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SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM APPLIED
Definitions of a Community College

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ABSTRACT

The value of Continuing Education is increasingly being realised throughout New Zealand. The educational institution termed the Community College is one facility being established in order to further the principles associated with lifelong learning.

This thesis presents an exploratory study related to the first such college built in this country, the Hawke's Bay Community College. The central purpose guiding the study was an attempt to discover how members of the Hawke's Bay region conceive this new institution. Here, what was envisaged as important, was not only the kinds of understandings revealed about the college, but also the attitudes and evaluations expressed by Hawke's Bay citizens regarding it. To this end, the dissertation is divided into a number of parts.

Firstly, there is consideration given to some of the philosophical issues underlying any research process pursued within the social domain. On the basis of this, a theoretically justifiable approach to the problem posed, is elaborated. The theoretical perspective of Symbolic Interactionism, and more particularly, the construct of the Definition of the Situation, are discussed.

From such a base, reference is made to the linkages and translation process required when moving from theoretical to methodological issues. Included in this section of the thesis, is a description of the data collection techniques employed for the study.

The results obtained as a consequence of the investigation are then given, along with some discussion relevant to the Community College's operations.

Finally, the thesis presents a series of tentative hypotheses and questions emergent from the research carried out. It concludes with a reconsideration of the exploratory nature of the problem posed, and the theoretical perspective within which it was couched.

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LIST OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	
Chapter 1: Philosophical Underpinnings	1
Approaches to the Social Sciences	1
The Notion of 'Social Reality'	2
A Tenable Position	4
Implications	6
Chapter 2: Theoretical Considerations	7
Symbolic Interactionism	7
Human Action and Interaction	7
The Meaning of 'Object'	10
The Definition of the Situation	12
Emergence	13
Relativity	14
The Interpretative Schema	15
Conclusion	17
Chapter 3: From Theory to Method	19
The Relationship between Theory and Methodology	19
Sensitizing Concepts	20
Exploration	22
Inspection	23
Qualitative/Quantitative Methodology	23
The Research Problem	24
Problem Specification	24
Transition from Theory to the Empirical Case	25
The Interview: An Overview	26
The Interview Design	27
The Interview Group	30
The Interview Guide	32
Interview Guide 1	33
Interview Guide 2	38
Discussion of the Interview Guides	41

	<u>Page</u>
Chapter 4: The Results	43
The Interview Group and the Interview Content	43
A General Description of the Interview Group	43
The Interview Content	44
Definitions of the Community College	45
An Overview	45
The College Defined as a 'Technical Institute'	50
The College Defined as a 'Vocational Training Centre'	52
The College Defined as a 'Community College'	54
The College Defined as a 'University'	56
The College Undefined	56
Inter-Relationships	57
The Descriptive Variables	57
The Definitional Components	58
Chapter 5: Discussion	60
General Comments	60
Hypotheses	64
Emergent Questions	66
Conclusions	68
Appendix 1	71
Bibliography	79

INTRODUCTION

If society is to meet the accelerating pace of social and economic change in today's world, Education needs to be viewed as an adjustment process, continuing throughout life, rather than as a preparatory process terminating during or shortly after adolescence. The notion of Continuing Education aspires to such a position.

"The aims of lifelong Education, of which Continuing Education is a part, are to assist all members of the community to adjust to continually changing personal, social and economic circumstances throughout their lives; to control by common decision and action those circumstances which are controllable; and to achieve their maximum personal potential." (New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO, 1972, p.102)

Continuing Education is thus not to be seen as a product, a series of packages, or even as a program, but rather, as a process that attempts to involve society at large continuously, in the development of educational goals. It strives to co-ordinate efforts intended to meet the needs and wants of the people, requiring interaction and general involvement by the community as a whole. Central problems inherent in the Continuing Education process then are, to identify accurately what people want, think they want, and actually do need, and then to structure these into a realistic and concerted series of significant educative activities. Communication, particularly between the educator and the community seems to be the key to the resolution of such problems.

It is within this framework that the New Zealand Education Department has introduced Community Colleges. Such institutions are to be concerned with: firstly, mobilizing the community's resources (particularly people, places and equipment), and linking them with the educational process and existing agencies; secondly, responding to the educational, welfare, cultural and recreational interests of people of all ages in their community; and thirdly, providing advice and guidance to both collectivities and individuals so that their interests, aspirations and consequent lines of action can be appropriately realized.(cf Renwick, 1974) In this way the Community College is both a focal point and a facilitating institution for the already existing learning networks. At the same time it is to develop new facilities, thereby leading to the creation of a new learning community, with the Community College becoming the peoples' college.

The first New Zealand Community College was set up in Hawke's Bay at Otatara, just south of Taradale. The first students were admitted in January, 1975. The college is intended to provide vocationally-oriented services and what has been termed 'Community Studies' services, particularly in those areas not catered for by established institutions. Emphasis is to be given to developing facilities designed to serve the expressed needs of the Hawke's Bay region.

In response to an invitation from the New Zealand Education Department, Massey University agreed to undertake an 'independent' study of the Hawke's Bay Community College during its early years of development. The study reported here is one component of the resulting research project. It is concerned with an exploratory study of what conceptions of the Community College are held by people in the Hawke's Bay region.

The principal reason for the study was, that as participation in the Community College activities must be largely voluntary, unless members of the community become aware of, and to some extent committed to its philosophy, then the Community College will be less able to realize its objectives. In short, the conception of what the Community College is, requires some control by its propounders. Its philosophy needs to be understood and accepted by the community. But such understanding and acceptance may be difficult to achieve. To a large extent they are dependent on the degree to which members of the community and the Community College come to speak each other's language, comprehend each other's meanings, and see through each other's 'glasses'. However, if incompatibilities are to be overcome, they must first be recognized.

The central purpose guiding this dissertation then, is to attempt to discern the nature of the conceptions held and to surface whatever differences, if any, do exist. To this end, it is aiming to:

- (1) Develop a theoretically justifiable approach to the problem posed.
- (2) Pursue the necessary investigation.
- (3) As a result of the research, provide information which could be beneficial to the Community College's functioning in the future.

With such objectives in mind, the study has been structured in the following way. Chapter 1 is a brief exposition of the philosophical issues which underly the theoretical position taken throughout the study, and which are relevant to a scientific exercise in the social domain. In Chapter 2, consideration is given to the theoretical perspective employed, that of Symbolic Interactionism, and more

particularly, to the theoretical model which guided the investigation undertaken. Chapter 3 provides a discussion of the linkages and translation process required when moving from the theoretical to the methodological issues. It also presents a description of the data collection techniques which were used in the investigation. The results of the investigation are given in Chapter 4. The final chapter consists of a discussion of these results, along with a reconsideration of the study as a whole.

Chapter One

PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Given that the research problem is concerned with the human being in the social context, where the prime interest is for the person and his interpretation of 'social reality', there are two philosophical issues that need to be examined before any elaboration of the problem can proceed. Firstly, if one desires to talk about 'social reality', then is conceptualization or rationale must be considered. Secondly, and more particularly, the theoretical framework within which the research problem is to be couched, clearly presupposes a specific philosophical stance which needs to be made explicit. Natanson makes the point appropriately about Mead:

"Mead is not, then, a philosopher first and a social scientist second; his philosophy and social science are inextricably bound up in the style of his thought and in the persuasion of his methodology." (1973, p.3)

This chapter then, gives special attention to the nature of the social world and approaches to the Social Sciences, in the process arriving at a defensible foundation for the study as a whole.

Approaches to the Social Sciences

In the history of the social sciences two distinctly opposed philosophical attitudes have tended to prevail - that of 'Naturalism' and that of 'Phenomenology'. They have in turn, employed two different kinds of conceptual schemes to portray the social world within the scientific framework. This is not to imply that these two positions correspond to any particular school of thought within the realms of science today, but rather, that as a way of seeing the social world, as fundamental conceptions of the 'social' itself, they are useful as general rationales. The term 'Naturalism' as it is being used here, encompasses Behaviourism, Empiricism, and Positivism, where particular concern is given to obtaining 'hard data' associated with the exact measurement of social phenomena through sensory observation, while 'Phenomenology' is being used to include all those positions that stress the primacy of consciousness and subjective meaning in the interpretation of social action.

On the one hand, 'Naturalism' tends to suggest that the methods of the natural sciences are not only adequate for the understanding of social phenomena but in fact, that such methods constitute an appropriate paradigm for all enquiry in the scientific field. The implication of this

position is that a qualitative continuum exists between the problems of the natural sciences and the social sciences. On the other hand, 'Phenomenology' holds that the phenomena of the social sciences are not qualitatively continuous with those of the natural sciences and that different methods need to be employed in order to study 'social reality'. This approach argues that giving primary consideration to the intentional structure of human consciousness, thereby stressing the meaning that social acts have for the actors who perform them and who live in a reality built out of their subjective interpretation, is of central importance.

The Notion of 'Social Reality'

In order to discuss the relative usefulness of either of these approaches, some attention must be directed to what is implicit in the notion of 'social reality'. Accepting that there is 'social reality', the crucial question requiring deliberation is how people have chosen to define it.

Social reality as defined by Schutz is:

"the sum total of objects and occurrences within the social, cultural world as experienced by the commonsense thinking of men living their daily lives among their fellowmen, connected with them in manifold relations of interaction. It is the world of cultural objects and social institutions into which we are all born, and with which we have to come to terms. From the outset, we, the actors on the social scene, experience the world we live in as a world both of nature and culture, not as a private but as an inter-subjective one, that is a world common to us all; either actually or potentially accessible to everyone; and this involves intercommunication and language." (1970, p.5)

So, basically, 'social reality' here is to be regarded as a consensual view of 'our' world. It is grounded, from this perspective, in the notion that man as a social being, is capable of sharing the same object from differing perspectives, and that such sharing (inter-subjectivity) involves the meaning intended and grasped in the acts of communication.

Take for example, the handshake that finalises a business contract. In physical terms, it is seen as no more than a series of mechanical movements of muscles, tendons, bones etc., but from the point of view of the social world, or in this case, more specifically the 'business world', the handshake is symbolic, signifying or meaning that something has been agreed upon by the people involved. Thus, the 'what' of social reality in this sense, is the meaning (grasped by each of us) of what is signified by external events. The implications of this approach are that human action is to be considered as being composed of both aspects,

overt and covert, and that the distinctive feature of man's being in the social world is that he may and does reflect on his meaningful action, that he is able to regard meaning in a reflexive manner.¹ Such is not the case in the world of physical phenomena - the distinction between 'bodily movements' and 'human actions' can be seen, only if one takes into account the construct of meaning and the human being's capability to reflect upon any such meaning. The nature of the phenomena being studied in the social sciences is seen from such a perspective as that of 'subject' while in the natural sciences it is seen as that of 'object'. A distinction between the 'social' and 'natural' systems is being made through acknowledging man's capacity to invoke meaning and to reflect upon it.

Thus, the argument is given from such an approach that, in order to understand 'social reality' as it has meaning to the social actors, the primary focus needs to be on the meaning inherent in any given act, and that such understanding is less likely to be attained if attention is directed just to the externally observable components. Intention and meaning, from this perspective, are seen to go beyond material presentation. The handshake, in the above example, if regarded in purely physical terms, would be indistinguishable from say an introduction to a new acquaintance, or the ceremony of receiving a degree. What is meant in each case, from the phenomenological approach, is something rather different. The handshake, from this approach, can be conceived as a social act composed of both covert and overt aspects. Without some consideration for those covert features, such an event may remain at an 'infra-social' level of understanding.

"The world of nature, as explained by the natural scientist, does not 'mean' anything to molecules, atoms and electrons. But the observational field of the social scientist - social reality - has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the human beings living, acting and thinking within it." (Schutz, 1970, p.11)

The postulate of a 'human consciousness', 'mind' or in Znaniecki's terms, a 'humanistic coefficient', is necessary in order to accommodate to the intention, meaning and reflection of which man is capable. Those approaches assuming the philosophical attitude of empiricism or positivism, which identify experience with sensory observation thus may exclude some features of social reality. Such an exclusion may or may

1. If we couldn't, Philosophy would be incomprehensible.

not have important consequences for any particular research problem.

A Tenable Position

The position taken here, is not that either of such approaches is to be regarded as the more 'correct' or 'absolutely' right. Rather, in accomodating to Meehan's argument regarding such problems, it is a question of the relative usefulness of such approaches, dependent upon the specific purposes inherent in investigating any particular sphere. To regard the handshake in a 'naturalistic' perspective may be quite appropriate in some circumstances while in others, unless explicit reference is given to its meaning, it may be totally inadequate - the usefulness of either approach is dependent upon the problem at hand.

"All explanations butcher reality in some degree....The important question is the degree to which oversimplification influences the purposes for which the explanation is used. Purpose makes distortion or incompleteness tolerable, and at the same time provides criteria for defining what will be tolerated." (Meehan, 1968, p.90)

Given that the intention of this study is to explore just what kinds of meanings human beings have constructed regarding a particular object, and the nature that the resultant action-orientations may take, the kind of conceptualization taken as the more adequate is that which acknowledges such dimensions as those elucidated above. Such an approach allows explicit recognition to be given to covert features which may be of great importance in such an explanation.

As Schutz demonstrates, human action, from the phenomenological approach, can be regarded as entailing what he has termed 'negative actions': in other words, 'intentional refraining from acting'. An approach centring on sensory observation would disregard such aspects of human action. Not to vote may be as political as ~~not~~ to vote.

Also, at another level, there is the question of taking into consideration, beliefs and convictions which are real because they are so defined by the actors. Sensory observation would not include such dimensions of social reality, but as has been shown for example, in Evans-Pritchard's (1936) study of members of the Azande culture, witchcraft and oracles were not a delusion to the inhabitants, but a very important, central feature in their social reality and, as such were open to investigation by the social scientist.²

2. Elaboration of this aspect will be given in the next chapter, for it is an intrinsic component of the 'definition of the situation'.

Given such conceptualizations of the nature of social reality, the phenomenological approach would seem appropriate for providing a framework within which the problem under investigation can be organized.

