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Reasons for nonparticipation in a union/management sponsored basic skills training program

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The Ohio State University, 1991
REASONS FOR NONPARTICIPATION IN A
UNION/MANAGEMENT SPONSORED
BASIC SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM

Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree, Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of
The Ohio State University
By
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To my loving mother who instilled in me the value of education and courage to achieve it.

Mrs. Ora D. Spann
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

During the latter part of the 1980s, basic-skills training emerged as a necessity in the workplace. Basic-skills training has become more necessary because of the demographic and technological reality of the workplace. According to Johnston and Packer (1987), and the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (1988), the workforce will be comprised of more women, minorities, immigrants and a smaller youth cohort by the year 2000. These demographic changes will dramatically transform the size, age, ethnic, and racial composition of the American labor force. The population will slow in growth and age at the same time. Johnston and Packer (1987) maintain that by the year 2000 approximately 80% of the new entrants into the work force will be women, immigrants, blacks, Hispanics, or Asians. White males will only represent 15% of the new entrants to the work force and will combine with white women to account for 57% of the new workers (Johnston & Packer, 1987). Thus, the work force will be smaller, include a larger percentage of disadvantaged, middle-aged, undereducated and untrained individuals. In order to remain
competitive and interact in a global market, employers will need to fill the gap between workers with basic skills and those in need of basic skills.

Carnevale, Gainer, and Meltzer (1990) point out that employees must be able to understand and acquire new and different skills quickly (p. 2). Employees are no longer being paid high wages for doing unskilled, repetitive work. They are being replaced by knowledgeable workers who make decisions and work in teams to solve problems (Feuer, 1987). There is a steady shift from labor-intensive to knowledge-intensive industries. Only a tiny fraction of the new jobs will require strength, coordination and manual dexterity alone. Workers will need reading comprehension, math skills and abstract thinking skills in order to compete in the job market and/or maintain current jobs (Feuer, 1987, Johnston, & Packer, 1987, & Carnavele et al., 1990).

However, Rumberger (1984) and the U. S. Department of Labor Statistics (1988) take issue with the dramatic portrayal of the workplace as being overpowered by high technology. They maintain that only a small percentage of jobs will be high tech and that janitorial and sexton jobs will increase. While this is true, Mikulecky (1982), Stitch and Mikulecky (1984), and Rush, Moe, and Storlie (1986) found that janitorial and sexton jobs are
becoming more complex. Workers are being asked to mix chemicals and read labels that require higher level skills in order to safely and efficiently complete their tasks. Cyert and Mowery (1987) maintain that, although technology has changed the nature of jobs, the impact of technology on job-specific skills is not clear. They note that "a substantial body of literature on the skill impacts of technological change has reached few consistent conclusions" (p. 99).

Reaching a consensus concerning the changing workplace and the need for basic skills training is difficult. However, because of demographic changes, the nature of work and the need for more and different skills, management views the upgrading and retraining of workers as a priority in the workplace. Because of the high priority basic skills is enjoying in the workplace, research must be conducted to understand the phenomenon.

Today's workers are less academically qualified than those of earlier decades (Lisack, 1984). Carnevale, et al., (1990) & Hull & Sechler (1987), identified the essential skills employees need to compete in today's workplace as: problem solving, listening, negotiation, and knowing how to learn, as well as teamwork, self esteem, leadership and motivation/goal setting, organizational effectiveness,
employability/career development, oral and listening skills, and creative thinking.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (1989), approximately 30 million Americans are functionally illiterate and the growth rate of illiteracy is approximately 2.3 million individuals a year. The Center estimates that approximately 2 million people graduated from high school in 1990 unqualified for any type of job. Building (1988) cited examples of businesses having difficulty finding qualified applicants. At New York Telephone Company, only 20 percent of those taking an operators test passed. The new worker will enter the work force with lower academic skills and less capacity for retraining than previous workers. It has been discovered that many of these new workers cannot add fractions, divide or compute averages (Miller, 1989). Along with finding it hard to find qualified workers, employers are finding that more and more of their current employees are functionally illiterate (Fields, Hull, & Sechler, 1987). Workers have hidden the need for basic skills training because of the stigma placed on being unable to read and write. Although stigma has been used at great lengths in the literature by Beder (1991), it was never defined. Good (1973) defined stigma as "any mental or physical mark or peculiarity which aids in identification or in the
diagnosis of a condition" (p. 558). I am going to use the term as it is defined by Good (1973).

To make up for the workers' deficits, organizations with 100 or more employees budgeted a total of $44.4 billion dollars for training in 1989 (Gordon, 1989). This figure represented a 12 percent ($5 billion dollar) increase over a one-year period. A survey conducted by the Center for Public Resources found that 75% of the country's largest corporations offer some type of basic skills training: the three R's and high-school level science. Corporations have found that employees who cannot read and write add extra costs to the employer in lost productivity, poor quality products, and accidents (Lee, 1986). In addition, corporations are finding that their competitive cycle is affected when employees lack essential skills (Carnevale et al., 1990). However, employees are reluctant to participate in basic skills training at the workplace. The reasons for worker nonparticipation are not clear and require further research.

An impediment to further research in the area of adult education (basic skills) lies in the lack of prior research and agreed-upon theory. Cross (1981) cited the lack of agreed-upon theories and the difficulty of theory building as a continuing problem. She listed three reasons why theory building is difficult: (1) the
marketplace orientation of most adult educators; (2) few adult educator scholars—largely because personnel involved are administrators and program planners; and (3) the multidisciplinary, applied nature of the field. Cross maintains that we must invite research on existing models in order to build theory.

Existing models and theories that attempt to explain participatory behavior include explanatory models developed by Knox and Videbeck (1963) and Miller (1967). They attributed variations in participation to the interaction of one's subjective orientation toward participation and the objective organization of one's "lifespace" (Scanlan, 1986). Dhanidina and Griffith's (1975) proposed economic model maintains that when perceived benefits outweigh the costs, participation will most likely occur. Recent approaches to understanding participation have been proposed by Rubenson (1977), Cross (1981), and Darkenwald and Merriam (1982). These theorists maintain that a variety of demographic variables (i.e., age, sex, income, race, educational attainment, employment status and geographic location) are associated with participatory behavior. Nondemographic variables (situational-individual life circumstances) such as a career and social roles are also a part of the explanation for participation. They also maintain that there are dispositional and
psychological factors such as values, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or individual psychological or personality traits connected with participation. Nondemographic variables outlined by Maslow’s (1977) hierarchy of needs may also play a part in the explanation of participation. The problem with the above participation research is that too much emphasis has been placed on describing the adult basic education student (demographic and nondemographic variables) from the participants’ point of view, and not enough has been placed on understanding the phenomenon from the nonparticipants’ perspective. In order to provide understanding of the nonparticipant, the researcher proposes to utilize Cross’s theory of participation/nonparticipation. This theory proposes that no single entity creates an environment for participation or nonparticipation.

The Chain of Response Model (COR) proposed by Cross (1981), as a theory of participation, will be used as the theoretical framework for this study. This theory incorporates the common elements of prior theories (i.e., psychological forces and external social and environmental factors) along with including identification of barriers (situational, institutional and dispositional), and utilizes both internal psychological forces and external social and
environmental factors. Cross maintains that the choice to participate is best understood and articulated by individuals making the decision.

Cross's COR model (see Figure 1) hypothesizes that participation in organized learning activities is the result of the interaction and interrelation of seven variables. It assumes that:

- participation in a learning activity, whether in organized classes or self-directed, is not a single act but the result of a chain of responses, each based on an evaluation of the position of the individual in his or her environment. (p. 125).

![Figure 1: Chain-of-Response (COR) Model](image)

Cross's concept of behavior is consistent with the theoretical work in the psychology of motivation (Cross, 1981). In this model, behavior is seen as a constantly flowing stream rather than a series of discreet events.
(decharms & Muir, 1978). The COR model begins action with the individual and moves to increasingly external conditions. Cross's COR model will aid the research being conducted by offering an understanding of the reasons for nonparticipation of bargaining unit and salaried workers at a manufacturing plant in the Midwest. Understanding the behavior of these workers will lead to the identification of additional reasons for nonparticipation, thus expanding the COR theory to include the business educational community.

Definitions

Several important terms and concepts will be used throughout this study. In order to provide an understanding of the concept of basic skills as it pertains to this study, the following terms are defined.

1. Basic Skills--The ability to read, write, communicate, and compute (Berlin & Sun, 1988). Additionally, the definition includes: communication skills, adaptability, personal management, effectiveness within a group, and the ability to influence (Carnevale et al., 1990)

2. Literacy--includes reading, writing, oral language, math, and other skills (Workplace Literacy, 1988).

3. Basic Literacy--places greatest emphasis on the lower levels of traditional academic literacy. Basic literacy definitions specify a grade
equivalent or skill level, with different criterion ranging from being able to write ones name to having a sixth or ninth grade reading level (Bloome, 1987).

4. Functional Literacy--relates directly to job relevant literacy that includes but is not limited to basic literacy. Incorporates job reading demands that enables an individual to bridge the gap between basic literacy and complex literacy skills needed to meet the requirements of the job (Bloome, 1987).

5. Training--"A set of planned activities on the part of an organization to increase the job knowledge and skills or to modify the attitudes and social behavior of its members in ways consistent with the goals of the organization and the requirements of the job" (Landy, 1985, p. 263).

6. Deterrent to participation--A reason or group of reasons contributing to an adult's decision not to engage in learning activities (Scanlan, 1986).

Statement of the problem

The purpose of this study is to understand the reasons for nonparticipation in a union/management training program designed to upgrade the basic skills of employees at a manufacturing plant in the Midwest. Employee nonparticipation in the training program
provided through management and union collaboration, is a problem the plant faces at this time. A qualitative study of salaried managers, supervisors and bargaining unit employees utilizing observations, a focus group and in depth interviews was conducted in order to understand and discuss the reasons for nonparticipation from the employee point of view.

Issues related to nonparticipation may be understood in terms of a theoretical model proposed by Cross (1981). This conceptual framework, the Chain-of-Response (COR) Model assumes that participation in a learning activity, whether in organized classes or individually guided, is not a single act but the result of a chain of responses, each based on an evaluation of the position of the individual in his or her environment (p. 125). The COR model is on a continuum that begins with self-evaluation and attitudes about education and continues with importance of goals, life transitions, opportunities and barriers, information, and ending with participation. The forces (which flow in both directions) of nonparticipation can exist within each of the above areas leading to participation. The researcher wishes to explore the reasons for nonparticipation based on the workers' self-determined position on the COR continuum.
There has been considerable research attention given to the phenomenon of "who participates and why" in Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs (Beder, 1990). However, research devoted to the question "who fails to participate and why not," has not been conducted extensively from the ABE perspective, and never from the workplace perspective (Beder, 1990). Nonparticipants need to be asked about their reasons for not participating in union/management sponsored basic skills training programs. Questions pertaining to educational background and history, and significant events affecting the nonparticipants' current life and educational goals have never been asked of bargaining unit and salaried workers within the workplace. As nonparticipants, the viewpoint of management and unionized workers are not known. This research will provide some understanding of this phenomenon.

Further implications for research extend beyond the plant to similar locations and programs throughout the workplace in general. Management/Union-collaborated training programs emphasizing the upgrading of workers' basic skills need to understand the workers' perception of such programs and the reason why they do not take advantage of them. This research will enable employers to meet the needs of workers in upgrading basic skills
and development along with assisting them in utilizing valuable training dollars effectively.

Discussion of the Problem

There are three major concerns among employers that influence the need for employees to participate in basic skills training program. These concerns are the changes in the work process, new technology, and the need to upgrade the skills of current employees (Berlin & Sun, 1988). Each of these concerns will be discussed along with related problems and demographics.

The work process has been transformed from an economy based on agriculture and manufacturing markets to a global, information-based economy (Carnevale et al., 1990). Thus, jobs are based on mental rather than physical activity. Workers will no longer be faced with rote assignments requiring little or no basic skills. New approaches to the organization of work leads to the expansion of the workers' role. They will be required to work in teams, think critically and solve problems (Carnevale et al., 1990).

An additional concern confronting the lack of employee participation in industry training programs is that of the need to upgrade the skills of current employees. Fields, Hull, and Sechler (1987), maintain that companies are finding that more and more of their employees are functionally illiterate. Motorola found
that their employees couldn't read when a supplier changed its packaging (Wiggenhorn, 1990). Employees were working by the color of package, not by what it said. Additionally, while opening a cellular manufacturing facility, Motorola found that 60% of the workers seemed to have trouble with simple arithmetic (Wiggenhorn, 1990). They later found that much of the poor math performance was due to the workers' inability to read. Thus, one reason for offering basic skills training to employees is based on academic deficiencies found in the workplace.

Basic Skills (1982) and Miller (1989) report that there is a mismatch between the skills required for the workplace and those actually possessed by the worker. By the year 2000 the majority of new jobs will require education and training beyond that received in high school (Johnston & Packer, 1987). Required lifelong learning skills will not only include reading, writing and mathematics, but higher-order critical thinking skills; analytical and problem-solving skills; listening, speaking and other communication skills, basic computer skills; and teamwork skills (Carnevale et al., 1990).

According to the U. S. Department of Labor (1988), companies are also experiencing difficulties in finding qualified entry level applicants. Examples cited
stipulated that only 20 percent of those taking a telephone operator’s test passed, and the ratio of applicants to those qualifying for secretarial or mail clerk positions were 20:1 and 10:1 respectively (U. S. Department of Labor, 1988).

Along with the basic skills issue, demographics will impact nonparticipation within the training process. This impact will occur when current workers refuse to participate in programs, and literate workers cannot be found within the labor force. Demographic changes cited by Johnston and Packer (1987) and the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (1988) include a decrease in the number of young workers entering the labor market. Also cited is the expected increase in the number of minorities, immigrants and women entering the work force. Since these groups are made up of individuals with low educational levels, the labor pool will have lower levels of literacy.

The need for workers to participate in workplace basic skills programs is evident as the number of persons entering the work force decreases and skill requirements increase. It is often assumed that workers will automatically sign up for basic skills training programs, but often employer’s assumptions prove false. At Motorola, the training and education department thought that once their basic skills courses were
described, people who needed them most would sign up to take them (Wiggenhorn, 1990), but this did not occur. Even though workers lacked the basic skills to compete within the workplace they did not fill the classes to capacity (Wiggenhorn, 1990). This phenomenon is also occurring at this plant. Although workers are being asked to perform different tasks such as statistical-process control, reading job guides and instruction sheets, making decisions, solving problems and working in teams, they are not signing up to upgrade their basic skills. Management and union representatives are aware that the lack of basic skills will prevent workers from participating in these tasks and prevent the company from progressing.

The need to reach these individuals through basic skills training classes is so widespread that management and labor are cooperating to plan, pay for, and administer training programs (Miller, 1989). Unions enter collective-bargaining agreements in which a percentage of payroll dollars are set aside for employee training (Collino, 1988). This is being done in order to protect workers' employability and minimize the time they spend in seeking new employment after layoffs (p. 11). The United Auto Workers (UAW) Local #969 and the manufacturing plant provide such a partnership. This partnership instituted a joint project that provides
employees with educational opportunities through the in-plant Lifelong Learning Center.

The Lifelong Learning Center provides employees with educational opportunities to obtain Basic Skills, a General Equivalency Degree (GED), skills to use the Automated Learning Interactive System (ALIS), Personal Computer Training or access to College Credit Courses. The center is staffed with UAW and Management personnel.

This research specifically addresses the Basic Skills component of the Lifelong Learning Center but broadly encompasses all offerings within the center. The gap between the Basic Skills of employees and the needs of the plant are representative of the national trend. Many manufacturing plants need highly skilled employees but currently employ workers possessing low basic skills.

Even though this center is in operation, employees are reluctant and in most cases refuse to sign up for basic skills classes and other components. It is thought that the changing, high-tech workplace environment would motivate employees to participate; however, this is not the case. In order to reach these individuals, a clearer understanding of the factors influencing their nonparticipation is needed. The research detailed in the following pages provide a vehicle to understand from the nonparticipants' point of
view the reasons for nonparticipation in a basic skills training program. The goal of the research is to provide a qualitative approach to understanding the phenomenon of nonparticipation.

Research Questions

In this research, I dealt with nonparticipants only, rather than including participants. The reason for researching only nonparticipants lies in the fact that there has been little or no effort to understand the phenomenon of nonparticipation from the nonparticipants' perspective (Beder & Quigley, 1990). Their reasons for not participating in basic skills programs may be different than those expressed by participants who cannot understand why nonparticipants do not participate in the first place.

Another reason for researching only nonparticipants is because employers, realizing the need to upgrade the basic skills of workers, are concerned about why workers do not participate in larger numbers. Instead of asking those who participate in the program why others do not, the researcher addressed the issue with those who are not participating. Consequently, the researcher entered the research with questions relating to the COR model along with other pertinent questions that provided understanding of the phenomenon of nonparticipation at the workplace.
The researcher entered the research with four major questions:

1. Does the operationally defined Chain of Response model provide adequate information to explain nonparticipation in the industry/business setting?

2. What do bargaining unit employees including "Ask Me" group members, perceive as the reason for not participating in the activities of the Lifelong Learning Center? How do the educational background, significant events or transitions, and attitude of the respondents relate to their nonparticipation?

3. What do salaried workers perceive as the reason for not participating in the activities of the Lifelong Learning Center? How do the educational background, significant events or transitions, and attitude of the respondents relate to their nonparticipation?

4. What workplace and environmental factors, including the location of the basic skills program influence the nonparticipation of workers?

Applicability, Generalizability, and Transferability

The purpose of this study was to obtain from a qualitative, naturalistic perspective the reasons individuals do not participate in a union/management-sponsored basic skills training program and to add an industry/business perspective to the COR model. There was no attempt to hypothesize or to identify variables.
Individual behavior or relationships between participants and nonparticipants will not be predicted.

A structured open-ended interview guide (see Appendix A) was utilized during individual and group sessions (Patton, 1990). However, there was no attempt to standardize questions because they were subject to change in different directions throughout the data collection process. Not standardizing the questions freed the researcher to probe deeply and discuss unanticipated topics brought up by the employee (Patton, 1990 & Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The concerns of generalization (external validity) were taken into consideration. Lincoln and Guba (1985) cite the problem of underdetermination and relativism in relationship to studying a single site. They assert that there is always more than one way to account for any set of data and what is found has meaning only for that particular context at that time (p. 216). The findings about the sample presented in this research is generalizable to the population from which the sample was drawn. Transferability is left to the person seeking to make an application of this research elsewhere. Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that the person seeking to make a transfer should accumulate empirical evidence about contextual similarity. The original researcher should provide sufficient
descriptive data to make such similarity judgments possible (p. 298).

In order to deal with external validity the researcher utilized multiple sources of data (triangulation) to reach an understanding of the phenomena. Denzin (1978) defined data triangulation as the use of a variety of data sources. The use of more than one source of data to provide understanding on a single point helps to corroborate, elaborate, or illuminate the research in question (Rossman & Wilson, 1985). This strengthens the study's usefulness for other settings (Marshall & Rossman, 1989).

Triangulation was accomplished in this research by using a combination of group and individual interviewing.

The study focused on nonparticipants (focus group and individual interviews) in the Basic Skills unit of a union/management-sponsored Lifelong Learning Center Program rather than encompassing all training programs sponsored by union/management. Focusing the scope of the study allowed the researcher to: focus on a subject area of specific interest, focus on a subject area that has not been researched from a qualitative perspective, and manage the study so as to acquire in depth information.
Significance of the Study

This study is significant because of the lack of literature pertaining to nonparticipation in workplace basic skills programs. Cross (1981) maintains that it is just as important to know why adults do not participate as why they do (p. 97). She maintains that it is usually the people who "need" education most—the poorly educated—who do not participate (Cross, 1981).

There are no studies concerned with nonparticipation in an industry-sponsored training program context. However, there are a number of studies pertaining to nonparticipation in Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs.

Similarities between research studies concerning ABE nonparticipants and business/industry nonparticipants are common. Individuals in each group are not homogeneous (Beder & Quigley, 1990). They have complex lives that impact their participation in such programs. Secondly, these individuals may have ambitions that may or may not involve education (Beder & Quigley, 1990). Many of the individuals in ABE research projects had difficulty returning to school. Issues of barriers, finances, and social stigma are prevalent in all of the studies. Beder and Quigley (1990) report that, "we will need to go well beyond the conventional classroom, both in our practice and research, if we are
to understand and learn from this large sector of our society" (p. 30).

This study adds to the general body of literature on nonparticipation in workplace basic skills programs. It provides an exploratory set of findings about the reasons workers do not participate in a union/management-sponsored training program. Discovering the reasons for nonparticipation may lead to different approaches to the development of union/management-sponsored literacy programs.

This research links ABE literature to literature in the workplace because both areas concern themselves with adult education and the need to understand the phenomena of participation/nonparticipation. This study deals with the nonparticipation aspects of the literature. By utilizing research conducted on ABE programs, the researcher hopes to link the nonparticipation phenomenon to the workplace. Does the COR model relate to the workplace? Why are workers turned off to company-sponsored programs? Are workers afraid of losing their jobs if employers learn of their low skill levels?

These findings are useful to the business community, individual workers, literacy-program managers, and current practitioners and individuals researching the area of literacy and developing policy for newly created programs.
The information and findings of this study are based on the perceptions of individuals who did not participate in an operational union/management-sponsored training program. The study generated several questions for future research as well as provided in depth reasons why workers do not participate in union/management sponsored programs.

**Organization of the Study**

Chapter I provides the background to the study, introduces theoretical concepts, and discusses the problem under examination. The research questions to be answered are listed along with definitions and the significance of the study. Applicability, generalizability, and transferability have also been addressed.

Chapter II presents a review of relevant literature which describes theoretical concepts utilized to understand the phenomena of participation and nonparticipation. In addition areas relating to basic skills in the workplace are discussed.

Chapter III describes the research methodology employed in this study and describes the general approach to the study. The program, population, sample, method of analysis, and the limitations of the study are also addressed in this chapter.
Chapter IV presents the data of the study in relation to the questions posed.

Chapter V analyzes and presents the findings, provide recommendations and discusses the implications of the study.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This literature review is presented with three objectives in mind. The first objective is to provide an overview of empirical research that utilized the Chain of Response (COR) theoretical model. The second objective is to present empirical research relating to participation and nonparticipation in Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs that relate to basic skill (literacy) programs. The third objective is to present empirical research from several areas relating to basic skills (literacy) in the workplace. Those areas are: (a) basic skills (literacy) and job performance; (b) skills needed for the workplace; and (c) transferability of basic skills.

Section one provides a broad contextual framework for the study through the discussion of the COR theoretical model as it relates to participation and nonparticipation. Section two continues the literature review with specific research information concerning participation and nonparticipation in ABE programs. Section three reviews the link between basic skills
(literacy) and job performance, the skills needed in the workplace and the transferability of those skills from training programs to the workplace.

**Research related to the Chain Of Response (COR) model**

The challenge faced by the business community is that of identifying the reason employees do not participate in union/management-sponsored basic skills programs. In order to ascertain the reasons, a researcher could utilize already established reasons for participation to understand nonparticipation or use existing theory to identify specific reasons for nonparticipation. This researcher elects to use the latter for the following reasons: (a) participation research primarily examines socio-demographic data that include race, age, sex, etc., (although Anderson & Darkenwald (1979) found that only 10 percent of the variance associated with adult participation is accounted for using these variables), and (b) participation research examines single variables that are not theoretically based.

Patricia K. Cross, in *Adults as Learners* (1981), proposed a theory of participation/nonparticipation--the Chain of Response (COR) model. She maintained that research based on theory that views participation/nonparticipation from many perspectives (variables) is needed. The COR model assumes that
participation in a learning activity, whether in organized classes or individually guided, is not a single act but the result of a chain or responses, each based on an evaluation of the position of the individual in his or her environment (p. 125).

The implications for the reasons an individual does not participate have generally centered around point five of the model: opportunities and barriers. The negative and/or positive forces that occur prior to defining opportunities and removing barriers are not addressed by employers (Cross, 1981). If these negative forces frustrate or overwhelm the individual prior to point five, removing barriers and providing opportunities will do little to increase participation.

Specifically more attention needs to be given to reasons for nonparticipation that exist prior to the barriers and opportunities point. Cross (1981) maintained that the creation of opportunities and the removal of barriers may not be enough to enhance participation. Internal forces should be understood prior to assessing external forces. Cross summarizes: "if adult educators wish to understand why some adults fail to participate in learning opportunities, they need to begin at the beginning of the COR model—with an understanding of attitudes toward self and education" (p. 130).
Cross (1981) continued to promote the COR theoretical model as a means to organize thinking and research. She maintained that the usefulness of the COR model will be judged by its capacity to accommodate existing research, stimulate new research, and improve practice (p.131). Thus, when reviewing research literature that has utilized the COR model, the researcher has to judge its usefulness in the above three categories: (a) accommodation of existing research, (b) generation of new research, and (c) improving practice.

Four researchers (Goodman, 1983; Green, 1983; Cooke, 1986; & Brandmeyer, 1987) have utilized the COR theory in their research. Goodman (1983) in *Self-concept as a learner and level of threat in learning activities: Potential inhibitors of adults' participation in education* conducted a quantitative analysis of two variables within the COR model; self-evaluation and attitudes about education. The study tested Cross's hypothesis that adults with low self-confidence in their learning ability will engage primarily or exclusively in low-threat-learning activities. Respondents were primarily white, affluent, college educated individuals. Utilizing a questionnaire to assess the threat level in a learning activity and a locus of control measure to assess self-concept, the
researcher conducted a one-way analysis of variance. The research hypothesis was rejected (Goodman, 1983). Goodman concluded that it was difficult to conclude which factor was the cause and which was the effect, however, adults enrolled in classes lower than their educational level exhibit lower self-confidence in their ability as learners than did adults enrolled in classes in the upper levels of the hierarchy.

Green (1983) evaluated a seminar designed to facilitate adult development and learning through prior-learning assessment. Her hypotheses and research questions were posited to explore whether growth and development occurred when adults reentered the learning environment through a college seminar. The seminar was designed to facilitate the process of learning how to identify, articulate, measure, assess and document college-level, prior learning. Two approaches to research were used: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative approach found no significant difference (Green, 1983). The qualitative approach proved positive and evidence of growth and development was found (Green, 1983). The COR model for understanding participation in Adult Learning Activities was tested in this part of the research. The model appears to be very useful in building a adult re-entry class. Through the interview, the researcher found that 12 students currently enrolled
or about to re-enroll followed each part of the COR model. Six students who expressed that formal education is not a present goal are either at point three or point four in the COR model.

Cooke (1986) utilized the COR model to describe the university faculty who participated in organized professional development activities (computer technology). The questions addressed were: (a) Does the operationally-defined model provide adequate information to explain participation or nonparticipation? (b) Does the operationally-defined model provide adequate information to explain the level of participation for those who participate? Cooke concluded that motivation to participate depended largely on goals and expectations. Faculty who were motivated were likely to seek educational opportunities and overcome barriers. If the faculty member was weakly motivated, barriers would deter his/her participation. Motivated faculty were also more likely to remember information about professional development opportunities on computer technology. Cooke also concluded that participants differed from nonparticipants in the areas of goals and expectations, opportunities and barriers, and information, thus the need to study them separately. In addition, the study determined that a high level of participation indicated that the majority of the
constructs on the COR model were positive descriptors of the faculty members (Cooke, 1986). Low or nonparticipation in activities indicated that the constructs described the individuals.

Brandmeyer (1987) used Cross's (1981) COR model as the theoretical frame for approaching the problem of whether older adults participating in higher education were more satisfied with their lives than a like group of older adults who were active but not enrolled in college courses. A one-way ANOVA indicated no significant relation between life satisfaction and opinions about college courses and higher education. A two-way ANOVA found that participants and nonparticipants had a higher life satisfaction score if they were in a higher socio-economic bracket. A stepwise multiple regression revealed no significant relationship between life satisfaction and participation in higher education.

These studies began the process of examining Cross's COR model to determine its viability as a means to organize adult participation and nonparticipation research around a coherent theory. I propose to examine the COR model from the nonparticipant's perspective for the following reasons: (1) Three of the above research studies were all conducted utilizing college-educated individuals and the fourth tried to find a significant
relationship between those taking college level courses and those not taking them; (2) Cooke's study pointed out that participants differed from nonparticipants; (3) The question of who participates and why not from the workers perspective needs to be addressed; and (4) Since most demographic information provides a description of the participant and nonparticipant as being uneducated, poor working class, research to understand their reality of nonparticipation should be conducted.

The proposed research study utilizing Cross's COR model as a theoretical basis is also designed to respond to calls from Knox and Videbeck (1963), Miller (1967), Mezirow (1971), Boshier (1973), and Cross (1981) for research based on theory. Cross (1981) invited research on the theoretical (COR) model which assumes that participation in a learning activity is not a single act but a result of a chain of responses evaluated on the position of the individual in his or her environment (p. 125).

Research utilizing the COR model has been conducted from the post-secondary educational setting; however, research from the business educational setting has not been conducted. The COR conceptual framework will be used to provide a structure for the research interviews, and, conversely, the interviews will be used to test the
usefulness and validity of the COR model as it relates to industry and business.

**Participation Research**

Research has been conducted on participation in organized adult education programs from the perspective of explaining participatory behavior. Specific models have been developed to understand human behavior that affords adults the opportunity to participate or not participate in sponsored educational activities.

Explanatory models of the relationship between situational, social and psychological antecedents of participation in adult education were designed and confirmed by Knox and Videbeck (1963) and Aslanian and Brickell (1988). These researchers found a relationship between changes in life circumstances and participation in adult education. A relationship was also found between variations in status configuration and activity in adult education.

Miller (1967) theorized that the valance of social structure and personal needs determined both the likelihood and nature of participant behavior. When need is driving the individual toward an educational objective the likelihood of participating and achieving the objective is high.

Dhanidina and Griffith (1975) and Smorynski and Parochka (1979) proposed an economic model of
participation. They theorized that cost and benefits affect the decision to participate. Participation occurs when the perceived benefits of the investment outweigh the costs. Darkenwald (1980) maintained that while the relationship between cost, benefits and participation is inconclusive, the model is logically appealing and may be relevant when explaining variations in job-related continuing education activity.

Seaman and Schroeder (1970), and Grotelueschen and Caulley (1977) theorized that attitudes toward adult education influenced the decision to participate. However, this relationship was not maintained when age and educational level were factored out.

