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THE LEARNING PROCESS OF ACCESS TRAINEES:
AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDY MOTIVES AND STRATEGIES.

A RESEARCH REPORT PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
BUSINESS STUDIES AT MASSEY UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The study applied Biggs' Study Process Questionnaire to the context of transition education in an investigation of the approaches, motivations to learn and strategies trainees in Access Training Scheme used in their learning. Respondents were also asked information about their age, sex, educational qualification, ethnic origin and how long they had been without a job.

Three training centres in Palmerston North city were chosen. The first centre conducted a course in drama, the second, a course in Maori language and culture, and the third, a course in basic computer skills. The Study Process Questionnaire was administered to 33 subjects, 16 males and 17 females.

The Study Process Questionnaire is concerned with three main approaches to studying and their three associated motivations and strategies. Surface Approach is dominated by extrinsic motivations where a learner concern is with obtaining a qualification. The study strategy involves memorising and reproducing when required in a test. Deep Approach is linked to intrinsic motivation dominated by intrinsic interest in the subject or task. Students under this motivation tend to search for meaningful learning and read widely. Achievement Approach is governed by achievement motivation and is associated with a desire to compete and obtain higher grades. Learners predisposed to this approach tend to schedule their time and do homeworks.

Trainees studied to express the use of Deep Approach more than Surface or Achievement Approaches. Accordingly they were inclined to be deep motivated and predisposed to adopt deep strategy to surface or achievement strategy in their study. A follow-up interview with 11 trainees tended to confirm the findings of the Study Process Questionnaire.

It was concluded that the Access trainees in the sample were likely to adopt deep approach in their study. This suggests that they are inclined to be intrinsically motivated in their learning and may be predisposed to engage in meaningful learning.
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