"The conceptual framework, the linked set of concepts that serve as a selecting mechanism for the observer, functions in the same way that spectacles serve the man who is blind without them. What is seen depends on the characteristics viewed through the spectacles. The facts do not lie beyond the observer, immutable and unchangeable. What a fact 'is' depends on the conceptual framework through which perceptions are screened." (Meehan, 1968, p.41)

The argument is not being advanced that the social sciences are 'en toto' different from the natural sciences - the attitude of the scientist in both realms is the same; nor is a different kind of knowledge necessarily involved in the two. Rather, it is recognized that the object of such knowledge may need to be conceptualized in various ways. As Luckmann points out:

"The domain is the domain of human action and its objectivated results. It is the constitution of the domain and the explanatory aims that are bound to it, rather than the logical form by means of which the domain is explained, that account for the difference between social and physical sciences." (1975. p.172)

The nature of the phenomena with which the scientist has to deal is often qualitatively different from the natural scientist, and thus, may involve the possibility of a different set of techniques with which to explore that realm. This does not preclude the possibility of prediction and control, nor the establishment of general laws. Rather, it points to the idea that the social scientist, in order to pursue his task, may have to undergo two socialization processes. Firstly, he has to be socialized into the community of science as does the natural scientist. Secondly however, depending upon what he is attempting to study, and how he conceptualizes his problem, he may have to be socialized into the rules and meanings of the social system being investigated. The subject matter of the social sciences is conceived by the phenomenological approach as being defined by the actors' criteria of significance and not by the scientist's. Thus, what is to be discovered is the logic of the social order in question, as seen by the incumbents, and not an order which is imposed by the investigator. To the phenomenologist, this is where the social scientist's enquiries can logically be said to begin, but of course, not necessarily where they shall end.

Implications

The implications of this discussion are that the more useful theory for the purposes at hand, is that which accepts the phenomenological approach to the nature of the social world and social reality. As will become evident in the following chapter, the theory of Symbolic Interactionism³ and more specifically, that of the 'Definition of the Situation', do this, demanding that the scientist embeds himself in the subject's perspective, while at the same time be committed to moving out of that world into that of sociological theory. (cf. Schutz's (1970) conceptualizing of Sociology as being of a second order nature)

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3. One point requiring clarification before proceeding, concerns Mead (regarded as the 'father' of Symbolic Interactionism), having been termed a 'Social Behaviourist' by a number of writers. Such a classification is totally inappropriate (if one follows the above conceptualizations), for he insists on the existence as such of a mind or consciousness. The problem confronting him, is how to develop a theory of the fundamental nature of social reality that takes into account the necessarily 'subjective' quality of mind and yet describes it in such a way that can be objectively verified.

Chapter Two
THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Given the philosophical attitude taken in the previous chapter, attention can now be directed towards the theoretical perspective within which the problem is to be considered. It is the purpose of this chapter to discuss Symbolic Interactionism, and the important construct emergent from that perspective - the Definition of the Situation.

Symbolic Interactionism

Central to Symbolic Interactionism and in congruence with the general phenomenological approach considered above, is the view that the human being, as an organism, can be regarded as having a 'self'. Such an assertion conceives of the human being as a special kind of actor and stresses the idea that he can be an object of his own actions - he can act towards himself as he might act towards others. In short, he can engage in a process of self-interaction. This ability is the central mechanism with which the human being approaches and deals with his world, enabling him to make indications to himself of objects¹ in his environment and thus guiding his action by what he notes. The human being is conceived as not being merely a passive receptor or responder to stimuli from the environment, but as capable of acting on, reacting to, and interpreting such stimuli, and consequently organizing his action on the basis of this interpretation.

Human Action and Interaction

Such a construct has ramifications for the conceptualization of human action and interaction in the social world. By making indications to himself and by interpreting what he indicates, the human being has to construct or form a line of action. Action is not conceived as a product of factors that play upon or through the human actor. Rather, as Blumer (1969) illustrates, action can be considered in the following manner:

"In order to act, the individual has to identify what he wants, establish an objective or goal, map out a prospective line of behaviour, note and interpret the actions of others, size up his situation, check himself at this or that point, figure out what to do at other points, and frequently spur himself on in the face of dragging dispositions or discouraging settings." (1969. p.64)

1. The concept 'object' has a particular meaning within the Symbolic Interactionist's perspective, and will be elaborated on in the latter discussion.

In brief, prior to any self-determined act of behaviour, there is always a period of examination, scrutiny and deliberation which culminates in what has been termed by Thomas as the 'definition of the situation.' It is on the basis of this definition or meaning which the human being has constructed, that he acts in one manner rather than another. It is this construct which is the prime focus of the proceeding discussion, but further explanation of the general perspective is required prior to any elaboration of this.

This self-interaction process inherent in the construction of human action does not occur in a vacuum. Rather, it operates within a social context, through the medium of social interaction (or inter-action). Such interaction can occur at two levels - that of the non-symbolic (Mead's 'conversation of gestures'), and that of the symbolic (Mead's 'use of significant symbols'). The former refers to those situations in which human beings respond directly to one another's gestures or action, while the latter encompasses those situations in which human beings interpret each other's gestures and act on the basis of the meaning or definition resulting from the interpretation.

This was Mead's principal argument for differentiating human beings from other forms of life. Gestures, at the infra-human or non-linguistic level, do not carry the connotation of conscious meaning or intent, but serve merely as cues for the appropriate response of others. The boundary delineation between the two levels is rather blurred, but generally it is conceived that communication at the non-symbolic level occurs immediately, without the mediation of a definition or meaning, and accordingly, an organism's behaviour is largely a series of direct automatic responses to stimuli. Communication at the second level however, involves responding to one another on the basis of the meaning of gestures. The gesture becomes symbolic - a symbol to be interpreted by the participant, encompassing an imaginative completion of the act. Such a process necessarily involves 'taking the role of the other'. To complete imaginatively the total act which a gesture symbolizes, the individual has to put himself in the position of the other person (either the role of one particular person or the role of the group, i.e. the 'generalized other').

"[Meaning] arises in experience through the individual stimulating himself to take the role of the other in his reaction towards the object. Meaning is that which is indicated to others while it is by the same process indicated to the indicating individual." (Mead, in Morris (Ed.), 1944, p.89)

The individual constructs and arranges his own action on the basis of such interpretation of the acts of others. The 'self' therefore, is seen as a social process composed of two phases, the 'Me' and the 'I'.

The setting within which this symbolic interaction occurs is seen as influencing the nature of action, particularly of an associational form, which may or may not eventuate. Human association is conceived as a process of interpreting and defining the acts, remarks, etc., of others, and it is through this process that participants fit their own acts to one another and guide others in doing so. Thus, within the Symbolic Interactionist perspective, social action (or joint action) is viewed as being lodged in acting individuals who fit their respective lines of action to one another through a process of interpretation. The organization of a human society (or collectivity in any form, eg. an organization or group) is considered as the framework within which social action takes place, but not as the determinant of that action. Such organization enters into the situation to the extent that it shapes the situation in which people act, and to the extent that it supplies fixed sets of symbols which people employ in interpreting their situation. The acting unit (whether it be an individual or collectivity) remains the primary focus however.

It must be recognized that joint action cannot be 'reduced' solely into individual lines of action. Joint action, while made up of diverse component acts that enter into its formation, is different from any one of these, and from their mere aggregation. When people come together with the aim of accomplishing some task, be it eating a meal, having a dance, making a decision or whatever, more is involved than the intentions and meanings brought into that situation. What is involved, is 'interaction' (the central feature of joint action), which is an emergent quality that may not have existed prior to the parties concerned coming together.

"The fitting together of individual lines of action provides the basic feature of the joint action. Individuals fit lines of action together by identifying the action they are going to engage in, and then by fitting these definitions around the other's definitions and interpretations. Hence, the joint action becomes more than the mere juggling of definitions - it

is the fitting of disparate, conflicting, and often incomplete plans of action into a package of meanings that, at least for the moment of activity, provide the basis of interaction."
(Denzin, 1969, p.24)

Therefore, there may not only be individual 'definitions of the situation' but also collective 'definitions of the situation'. Joint action and society is possible to the extent that there is some kind of consensus among the participants about the definitions or meanings of any relevant object.

The Meaning of Object'

Of some significance here, is just what this notion of 'object' encompasses, for human beings live in a world of objects and form their activities around them. An 'object' is taken to mean anything which can be indicated or referred to. Thus, as Mead illustrates, this construct does not only encompass physical entities, but also social objects such as the self and institutions, and abstract objects such as moral principles or philosophical concepts. What is being asserted, in accordance with the general framework, is that objects are not self-existing entities with intrinsic natures, but are primarily human constructs. Blumer (1969, p.68), in his elaboration of this construct, makes a number of points deserving mention.

- "1. The nature of an object is constituted by the meaning it has for the person or persons for whom it is an object.
2. This meaning is not intrinsic to the object but arises from how the person is initially prepared to act toward it."

Thus, objects do not exist for the individual in any pre-established form, but are dependant on the experiences of the actor. Objects can vary in their meaning. A school for example, may not be the same object for a pupil, teacher or parent.

- "3. All objects are social products in that they are formed and transformed by the defining process that takes place in social interaction."

For example, the human being is not born with a 'self'. Rather, it is a social product, an emergent of the kind of environment within which it is being formed.

- "4. People are prepared to act towards objects on the basis of the meaning of the objects for them."

Individuals may have different 'definitions of the situation' and thus, act towards the same object in varying ways.

- "5. Just because an object is something that is designated, one can organize one's action toward it. Instead of responding immediately to it, one can inspect the object, think about it, work out a plan of action toward it, or decide whether or not to act toward it."

The objects which constitute the individual's experienced environment, are established by the person's activities. To the extent that his activity changes, his environment changes; or stated in a different manner, objects alter their meaning as activities towards them change.

This is not to claim that there can be no shared objects. As Mead is careful to expound upon, shared objects are possible by virtue of the fact that objects arise, and are present in experience only in the process of being indicated to oneself, and hence, implicitly or explicitly, to others. The individual, through living in a social world, acquires a certain commonality of perspective with others by learning the symbols (and their definitions) by which others designate aspects of the world (and thus, the emphasis on social interaction). A 'perspective' is taken as referring to:

"an organized view of one's world, what is taken for granted about the attributes of objects, of events, and of human nature. The environment in which men live is an order of things remembered and expected as well as of things actually perceived. It includes assumptions of what is plausible and what is possible." (Shibutani, 1962, p.130)

The concept of 'culture' is but one example of a perspective that (at a certain level), is shared by the members in a particular group.

Generally, Symbolic Interactionism is postulating a conceptualization of 'social reality' within the phenomenological approach considered in Chapter 1. It does this in so far as it focuses on the meaning and intentional character of human existence, and claims that the social world is constructed through human action and interaction. Such a position conceives that 'reality' is socially emergent in that meanings are created and acted upon through the process of symbolic social interaction. Acting units (whether individual or collective), through such processes, come to develop similar or different worlds, and these worlds may alter as the objects that compose them, change in meaning.

In essence then, such a theoretical orientation rests on three assumptions; namely, that human beings act towards objects on the basis of the meanings that these objects have for them; that the meanings of such objects is derived from, or arises out of the social interaction

one has with other human beings; and, that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process employed by the person dealing with the objects he encounters. These assumptions, inherent in the above discussion, are taken as underlying this entire study.

The Definition of the Situation

Given the above perspective, the following study focuses on one aspect of the phases inherent in the construction of human action in the social world. The interest is directed towards that phrase termed the 'definition of the situation', or meaning on which the individual bases his conduct with regards to a particular object. The emphasis of the study is 'situational' in so far as being concerned with one physical and social-cultural environment with which the actor may have connections. Accordingly, elaboration of the aspects of this theoretical construct will now be given.

The prime concern here is with microsociology rather than with macrosociology. The focus is on the 'ground level' of the sociological discipline, in the sense of viewing order from the base up. Macrosocial ideas, concepts, and analyses are regarded as being pre-conditioned by the microsocial.

The implication of the phrase 'definition of the situation' is that something intervenes when people and objects come together, which makes possible a variety of interpretations. The same object can have varying meanings for different individuals. It follows that whether one is responding to features in nature, to other selves, or to one's own self, one is responding to meanings. In other words, the human being is always defining situations and responding to such situations on the basis of the definition he creates. As Perinbanayagam (1974) comments, "one is condemned, so to speak, to a world of meanings". In adhering to such a position it is thus argued, that the theory proposed by Stebbins (1967), of the 'definition of the situation' is in error in so far as making a distinction between 'subjective' and 'objective' components of any given situation. As already shown, objects are human constructs, and not self-existing entities with intrinsic natures. Mead spent his lifetime elaborating on such a conception and refuting the position Stebbins accepts. Actually, Stebbins (1967, p.150) does admit that the "epistemological question raised here of whether or

not a truly 'objective' view is possible is being sidestepped". What is of crucial importance throughout this study is the world as seen by the actor.

What Stebbins (1967, 1969) does do however, is to recognize that any such meaning or definition can be seen as having various components. As Merton et al (1956) demonstrate, the 'meaning' of an object can be considered as being made up of three inter-related components, comprising, firstly, a cognitive factor (a level of understanding); secondly, an affective factor (an attitude or feeling); and thirdly, an evaluative factor (a judgement or appraisal) at some level of articulation. What such features will be composed of, is still an open question however, and thus, it is of some consequence to give more specific examination to those features inhering in the construction of such a definition. It was Mead who has provided two constructs - Emergence and Relativity, within which the contours of the 'definition of the situation' can be more clearly explicated.

Emergence

Emergence refers to the temporal dimension of meanings - the inter-relationship between the past, present, and future. These three phases of time may be analytically distinct but at the same time, as Mead illustrates, are convergent, for they are not correspondingly distinct in their influence on human meaning and action. Things or events do occur in chronological time, and a temporal differentiation may be of value in some circumstances. But in this context, to assume that there is no influence of the past upon the present, and both upon the future, would make it impossible to explain social interaction. Take for example, the idea of academic success. A person may, at fifteen, succeed in an examination such as school certificate, and then at twenty-five, have achieved a doctorate. If at fifteen, he anticipates future academic success, this person's school certificate will hold a different meaning for him than if he expects that the school certificate will be his highest academic achievement during his lifetime. The meaning of an object can differ during these three phases of time, but each phase will necessarily influence the other. It was Sigmund Freud who expanded such a view, bringing into stark realization the inter-relationships that may exist. As Pelz (1974, p.17) points out:

"Freud understood the human reality as constituting itself in a kind of space-continuum. In human life, as perhaps in all life, the past is never past. It is the continuing, fluid substratum or substance out of which the present with its demands for present response is continuously constituted and 'gestalted'."