Efforts to explain the phenomenon of educational participation have used dispositional, situational, and environmental variable interactions (Scanlan, 1986). Cross's Chain of Response model, which has been thoroughly discussed previously, has been held as the second theory formulated to explain adult participation in learning activities. Other models of participation were developed by Rubenson (1977), and Darkenwald and Merriam (1982).

Rubenson (1977) based his model of participation contingent upon the interaction of personal and environmental variables that operate within the adult lifespace. Specific variables stated in the model
include prior experience, personal attributes and current needs, and environmental factors. How these variables are perceived and interpreted by the potential learner is more important to understanding participation than the variables themselves.

Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) postulated the psychosocial interaction model in an attempt to explain adult participation. This theory is consistent with Cross's perception of participatory behavior in that it is designed on a continuum of internal and external stimuli, and utilizes early theoretical concepts to test and develop more concrete theory. However, Darkenwald and Merriam utilized adult socioeconomic status as a determinant of participatory behavior. They maintained that if one's environment encourages further education, then that individual will have a positive perception toward continuing his or her education. If the perceived value in continuing one's education is strong, then the individual will be more likely to participate.

The COR model continued by emphasizing the perceived frequency and intensity of participation stimuli. A job change or the desire for self improvement may stimulate an individual to participate. According to this theory, there is a relationship between living in an environment that encourages learning and the perceived magnitude of the stimulus to
participate. The model included informational barriers to participation as a determiner of participatory behavior. The Darkenwald Theory, as a result, essentially added a psychosocial category to Cross’s original three (situational, institutional, and informational) barriers. While environmental factors as well as access to information certainly play a role in nonparticipation, this research will test the theory that a series of events deter an individual from participating in educational activities.

**Nonparticipation in Adult Basic Education Programs (ABE)**

In reviewing the literature on nonparticipation, research was not found specifically relating to nonparticipation in workplace basic skills programs. An assumption of this study is that the issue of nonparticipation exists due to the low enrollment of adults in Adult Basic Education (ABE) Programs. The National Advisory Council on Adult Education (1977) reported that as few as 5% of the adult population was being served during any given year. Subsequently, studies support the claim that only a small percentage of adults who qualify for inclusion in Adult Basic Education programs (whatever standard for inclusion one elects to use) actually choose to participate in such programs (Balmuth, 1986; Garrison, 1985; Glustrom, 1983; & Scanlan, 1986). Beder and Quigley (1990) acknowledged
the lack of ABE program funding contributes to the low number being served. They also recognized that the failure to understand those who do not participate, and the phenomenon of nonparticipation contributes to the low participation rate (Beder & Quigley, 1990). Research studies concerning the lack of adults participating in ABE programs may serve seminally to research concerning nonparticipation in workplace literacy programs.

The reasons for nonparticipation have been addressed in the research literature. According to Beder (1990) there are at least three reasons why adults who are eligible for ABE adult basic education fail to participate: the lack of motivation to attend, deterrents, and unawareness of ABE programs. Kotler (1975) and Beder (1986) have also applied the concept of demand to motivation (marketing theory). They have sought to explain the actions of nonparticipants by using a continuum ranging from outright avoiders (negative demand), to indifferent (no demand), to motivated (positive demand) individuals. The positive demand assures participation only if there are no deterrents and the learner is aware of Adult Basic Education program offerings. Beder and Valentine (1987) focused on motivation in ABE and found that there were seven basic motivations for participation among Iowa ABE
students: Self-Improvement, Family Responsibility, Diversion, Literacy Development, Community/Church Involvement, Job Advancement, and The Urging of Others. Beder and Valentine (1988) found that English as a Second Language (ESL) students in Iowa were motivated to participate in order: to improve themselves through social integration, to help their children, for job/economic reasons, to function better, reduce isolation, to become empowered, to gain reading and writing skills, and to contribute to their native lands. Most of the work on the lack of motivation has centered on participating rather than on nonparticipating. Thus, the concept of demand (marketing theory) may be more applicable to nonparticipation than why people are motivated itself.

In 1981, Patricia K. Cross agreed with previous researchers that there are situational (things external to the individual's control) and dispositional (based on personal attitude) barriers to participation. She added an additional barrier—institutional to the list (Beder, 1990). Hayes (1988) identified five basic deterrents: Low self-confidence, social disapproval, situational barriers, negative attitude to classes, and low personal priority. However, Scanlan (1982), Scanlan and Darkenwald (1984), and Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) found that deterrents (barriers) vary according to the
population under study. In these studies, lack of awareness was viewed as a component of deterrents.

The four studies germane to the issue of nonparticipation are dated, but will be cited because of their relevance to the proposed research. Boggs, Buss, and Yarnell (1978) conducted a study of eligible ABE students in Ohio. They used telephone interviews (multistage random sampling design) to determine: awareness of ABE, characteristics of eligible Ohioans, and requirements and conditions for attending ABE. The reasons given by those who had considered attending ABE, but did not were: too old (31.9%), too busy (13.7%), not interested/necessary (13.2%), poor health (9.8%), family responsibilities (9.5%), and other factors (17.9%). Kreitlow, Glustrom, and Martin (1981) used telephone interviews of Wisconsin adults aged 16 and older who had not completed high school and were not currently attending school. The researchers cited the most frequent response as being, "not considering obtaining a high school diploma." Additional responses were: too busy, work, family responsibilities, age, and poor past experiences in school.

Fingeret (1983) conducted a qualitative study and identified the lack of need for ABE programs as a reason for nonparticipation. Low literate adults adapted to their state of illiteracy, relying on personal sources
from within their social network and nonprint mass media (Fingeret, 1983).

Recently, Hayes (1988) went beyond analyzing descriptive data of nonparticipants. She factor analyzed the reasons given for nonparticipation and found five basic deterrents to participation: low self-confidence, social disapproval, situational barriers, negative attitude to classes, and low personal priority.

The Iowa nonparticipation study addressed four questions: What attributes describe adults who are eligible for ABE, but have never participated; what are their reasons for nonparticipation; is there an underlying structure to reasons for nonparticipation, and what factors are associated with nonparticipation (Beder, 1989).

The Iowa study (Beder, 1990) found that nonparticipants were older adults with incomes above the poverty level. The most important reason for nonparticipation in ABE programs cited relates to attitudes toward, or perceptions of, ABE programs. Other reasons for nonparticipation in Iowa were the adults low perception of need, perceived difficulty or dislike for school, and situational barriers. The study concluded that it is harder to recruit older adults who do not see the need for ABE (Beder, 1990). Findings supported previous research on nonparticipation that
encompasses motivation (low perception of need) and the lack of demand for ABE. When individuals see the need to participate, situational barriers such as a general dislike for school or the perception of school as being hard may deter them. Barriers have to be reduced in order for individuals to participate.

The Pennsylvania Resistance Study on Nonparticipation consisted of two studies. The first study used literary fiction (i.e., adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain; The Catcher in the Rye; etc.,) to establish a framework as to how and why adults resist ABE. The second study utilized in-depth interviews with adults who resisted ABE. The studies found that the problem of resisters lies within our educational system. It is maintained that resisters are saying no to the middle class values inherent in school systems and not to learning. Beder and Quigley (1990) suggest: for resisters, the problems lie within the fabric of our educational system. More specifically, what nonparticipants resist is not learning, but the irrelevant, unacceptable cultural and socioeconomic normative values they see in schooling (p. 21).

The studies found that nonparticipation was not due to a lack of awareness, fear of failure, poor self-image, insurmountable barriers, lack of motivation or learning disabilities.
Implications of the research conducted on nonparticipants indicate that they are not homogeneous. While individuals see value in education, their aspirations may or may not involve further education. Older nonparticipants had difficulty seeing themselves back in school and younger nonparticipants wanted more accessible and relevant programs. School is unattractive to both older and younger adults. Researchers contend that relevant programs emphasizing the learners' needs and presented in alternative environments capture the nonparticipant (Beder & Quiggly, 1990 & Freer, 1990). Programs that go beyond the conventional classroom will help to understand the nonparticipant.

In reviewing the above research on nonparticipation, it was found that researchers do not agree on the reasons for nonparticipation. Many cite low perception of need (motivation), lack of demand for ABE programs, basic deterrents such as low self-confidence, social disapproval, etc., barriers (family, age), and the lack of information about ABE programs as an influence to individual participation. The above research also demonstrates that research has primarily been conducted on demographic variables.
Research areas relating Basic Skills in the workplace

Literacy and Job Performance

Research on literacy and job performance show that there is an indirect relationship between a worker's literacy skill level and job performance (Crandall, 1981 & Mikulecky, 1988). Mikulecky maintains that this relationship is not overwhelming or direct and is based on research conducted on military personnel. Therefore, the generalizability of this research to unlike populations may not be as great as we would like. Further research is indicated.

Sticht (1982) in a review of military basic skills training found that the performance of skilled workers who had not graduated from high school equaled that of high school graduates with low basic skill levels. He maintained that the level of basic skills does not determine successful job performance in the military. Nor does an individual's reading ability as measured by a reading test explain successful performance.

In 1984, Hunter and Hunter conducted a meta-analysis of hundreds of studies that addressed job performance. They found that cognitive measures predicted job performance better than previous education, expert recommendation, biographical inventories, and biographical interviews.
When determining how reading abilities relate to job performance, Mikulecky and Winchester (1983) and Mikulecky and Ehlinger (1986) noted a low-level relationship between simple literal-level reading ability and job performance in nurses and electronic technicians. However, a higher-level relationship existed between job performance and the ability to apply and use literacy skills.

This is in line with Hunter and Hunters (1984) contention that there is a high correlation between cognitive measures of ability and job performance. It is noted that a higher level of literacy skills are needed for successful job performance in the workplace.

Another aspect of the relationship between basic skills and job performance is that of mistakes caused by low-skilled employees. In research conducted by the Center for Public Resources, Henry and Raymond, (1982) cite examples of costly one-time mistakes made by workers with low basic skills. Examples cited include: workers accidently killed because of the inability to comprehend correspondence, and time lost due to the need to give regular lectures on the use of equipment as opposed to step by step written instructions (p.18). Low ability levels in applied computation and measurement, according to respondents, regularly
accounted for losses in production, quality, and general corporate performance (P.20).

Even though literacy skills are not overwhelmingly related to job performance they do have an impact on job performance. A worker possessing reading ability with high-level problem solving and metacognitive skills is predicted to have a high rate of success on the job as opposed to workers possessing no factual-level reading skills. When employees have low-level basic skills they can be costly and dangerous to employers.

The need for Basic Skills in the Workplace

The demand for literacy skills in the workplace is documented by numerous researchers. In research conducted by Diehl and Mikulecky (1980) and Mikulecky (1982) 98% of 100 workers were in occupations that required reading and writing skills. Workers utilized print, reading, charts, graphs, and computer printouts approximately two hours per day (Diehl & Mikulecky, 1980; Rush, Moe & Storlie, 1986; Sticht, 1982). The difficulty of reading material ranged from 9th to 12th grade level. Diehl and Mikulecky (1980) stipulated that 70% of running prose reading materials utilized on the job had a difficulty level ranging from 9th to 12th grade levels. A comparison study by Mikulecky (1982) found that blue collar workers read more than 11th graders and the difficulty level of the material
utilized was as difficult or more difficult than that used in junior high school. Consequently, studies focusing on job related versus general literacy, conducted by Mikulecky, (1985) and Mikulecky & Others (1987), found that there are differences between the requirements of general literacy and workplace literacy. Mikulecky (1988) maintained that the literacy skills needed to perform on the job (reading, writing, computation) are used to complete tasks or assess specific problems related to the task. This differs from grade-school reading in that workers have to solve problems, provide services, and perform tasks (Mikulecky, 1988).

Higher-level thinking skills are associated with problem solving skills that will enable the worker to complete specific tasks. Mikulecky (1988) points out that reading a single textbook or article is less demanding than obtaining information from several sources to solve problems and assess or complete tasks. Mikulecky and Winchester (1983) and Mikulecky and Ehlinger (1986) reported a relationship between higher-level "metacognitive" and problem-solving reading abilities and job performance across differing occupations. New workers learning new jobs are expected to encounter the heaviest job-related reading (Kern, 1980).
There is disagreement concerning which skills will be needed in the future. Data from the Department of Labor (1988) and Rumberger (1984) suggest that high tech jobs will not control the future. According to the Department of Labor (1988), between 1978 and 1990 the United States will need 672,000 new janitor and sexton jobs compared to 199,000 new computer systems analysts. Rumberger (1984) maintained that most jobs will not be in the high-tech field and technology will actually reduce skill requirements.

Mikulecky (1982); Sticht and Mikulecky (1984); Rush, Moe, and Storlie (1986) maintained that traditional jobs are becoming more complex. While some jobs will show a need for lower-skill requirements, most will show a need for higher-skill requirements. In janitorial jobs, workers will need to read complicated labels that instruct how to mix solvents and encounter increased paperwork and computer usage to reorder solvents. This will increase the demand for literacy skills in the workplace.

Transferability of Basic Skills

The initial assumption of basic skills training programs was to teach basic skills and transfer them to the workplace. However, Duffy (1985); Mikulecky and Ehlinger (1986); Sticht (1988); and Kirsch and Jungeblutt (1986) note problems associated with the
transference of skills from the classroom to the workplace.

Sticht (1988), while conducting research for the military, found that recruits improve their basic skills while in the classroom but lose these gains within eight weeks. Sticht indicated that "personnel retained 80% of their end-of-course gain in job literacy training (but) only 40% of their end-of-course gain in general reading" (p.40). Kirsch and Jungeblutt (1986) suggest that only 25% of the skills taught are transferred from the classroom to the workplace.

Mikulecky and Strange (1982) and Sticht and Mikulecky (1984) maintain transfer of training occurs when literacy-skills training is integrated with actual job training. This functional-literacy approach was evaluated by Sticht (1982). The evaluation for approximately 700 students participating in the Army's Functional Literacy Training (FLIT) program concluded that students retained what was being taught at an 80% rate, performed three times better than their counterparts in other branches of the Armed Services who utilized general literacy training, and made three times the improvement in job-related reading as opposed to general reading programs. Sticht (1982) also noted that some students did not make progress utilizing the program and suggested longer periods of participation.
Even so, Duffy (1985) described the Army’s Functional Literacy Training program as exemplary.

A job-oriented approach to training personnel using materials found in the workplace has been found to be successful (Sticht, 1982). Training must be matched to specific occupational needs, and the assumption of general transfer of knowledge cannot be assumed.

**Summary**

The research conducted on participation and nonparticipation has been conducted from the Adult Basic Education perspective and primarily on participation. Participation research models developed to understand why individuals participate has found a relationship between changes in life circumstances, personal need, social structure, cost and benefit, attitude toward adult education, personal and environmental variables, psychosocial interactions and internal/external stimuli. These variables influence the individuals decision to participate in educational activities. These models build on each other to explain why individuals participate.

Although there are several nonparticipation studies conducted by researchers, nonparticipation has more or less been studied through participation research. Thus, the area of nonparticipation needs to be addressed from a theoretical framework as proposed by this researcher.
Utilizing the COR theoretical model to provide understanding of nonparticipation will add to the existing body of knowledge and provide a theoretical concept from which nonparticipation can be studied.

The Chain of Response (COR) theoretical model has been used to conduct empirical research on participation/nonparticipation in adult educational activities. The overview of empirical research utilizing the COR model consisted of four studies. The findings of these research studies reinforced the value of using the COR model to organize thinking and research about adult participation or nonparticipation in educational activities. However, continued research is needed in order to determine the usefulness of the COR model in explaining participation and nonparticipation in workplace educational programs.

Empirical research relating to basic skills in the workplace has encompassed the areas of job performance, the skills needed for the workplace, and the transferability of these skills to the workplace. Some research findings maintained that there is an indirect link between the literacy skill level of the worker and job performance. Other findings maintained that the level of basic skills does not determine successful job performance, nor does the individual reading ability as measured by a reading test explain successful
performance. In line with the above research findings it is determined that literacy skills or the lack thereof, impact job performance. Workers need the ability to obtain information from several sources to solve problems and assess or complete tasks.

Although there is disagreement as to the need for specific skill requirements in the workplace, there is agreement that jobs are more complex and general literacy is different from workplace literacy. Workers read more than junior high school students and complete or assess tasks that require a higher level of thinking and problem solving than grade school students. In order to transfer the needed basic skills learned in the classroom to the workplace, a job oriented approach to training is needed. Literacy skills training needs to be integrated with actual job training.

These three areas (job performance, skills needed for the workplace and transferability) concentrate on connecting related areas of basic skills research to the need to understand nonparticipation in workplace learning activities. Employees view the need for improved basic skills with improved job performance and the provision of what is learned to be transferable to the workplace. Research literature supports the researchers efforts to provide an understanding of
nonparticipation in educational activities in the workplace.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This chapter reflects the methodology and design of the research used to investigate the reasons for nonparticipation of workers in a Lifelong Learning-Basic Skills Training Program. The program is sponsored by the union and management at a manufacturing plant in the Midwest. The logic and rationale for using the qualitative approach and naturalistic inquiry is discussed, followed by sections addressing the research method; site and sample selection, sample size, and sampling assumptions and limitations; and data collection techniques. The analysis methods used to order, understand, and present findings are also described. Finally, the questions of authenticity and trustworthiness are addressed.

Naturalistic Inquiry and Qualitative Research

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) naturalistic inquiry refers to a paradigm that emphasizes the study of phenomena within the context in which they occur. Qualitative research allows systematic inquiry to occur in natural settings where individuals can express
themselves verbally or nonverbally (Patton, 1990 & Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Patton (1990) refers to the research setting as: a naturally occurring event, program community, relationship, or interaction that has no predetermined course established by and for the researcher (p. 41).

Qualitative research uses human beings as the primary data gathering instrument (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Participants are asked to provide their perspectives on what is happening in their world through interaction with the researcher. The researcher seeks to understand these perspectives from the individuals’ point of view and focuses on their interpretation of what is real and the personal meaning attached to those realities. Understanding is the ultimate goal of the qualitative researcher.

Qualitative research methods provide the researcher with the tools needed to conduct naturalistic inquiry. According to Bogdan and Taylor (1975): Qualitative methodologies refer to research procedures which produce descriptive data: peoples’ own written or spoken words and observable behavior... Qualitative methods allow us to know people personally and to see them as they are developing their own definitions of
the world... (pp. 4-5). This inquiry was descriptive in nature and flexible enough to respond to changes within the context of the research conducted.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) maintain that the practice of qualitative research includes the use of text or language that is not amenable to statistical manipulation, and methods such as interviewing that promote understanding rather than definition. In this research human beings were used as the primary data gathering instrument because of the need to grasp and evaluate the meaning of a variety of realities and interactions (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Tacit (intuitive, felt) and propositional (knowledge expressible in language form) knowledge was utilized (p. 40). Lincoln and Guba (1985) saw as salient the facts that (1) no manipulation on the part of the inquirer is implied, and (2) the researcher is careful to document biases and assumptions in advance within the naturalistic paradigm.

By collecting data through in depth and open ended interviews, direct observation, and/or written documents, the researcher increased the understanding of the phenomenon under research and the potential effect of method to document. This type of research is responsive to modification during data collection.
In addition, Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Glaser and Strauss (1967) maintained that purposive sampling is used in this research paradigm in order to maximize the researcher’s ability to obtain relevance, which is at the heart of grounded theory. Grounded theory (theory emerging from the data) takes into account local conditions, local mutual shapings, and local values. In this way, it is true to actual perceptions of the phenomenon under study. Denzin (1978) and Geertz (1973) maintained that solid descriptive data (thick description) enables those reading the results to understand and draw their own interpretations.

Inductive data analysis is utilized because it is more likely to identify multiple realities and make the research-respondent interaction explicit, recognizable, and accountable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This process describes the setting fully, allows decisions to be made about other settings and identifies mutually shaping influences that interact (p. 40).

The value of a qualitative study on the issue of nonparticipation in basic skills programing at this plant relies heavily with the ability of the researcher to explore the realistic view of the nonparticipant. Basic skill deficiency is a sensitive and protective issue in the workplace and must be researched on a case-by-case basis in order to ascertain data. Participants
were asked to provide their perspectives on what is happening in their world that will lead to an in depth understanding and clarification of the lack of participation.

It is the belief of this researcher that the qualitative method was most useful due to the workers' inability to read well which lowers their chances of completing other types of research inquiry. The research included a sampling of non-participants utilizing a focus group, and in depth interviews with salaried managers, supervisors and bargaining unit nonparticipants until redundancy occurred. Focus group participants consisted of four (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990) individuals. Focus group members were "Ask Me" recruiters utilized during the opening day exercises of the Lifelong Learning Center. These individuals were utilized to recruit participants but did not participate in the program themselves. They have similar backgrounds and experiences within the work area at the plant.

In depth, open-ended interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of seven bargaining unit employees and seven salaried managers and supervisors who did not participate in the basic skills development program. Salaried managers and supervisors were interviewed within the plant facility. Each individual was
questioned about his/her individual nonparticipation. In order to maintain confidentiality, the hourly bargaining unit employees were interviewed outside the plant facility. However, recruitment began within the plant area utilizing individual and focus group referrals. A snowball effect aided in the recruitment of the sample. Individuals being interviewed were asked to refer other nonparticipants. These individuals were questioned about his/her individual nonparticipation in the Lifelong Learning Center's programs.

Site and Choice of Informants

The research questions posed by the researcher determined the site and choice of informants. The site for this study was a manufacturing plant in the Midwest. This site was utilized because it is located within reach of the researcher, it has a specific Lifelong Learning Center (basic skills) in place, and events occurred that enabled the researcher access to nonparticipants in the program and entry into the plant. This researcher met with a representative from management, labor, and the Lifelong Learning Center to discuss the proposed research. These individuals agreed that the research was needed and requested an abstract detailing the proposed research for committee review (see Appendix B). The abstract was submitted and entry into the plant was granted (see Appendix C).
Patton (1990) states that "qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth, relatively small samples, even single cases (n=1), selected purposefully" (p. 169). Purposive sampling was used to identify the interviewee population (p. 49).

The strategy utilized in this research for purposefully selecting information-rich cases was that of snowball or chain-sampling. The snowball or chain sampling was used to locate information rich key informants or critical cases. Patton (1990) maintains that snowball or chain sampling begins by asking well-situated people, "who knows a lot about______? Who should I talk to?" (p. 176). Recruitment of focus group participants was handled through a collaborative effort by the union and management. A snowball or chain sampling of program nonparticipants occurred (Patton, 1990). The snowball or chain sampling was feasible for this research in that it allowed individuals to be identified confidentially. Individuals participating in the focus group were asked for confidential referrals of nonparticipants. Referrals of nonparticipants was also solicited from management, union, and program staff. This researcher started the process by interviewing managers and supervisors. Research continued with the focus group ('Ask Me' members) and ended with management/union referrals which comprised the off-plant
in depth interviews. Referrals of cases to study began with a broad group of knowledgeable people (managers and supervisors) and ended with a snowball referral system. Each individual interviewed referred a smaller group of additional information rich cases to study.

**Number of Informants**

Patton, (1990) reminds us that there aren’t any rules for sample size in qualitative research. The size of the sample depends on what the researcher wants to know, time constraints and how the findings will be used. In this research the researcher sought depth, rather than breadth, thus a smaller sample size was utilized. At the specified site the researcher complied with Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) recommendation of researching to the point of redundancy within the interview/focus group context. Although scheduled for seven, four individuals participated in the focus group on-plant. The remaining three individuals had specific demands on their time that did not enable them to participate. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) states that "when the population of interest is relatively homogeneous and the research question is relatively simple, a single group may be sufficient (p.58). Seven salaried production floor supervisors and managers were interviewed on-plant. Seven bargaining unit workers were interviewed for the off plant interview sessions.
However, the sample size was flexible and emerged as the research continued. The criteria for increasing or decreasing the sample size came from referrals and scheduled interview sessions.

Assumptions and Limitations

The interviewees researched in this study are referred to as on-plant bargaining unit focus group participants, managers, supervisors and off-plant bargaining unit interviewees. The sample was taken from management and bargaining unit employees of the manufacturing plant. Because of this the data reflects trends and experiences relative to a union/management basic skills program at a manufacturing facility in the Midwest.

Collection of Data

The technique used for collecting data was the general interview guide approach (Patton, 1990). An interview guide containing issues was selected and outlined prior to the interview sessions (see Appendix A). This method kept the interview focused as well as allowed individuals to express their experiences and perspectives (Patton, 1990). The choice between the standardized open-ended interview and the general interview guide necessitated much thought. The reason for selecting the guide dealt strongly with the individuals involved in the research. It was thought
that standard questions would not allow the researcher/interviewee time to build rapport so that the interviewee would open up and disclose his/her true in-depth feelings and reasons for not participating in the training program. The researcher is also skilled with this type of interview or interviewee. It was felt that although open-ended interviews might minimize issues of legitimacy and credibility by collecting standardized information, the prospect of getting much information from informants at all was at risk.

The utilization of the general interview guide with the focus group was because of the need to obtain insight from information-rich individuals who expressed an interest in the basic skills component of the center but did not participate (focus groups), along with obtaining referrals of individual nonparticipants.

The guide also allowed the researcher to enter into other individual perspectives so as to find out how they interpreted the world and the meanings they attached to what was going on in their work environment.

Individual participants were allowed to discuss what was important to them within the context of nonparticipation in the basic-skills-training programs. It also afforded the researcher the opportunity to develop theory that is grounded in real world patterns (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
Interviewees were asked to permit the taping of the conversation in order to limit errors of misobservation, and miscommunication. A signed form (see Appendix D) as well as verbal consent (on tape) was secured prior to the interview. The focus group interview and interviews of managers and supervisors were conducted at the work site. Individuals were assured of group privacy and confidentiality. All bargaining unit employee interviews were conducted off-plant at the convenience and desired location of the interviewee (see Appendix E). This assured individual privacy and confidentiality.

All interviews began with a review of the benefits of the study and an overview of the kinds of questions to be asked. The order of questions varied with each interviewee. This afforded the interviewee the opportunity to address issues of concern and importance to them. The interview guide was used as a reference tool to help the researcher ensure that the same general areas were covered in each interview. After the initial interview, new areas were added identifying emerging themes.

Prior to starting the tape recorder the researcher discussed the importance of confidentiality and offered the interviewee (s) the option of turning off the recorder at any time during the discussion. This
researcher then requested permission to tape the interview and recorded verbal permission on the tape.

Presentation, Interpretation, and Analysis of Findings

All interviews (focus group and individual) were taped, dated, time stamped and transcribed (verbatim), the pages numbered in chronological order, and a number assigned to each question to ease retrieval of information. The transcriptions were checked for completeness and quality.

The first level of analysis was descriptive analysis (case analysis). Basic descriptive questions were analyzed in order to answer major questions about research-program participants. The purpose of descriptive data is to display the daily events of the phenomenon under study (Marshall & Rossman, 1989).

The second level of analysis (cross-case analysis) focused on the research questions generated at the beginning of the inquiry process and additional ones that emerged. This allowed the analysis to focus on needed information and prepare the users for the results (Patton, 1990). This afforded the opportunity for the researcher to prioritize questions and view new possibilities that emerged from fieldwork. The researcher grouped answers from different people to common questions or to central issues. Utilizing the
interview guide, patterns of major reasons for nonparticipation were located.

The third phase of data analysis utilized content analysis to generate categories, themes and patterns that could be compared and contrasted. The researcher ensured that the categories had internal convergence and external divergence (Guba, 1981). Marshall and Rossman (1989) stated: "The categories should be internally consistent but distinct from one another" (p. 116). The researcher identified salient, grounded categories of meaning held by the research participants. This was where the categories emerged from the data. As categories and patterns emerged the researcher searched for alternative explanations in order to show that the original explanation was the most plausible.

Data from the study are presented in several ways in Chapter IV. In reporting the findings, this researcher provided a case analysis of each informant utilizing Cross's COR model and barriers to learning. Descriptive characteristics of the interviewees were displayed in table format. Answers to open-ended interview questions addressed each research question. A description, and interpretation of each research question was presented in one place. This research report is focused and materials directly connected to the theme are included.
Specific descriptions and direct quotations were included in order to get the reader involved in the report. As cited by Denzin (1978), "the perspectives and experiences of those individuals who are served by applied programs must be grasped, interpreted, and understood if solid, effective, applied programs are to be put into place" (p. 105). However, description was balanced by interpretation.

Chapter V concludes with the analysis of the major findings of the study, implications, and recommendations for future research.

Trustworthiness of the Study

The authenticity of a study can be evaluated by considering the four aspects of trustworthiness. Guba (1981) asserts that the four aspects of trustworthiness are: truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. They were considered when planning or assessing research undertaken in the naturalistic paradigm. These aspects were addressed using the naturalistic terms credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that, "the member check, whereby data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stake-holding groups from whom the data were
originally collected, is the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (p. 314). Member checks were incorporated into the study through intentional verbal summarizing and specific documentation so that another individual could trace the study.

The researcher conducted two interview sessions because access to unionized bargaining unit employees and industrial managers and supervisors was costly. Informants were reluctant to participate in this research because of the lack of compensation, time, fear of retaliation and/or being labeled as a participant. Access to the plant was secured through the Director of Training and the Union representative, along with an agreement for release time for on-plant interviewees. Salaried interviews and focus group sessions occurred on-plant during regular working hours. In introductory meetings held with representatives of the plant, the issue of release time for participants was discussed. It was requested and granted that these individuals be paid by the plant for the sessions. Also taken into consideration was the fact that scheduling more than two interview sessions would create hardship for the informant due to job and family responsibilities. Bargaining unit/individual informants volunteered their time due to the need for confidentiality and anonymity.
During the interview session I probed for further insight and understanding of themes that emerged from other informants as well as themes emerging from the data. At the end of the first interview session I intentionally summarized the main points in order to clarify any misunderstandings. This served as a credibility check with the interviewee. The second interview session was conducted by telephone. This served as a mechanism to probe further, and to cross check and clarify information provided by the interviewee.

Credibility in analysis was established by the researcher. The researcher looked for additional ways to organize the data, thus leading to other findings. The researcher thought of other logical reasons for nonparticipation to see if those reasons are supported by the data.

Additionally, the study was designed so that an external observer could derive an independent judgment about the credibility of the study. Another researcher, utilizing a similar setting, will be able to trace the development of the study's conclusions and determine if the conclusions were supported by the original data.

**Transferability**

The range of information covered is extensive due to purposive sampling. The purpose of the study is to
provide an understanding and contribute to the literature on nonparticipation in basic skill programs sponsored by the management and union of a manufacturing plant in the Midwest. The researcher does not claim generalizability of the findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) contend that, "it is not the naturalist's task to provide an index of transferability, it is his or her responsibility to provide the data base that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of potential appliers' (p. 316). Applicability of the study results apply to nonparticipants in management/union sponsored training programs with basic skills components.

**Dependability**

The researcher does not expect the study to be replicated with the researcher arriving at the same conclusions or provide data in the same format as the current researcher. The materials to be maintained include raw data, data reduction and analysis products, process notes, materials relating to intentions and dispositions, and instrument development information.

**Confirmability**

Reflections of a personal bias, questions, and concerns relating to the study were confronted by the researcher. The researcher reviewed the audiotapes in order to analyze her own verbal responses provided to
the interviewees. Conversing with peers about the reasonableness of the interpretation was made throughout the study. The researcher’s bias and values formed part of the canvas of the research effort. This researcher took into account how her personality, beliefs, and perceptions influenced the viewpoint of the study. A reflective journal was maintained by the researcher.

Summary

This study utilized qualitative research methods (in depth interviews and a focus group) to provide an understanding of the phenomenon of nonparticipation in a management/union sponsored lifelong learning center program. One bargaining unit/focus group, members of the salaried workforce and bargaining unit/individual workers were interviewed using a general interview guide. Interviews continued until redundancy occurred. Entry into the plant was ascertained through the director of training and the union representative.

After gaining access to the plant and collecting data, the researcher is presenting the data using descriptive characteristics, and direct quotations. Chapter IV will present the text in that form.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION OF DATA

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a presentation of data related to research conducted at a manufacturing plant in the Midwest. In previous chapters the following has been provided: a statement of the problem (Chapter I), a review of related research (Chapter II) and a description of how the study was conducted (Chapter III). This chapter begins by explaining the three informant groups (salaried, bargaining unit, and focus group) and describing the purpose of the Workplace Basic Skills Program offered through the Lifelong Learning Center at the plant. It continues with a general overview of how I gained access to informants and an introduction to individual informants and group characteristics. The remainder of the chapter presents data in sections that emerged through processes of preliminary data analysis. A detailed description of each section is presented with actual accounts of the perceptions provided by the 18 individual and focus
group interviews of salaried, and bargaining unit (hourly) personnel that included a focus group.

The Three Informant Groups

Salaried personnel are management personnel who are not represented by the union and are paid a flat monthly rate (M. Pierce, personal communication, September 11, 1991). The individuals interviewed were supervisors, and office workers, some of whom were previous plant floor supervisors. Bargaining unit personnel members were hourly workers who punch a time clock and are covered by a bargaining agreement, and payed an hourly wage. The individual bargaining unit informants were plant floor workers operating machines. The members of the focus group were bargaining unit personnel who worked as trainers and plant floor workers.

The focus group consisted of four bargaining unit employees who acted as recruiters and guides for the Lifelong Learning Center’s opening day ceremony. Focus group interviews are one type of group research (Goldman, 1962). According to the definition it consists of sections that include group, depth, interview and focus. A group is defined as a number of interacting individuals having a community of interest. Depth is defined as the seeking of information that is more profound than is usually accessible at the level of inter-personal relationships. The term interview
implies the presence of a moderator who uses the group as a device for eliciting information. The term focus simply implies that the interview is limited to a small number of issues.

Although Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) spoke of the fact that smaller groups may be dominated by one or two members, this was not the case with these interviewees. The smaller group allowed for more in depth thought and less repetitive answers patterned after other group members. Four focus group members were interviewed for this research. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) state, "when the population of interest is relatively homogeneous and the research question is relatively simple, a single group may be sufficient" (p.58).

Focus group interviews were held on plant in the Plato room. The room is equipped to handle audio-taping and group sessions. This facility is utilized for training sessions, thus individuals were comfortable with its usage.

By utilizing both salaried and bargaining unit employees with individual as well as group interviews the perceptions provided by the informants builds "depth" and richness into the research while answering the four research questions:

1) Does the operationally defined Chain of Response (COR) model provide adequate information to explain nonparticipation in the industry/business setting?
2) What do bargaining unit employees including 'Ask Me' group members, perceive as the reason for not participating in the activities of the Lifelong Learning Center? How do the educational background, significant events or transitions, and attitude of the respondents relate to their nonparticipation?

3) What do salaried workers perceive as the reason for not participating in the activities of the Lifelong Learning Center? How do the educational background, significant events or transitions, and attitude of the respondents relate to their nonparticipation?

4) What workplace and environmental factors, including the location of the basic skills program, influence the nonparticipation of workers?

The summaries of responses given during the interview process concerning the informants nonparticipation will serve as a basis for the data presentation and analysis that follow. Responses from the interviews are developed along domains utilized in Cross's COR theoretical model, from the four research questions and from those which emerged during the course of the study (Spradley, 1979). These domains or "value themes" will be further developed when analyzing and interpreting the data. The term 'informant', is defined as one who is a legitimate, committed, and accepted member within the local context but who is at the same time willing to act as a member of the inquiry team (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The term 'informant' will be used throughout this presentation.
Purpose of Lifelong Learning Center

The purpose of the Lifelong Learning Center and the way I gained access will be discussed in this section. The plant employs approximately 1653 workers and manufacture selected car body parts (M. Pierce, The Visually Integrated Personnel System). Approximately 365 (22%) hourly workers did not graduate from high school. Eight hundred and thirty nine (51%) hourly employees graduated from high school with 219 (13%) workers either participating in some college or a two year degree program. Two hundred and twenty nine (14%) workers graduated from college and or an apprenticeship program. One (.00061%) worker has a master's degree. In addition, the workforce is 21 percent (355) African-American, 78 percent (1,282) Caucasian-American, and less than 1 percent (8) Hispanic and other (8). There are 1,285 (78%) male workers and 372 (22%) female workers. The average age is 46.

One of the Lifelong Learning Center's objective is to train workers who have inadequate literacy skills. The lack of literacy skills limits their ability to respond to technological changes within the workplace and global competition. In addition, workers moved from traditional production methods to synchronous manufacturing, which requires team work and cross training responsibility. Specific benefits to be gained
from the project include increased productivity leading to greater job retention and job satisfaction which would make employees more flexible and adaptable (M. Pierce, personal communication, May 11, 1991). Workers were also expected to experience an improved self-concept, greater personal satisfaction as well as becoming better parents and more effective members of society.

The Lifelong Learning Center is housed in existing renovated plant space on the second floor of the administrative building. It accommodates both individualized and group instruction. The programs that are available through the Lifelong Learning Center includes Workplace Basic Skills, General Equivalency Degree (GED), Automated Learning Interactive Systems, Personal Computer Training, and College Credit Courses (as reported in the Lifelong Learning Center’s brochure). The Workplace Basic Skills program has as one of it’s objectives the improving of the basic skills level of workers that will enable them to adapt successfully to a changing workplace. Another objective is to provide a supportive learning environment by identifying and referring workers with personal problems that affect job performance (p.2).

The GED program provides instruction on-site to employees who have not graduated from high school.
Employees who attend GED instructions and take the practice exam are permitted to take the GED exam at no cost.

The Automated Learning Interactive Systems program is an instructional activity. It uses a Cyber mainframe computer to provide individualized instruction on a large number of technical and business topics. The personal computer training program offers workers the opportunity to practice their computing skills and use self instructed tutorial programs.

The College Credit Course program provides college level courses on-site whenever demand for the course exists. The courses are provided through a State Community College. An on-site counselor is available from the college.

According to a plant document (as reported in the unpublished Lifelong Learning Center’s report), 62 workers attended the basic education unit, 12 attended the GED unit, 54 attended the college credit unit, 231 attended the self-development unit and 33 attended the computer based training unit in 1991.

Gaining Access

Gaining access to the plant and the Lifelong Learning Center was accomplished through my university advisers, a management representative and the union representative. Initially I was told by my first
contact that access to the plant would not be a problem. After meeting with this individual on several occasions, I felt secure. However, after several months, the contact did not seem receptive to my conducting research through the Lifelong Learning Center. I then contacted one of my university advisers, who immediately secured a meeting with key personnel at the plant. These individuals were highly receptive to my research interest and requested a letter of request outlining the proposed research. The letter of request was submitted through my advisers. After a period of time, I submitted a copy of the first letter to the plant. Subsequently, I received a letter of approval.

After gaining access to the plant, I had to gain access to informants. This task was accomplished with the assistance of three contact persons: the secretary of the Lifelong Learning Center, the union representative and management's representative. I met with the union/management plant representatives to determine a plan of action for data collection. Each detail had to be approved by these two individuals. Subsequently, I found it prudent and less time consuming to utilize the secretary of the Lifelong Learning Center as the initial contact. She assisted me in every aspect after obtaining permission from plant representatives.
Although I had the trust of the three contact persons (the secretary and union/plant representatives), I felt it necessary to interview them. These individuals were interviewed for purposes of exposing them to the guiding questions interviewees would experience. These interviews were utilized as trial interviews and were not included in the study. Thus began the snowball sampling process. Salaried personnel referred by the three contact persons were interviewed on plant in a conference room. These individuals provided the names of additional salaried employees as well as the names of some bargaining unit employees. Bargaining unit/individual personnel were interviewed in their homes on an individual basis. Referrals were obtained after each bargaining unit employee interview. Focus group members consisted of 'Ask Me' group members and were referred by the three contact persons. These individuals were interviewed on plant in the regular training room. In the next section I will present the individual informant utilizing personal information, the COR theoretical Model, and information pertaining to barriers to learning.

**Individual Characteristics Of Informants**

This section consist of information on each individual informant who participated in this research. For each individual I will provide personal data, their
decisions made utilizing the COR model and information pertaining to barriers to learning. I will use the domains in Cross's COR model as outlined in Figure 1 (1-7). The results of each domain are incorporated into the individual background data reported on each informant. The COR theoretical model has seven domains outlined by Cross. Informants were questioned about each of the domains using the following explanations:

1. Self-evaluation—persons who lack confidence in their own abilities (frequently termed failure

![Figure 1: Chain-Of-Response (COR) Model](image)

Figure 1: Chain-Of-Response (COR) Model
threatened or deficiency oriented) avoid putting themselves to the test and are unlikely to volunteer for learning which might present a threat to their sense of self-esteem.

2. Attitudes about education---arise directly from the learner's own past experience and indirectly from the attitudes and experiences of friends and "significant others." If adults hated school as a child, because they did not do well, they are unlikely to return voluntarily to the scene of their former embarrassment.

3. Importance of goals and expectation that participation will meet goals---recognized as the familiar expectancy-valance theory of motivation. Valence is the importance of the goal to the individual and expectancy is the individual's subjective judgement that pursuit of the goal will be successful and will lead to the desired reward. Expectancy is related to self-esteem in that individuals with high self-esteem expect to be successful, whereas those with less self-confidence entertain doubts about their probable success.

4. Life-transitions---periods of change calling for adjustment to new phases of the life cycle. Dramatic changes, such as divorce or loss of a job, may trigger a latent desire for education into action.
5. Opportunities and barriers---If adults have a strong desire to participate at this point in the model it is likely that the force of their motivation will encourage them to seek out special opportunities and to overcome modest barriers. Awareness of special new opportunities for adults may enhance the motivational force for participation.

6. Information---provides information that links motivated learners to appropriate opportunities. Domain number seven is participation.

Cross (1981) also presented headings under which barriers to learning were generalized to what people say are obstacles to their participation. The three headings are: situational, institutional and dispositional barriers. She devised the headings and utilized data from the National Survey conducted for the Commission on Non-traditional Study (Carp, Peterson, and Roelf’s 1974). This table of perceived barriers to learning was utilized in this research to determine if informants encountered some of the same barriers (see Table 1). The first heading is situational barriers. They arise from one’s situation in life at a given time. Lack of time because of job and home responsibilities, lack of money, child care and transportation are all situational barriers. Institutional barriers consist of all those practices and procedures that exclude or
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<td>- Afraid that you’re too old to begin</td>
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discourage working adults from participating in educational activities— inconvenient schedules or locations, full time fees for part-time study, inappropriate courses of study and so forth. Dispositional barriers are those related to attitudes and self-perceptions about oneself as a learner. Many older citizens, for example, feel that they are too old to learn.

The results of both the COR model and barriers to learning (see Table 1) are incorporated into the individual background data presented on each informant. The names of the informants are pseudonyms.

Informants

Ella---Ella is in her mid-thirties and has been employed at the plant for fourteen years as a production worker. Currently she is a member of the 'job bank' program. This program provides positions throughout the corporation for those who would otherwise be laid off. She has completed two years of college and talks of continuing classes in order to obtain a bachelor degree.

Utilizing the COR model I have determined that she has a negative force at point one because she questioned her ability to succeed. She stated:

When I first started my education, I have a lot of problems...reading or spelling and it was a scary feeling going into...it was almost like, can I really do this.
However, she sought and obtained assistance, turning the negative into positive. The lack of self esteem plays a role but it has not deterred her from feeling good about education.

Her overall attitude about education is positive although her friends view education as secondary in their lives. She maintains that her friends are financially stable, therefore they are not as supportive of her obtaining an education. Her goal is to graduate when her son graduates from high school (five years). This is important to her and she believes that she will be successful. The force for participation is positive for Ella at this point because she has goals and she feels she will be successful.

Life transitions (Divorce) have not deterred Ella from continuing her education. She has a strong desire to participate in higher education but due to the lack of information, and other forces within the work environment, (that will be discussed in the group section) elects not to participate in the Lifelong Learning Center.

Specific barriers to learning for Ella are mainly institutional ones that include: courses aren’t scheduled when I can attend, lack of information, attendance requirement and no way to get credit or a degree. ‘Time’ is the only situational barrier to her
participation. Low grades in the past and the fact that she does not enjoy studying are the dispositional barriers to learning. Although Ella admits to having low grades in the past and problems studying, she presents herself as being a highly motivated, self-confident individual who loves being a trainer.

Bobbie---Bobbie is in her early thirties and has been employed at the plant as a production floor worker for fourteen years. She graduated from a technical school with a degree in electronics. After graduating, she admits to being burned out in terms of school.

According to the COR model Bobbie is positive at point one. She has completed a program at the technical school and knows that she can be successful. She provided a reason for not obtaining an education earlier in life.

I had a good paying job. Once you got in General Motors at the time I hired in, you had it...you were set for life. I didn’t feel like I needed extra schooling.

Her husband and daughter are very supportive. She does not have educational goals at the time because she feels burned out after technical school. She also felt that she did not receive the reward expected after graduation (high paying job outside of the plant). She stated:

...Going to school and working...I got sick and I still...graduated well, but I just kind of real hesitant to get back in because of that. I went on interview and the job just didn’t pay like this did.
She did not have any major life transitions. Although the opportunity for schooling is present, she fears returning to school after long periods of time. She maintained that working on the plant floor allows her academic skills to get rusty because she does not have to think. Although information about opportunities are available, she is not motivated to participate.

Bobbie's perceived barriers to learning include, 'inappropriate course of study', 'courses aren't scheduled when I can attend', 'lack of information' and 'no way to get credit or degree' (institutional). Situational barriers include, time, home responsibilities and transportation. Dispositional barriers include low grades in the past, tired of school and don't know what to learn or what it would lead to.

Thomas---Thomas is in his mid-thirties and has worked on the plant floor for 15 years. He has three years of college and hopes to graduate with a bachelor's degree in business.

Thomas had some difficulty with self esteem, but he was able to overcome it. He believed that he was not living up to his academic potential. However he dealt with the issue and returned to formal schooling. The general attitude of people around him is negative. They often ask him, "why do you need it {education}". However his family is supportive. He has educational
goals and recognizes the importance of them. He stated:

It really bothers me that I haven't finished college, that I started it, then I was so close and I just...I haven't completed it. So that's a goal...a degree is good, not so much for the purpose of on the job but just as a personal fulfillment.

He expressed life transitions, but maintains that they did not deter him from continuing his education. He believes that transitions can be both positive and negative. They are positive when they motivate an individual to continue their education and negative when the individual is not motivated to continue their education.

When pursuing college credit courses he utilizes the company's educational plan. Under this plan, the company pays for the courses he takes. However, he has not been motivated to attend the Lifelong Learning Center. He feels that the workers are stigmatized (by salaried workers) when they walk through the door of the 2nd floor where the center is located. He says the workers up there look at bargaining unit workers and make them feel uncomfortable.

Thomas's perceived barriers to learning include, 'inappropriate course of study', 'courses aren't scheduled when I can attend', 'lack of information, and no way to get credit or degree' (institutional barriers). Situational barriers to learning are time
and home responsibilities. Dispositional barriers include 'low grades in the past' and 'don’t know what to learn or what it would lead to'.

James---James is in his early thirties and has worked as a production worker for 14 years. He is a senior in college, majoring in business.

James admits that he was an average student in high school. He relates that after high school he "...didn’t know what I was able to do". However, he has overcome his doubts and thinks that education will be a good way to help his self-confidence. He was motivated by his parents and his children. At one time he believed that education would promote him through the organization. However, he does not believe that now. To counteract this negative point, he has as a goal to obtain a Master’s degree. Thus, positives out weight the negatives in this instance.

James states that his divorce made him change his career path from engineering to marketing; however, he did not drop out of school. He has a strong desire to participate and is aware of a graduate program that co-workers have successfully completed. Although he is motivated to learn, he has problems attending the Lifelong Learning Center. The center does not meet his needs (tutoring in calculus). He stated:

It needs (Lifelong Learning Center) to be more open and more catered around the individual
and find out which direction they want this to go.

James’s perceived barriers to learning include the following: ‘inappropriate course of study’, ‘courses aren’t scheduled when I can attend’, ‘lack of information’ and ‘no way to get credit or degree’ (institutional barriers). Situational barriers included ‘time’. Dispositional barriers included: ‘low grades in the past’ and ‘don’t know what to learn or what it would lead to’.

Toby---Toby is in his early forties and has been employed by the plant for twenty-three years as a production worker. He is a high school graduate who wants to be an artist one day. According to the COR model, Toby does not have low self esteem. He speaks freely of reading and doing things on his own. He stated:

Yes, I love to increase my knowledge. The free time I have I go to the Library, take out books... I try to keep up with current events.

He expresses the lack of need for continued education.

He stated:

The money was good so I didn’t have any option about here, I’ll quit here and go to college and try.

He had positive school experiences although he questioned his teachers about the lack of African-American hero’s in the literature. He is surrounded by
well educated individuals. His fiance is a Ph.D. student.

His long term goal is to attend art school. He believes that he will be successful. Currently he is submitting comic strips to local papers and national magazines.

He experienced a negative transition when he and his wife were divorced; however, it did not trigger a latent desire for education. He does not have a strong desire to participate in the Lifelong Learning Center. He will not seek out information because he is more concerned about home responsibilities (sick parents).

Toby's perceived barriers to learning are 'inappropriate course of study' (institutional), and home responsibilities (situational). He did not cite a dispositional barrier to learning.

Rose---Rose is in her early forties and has been a production worker for twenty-three years. She graduated from high school and attended college for three years.

Rose is positive at point one in the COR model. She believes that she will be successful because she completed a course of study in computers along with three years of college. The need for education became a focal point in her decision making. She stated:

I had my children to take care of. I completed the course of study, found a job, then got hired at (the plant). The pay was more.
Though her friends value education, they would speak negatively of her if they saw her attending the Lifelong Learning Center. Her goal is to open a catering business upon retirement. Thus, educational goals are not important to her. She has experienced periods of change but they did not trigger a desire for education. She does not seek opportunities nor try to overcome modest barriers because she has no desire to participate. When asked would she participate if there were classes on catering, she answered that she might invest in something like that. Thus, information linking her to goals other than direct education would be welcomed.

Rose's perceived barrier to learning is 'no way to get credit or degree' (institutional barrier). She did not express dispositional nor situational barriers to learning.

June--June is in her mid forties and has worked at the plant for 15 years. She graduated from high school and beauty and barber school. She admits that she has thoughts about continuing her education however, the ambition, money and desire are not present.

June's self-esteem is low. She admits a need for education because, "I'm not as bright as I should be." Earlier in life she tried to become a nurse but was told it was not physically possible (too short). She also
stressed that the funds were not available to continue her education at that time. Because she has made 'good' money, the need for education was not an issue. She stated:

"You start making a little extra money and you just don't continue."

Her overall attitude about education is positive. She stated: "it's great" and "I think about going all the time." However, she speaks of her family's previous attitude about education as being, "you get to 12th grade and that's fine, you know if you go on, that's great".

Goals are important to her. She stated: "if you don't have goals, you're going to end up nowhere". However, she's not sure that she would have succeeded after high school. She stated: "the thoughts there, but the drive, you know wasn't behind me".

She has endured transitions throughout her life but they did not trigger a latent desire for education. She realizes that the work she performs is rote and stated: "you work in a plant, unless you use skills, you really forget, spelling, math, most reading, not all." She is not motivated to seek out special opportunities and she does not fully understand how the Lifelong Learning Center's program work. However, she stated:
"I think it's great that they have this for these people to be able to be our age and go in and be able to pick up and try to learn. I'm going to go, I'm going to go."

She lacks the information necessary to participate in the Lifelong Learning Center. She stated: "they say it's there for you to get, but it needs to be a little more available".

The institutional barriers to learning for June are: 'courses aren't scheduled when I can attend' and 'lack of information'. The situational barrier is home responsibilities. The dispositional barriers are low grades in the past and don't know what to learn or what it would lead to.

Chris---Chris is in his mid-forties and has worked at the plant for twenty-six years. He obtained his General Equivalency Degree (GED) two years ago. He emphasized that the motivation to pursue the GED came from the need to impress upon his youngest son the value of education. Chris believes that being "established into a good job" made the need for an education obsolete for him.

Chris is self-confident because he successfully completed the GED. He believes in education and feels that it is needed in today's society. His friends thought it was great when he returned to school to get his GED.
He does not have an educational goal. However, he wants to open up beauty and barber shops upon retirement. Life transitions did not trigger a latent desire for education. When asked if he thought about going back to school he related himself to the professional workforce outside of the plant. He stated: "they make more money here than you can using their education." He does not seek out opportunities for education. He is aware of the Lifelong Learning Center but feels it should be publicized more.

The institutional barrier to learning was, 'no way to get credit or a degree' from attending the Lifelong Learning Center (institutional). The situational barrier to learning was 'home responsibilities'. The dispositional barrier to learning was, 'don't know what to learn or what it will lead to'.

Betty---Betty is in her mid-forties and has worked for twenty six years as an all purpose operator. She is very proud that she operates a computer, and interacts with engineers and the purchasing department. She does not feel intimidated by education.

Betty stated that her educational experiences were positive and that all her friends graduated from high school. Many of them graduated from college and her two ex-husbands were engineers. She also had positive experiences with education in the past and graduated
from high school. However, she does not have an educational goal. She stated:

I want to retire in 3 years. ...then I’m going to do some volunteer work and I probably will take some classes for writing. And I may, I’d like to work at a library part-time. I like to read.

Betty’s divorces did not trigger a latent desire for education. She felt equal to her husbands as far as money was concerned. She wants to assist her daughter through college and retire. When asked if the center offered a writing class would she participate she stated:

Maybe when I get off of third shift ...and go back on days. I might have some time to do it, but right now I need the extra money for financial reasons.

Betty stated that the only institutional barrier to learning was ‘no way to get credit or degree’. The only other barrier to learning was ‘lack of time’ (situational).

Wanda---Wanda is in her mid-forties and has worked at the plant for fourteen years. Wanda has completed two years of college. She feels she has been called to the ministry’ and wants to obtain a Ph.D. degree.

Although Wanda remembers having problems in the fourth grade with subtraction, she believes that if she studies hard she could be on the dean’s list. At one time she did not think education was important, however now she regards it as necessary, especially for her
children. Her family and friends are very positive and she does not doubt her ability to succeed. Her goal is to complete the Ph.D. degree in 'Christian Ministry'.

Being called to the ministry', triggered a latent desire for education. She acquired the necessary information to participate in formal education but not in the Lifelong Learning Center. She needs additional information about how the Lifelong Learning Center can help her achieve her goal.

Institutional barriers to participation include, 'courses aren’t scheduled when I can attend', 'lack of information', and 'attendance requirement'. The situational barrier to participation was 'home responsibilities'. The dispositional barrier was 'don’t know what to learn or what it would lead to'.

Michelle---Michelle is in her mid-thirties and has worked at the plant for 14 years. She graduated from high school and completed one quarter of computer programming.

Michelle has a positive conception about her ability to acquire education. She stated:

I always figured that if and when I knew what I wanted to do that I could always continue my education at a later date.

Her attitude about education has changed throughout the years. Education at one time was something she had to do, now she believes that knowledge is something very
valuable. She plans to attend nursing school at the state college in the fall. Her friends see the importance of education, especially with 'the way' things have changed at the work place.

Her educational goal is to attend school to become a nurse. She feels that she will be successful. She stated:

I always knew I would take care of myself. ...That I would be happy with myself. I've always felt that way, and it was just a matter of not really knowing what route I wanted to go.

Earlier, life transitions deterred Michelle's plans of obtaining a nursing degree, however she is free to pursue her plans at this time. She feels strongly that she would succeed in the Lifelong Learning Center, however she does not see how it would complement her goal of obtaining a nursing degree. Thus, she has not participated in the center.

Although Michelle did not cite any institutional barriers to learning she stated that the situational barriers were 'time' and 'home responsibilities'. The dispositional barrier was 'don't know what to learn or what it would lead to'.

Paul---Paul is in his mid-thirties and has worked at the plant for 13 years as a production floor supervisor. He has a degree in business marketing.
Paul is confident that he would succeed in any educational arena. His past experiences with education were positive. His family and friends are in favor of his acquiring additional education. He expressed a desire to take a finance course to expand his business background and an interview type course to make him look 'polished'. However, his overall goal is to own a business. He expects to be successful in that area and not in obtaining an advanced degree.

He has not had a transition that triggered a desire for education. He is aware of the opportunities that would aid in further education, however he does not value these opportunities and will not pursue them. The lack of information about the Lifelong Learning Center deterred him from participating in the program.

Paul cited the lack of information as an institutional barrier to learning. He did not have any dispositional barriers but cited 'home responsibilities' as a situational barrier to learning in the Lifelong Learning Center.

Rand---Rand is in his mid thirties and has worked at the plant for 14 years. He has a B.S. degree in Business.

He is positive that he will be successful. However it took longer than four years to complete a bachelor's degree, because of lack of maturity. He recently
completed his degree while attending school part-time. He is confident that he will succeed with any educational endeavor. He has not experienced any life transitions. His wife has a positive attitude.

His goal is to obtain a Master of Business Administration degree. He stated: "two weeks ago I just took the GMAT". He believes that he will be successful and will advance within the company as a result. He is aware of a graduate program that his co-workers have completed which is geared toward the working MBA student. He does not believe that the Lifelong Learning Center is for salaried employees at the plant.

He cited the following as institutional barriers to his participation: 'inappropriate course of study', 'courses aren't scheduled when I can attend', 'lack of information' and 'no way to get credit or a degree'. Situational barriers to learning include 'time' and 'home responsibilities'. The dispositional barrier was 'tired of school, classes'.

Matt---Matt is in his late-twenties and has worked at the plant for eight years as a production floor supervisor. He has a B.S. in Business and courses toward his Master's in Business Administration.

He is very sure of himself and has always been successful. He has a strong attitude about education
and the possibilities for advancement. Goals are important to him. He wants to advance to general supervisor in a year. He has decided that if he does not get the promotion, "I will look for alternative employment".

He has not had a life transition that trigger a latent desire for education. However, he has always had the desire to improve himself through education. He is aware of the opportunities that are available and knows that he will succeed. The information distributed about the Lifelong Learning Center led him to believe that it was for the bargaining unit worker.

Matt’s institutional barrier is ‘lack of information’. The situational barrier is ‘time’. He does not have a dispositional barrier.

Julie---Julie is in her early-forties and has worked at the plant for 17 years as a production floor supervisor.

Julie is apprehensive about the learning environment, but is self-confident. She stated:

I’ve been out of the learning sector, education learning sector, a long time, and except for classes that are offered here to get you trained and motivated into working with people, it’s been a long time.

She did well in grade school and made the honor roll throughout high school, therefore, she knows that educational success is possible. She has a positive
attitude about education and recognizes the value of it. Her friends value education as well. However she does not have an educational goal. Her goal is to remain in management and retire from the plant.

Her divorce triggered a need to continue work and raise her son. She does not have a strong desire to participate in an educational program and feels that the information would not motivate her to attend the Lifelong Learning Center.

Julie's institutional barriers to learning are: 'courses aren't scheduled when I can attend', and 'lack of information'. The situational barriers to learning are 'time' and 'home responsibilities'. She did not have any dispositional barriers.

Sue---Sue is in her mid forties and has worked at the plant for 26 years. She has completed two years of college.

She has a positive attitude about her ability to pursue and be successful in the educational arena. She was a good student in high school and friends are supportive. She stated: "if I felt it would advance my career, I would pursue further education". She feels very strongly that she will succeed.

Her goal is to retire, play golf, and dabble in real estate. Educational goals are not important to her because she does not believe that education will advance
her career at the plant. Her life transitions did not motivate her to participate. She would not seek out opportunities or alleviate moderate barriers to education because she does not wish to pursue education. The programs offered in the Lifelong Learning Center are not consistent with Sue's goals.

Sue's perceived barriers to learning include the following: 'courses aren't scheduled when I can attend' and 'lack of information' (institutional barriers). The situational barriers to learning are 'time' and 'home responsibilities'. She did not cite any dispositional barriers to learning.

Joe---Joe is in his early thirties and has worked at the plant for eight years. He has a bachelor's degree in business.

He has had good experiences with the educational process and is sure he will succeed in any program. His attitude about education is positive. His wife and friends are pursuing additional education. His educational goal is to obtain a Masters of Business Administration (MBA). He believes he will succeed and stated, "I want to advance my self here and I think in order to help me do that I think that's important (education)". He has obtained information on the MBA program that has been successful for his co-workers. The flexible hours will allow him to work and attend
school. He does not have any major life transitions. He does not have any information on the Lifelong Learning Center because he thought it was for bargaining unit workers.

Joe cited 'home responsibilities' as the only barrier to learning and attending the Lifelong Learning Center. He did not cite any institutional nor dispositional barriers to learning.