From another point on the continuum, Duberman (1972), in his attempt to construct an account of the birth, growth, and final death of an innovatory community education project in the United States during the 1930's and 1940's, elucidates the enormous difficulties, in fact, the impossibility of eliminating the influences that the present (i.e. the 1970's) have on the participants' recollections of that past. More generally, what is being claimed here is that:

"the past influences the symbolic definition of the present, the definition of the present is influenced by inferences about the future, and the events of the future will reconstruct our definition of the past." (McHugh, 1968, p.24)

Chronological time has been transformed into social time.

Relativity

This temporal dimension of Emergence, involving the old and the new is not sufficient alone however. One also requires some kind of reference to the actors life-space in order to gain some understanding of the nature of the definition which human beings construct regarding the past, present, and future. Mead has created another construct useful here - that of Relativity, which is a spatial dimension characterising an object and its relationship to other objects across the boundaries of space.

"The spatial, temporal and energetic character of objects vary with the velocity of motion in relation to the world which is at rest....But the consentient set which is moving may be regarded as moving with like velocity and in an opposite sense The reality of motion does not lie in the change but in the relative position of things, regarded as events, with reference to each other." (Mead, in Murphy (Ed.), 1932, p.39)

As with Symbolic Interactionism generally, Relativity indicates the absence of any ultimate reality. Rather, there can be varying schemes of interpretations, perspectives, or in Schutz's terms 'multiple realities' which result in the possibility that the same object may have a different meaning for different individuals. It also makes explicit the idea that the meaning of any given situation can change over time. Situations are not to be regarded as a static set of conditions. As they are experienced by individuals and groups they are

fluid and dynamic, permitting the entrance of new stimuli which may effect their definition and the resulting behaviour. As Thomas (1923, p.42) elaborates:

"Every new invention, every chance acquaintance, every new environment, has the possibility of redefining the situation and of introducing change, disorganization or a different type of organization into the life of the individual or even of the whole world."

Such a construct is also of value in another sense, pointing to the inter-relationships between the various spheres or areas of activity in an individual's life-space¹, or inter-connections between the significant objects in the person's environment.

The Interpretative Schema

Of central importance here is the delineation of the categories inherent in any such schemes of interpretation. An individual coming to give meaning to any particular object, does not go through such a process in isolation. The manner in which he defines any object depends upon his interpretative schema or organized perspective, which in turn, depends upon what he has taken as significant in his surrounding environment. And, as already stated, the meaning of an object arises out of the experiences that one has in the social world. Thus, one way of discovering an individual's definition of the situation, is to explore the make up of his interpretative schema with regards to a particular object, through examining what he has deemed as 'significant' in such experience.

It is recognized that, as Schutz proposed, such an interpretative schema in relation to any particular object, can be regarded as being hierarchically ordered in terms of zones of relevance, going from that of 'primary relevance' through to that of 'absolute irrelevance'.² However, in order to take full cognizance of what has been regarded as 'significant' when such 'zones' are composed, it appears that the Symbolic Interactionist's approach provides a more clear conceptualization within which such examination can occur.

From such a perspective it seems that 'significant' experiences can be differentiated into three crucial categories. It must be noted here that the primary focus is on the 'social' dimensions of such experience, emphasizing those elements in the social world with which

2. For further discussion of this, refer to Heeren's article in Douglas, 1971.

the individual has particular interest, rather than concentration on, say psychological or physiological components. In doing this, explicit acknowledgement is being given to Mead's preoccupation with the social world. Meaning is primarily established or created in responsive discourse between actors - it is socially emergent.

Significant Others. Firstly, there are 'Significant Others', those people who the individual takes cognizance of, when giving meaning to any object. The term 'Reference Group' can be employed here, if it is assumed to refer to:

"that group whose outlook is used by the actor as a frame of reference in the organization of his perceptual field. All kinds of groupings, with great variations in size, composition, and structure, may become reference groups. Of great importance for most people are those groups in which they participate directly - what have been called membership groups - especially those containing a number of persons with whom one stands in a primary relationship." (Shibutani, 1967, p.163)

'Significant Others' in Mead's terms, may be conceived of as the actors' 'generalized other' - that perspective assumed by the actor and shared with his significant others in a transaction.

Significant Interaction. Secondly, there is 'Significant Interaction', referring to actual interaction sequences which the individual regards as playing importance in his definition of any object, or as being influential in the meaning that he constructs. As Volkart demonstrates in his Introduction to 'Social Behaviour and Personality' (1951), an individual's perspective with regards to a specific object may be affected by a single critical experience, say the reading of a book, an accidental observation of an event, or an incident with another person or group, and thus, requires inclusion in the perspective taken. (Thomas employed the term 'crisis' to refer to such types of experience.) Such a sequence (or sequences) may or may not involve those the actor regards as his 'significant others'.

Included within this category must also be 'Significant Non-Interaction' in order to cover those situations where the individual may perceive that there is (to him), an important interaction sequence (sequences) which has (have) been absent during the construction of his definition of an object.

Significant Information. Thirdly, there is 'Significant Information', referring to information which the individual has selected and taken into account when forming his definition. Here, the focus is on the

content of the information which the individual regards as influencing his definition of an object (no matter whether such information is 'factual' or 'imaginative'), rather than the source of such information, or the medium through which it is expressed. This domain has been shown to be of some consequence in a number of spheres. One study of relevance, was carried out by Braginskly, Braginsky, and Ring (1969) and concerned schizophrenic patients in a mental hospital. They investigated hypotheses about the relationships that exist between the patient's attitude, his acquisition of hospital information, and the length of hospitalization. What was perceived by the patient as 'significant information' was shown to have important effects on such relationships.

As with the second category, acknowledgement must be given to what could be termed 'Significant Non-Information', in order to include those situations where the individual regards it as important that he has not perceived some information relevant to him, regarding the object in question.

Conclusion

Together these three categories will be termed 'Personal Context', referring generally to what in the environment the individual has taken as significant in influencing his definition of the situation. They are also seen as referring to what in the environment, a collectivity may have taken as significant and thus, affecting the consequent definition.

Sociological analysis of the definition of the situation does not stop with the study of individual meanings. It attempts to show that intersubjective understanding requires the acquisition of shared meanings. For example, one of the essential functions of cultural norms is to provide members of a group or society with these shared definitions of the situation without which, social living would be impossible. If the scientific observer is able to penetrate the typical definitions of the situation prevailing in particular groups, strata, or societies, he is able to make predictions as to the probable responses of members of these groups in future situations.

It must of course be realized that, these are analytical distinctions - in the experiential world, inter-relationships will exist. Also, it can be seen that this construct of Relativity is intertwined with that of Emergence. The nature of experience (in terms of Others, Interaction sequences and Information), that one has had in

the past will influence his experiencing in the present and also, any contemplated experience in the future.

Essentially then, the above discussion has been concerned with delineating a theoretical schema within which one can discover the actors' categories of meaning and what influences their construction.

"If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." (Thomas, 1928, p.584)

Meanings are not simply pre-given. They possess the parameters of Emergence and Relativity. In other words, meanings are never complete (for example, the meaning of an object alters when viewed retrospectively), and are relative to certain environments and the unique contexts of the actors involved.

Chapter Three

FROM THEORY TO METHOD

The use of Symbolic Interactionism carries with it certain methodological consequences that need to be discussed. This chapter is concerned with elaborating them, in particular with reference to: ramifications of Symbolic Interactionism for studying the social world; and the two principle procedures that emerge from such a perspective. The chapter also considers the nature of the methodological procedures employed in this study, in the process discussing the problems inherent in the transition from theory to empirical action.

The Relationship Between Theory and Methodology

The relationship between Theory and Methodology is contentious. On the one hand, there are those who claim that methods should be regarded as 'atheoretical' tools, while on the other hand, there are those who argue that theory and method should be intimately related. Symbolic Interactionism admits only the latter position.

"We can and I think must, look upon human life as chiefly a vast interpretative process in which people, singly and collectively, guide themselves by defining objects, events and situations which they encounter....Any scheme designed to analyze human group life in its general character has to fit this process of interpretation." (Blumer, 1956, p.686)

The implication of such a statement is that the scientist is required to devise theoretical and research designs that attempt to reflect and capture what Symbolic Interactionism regards as the special features of human action and human interaction.

It is evident that there are implicit problems here. If one accepts the Symbolic Interactionists' argument, then the scientist is no less subject to using an interpretative procedure in arriving at meaning than are the actors he is investigating. The scientist, as a human being, can have a particular 'definition of the situation' just as any other human being can. From such a perspective, it is necessarily impossible for the scientist to enter any given situation in a 'tabula rasa' state. Rather, the meaning that he arrives at will be influenced by his interpretative schema. The dilemma inherent here, is that if one accepts the Symbolic Interactionist's emphasis of attempting to capture and reflect the actors' view of a situation, one has to overcome the problem of there possibly being two very different, incompatible orientations to that situation - the actors'

and the scientist's.

Essentially, what is required is a way of diminishing the predominance of the scientist's definition of the situation, while increasing the predominance of the actor's definition, or more generally, the actor's view of that aspect of the social world under scrutiny. In one sense, the ability to achieve such a state is circumscribed by the fact that any investigation is the scientist's problem, not the actors'. The scientist may conceive of a phenomenon as a problem worthy of study while the actors do not. To this extent one cannot penetrate entirely into the actors' world. In another sense however, it is a question of compromise, of attempting to bridge the gap between the scientist's and actors' interpretations of reality as much as is humanly feasible. The extent to which this is achieved will determine how adequately the scientist has pursued his task from a Symbolic Interactionist position.

Sensitizing Concepts

In the attempt to provide such a linkage, Blumer (1969) has put forward the idea of employing theoretical concepts from an orientation which is sensitizing rather than definitive. He points to the problems which have been present in this area, particularly those concerning the separation between conceptual usage and empirical investigation, and the often ambiguous nature of the concepts used. In his effort to rectify such difficulties, he proposes the notion of 'Sensitizing Concept', using it to refer to those concepts that are not transformed immediately into operational definitions (through, for example, an attitude scale). In operationalizing a concept, one makes it 'definitive' in so far as providing presumptions of what to see. By contrast, using it as a sensitizing concept, one merely suggests directions in which to look. Blumer (1969) takes the notion of 'Intelligence' as an illustration. If one gives an operational definition for 'Intelligence' one may, as an example, define it as the score received on a particular I.Q. test. But, if one chooses a sensitizing approach, one would leave it non-operationalized until after entering the empirical world and having learnt the processes representing it and the specific meanings attached to it by the actors being observed.

"Sensitizing a concept permits the sociologist to discover what is unique about each empirical instance of the concept while he uncovers what it displays in common across many different settings. Such a conception allows, indeed forces,

the sociologist to pursue his interactionist view of reality to the empirical instance."

(Denzin, 1970, p.15)

While it is acknowledged that it is the scientist, by way of theory, who creates the concept, it is contended that by doing so, one cannot necessarily define what meaning this concept will involve without first entering into the empirical case under consideration. It is here primarily, where what could be termed the cardinal principle of Symbolic Interactionism comes to the fore.

"Respect the nature of the empirical world and organize a methodological stance to reflect that respect."

(Blumer, 1969, p.60)

In order to examine what that meaning may be, the scientist, from the Symbolic Interactionist perspective, needs to investigate human conduct, or some facet of it, from the point of view of those he is studying, this requiring him in concrete situations to 'take the role of the acting other'. (Denzin, 1970, p.8) This implies that the scientist needs to learn the everyday conceptions of that reality (or that aspect under study) as the actors hold them. At the same time, however, the scientist needs to maintain the distinction between everyday and scientific conceptions of that reality, interpreting these conceptions from the stance of his sociological theory. It is seen then, that the notion of a sensitizing concept, or more generally, a sensitizing mechanism, provides the means by which the linkage between everyday and scientific worlds can be attained. While it is the scientist who creates the research problem to be studied and its theoretical conceptualization, from the Symbolic Interactionist approach, it is the actors in the social world who provide the meanings that the problem may encompass.

In the context of the research problem here, the meaning components being considered (i.e. the cognitive, affective, and evaluative factors), and the interpretative schema within which such factors are constructed (i.e. significant others, significant interaction, and significant information, together termed 'personal context'), are to be regarded as sensitizing mechanisms, providing the means through which the definitions of the situation (in relation to a particular object) can be studied. While the conceptualization employed is that designed by the investigator (by way of the theory of Symbolic Interactionism), this 'definition of the situation' has been so ordered as to direct

emphasis to that which, in the actors' experience, is taken as significant, rather than what may have been predetermined as significant.

Methodological Procedures

Given such an orientation, the methodological procedures whereby the notion of sensitizing mechanisms can most appropriately be pursued, requires discussion. Blumer (1969) in this regard, has put forward two processes, which he has termed Exploration and Inspection.

Exploration

Exploration, as defined by Blumer, provides the means of achieving simultaneously, two complementary and inter-linked objectives. Firstly, it provides a way by which the investigator can become more closely acquainted with that previously somewhat unfamiliar sphere of life being studied. Secondly, it enables the investigator to develop and sharpen his inquiry, so that the dimensionalization of the problem, the direction of inquiry, the data, analytical relations and interpretations are emergent from, and remain grounded in, the empirical sphere of life under scrutiny. By definition, it is seen as a flexible procedure, not being pinned down to any particular set of techniques. Rather, it may involve direct observation, interviewing, consulting public records, questionnaires, or more generally, any ethically allowable procedure which will help the investigator to penetrate into the actors' views of reality. It is necessarily vague in the sense that any specific empirical investigation is circumscribed by its own special problems and limitations. The general aim however, of such exploratory research, is to develop and fill out as comprehensive picture of the area of study as conditions permit.

The main consideration is to employ a technique (or set of techniques) which has (have) as a central focus, the actors' perspectives rather than the investigator's. One can see the compatibility of such an approach with that proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), and also with the general Participant-Observation stance, reflected for example, by Bruyn (1966). The essential focus is in the direction of moving towards a depiction of the social world as seen by the participants. One reason evident here for employing sensitive rather than definitive concepts is that the use of the former enables the investigator to recognize explicitly, and take into account, features of any given situation which may have not been previously considered.

Inspection

The second phase inherent in Blumer's approach is that of Inspection.

"By 'inspection' I mean an intensive focused examination of the empirical content of whatever analytical elements are used for the purposes of analysis, and this same kind of examination of the empirical nature of the relations between such elements." (Blumer, 1969, p.43)

Some explanation is required here. 'Analytical elements' refer to whatever categorical items are used as the key terms in the analysis, eg. integration, assimilation, morale, attitudes, or institutional commitment. As such examples suggest, analytical elements refer to various types of phenomena, and may be of differing degrees of generality. The procedure of Inspection is to subject such analytical elements to intense examination by careful but flexible scrutiny of the empirical instances covered by them. While the analytical elements themselves may be devised by the investigator, in accordance with his theoretical orientation, their interpretation is grounded in the empirical case.

Specifically, the procedure of Inspection consists of examining the given analytical elements by approaching them in a variety of ways, viewing them from different angles, asking various questions about them, and returning to their scrutiny from the standpoint of such questions. It is through such analysis that one can overcome the possibility of having been captive of one's prior image or conception of the elements of the problem.

Together, these two procedures are taken as the most appropriate for the given research problem in so far as they attempt to respect and remain close to the empirical world, to the world as the participants define it.

Qualitative/Quantitative Methodology

Generally, such an approach is more qualitative than quantitative; that is, if quantitative methodology is viewed as being particularly concerned with 'hard data', with the relationships between specifically defined variables and the testing of preconceived hypotheses, and qualitative methodology is taken as referring to those human processes of interaction not readily reduced to quantified data. It is not being claimed that one methodological type is necessarily better than the other. Rather, it is argued that, just as the usefulness of a particular conceptualization of the social world

is relative, dependent upon one's purposes, so too is methodology. As the prime concern here is with discovery, with developing hypotheses rather than testing them, it seems that the methodological procedures put forward by Blumer are appropriate.

The Research Problem

The particular problem being investigated will now be considered. Linkage of the general discussion on methodology to the specific context relevant here will be made, and more specifically, some explanation of the exploratory model designed for the actual research process will be given.

Problem Specification

The phenomena to be studied are the perceptions of a Community College held by members of the community. In Symbolic Interactionist terms, this institution is to be seen as the 'object' to which reference is being made. The perceptions of this object under examination are those of potential clients, potential in the sense of being eligible to participate in the college's activities. This has been taken as primarily referring to those over the age of fifteen and residing in the Hawke's Bay region.

The notion of Community College is new to New Zealand. There may be various opinions, or conceptualizations of what role this tertiary institution is to perform, who it is to serve, how it is to operate, and so on. Or, from the theoretical stance taken above, there may be various definitions of the object termed Community College. It is these which are the prime focus of the study.

Such definitions are of crucial consequence for a number of reasons, the primary one being that joint action does not occur merely from the existence of a Community College in the area. Rather:

"by identifying the social act or joint action the participant is able to orient himself, he has the key to interpreting the acts of others and a guide for directing his action with regards to them. Thus, to act appropriately, the participant has to identify a marriage ceremony as a marriage ceremony, a holdup as a holdup, a debate as a debate, a war as a war, and so forth." (Blumer, 1969, p.71)

Thus, in order for joint action to occur in the Community College, there must be some congruity of definition on the part of potential clients and the institution. However, the testing of such a relationship presumes a prior condition; namely, that the definitions constructed

by the potential clients are known to the researcher. It is with this prior condition that the present study is primarily interested, in which an examination of definitions and their impact on the structure of human action towards the Community College is pursued.

In brief, the objectives of this study are: (1) to explore just what kinds of definitions of the college exist throughout the region; (2) to analyze what features may be inherent in these definitions, in order to arrive at some hypotheses and general typologies regarding those aspects of the environment the potential clients may have given importance to in their construction; and (3) to conceptualise general features the Community College could profitably take into consideration in making decisions related to the functioning of the college.

Transition from Theory to the Empirical Case

Essentially, the intention is to comprehend the actor's view of reality that 'is' the Community College. Meaning or definition is taken as problematic. Thus, the sensitizing mechanism to be used is not designed to provide any 'a priori' definitions or to test hypotheses about what particular definitions may entail. Rather, it is included in order to provide broad contours within which the exploration of definitions can proceed. The exploratory model is to be viewed in this manner, providing the researcher with a general sense of reference and guidance for approaching the empirical case. It is being used as a linkage to enable a transfer to be made from the theoretical construct, the definition of the situation, to the empirical world. The analytical elements included in this construct indicate the order or structure imposed by the researcher on the research problem, devised primarily from the theoretical perspective discussed above. They do not however define, in any precise form, what nature they will take in the empirical situation. To discover such form is one of the purposes of the research.

However, to present a theoretical approach to a specific study is one thing; to translate that approach into empirical action is another. The features inherent in the latter situation now become very important. Fundamentally, the problem requiring confrontation was to gain an understanding of the way in which the Hawke's Bay Community College was perceived in the community it was established to serve. Given that the college's catchment area encompasses a population of

over 49,000, fairly clearly only an incomplete sampling of perceptions was possible. Given also, the scattered nature of this population, and the consequent problem of access and data acquisition, the means for obtaining perceptions were also circumscribed. In addition, the time available for pursuing the field work was limited, as was the available manpower. The resultant logistic problems necessarily had a considerable effect on determining the way in which the theory was operationalized into data gathering practice. Recognizing such problems, it remains to discuss what methodological procedures were employed, and to consider their rationalization.

The Interview: An Overview

For a number of reasons the Interview technique was taken as the most suitable for achieving the objectives of this study. At a general level, in terms of man being a social animal, such a technique can be justified in the sense that it is inextricably bound up with living in a social world. More particularly, an Interview provided the most satisfactory means for dealing with the problem at hand, given the practical limitations which were operating. As a field technique, it has advantages over any experimental design in so far as being 'naturalistically-oriented'. The potential clients' definitions were assumed to be intertwined with the realities of their everyday lives, and thus it was seen as appropriate to explore them within that realm. Also, being a dialogue situation, it would provide the means whereby exploration of the actors' responses could occur, thereby aiding the researcher to comprehend the actors' interpretative schema. Stebbins (1967) for example, has used the Interview as his data collection technique in various studies of the definition of the situation.

The types of interview strategies are various, ranging from the structured to the unstructured. Each has advantages and disadvantages compared with the other. For example, the latter's orientation is congruent with the stated problem (one of discovery), and the theoretical perspective within which it is couched. The unstructured interview gives the interviewee an opportunity to express himself about matters of central importance to him rather than those presumed to be important by the interviewer.

With either strategy however, the problems of validity and reliability require some solution. As Cicourel (1964) illustrates, while the validity component is maximized through the exercise of

great freedom on the part of the interviewee, the reliability component is maximized through the standardization of procedure. In the instrument designed for the purposes of this study, such considerations were taken into account, along with the practical conditions impinging on the empirical case under examination. A semi-structured interview was constructed, whereby a balance could be maintained between the validity and reliability factors. An interview guide, consisting of a series of general and specific cues was employed, while concomitantly, the means were provided whereby the interviewee could initiate any matter which he thought relevant.

The Interview has been termed by some as a 'conversation with purpose', implying that in a successful interview:

"Not only does communication take place frankly and freely, but the content of that communication is so focused and so controllable that the initial purpose of the interview is achieved." (Kahn and Cannell, 1957, p.97)

The purpose of the interview is that defined by the researcher and thus, its design takes the form appropriate to attain this end. On the one hand, the design requires adherence to the theoretical perspective being employed, while on the other hand, it needs to take into consideration the empirical conditions that may be operating. To this extent, the resulting interview is a compromise, confirming to Symbolic Interactionism at some points, while deviating from it at others.

The Interview Design

As stated in Chapter 2, three aspects of meaning were to be examined - the cognitive, affective and evaluative.

The Cognitive Aspect. With the cognitive factor, the central interest of the research is in the level of understanding or awareness that the actors may have of the Community College. As an analytical strategy, one may envisage a continuum ranging from issues where the public may have little interest, to issues where the public may be greatly concerned. As the entire range of possibilities could not be practically investigated, those issues thought to be of most public concern were chosen. These are conceived in terms of the Community College's goals, and the means for attaining such goals. Specifically, attention was given to the actors' interpretations of: who the college is for (the catchment group), what kinds of services it is providing, and how these services are to be realized (for example, the timing, locality, and cost of the services) etc. While the areas of interest have been

determined by the researcher, the content they may have remained to be explored.

The Affective Aspect. The affective factor involves an attitude or feeling towards the Community College. Here, two areas were regarded as important: firstly, the content of the attitude expressed by the actors, and secondly, the reasons given for such content. Recognition is given here to the fact that any such attitude may be of different levels of articulation (ranging from a vague, non-committal attitude through to a definitive attitude of a positive or negative direction), and that its nature is to be discovered from the empirical case.

The Evaluative Aspect. The third factor, the evaluative, is concerned with the actors' action-orientations in relation to the Community College, and is seen as basically referring to the question of participation or non-participation in college activities. Here, attention is directed towards the question of use or non-use, and a consideration of the reasons given by the actors for stating either.

The Interview sought to elicit a statement about the respondents' cognition, feeling and evaluation of the Community College. Stebbins (1969) for example, argues for the inclusion in any study of the definition of the situation, such factors as the actors' perceptions of the goals or intentions of the object, and their plans of action in relation to that object. Because the meaning components which are of concern in the present study have been defined by the researcher, it could be argued that the research instrument deviates from Symbolic Interactionist postulates. But, inevitably some compromise is necessary when entering the empirical field.

However, such a design is incomplete, for as indicated in Chapter 2, the responses to such factors will be dependent upon the actors' interpretative schema, or more generally, will be intertwined with what the actors have selected as significant from their environments. So, it is here that the constructs of Emergence and Relativity become very important. In order to explore the construct of Emergence, attention needs to be given to the impact of experiences, both past and present, to which the actors have given significance in the kinds of definitions they construct of the college. It seems that such factors can be considered within the framework of Relativity, so long as social time is explicitly included. As evident in the earlier discussion, three areas of the actors' experience are of crucial

consequence.

'Significant Others'. Here, the focus is placed on those people within the actors' life-space who may have served as reference points in the respondents' constructing a definition of the college. While, from a Symbolic Interactionist perspective, such 'others' should not be predetermined by the researcher, to avoid some specification was not practically possible. So the groupings of the Family, Friends, Work Colleagues, and Club Memberships were explicitly included here. This was seen as justifiable in so far as other studies (especially those related to 'Reference Groups') have demonstrated that such 'others' are of considerable importance for a given individual. It is not being argued that these categories are sufficient. Rather, they were seen as necessary components of the Interview as sensitizing mechanisms. The important point is that, while such groupings were seen as requiring inclusion in the research technique, the manner and extent to which they were significant remained an open question to be discovered from the empirical situation.

'Significant Interaction' (and 'Non-Interaction'). This sensitizing concept is being used to refer to those interactions actors have had in the past and the present, and which have been important in the construction of their definitions. Again, there were practical limitations operating here which required some specification to be given. It was taken that any past or present interaction (or non-interaction) with an educational institution would have major relevance here. This was assumed mainly because the college is an educational institution, and the actors may conceive it as similar or dissimilar to those with which they have been, or are associated. This concept was also designed to sensitize the researcher to explore any situations where the actor may have interacted with a college staff member, and may have regarded such a sequence as important in the definition that he constructs.

The inclusion of 'Significant Non-Interaction' serves to point towards two different sets of circumstances; firstly, when the actor may consider he has had no relevant interaction sequences and thus feel able to give only a 'superficial' definition of the college; and secondly, by including this concept, the problem of the actors' 'needs' can be given attention. Non-interaction in this sense, may be salient, for it may affect whether the actor sees the college as relevant to meeting

his 'needs'. Also, the resulting information was thought likely to be of some value to the administrators of the college.

'Significant Information' (and 'Non-Information'). This concept refers to information which the actors have internalized in the past and present and have regarded as significant in constructing their definitions. From the Symbolic Interactionist perspective what is relevant here is not 'objective' information, but rather, any information the actors have taken as significant. Such information may or may not be 'factual', and is to be discovered from the empirical situation. The purpose of including 'Significant Non-Interaction' is to sensitize the researcher to explore those situations where the actors may feel 'unenlightened' about the college.

Summary

One needs to be aware that what is being explored is the actors' definitions at one point in time, the present. Any such definition may change over time in the actors' 'effective' environments alter; for example, if further, more explicit and significant information is gained. In a sense such an assumption is implicit in the study in so far as that providing feedback to the college is one of the objectives of the investigation. What the college does with such feedback subsequently, may alter the potential clients' definitions of the college. Furthermore, through the researcher's contact with the actors, their definitions may also undergo change.

Generally, given the theoretical perspective, and the practical limitations impinging on the field work, the strategy of having an Interview provides the means for employing the sensitizing mechanisms through which potential clients' definitions of the Community College can be explored. The dimensions of the actual interview will be discussed later in this chapter. Here, consideration will be given to the composition of the group to be interviewed.

The Interview Group

The fact that there were over 49,000 people older than fifteen years residing in the Hawkes Bay region, posed problems when sampling was considered. The Interview was estimated to take up to one hour to complete.¹ Given the constraints of time, travel, and finance, only

1. Often, it took considerably longer.

about eighty interviews could be undertaken. The problem was to rationalize who this group was to be composed of.

The emphasis in this study was on generating a theory in a particular substantive area rather than on verification. It was assumed that more intensive, definitive investigations would need to follow this study. The main problem was to obtain a 'general picture' of what definitions may exist and what they may encompass. Hence, the principal concern was to employ a sampling procedure which could accommodate to such purposes.

"The researcher chooses any groups that will help generate, to the fullest extent, as many properties of the categories as possible, and that will relate categories to each other and to their properties." (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.49)

Given this orientation, the Interview Group chosen was to be one which would allow for the maximum range of possible definitions of the Community College to be included. Four criteria were used to create a stratified Interview Group: Sex, Age, Ethnic Origin, and Distance from the College. Each was selected because of its face value significance and its presumed relevance to the college's functioning. The categories for each were as follows:

Sex. Half of the interview Group was to be composed of females and the other half was to be composed of males.