Mary—Mary is in her early forties and has worked at the plant for 17 years as a Senior Clerk. She has two years of college.

At one time she lacked confidence in her ability to complete the educational process, but now feels that if she tries she will be successful. She stated:

I didn't at first. I had my doubts' cause I had been out of school for a while and I thought maybe, I knew any study habits probably wouldn't be up to par, but I thought, well, I knew I could do it if I wanted to.

Her son and friends are supportive. She does not have an educational goal. She will take courses and believes she will succeed. She has had transitions that have not allowed her to participate in the educational process. She stated:

Yes, it put everything on hold, on the back burner for a while. ...situations come up and your life changes and you have to regroup and you want to go back, but the situation just doesn't allow you to at the time. ...just has to be a determining factor just to go back and do it.
She has not sought any opportunities for education because she does not have an educational goal. She would like to have information about the Lifelong Learning Center in order to take courses, however, she has not been able to obtain it.

Mary’s perceived barriers to learning include the following: ‘courses aren’t scheduled when I can attend’, ‘lack of information’, ‘attendance requirements’ and ‘no way to get credit or a degree’ (institutional barriers). The situational barriers to learning are: ‘low grades in the past’ and ‘don’t enjoy studying’. She did not cite dispositional barriers to learning.

Group Characteristics Of Informants

Gender and Ethnic Race

Of the 18 informants who participated in the study, 8 (44%) were African-Americans while 10 (56%) were Caucasian-Americans. Eight (44%) were male while 10 (56%) were female. There were seven bargaining unit informants, two men and five women of whom four were African-Americans and three were Caucasian-Americans. There were seven salaried informants, consisting of two African-American females, one Caucasian-American female and four Caucasian-American males. There were four focus group members, one African-American female, one
Caucasian-American female, one African-American male and one Caucasian-American male (see Table 2).

**Age**

As can be seen from Table 3, informants range in age from 20 to 49 years. Only 1 (6%) informant reported being between the ages of 20 to 29. Eight (44%) reported being between the ages of 30 to 39 and nine (50%) were between 40 and 49 years of age. The age of individuals were reported by informants during the interview session.

**Education**

The educational level of participants varied. All of the informants interviewed graduated from high school. Six (33%) informants did not continue their education beyond the high school level. Table 4 reflects the progressive movement of informants as they reached levels beyond the completion of high school. Six (33%) informants attended some college, one (6%) attended technical school, one (6%) completed technical school, two (12%) completed either the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree and two are pursuing the Master of Business Administration (MBA).

**Length of Employment**

The overall length of employment of informants ranged from 9 to 30 years. Of the 18 informants, 2 (11%) were employed by the plant from 1 to 10 years, 10
(55%) from 11 to 15 years, 1 (6%) 16 to 20 years, 2 (11%) 21 to 25 years and 3 (17%) 26 to 30 years (see Table 5).

The above characteristics of informants shows the generalization of research informants to plant workers who possess high school diploma or GED's and those with higher education. Plant statistics (The Visually Integrated Personnel System) show that there are more Caucasian-Americans (78%) than African-Americans (21%) with a small percentage (less than 1%) of Hispanic and other workers. The average age of the workers are between 40-49 years of age, thus signifying an older workforce. Bargaining unit workers interviewed were graduates of high school with some technical school and college. Salaried workers either were high school graduates, had some college or graduated from technical school or college. The average length of employment was from 11-15 years with a significant percentage in the 26 to 30 year category. Thus, the sample is representative of the high school, GED, some college and college educated worker in the plant. The next section will provide data as to the views of these informants concerning Cross's theoretical model (The Chain of Response Model - COR).
## TABLE 2
Informants By Gender and Race (N=18)

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<th>Salaried</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
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## TABLE 3
Informants By Age (N=18)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Bargaining Unit</th>
<th>Salaried</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
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Table 4
Informants By Educational Level (N=18)

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Table 5
Informants By Length of Employment (N=18)

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Data Pertaining to Research Questions

This section will utilize the research questions posed at the beginning of this dissertation to present data. Data will be organized around the three informant groups and the research questions. Themes that emerge will be presented throughout this section as well as at the end of the section.

Does the COR Model explain Nonparticipation

This section gives an overview of the informant’s views on the educational evaluation process that takes place throughout their lifetime. It relates to question #1 in this research study:

Does the operationally defined Chain of Response Model provide adequate information to explain nonparticipation in the industry and business setting?

Informant information will be presented by group (salaried worker, bargaining unit-individual and bargaining unit-focus/group) for each section of the Chain of Response Model (COR). It will be organized by using the themes outlined in Figure 1.

Each of the themes and their properties are described in depth by the interviewee. The intent is to provide the reader with grounded descriptions of the themes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The names of informants, placed in parentheses after each statement are pseudonyms.
Salaried Workers:

Self-Evaluation

All seven informants stated that they had gone through the process of self-evaluation two times or more throughout their lifetimes. When asked the question if self-evaluation played a role in their lives and the number of times this occurred informants revealed:

Probably once or twice...the decision to go to college and the decision to go back and get my masters... A few times (Matt).

Yes, I have recently reassessed it (Sue).

I’ve considered a masters degree and I’ve even gone as far as taking the required exams and get accepted ... (Joe).

Oh, I’ve thought about it a lot--I spent four years at ..., but I changed my direction so many times I ended up with four years of College and no degree... (I) eventually went to ... part time ...and I finished (Rand).

I thought about it, yes--more than three times. (Mary)

Responses from the above informants suggest that self-evaluation does occur in each individual and sometimes lead to participation and or an awareness of the need to participate. However, other responses shows that although an individual is self-confident (evaluate themselves) not all self-evaluations will lead to participation. Examples of nonparticipation include:

Yes, I have from a personal point of view--I just never made it a priority to get back into the things I really wanted to do for myself (Julie).
I’ve continually evaluated it, but I always come up with the same answer—I’m not going to spend my time and efforts on something that will not lead me to being my own boss (Paul).

Thus, it appears that self-evaluation is productive in the decision making process, but does not necessarily lend itself to participation in every instance. Those individuals with high self-confidence may also choose not to participate.

Attitudes about Education

The general attitudes of salaried workers about education were very positive. All seven of the informants had good experiences in grade school and are surrounded by friends who value education. Four of the informants stressed the following views:

- It’s something [Education] that we need more of, for everybody (Paul).
- I think it’s very important (Joe).
- I like a sharp mind, sharp-minded friends, okay. There is a definite value to education and I firmly believe that (Sue).
- ...The decision whether to go to college, I guess, which was...pretty much ingrained in my life (Matt).

Two informants stressed that their friends also had positive views about education. They stated:

- Well, most of them have either gone to a college or university, taken courses or mostly just have had some kind of contact with it (Mary).
- I guess they would be in favor of it. It wouldn’t be something like they’d go...‘oh, he’s taking a class.’ ...I’m pretty
influential on the floor, if I did that, really thought that I was getting something out of it, I could probably sway others into doing something like that (Paul).

Importance of Goals

At this point in the lives of the seven informants the motivation to continue the educational process changes for some in that their goals do not include formal education. The following statements were made by three informants regarding other aspirations that do not include formal education. They stated:

Well, at the moment, just learning different courses, but not at the moment to pursue any degree. I'm just not there yet (Mary).

I've kind of been under the theory—I want to get into business for myself, which I probably will do, and I guess I'm looking at the length of time that I could spend going back to school and working a full time job in order to get my masters. I guess I relate that to how much money will that mean for me, or how much, what that will make me versus spending the time outside getting a business of my own, and I guess my decision has been I think I could further myself spending the time and efforts in another direction versus going back to get a masters degree. I feel a masters degree is really not going to help me to any great degree here at (the plant). ...If we were out on the street looking for a job, then I guess a Masters degree would be a way of getting a job, then I guess a Masters degree would be a way of getting a little favor if we're all out there interviewing at the same companies for another job. I've taken more the independent ...something on my own (Paul).

My interest right now are in real estate and if I went on I would venture out in that field and that, you know, is not really associated with my work. I have recently reassessed it as to why I don't go on and complete what's necessary for my degree. At this point in
time I don’t feel that it will enhance my career in any way with (the plant). The only enhancement I would get would be personal enhancement and my interest right now (Sue).

When questioned further the informant stated:

I felt that it would not be beneficial to my job, that I, that it would not lead to advancement in case. I may have misperceived that, although that was my perception...would not broaden my career gap, so therefore, I did not pursue it (Sue).

In contrast, four informants desire to continue their education or utilize what they have obtained. These individuals have evaluated their lives from an educational perspective and have as a goal the pursuit of additional education and upward mobility as a result of education. Responses included:

I’ve considered a Master’s degree and I’ve even gone as far as taking the required exams and got accepted at ... ...but due to work schedule conflicts, I’ve been unable to do that. So I still have that out there as a plan as far as just doing it sometime. Right now I’m trying to get my wife through school (Joe).

I’m going to return to school to get a MBA (Rand).

I’m not working necessarily toward a degree, but I need to take a computer course, and it’s just a matter of timing (Julie).

I’ll have my MBA...in about four weeks...My goal is to be a general supervisor within a year (Matt).

Life Transitions

Informants cited specific transitions in life that placed a desire for education on hold. They indicated
that these transitions deterred them from accomplishing their goal of returning to school. Examples are:

...{Divorce}, It put everything on hold, on the back burner for a while. Situations come up and your life changes and you have to regroup and you want to go back, but the situation just doesn’t allow you to at that time, so I had to put it off and then you don’t pursue it and you lose it for a minute and you think about it and something always comes up, just has to be a determining factor just to go back and do it (Mary).

I always attribute it to a lack of maturity ...I didn’t know what I wanted to do (Rand).

In contrast, five informants had no life transitions that would cause them to not participate in education. Representative replies were:

No life transition kinds of things, Oh God forbid, death, or having to take care of a parent (Sue).

None, no family problems. No, there’s really nothing else that I can blame to keep me from going (Joe).

Nothing big I guess that’s made me, influenced, no major happenings (Paul).

Opportunities and Barriers

Informants noted that special opportunities for adult learning are provided by {the plant} through their on-the-job training, tuition reimbursement program and the Lifelong Learning Center. However, barriers exist that are mainly self-imposed. One informant does not wish to go beyond that which is required for the job because of fear of the unknown. She stated:
Because it would be a struggle, I’ve been out of the learning sector, educational learning sector, a long time, and except for the classes that are offered there to get you trained and motivated into working with people, it’s been a long time (Julie).

When asked about her ability to complete four years of college this same informant goes on to explain:

Not my ability per se, because I think anything I set my mind to I could do it. However, I would obtain a lot of difficulty, I think, you know. I mean, coming back, it would take me longer to get back into the swing of things than the other person, because I’ve not made it a priority (Julie).

Another informant used an analogy to describe his decision not to utilize the opportunities provided by the plant. He presents a self-imposed barrier that includes his separating from the workplace.

I’ve continually evaluated it, but I always come up with that same answer, I guess...Joe’s plan is probably to get 30 years in at General Motors and retire and all that. I mean, we’ll both have degrees, both looking at matters of furthering. Joe’s planning on staying here 30 years, he thinks if he gets that masters it’s going to put him in a position to raise to the next level or get into another job here. I look at it as I don’t really want to do that. I’m not going to spend my time and efforts on something else and then in looking at a purely monetary reward, which is a part of it, I think I’d be a lot further ahead than Joe when he gets to that next step. I think I’d be more satisfied being my own boss (Paul).

Other informants explained self imposed barriers that allowed for nonparticipation:

I attended ... State for a minute and that was my fault that I quit, I just didn’t apply myself enough and I just quit (Mary).
I guess the responsibilities of being single... I don't need to work all the time, I need to put some, some fun in my life, and I've always told myself I really didn't have time for that. I've re-evaluated that, and that's becoming more of a priority now than learning (Sue).

When asked why she did not continue her education earlier in life the informant stated:

I didn't feel that it would be beneficial to my career here and I knew I was going to retire from here and so therefore I didn't pursue it. ...I've done somethings to enrich my life ...in other fields and avenues (Sue).

When questioned further the informant stated that grades were not a problem and as she worked, finances were not a problem, however she stated:

...In working out here I was making more than my friends that had graduated from college. So that sort of took the bite, I didn't have the need. I just did not have the need (Sue).

Information

Informants seemed aware of programs offered at institutions outside the plant. Several talked about evening programs where work experience is utilized. However, information about on-plant classes are limited to being selected or volunteering for seminars through the on-the-job program, and knowing that the Lifelong Learning Center exits. None of the informants know the total extent of the services offered by the Lifelong Learning Center. They stated:

Yes, I have asked to take courses, but no one has ever gotten back with me to inform me as to how, where to go and what to do. They were
always going to get back with me. Right now I’m on a job where I am learning a course, well a computer course. We’re informed about what’s available but not totally informed as to the courses...it’s just the information is there but to me it’s not pushed forward enough for people to get the information (Mary).

An informant whose relative was directly involved in the Lifelong Learning Center, and acknowledged that he should have known everything. He stated:

I have an idea, and being that I’m______ I should really know everything that’s going on up there. I don’t know a lot about the center (Paul).

All of the salaried personnel viewed the process of self-evaluation, their attitude about education, life transitions, opportunity and barriers and information as positive forces in their lives. They utilized the COR process to ascertain and reevaluate their vision for the future. However, the future did not necessarily involve educational activities for each informant.

Bargaining Unit/Individual

Bargaining unit/individual employees provided information about the six themes that offer some understanding as to how each is utilized in the process to determine nonparticipation. The following includes their view of each theme.

Self-Evaluation

When asked about self-evaluation, informants in this unit assessed their past participation efforts. Two informants explained:
Yes, I wish I had done a lot of things different, like going to college had the opportunity been there, but I did take a computer course (Wanda).

I could be a bit more educated than what I am, I could go to school, and I should, because I'm not as bright as I should be (June).

In contrast, she goes on to explain that she has evaluated herself many times but has not been able to participate beyond high school. She stated:

You think about it, you know, most places, even to get into college, you test, you take pre-testing. They determine where you go, and it's, I just, you know, my mind just freezes, I just, I have a real hard time testing (June).

When questioned further about bad experiences the informant stated:

You know I'm afraid I can't do it, I don't remember. My memory span is like, I can read something today and depending on what it is as to whether or not I'd really kind of remember (June).

When asked if she had bad experiences or fears that would stop her from entering a classroom the informant stated:

No, I've never failed (June).

Other informants referred to past evaluations and the effect it has had on their decision not to participate.

I have evaluated myself. It's been probably six or seven times because I think it's such a positive thing (Betty).

Yeah, definitely. My decision to go to school for nursing, this is something that I have
been thinking about and contemplating about now probably a good three or four years, and even since then within the past ten years, I would say I have had this on my mind, it's just been a matter of timing. ...Being a single parent. ...I just did not choose to take any extra committed time away from what I already had, and because I've chose to try to maintain as much a normal family atmosphere for my son as possible (Michelle).

Another informant was motivated to evaluate himself when trying to encourage his son to return to school. Through his son's motivation he acquired a GED.

My youngest son dropped out of school in his junior year, and I had been on him about completing it. We made an agreement that if I returned to school, he would. I got my GED but he never finished school (Chris).

In greater contrast, the next informants self evaluation led to concerns about fellow workers and their opinions of her attending classes. She stated:

They might say, there she goes up there trying to learn something that she know thats not going to benefit her in some kind of a way (Rose).

One informant went on to view self-evaluation as a continual process but added:

I have to see what I'm going to do when I get out of work, when I retire, as to whether I'll be financially able to go back to school (Wanda).

Attitude about Education

When viewing individual attitudes about education, respondents generally agreed that education is needed, however different views emerged from the interviews. One informant stated:
It's something that you have to have today to survive (Chris).

When asked how he survived 24 years without it, the informant replied:

When I started out to make a living, you didn't have to have that, and I already had myself established in a good job, but today, you can't do that without an education. Today you can't go out and get a job anywhere unless you have education (Chris).

When questioned further about having a college degree versus a GED he stated:

I've thought about that, and I've worked alongside people with college degrees for over 20 years, and they do the same work that I do, and I've asked them why they're in there doing physical labor when they have all this education, they said they make more money here than using their education (Chris).

Another informant's attitude about education was molded by his community. This informant shared insight into his childhood education which now reflects his adult educational pursuits. He cited the lack of role models and the impact it had on his life. He stated:

I didn’t understand what they were trying to do because you went all those years through school—all the teachers were White, it was an all-Black neighborhood, and the only outlook you had about life was from on the corner store...civil rights made you aware of education (Toby).

He continued:

On my own I’m continuing my education, you know going to the library, reading and doing things on my own (Toby).
He continuously stressed work ethics derived from his father wherein you worked for one company and retired. The informants attitude about education was then molded by his father.

Having a father that worked 30 years and retired I had that mentality. If something had happened I would try to better myself. I was under the impression that you work 30 years and retire. Put it all one place (Toby).

Another informant stated:

Black people should and definitely do need an education, sometimes I get discouraged (Betty).

She goes on to say:

At a young age, when I decided to go on and get me a job right out of school, maybe at that point I wasn't looking at education as being so important in my life as opposed to getting married and having a husband and children, and then as life progressed and everything, I've seen that that's what you really did need in your life, you know, you do need your education, and I made sure that I instilled that in my children (Betty).

Another informant speaks to her envy of others who have an education. She stated:

I'm envious of a lot of people, you know, that I work with in the factory because they, you know, are a little bit more articulate than I am. A little more educated (June).

The same informant continues on to suggest a link to encouragement and attitude about education.

...And if they only have 12 years, you've got to have some push behind you, which I never had at home. You know you've got to have a lot of, you've got to have a little bit of encouragement. Not saying that my parents,
you know, didn’t encourage you, but they’re from a poor family and people who, as far as education, you go to school and you get to 12th grade and that’s fine, you know, if you go on, that’s great (June).

In contrast, another informant viewed the acquisition of education from a need-to-know basis.

It was something you had to do. I guess at that age I probably, and probably to a certain, well, no, I’ve changed since then, but at that age I was probably on as a need to know basis. I mean, it was like, why take all that stuff if you don’t need to (Michelle).

When asked had her attitude changed the informant stated:

Yes, I think that as I’ve gotten older, and I see things, I think that knowledge is something that is very valuable that there is a wide variety of knowledge, be it through your own personal education by using the public library, life experiences, but also as far as myself, and the situation that we’re in right now with the plant. But for the younger generation I see the importance, that it is more and more difficult to earn a living without a good education (Michelle).

Two other informants were questioned about positive versus negative forces and they stated:

All my friends that I have graduated from high school, some graduated from college. My ex-husbands are engineers. One’s a mechanical engineer and the other one’s an engineer for television (Betty).

They might say, ‘there she goes up there trying to learn something that she know thats not going to benefit her in some kind of a way (Rose).
Importance of Goals and Expectations

When questioned about their educational goals informants spoke of other goals unrelated to education. A representative sample of replies were:

I’m going to retire and go into catering full time (Rose).

I’m going to do some volunteer work and I probably will take some classes for writing. And I may, I’d like to work at a library part-time. I like to read (Betty).

To retire and open a painting business, I already have some of the equipment (Toby).

Hopefully I’m going to retire next year. I plan on probably opening two or three more beauty salons (Chris).

In contrast, another informant talks about her goal of going to nursing school:

The thing that I am very interested in especially with the nursing is that it’s a stepping stone into the possibilities of furthering, you know, either to a two year program, and then probably, and possibly going into a four year curriculum, or even branching out to other opportunities (Michelle).

She goes on to talk about the importance of her goals in relationship with her job.

...It’s mostly physical labor, there’s not a lot of mental stimulation and at one point in my life I was really becoming stagnant, very stagnant. At work I did this repetitious job all day, I came home, that was it and I was just like, all of a sudden I felt like it’s just this big blob (Michelle).

When asked if there were any goals in relationship to her job, another informant stated:
I never really had any. I would like to be able to, you know, might be in an office or a manager for the office (June).

When questioned about the importance of educational goals further along in the conversation she stated:

Well, it's important. If you don't have goals, you're going to end up nowhere. I'm not a leader, I'm a follower and I know that, you know, it's not a matter of you know I want to be the boss, or anything like that (June).

Another informant is pursuing a high level degree and speaks to her discouragement. However, she gets motivated when she sees others who have achieved their goals.

It's very important. It seems like I get discouraged cause it seems like it's taken me a long time (Wanda).

Life Transitions

Informants cited specific periods of change in their lives. Each individual recounted the adjustment that was made as a direct result of the transition. One informant stated:

I was helping her [first wife] go through college. I worked at General Motors and painted at night. Then her religion changed. She asked me to adopt to her religion. I couldn't so she wanted to lead her life with a witness. I stopped painting and just worked at the plant (Toby).

The next informant shared her transition:

That's why I never finished, you know getting a higher education, because, you know, the babies came along, divorce...(June).
Other informants shared their reasons for the lack of motivation following their divorcees.

Well, at the time, I guess I probably was making more money than they were making or as much as they were making (Betty).

I was divorced when my son was two. I’ve never remarried, and being a single parent with no help at all from the father, financial, moral or whatever. My first priorities have been my home and my family. I have chosen not to take away any extra committed time that school would involve for that reason (Michelle).

Another informant continued by sharing her response to a transition within her life:

When the Lord called me to the ministry--I started going to school (Wanda).

Opportunities and Barriers

Informants recognized the opportunities available to them within the plant as well as in the community. Along with work and lack of time, informants cited other barriers such as primary caretaker of parents and small children to raise. An informant spoke freely of the opportunities and barriers that affected her schooling. She surmised that it has taken a long time to get through school. She stated:

It was just that I couldn’t quit working and go to school full time (Wanda).

She continued to relate a life transition (being called to the ministry) as the catalyst for her continued pursuit of education. Although she admits that the opportunity to find other institutions of
learning is limited by her job, she is attending school on a part-time basis. She stated:

I’ve only been able to go part time. ...I just, you know, I haven’t had the opportunity to go out because I’ve been working. ...And look at other institutions. ...You have to go in the day time, and I’m working day shift (Wanda).

In contrast, the next informant stated that having children presented a barrier for her, however she does not have an excuse at this time. She refers back to her fears of the classroom and stated:

I’m very rusty, when you work in a plant, unless you use skills, you really forget, spelling, math, most reading, not all (June).

In greater contrast, an informant cited time as a barrier although she acknowledged the fact that the opportunity is available. The informant citing time as a barrier would probably participate, if programs were offered at work. She stated:

I just haven’t had the time....They offered it at work. So I took it, and if they had the opportunity to offer it again, I’ll take it (Betty).

She goes on to acknowledge the opportunity she has had to obtain an education. She stated:

Well, they do offer some courses now and I was thinking about taking some, but I’ve got to find some time, I guess I’m too busy (Betty).

The second informant citing time as a barrier related his experience.

At the time it was a limited education for us. ...I worked at the plant for two years then
Vietnam was going on, boom I got drafted. They weren't interested in education. I got out and got a job at the plant. I didn't have no idea I'd be there that long. The money was good so I didn't have any option about here, I'll quit here and go to college and try. At the time for Blacks it was hard to get a good job. There were 3000 people at the plant but only 250 was Black (Toby).

When questioned further about the possibility of leaving the plant and getting a better job the informant stated:

Not necessarily a better job. If something had happened I would have tried naturally to better myself (Toby).

The informant continues to relate his present situation as a barrier to his obtaining further education. He stated:

During the week my mother goes up there to this dialysis clinic. I've been going up there getting her three days per week taking stuff over there--they're older (Toby).

The next informant related to the first part of the above barriers in that he did not think of education in his earlier years, however he stated:

...Today you can't go out and get a job anywhere unless you have an education (Chris).

However, when asked if he desires a degree beyond the GED he stated:

I really hadn't thought about it, because I'm hopefully, I'm going to retire next year (Chris).

When questioned about plant opportunities and barriers the next informant stated:
It’s thought to be prestigious in a way but then after you got finished with these courses you’re off limits. Management doesn’t do anything to try to promote you into doing something better. Oh, no you stay right where you are (Rose).

When asked about the reaction of other workers in the plant to this specific training she stated:

Then they say, well they just knew it, that they wouldn’t go anywhere (Rose).

After I reintegrated that the education program does not promote that the individual will get promoted as a result of the classes, the informant stated:

I know but ...these ones thats been doing this has in their mind that they would get promoted into doing certain little things. You know, around the plant (Rose).

When asked if she ever intends to participate in other educational programs, she stated:

I might take a computer course (Rose).

In complete contrast, this informant recognizes the barriers and opportunities. She is at the period in her life where she can participate. She stated:

Now that my son is 17, I am starting back to school this fall. So it has come to the point in my time of life that I know that I’m ready for it, and I am starting at Columbus State in the fall quarter (Michelle).

Information

In the information area, the informant who is starting to attend State college relates her earlier need for information. After graduating from high school the informant stated:
I did not know what I would want to go to college for. ...Why should I take the opportunity away from someone else who really wanted to go to school, knew where they were heading, and what they were going for (Michelle).

As the years passed and she identified educational goals, she related her search for information:

...I’ve chosen (Nursing) because it’s such a variety and flexibility... I have done a little research into it myself, calling different hospitals, speaking with the nursing staff, to get a feel for it as far as age discrimination and what not, it seems to be a real good, it’s a good field (Michelle).

The same informant related her long term goal when she stated.

The thing that I am very interested in especially with the nursing is that it’s a stepping stone into the possibilities of furthering, you know, either the 2 year program and then probably, and possibly going into a four year curriculum, or even branching out to other opportunities (Michelle).

In contrast, one informant does not have information available to her. She stated:

I’m really not sure how that program works upstairs, to tell the truth. I still don’t quite understand it. They asked me what I’m interested in... she marked out some things, and I don’t know if it makes sense to me or not (June).

Another informant goes on to say that, when she asked about the classes offered by the center, it was assumed that everybody was illiterate as opposed to being functionally illiterate or needing extra help or college level courses:
Mostly I was hearing about the GED (Wanda).

She goes on to say:

What bothers me is that you don’t get a credit for it (Wanda).

**Bargaining Unit/Focus Group**

**Self-Evaluation**

The focus group informants were asked if they participated in self-evaluation at any point in their lives in order to ascertain the level of self confidence. As they answered the question, they were positive that the self-evaluation process was continual and barriers stopped them from taking action on the results of the evaluation. They were all positive about their abilities to succeed even though they may have had problems. The statements made were:

Yeah, I have... I think the basic... my reason was more of family obligation...having time not so much the opportunity (Ella).

I think obligations, financial obligations, family obligations... Other outside interests... you just somehow or another just put before...before the thought of education (Thomas).

When I left high school I never really proved myself so I really didn’t know what I was able to do (James).

I had a good paying job. Once you got in the plant at the time I hired in you had it... you were set for life. That was the theory, once you got in the plant...you have a very high paying job (Bobbie).
Attitude about Education

One informant spoke of the cycle of evaluations that occurred in his life and how it affected his attitude towards education. At the high school level his attitude was:

Okay, I’ll just get through (James).

And then later his attitude changed:

I need more (James).

The same informant spoke of broken promises to his parents as being a motivating factor in changing his attitude. The most profound change in his attitude came as a result of his realization that:

I wanted more out of life than just being in the plant and working a factory store. I thought for sure education was a good means to help my self-confidence. Promote myself through the organization and maybe have some opportunity as I have had it before (James).

Another informant stated:

My attitude is, I probably should be back in school again to get more education. This place is not secure at all (uh) just can’t count on it and I probably should be getting all the education I can get however, the present time is not convenient with me. ...My daughter is 16 and I want to make sure she gets her education. It’ll be a long time...I’m going through high school with her right now trying to help her get through (Bobbie).

In contrast, another informant’s attitude about education is positive but he does not feel he will use it while he works at the plant.
I’m two classes away from getting a bachelor’s degree and for me to back up and start over...I’d be taking a substantial pay cut. So my attitude is that they will have to close this place before I’m gonna go out and use my degree. I may have a degree but I’m not gonna use it... (Thomas).

Most of the informants felt that their friends would laugh at their attempt to participate in an educational degree program.

They laughed...a lot of my friends are just high school graduates, and they have very well paying jobs. The standard joke has always been, ‘Oh you work at the plant, you get eight months employment, you get four months off, you don’t need any education.’ When I told them I as going back to school and they said ‘What do you need school for’ I make good money now, I never got a degree. So, it more of a...it’s not a putting down somehow, it’s like a...well, I got where I am now without going back to college and one of my friends, he says, ‘it seems like you spend your whole life in school, what has it accomplished you (James)?

It’s secondary... the ones [friends] that I presently work with...why put myself though that, go to school and be (you know) concerned with that when I am already making money and there is a lot of college grads that (you know) not making as much money as I’m making. A lot of them just take education as secondary (uh) because all of them are stable (you know) stable already (Ella).

I think the general attitude of most of the people that I do associate with is that...why do you need it? ...Like I said it, you have a comfort zone...where at the age of most of us are, we’ve been at this job for quite a few years, we got comfortable. We got a level of income so it’s always been an attitude, ‘why?’ Well, as I just said, it’s a matter...this isn’t going to be here very long and to move on...to continue on with that level of income, you’re going to need it [education] (Thomas).
Importance of Goals and Expectation

One informant started out by saying that she had never evaluated herself in order to assess her goals. Later she recanted that statement as follows:

I told a lie. I still have a goal because I told my son that I will be graduating when he does...that's a goal (Ella).

Another informant stated that he continuously reviews his goals. He stated:

Goals, I think about it all the time. It really bothers me that I haven't finished college. That I started it, then I got so close and I just... I haven't completed it so that's a goal. ...A degree is a goal... ...Not so much for the purpose of on the job but just for personal fulfillment. Just something that I would like to do. To be able to tell myself that you started this so many years ago, and that now you have completed it. ...More personal fulfillment at this point (James).

In contrast, another informant related the reason for her not having a current goal with her experience trying to get an associate degree:

And even if you go to school part-time you still got to schedule the classes...study...do homework and its tough to work in a factory situation especially in piecework. It is such a demand on you physically and then you turn around and go to school and even if you were taking a couple of classes it's awful demanding on your body and mind to do that, so I guess I kind of cut it off. I got sick and I still...I graduated, ...I'm just kind of
real hesitant to get back in because of that (Bobbie).

Another informant cited:

I guess I’m close to getting the first goal... Then when I got close to the goal (bachelor degree) I got to thinking a college degree was a nice ticket to a nice job till reality sat in and I found out, well, if you really want a job comfortable to my level (pay) now...I need a masters... so its more or less... take a year off, go back, and get...pursue a master’s degree (James).

**Life Transitions**

When informants talked about periods of change in their lives that called for adjustment they made the following comments:

Well, every transition you have in life, whether it’s divorce or you have children or you get married or you lose a job...just that experience alone gives you another insight as to what you gonna need later on in life... (Bobbie).

At each juncture in your life I think you take a different perception of how life is and as compared to how it was before that juncture. That in itself is going to lead you to somewhere along the way to consider education (Ella).

Another informant cited the times he linked life transitions to education.

...Let me say it did for me... a difference in changing jobs...15 years ago, that I remember thinking about education then. I can remember thinking further about education when I got married and had kids. I can remember thinking further about education when the bigger boycott and (you know) those things made significant transitions in my life because I got laid off, I got married, I had kids...those all lend some credence to get more education. I think it added something to
the thought of education—all those transitions (Thomas).

In contrast, another informant believes it has to do with the positive or negative experience of getting a divorce. He stated:

I agree with the re-evaluation, but I think it has a lot to do with the positive or negative experience in your life because I know when I went through the divorce I’d started as... engineer and I got to a place where there was no way going through at least a year and a half, two years of court hearings and just...stuff, I knew there was no way that I was gonna be able to accomplish the engineering side. ... So then I took a re-evaluation...okay engineering is too hard at this time in my life. ...I went from becoming an engineer to a marketing major...because I just had too much stress, yes, it does help to re-evaluate, but if its a positive experience then I think it would have a different effect (James).

He goes on to explain that a supportive wife, willing to help and encourage him was very motivating. But then he lost the support system (divorce), thus he believes that negative transitions do not motivate participation unless they threaten his living space.

...shut down, lay off...things that affect income security are gonna have more input into whether you go into education or not. If they don’t affect that income security, I think you will be more least likely to consider the education side of it (James).

**Opportunities and Barriers**

When asked about the opportunities and barriers for learning in the Lifelong Learning Center one informant stated:
I’ve asked the instructors if they know anything about calculus...and they say, well no. I don’t like to interact with computers, I want some personal interaction ...tutoring (James).

He went on to state:

If the Lifelong Learning Center was here five/six years ago before I started this process... I would have gone up there to refresh my basic skills to give me a little bit of confidence before I got into the college/ university setting...but now they’re not able to assist me... because they’re basically basic education, the GED program... any kind of advanced work its always interaction with the computer (James).

Another barrier that may impact on participation is psychological. When asked about doubting their ability to learn in other programs, informants stated:

I was afraid because (uh) being out in a factory floor I didn’t have to think, so some of my skills got rusty. It wasn’t that they weren’t there..it’s just that I forgot how to use them... I didn’t have to think...when I came to work. Then when I went to {technical school}. I was afraid maybe some of the papers I would turn in would be substandard just because I wasn’t using those skills up to their full potential. So, yeah, I was pretty nervous when I went back to college (Bobbie).

It was frustrating to me because here’s the 18 year old kid and I’m 29...he sits and spends four hours a week. I spend 4 hours a night and I get a C and he gets an A. So that was intimidating (James).

In contrast, when speaking of the Lifelong Learning Center one informant stated:

I think you can learn there. I think there’s a lot of programs that are in the Lifelong Learning Center that you can learn. I mean,
basic learning or even some advanced learning there (Ella).

Information

When informants were asked if the information about the Lifelong Learning Center met the needs of the workers, one informant spoke about the accessibility of the center's programs for those working other shifts.

On third shift, where are the instructors... I need help now. So you got needs of people at different time... (Thomas).

Informants were then asked about the advertising of the Center's programs. They stated:

There's so much pamphlets... There's so much paper. ...I got on of those...I threw it down (Thomas).

The bulletin board is one of those things that you go by and you look and if it doesn't directly affect you right then, you don't read it...(James).

In contrast, one informant advocate oral communication to get the information to workers. She stated:

...Anytime you invite somebody personally, I mean you gonna have a lot better chance in getting them to come than if you put a general announcement of {the} grand opening of the {the} Lifelong Learning Center (Ella).

Summary

The Chain of Response (COR) model can be utilized as a guide in the explanation of nonparticipation in the business setting. The COR model hypothesizes that participation in learning activities is not a single act
but the result of a chain of responses, likewise nonparticipation does not involve a single act but rather a number of responses based on the assessment of the individual’s environment. Thus, the connection between nonparticipation and the COR model exists. However, the model does not provide a total explanation of why manufacturing workers do not participate in co-sponsored educational activities. Figure 1 outlines a continuum that allows for nonparticipation to begin with the individual and move to external forces. This continuum does not include all aspects of the workers environment. The culture of the workplace play an important role in nonparticipation.

The themes outlined in this chapter were tested on nonparticipants in an employer sponsored Lifelong Learning Program. Nonparticipants from each segment of the workforce were asked to discuss their lack of participation based on the COR model themes.

All workers participated in the self-evaluation process before determining not to participate. This process aided in determining the level of worker self esteem. They were all confident in their ability to succeed in the educational arena. They assessed the plant environment and its affect on their participation. Workers also took into consideration the culture of the plant. If the culture is to work, get paid and go home
then getting individuals to attend the Lifelong Learning Center will be almost impossible.

Salaried workers not only thought about continuing their formal education, they reevaluated themselves on a continual basis. Self evaluation led some of these individuals to think positively about continuing their formal education. In contrast, some did not make it a priority or had selected other interests as opposed to continued education. However, low self concept did not play a major role in their nonparticipation. Most of them had other plans and lack of need.

Bargaining unit/individual informants shared their experiences in terms of regrets for not continuing their education, to returning to the self-evaluation stage upon retirement. Through self-evaluation two individuals decided to continue their education. They were confident that they would succeed. The bargaining unit/focus group specifically outlined plant cultural barriers that affected their decision not to participate in educational activities. Low self concept was present, but was not intensely portrayed as a deterrent to participation. However, they acknowledge the continual process of self evaluation.

In general all informants held positive attitudes about education. Salaried workers had good experiences with the educational process. Their friends valued
education as well. However, some elected to continue formal education, while others elected to work until retirement and pursue other interest. Those wanting to continue their education had a 'need' for doing so. They wanted promotions within the plant. The culture surrounding these individuals afforded them the hope for upward mobility.

Bargaining unit/individual informants held positive attitudes about education, however differing views of the educational process were expressed. While some agreed that education is needed, the amount varied. They expressed that in earlier years they could make a good living without an education and they made just as much money as workers with educational degrees. Thus, the 'need' factor arises. Even though they know that they will succeed, the question remains for them--what will it lead to? If an individual knows he/she is going to remain on the factory floor, make good money, and is able to adapt to his/her environment then why education? They cited the lack of role models and the need for strong family support. They also spoke of the general work ethics of the 50's and 60's which was, get a job after high school, work hard and stay in a stable working environment. They all related their earlier experiences of leaving high school and getting a job, however as they matured and reevaluated their situation
they saw the value of education. These individuals also stressed their need to work.

Bargaining unit/focus group workers spoke of the changes in their attitude about education. At first it was to do what was needed to get through, but then it changed into a respect and need for further education. Although this respect is present, workers do not anticipate that obtaining a higher degree will change their job assignments. Thus, the 'need' for obtaining a degree becomes a big factor in the decision making process. Workers spoke of the affect of friends on obtaining a higher degree and their inability to see the need for more education. Specific comments were made, that illustrate that these individuals intermittently continue the pursuit of formal education.

When viewing the importance of goals, some salaried informants do not include continued education as a goal. In contrast, some of these individuals have specific plans to obtain degrees in hopes that it will promote them to higher level supervisory positions or management levels.

Bargaining unit/individual workers have specific goals for the future. Their plans include retirement, volunteer work, or opening a small business. Two informants had a goal of continued education.
Bargaining unit/focus group workers possess goals of continued education but acknowledge the problems of integrating work and school. One informant shared the experience of attending school part-time only to find out later that he would need an additional degree to compete in the workforce.

Informants from all three sections acknowledge life transitions as a deterrent to continuing their education. However, none of them shared experiences that allowed a complete breakdown in the self evaluation process that would not enable participation in educational activities. Some salaried workers shared transitions like divorce, and the lack of maturity while others did not experience transitions that affected their participation. Thus negative life transitions can motivate participation in some instances, but not in every instance.

Bargaining unit/individuals cited periods of change in their lives that affected their efforts to participate. Divorce, being called to the ministry, and having children greatly impacted participation as well as nonparticipation. One participant cited the money as being a determining factor in her not participating. Many workers did not see the need to pursue additional education when they were making good money.
Bargaining unit/focus group informants viewed life's transitions as a turning point in their lives. It could be positive and motivate them to participate or negative and not motivate them to participate.

All of the informants recognized the opportunities for participation within the plant. However, they viewed it from different perspectives. Salaried workers viewed the opportunities outside the plant as being salient to them. Informants plan to choose programs at surrounding schools to continue their education. In contrast, other informants do not plan to utilize the opportunities because they have other plans that do not include formal education.

Bargaining unit/individual workers see both the opportunities and barriers. They are aware of programs that exist within the plant but are not sure how they fit into the larger scheme of continued employment. They cited barriers such as time, home responsibilities, fear, single parenthood and the need to care for aging parents as barriers to participation.

Bargaining unit/focus group workers are aware of the opportunities however, they cited barriers that exit within the framework of the very program that is designed to provide the opportunity for continued education. These informants cited a need beyond which
the Lifelong Learning Center provide. They advocate assistance with course work in the form of tutoring.

Salaried workers possess the information necessary to make a decision concerning participation versus nonparticipation in formal educational programs. In contrast this same group did not grasp the importance of on-plant educational opportunities other than those needed for the job. They took great pride in listing the seminars they attended for plant purposes. However, they did not view nor did they have the information to decide if the Lifelong Learning Center was a feasible educational opportunity for them. They were not aware of the programs the Center offered.

Bargaining unit/individual workers explained that they are not sure how the Lifelong Learning Centers program work. Although efforts were made to provide information, the plant bargaining unit/focus group workers maintained that the pamphlets and bulletin boards were not being read. They also cited the lack of participation by bargaining unit workers in the opening day exercises at the plant. They maintain that workers were not informed properly about the center, although they know it exist.

Although it needs further testing and no clear pattern exists for decision-making, informants clearly followed the pattern of the COR model in determining
whether or not to participate in educational activities. The process was utilized by each individual in all three sections on more than one occasion.

The range of informant views concerning the processes that occur prior to participating in further education has been presented. Each theme has a great deal of information that emerged from the interviews. Individual informants have cited specific information in each theme area of the Chain of Response (COR) model that affected their nonparticipation. In chapter V, the analysis of each theme area will be presented. Specific findings and recommendations as to the value and usage of the COR model in determining nonparticipation will follow.

Reasons for not Participating

Salaried Workers

This section relates to question #2 in this research study:

What do salaried workers perceive as the reason for not participating in the activities of the Lifelong Learning Center? How does the educational background, significant events or transitions, and attitude of the respondents relate to their nonparticipation?

When reviewing the data, individual educational backgrounds as they relate to nonparticipation appeared not to have an impact on the decision not to participate. However, themes emerged when informants were asked about individual plans for the future. The
themes represent a collection of responses from all seven informants. There is no special order in terms of weight or importance and the themes do not necessarily include the barriers to learning expressed by informants earlier. Major themes emerged in the areas of retirement, significant events/transitions, attitude, other plans, lack of priority, lack of need/motivation and the 'well educated syndrome'. Those citing retirement as the reason for nonparticipation stated:

I’m going to be retired, be playing golf, hope to be dabbing in real estate, and I want to do extensive traveling--including Europe (Sue).

Hopefully I’ll be somewhere close to retirement (Julie).

...Established in a career before I retire (Mary).

In contrast, one informant does not desire retirement but will not participate because he has other plans. He stated:

I want to be in business for myself (Paul).

Several informants hoped to be employed at the plant in the near future but still will not participate.

Probably somewhere in management (Julie).

I hope to have moved up the ladder here a few notches (Rand).

Significant Events/Transitions:

Only one worker reported a major event or transition (Divorce) that affected her decision not to participate in educational activities. The remainder of
the salaried workers were family oriented. The major motivation to participate lie in the desire to upgrade their job title. One worker did not see education as the route to his career success. His goal is to own a restaurant and not be dependent on the plant.

The first theme for this section is:

Attitude About Education

Workers perceived their attitude about education as being positive. However, the usage of it is questioned and is derived from responses given in the reasons for not participating. Workers either perceived that they had enough education or that they would invest in things that would benefit them directly ie., 'the me syndrome'.

What I need to know in business for myself I think I could get myself (Paul).

It would take a lot of time out of my life (Julie).

My skill level could have been improved although it was adequate as I perceived it for the job at hand (Sue).

I was pretty well schooled out (Rand).

In contrast, two informants feel the need to continue their education beyond the undergraduate degree. Thus, their attitude is very strong. These informants stated:

I need something to differentiate myself from all the other supervisors on the floor. It's very hard to move up here right now. And the only way to do it is through education, where I have a little leverage (Matt).
I hope to be done with an MBA and I guess my reason for doing that is somewhat selfish, I want to advance myself here and I think in order to help me do that I think that’s important (Joe).

Reasons for not participating in the Lifelong Learning Center or other educational programs presented additional themes. Themes derived from the informants reasons for not participating are:

Other Plans

I want to be in business for myself... I’ve made a decision I’ll spend my efforts outside, my time and energy and efforts on getting something on my own versus educational knowledge (Paul).

The programs...Plato format are not of interest to me...For my personal time, there are other things that would enhance my life more (Sue).

Lack of Priority

I inquired...just never pursued it (Mary).

I just have not made it a priority (Julie).

Lack of Need/Motivation

Well, I perceive it as a level below where I’m getting myself educated (Matt).

Until I went into training...there wasn’t a need to. I knew, I felt I had enough skills to do my job well (Sue).

The Lifelong Learning Center, as I understand it is for the person who feels that they need help, like in math, reading, their writing, giving speeches (Rand).

The ‘Well Educated’ Syndrome

I understood that it mainly offered undergraduate level and lower courses...I feel
my educational desires would be filled out
side the plant adequately (Rand).

I feel that I pretty much have my educational
priorities planned out...and I didn’t feel it
was necessary to do that. I have my
bachelor’s degree and I don’t need to go up
there (Joe).

Summary

The Salaried workers attitudes about education is
positive, however, not all of them see the need for
education. They especially do not view the Lifelong
Learning Center as a source of continued education for
them. For many, their educational background goes
beyond the center’s programs. Those that express the
desire for upward mobility are preparing to attend
graduate school to pursue a Masters of Business
Administration. In contrast, others are thinking of
opening a business or simply retiring and engaging in
recreational or personal activities. Specific reasons
for not attending the Lifelong Learning Center included
the following: plans for retirement, the center is not
viewed as a tool for upward mobility, lack of time,
tired of school, perception that they have an adequate
amount of education, lack of need, motivation and
priority, lack of information, and other plans.

Bargaining Unit Workers

This section relates to question #3 in this
research study:
What do bargaining unit employees (including 'Ask Me' group members) perceive as the reason for not participating in the activities of the Lifelong Learning Center? How does the educational background, significant events or transitions, and attitude of the respondents relate to their nonparticipation?

The first two themes that emerged dealt with significant events/transitions and attitude.

**Bargaining Unit/Individual**

**Significant Events/Transitions**

While some informants stated that there were no major events or transitions affecting the decision not to participate in educational activities, two informants shared their major events.

- Got laid off...I've been back to work for four weeks (June).
- Being called to the ministry (Betty).

Thus, one event caused one worker not to participate (when she got laid off), while another event caused the other worker to participate (being called to the ministry).

**Future Plans**

When reviewing the data on educational background, I found that goals or individual plans for the future impact the decision of nonparticipation. Informants stated:

- I would like to stay with (the plant) if it's in ... (June).
- Getting out and into a nursing field (Michelle).
I plan to attend art school (Toby).

Hopefully, I would have my masters or my Ph.D. in Christian Ministry (Wanda).

Hopefully, maybe going back to school or trying to maybe start writing books (Betty).

Caterer...be in my own business...you see I'm a caterer (Rose).

I own a beauty salon now and I plan on probably opening two or three more beauty salons and just let that occupy my time (Chris).

**Attitude**

Generally, the attitude of informants were positive toward education. They stated:

Any type of knowledge, it changes you, even if it's a learning experience (Michelle).

I think education improve everybody's life (Wanda).

If I was a young person starting and they offered the Lifelong Learning Center, I think I'd probably be one of the first ones to take some courses because all the things you didn't have opportunity for like in school now kids can, you know really get upset because they offer so many things in school for kids and they don't take the initiative to take the courses. And then when they get old and can't do anything else they wish they had done it (Betty).

In contrast, when bargaining unit workers were asked why they did not participate in the Lifelong Learning Center, a representative theme centering around the lack of upward mobility was summarized by one informant. The informant stated:
If I thought that the course that they are giving would benefit me into getting a better job than what I have out there on the floor I would go and invest my time in it. But there's no sense in me investing my time in it if I can't put it to work on the job (Rose).

When questioned further the informant stated:

Because I don't have an interest. Simply, because I felt like it didn't have anything to promote me to get out of the job I am doing. It is hard work. If I took the course and completed it I'm still at a stand still. See, I'm not moving (Rose).

Additional themes emerged as the interviews progressed. Those themes as perceived by the informant are: lack of time, personal responsibility, the 'me' syndrome, tiredness, retirement, lack of need/motivation, and lack of information.

Lack of Time

My main reason at the time was time and just taking the time to go (Michelle).

I didn't have a lot of time...and when I did look at the curriculum that they had, they didn't have anything I wanted to take at that particular time...so I thought maybe they should offer a little more (Wanda).

I guess I don't have time... I had to adjust to third shift from first shift...I went to New York with the mini wedge and I'm getting ready to go back again next week (Betty).

Lack of time to fulfill my education. One upstairs sick and the other downstairs sick (Rose).

When questioned further the informant stated:

That work is very hard. When you walk out of there your feet be hurting and your hands. it works on your body. They have pushed the workers so... This is hard on the folks and
you’re tired when you leave there and nine times out of ten you got chores to do at home, you’ve got family to take care of. Kids to pick up and when we get finish with the job, you’re tired. You want to get out of there. Get home, relax. Some days you’re too tired to do that when you get home. That’s probably the reason why (Rose).

**Personal Responsibility**

Going back to work in the first place is a stress. Then when you come home, I still have her (daughter) at home (June).

I’ve been busy for the last year...this (parents) is more important than any goals I’ve set for myself (Toby).

I was taking care of my ill mother and father plus my children (Rose).

Being a single parent, just here for my son to come and go and to answer to was important to me at the time (Michelle).

**The ‘Me’ Syndrome**

I had to go to school that I got a credit for. I took a class and I did get credit for it at ... State (Wanda).

When I asked if obtaining credit for a course made a difference, she stated:

Yes, cause if I decided to go back to take some courses for an associate degree, that would benefit me, because I’d already have three credits (Wanda).

**Tiredness**

If you’re on piece work you got physical and mental stress because you have to make your money, you’re trying to make your money (Betty).

...Several times when I was on second shift, I thought of going up after I got done working and checking into it. Most of the time then, I was just too tired.
Physically, we get older, our bodies wear out and some of the work there at (the plant), it's quite hard (Michelle).

**Retirement**

After retirement I plan to paint houses. I have some of the equipment already (Toby).

I'm at the level of being able to retire so whatever happens isn't going to hurt me, okay (Betty).

**Lack of Need/Motivation**

I don't feel that I have the need (Chris)

I really didn't have the desire. I mean the motivation wasn't there. I had too many other little things I had to do (Michelle).

All you want to do is get out, even though it's air conditioned...the heat wears you out with the job...the job wears you out and you just don't have any time to feel like thinking...your brain is through (Betty).

**Lack of Information**

I think they had good educated people in there and they could have been a plus and beneficial to everybody, but I think that they should have held classes, you know... met with x amount of people and explained the Lifelong Learning Center to them, as opposed to telling them go to the Lifelong Learning Center and you can see what's what...I think sometimes you need a one-on-one conversation with people and let people understand what we're offering you and how it will benefit you. If you don't do that then people don't know and then people don't participate (Betty).

What I have in mind right now is to use the center in areas that, like as I go to school, if I'm having some trouble in areas, to use the center as kind of like my tutor, per se (Michelle).

An informant provided a representative summary of this unit:
The workforce now I guess mostly everybody is in their, has to be in their in their thirties or early forties. So most of them are really wanting to get the job done and get out. Then we have a lot of older people that hired in '77 as far as seniority-wise and mostly all them are just working to get their time in and out so we don’t really have a young workforce anymore like Honda does, you know, where you’ve got people in their twenties (Betty).

Bargaining Unit/Focus Group

Informants identified reasons for not participating in the Lifelong Learning Center. Themes that emerged included other plans, personal responsibilities, environment, lack of need, lack of time and tiredness:

Other Plans

When asked about individual plans, informants stated:

I would like to be doing something a little different than what I am doing now...directly business related. ...Seriously considering retirement (Thomas).

I’d like to have my own outlet store, get a business for myself (James).

I particularly don’t want to be an assembly line worker on piecework going nowhere...I don’t see that in my future...I want to be financially independent of this place (Bobbie).

Just married (Ella).

Personal Responsibilities

Although there were no major transitions that encouraged nonparticipation in the educational process, group members agreed that other obligations hindered their participation. They stated:
Personal obligations...family...I just felt that I needed to be, maybe at home...I felt a personal need to be home more (Thomas).

Time frame...working a full time job, trying to go to school and raise a child... (Ella).

Environment
I was turned off by one of the instructors up there, I don’t like to be treated as if (you know) somebody is better than me because we all adults and I thought that was supposed to be a helpful situation...I was turned off by the basic part... (Ella).

When asked for an example the informant quoted:
Why didn’t you know that (Ella)?

Lack of Need
None of them were able to help me...they couldn’t help me in my calculus class, they couldn’t help me in another class...I need somebody up there who is able to help me where I am at now (Thomas).

I’m more degree oriented. I’m at a point where I only want to take courses that are going to add credits towards my degree and right now what’s offered there just won’t do that (James).

Lack of Time
I’m...commuting from a far distance to the plant so time is a lot of my problem (Bobbie).

Tiredness
I’m tired and I have more than an hour drive (Bobbie).

Summary
Bargaining unit workers shared significant events and transitions that affected their nonparticipation. These events and transitions proved to either create a
desire and need to participate or not participate. Specific individual goals also impacted the decision to not participate. An example of this would be, if goals were to obtain a Master's degree, then education would be a consideration, however if the goal was to continue working at the plant, then participating in education does not seem to be a priority. Another example of this would be, if goals were to retire then education would not be a consideration, however if the goal was to go into nursing then participating in education would be a priority.

The attitude about education was positive even if individuals did not plan to participate in educational activities.

Specific reasons for not participating in the Lifelong Learning Center included the lack of upward mobility, lack of time, personal responsibility, tiredness, plans for retirement, lack of need/motivation, lack of information, other plans and the environment.

Workplace and Environmental Factors

This section relates to question #4 in this research study:

What workplace and environmental factors, including the location of the basic skills program influence the nonparticipation of workers?
Salaried Worker

Specific themes emerged from the data concerning the workplace environment. When asked, informants explained the attitude of managers and environmental factors as key themes explaining the nonparticipation of workers in the Lifelong Learning Center. Additional themes are: location, and peers.

Attitude of Management

When asked about the attitude of management towards education, informants answered from several points of view. The first point of view is that management values education.

It seems to be enthusiastic (Mary).

Tremendously supportive (Sue).

I think management has been dedicated. I think they’re dedicated to the learning center and they’re dedicated to helping people obtain that education and especially for the people who have less than a high school education. (Julie).

In contrast, another point of view speaks to managements encouragement of education but also to the usage of education as a criterion for promotions when its convenient for them. Informants stated:

They encourage it to the point of, if you’re interviewed for a job they’ll say well I think you should continue to pursue your MBA...I personally look at it as an excuse for them not to put you in a job (Matt).

I think its something they want. Sometimes they don’t always set time and priorities
...for you to do it...to allow you to do it but I think they support it (Joe).

I think they like to see that and at any point in time, too, if you are putting in for another job or occupation of some type (Rand).

I think they want to see that you're trying to do something to better yourself...but that doesn't always weigh in your evaluation. ...that's a definite benefit and management likes to see that (Paul).

In greater contrast, another point of view exemplifies the attitude that workers can do without education:

Some people's opinion is that you can do without an education (Matt).

He goes on to explain:

There are quite a few people with college educations on the floor who make good money out there who would probably have trouble finding a job with comparable pay (Matt).

Environmental Factors

When asked about the working environment informants described a 'get away' attitude. Workers are anxious to leave the plant. Statements included:

After I put my day in... I'm ready to leave this facility. I'm done here, I want out. Just something about... I'm still at the plant (Rand).

The outside looks awfully good (Paul).

In contrast other workers cited negative attitudes, low morale and changes within the work environment as reasons:

You hear negative things about the plant may close or...the morale of the plant, you know,
people aren't up because they hear such gloom and doom (Mary).

Well, the work environment, probably for the first 20 years that I was here, did not require educational skills, it required manual labor...it was manual labor type of productive goals (Sue).

When continuing the conversation, the informant went on to describe the new work environment after 20 years.

We've seen a change. The competition's out there and we need to change methods, the old methods that we've used...need to update skills, techniques, processes, everything needs to change if we're going to survive...even our handling of people (Sue).

Generally, the environment at the plant is usually talked about in terms of promotions. A representative statement included:

I really think promotions are not all the time based on the educational background. As a matter of fact, I know it's not. A lot of promotions are made from within for whatever reason (Julie).

She goes on to relate specific codes ie., code six (1st line supervisor) code seven (general supervisor) and promotions based on educational attainment:

General supervisors have been made without having a college degree...the superintendent that retired did not have a college degree, as a matter of fact, I don't think he even had a high school education. I don't think in the future they would probably put somebody in that high a category without some kind of educational background, but... (Julie).
Location

Salaried workers varied in their perception of the impact of the location on participation. One informant stated:

I’m salaried the same as they are...the attitude out there is.. we’re the ones that really make it happen out there. We’re the ones out there that are sweating,...people problems and the union problems and all that, and there’s like an unwritten, unspoken..these people up here (referring to the second floor) What do they do (Paul)?

The informant continued:

There is a little bit of animosity thing between us and them and we feel like maybe they have it a little bit better, they’re taken care of a little bit better than we are out there, we’re actually the ones making it happen. So therefore, there is a little bit of a barrier (Paul).

The informant mimics the salaried worker working in the administrative floor as saying:

Here they come, look at them (Paul).

However, the informant continues by saying:

It does not affect me because being management I’m a part of this and of the building (Paul).

When asked what she thought of the combined agreement between management and union in establishing the center the informant stated:

I think it’s great that management and union are working together. I mean, there’s just as many intelligent people on that side of the wall as there is on the management side, and its good that everybody is working together (Mary).
Peers

When asked if peer pressure contributes to his not attending the center, the informant stated:

Yeah, a little bit (Paul).

When asked why it bothers him he stated:

That guys worked for me, I’ve told him what to do, that may or may not have been a good employee is like telling me what to do. I guess you either feel like that employee deserves to be in that position (Paul).

The salaried worker brought out the cultural aspects of the workplace. Although management has a positive attitude about education, it is not utilized as a criterion for promotions in every instance. Another cultural aspect of the workplace is the amount of money that is made by the employees. It allows them to have a false sense of security concerning the need for education in the future. The plant environment also lends itself to the ‘work and go’ attitude. Workers are ready to clock out at the end of the day. Salaried workers recognized the ‘stigma’ that exists within the plant among their peers. However, they deal with it from the perspective of being an equal. Peer pressure is present in this environment and plays a role in nonparticipation.
Bargaining Unit/Individual

Specific themes that emerged from this unit are: attitude of management, environmental factors, union/management relationships, location, peers, absenteeism policy, relationship of education and hiring promotions, tiredness, and lack of information.

Attitude of Management

When asked about the attitude of management toward workers attending educational programs, contrasting views were given. Some informants spoke of the benefits of having union and management cooperating to provide educational programs:

I see what they’re trying to do...we get along pretty well...I perceive it as a better relationship between management and employees. It gives me a better understanding of what’s really going on. And the programs they’ve been coming up with...I feel more involved. I feel like these people are reaching out to show me what they want and what my union wants. They’re working together to try to show me the best possible way to get it done (Toby).

We can work with them, talk to them when we have our meetings (Rose).

In contrast, others did not feel that management viewed education as being important.

As long as it don’t interfere with production, its fine (Rose).

As long as it doesn’t interfere with their time and their job, most of them... (Chris).

You have personality conflicts between employees and supervisors, supervisors and upper management, and they catch it both ways
and then it kinda trickles down to the hourly person (Wanda)

Yet, another view which supports both of the above views is expressed by an informant who is somewhat drawn between the positive and negative attitude of management support of education.

I think they are doing, or agreeing to and cooperating on a whole in every way they can to help people further their education (Michelle).

But on another level

I don't really think it makes that much difference to them...there's usually ulterior motives. ...I mean the company does not need to do this, they could just say, hey we're closing...but they're going far enough to agree with paying for the tuition, the schooling, it does not have to be job related...the Lifelong Learning Center...you know the way that they're putting that up, and everything (Michelle).

She goes on to say

The more opportunity that they give people to further their education... that's less people that they have liability for and to worry about displacing (Michelle).

However, an informant adds another aspect to the presumed attitude of management towards education.

When I first started in there we had lots of old foremen that came from the floor up, which knew the jobs and how to fix things and then between '76 and '77 and I'll say '78 we got a lot of... students, some supervisors they came from off the streets didn't know anything about factory work or machines, so they couldn't tell you anything, but they didn't want to listen either. They started deciding that management wasn't always right and we had
been telling them for years, you're not the ones out there running these machines (Betty).

She continued:

But now they decided that we, this is where the... synchronized work, that we're in charge. Like if... something's wrong with the machine and we know it, then we have the right to say, stop and not run parts, where as before it was like, well we need so many parts, run it anyway. They would more or less look at what you put on the paper each night as opposed to quality (Betty).

In contrast, although another informant agreed with the new relationship, she felt that it was not being followed.

They listen to what we say but they don't always put it to good use...you have to stay on them...you really have to get aggressive with him to get him to call the electrician or someone...He'll say there is nothing wrong with it...and you know somethings wrong with it because you run the job every day (Rose).