Age. For practical purposes this criteria was divided into three categories, paralleling what has commonly been named the 'Young', 'Middle-aged' and the 'Old': (1) the fifteen to thirty-five age bracket; (2) the thirty-five to fifty-five age bracket; and (3) the fifty-five plus age bracket. One third of the interviewees were to come from each of these three categories.

Ethnic Origin. This criteria was divided into two general categories: that of Pakeha² and that of any other race, such as Maori, Polynesian, Indian or Chinese. It was seen here that, as the proportion of the Pakeha population is higher than the other groups in the Hawkes Bay region, so too would the proportions included in the Interview Group.

Distance From the College. For convenience, this criteria was divided into three categories: (1) less than five miles from the college; (2) between five and ten miles from the college; and (3) more than ten miles from the college. One third of the Interview Group was to come

2. While this term has different connotations in various spheres, it is being used here to refer generally, to those people of european descent.

from each category.

Together, these criteria point to the structure of the Interview Group. On the basis of these criteria, the people interviewed were randomly selected. This was achieved by travelling to various areas, both rural and urban, throughout the region. Approaches were then made to a sample of the dwellings within that area, the sample size depending on the number of residences established in any of these areas.

As can be seen, the Interview Group was not a representative sample of the total population relevant to this study. However, given the aims of the research, this was not regarded as a major deficiency. More importantly, it was recognized that, in moving from the theory to the methodological considerations, deviations from Symbolic Interactionism have occurred. But this is taken as necessarily the case when one enters the empirical world. The extent to which it violates Symbolic Interactionism in any major way remains, but overall, it is argued that the instrument designed, and the sampling procedures adopted were appropriate, given the empirical conditions operating. The Interview was constructed as a sensitizing mechanism within which feasible exploration of definitions of the Community College could take place, and the Interview Group was designed specifically for the purpose of making such exploration as wide as possible.

The Data Collection Instruments

The purpose of this section of the present chapter is to describe the instrument used to obtain the data relevant to this study.

The Interview Guide³

Two Interview Guides were constructed on the basis of the Interview Design discussed earlier in this chapter. Interview Guide 1 was used with those interviewees stating 'Yes' to the first question 'Have you heard of the Community College?', while Interview Guide 2 was pursued when the reply to this question was 'No'. In doing this, it was assumed that a continuum might exist with regards to potential clients definitions,

3. The term 'Guide' rather than 'Schedule' is used here to imply the semi-structured nature of the Interview. This differentiation is in accordance with the way in which these terms are employed in general discussions regarding Interviews.

ranging from the situation where virtually nothing was known about the college, to where considerable communication with the college may have taken place.

It was taken that an Interview with those people responding negatively to the first question would be of some value for a number of reasons. Firstly, it would enable the researcher to include those people who, while responding negatively to the first question, did have some knowledge (be it vague) of the Community College. Secondly, it would allow the researcher to examine whether or not an interviewee, once given some information about the college, would be likely to make use of its services. Therefore, an initial stimulus containing information about the college was given to these people, and then the Interview proceeded in a similar manner to Interview 1, in which the questions of whether or not the Interviewees and their 'significant others' would be likely to make use of the college, and so on, were explored. The format of these two Interview Guides were as follows:

Interview Guide 1

I'm Jennifer Taylor and I'm part of a research team trying to find out what people know and feel about the Hawkes Bay Community College. I should like to ask you a few questions if I may, they shouldn't take too long. Of course anything that you tell me will be strictly confidential - I will not even record your name.

1. Have you heard of the Hawkes Bay Community College?

- if 'No', then proceed to Interview Guide 2.

2. What do you know about it?

2:1 Where is it located?

2:2 What sort of services is it trying to provide?

Probe: 2:21 Vocational

2:22 Cultural

2:23 Educational

2:24 Welfare

2:25 Recreational

2:26 Other

2:3 Where are the services likely to be available?

Probe: 2:31 At the College only

2:32 At specified population centres

2:33 Anywhere required throughout the region

2:4 How are people expected to get to where the services are?

Probe: 2:41 Own Means

2:42 Means provided

2:5 At what times do you think the services will be provided?

Probe: 2:51 Morning/Afternoon/Evening

2:52 Days of the Week

2:6 Will there be any cost for those attending?

Probe: 2:61 Free

2:62 Fee

3. In whose interests do you think the college has been set up? Who are its services supposed to be for?

3:1 Geographical Area

Probe: 3:11 Napier

3:12 Napier/Hastings

3:13 Throughout the region

3:2 Age Groups

Probe: 3:21 Young Adults (15-35)

3:22 Middle-aged (35-55)

3:23 Old (55 and over)

3:3 Sex

Probe: 3:31 Predominantly Female

3:32 Predominantly Male

3:33 Both

3:4 Ethnic Groups

Probe: 3:41 Some Groups - Specify

3:42 All Groups

3:5 Occupational Groupings

Probe: 3:51 Manual/Trades

3:52 Office/Clerical

3:53 Semi-Professional

3:54 Professional

3:55 All Groupings

3:6 Educational Background

Probe: 3:61 People with certain educational qualifications

3:62 Anybody

3:7 People with Special Needs

Probe: 3:71 Yes - what needs?

3:72 No

3:8 City/Country

Probe: 3:81 Urban Dweller

3:82 Rural Dweller

3:83 Both

3:9 Any other Categories

4. What sort of people are most likely to use the college?

-use same specific cues and probes as in the above topic area

5. What do you feel people in general, think about the college?

5:1 Attitudinal Content

5:2 Reasons for Content

Well, I've asked you some general questions about this college. Now, I would like to go on and enquire about what you think specific people feel about the Community College.

6. Are any of your close friends enthusiastic about the college? What do your friends think about the college?

6:1 Attitudinal Content

6:2 Reasons for Content

7. Are they likely to make use of its services?

-if 'Yes', then:

7:1 Which ones/

Probe: 7:11 Vocational

7:12 Cultural

7:13 Educational

7:14 Welfare

7:15 Recreational

7:16 Other

7:2 Reasons for Use

- if 'No', then:

7:3 Reasons for Non-Use

8. What does your Family think about the college?

8:1 Attitudinal Content

8:2 Reasons for Content

9. Are any members of your family likely to make use of the services of the college?

- if 'Yes', then:

9:1 Which ones?

Probe: 9:11 Vocational

9:12 Cultural

9:13 Educational

9:14 Welfare

9:15 Recreational

9:16 Other

9:2 Reasons for Use

- if 'No', then:

9:3 Reasons for Non-Use

10. Do you have a part-time or full-time job?

- if 'Yes', then:

10:1 Nature of the job

- if 'No', then proceed to question 14.

11. What do people at work think about the college?

11:1 Attitudinal Content

11:2 Reasons for Content

12. Do you think any of your work colleagues would use the services of the college?

- if 'Yes', then:

12:1 Which ones?

Probe: 12:11 Vocational

12:12 Cultural

12:13 Educational

- 12:14 Welfare
- 12:15 Recreational
- 12:16 Other

12:2 Reasons for Use

- if 'No', then:

12:3 Reasons for Non-Use

13. Would your employer likely to be interested if you used the services of the college?

- if 'Yes', then:

13:1 Which ones?

- Probe: 13:11 Vocational
- 13:12 Cultural
 - 13:13 Educational
 - 13:14 Welfare
 - 13:15 Recreational
 - 13:15 Other

13:2 Reasons for Interest

- if 'No', then:

13:3 Reasons for Non-Interest

14. Do you belong to any clubs, groups, or organizations?

- if 'Yes', then:

14:1 Which ones?

- Probe: 14:11 Vocational
- 14:12 Cultural
 - 14:13 Educational
 - 14:14 Welfare
 - 14:15 Recreational
 - 14:16 Other

- if 'No', then proceed to question 17.

15. What do you feel, the members of these groups think about the college?

15:1 Attitudinal Content

15:2 Reasons for Content

16. Do you think any of these groups, as a whole, would be likely to use the services of the college?

- if 'Yes', then:

16:1 Which ones?

- Probe: 16:11 Vocational
- 16:12 Cultural
 - 16:13 Educational
 - 16:14 Welfare
 - 16:15 Recreational
 - 16:16 Other

16:2 Reasons for Use

- if 'No', then:

16:3 Reasons for Non-Use

17. How do you see the Community College in relation to established educational facilities in New Zealand, such as Secondary Schools, Universities, and Technical Institutes? Do you see the Community College trying to achieve similar or different sorts of things to these facilities?
 - 17:1 Similarities
 - 17:2 Differences
18. Do you think that you personally would make use of the college?
 - if 'Yes', then:
 - 18:1 What for?
 - Probe: Vocational
 - 18:12 Cultural
 - 18:13 Educational
 - 18:14 Welfare
 - 18:15 Recreational
 - 18:16 Other
 - 18:2 Reasons for Use
 - if 'No', then:
 - 18:3 Reasons for Non-Use
 - 18:4 What about in the future, if the situation changes?
19. What do you personally think about the college?
 - 19:1 Attitudinal Content
 - 19:2 Reasons for Content
20. Who do you think, decides what activities are to be held?
 - 20:1 The Community College staff
 - 20:2 Members of the Public
21. How have you obtained your information about the Community College?
 - 21:1 Friends
 - 21:2 Family
 - 21:3 Work Colleagues
 - 21:4 Media - T.V., Radio, Newspaper, Magazine
 - 21:5 Direct from the college
 - 21:6 Other means
22. Do you see the Community College becoming a part of your life in any way?
 - 22:1 How?
 - 22:2 Under what circumstances?
23. Generally, is there anything in particular that you would like to do with your life which you cannot do now?
 - if 'Yes', then:
 - 23:1 What?
 - 23:2 Do you think with a bit of imagination, the college could be of any help in these areas?

24. Is there anything which we have not already discussed, which you would like to mention?

Age

Educational Background

Thank You

Interview Guide 2

Well, you can still be of considerable help to me. I have here a short summary about the Community College which I would like to read to you, and then we can discuss a number of points.

The Hawke's Bay Community College has been built at Taradale and is the first of six such educational facilities to be built throughout New Zealand. The idea behind starting up these colleges is that people, throughout their lives, need and should be able to have various sorts of educational services beyond those which are given in the ordinary school and university set-up. So, this Community College is seen as being a rather different kind of thing to the educational facilities we have already.

The Hawke's Bay Community College has been built with the aim of providing a great range of activities for any person (over the age of fifteen), no matter who they are, living in the Hawke's Bay region. These activities are to include not only ones related to one's job, but also a host of other activities connected with what a person may like to do in his or her spare time, and ones concerned with helping us in community living. There may be activities concerned with our interests or hobbies, eg. Drama, Sport, Vintage Car Restoration, or activities related to our family life, eg. activities concerned with being a parent, or activities related to our living in a community, such as pollution or social living. The possibilities are very great.

Now, the important point is that such activities are going to be started depending on what the people in Hawke's Bay want and need. Already courses for secretaries, hair-dressers have begun. Also, there have been activities in such areas as Drama, and Youth Leadership. One of the main aims is to give opportunities to those who may have missed out in the ordinary school set-up, and also to widen opportunities into areas where no activities before may have been available.

Now, these activities are not just going to be for people who can go full-time, but especially for part-timers, so that activities may be run during the day, evening or weekend, depending on what's most suitable for the public. Also, the idea is that these activities will be held at various places throughout Hawke's Bay depending where the people who want to get involved, may be living. The college is run by a council who are members of the public in Hawke's Bay, who are there to help see that this college provides a great range of educational services which are wanted and needed by the Hawke's Bay people.

Are there any questions you would like to ask me about what I've said?

Well, I now have a number of questions which I'd like to ask you, if you don't mind.

1. As I said in the summary, the Hawke's Bay Community College is trying to provide a wide range of services for the people living in the Hawke's Bay. Do you think any of your close friends would be likely to make use of any of these services?

- if 'Yes', then:

1:1 Which ones?

Probe: 1:11 Vocational
1:12 Cultural
1:13 Educational
1:14 Welfare
1:15 Recreational
1:16 Other

1:2 Reasons for Use

- if 'No', then:

1:3 Reasons for Non-Use

2. What about your family? Do you think members of your family would be likely to use the services of the college?

- if 'Yes', then:

2:1 Which ones?

Probe: 2:11 Vocational
2:12 Cultural
2:13 Educational
2:14 Welfare
2:15 Recreational
2:16 Other

2:2 Reasons for Use

- if 'No', then:

2:3 Reasons for Non-Use

3. Do you have a part-time or full-time job?

- if 'Yes', then:

3:1 Nature of the job

- if 'No', then proceed to question 5.

4. What about your work mates? Do you think they would be likely to use the services of the college?

- if 'Yes', then:

4:1 Which ones?

Probe: 4:11 Vocational
4:12 Cultural
4:13 Educational
4:14 Welfare
4:15 Recreational
4:16 Other

4:2 Reasons for Use

- if 'No', then:

4:3 Reasons for Non-Use

5. Do you belong to any clubs, groups or organizations?

- if 'Yes', then:

~~5:1 Which ones?~~

Probe: 5:11 Vocational

- 5:12 Cultural
- 5:13 Educational
- 5:14 Welfare
- 5:15 Recreational
- 5:16 Other

- if 'No', then proceed to question 7.

6. Do you think any of these groups, as a whole, would be likely to use the services of the college?

- if 'Yes', then:

6:1 Which ones?

Probe: 6:11 Vocational

6:12 **Cultural**

6:13 Educational

6:14 Welfare

6:15 Recreational

6:16 Other

6:2 Reasons for Use

- if 'No', then:

6:3 Reasons for Non-Use

7. Well, I have given you some information about this new college - How could you obtain more information about it?

7:1 Friends

7:2 Family

7:3 Work Colleagues

7:4 Media - T.V., Radio, Newspaper, Magazine

8. Do you think that you personally, now that you have some information about this college, would make use of its services?

- if 'Yes', then:

8:1 What for?

Probe: 8:11 Vocational

8:12 Cultural

8:13 Educational

8:14 Welfare

8:15 Recreational

8:16 Other

8:2 Reasons for Use

- if 'No', then:

8:3 Reasons for Non-Use

8:4 What about in the future, if the situation changes?

9. Do you see the Community College becoming a part of your life in any way?

9:1 How?

9:2 Under what circumstances?

10. Generally, is there anything in particular that you would like to do with your life which you cannot do now?

- if 'Yes', then:

10:1 What?

10:2 Do you think with a bit of imagination, the college could be any help in these areas?

11. Is there anything which we have not already discussed, which you would like to mention?

Age

Educational Background

Thank You

Discussion of the Interview Guides

The questions were ordered in the Interview Guides so that they would make most sense to the interviewees. Neutral questions came first, while those of a more sensitive character followed. In this way, rapport and trust would readily be built up during the Interview. However, in the actual Interview situation, the only predetermined ordering was the first question. Thereafter, how the Interview proceeded depended upon how the interviewee responded to this question, using the appropriate Interview Guide. In both types of interview situations generally, the question order depended on the interviewees' responses rather than on what was the next question in the Interview Guide. The onus was on the interviewer to make use of association of ideas initiated by the interviewee in order to make a cued transition. The Interview Guides provided the topic areas to be covered within the interview situation. The order in which these were considered was determined by what the interviewees said.

Supplementary probes were used in the Interview Guides to facilitate further response and to provide greater detail. The probes were used to:

- (1) enhance, or at least maintain, the interpersonal relationship between interviewee and interviewer.

- (2) enable the interviewer to motivate additional communication on the required topic.

- (3) accomplish both these purposes without introducing bias or modifying the meaning of the primary questions.

Kahn and Cannell (1957) stress the importance of such factors being taken into account in any interview situation.

Generally, the questions included in the Interview Guides were seen as necessary components, given the Interview Design discussed earlier in this chapter. However, the need to pursue any interviewees' comments or remarks diverging from the guides was given importance. Such an accommodation illustrates one of the merits of the semi-structured

Interview, its flexible adaptation to emerging new data.

The interviewees' perspectives were taken as central, and thus anything that they stated was regarded as having relevance in the exploration of their definitions of the Community College. The purpose of the Interview Guides was not to achieve a tightly structured set of questions, but to provide the interviewer with a list of topics, in the form of questions and cues to be sure to cover during the interview.

Chapter Four

THE RESULTS

The purpose of the present chapter is to report the results. It begins with a general description of the Interview Group in terms of the variables used for determining it, and briefly reconsiders the interview content. From here, an inspection of the nature of the definitions discovered during the research process is pursued from various perspectives.

The Interview Group and the Interview Content

A General Description of the Interview Group

Two weeks were spent in the Hawke's Bay region contacting the Interview Group and carrying out the interviews. While a considerable number of dwellings were visited (over 300), a total of 79 interviews were completed. Those who refused to be interviewed gave various reasons for this, ranging from 'being too busy' to 'being uninterested'. Such people were scattered throughout the region, residing both close to and some considerable distance from the college.

Of the 79 people finally interviewed, 49 completed interviews using Interview Guide 1 and 30 people were interviewed using Interview Guide 2. Once 30 interviews were completed with the latter Interview Guide, interviews using this guide were discontinued because of time and financial constraints.

The distribution of the 79 interviewees in terms of the four variables dimensionalized in Chapter 3, were as follows:

Sex. Forty people interviewed were females, thirty-nine were males.

Age Range. Of the total number of interviewees, thirty were between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five, thirty-one were between thirty-five and fifty-five years, and eighteen were over the age of fifty-five. The older Hawke's Bay citizens were harder to contact.

Ethnic Origin. A total of ten interviews were completed with Maori people, while the remaining sixty-nine were with those of European origin.

Distance from the College. Twenty-nine interviews were carried out with people living less than five miles from the Community College, twenty-seven with people living five to ten miles from the college, and ~~twenty-three with people residing more than ten miles from the college.~~ An attempt was made to include both rural and urban dwellers in each of

these three categories.

Initially, approaches were made to the peoples' homes where the interviews were carried out. In a number of cases however, particularly with male interviewees, it was necessary to make contacts in work situations due to absence from their residences during the day (when the interviews were completed).

Three other sets of descriptive information about the Interview Group were obtained during data acquisition. They were as follows:

Educational Background. Of those interviewed, 21% had completed primary school only, 44% had completed up to three years of secondary school without achieving any academic qualifications, 26% had gained some academic qualifications while at secondary school (eg. School Certificate or University Entrance), and 9% had attained a University degree.

Occupational Groupings. A simple five-category classification system was used here. 9% of the interviewees were employed in Trade and Manual type occupations, 25% in Clerical type occupations, 13% in Semi-Professional type occupations, and 10% in Professional type occupations. The remaining 43% were not employed, being either housewives or retired.

Group Membership. The groups, clubs, or organizations interviewees stated they belonged to, were classified into three categories, and the distribution was as follows: 16% were members of educational or welfare groups, 19% were members of cultural groups, and 35% were members of recreational groups. 30% of the interviewees did not belong to groups of any sort.

This descriptive data indicates the extent to which a broad range of Hawke's Bay citizens were included in the Interview Group, and provides a general background of information about those people contacted and interviewed during the data collection. They will be re-introduced in the later discussion in connection with the information gained from the interviews.

The Interview Content

As already stated, the ordering of the questions included in the Interview Guides was determined on the basis of the interviewees' frames of reference. However, in the following inspection of the results, they are grouped according to the researcher's purposes. The questions themselves were used as cues to gain understanding of various features

of the actors' perceptions. They will be studied in terms of the more general topic areas with which the researcher was interested, coinciding with the cognitive, affective, and evaluative definitional components. Hence, the central focus is not so much on the response to each individual question, but with the general kinds of responses given to the topic areas included in the interviews, all of which were viewed as aspects of the interviewees' definitions of the Community College.

Definitions of the Community College

The remainder of this chapter is divided into three parts. Firstly, there is a brief, general discussion of the nature of the responses given by the interviewees to the cues included in the interviews. Secondly, there is a specific, more detailed study of these responses in terms of the interviewees' definitions of the college. While the former part involves mainly a classification of the actors' responses by the researcher, the latter part focuses on the actors' perspectives within that framework. Thirdly, attention is given to the inter-relationships that were discovered from the data, with regards to both the definitional components, and the descriptive variables dimensionalized above.

An Overview

Predictably, diverse kinds of understandings of the Community College could be discovered from the data, each with their own idiosyncracies. One could however, classify these into five general groupings, ranging from a total unawareness of the Community College, through to an awareness compatible with the college's expressed ideology. Admittedly, the boundaries between such groupings could not be specified in an exact manner, but overall, the interviewees' cognition of the Community College was of five kinds.

Firstly, there were those people (30) who expressed unawareness of what the college was, having either 'never heard of it' or were 'ignorant as to what it was'. These people completed interviews using Interview Guide 2.

Secondly, there was the person (1) who perceived the college as a new 'University' for New Zealand, structured in a similar manner to those already established.

Thirdly, there was a group of people (11) who understood the college to be a 'Technical Institute'. Some stated that it was a new Technical

Institute for the Hawke's Bay, while others called it a 'Trades Training Centre'. Generally, these interviewees emphasized the idea that the college was providing services in the area of Technical Education, especially facilities for the trades sector of society.

Fourthly, there were those people (20) seeing the college as a 'Vocational Training Centre'. These interviewees did not regard the college as a Technical Institute in the traditional sense in so far as they saw it providing job-training services for any sort of occupation. They also thought that the college might provide subsidiary activities connected with hobbies and interests. However, they all stressed that its primary function was as a job-training centre.

Fifthly, there were some people (17) who perceived the college in a manner similar to the college's expressed ideology. They emphasized that the college was primarily involved with Community Education, and with extending education into all spheres of life. Some people stated here that the college was a totally open-ended institution as to the kinds of services it would offer.

This then, was the general range of perceptions of the Community College expressed by the Interview Group (henceforth abbreviated to 'Unaware', 'University', 'Technical Institute', 'Vocational Training Centre', and 'Community College'). The more detailed, specific perceptions the interviewees expressed in relation to these cognitions will be elaborated in later discussion. Here, as part of this general overview, the kinds of responses offered by the interviewees in the affective and evaluative dimensions will be examined. The purpose of this section is to describe what the range of these responses were. It is not to indicate what types of responses were emphasized in the interviews.

In the affective domain, the major focus was on the interviewees' own attitudes towards the college, and their interpretation of other peoples' attitudes towards it. The topic areas relevant here were seen to consist of, the content of the attitude and the reasons given for that content. The consequent inspection was divided according to these two sets of factors. More specifically, in order that some exploration of the inter-relationships possibly existing, could occur, each set of responses was inspected and classified according to the same classification system. The resultant categories constructed, require some explanation.

Attitudinal Content. An examination of the responses revealed a continuum of attitudes existing which could be dimensionalized in the following way:

1. 'Enthusiasm': Some people gave such expressions as 'the college is the best thing that has happened to the Hawke's Bay', 'it is a great asset to the community', or 'it is a very worthwhile facility', in response to the cues given.
2. 'Potential Interest': Those interviewees expressing a positive attitude about the college, but qualifying it in some way such as 'I'm very interested in its potential'.
3. 'Minor Consideration': Unawareness or little knowledge of the college was stated by some.
4. 'Uncertainty': Those interviewees stating that they could not respond to the cue given, and included such statements as 'I wouldn't know'.
5. 'Reservation': Those interviewees expressing some diffidence or suspicion about the college.
6. 'Not Applicable': For some, the cues about attitudes were inappropriate. For example, some interviewees did not work or were self-employed, and so the cues about work were irrelevant. Similarly, the questions about groups were not applicable for those not belonging to any, while the questions about the Family were irrelevant for those whose families had left the area or were deceased.

Reasons for the Attitude. The reasons given by the interviewees for any particular attitudinal content varied, and could be classified into the following categories that range from positive to negative positions.

1. 'New Opportunities': All those reasons given by the interviewees which were of a general, impersonal, positive orientation, involving such responses as 'because the college will provide new opportunities for Hawke's Bay'.
2. 'Job Training': Some interviewees gave reasons of an impersonal, specific, positive nature related to occupational training.
3. 'Keen to Learn': Some gave reasons of a personal, general and positive orientation, including such responses as 'because learning is a good thing'.
4. 'Interested': Those reasons given of a personal, general and positive nature, referring to an activity. Such remarks as 'because they're interested in that sort of thing' were stated here.

5. 'Provide a Stimulus': Those whose reasons were personal, specific and positive, but were rather different to those included in category 4. Here, the focus was on the person, whereas in the above category it was on the activity. Such comments as 'because it will provide us with something to do' were made here.
6. 'Inadequate Publicity': Those giving negative type responses referring specifically to a lack of publicity on the part of the college.
7. 'Inadequate Interest': Those whose reasons were again negative, referring to the potential client not being interested in the college's activities.
8. 'Never Discussed': Those reasons stated referring to never having talked about the college.

It can be seen that the attitudes given were varied and involved different perspectives. Some interviewees responded to the attitudinal cues within a potential client's frame of reference for example, while others responded using the college itself as the reference point for their remarks. Who amongst the Interview Group gave what kind of response in this area will be studied in later discussion. In this section of the present chapter, it remains to have a similar survey of what kinds of responses were made in the evaluative domain.

In this area, the focus was on the judgements made by the interviewees about their own possible use, and their evaluation of other peoples' possible use of the college's services. The question of participation or non-participation was central. As with the attitudinal elements, all relevant topic areas were inspected for classificatory purposes with two sets of factors being considered: those about the question of use or non-use and those about the reasons given for the statements made here.

Use. The following classification was derived from inspecting the results:

1. 'Use of Job-related Facilities': Those people who stated that they themselves or specified others would use the college's services connected with job training.
2. 'Use of Cultural and Recreational Facilities': Those saying that they themselves or specified others would use either the college's cultural facilities, such as courses related to hobbies or interests, or the college's physical plant and equipment, such as the Library.

3. 'Unspecified Use': Those who envisaged themselves or specified others using the college's facilities, but were unable to state exactly what for.
4. 'Conditional Use': Those who claimed that they themselves or specified others may use some of the college's services, but that any such use would depend on what the college was offering eg. the frequently given response 'if the service is geared to their interests'.
5. 'Uncertainty': Those who responded with 'I don't know' or its equivalent.
6. 'No': A definitive, negative response.
7. 'Not Applicable': As before, there were people for whom the cues about the use of the college were irrelevant; eg. interviewees whose families did not reside in the Hawke's Bay.

Reasons. A classificatory system was constructed from the comments made by the interviewees about their reasons for expected use or non-use of the college's services. Again, they can be seen to range from positive to negative.

1. 'Job Training': Those people who stated that the reasons for their own or specified others' use of the college was to obtain job training.
2. 'Knowledge': Those whose reasons for use of the college was so that they could 'learn more' or 'gain more knowledge'.
3. 'Interests': Those whose reasons for anticipated use were based on the desire to expand an area of interest, whatever that may have been. (Responses here tended to be more specific than those in the above categories.)
4. 'Socialize': Those whose reasons were positive, as were the above three, but were in the framework of such comments as 'to become involved in social activities' or 'to provide something to do outside the home'.
5. 'Available Facilities': Those who referred either to using the college's physical plant and equipment, or participating in activities provided by the college simply because they were there.
6. 'Uncertainty': Those whose reasons referred either to expressions such as 'do not know what they're interested in' or 'do not know what is available'.
7. 'Too Settled': Those whose reasons were negative and included such comments as 'content with life' or 'already have a job'.
8. 'Too Busy': Those who said they were either 'too busy' or 'have too many other things to do' to be able to take part in any of the college's activities.
9. 'Too Old': Those who said they were too old to participate.

10. 'Uninterested': Those whose reasons for not participating involved such comments as 'not the type' or 'the Community College is considered irrelevant'.

11. 'Not Applicable': As with the other areas, this category was included to accommodate extraneous circumstances relevant to some interviewees' reasons why they answered 'No' to the general cues given here, such as illhealth.

Given that the classification system described above was 'distilled' from the actual responses, it is evident that various perspectives and reasons were expressed by the actors. For example, whilst some responded to these cues within an impersonal, general framework, others were more personal and specific in their remarks. From this base, it is now possible to inspect the actors' responses to the cues given from within the cognitive groupings discovered. To do so requires the use of selected categories to define the class of actors. In the first instance, such definition is in terms of the actors' views of the college itself. The categories used below, were constructed on the basis of what the actors said about the college, indicating their general interpretations of it.