This informant related the problem to the lack of communication.

We only have safety meetings or bad parts...they never call you in and tell you something good is happening. The only time the employees have contact with the people upstairs is when you need to go up there to take care of business. If it involves your job the engineer comes down stairs. I don’t think they have a problem going up there. The classes start after four (o’clock) and most people up there are gone home (Rose).

Management is attempting to change the overall workplace. However, this is not being communicated effectively to the workers. There wasn’t a clear consensus among these individuals concerning the
attitude of management toward education. They see the programs as being offered and the change within their workspace, however they have not connected them to improved performance, global competition and new technology.

**Environmental Factors**

When asked how has the plants working environment affected participation, one informant expressed her concept of the plant environment from the perspective of union/management relationships. She stated:

> About the union and management working together is fine, but I don’t feel like unions should get too chummy with management because we have a contract coming up and I don’t think we need to be getting sold down the drain just for management. See its like now, our factory’s old and for at least the last 10 years or better... it’s always, like well we’re going to do this, we’ve taken a lot of concessions, and this is how management and union got together in the first place at our plant... that was so maybe if we could come together we would be able to save the plant here (Betty).

Other workers viewed being ashamed within their environment, specific policies, tiredness and the lack of information as environmental aspects reinforcing their nonparticipation. One worker stated:

> It might be a person that can’t read and write and I’m sure they wouldn’t want the people that they work beside to know that (Chris).
Specific policies regarding absenteeism, are also a concern of an informant. She stated:

Now they have absenteeism program and that means like if you’re off so many days, you get put in this program. Like if you get sick they have a certain amount of time allowed for certain surgeries or illnesses, then you get penalized points for days that you’re absent after that. And then if it gets too many days you’re put in absentee program.. and then they’ll give you time off, and then if it gets real bad you’re fired (Betty).

The policies relating to the relationship of education to hirings and promotions became an issue with some informants. They stated:

It was amazing to me to learn that some of the people that I hired in with that were white did not graduate from high school, okay. But when the blacks hired in, they asked for a high school diploma (Rose).

As far as the way it works at (the plant) it’s a seniority plant, it doesn’t work by a lot as far as knowledge. They are starting... to get into that more, or at least I’m becoming more aware of it (Michelle).

Other informants relate back to the work that is performed by workers within the plant environment. They stated:

The jobs I have been on the last couple of years that have been jobs that are a little physically harder than other jobs, and so as far as going in after work, most of the time I would be too tired (Michelle).

The environment at (the plant)...it kinda makes you feel like you know, I can’t wait until I get my eight hours in and...out of this building, period (Wanda).
The lack of information affects the plant environment as well. One informant stated:

Management in my department never discuss that...when we have our meeting they never tell you about going up to the Lifelong Learning Center... (Rose).

Distrust exists within this environment. It is ingrained within the culture. The adversarial relationship is present, however an effort is being made by both sides (union and management) to close the gap between 'us' and 'them'.

**Location**

Informants spoke freely concerning the location of the Lifelong Learning Center’s program on the second floor of the administrative building. They realize the stigma placed on that part of the building and the effect it has on their not participating in the center. Informant statements included:

Sometimes when I go up there, but that’s true anywhere you go in the plant, you just see how everything is dwindling, down, down, down (Michelle).

It's in the administration building...people on the plant floor...there is a stigma between plant people and office people (June).

I just hate the narrow mindedness...because we have been put down...I’m talking about people that work in the factory, you know, they have such a low esteem of their selves, some of them...that they feel like because management is on higher level of people there that, you know, they don’t want to go up there in that
part of the building because they were not allowed in that part previously (Wanda).

In contrast, the same informant stated:

...it wouldn’t bother me because I know what they’ve got up there is to better qualify you to get things done (Wanda).

Stigma has been a part of this environment for a long time. Even though people want to discard it, it has been ingrained, thus innovative efforts have to be made to alleviate it from this culture.

Bargaining Unit/Focus Group

Focus-group informants provided themes that in some cases summarized what the individual informants perceived about the location of the Lifelong Learning Center. Those themes are: attitude of management, environmental factors, and location.

Attitude of Management

When asked what they perceived as the attitude of management toward bargaining unit workers attending educational programs, focus group informants stated:

It doesn’t make any difference one way or another (Thomas).

It seems to me no matter what degree you had, you don’t get to move up the ladder or go any higher and a lot of people on the floor have degrees and are still doing what they did four years prior to getting their degree (Ella).

I’ve ran into situations where supervisors know that I’ve gone to school are intimidated types...its conveyed in nonverbal actions...through their mannerisms...so...I went back to school to advance in an organization, which you can’t and then when I
do run into some individuals in management they are...threatened because I’m a union workers and there’s a stigma between management and union (James).

It’s frustrating...you apply yourself...and as opportunities come along you prove yourself you’re gonna advance...that assumption wasn’t true (Bobbie).

I think the general assumption is that if you go back, you make an effort to get a degree then there’ll be a chance for advancement in this organization, now there isn’t (James).

In line with the thinking of these individuals, one informant shared an example of the lack of importance management puts on education:

There’s no record as to how much education I’ve got since I’ve been here, they just seem not interested (you know) (Thomas).

In contrast, an informant feels that the attitude of management is positive:

The time I took the final they always were sympathetic with me, they would give me the day if I said I needed a day off to take a final...or if I needed a day off to study...that was encouraging. I didn’t go to school to get up in the ladder of (at the plant). I go to school for personal development or personal reasons...I might in the future need another background to fall back on (Ella).

Experiences vary among this group of informants. They don’t think management wants them to become better educated because it is not rewarded. However, everything is being done by management to educate the workforce.
Environmental Factors

Informants were receptive to the usage of a fellow worker as a member of the Lifelong Learning Center's staff. They stated:

I feel more comfortable with my peer than I would with the staff they have up there because I can relate to them (James).

I think I'd like to see some instructors that may have some experience in a factory environment...not just having book knowledge...I want them to know what I've just been through (Bobbie).

Informants viewed time as being important within their environment and its relationship to their ability to participate. They stated:

General factory work itself is...it mentally and physically...just beats you down to a point where when you're done the biggest thing you want to do is get as far away from what you finished doing as fast as you can...and I was reluctant to take up the course...cause it is here at the plant, because I'm one of those who when I get off at 3:30 I want to get away from this plant, physically away...and I thing a lot of people probably feel that way (Bobbie).

Time is a big thing...after you spent eight hours...even my outside education. I have to make a concerted effort to really push myself to go to class and thats toward a degree ...unless the person just wants to develop himself...because there is no other reward for it (Ella).

In comparison, the informant continued to talk about time, the type of work completed by workers and the desire to leave the plant when the workday was over. She continued:
In the type of work you do especially repetitive...and we're not just talking doing fifty parts and let's call it a day when you're doing thousands...and you're smelling...been on your feet all day...yeah, you do want a whole new environment...get out and get some air...that sunshine does something to you (Ella).

Location

Informants stated that the Lifelong Learning Center was located too far away from the workers. These informants combined location and environmental factors. They stated:

I'm not exactly comfortable with the location of it...the location could have been...more east. It's located in the front of the plant...I think it would be more conducive to people using it if it was located where the people are (Thomas).

That part of the building at one time was more or less off limits to us...unless we were in trouble...right directly below it is labor relations (Bobbie).

When asked if the location of the center was related to the lack of participation they stated:

It's tough enough because there's a stigma management versus union and I know we've come a long way but it's still there and for me to walk through that front door to spend eight hours on that floor, it's very intimidating...cause I'm not in my environment (Bobbie).

Need to take into consideration the needs of the people that's gonna use it. Now, it's out front my assumption would be it's for the people out front. If it's on the floor then it's for people on the floor... I mean I'd like to see how many from management side will get involved in the center or come out and ask questions if it was on the floor. Okay. There is a lot of space and let me tell you if union representatives can build an office on the
floor centrally located for the people. I don’t know why you can’t put forth the effort to work on facility that you know that the hourly work force is going to use also (Thomas).

When challenged and told that some workers report that the location doesn’t bother them, focus group participants recanted:

Sure they care...you still feel the tension, the stigma when you walk through the door because of the look...‘what are you doing up here’, ‘why are you walking on our floor with your dirty shoes’...it’s a stigma... we have on jeans and t-shirt and they have on white shirt and tie (Bobbie).

It bothers all of us because...you know these eyes are kind of following you around to make sure that nothing is missing...sure...it’s there (James).

They continued by sharing experiences, while visiting the second floor of the administrative building:

And there’s people that have been asked (you know), ‘why are you up here?’ ‘where are you going? can I help you find something?’ Like ‘you don’t belong here!’...it’s very easy to determine who is hourly and who is salaried’... (Thomas).

In conclusion, one informant stated:

More people would use it just because...it would be centrally located... (Ella).

Summary

The culture of the plant plays a significant role in the nonparticipation of informants. Major categories such as management’s attitude towards education, the location of the center, stigma, the lack of
communication, plant closure and the need to leave at the end of the day have been ingrained in the environment of the plant. These categories affect the decision making process of workers. If the environment is negative, then participation will not take place.

Salaried workers have differing opinions concerning management's attitude towards education. A majority feels that management values education, however a vocal minority feels that although management is supportive and encouraging, education is only valued if you do not have it. Once you obtain it, other criteria are used for promotions. In addition, the pay of individuals within this industry surpasses the general public's pay, thus the issue of finding comparable salaries elsewhere affects the value of obtaining additional education.

Bargaining unit/individual informants believe that the attitude of management concerning education is only positive if it does not interfere with production. They note the cooperation of union and management in providing educational opportunities for employees, however they still do not trust the new approach to managing. One reason for this is that even though they are asked to work together, their suggestions are not always acted on in a timely way by supervisors.

Bargaining unit/focus group informants cited the attitude of management in reference to promotions as
being a problem. They feel that obtaining education does not advance their careers at the plant. Since the work is hard, individuals lack time and energy to attend the Lifelong Learning Center. Workers are anxious to leave the plant at the end of the day.

Although, education is pushed, workers feel that promotions are not based on it because of the educational backgrounds of individuals who hold higher level positions. Morale is also lowered by the lack of knowledge of the system utilized for promotions. Continued threats of plant closure and technological changes within the national workforce also lowers morale in that workers fear change.

Salaried workers feel confident when utilizing the second floor because of their status as salaried workers. In some cases those workers compare themselves favorably to salaried workers on the 2nd floor in that they have the same status. However, they recognize that animosity exists because workers on the plant floor feel that they work harder than workers on the second floor.

In contrast, the location of the Lifelong Learning Center on the 2nd floor of the administration building provided a reason for nonparticipation for bargaining unit workers. The stigma attached to plant floor workers versus salaried workers is hard to discard. Prior to seven years ago the 2nd floor itself was not
utilized by plant floor workers unless they were in trouble. They were not comfortable with the location because they felt that management and the union did not consider other space on the plant floor. They especially cited the stigma experienced by plant floor workers when entering the 2nd floor. They felt that the center should be centrally located.

Environmental factors that stop workers from participating are, being ashamed, absenteeism, hiring and promotion policies, lack of time, tiredness, and the lack of information.

Some informants were receptive to the usage of peers as workers in the Lifelong Learning Center, others were not. The most pressing environmental problem involved the 'produce and leave' attitude of workers. Due to the nature of work (production) workers are anxious to leave the plant at the end of the day.

**Continued Emerging Themes**

Additional themes that emerged from the data are: plant closure, stigma, lack of communication and lack of benefits. These themes were consistent (intensity) among all three informant groups. Throughout the interviews they surfaced, and were explored further during subsequent interview sessions. Informants discovered that the basis of nonparticipation could be derived from numerous sources.
Plant Closure

Although, the threat of plant closure has been discussed as a part of the environmental theme, follow up interviews provided an understanding of the significance of it to informants. The plant closure theme surfaced during the first interview. The Bargaining Unit/Individual informant did not believe that the plant would ever close.

The threat has been there for 26 years that I've been here they were going to close this place, people don't believe it (Rose).

In comparison, two salaried workers shared the same belief and said:

I've been here all these years, and I've heard those things said every single year I've been here. You talk to people who have been here longer than I have and they said those same things. It never has. It's always the sky has fallen you know (Rand).

They're just rumors (Sue).

In contrast, not all salaried workers were that optimistic. They not only believed the plant will eventually close, they do not feel secure in their jobs. A representative statement included:

I see that the possibility of the plant closing is a very real issue...and with the information that I'm given. I know that it's a very serious time for all components, (the plant's) components...and I see that the performance of that plant has a real bearing on whether we succeed as a plant or not (Joe).

The salaried worker goes on to express what he perceives as the feelings of other workers.
I think there’s a general overall feeling out there that (the plant) is going to take care of them (Joe).

When asked why workers trusted the manufacturing plant, the informant stated.

Through their contracts they have an obligation to, you know. I’m not that familiar with it...but I know there are some general obligations (Joe).

In greater contrast, a bargaining unit/individual informant thinks that a younger worker would more likely be convinced that the plant is going to close versus an older worker. He stated:

The new people, the younger people in the plant, now they, you can convince them that the plant is eventually going to close...but most of your older people that you talk to out there, you can’t convince them it’s gonna close (Chris).

Bargaining unit/focus group informants perceived the plant closure prospect as being real and perceived that older workers are trusting and believe that they will reach retirement. The informant stated:

Most of the older people that feel that way, that the plant is going to be there, why, you know why do I need any more education? You know I’m going to beat this punch press until I retire and then I’m going to go sit on the front porch in a rocking chair. You very seldom see an older seniority person in training ...with their seniority, they can stay off that job (James).

When asked if the plant and the union will protect the workers, bargaining unit/focus group members stated:

I don’t know if they don’t pay attention or if it’s just hopeful or wishful thinking (Ella).
No longer exists...its not here (Thomas).

I think it’s come to reality that people with 15 or 14 years will not see retirement. I mean that’s not a given fact, but its very close to reality (James).

They don’t understand their contract...they don’t understand the economic reality of business...if business feels that its impossible, they can change that...that’s economic reality (Bobbie).

When asked if workers will be transferred to another plant a representative reply was:

They don’t know...because the only way you can go to another job is that the job here has to be going to that plant. If we lose this they might just be obsolete jobs (Ella).

Stigma

The issue of stigma surfaced throughout each interview session. Stigma played a large role in the educational attitude of one bargaining unit/individual informant. The informant constantly evaluated what her fellow workers would say if she visited the Lifelong Learning Center. She stated:

They might say, "there she goes up there trying to learn something that she know that’s not going to benefit her in some kind of way" (Rose).

When asked if fellow employees or the supervisor knew that she attended college, she replied:

They don’t know that about me. I never discuss my education with anyone (Rose).
Another bargaining unit/individual worker spoke of her feelings about stigma and the 2nd floor. She stated:

It’s tough enough because there’s a stigma. ...Management versus union and I know we’ve come a long way but it’s still there and for me to walk through that front door to spend eight hours on that floor--it’s very intimidating...cause I’m not in my environment (Bobbie).

In contrast, when salaried workers were asked about stigma, a representative reply was:

I would hope not, although it might at first. It’s hard to say I didn’t graduate from high school. It’s hard to admit that you have weaknesses in certain areas. I feel it’s important that we move the barriers and come together for learning experiences and get rid of the old stigmas...the perception that we’re different (Sue).

Lack of Communication

The lack of communication became an issue in several interview sessions. Bargaining unit workers had strong feelings concerning the way the Lifelong Learning Center was advertised. Informants expressed the following views:

People don’t understand what the Lifelong Learning Center is all about and I think if they had a better understanding, then they would have participated and they would go, and I think it would be beneficial to all of them if we attended the Lifelong Learning Center (Betty).

They shut down 5 or 10 minutes...explain to people about the United Way and how it could benefit them and their families...I felt the same way about the Lifelong Learning Center...that they should have shut down...let
them stand and talk to them about the Lifelong Learning Center and how it is important and how it would be beneficial...helping you in your life and whatever goals you had in life (Wanda).

I think they should have handled [it] just like our other campaigns...we have this guest speaker come in and sit downstairs in our cafeteria, the hourly can get involved in it, they could ask questions...that media didn’t do nothing for these people on the plant floor (Bobbie).

Get out there and get involved with the people, get involved in an area they have (James).

When given an example the informant was asked, (ie., if a flier was sent throughout the plant advertising a small business seminar on July 13th)...what would be the response of workers? The informant stated:

You’ve got an idea of what they’re offering. I mean, I just, you know, it’s like they’re promoting it more. Right now I don’t think it’s promoted that much (Betty).

In comparison, bargaining unit/group informants were also concerned about the advertisement of the opening day exercises for the Lifelong Learning Center. Informants stated:

It was advertised, I mean, that was more or less like for management as opposed to hourly people (Thomas).

The grand opening was more, not to introduce people that need it or the people that were going to use it, it was more for a media blitz. Nobody was involved...it was a closed group of people that did the planning...as a matter of fact...even when they had the grand opening they invited some hourly people...it
was mainly the news media... hourly work force was not really involved in the process (Ella).

When asked about the type of communication needed at the plant, informants stated:

Be down to earth (Bobbie).

You have to be a personable person (Ella).

When asked about forms of communication ie., surveys the informant stated:

The timing of a survey was bad. Everybody is doing the survey at the same time and people got tired of doing surveys. They did like three or four surveys in the last three months (Ella).

If they would just use their common sense, set it up properly, do their needs analysis, respond to the concerns of the individuals, find out what’s convenient for the average worker... who is gonna use it... the whole Lifelong Learning Center would run a lot better, but instead of doing that they go backwards (James).

After hearing concerns from bargaining-unit members, salaried workers were asked if they promoted the Lifelong Learning Center to the individuals they supervised. Representative answers were:

No, I haven’t really promoted it (Joe).

The only way I’ve encouraged it is when they’ve expressed an interest. I’ve encouraged them to go ahead and do it. But I haven’t tried to initiate someone’s coming up here (Rand).
Lack of Benefits

When seeking information on the concept of the 'me' syndrome, informants felt strongly that programs offered to workers should be explained in such a way that it promotes their well-being. Bargaining unit/individual workers responded:

People aren't going to invest their own time if they don't see a benefit to themselves...a lot of people would look at this, even though its ..., and it's a joint effort and the union backs it and everything else...it's in the plant, you know somehow I'm investing my own time and the plant is going to get the benefit...and I'm going to get nothing (Michelle).

You're not going to like move up the corporate ladder as you might like if you were in salary or whatever, you know...cause there's really no place to move...at one time they did take some people off the floor and put them in supervisory positions (Wanda).

In comparison, workers agreed in that they wanted to know the possible results of their attendance to any program. They seemed receptive to on-the-job training because they viewed it as being helpful in performing their jobs along with developing themselves.

If you did get a credit, more people would take advantage of the on-site learning center...that was one of the first things I questioned when I called the [Lifelong] Learning Center. If you work on the plant floor, you usually are tired but you have got to have some kind of motivation for you to go up there...they would have to want to better themselves for themselves (Michelle).

In conclusion, focus-group members believed that a major reason workers do not participate is due to the
way previous programs have been offered at the plant. These programs are shorter in length and offer some certificate or reward at the end. Focus-group informants summarize the concept.

Most of these people have been around here for quite a while and these people have seen a lot of programs come and go...I think it’s difficult for a workforce to believe that the next program that comes down...is the one that’s going to be here, this is the one that’s going to be around... (Thomas).

Summary

Emerging themes provided further understanding of nonparticipation in the Lifelong Learning Center at the plant. Informants had differing views that were expressed throughout subsequent interviews. Major themes that emerged included: plant closure, stigma, lack of communication and lack of benefits. These themes continue to emphasize the role of corporate culture in the workplace.

The first major theme explored was plant closure. One segment of salaried workers as well as bargaining-unit workers do not believe that the plant will close. They maintain that the threat has always been present, however, the possibility of it occurring is minor. In contrast, the other segment of workers believe that the possibility of the plant closing is real. The overall concept of the plant is shared by many because of the
union contract and the fact that the threat has been around so long.

Bargaining-unit/focus group members are not convinced that the plant will remain open. They maintain that older workers are not aware of the content of the union contract. The confusion surrounding plant closure provides a false sense of security for those who believe that it will not close, thus, they do not feel the need for education. They feel that until retirement they will always have good paying jobs at the plant. Informants who believe that plant closure is a possibility, view formal education as a way out. However they don't see the value of it within the plant. They are in no rush to continue or complete their educational pursuits.

The next major theme is stigma. Stigma is prevalent in this environment even though the way the plant is being managed has changed. Informants recognize the commitment of the plant, and their relationship with the union. However, barriers caused by pre-existing rules have not vanished. Informants recognize the impact of fellow workers perceptions of them and protects it by not providing information on their lives outside the plant, especially their educational backgrounds.
The environment on the plant floor protects individual workers and they felt intimidated when placed outside that environment. Workers perceive that individuals (salaried workers) on the 2nd floor label them as being uneducated and that makes it harder for them to participate in the Lifelong Learning Center.

The lack of communication theme raised questions concerning the advertisement of the Lifelong Learning Center and the way salaried workers promoted it. Bargaining unit workers do not perceive the Lifelong Learning Center as being a part of their educational plan. This perception surfaced at the opening of the center. Informants did not feel that a representative number of bargaining unit employees attended the opening-day exercise. They felt strongly that the center was utilized as a media event. They also were concerned about the location of the center. In contrast, salaried workers have not promoted the center to bargaining unit workers.

The final emerging theme is the lack of benefits. All of the informants felt strongly that educational programs at the plant have to have rewards attached in order to get people to participate. Getting credit for courses or work performed as well as knowing how the completion of an educational unit will influence the work environment is important to workers.
These themes have been a part of the plant environment for a long time. Providing programs throughout the plant without clear connections to the company's vision will not alleviate the concern. The culture of the plant is a part of the individual worker. It has to be re-learned through the vision of management and the support of the union.
Chapter V
ANALYSIS, RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter contains a summary of the major themes, their characteristics and properties, the beginnings of grounded theory in the area of nonparticipation, recommendations for further research, and implications for practice. The themes generated by research questions and their characteristics will be summarized.

This study attempted to utilize grounded theory to understand the reasons for nonparticipation in a union/management Basic Skills training program (Lifelong Learning Center) designed to upgrade the basic skills of employees at a major manufacturing plant in the Midwest. The focus of inquiry was the perception of salaried and bargaining unit workers in relationship to the evaluation of their nonparticipation and the process used to reach the decision not to participate. I used the Chain of Response theoretical framework developed by Cross (1981). Her model began the framework for understanding nonparticipation in general and I have
used it to understand nonparticipation in industry and business. The proposed modification will be useful to practitioners.

I conducted the research in a natural setting but was not an active participant. Prior to beginning data collection, I took into account my own bias and constantly reflected on it through conversations with peers and by maintaining a reflective journal. I assumed that there would not be an overwhelming difference between the race of nonparticipants. My belief that the color of one’s skin does not predict nonparticipation did not impact the research because I confronted the issue (writing about it) and discussed it with my peers.

Throughout the year prior to the opening of the center, I interviewed the principal director of the center along with plant representatives (see Appendix E). These individuals provided great insight into the purpose of the Lifelong Learning Center and the Basic Skills unit. I attended the opening ceremony of the center and observed potential users along with staff members and professors associated with the center. I visited the center on numerous occasions and received copies of the brochure and pamphlets used for advertisement. While there, I observed potential participants as they entered the center, making
statements concerning their interest in material for others and leaving without signing up for classes. This process afforded me the opportunity to view first hand the concerns of nonparticipants and led to the questions concerning the reasons for nonparticipation. I then decided to conduct my research.

Data collection began during the second half of the year after the center opened. Data were gathered by utilizing three groups of workers from the plant that included salaried, bargaining unit/individual and bargaining unit/group members. The method of data collection and analysis followed the naturalistic paradigm of research which seeks to understand and explain people from their own frame of reference (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Data were gathered using a set of guiding questions (see Appendix A) during in-depth interviews which were audio taped. Salaried and bargaining unit/focus group workers were interviewed on-plant while bargaining unit/individual workers were interviewed off-plant. Salaried workers were interviewed on the second floor of the administrative building and bargaining unit/focus group members were interviewed on the plant floor in the Plato Room where much of their in-plant training occurs. Bargaining unit/individual members were interviewed in the quiet of their homes or in the office of the researcher. Follow
up interviews were conducted by telephone, utilizing home numbers provided by the interviewees at the time of the first interview.

Methods for data analysis by Glaser and Strauss (1967) were utilized. Prior to analysis, interviews were transcribed (verbatim). The quality of the data was checked and missing material was provided by informants. Four copies of the data were made, with the master copy being kept as a backup. Since the focus of my research was on nonparticipants in a Basic Skills Training Program serving adults in a manufacturing plant, I decided to begin analyzing the interviews by using cross case analysis. I number coded each page according to informant group units (i.e., bargaining/individual), after which I coded each section according to the guiding questions utilized during the interviews. This provided a descriptive analytical framework for analysis. I cut and pasted sections and recoded them according to the research questions. I then organized the data into topics and files utilizing themes the informants used. I utilized inductive analysis wherein the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis came from the data (Patton, 1990). The categories articulated by the informants were utilized to present themes. I communicated these themes by comparing and contrasting data. I continued the
analysis by utilizing case analysis. I wrote a case study for each person interviewed utilizing demographics, Cross’s COR model and the list of barriers to learning (institutional, situational and dispositional barriers) cited in Cross,(1981). Guided questions were utilized in identifying if Cross’s barriers to learning were significant for these individuals (utilized in the case study of each informant). Later in the data collection process participants were asked to spontaneously state and discuss their reasons for not participating in the center. These responses were utilized to develop the cultural category of the research.

Emerging Patterns

The analysis of data resulted in patterns that emerged from the data, modifying the COR theory. Merriam (1989) explained the usage of grounded theory as being suited to investigate problems for which little theory has been developed. This is true with the phenomena of nonparticipation. Glaser & Strauss (1967) stated that theory emerges from fieldwork experiences and is grounded in the data. The research was conducted and patterns emerged that will impact the understanding of nonparticipation in the workplace. Based on the data collected and the analysis completed in chapter four, four assertions will be discussed.
Existing Patterns

1) There is a pattern between nonparticipation, educational level, age, and length of employment. However, a pattern between race and gender was not found.

The COR Model and Cultural Evaluation

2) The Chain of Response Model provided a concept to work from, however it did not provide adequate information in each category to explain the process of nonparticipation in (manufacturing) industry and business. I propose a modification to Cross's theoretical model to include cultural barriers. Thus, an additional category (cultural evaluation) was introduced to the COR model. The cultural evaluation category plays an equal role along with Cross's internal and external categories (Research Question #1).

Barriers to Nonparticipation

3) The reasons for nonparticipation among salaried and bargaining unit workers are similar in the areas of home responsibilities, time, lack of credit or degree, inappropriate course of study, lack of information, attendance requirement, tiredness and plant closure. They differ in the areas of low grades in the past, and stigma. (Research Question's #2 and #3).

Corporate Culture and Nonparticipation

4) The organization's culture affects nonparticipation. Cultural factors at the plant included the location of the program on the 2nd floor, the threat of plant closure, stigma, lack of communication, and lack of benefits received by participants (Research Question's #4).

These assertions provided an understanding of the research questions by using the perceptions of the
Informants. Informants responded from their individual perspective. They provided a connection between the COR model and the reasons why informants do not participate in organized nor formal learning provided by union and management. Some of the assertions will be supported by existing theories, while others provide new patterns to test. Each assertion will be discussed fully.

**Assertion #1 Existing Relationships**

There is evidence of a pattern between nonparticipation, educational level, age, and length of employment. However, a pattern between race and gender was not found.

According to demographic data produced by this study, it became apparent that race and gender did not play a major role in the nonparticipation of informants. However, nonparticipation, and educational level, age, and length of employment were connected to individuals not desiring to participate. The above findings are not in line with Rubenson (1977), Cross (1981) and Darkenwald and Merriam's (1982) theory that a variety of demographic variables including race and gender are associated with participative behavior. Although a number of the variables listed by these researchers are associated with nonparticipation, race and gender are not.

Research in line with my findings was conducted by Anderson and Darkenwald (1979). They found that race
accounted for only 10 percent of the variance in explaining participation.

Throughout the in depth interviews of this research, race was not expressed as a reason for lack of participation nor did gender surface as a measure of nonparticipation. Informants of different races and gender refrained from participating with the same enthusiasm and almost equally. When Anderson and Darkenwald (1979) statistically analyzed the triennial survey conducted by the Census Bureau in 1978, they found that blackness among other things did not directly affect participation. They surmised that each race is equally motivated to participate or not participate in education. Researchers have found that college graduates of African American descent are as likely to participate in adult education as Caucasian-American college graduates (Bloome, 1987). Bloome noted that all participating individuals were higher on the socioeconomic scale than nonparticipants. In this study the informants were highly paid factory workers who did not participate in the program. Since some bargaining unit workers made more money than salaried workers, a comparison could not be made.

Although a pattern did not surface between gender and nonparticipation, research has showed that the relationship between female and males is one of
participation rate. Females (65%) tend to participate at a higher rate than males (35%) in continuing education (National Center for Education Statistics, 1989). However, this did not occur in this research. Male informants were just as eager to be interviewed as female informants concerning their nonparticipation. Of the nine individuals expressing a future desire to continue their education, male nonparticipants outnumbered female nonparticipants by one.

Informants of each race and gender experienced confusion over continuing their education upon graduating from high school. Some individuals expressed a need to get a job, mature, or get married as opposed to acquiring further education. The term need is defined as 'those human requirements calling for a response that makes human survival and development possible in a given society (Lederer, 1980). For these individuals the desire for additional education came later in life. Some did not feel that the opportunity was available for further education (lack of finance, low family support, military duty). For those who continued their education, some were successful (completing the bachelor's degree) and others were not (completing one to three years of college). Once these individuals acquired jobs at the manufacturing plant, education became secondary to 'making good money'. The
demand for education was not apparent in these individuals. According to Kotler (1975) and Beder (1986) there were negative demands (avoiders) for continued education. High salaries were valued above the need for additional education by both race and gender. No one stood out in any area in respect to race or gender.