The College Defined as a 'Technical Institute'

Those people defining the college as a 'Technical Institute' predominantly (90%)¹ saw its services operating at the college only, during the week, both day and night, essentially in a way similar to the conventional Technical Institute. The others (10%) understanding the college as a 'Technical Institute' envisaged some training courses requiring visits to appropriate work places for practical experience in addition to the on-campus activities.

Given this preconception, all the interviewees saw the college functioning for the whole region, for members of both sexes (apart from one interviewee stating that the services were primarily for males), and any ethnic group. Users of the college were seen to come from the younger age bracket, especially school leavers interested in trade and manual type occupations. They thus envisaged no entry requirements. Rather, participation was viewed as the means to achieving such things as a

1. The data which the percentages given throughout this chapter were derived from, is included in this thesis as Appendix 1.

Trades Certificate. Whilst some were uncertain (18%) as to who would decide what these activities would be, others stated that the college officials would work in with the public here (18%), that the members of the public would decide (9%), or that the college alone would make the decisions (55%).

According to these interviewees, they had gained their information about the college mainly from the newspaper (64%), and through discussion generally (18%), or from their friends (18%).

These actors interpreted the attitudes of other people towards the college in various ways. For example, some (55%) felt the general public to be enthusiastic about the college's establishment because of the new opportunities which would become available. However, others (18%) believed the general public to be somewhat reserved about the whole thing because, according to them, there had not been enough publicity about the college.

Nonetheless, a number of these interviewees were uncertain about the attitudes towards the college of their friends (45%), work colleagues (36%), and membership groups (55%). They pointed out that the college had never been discussed amongst them, or that they thought these people were not very much interested in the Community College at all.

The interviewees' interpretations of their families' attitudes were more positive. The majority (55%) perceived their families to be enthusiastic about the college because of the new opportunities it could offer, particularly in the job training area. Whether employers (where appropriate) would be interested if the interviewees themselves participated brought a varied response. Some (40%) felt their employer would be if such participation was relevant to their jobs. The others (60%) were unsure about this because such matters had never been discussed.

Similar trends surfaced in the evaluative domain, though they were more negative. Whilst some interviewees (33%) envisaged their friends using the college, mainly for job-related activities, others did not, mainly because they already had jobs, or generally, had 'settled down'. The primary reasons for stating uncertainty over whether members of their families or work colleagues would participate, were either that they were unaware as to what was being offered, or that they were too old. Their evaluation of their membership groups' involvement was more definitely negative, either because they were uninterested in

the college activities (36%) or because these groups were not aware of what was available (55%).

Many of the interviewees defining the college as a 'Technical Institute' did not imagine themselves using the college (55%), mainly because they regarded themselves as too old. They certainly did not see the college becoming a part of their lives in any way (73%) principally because they were too busy, too old or too settled. Few interviewees (27%) felt they had any learning needs which could have been catered for by the college. The remainder (73%) did not perceive any such needs whatsoever.

This then, gives a summarized picture of what these actors defining the college as a 'Technical Institute' had to say about the topics included in the interviews. Generally, it seems as if they took the college somewhat for granted, as another training institution to be used if or when required. They appear to consider it rather irrelevant for the older person or for those people already pursuing some sort of career.

The College Defined as a 'Vocational Training Centre'

The people defining the college as a 'Vocational Training Centre' were somewhat ambivalent in their interpretations of many aspects of the college. For example, whilst some (35%) thought the services would be provided at the college only, some (40%) imagined them to be available also at other specified centres, while others (25%) thought they would be anywhere throughout the region as required. Most envisaged these services operating during the week, both daytime and evening (75%). The remainder however, were either uncertain about this question or thought that timing would depend on the convenience for both the college staff and the members of the public involved.

While most of the interviewees visualized providing their own transport to get to the college activities, one person defining the college as a 'Vocational Training Centre' and two defining it as a 'Community College' stated that transport should be supplied. All three responding in this way had no transport of their own, and although living within city boundaries, they pointed out some of the difficulties involved in using public transport.

All of the interviewees except three who were unsure about the question of cost, anticipated paying some fee in order to participate.

These interviewees were also ambivalent about who the college's services were for. There was complete agreement that the college would

cater for both sexes, any ethnic group, and any occupational grouping. Age however, was a discrepant variable. For some (65%), the services were seen as being for all age groups because, apparently, job training or re-training may be necessary at different stages throughout life. For the others though, (35%), the services primarily were for young people. A similar discrepancy was discovered when educational background was considered. Whilst most (90%) did not perceive any educational qualifications being required for entry into college activities, the others (10%) did, pointing out that job-related courses often assume some previous educational achievement.

It is pertinent to note here, that only three interviewees defining the college in this way, made definite remarks about the college's services being for 'ordinary people'. One of these commented on the need for the college to 'let the public know that the ordinary person can go. They have to dispel the conviction that it is an academic place'.

Whether or not the college was regarded in the same way as other educational institutions was a matter of some disagreement. Many (60%) viewed the college as being 'different to some extent' from those already established in New Zealand. Others either saw it as similar (20%), or could not answer this cue (20%). According to some (50%), the college's services would be decided on by both the public and the college. Others (30%) said that such decisions would be made by the college alone. The rest either thought that the public would make the decisions (10%), or were uncertain (10%) as to what would occur here.

As with all the other interviewees, the newspaper was the major source of information about the college (55%), although obtaining information direct from the college was mentioned by some (30%), as was friends (15%).

This group showed a tendency to express attitudes towards the college much the same as those defining it as a 'Technical Institute'. There were some pertinent differences however. The reasons given for enthusiasm tended to be of a more general nature, couched in terms such as 'it will give new opportunities to the area'. Job training was seen as an important reason for having a favourable attitude towards the college, particularly when the question about employer interest was raised and when the interviewees' personal attitudes were examined. ~~When uncertainty was expressed in this area, it was mainly~~ because the college had never been talked about.

Again, when the question of use was brought up, the responses became more negative. Whilst some envisaged their friends using the college's services, either for cultural (25%) or job-related (20%) activities, others were either uncertain about such participation (10%), or did not anticipate any involvement (35%), saying that they were too old, busy, settled or simply uninterested in the college. They were more positive about their families' expected use of the college.

With regards to their own use of the college, those who anticipated involvement were primarily interested in job-related activities (30%). Some interviewees (15%) said they would become involved so as to 'meet people' or 'get out of the house'. Those who believed they would not take part saw themselves as too old, too busy or not interested.

When the cue about the college becoming a part of their lives was presented, the responses became more negative (60%), with the usual reasons such as too old featuring. Similar trends were found when the interviewees considered their learning needs. Some (50%) felt that they had none. Others did see 'inadequacies' in the areas of Practical Skills (20%), Hobbies (15%) and General Education (15%), which the Community College could possibly help overcome.

Generally, these interviewees tended to conceptualize the college within a broader perspective than those defining it as a 'Technical Institute'. For example, they perceived the college catering for a wider range of purposes. However, it still was seen essentially as a 'training' institution rather than as an 'educational' one. Similar trends surfaced in the affective and evaluative domains as those found with the interviewees already studied.

The College Defined as a 'Community College'

The interviewees who defined the college as a 'Community College' saw it as different from any already existing educational institution. While some anticipated its services being available at the college and other specified centres (30%), most (70%) believed the services would operate anywhere throughout the region. Such services, according to some (55%), would not only be offered during the week but also at the weekends. They were viewed as being for all areas of Hawke's Bay, people of any age, sex, ethnic origin, or occupational grouping. Also, the interviewees imagined no prior educational qualifications would be needed for participation. Who they thought would make the decisions about the college brought a varied response. Most (76%) felt that the

college in conjunction with the public, would reach any decision, others (18%) imagined that the public would, while the remainder (6%) did not know what would happen here.

Again, the predominant means by which knowledge about the college had been gained was through the media (76%). The others (24%) had found out about the college from their friends, the college itself, or through general discussion.

Whilst these interviewees gave similar attitudes towards the college as those people defining the college in other ways, some features require mention. There was a more definite tendency for these interviewees to say that their families were enthusiastic about the college (54%), not only because of the new opportunities the college would offer generally, but also because they personally were keen to learn. A similar trend was found in their interpretations of their membership groups' attitudes, as with their own attitudes towards the college.

When it came to considering using the college, the findings were parallel with those evident amongst the other interviewees' responses. On the positive side however, the college was viewed as being used for a wider spectrum of activities, particularly by their families and themselves. Activities such as cultural and recreational pursuits were mentioned here more often than job-associated ones. On the negative side, it was again a problem of being too old, or simply uninterested in what the college had to offer.

As with the other interviewees, when the cue was presented about the college becoming a part of their lives, the orientation was more negative. Some of the interviewees (18%) commented that it would become a part of their lives, others (41%) said that any involvement would depend on what was offered, and the rest (41%) stated that it would not.

Generally, these people by definition, conceived of the college in a way congruent with that put forward by the college's propounders. The inspection of the results has indicated however, that even when the Hawke's Bay citizen is imbued with the Community College's expressed ideology, and has a positive attitude towards it, the question as to whether he or she is going to make use of the institution is a debatable one.

The College Defined as a 'University'

There was only one person defining the college as a 'University', included in the Interview Group. This interviewee's interpretation of the college was, according to her, a result of involvement in past educational developments in the Hawke's Bay region. As such, this definition could be seen as rather insignificant in terms of the study as a whole. Hence, no elaboration will be given to the nature of her responses to the interview topics. However, it does deserve mention in so far as there may be other citizens who, because of historical events, and not perceiving anything to the contrary, interpret the college in this way.

The Community College Undefined

These findings come from the thirty interviewees, who at the beginning of the interview had no (or little) knowledge of the Community College. They followed after a summary statement about the college's activities had been provided by the interviewer.

In response to the cue about how they might obtain more information on the Community College, some (45%) specified the newspaper, others (45%) stated the college itself, and the remainder (10%) were uncertain about this.

When the questions about using the college were raised, these interviewees tended to make the judgement that their friends would not participate in any of the college's activities (64%), either because they were too old, too busy, had settled down, or were not interested. Similar responses were given to the cues about use by work colleagues and membership groups. Judgements about their families' use of the college were slightly more positive. Here they stated that members of their families would use the college either to gain job-related skills, or simply to further their knowledge generally. But, when their own anticipated use was discussed, the emphasis was again in the negative direction (60%), stressing particularly that they were too busy to become involved. The cue about the college becoming a part of their lives resulted in responses reinforcing this situation, with most (67%) replying in the negative. As with all the other interviewees, many (53%) perceived that they had no learning needs at all.

So, even when an initial stimulus was presented about the Community College, the responses to the questions about using it tended to be either negative or neutral.

Inter-Relationships

Moving from the above approach to studying the results, attention is now directed towards inspecting the results from a rather different perspective. Here, the interest is with the inter-relationships which were discovered from the data. Firstly, there is an examination of the emergent relationships between the descriptive variables (mentioned earlier in the chapter) and the various definitions of the college. Secondly, the linkages between the interviewees' understandings, attitudes and evaluations are inspected.

The Descriptive Variables

Age. Generally, it was discovered that, the older the actor, the greater the likelihood of a discrepancy between his or her understanding of the Community College and the propounders'. While 31% of those interviewees aged between fifteen and thirty-five defined the college either as a 'Vocational Training Centre', a 'Technical Institute' or as a 'University', the corresponding proportion for those aged between thirty-five and fifty-five was 36%, and for those over the age of fifty-five it was 40%.

Ethnic Origin. The small number of cases involved do not warrant any definitive remarks here.

Distance from the College. There seems to be evidence of a tentative trend in the relationship between the definitions of the college given and the place of residence of the interviewee. Little significant difference was surfaced between those actors residing less than five miles from the college and those living five to ten miles from the college in how they defined it (with 24% of those from the former group defining it as a 'Community College', and 25% of those from the latter group giving a similar definition). However, if these two results are together compared with those people living more than ten miles from the college (12% of whom defined it as a 'Community College'), it appears that those residing at some distance from the college were more likely to be either totally unaware of the college or to have defined it as something other than a 'Community College'.

Educational Background. The only appropriate tentative trend found here was that those defining the college as a 'Community College' tended to have completed more formal education than any of the other actors (55% of those viewing the college in this way having completed some tertiary education).

So that an exploration of the inter-relationships emergent in the affective and evaluative domains could occur, it was necessary to simplify the relevant classification systems. The categories featured above were therefore, grouped into those of a positive, neutral and negative orientation.

It is of little significance though, to consider the interaction of the descriptive variables with the attitudes expressed by the interviewees, for only one person, living five to ten miles from the college, aged about forty, (whilst defining the college as a 'Community College'), stated a negative attitude towards it. The rest of the interviewees, no matter what age, sex, ethnic origin, or area of residence, viewed the college favourably.

Some intriguing results were revealed when these descriptive variables were linked with the responses given about use of the college. For example, it was more the younger person than the older person who was positively disposed towards participating. (Of those interviewees between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five, 51% gave a positive response, 27% a neutral response, and 22% a negative response. The comparable figures for those aged between thirty-five and fifty-five years were 42%, 23% and 35% respectively, while those over fifty-five years of age either gave neutral responses (17%) or negative (83%) responses.)

Also, when considering the actors and where they lived, it was found that those residing further away from the college were less inclined to envisage participating (57% of those living more than ten miles from the college giving a negative response), than local people, (31% of those living less than five miles from the college giving a negative response).

The Definitional Components

The data was examined to discover whether any inter-relationships might exist between the interviewees' interpretations of other peoples' attitudes and their own attitude.

Table 5:1

Other Peoples' Attitudes - Interviewees' Attitudes

	Category	Friends	Family	Work	Group	Person
a. Content	Positive	42	51	18	28	98
	Neutral	58	49	82	72	0
	Negative	0	0	0	0	2
	Total	100	100	100	100	100
b. Reasons	Positive	42	71	54	39	98
	Neutral	44	29	46	56	0
	Negative	14	0	0	5	2
	Total	100	100	100	100	100

From this table it can be seen that, while the most often stated attitude regarding friends, work colleagues, and memberships groups was neutral, the interviewee himself generally viewed the college positively. The groupings which tended to be given a parallel orientation to this were the Family and Friends.

A similar table was constructed in relation to the interviewees' interpretations of other peoples' likely use of the college and their own.