A pattern appeared between nonparticipation and the educational attainment of informants. Older bargaining unit and salaried workers (ages 40 to 49) did not see the need for continued education beyond the high school diploma although they saw the need for younger workers to have more education because of the ‘changing workplace’. They maintained that the opportunity for good paying jobs like theirs at the plant will not be available for their children. These workers would agree with Lisack (1984). He maintained that today’s workers are less academically qualified than those of earlier decades. Thus, older workers had goals to retire and pursue other areas of interest (golf, opening beauty/barber shops, work in libraries, paint houses) while they wanted their children and younger co-workers to pursue further education because of the lack of good jobs and the need for academically qualified workers. However, older workers have ambitions that do not involve education (Beder and Quigley, 1990). They
constantly spoke of their ability to make more money than their friends with more education who worked outside the plant.

Most of the younger workers (ages 30-39) agreed with the older workers that they need more education than their parents. For these workers the reason for this agreement relates to the possibility of plant closure. Most older workers feel strongly that the plant will continue to prosper financially and/or will take care of them through either early retirement, outplacement or seniority promotions to other facilities. Although younger workers are not that optimistic, they share the desire to remain employed at this plant. This fact along with the high salaries made by these individuals created a false sense of security within this environment. This false sense of security is shared by both age groups. This is manifested in their belief that the plant will not close. Therefore, none of the workers plan to acquire education in order to locate jobs outside the plant. Like the older workers, younger workers constantly spoke of their ability to make more money than their well educated friends who worked outside the plant. One younger worker stated that he would acquire a bachelor’s degree, but he would not use it. He intends to stay at the plant until retirement or plant closure.
Carp, Peterson & Roelfs, (1974), Cross, (1979a), Johnstone & Rivera, (1965), Boaz, (1978), and the National Center for Educational Statistics (1989) all agree that learning is additive and that the level of education influences nonparticipation. Cross (1981) agrees that the amount of formal schooling has more influence on continued education than any other variable (Cross, 1981). Individuals with less education do not aspire to acquire more. I found that to be true in this study. Older workers (ages 40-49) are content with either their GED’s or high school diploma’s. Younger workers with two to three years of college are trying to obtain their bachelor’s degree while workers with bachelor’s degrees are aspiring to obtain MBA’s.

Salaried workers either have bachelor degrees or have had some college. These workers confirm that the more education people have, the more interested they will be in further education, the more likely they will know about available opportunities, and the more they will participate (Cross, 1979b). In line with this research and in relationship to the informant responses during this study, the majority of these informants desired to participate in formal education. Three of the four salaried workers (ages 30-39) who graduated from college desired to continue their education. They spoke of the need to be ready if the plant closed.
These workers see security in having more education. They all want to be promoted to general supervisory positions. They felt strongly that education will make them more competitive within and outside the plant.

After educational attainment/level, Cross (1981) maintained that the most powerful predictor of participation in adult education is age. In this research, the pattern between nonparticipation and age appeared in several categories. Bargaining unit/individual workers and bargaining unit/focus group workers differ in their understanding of the union contract by age. Bargaining unit/individual informants were between the ages of 40 to 49 and believed that the union contract would protect them. They believed that specific provisions in the contract would provide jobs until retirement. However, bargaining unit/focus group workers who were between the ages of 30 to 39 did not believe the union protection concept and explicitly stated that the contract did not provide such protection. These individuals strongly believed in the union but felt that the other workers did not understand their union contract. The union contract added to the false sense of security for all bargaining unit workers. Because of the union contract and the concept of manufacturer loyalty to its workers, informants do not see the need for education.
Miller (1967) believe that social structure and personal need determines both the likelihood and nature of participant behavior. It appears that personal need is a factor in nonparticipation. As in this plant, there is no stated or perceived need driving the individual toward an educational objective when nonparticipation is high. One informant stressed that when she was hired, a high school diploma was a requirement. Thus, the fact that all you needed to work was a high school diploma became ingrained in the culture of the plant. Although this was not true, the educational requirement has not changed. Workers still view the high school diploma as the ultimate degree needed in the workplace. An initial definition of 'culture' is defined as "the collection of behavior patterns and beliefs that constitute standards for deciding what is, standards for deciding what can be, standards for deciding what to do about it, and standards for deciding how to go about doing it" (Goodenough, 1971 p.21-22).

A pattern between nonparticipation and length of employment among salaried informant group members (ages 20-39) with less than 15 years of employment existed. These individuals were pursuing formal education in order to promote themselves within the company or as a means of securing a job if the plant was to close. They
aspired to be competitive with salaried workers outside the plant. However, the majority of workers with 15 years or more of employment seemed content to wait for retirement. They do not see upward mobility as a possibility, nor do they feel that they can leave the plant and make as much money as they do. Dhanidina and Griffith’s (1975) economic model maintains that when perceived benefits outweigh the costs, participation will most likely occur. In this case nonparticipation occurs when the costs (less time at home, less rest, no credit or degree) outweighs the benefits. Informants desired to participate in other activities that did not include organized or formal education.

Of the seven bargaining unit/individual workers, two desired to continue their education. The others cited plans (opening a small business, hobbies etc.) that did not include continued education in any form. Workers did not view the Lifelong Learning Center’s programs as being job related education. They did not agree with Crandall (1981) and Mikulecky (1988) that there is a indirect relationship between a workers literacy skill level and job performance. They did not see the connection between basic skills and performance because they have always worked under a piece-rate system and advocated quality work. The center was not advertised as were the other job related training
programs that occurred on plant. When I asked informants about the relationship of the center to globalization or new technology, they could not answer. The need for the center was not expressed in terms of the workplace and job performance. Informants stated that they would attend the center if it had been explained to them in that manner. Thus, they did not feel obligated to participate because they did not see a connection to the job or an increase in their wages. There were no thoughts of obtaining education in order to become better individuals or progress in their communities. These informants were not concerned with education for education’s sake (Carp, Peterson, & Roelfs, (1974), Cross, (1979) & Johnstone & Rivera (1965).

Bargaining unit/focus group workers aspired to continue their education but did not see it as a means of upward mobility within the plant. They do not share the belief that plant management wanted them to acquire education for upward mobility, however, they admitted that the company placed great emphasis on it. Again, Dhanidina and Griffith’s (1975) economic model applies to this finding. The perceived costs of participation did not outweigh the benefits. The benefit informants desired was upward mobility. Since they do not envision
receipt of this benefit, they did not attempt to participate.

Within all three units, those graduating from high school sought retirement, recreational activities or education that would enhance their retirement goals, (i.e., volunteering, golfing, or writing a book). A substantial number of those with some college or who graduated from college have goals of eventually continuing their education.

Findings

-Race and gender did not play a major role in the nonparticipation of workers. Male nonparticipants out numbered female nonparticipants by one. Informants of both races and gender experienced confusion over continuing their education. They wanted to get a job or get married. Education became secondary to making good money.

-There was a pattern between nonparticipation and educational attainment. Older workers did not see the need for education beyond high school. Workers did not plan to acquire education in order to leave the plant. In this area workers had a false sense of security based on the union contract.

-There was a pattern between nonparticipation and age. There was a misunderstanding of the union contract by age. Workers 40-49 years of age believed their contract would protect them by providing jobs until retirement. However younger workers did not believe that the contract made provisions for that. There was a false sense of security based on the union contract.

-There was a pattern between nonparticipation and length of employment. Workers with 15 years or more are content to wait for retirement. Workers with less than 15 years of employment are pursuing formal education in order to promote themselves within the plant. Workers did not see the relationship between basic skills and job performance because they have always worked under a
piece-rate system and advocated quality work. Workers did not view the Basic Skills program as a means of upward mobility.

-Mature workers (ages 40-49) had a false sense of security about the continued opening of the plant.

-Employees did not view the need for improved basic skills with improved job performance and the provision of what is learned to be transferable to the workplace.

Assertion #2 The COR Model and Cultural Integration

The Chain of Response Model provided a concept to work from, however it did not provide adequate information in all categories to explain the process of nonparticipation in industry and business. I propose a modification to Cross's theoretical model to include cultural barriers. Thus, an additional category (cultural evaluation) was introduced to the COR model. The cultural evaluation category plays an equal role along with Cross's internal and external categories (Research Question #1).

The Chain of Response (COR) Model was utilized by the three informant groups (bargaining unit/individual, bargaining unit/group and salaried). Within the period since high school, bargaining unit/individual informants have evaluated their educational aspirations. According to the in depth interviews, individual reasons for not participating in further education included, being too tired, other plans, home responsibilities, lack of communication, lack of benefit, lack of testing ability, poor memory span, stigma, lack of interest/need, family responsibilities, programs do not meet the educational needs of workers, and retirement plans. These reasons are spontaneous and are not taken from the list of
barriers by Cross, (1981), that are provided as a part of the individual section at the beginning of chapter IV. However, some reasons may overlap with earlier barriers stated by informants.

In this group, two members have goals to continue their education. One aspires to attend nursing school in the near future and the other wants to continue divinity studies. The other informants were adamant when stating that they would not be interested in formal nor organizational educational programming in the future.

It is not confirmed by this research (intensity of responses) that individuals who evaluated themselves at this point and do not decide to enroll in an educational program have low self esteem. The term 'self esteem' is defined by Webster’s Dictionary as a confidence and satisfaction in oneself. These individuals see graduation from high school as being successful and feel that they can learn if they desired to do so. Many of them are not interested in continuing their education because they view their high paying jobs and retirement as an end to the need for education. Low self esteem played a role in nonparticipation, but was not the only factor. Other factors such as the lack of need played an equal role in the individual informants desire not to participate.
The contention by Darkenwald and Merriam (1982), Cross (1981), Boshier (1973), and Knox, (1977), that low self confidence gained through academic failure in school and poor achievement records because of low self esteem, results in nonparticipation was not found to be the case in this research. This is in line with Fingeret (1985), and James (1990), as they challenge this line of thought. Fingeret maintained that teachers assume students have low self concepts because of the failures of life, which results in a (teachers) condescending attitude towards students. James maintained that the self concept idea takes away the students right to self-determination (p. 24). Beder (1991) says that the jury is still out on the affect of the 'low self esteem' concept. This research acknowledges it's presence, however does not view it as the single nor most important determiner of nonparticipation.

Although some informants cited the lack of testing ability and poor memory span as reasons for nonparticipation, they also stated that they are usually tired after work and did not want to return for further education. They explained that the work at the plant is hard and physically demanding. At the end of the day, they are too tired to attend classes unless they pertain to the job. However, most classes that pertain to the
job are offered during working hours. Workers are able to attend these classes during working hours and on plant time and not their own time.

Fingeret (1983) and Freer (1990) maintained that people are able to adapt to their state of illiteracy, thus nonparticipation reflects a lack of need for continued education. This is especially true in the manufacturing work setting where rote learning is necessary to meet the quota of parts needed per day. Although the work design has changed, piece rate is still a vital part of the culture and workers are accustomed to making production, punching the same press day after day, and leaving at the end of the day. They have learned to adapt to this system, but yet integrate on-the-job training and some innovative management styles into it.

Although these informants were not motivated to continue their education, they all valued education and did not believe that their attitude about education stopped them from participating. They clearly saw the value of education over the span of time, however the 'need' was not evident. They viewed it as a necessity today, however they compared themselves to those workers with college degrees and felt compatible. Again, they have adapted to their environment and feel strongly that new information is not needed.
In general, attitudes about education were molded by their communities, family, friends, and comparison of self to peers. They also viewed education based on a 'as need to know' basis. Earlier in life they did not feel the need for continued education or lifelong education. This thought pattern is in line with Darkenwald and Merriam's (1982) psychosocial interactive model. This model maintained that if the environment encourages further education then the individual will perceive education as being positive. These workers grew up in environments where 'good jobs' were valued. As workers got older they saw the need for education for younger generations, but not for themselves.

The majority of informants stated that their past educational experiences were fine, however the attitude and negative comments of co-workers would present a problem in their participating in the Basic Skills unit of the Lifelong Learning Center. This is true because the perception of the Basic Skills unit centers around obtaining the GED. Most workers are proud of the fact that they have a high school diploma. They believe that they will be labeled if they attend the Lifelong Learning Center because of the stigma attached to not being able to read or write.

The process of devising goals that will enable an individuals to continue their education is prevalent
among this group, however many do not see the acquiring of education as a long term goal. The majority of the informants reviewed their goals and determined that they did not include further education. They held goals that included retirement, volunteer work, and beginning entrepreneurships. Of this group one individual wanted to attend nursing school and another wanted to obtain a Ph.D in Divinity. The majority of the informants did not believe that obtaining further education would improve their chances of upward mobility within the plant. The two individuals who will pursue further education are motivated for reasons that do not pertain to the plant environment (nursing and divinity). However, they believe that they will be successful in their educational endeavors. Again it was not so much that the other individuals who did not desire to participate had low self esteem, but rather they did not ‘need’ education at this point in their lives. They had good paying jobs with the hopes of retirement.

Life transitions were prevalent among these individuals, however they did not play a major role in motivating them to participate in formal or organized instruction. Only one informant cited a transition (being called to the ministry) as being a determiner in her pursuing further education. The other informants stressed that their transitions in life (divorce, single
parenting and taking care of elderly parents) were not positive forces for learning. Havighurst’s (1972) ‘teachable moment’ or the ‘right time’ for education has not occurred for these individuals.

Informants were not motivated, although special opportunities existed (Lifelong Learning Center) to participate in further education. Barriers (i.e., lack of time, primary caretaker of parents, small children to take care of and stigma) to participation were felt to be insurmountable. Of the two informants who had the desire to participate, one waited until her barrier (son reached age 17) lessened and the other stated that she did not have a specific barrier to participation.

The lack of information deterred some individuals in that they did not know what to study or how the Lifelong Learning Center’s program worked. Informants cited the lack of information about the Lifelong Learning Center as a deterrent. They maintained that accurate information might motivate them to reassess their goals and add value to obtaining further education.

Bargaining unit/focus group informants took advantage of the self evaluation process on numerous occasions throughout their lives. Their attitude changed from not wanting additional education to realizing the need for continued education. Thus, need
played an important role in the internal process of deciding whether to participate or not.

Learning is not currently a threat to these informants. They admitted to experiencing difficulty in grade school (i.e., not learning to subtract until the 4th grade, not knowing why certain areas of history were not being taught). However, the difficulty did not account for their nonparticipation in educational activities. Again, this is in line with research conducted by Fingeret (1985) and James (1990) who maintained that low self concepts are assumed for low literacy adults. Quigley (1990a) believes that the low self concept reason is social stigma attached to illiterates in the United States. Beder (1990) agrees that the perceived linkage between low self concept and failure originates from stigma. Thus, stigma perpetuates low self concept.

The informants friend’s perceived that they do not ‘need’ education because they {friends} do not see how it will benefit them. Their friends surmised that if one is making good money, why go to school. This could have been the driving force for nonparticipation, however informants stated vigorously that their friends and family members did not influence their decision not to participate in the Lifelong Learning Center. These individuals are pursuing formal education outside the
plant environment, and do not view the Lifelong Learning Center’s organized instructional program as being beneficial to their desire for upward mobility.

Other factors involving the cultural environment of the plant (stigma, potential plant closure, lack of communication) played a much greater role in the informants nonparticipation than low self concept. However, low self concept and the attitude of informants did play a role in the nonparticipation of informants, although it was minor. Low self concept is only a part of the focal point of the nonparticipatory behavior of this group.

Goals were important to this group. These individuals made and valued goals, however they felt that achieving the goal would not lead to the desired reward which is upward mobility at the plant.

Informants viewed life transitions as positive as well as negative forces in life. A transition in life can bring about decisions to participate in education either out of necessity or to not participate due to personal devastation. These informants believed that life transitions can motivate an individual to participate or not participate (added to life transition category). These individuals would agree with Havighurst’s (1972) theory that there are periods in life wherein individuals are positively responsive to
learning. However, they would add that major transitions (divorce, etc.) can provide negative responses to life transitions, thus limiting the right time for learning.

These informants do not view the opportunity of attending the Lifelong Learning Center as advanced enough. Their goals are to achieve college degrees and they perceive the Lifelong Learning Center as a place to prepare individuals for the GED. According to Darkenwald and Merriam's (1982) category of barriers (psychosocial barriers) which deals with socio economic status, working class persons may not see the usefulness of the center in achieving their educational goals. According to these informants the true needs of workers were not addressed. Among the many things workers needed, were: tutoring to pursue higher level degrees, and individualized career counseling. Also the actual relationship of the Lifelong Learning Center to jobs within the plant was never explained to these workers.

Cross (1981) acknowledges that information links motivated learners to appropriate opportunities that will enable participation. These informants believed that the method of communicating at this plant was inappropriate for the workers. Utilizing bulletin boards and flyers did not provide sufficient advertisement of the center. Informants stressed that there were other
pamphlets and surveys being circulated throughout the plant at the same time. Workers had grown tired of this method of advertisement. These workers advocated speaking directly with the workers through some type of plant meeting or forum. They agreed with Cross (1981) that the best form of communication is by word of mouth. Although these informants are motivated to participate, they are not aware that the program offers more than the GED. They can receive credit towards a degree by taking courses at a state college.

Although categories in the Chain of Response Model needed modifying in two sections, self-evaluation and life transitions for all informant groups, salaried informants were closer in their assessment of each category of the model. Through the self evaluation process they spoke freely of their desires to continue formal education. Their self confidence was evident in their knowledge of the program of study they wanted to pursue. Thus, self esteem or self confidence remains as a category under self evaluation. The positive attitude of friends and membership groups enhanced their motivational level. All group members knew that the end result of obtaining an advanced degree would be promotions within the plant or a chance to stay competitive with other salaried workers outside the plant.
Individual informants who did not desire to continue their education cited the lack of need as a major reason. They had plans to retire or acquire expertise in golf, real estate or the small business area. These informants do not feel that education is beneficial to their jobs. They work together and are aware of the possibilities of promotions, however their goals are different. Some informants want to move up the corporate ladder, while others want to retire or pursue other goals where education is not a corporate prerequisite for success. These individuals believe that pursuing goals other than education will lead to the reward they seek. When asked why they decided not to participate in the Lifelong Learning Center, informants related that their educational goals went beyond the course offerings of the center, thus they were not motivated to participate even though they felt they would have been successful. Some informants didn't want to continue their education because in the past education was not rewarded. A superintendent who has since retired, possessed an 8th grade education. Therefore, informants saw no reason to continue their education for promotion purposes. Herzberg's (1967) motivator-Hygiene Theory is evident in this section. Workers will be motivated to produce (participate) if they perceive that the result will satisfy their needs.
Critical incidents (wherein people receive recognition for special accomplishments or a feeling of pleasure or satisfaction) does not occur daily for these individuals. Since these informants are near the point of retirement, education for education's sake is not a priority for them.

Some informants had transitions that stopped them from achieving their goals however, the majority did not express transitions. The transitions were divorce, and the lack of maturity.

Special opportunities for learning plays an important role in the lives of these informants. They have the motivation to participate, however if the opportunity does not exist that will allow them to work and attend classes, they will be nonparticipants. For these informants opportunities existed outside the plant for formal education. These opportunities will allow them to maintain their positions within the plant and pursue an MBA degree. Other workers have self imposed barriers that deter them such as not being interested or dependent upon education as a way out, (want to own a business) along with the feeling of job security. These individuals feel that they are making good money, thus they do not need to continue their education.

Although these informants are motivated to participate, they have not received accurate information
about the Basic Skills unit of the Lifelong Learning Center. They are not aware that they can take courses at a state college that are transferrable to other colleges. These individuals are not linked to the appropriate opportunities that will enable them to participate because they perceive the Basic Skills unit of the Lifelong Learning Center as a program for the bargaining unit worker. They do not feel that the center will serve their educational needs nor do they inform their subordinates (bargaining unit worker) about the opportunities within the center.

**Cultural Evaluation-Modification of Cross's Theory**

The cultural evaluation category emerged as a way of understanding nonparticipation in (manufacturing) industry and business. I propose this additional category along with Cross's COR conceptual model to aid in the understanding of nonparticipation in sponsored educational programs within the work setting. This cultural category emerges from the plant environment from which the individual informants receive their cues for nonparticipation versus participation. The cultural category influence greatly the lives of workers in the workplace and determines if participation is possible. As defined earlier, culture encompasses behavior patterns and beliefs that constitute standards for deciding what is, what can be, how one feels about it,
what to do about it and how to go about doing it (Goodenough, 1971). However, there is no agreement on the definition of culture. There are additional definitions such as, 'the way we do things around here' (Deal and Kennedy, 1982), and the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and integration (Schein, 1983).

Most definitions define culture in terms of the values that individuals in organizations use to prescribe appropriate behavior. The common attributes of these definitions are that culture is a set of values held by individuals in a firm that are taken for granted and are communicated through symbolic means within the organization (Moorhead and Griffin, 1989). These values describe behavior that is accepted or unaccepted in the organization. The values are often taken for granted and are assumed rather than written down and are communicated through symbolic means (stories, myths or fairy tales). According to Moorhead and Griffin, (1989), the cultural category can be studied from several social science disciplines (sociology, social psychological, economic, anthropological). The Sociologist focuses on informal social structures and use systematic interviews, questionnaires, and other quantitative research methods to study culture. Usually
a simple typology of cultural attributes analyzes a large number of firms.

The social psychological approach emphasizes the creation and manipulation of symbols. The use of stories or information about a single event can influence decision making. The culture within organizations is best communicated through stories and examples.

The economic approach to studying organizational culture allows managers to utilize a variety of tools to provide economic advantage to the organization. Finally, the anthropological contribution to the study of culture seeks to understand "how the values and beliefs that make up a society's culture affect the structure and functioning of that society (p.498). Anthropologist looks at culture from the point of view of the people within the society. They provide thick descriptions obtained through in depth questioning and observations that clarifies the values and beliefs of the organization.

Anthropological and sociological contributions to the research of organizational culture are important, however most of the work has been done from a sociological perspective. I have chosen to study the nonparticipation of workers from an anthropological perspective. Studying the COR model from this
perspective aided in obtaining emerging themes that provided understanding of basic skills programming in the workplace (cultural evaluation). The COR model has been revised to include the emerging themes of 'cultural evaluation', and 'need'.

The revised COR model is consistent with Cross's (1981) COR model in that it assumes that nonparticipation in a learning activity (organized classes, self directed, or formal), "is not a single act but the result of a chain of responses, each evaluated by the position of the individual in his or her environment" (p. 125). There is no hierarchy of needs proposed by Cross. Figure 2 is the COR Model Revised that includes cultural evaluation. It encompasses the clear distinction of nonparticipation in the workplace. Along with Cross's original internal evaluations, section A includes the 'need for education' property that allows for individual evaluation of 'need'. This 'need' can be focused in a positive or negative manner. Workers may decide that there is a lack of need for education because they have adjusted to their environment or they may decide that there is a need for education.

Along with Cross's original external evaluations, section B encompasses the negative versus positive force of transitions that occur in life. Divorce may be a


(A)

Internal Evaluation

- Self evaluation
- Need for education
- Attitudes about education

(B)

External Evaluation

- Life transitions
- Importance of goals and expectation that participation will meet goals
- Opportunities and barriers
- Information

(C)

Cultural Evaluation

- Plant Culture
- Union Culture
- Management Culture

Nonparticipation  Participation

Figure 2: The Revised Chain-of-Response (COR) Model
motivator for learning to some individuals and a
detractor for others.

Section C encompasses the cultural aspect of the workplace. This includes the culture of the plant, union and management. Informants have to operate within three distinct environments that are regarded as one. This environment encourages further education but does not reward the obtaining of it by all individuals. The decision to participate or not participate is made when these environments are evaluated.

The assertion that nonparticipation begins with the individual is true, however, the additional factor of 'need' enters the continuum along with self esteem and attitude about education. Individuals also evaluated their 'need' for additional education in relationship to the environment in which they work.

According to Cross, the COR model continues with external factors. Life transitions are a vital part of the continuum, but Cross does not take into consideration the effect of those transitions on nonparticipation. An individual may be motivated not to participate because of his or her negative transitions. Thus, divorce can lead to the individual surmising that he or she has to work harder to make up for the loss of income as opposed to seeking education. The importance of goals and expectations that participation will meet
goals, opportunities and barriers, and information categories remain the same. However, the revised theory proposes that although individual workers may reach the point of having information that is positive about participating, nonparticipation still occurs in the workplace. Workers encounter cultural environments that encourages nonparticipation in the workplace. Stigma, lack of communication, threat of job loss (plant closure), and adversarial relationships are a part of this plant's cultural environment. This environment will change for each work site but will encompass the plant (all workers), management and/or union cultures.

The culture of this manufacturing plant's training programs included work groups, quality network, and participative management. These training programs have affected how employees view the employer/employee relationship and the pattern of thought throughout the plant. Informants view the training program culture as one of uncertainty. They maintain that 'programs come and go' therefore workers do not get excited when they are operationalized. The organization is trying hard to incorporate training programs into the workplace. Workers are introduced to these new concepts and are allowed to try them out on the plant floor. However changes within this organization are slow and workers do not necessarily claim ownership of these changes.
Schien (1990) speaks of the natural evolution of changes within an environment. Although new learning and adaptation occurs and new members enter the cultural setting, "groups do not easily give up some of their basic underlying assumptions merely because external events or new members disconfirm them" (p. 116).

Providing training programs that are presumed to be designed for personal use (basic skills) instead of benefiting the company (Quality Network) is new at this plant. Previously, workers believed that everything was being done to maintain the existence of the plant, thus, a new program that workers do not see as being a part of that framework is not easily accepted.

The properties under cultural evaluation are plant culture, union culture and management culture. This unit may change for each work setting. Plant floor culture interacts with the union, supervisors, and bargaining unit workers. The bargaining unit worker operates within the culture of the union and supervisors. They must be versatile, yet meet the needs of each group. Within the plant culture, individuals may find it safer within their work environment on the plant floor to maintain a certain level of knowledge, so as to fit in or maintain their jobs. An example of the above occurred with a bargaining unit worker who had been placed on the second floor as a part of the job
bank (rather than laying off workers, they are placed in other positions within the plant) program. The worker related that it has been hard getting the training needed for the job.

The one guy was afraid I was going to take his job. ...He's a little resentful that somebody's in the office with him (June).

Another informant related his frustration after acquiring additional education. He stated:

...I've run into situations where supervisors know that I've gone to school are intimidated types...cause I can do a lot of things it's almost like, well, I don't want you doing that...you're trying to take away from my job...it's conveyed in nonverbal actions...it's conveyed through their mannerisms and things like that. I went back to school to get to management organization which you can't and then when I do run into some individuals in management they are...they're threatened because I'm a union worker...and there's a stigma between management and union (James).

Workers will not volunteer for learning if their leadership status is threatened within the environmental 'safety net' of the work place. Within this 'safety net' workers are not known for their educational expertise but rather their performance and leadership. One bargaining unit informant explains how she perceived co-workers would act towards individuals who may decide to attend the Lifelong Learning Center. She stated:

I know what they say about some. They think they are that much better than you are. They are employees just like you are employee. ...They get some kind of notion that there is some kind of prestige by them going up there
{lifelong learning center} and they look at you {if you don’t go} to say that you are a nobody and they’re somebody because you’re not going and they have the nerve to turn their nose up at you. ...It’s thought to be prestigious in a way but then after you get finish with these courses you’re off limits. Management doesn’t do anything to try to promote you into doing something better. Oh, No. You stay right where you are (Rose).

The informants appeared to be confident in their own abilities but wanted to maintain peer relationships that allowed them to fit in and maintain their status as a plant floor worker.

Of the three basic approaches to describing organizational culture, Parson’s (1937) AGIL (adaptation, goal attainment, integration and legitimacy) model offers some perspective into the plant floor culture. He postulates that a social system must meet certain functions in order to survive and prosper. Although the model is dated and abstract, it describes certain aspects of the plant floor environment. When workers state that they value education and its affect on the workplace, they are adapting a value that is specific to new workplace environments. Generally, a high school diploma is valued. Most plant workers do not go beyond that level of education. The value of integrating new approaches (ie., work groups, participative management) in order to improve the quality of parts meets the criteria for goal attainment. Integration occurs when workers sense their importance
to the company (i.e., job bank program) and legitimacy occurs when workers promote the production of quality parts and provide suggestions as to how to make quality parts that will reach outside the plant environment.

All workers interact with the union culture. Currently, union, management and the worker interact on a daily basis. They are equally trying to improve worker performance through innovative programming. According to Norman (1988) the union once placed emphasis on 'bread and butter' issues but are now emphasizing human development and job security. Although great progress has been made in bringing union and management together, the adversarial climate still exists. Every aspect of the workplace has to be monitored by the union as union/management tries to improve worker performance through innovative programming. In the area of improving worker performance, Peters and Waterman (1982) offers six attributes that have been successful in coordinating the relationship between culture and performance. Their approach to organizational culture focused on organizational culture and performance. The attributes include action oriented decision making (bias for action), valuing the customer (stay close to the customer), encourage independent, creative, even risk-taking activity, (autonomy and entrepreneurship),
valuing workers (productivity through people), stay in touch with the firms essential business (hands-on-management), stay in related industries, (stick to the knitting), have few administrative layers (simple form, lean staff) and be loosely organized (fewer rules and regulations, and fewer staff) but tightly organized in beliefs and values (simultaneously loosely and tightly organized).

Workers are distrustful of the union and management. They feel that the union makes too many concessions and management ask for too many. However, they want to maintain their jobs, with union protection, therefore they agree with the union/management connection. This culture is deeply rooted and individuals have adapted to its guidelines.

Management’s role in shaping the culture of the plant is evident. The inclusion of participative management, work groups and quality network programs have changed the way management view the hourly worker, union involvement, and specific rules and guidelines. Incorporating participative management, work groups and other quality network programs within the work environment also aided in the way workers view management. There is a positive, yet distrustful attitude which is an improvement from the negative attitude that has permeated this environment.
Even with the new positive attitude between the cultural units, management has a great deal of improvements to make. Specific concerns included: supervisors not wishing to share their work space, the lack of communication and the need for market strategy for new programs. An investment in video-tapes or other modes of communication would be helpful in marketing training programs.

Ouchi's (1981) framework attempted to develop a model for analyzing the cultural systems of organizations. He developed seven points of comparison for a typical Japanese firm, Type Z American firm and a typical American firm. The points of comparison are: commitment to employees, evaluation, careers, control, decision making, responsibility, and concern for people. He maintains that the culture of the typical American firm is different from that of the Japanese and Type Z American firm. Several of the differences involve long term (Type Z American and Japanese firms) versus short-term employment (typical American); broad (Type Z and Japanese) versus narrow career path (typical American); and holistic (Type Z and Japanese) versus narrow (typical American) concern for people.

From this comparison Ouchi maintained that U.S. companies should adopt a new approach to management in order to improve productivity. He maintains that
organizations should draw characteristics from Japanese and successful U.S. firms to improve productivity. This approach to management is Ouchi’s Theory Z (Type Z). Type Z organizations would include, long term employment, consensual decision making, individual responsibility, slow evaluation and promotion, implicit, informal control with explicit, formalized measures of performance, and moderate specialized career paths.

Efforts to include some of these points and blend them into the cultural aspects of American firms have been made by the plant. However, an effort to include the workers as decision makers and provide individual responsibility is not always seen by workers as a positive move. The lack of trust within this culture is carried over into the training program. Although the plant shares in the national philosophy of its owners, advocating that workers benefit from new technology and sustaining collaborative partnerships with the union, workers do not trust the new image being espoused by the plant and the union. Corporate priorities of product quality and cost competitiveness are not visualized on the plant floor. Total input by workers are not viewed by all administrators as being good. Workers maintain that these individuals offer 'lip service' when they agree to participative management. Workers believe that their suggestions are not taken seriously. Workers
believe that obtaining additional education will not improve their status on the plant floor, nor will it create promotions for individuals desiring to progress up the corporate ladder. Ouchi’s Theory Z is appropriate for this company and is being processed through the plant environment. However, the strong plant, union and management culture of distrustfulness contribute roadblocks that slow the progress of training emphasis advocated by all three groups.

A clear, distinct cultural pattern exists at the plant. Specifically the culture included the following aspects:

**Plant**

-a clear distinction between management and hourly workers (bargaining unit members).

-The culture of the plant controls the workers perceptions and behavior.

-The culture protects itself from change by institutionalizing certain practices such as using the 2nd floor for management and the plant floor for hourly workers.

-Corporate vision is not shared by workers.

-Although attention was placed on the way people manage work, the way people think was not dealt with, thus corporate change becomes impossible. Participative management, teamwork, quality network programs are positive forces within this environment, however workers do not believe that these things are important to the company.

-Factory workers encompass those who are illiterate to those who have graduate degrees.
Specific inconsistencies that go along with a plant that incorporates team work but yet maintain a piece-rate environment.

Group norms allows stigma to remain a focal point of the culture.

Employee ideas are not readily accepted by supervisors.

The uncertainty of plant survival is an ingrained part of the culture.

**Union**

Although union and management work together on new programs, there is a certain amount of protectiveness of union officials and a certain amount of management protectiveness. They are all watching each other.

Workers play an important role in that they want change but only with unionized protection.

Culture is deeply rooted and very hard to change.

Company programs lack credibility because workers don’t see the benefit for them.

**Management**

Participative management or work groups are not genuinely accepted by supervisors because they lose authority and control.

The lack of market strategy for communicating programs to workers hinders the full understanding of planned programs.

**Findings**

Although the COR model is a useful and valid guide to access nonparticipation in the workplace, the self-evaluation and life transitions categories of the COR model do not provide adequate information to explain nonparticipation in the manufacturing setting.

Need played an important role in the internal process of evaluating if participation in education
will occur. Low self esteem played a role in nonparticipation, but was not the only factor.

-Workers have adapted to their environment and feel strongly that new information is not needed. Although they value education over the span of time, they felt compatible to their peers with college degrees. They view their high paying jobs and retirement as an end to the need for education.

-Life transitions can be negative (motivates nonparticipation) as well as positive (motivates participation). For these workers it was negative.

-The cultural environment of the plant (i.e., stigma, plant closure, lack of communication) played a greater role in informant nonparticipation than internal and external factors.

-The properties under cultural evaluation are plant culture, union culture, and management culture. Plant floor culture—the informants appeared to be confident in their own abilities, but wanted to maintain peer relationships that allows them to fit in and maintain their status as a plant floor worker. Union culture—although great progress has been made in bringing union and management together, the adversarial climate still exists. With the new co-sponsorship of programs, workers are distrustful of the union and management. Management culture—management has a definite role in shaping the culture of the plant. Although they have introduced participative management, work groups and other quality network programs, there is work to be done in the areas of supervisor acceptance of new programs and devising market strategies for communications.

Assertion #3 Barriers to Nonparticipation

3) The reasons for nonparticipation among salaried and bargaining unit workers are similar in the areas of home responsibilities, time, lack of credit or degree, inappropriate course of study, lack of information, attendance requirement, tiredness and plant closure. They differ in the areas of low grades in the past and stigma. (Research Question’s #2 and #3).
The major reasons workers did not participate in educational programs were: lack of need/interest, stigma, retirement plans, lack of benefits, being tired, other plans, lack of communication, program did not meet the educational needs of workers and cultural constraints. Reasons provided that coincided with the original barriers to learning (Cross, 1981) are: lack of information, home responsibilities, no way to get credit or degree, low grades in the past, tired of school, attendance requirement, and uncertainty about what to learn or what it would lead to.

Salaried workers viewed upward mobility as a positive connection to participation, while bargaining unit workers viewed it negatively. Bargaining unit workers do view upward mobility as a part of their work history at the plant, thus reinforcing nonparticipation for these individuals.

The major difference between salaried and bargaining unit worker’s answers to the reasons for nonparticipation are low grades in the past and stigma. Unlike salaried workers, bargaining unit informants stated that they had low grades in the past. However, all of the informants who spoke of low grades attended
TABLE 6

Reasons for nonparticipation in the Basic Skills unit of the Lifelong Learning Center

**Institutional Barriers**
- Lack of information
- No way to get credit or degree
- Attendance requirement

**Situational Barriers**
- Home responsibilities
- Time

**Dispositional Barriers**
- Low grades in the past
- Tired of school, classes
- Don’t know what to learn or what it would lead to

**Cultural Barriers**
- Too tired after work (physical labor)
- Lack of communication
- Lack of benefit to the worker
- Programs do not meet the educational needs of workers
- Stigma
- Lack of need/interest
- Plan to retire
- Other plans
- Adversarial relationship in the workplace
college and have goals of obtaining a higher educational degree.

Salaried workers did not cite low grades or stigma as a reason for nonparticipation. Stigma is not viewed by the salaried worker as a problem at the plant primarily because they perceive themselves as peers of other salaried workers. They also feel that they are the ones who accomplish tasks and work harder than 2nd floor salaried workers.

In Table 1 informants responded to a list of barriers posited by Cross (1981). These barriers were utilized when I provided a description of each to individual informants. When ascertaining the reason informants did not participate in the Basic Skills unit of the Lifelong Learning Center I received spontaneous answers (table 6) without the assistance of a list of barriers nor reference to the list of barriers. Table 6 provides those reasons which have been categorized according to Cross's three categories and the proposed cultural category.

Informants stated three reasons (lack of information, no way to get credit or degree and attendance requirement) for nonparticipation under the Institutional barriers as categorized by Cross (1981). The reasons not given were 'inappropriate course of study and courses aren't scheduled when I can attend'.
I believe that informants linked those two reasons to a reason under the cultural category, 'programs do not meet the educational needs of workers'. It is not the inappropriateness of courses or scheduling problems that prevented participation for these individuals. Workers look at the program being offered in relationship to their goals and assess a need. They did not feel the need for basic skills but rather a need for assistance in courses they planned to take at the college level.

Situational barriers included, home responsibilities and lack of time. Informants overwhelmingly stated that their home life took precedence over any outside activity. The lack of time to attend training programs stemmed from the need to be at home after work.

Informants did not have to be concerned with the 'cost' of the program or 'transportation'. The program was free for all workers and was offered on plant. Although friends and family members played an important role in the lives of these individuals, they did not present a problem linked to nonparticipation. The stigma within the workplace contributed to their nonparticipation. Informants cited problems with work related friendships as being a problem, however these friends did not stop them from participating in the training program.
Dispositional barriers stated by informants were: low grades in the past, tired of school, classes and don’t know what to learn or what it would lead to. Informants did not cite ‘afraid that you’re too old to begin and don’t enjoy studying as reasons for nonparticipation’. These were average age workers.

The cultural barriers cited will vary from workplace to workplace. Workers felt that they worked hard, thus at the end of the day they wanted to leave the work environment. They described a hot, high paced work setting with little or no contact with outside environments during working hours.

They also cited the lack of communication as a reason for nonparticipation. According to Ruch (1984), the term communication is defined as ‘transferring thought from one individual to another’. Although methods of downward (flyers, brochures, bulletin boards and company newsletters) communication were used as well as upward communication (using ‘Ask Me’ group members and the opening day ceremony) workers were not well informed about the Lifelong Learning Center. This is in line with a study conducted by Merrihue (1960) which compared the subjects employees considered important to those of the supervisors. He found that the top three subjects on the employees list were the lowest three subjects on the foremen’s list.
Workers did not claim ownership of the training program because they did not feel involved in the implementation of it. They did not assess a benefit to them through the advertisements distributed by the program. They were not offered release time during working hours, academic credit, nor certificates as a result of their participation. The center was never fully connected to the other training programs occurring in the plant like Quality Network or work groups. Since it was never explained as a mechanism by which workers could improve or maintain their jobs or from an economic perspective, workers did not see it as beneficial to them. Bargaining unit workers did not see the possibility of being promoted.

After assessing the flyers and brochures advertising the center, workers did not feel that the program met their needs. All of the workers were high school graduates and many held additional educational degrees or coursework. They wanted assistance with upgrading skills associated with specific courses.

Stigma played a role in this work environment. Workers without high school diplomas would not volunteer to be interviewed for this research because of fear that others would identify them as not being able to read or write. Even workers who referred some of these individuals to the researcher were reluctant to do so.
At this point within the plant environment, individual workers are not aware of who are not high school graduates. In most instances, informants thought that a requirement for employment was a high school diploma. When the program started, some workers were shocked that a fellow worker did not have a diploma.

Other forms of stigma exists within the plant. The location of the Lifelong Learning Center on the 2nd floor of the administrative building presented participation problems. Workers felt that members of management 'look down on them'. Their perception is that management views them as greasy, non-educated individuals who only know how to punch a press and make widgets.

The reason for nonparticipation by workers also included the lack of need or interest. Some workers viewed their high salaries and retirement plan as security from ever having to need additional education. Workers (salaried) who did see the benefit aspired to receive promotions after obtaining additional degrees.

In addition, workers viewed plans to retire and other plans (golfing, writing a book, opening a small business) as being the final stage in their lives. They all aspired to reach retirement at this plant. They did not believe that the plant would ever close because many had heard the threat of closure for years. They felt a
false sense of security in that the plant has not
closed. They felt strongly that plant management and
the union will protect them.

There is a strong union culture within the plant,
that presents a sense of security for Bargaining unit
workers. This sense of security is based on the fact
that the union has always been able to aid in
maintaining the life styles workers have become accustom
to living. The union is not a direct reason for
nonparticipation, however it impacts the decision not to
participate from two perspectives. The relationship
between union and management is constantly under
scrutiny by the worker. However, the union is an
integral part of the culture, thus workers depend on it
as a voice. They see a need for a relationship between
union and management but distrust it. They do not want
to make too many concessions. Secondly, the union is a
partner in the Lifelong Learning Center and advocates
it's use by the workers. However, workers have become
somewhat skeptical of the union and feel that it may be
becoming too close to management. Simple communication
to workers about the Lifelong Learning Center and the
reasons for union collaboration will alleviate this
concern. Workers want to maintain their jobs and as
long as the center is related to the job, they will
approve of the union involvement.
Findings

- There is no single reason for nonparticipation. Each informant had at least two or more reasons for not participating. This is in line with Tough’s (1968) finding that there is no single reason for adult learning.

- Reasons for nonparticipation are in line with Cross’s barriers to learning (i.e., home responsibilities, lack of information, don’t know what to learn or what it would lead to) however, workers in industry and business have additional reasons that encompasses the workplace such as retirement plans, being tired, lack of communication, program not meeting the needs of workers, stigma, lack of benefits and other cultural constraints.

- Primarily, workers expressed the same reasons for not participating in the Basic Skills program with the exception of two: low grades in the past and stigma.

Assertion #4 Corporate Culture and Nonparticipation

4. The organization’s culture affects nonparticipation. Cultural factors at the plant included the location of the program on the 2nd floor, the threat of plant closure, stigma, lack of communication, and lack of benefits received by participants (Research Question #4).

The location of the Lifelong Learning Center on the second floor acts as a barrier to participation. Workers are not comfortable entering or attending classes on the 2nd floor because it has always denoted punishment or reprimand in the past. Only salaried workers work on this floor and bargaining unit workers felt that salaried workers viewed themselves as having more status and being better educated than they are.
Beder (1991) talks about settings that convey a symbolic message and the reaction of nonparticipants. He stated that "the workplace for some may symbolize toil and constraints on freedom" (p. 84). Thus, nonparticipation may occur because of the negative symbolism attached to the location of the program. This is the case with the location of the Lifelong Learning Center at this plant. It symbolizes constraints workers endured for years.

Other aspects of the cultural evaluation of the plant included the stigma felt by bargaining unit workers within the plant environment. Stigma is attached to the acquiring of basic skills, and workers do not want to subject themselves to the scrutiny of co-workers and salaried workers on the 2nd floor. When specific cultural aspects of the plant were discussed, salaried workers tend to lower the importance of the concern about stigma. *Bargaining unit workers* maintain that stigma exists and presents a problem with workers going to the 2nd floor where the Lifelong Learning Center is located. *Salaried workers* acknowledge the fact that it does exist, however they maintain that it vanished seven years ago when bargaining unit workers were allowed to walk freely on the 2nd floor. However, the literature agrees with bargaining unit workers in that Beder (1991) maintain that stigma is attached to low literacy in American society. Quigley (1990) stated
that low literacy has been viewed as a national menace, an impending disaster, and a moral disgrace. Because individuals with low levels of reading and writing have been labeled as incompetent, unproductive and incapable of making informed decisions (Ehringhaus, 1990), no one wants to be labeled as needing basic skills.

The usual adversarial climate between union and management exists, however joint sponsorship of programs lessen the day to day conflicts. At the plant, workers express their agreement with the introduction of participative management, however there is still a significant amount of distrust between unionized workers and management. Prior concessions have led workers to feel as if they are being 'sold down the river' by union representatives who get too cozy with management. This cultural climate of distrust along with the union representatives desire to integrate union and management puts a strain on the environment.

A move has been made by executives and high ranking union officials to introduce new management styles and other programs into the workplace. Although lower level workers understand the need for co-sponsorship, the overall culture of the workplace is slow to change. They all agree that co-sponsored programs are the best way, however no-one wants to give up their position of autonomy within the environment.
The threat of plant closure has been a focal point of the plant culture for more than 15 years (as stated by informants) due to economic constraints. This threat permeates the lives of individuals and creates an atmosphere of uncertainty. Many bargaining unit workers simply dismiss it as a ploy by management to obtain concessions in the union contract. Whatever the reason for the threat of plant closure, it has become an integral part of plant culture. As a whole, bargaining unit workers do not believe that the plant will close which reinforces nonparticipation. Workers do not see the educational unit as being needed to maintain or improve their productivity, especially since they will maintain well paying jobs (lack of need). These workers have never discussed the global economy and workplace changes that will affect them in the future. Therefore the need for improved basic skills through organized instruction or formal learning is not a priority.

The lack of communication becomes a part of the culture of the plant. Information of the move to a global economy and other aspects of the economy that affect the livelihood of workers are not tied into training programs. Informants are unaware of the significance of sponsored programs in relationship to global competition and productivity. They are accustomed to quick fix programs that allow release time
from work. They do not claim ownership of the Basic Skills unit, thus they do not readily participate in it. If the training program is advertised as an aid to job performance or is needed to maintain their job, then they would readily participate. However, if the training program is only announced and the informant sees no real value to the informant, then nonparticipation occurs. Workers want to know the tangible and intangible benefits from program participation. This is related to receiving a full day's pay for a full day of work.

Salaried informants admitted that they did not actively promote nor encourage their subordinates to investigate the Basic Skills unit of the Lifelong Learning Center. Bargaining unit informants did not feel that the Lifelong Learning Center included them as potential users. They maintained that the opening day ceremonies begun the process of eliminating them. The media, personnel from the University and top management and union personnel from the plant attended the exercise in a room on the 2nd floor of the administrative unit. A select number of bargaining unit workers attended the opening along with "Ask Me" recruiters. Other bargaining unit workers had to work on the plant floor during the time of the opening ceremony. Bargaining unit members felt that management views education as
being important as long as it does not interfere with production.

Informants stressed the fact that attempts to recruit students, and advertise the center were not done with them in mind. The center’s personnel expected the workers to quietly report to the 2nd floor when they were not accustomed to doing so. Workers were also accustomed to explanations of new programs within their environment. Even though bargaining unit members were used as "Ask Me" recruiters, they did not feel as if they were a part of the overall center. The method of recruitment for these individuals were questioned in that they did not volunteer, but were told to participate.

Since these individuals did not claim ownership of the Lifelong Learning Center, they did not readily participate. Beder (1990) suggests a differentiated marketing strategy for attracting adult learners. Because literacy (basic skills) has a different value for different people, desired benefits from participating should be ascertained. After which programs, promotional activities and locations should be designed to appeal to each identified subgroup interested in participating in the program. Thus, the culture of the worksite will dictate marketing strategy to ensure program success.
Findings

-The location of the Lifelong Learning Center’s Basic Skills unit on the 2nd floor aided in the nonparticipation of workers.

-The organization’s culture encompasses stigma experienced by bargaining unit workers, union-management co-sponsorship of programs which stimulates a minor reduction in the adversarial climate, the lack of ‘need’ permeated by high salaries, the threat of plant closure, and the lack of communication and benefits.

Recommendations For Further Research

This study provided an insight toward understanding nonparticipation in organized instruction in the workplace. It has served to identify reasons workers do not participate in sponsored programs at the worksite. The workers perspective of nonparticipation has been incorporated into the existing participation theory of Cross (1981). This has been accomplished by adding the cultural evaluation category to the COR model. The beginnings of grounded theory in this area utilizes existing theory to address workplace issues of nonparticipation.

The present study has served as a beginning process of understanding nonparticipation in relationship to seven domains: self evaluation, attitudes about education, importance of goals and expectation that participation will meet goals, life’s transitions, opportunities and barriers, information and plant culture. An added domain is proposed to encompass
corporate culture which grouped the original domains into three categories (internal, external and cultural). The identification of categories and other properties that have an impact on nonparticipation in the workplace has only begun. Continued research is needed that focuses on why people do not participate in educational or training programs in the environment in which they live and work.

Studies designed to address questions such as the following would add to the current understanding of training programs designed by Human Resource Development and Adult Education professionals to improve employee performance in the workplace.

1. How do the perceptions of Chief Executive officers, plant managers and HRD professionals impact the nonparticipation of workers? What are the implications for cultural change within the environment from these individuals?

2. What role does the instructor's compatibility to the cultural environment play in the nonparticipation of workers.

3. How does corporate culture impact the nonparticipation of workers? What is the role of change within the culture of the workplace? Do workers agree with the cultural change process?

4. How does the perceived lack of need affect the nonparticipation of workers. What are the implications for management and worker involvement in alleviating this perception?

5. What market strategies can be utilized in a union/management training program that
will enable workers to make informed choices concerning participation?

6. What are the organizational and formal learning needs of functionally literate workers? How should their needs be met? What are the implications for program development?

7. How can corporations, adult educators, training specialist and others diminish the role stigma plays in nonparticipation? What are the implications for future program development in the workplace?

8. How can corporations and workers alleviate barriers to learning? What existing avenues are being taken in programs throughout the world to remove barriers to learning. What are the implications for workplace Basic Skills programs?

Implications

The reasons for nonparticipation in educational programs within the workplace encompass internal, external and cultural evaluations. Workers within this manufacturing facility utilized all three categories to assess if they wanted to participate in a union/management sponsored training program.

Much of the literature in this area centers around demographic explanations (Beder, 1990) of nonparticipation and emphasizes the lack of self esteem as specific reasons for nonparticipation. However, this research shows that there are many reasons for nonparticipation, all of which could be as equally important in the decision making process.
Specific implications of the research for practitioners are:

1. Educational programs must meet the needs of the workforce or the group it is intended to reach. While survey type needs analysis is necessary and valuable, a representative sample of open-ended questions should be utilized to ascertain the true feelings of the employees. Employees do not always complete surveys. Direct interviews may be a better way to ascertain the information needed.

2. There should be room for upgrading and downgrading the program offerings to meet the needs of the workers. Maintaining a rigid program only serves to alienate participants. These programs need to be flexible in addressing the needs of the individual worker (ie., tutoring).

3. Workers should be aware of the benefits of each program being offered. Answers to questions of need, value, and importance should be readily available and utilized as a part of the marketing strategy of the program.

4. Effective communication strategies must be utilized to advertise the program. Market strategy for programs must be carefully devised and employee preference in information sources should be determined. This will enable the worker to 'buy into' the program concept.

5. Perceived, known and unknown cultural factors must play a role in opening an educational center. The cultural climate of the workplace must be taken into consideration when planning to introduce new programs. The way the program is introduced to the workforce may determine its acceptability.

6. The decision to use workplace materials in the center should be carefully monitored. Some workers may resent having to utilize this material outside
of the plant floor. They may feel threatened and intimidated. Thus training programs should carefully monitor the need to use such material.

7. The intended users of the center or program must claim ownership of it to insure success. Workers who actively participate in the designing and implementation of a specific program usually claim ownership of that program.

9. The Lifelong Learning Center should be linked to other training programs within the workplace. If all programs come out of this environment, then the stigma attached will be lessened.

10. Programs devised to provide Basic Skills training for workers should be located within a neutral environment. This location should be within easy access to the workers it proposes to serve, yet provide privacy.

11. Potential barriers to participation should be addressed throughout the planning stages of the program. Specific barriers (child care, time, stigma) should be dealt with by the organization. Support mechanisms (Counselor) should be in place to aid workers desiring to participate.

Afterword

Less research should be conducted on who participates and more on why and how they participate. Socio-demographic analysis (the study of participation as a function of race, sex, age, income, education, place of residence) becomes nonproductive when it is used as a constant reminder of the inadequacies of one group. That type of research serves as a process of eliminating individuals who might other wise
participate, if the stigma attached to participating was not present.

Anderson and Darkenwald (1979) found that only 10 percent of the variance associated with participation is accounted for when conducting research on who participates. I maintain that the individuals self esteem is lowered tremendously when these data are utilized to describe their lack of participation.

The category of self-esteem is addressed in every aspect of motivational theory and is a needed entity in participation. With this in mind, I maintain that the constant quoting of demographic data has only served to minimize self esteem and nonparticipation in Basic Skills programs. Individuals perceive hopelessness through the general knowledge of their inability as a group to obtain further education. As the years progress I hope that we will go beyond the race and age of an individual and deal with the holistic world of the nonparticipant. One’s perception of the workers world will not determine nor enhance his/her participation rate. If we continuously speak about basic skills in negative terms, workers will not be motivated to participate.
APPENDIX A

Interview Guide
NONPARTICIPATION
RESEARCH STUDY
INTERVIEW GUIDE

A) Name: _________________________________
Race: _______

Job Title: ______________________________
Sex: _______

Telephone #: __________________________
Age: _______

B) Educational Background:
___Grade School  ___High School  ___College
___Technical School  ___Community College

C) Marital Status:
___Single  ___Married  ___Divorced  ___Widowed
___Never Married  ___Separated

Dependent(s):
___Boy(s)  ___Girl(s)  ___Parent

D) Length of time at the plant
____Number of years

E) List (reasons)
Institutional Barriers:
___inappropriate course of study
___courses aren’t scheduled when I can attend
___lack of information
___attendance requirements
___red tape
___no way to get credit or degree

Situational Barriers:
___cost
___time
___home responsibilities
___transportation
___friends or family don’t like the idea

Dispositional Barriers:
___afraid that you’re too old to begin
___low grades in the past
___don’t enjoy studying
___tired of school, classes
___don’t know what to learn or what it would lead to
F) How has the Lifelong Learning Center been advertised to the workers in your area?

G) Chain of Response Model:

1) Self Evaluation (confidence in your ability)
   Have you ever evaluated the reason why you did not participate in educational activities?

2) Attitude about education (past experiences)
   Attitude of friends and significant others
   Have you gotten beyond this point?

3) Goals
   Do you have educational goals? How important is it to have goals? Do you think you would succeed if you decided to enroll in classes sponsored by the center?
   If you participate, will you succeed?

4) Do you have a desire to participate?

5) Life Transitions
   Were there positive forces for learning in your life? (Divorce or loss of job which may trigger a desire to participate in education)

6) Do you think that you could learn or acquire knowledge in any of the programs offered by the center, i.e. self development, interpersonal relationships.

7) Have you ever doubted your ability to attend other learning institutions?

8) Tell me about your experience in grade school? Did you do well in school?

9) Do your friends value education?

10) What would happen if your friends saw you going to the Lifelong Learning Center?

H) Have you had difficulty achieving your educational goals? If so, what has made achieving your goals difficult?

I) What do you want to be doing 3, 5, 10 years from now?

J) Are you aware of the center's programs?
K) Have you ever participated in educational programs at Inland Fisher Guide? If yes, what did you gain? If no, why not?

L) Why are you not attending the Lifelong Learning Center? Do you feel that your life will change if you attend? How will your life change?

M) What do you believe to be the attitude of management toward (hourly, salaried) your attending educational programs?

N) What factors discouraged or hindered you from participating in the Lifelong Learning Center?

O) How has the plant working environment affected your participation?

P) What comes to your mind when you go to the second floor of the Administration building? Does this play a role in your attending the Lifelong Learning Center?

Q) Does having your peers operate the Learning Center affect whether or not you will attend it?
APPENDIX B

Abstract submitted to the plant
ABSTRACT

March 8, 1991

Mr. Mark W. Pierce
Education and Training
Inland Fisher Guide
200 Georgesville Road
Columbus, Ohio

Dear Mr. Mark Pierce:

I am writing as a follow up to our meeting on February 21, 1991. I am officially requesting permission to conduct my dissertation research at the General Motors-Inland Fisher Guide Plant. This research is being conducted to increase the understanding of why shop floor workers do not participate in a union/management sponsored basic skills programs.

I am requesting the following support from the Inland Fisher Guide Plant: (a) provide a total of eight hours of on-plant access to individuals participating in the two focus groups ("Ask Me" recruiters and union/management target group); (b) provide a private facility to meet with focus group members; (c) provide refreshments for the two focus groups; (d) permission to set the date for focus group meetings with Mr. Francisco and Mr. Pierce; and (e) allow the posting of flyers requesting worker participation in an off-plant research project.

I will provide exclusive confidentiality for all participants. Individual names will not be used in any
written documentation of the focus group meeting; nor will off-plant participant names be utilized with on-plant individuals. Documentation of interview sessions will be number coded.

A report of findings and recommendations will be presented to Mr. Francisco and Mr. Pierce at the end of the research period.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Ora Spann

cc: Mr. Ralph Francisco
APPENDIX C

Permission to conduct research letter
June 18, 1991

Dr. James Sage
160 Ramseyer Hall
29 W. Woodruff
Columbus, Ohio 43210-1177

Dr. Sage:

This is to offer the commitment and support of the Inland Fisher Guide-General Motors Division to research being conducted by Ora Spann (Ph.D. candidate at The Ohio State University). This research will involve individual and focus group interviews to be scheduled during a one month period beginning June 24, 1991. The researcher will provide an anonymous summary of the findings. Inland Fisher Guide will provide access to the facility and individuals for interviewing purposes.

If you have any questions you can contact Mark Pierce, Supervisor of Education and Training at 275-5132.

Jim Siders
Personnel Director
APPENDIX D

Consent Form
CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN
SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

I consent to participating in (or my child's participation in) research entitled:

REASONS FOR NONPARTICIPATION IN A UNION/MANAGEMENT SPONSORED LIFE-LONG
LEARNING TRAINING PROGRAM AT INLAND FISHER GUIDE-GENERAL MOTORS DIVISION

ORA SPANN _______________________ or his/her authorized representative has
(Principal Investigator)
explained the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and the
expected duration of my (my child's) participation. Possible benefits of the
study have been described as have alternative procedures, if such procedures
are applicable and available.

I acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to obtain additional information
regarding the study and that any questions I have raised have been answered to
my full satisfaction. Further, I understand that I am (my child is) free to
withdraw consent at any time and to discontinue participation in the study
without prejudice to me (my child).

Finally, I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the consent form.
I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date: ____________________________ Signed: ______________________
(Participant)

Signed: _______________________
(Principal Investigator or his/ her Authorized Representative)

Signed: _______________________
(Person Authorized to Consent for Participant - If Required)

Witness: _______________________

HS-027 (Rev. 1/87) --(To be used only in connection with social and behavioral research.)
APPENDIX E

Meetings, Interviews and Observations
Meetings Attended, Persons Interviewed, and Observations

March 1990–November, 1991


Ms. Sandra G. Pritz, Senior Program Associate, Center on Education and Training for Employment—The Ohio State University.

Dr. William D. Dowling, Director, Center for Adult Education and Associate Professor of Adult Education—The Ohio State University.

Mr. Dale C. Brandenburg, Senior Researcher, Industrial Technology Institute—Ann Arbor, Michigan—"Solutions to Literacy Deficiencies in the workplace: A Performance Technologist Perspective" March 28, 1990.

The Lifelong Learning Center’s Opening Ceremonies—September 4, 1990.

Ms. Pat Scott—Quality Network Trainer, Inland Fisher Guide-General Motors Division, Columbus, Ohio.

Ms. Debbie Ferreli—Secretary—Lifelong Learning Center, Inland Fisher Guide-General Motors Division, Columbus, Ohio.

Mr. Mark Pierce, Training Specialist—Inland Fisher Guide-General Motors Division, Columbus, Ohio.

Mr. Ralph Francisco, Union Representative—Inland Fisher Guide-General Motors Division, Columbus, Ohio.

**Meetings held concurrent with observations

Group meeting with Dr. William Dowling, Mr. Mark Pierce, and Mr. Ralph Francisco.

Informant interview with Debbie-May 11, 1991
Informant interview with Rose-June 18, 1991
Informant interview with Toby-June 20, 1991.
Informant interview with Paul, Joe, Matt, and Rand-June 26, 1991
Informant interview with Sue, Mary and Julie. June 27, 1991.
Informant interview with Wanda-July 16, 1991
Informant interview with Betty-July 16, 1991
Group informant (focus group) interviews with Ella, Thomas, James, and Bobbie-July 18, 1991

Follow-up telephone interviews with informants throughout the month of June, July, and August.
References


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