Table 5:2

Other Peoples' Use - Interviewees' Use

	Category	Friends	Family	Work	Group	Person
a. Use	Positive	25	36	19	10	30
	Neutral	23	42	53	57	33
	Negative	52	22	28	33	37
	Total	100	100	100	100	100
b. Reasons	Positive	38	62	38	20	36
	Neutral	16	14	32	41	21
	Negative	46	24	30	39	44
	Total	100	100	100	100	100

It is evident here, that the greatest amount of agreement between interviewees and other people, when the question of use was broached, was between the Family and the interviewee.

Overall, this chapter has provided a description of the information that emerged from the interview data. As such, it gives a picture of what was said in the interviews and who said it. Discussion of this information will be one of the purposes of the next chapter.

Chapter Five

DISCUSSION

Within this final chapter, two broad areas are examined. Firstly, the results presented in Chapter 4 are discussed. In particular here, reference is made to these findings within the framework of the definitional components that were explored during the study. Also, hypotheses and questions emergent from the inspection are considered. Secondly, a final comment is made about the investigation as a whole.

A Consideration of the Results

This section of the present chapter involves a consideration of the results within the perspective of Symbolic Interactionism.

General Comments

The Cognitive Domain. As has been shown, in some cases no information was selected by the actors as significant from their environments about the Community College and hence, these people were unaware of the college's existence. In other cases, the information selected as significant, has resulted in four rather different kinds of understandings of the college. The college was certainly not viewed by all the actors in the same way as its propounders. Rather, the understanding varied, depending on what information the actor chose and interpreted (in his own way) from what was available.

Whilst those understanding the college to be a 'Community College', a 'Technical Institute' or a 'University' were fairly definitive about the correctness of their conceptions, it seems that those viewing it as a 'Vocational Training Centre' were in a state of uncertainty. This appears to be evident in responses given by these actors to the specific cues presented about the sorts of services the college was offering and who these services were for.

What has been selected as significant information by the actors has influenced the kinds of responses they gave. On the one hand, there are those actors who have given salience to information congruent with that expressed in the Community College ideology. On the other hand, there are those actors who have selected information and interpreted it within the confines of other educational institutions.

The study has shown that a number of factors may be involved here. Age is one, with the older citizen being more inclined to view the

Community College within the framework of another previously established educational institution, than the younger citizen. This finding may be a consequence of significant past information and/or interaction. The older Hawke's Bay resident may have had greater access to information about, and contact with, such organizations as Technical Institutes than the younger resident. To this extent, until the differences between such facilities and the Community College are internalized, and seen as important by potential clients, the college may be conceived in a similar manner.

Another factor revealed as influential here was where the actors lived in relation to the college. Perhaps the trend surfaced here is indicative of the extent to which appropriate information about the Community College has permeated throughout the region and been viewed as of some consequence by its citizens.

The relationship between the educational background of the actors and their conceptions of the college discovered from the data, raises another point. The explanation of the trend revealed here could be associated with the idea that it is the 'educated' person in the community who is interested in, and concerned about, any educational developments such as the Community College.

It is also necessary here to look at what information sources the actors mentioned, for this may have had some effect on the definitions they gave. But, the primary way of finding out about the college was through the media (predominantly the newspaper). All other interaction sequences commented on (such as the Community College itself or Friends) were far less important. The intriguing point then, is how the actors, although using primarily the same medium to gain their information, arrive at rather different understandings of the college. It seems that, as Symbolic Interactionism postulates, what is selected and interpreted as significant, even from the same source, can vary in some way, resulting in various definitions.

This brings up the question of public relations generally, between the Community College and the public. One publicity technique may not be 'appropriate' for all members of the catchment group. It is pertinent to note here, that during the data acquisition period, a number of the people contacted remarked now that someone (the interviewer) had talked to them about the Community College, they would discuss it

further with their family and friends. Also, it was evident from the study that quite a number of the catchment group do not belong to any associations. Hence, discussion about the Community College at clubs or group meetings may not reach such citizens. Generally, it seems that this sphere of the Community College's development is of particular importance, especially given the fact that there are discrepant interpretations of it existing in the region.

The Affective Domain. On the affective side, many of the actors, if they were not merely 'satisfying' the interviewer, were positively inclined towards the college. While both the actual attitudes and reasons stated varied, ranging from an impersonal, general viewpoint through to a personal, specific viewpoint, this trend was evident. Also, regardless of how they perceived the college, the actors had favourable attitudes towards it.

By including the actors' interpretations of other peoples' attitudes towards the college, the sensitizing concept of 'Significant Others' could be considered. The Family, Friends, Work Colleagues, and Membership Groups were explicitly included as potential reference points for the actors when they were defining the college. However, from the results it can be interpreted that the Family and Friends were more likely to be positively significant in relation to such definitions. Either the other two groupings were not applicable to some of the actors, or, it appears that very few significant interaction sequences occurred between the actors interviewed and their work colleagues or membership groups. The response was often given, that the Community College had never been talked about amongst these people. The consequence was that the majority of actors interpreted these two groups' attitudes towards the college as being neutral. The same trend did not occur to the same extent with Family and Friends. Rather, it can be seen, in following Symbolic Interactionism, that the actors' interpretations of their Family and Friends' attitudes towards the college were of some importance for their own attitudes.

Such a situation perhaps could be accounted for, if it can be argued that the actor is more likely to consider his friends and family in relation to educational pursuits, than his work colleagues or membership groups (unless they are specifically involved with educational activities).

The Evaluative Domain. The inspection of results in the evaluative domain indicated that the actors varied to a greater extent over the question of participation. While approximately one-third envisaged involvement in some college activity, one-third were non-committal, and the remainder negative. The combined totals of the latter two groups imply that the Community College was not seen as very important to the majority of actors, a suggestion reinforced by the responses given to anticipated future use of the college.

It is of some interest to examine the reasons given for the negative replies in this area. Predominantly, they referred to being 'too old', 'too settled', or 'uninterested'. As such, they raise questions about the degree of commitment by members of Hawke's Bay to the Continuing Education philosophy. Such kinds of responses seem to indicate that some re-direction of the catchment group's ideas as to when education begins and ends, and its value, may be required. However, such notions have inherent problems and dilemmas. The question as to whether the Community College should ignore such orientations or attempt to alter them, is of considerable importance. When one also takes into account the topic about the actors' learning needs, such a problem is amplified. The majority did not perceive any.

It seems that while actors may have a positive attitude towards the Community College, this does not necessarily imply that they will be inclined to use it. The overcoming of such feelings as being too old is required if this situation is to be changed. In a sense, these findings can be accounted for partly in terms of significant information. Whilst some actors have internalized the general philosophy of the Community College, especially the idea that it is for all age groups, the information having least impact was in relation to their own involvement. The Hawke's Bay citizen interviewed, particularly the older person, did not seem to view the Community College as a potentially important part of their lives. The finding that the actors' place of residence was related to the participation issue, implies another factor relevant here. Perhaps the college's services, in practical terms, have not been adequately understood to be operating throughout the region.

By examining the interaction between the actors' statements about ~~using the college themselves and their interpretations of other peoples'~~ use of the college, a similar trend to that evident in the affective

domain was found, although it was not as definite. Family and friends were more likely to be given a similar orientation about use of the college to the actors themselves than were work colleagues and groups. It must be noted however, that when some significant communication had occurred with any of these groupings about the college, the actors saw it as very important.

An example relevant here, was with an actor belonging to a Geology Group. Throughout the interview, this group was taken as the reference point, and the cues related particularly to the affective and evaluative domains were answered in terms of what the college could offer to this group. To this actor, the Community College was potentially very significant to her life-space. Another example, of a slightly different nature, was with a woman who stated, in no uncertain terms, that she and her friends had both a positive attitude towards the college and anticipated making use of its facilities. The Community College was of considerable importance to them all and had, according to the interviewee, been talked about at some length. Together, they felt that their education in terms of job training had been insufficient. The college was seen to be the means through which such 'inadequacies' could be overcome. However the problem, said the interviewee, was one of approach. Since the interviewee and friends had completed primary school only, they were unsure of their acceptability by 'that academic place'. Even when the person is positively disposed towards the college, there may still be constraints or barriers to be overcome prior to actual participation in a Community College activity.

Hypotheses

Generally, from this discussion of the results, the following tentative hypotheses are put forward about the definitions which may be held by Hawke's Bay citizens of the Hawke's Bay Community College:

1. that some citizens of the Hawke's Bay region have internalized no significant information about the Community College and hence, are unaware of its existence.
2. that those citizens of the Hawke's Bay, selecting and internalizing some significant information about the college, will make various interpretations of such information, and hence, have various understandings of what the college is.

More specifically:

- a. that the older citizen is more likely to have an understanding of the college discrepant with the college, than is the younger citizen.
 - b. that the citizen living some distance from the college is more likely to be unaware of, or uncertain about, what the college is, than is the citizen residing closer to the college.
 - c. that the citizen who has completed the most formal education is more likely to have an understanding of the college compatible with the college itself, than is the person who has less formal education.
 - d. that the citizen understanding the college to be a Technical Institute or a University, is more likely to conceive of its goals and means for achieving them as of a similar nature to those appropriate educational institutions already established, than is the citizen understanding the college in a way compatible with the college itself.
3. that those citizens internalizing some significant information about the college, are more likely to state that such information comes by way of the family, friends or media, than by any other kind of interaction sequence.
 4. that the citizens of Hawke's Bay, aware of the Community College, are more likely to have a positive rather than a negative attitude towards it.

More specifically:

- a. that the kinds of attitudes expressed by such citizens will range from those of an impersonal, general orientation through to those of a personal, specific orientation.
5. that the citizens of Hawke's Bay, aware of the Community College, are more likely to regard their family and friends as significant others in relation to their own attitudes, than their work colleagues or groups to which they may belong.
 6. that some of those citizens, aware of the Community College, will not consider participation in college activities as having any relevance to their own life-spaces.

More specifically:

- a. that the younger citizen is more likely to be positively inclined towards the college, than is the older citizen.

- b. that the citizen residing within close proximity of the college is more likely to be positively inclined to participate, than is the citizen living at a greater distance from the college.
7. that those citizens having had significant non-interaction sequences with significant others about the Community College, are more likely to be positively disposed towards it, than are those who have had no such sequences.

Emergent Questions

Arising from the information obtained in this study and the consequent hypotheses are a number of broad questions which warrant recognition.

It became obvious from the study that the citizens of Hawke's Bay did not perceive, interpret and consequently define the same 'reality' out there. For some, the Community College literally did not exist. For others it did. However, the latter group of people interpreted and defined this 'reality' in various ways depending on what they had taken as significant from their environments by way of information, interaction and other people. So, on the one hand, there are questions raised here about why some people did not perceive the Community College at all. There is also the question implicit here as to whether there is any onus on the Community College to initiate those 'ignorant' citizens into becoming aware of the college's existence. On the other hand, there is the dilemma as to whether the Community College should attempt to get those citizens aware of the college, understanding it within a particular perspective. To what extent is there a need to dispel divergent conceptions of what the Community College is all about?

The inspection of the results has indicated that such divergent conceptions can in fact exist, even when the same information source is used. This opens up the problem as to what publicity about the college is appropriate, as well as the form such publicity should take. People selectively perceive any given information about the college, taking out what is significant to them. Consequently, they interpret it and define the Community College in various ways. Whether or not the college needs to do anything about this situation depends on the extent to which it places importance on its catchment group conceiving of the college in the way that its propounders do.

As a result of such divergent conceptions of the Community College,

there are various ramifications for how the Hawke's Bay citizens approached the question of participation in any college activity. Considering first those citizens contemplating using the college, it became evident that such use would be for numerous reasons. Some would participate in order to further their knowledge in various areas. Others however, had social goals in mind, whilst others anticipated using the college for job training purposes. Still others envisaged involvement as the means for solving some particular problem. Can the Community College accommodate such a range of objectives? Does this imply that any service offered by the college may need to take various forms, depending on the motivations of those participating?

When looking at the potential 'non-users', again questions are raised. Most of the reasons given for such non-involvement were couched in a perspective rather contrary to the entire Continuing Education philosophy. How for example, does the Community College overcome such feelings as being past the age of needing to learn anything new, or the idea that the Community College is an 'academic institution'? It seems that such problems are very deep-seated in the sense that so many of the Hawke's Bay citizens interviewed did not even regard themselves as having any learning needs whatsoever. Should the Community College initiate citizens into a different attitude here, or should it ignore such factors?

The inspection of the results related to the issue of participation in the college's activities seems to imply generally, that perhaps what the college, as a Community College, is attempting to provide for the region, is taken as rather insignificant by its catchment group. The fact that so many people were uninterested in discussing the college, whether or not they knew anything about it, makes one wonder about the desirability of such an educational enterprise for the general public. Perhaps the Hawke's Bay residents need 'educating' as to just what the concept of 'community Education' means and involves? Then again, maybe it is just a question of time?

All the problems and questions raised here, which emerged from the information gained by the investigation, have implicit implications for the Community College. These it seems, are centred around the communication that takes place between the Community College and its catchment group. Whilst not attempting to provide any rationale for such implications, it appears that the key to any communication is

diversification.

Diversification seems to be important not only in the kinds of activities offered by the college and the forms that such activities take, but also in the kinds of publicity used by the Community College generally. Here, personal contact may be vital. Perhaps the Community College, being such a new and 'confused' institution, may need the 'personal touch' in order to get the Hawke's Bay citizens committed to its philosophy and motivated to become involved? Communication through friendship and kinship networks could be one means for achieving such ends?

However, in viewing what has been said in this chapter, a number of factors need to be taken into account. Firstly, throughout this study the researcher has made the assumption that her interpretation of the Community College is 'correct', coinciding with the college's. Such an interpretation has been based on discussions with college officials and relevant information read by the researcher. But, the fact must be recognized that the researcher may have some 'false' conceptions about the nature of the Community College. If this is so, various aspects of the inspection of the results and consequent comments, may have been 'coloured' by what these are. Any judgement of whether or not this has happened is for the reader to make.

Secondly, in evaluating what has been said, one has to recognize both the nature of the research problem tackled and the theoretical framework within which it was couched. Hence, this chapter concludes with a brief reconsideration of the investigation as a whole.

Conclusions

The problem posed for this investigation was of an exploratory nature. No previous research has been pursued which centred on finding out what Hawke's Bay citizens know about the Community College, feel about it, and how they are willing to act towards it. This study attempted to gain some knowledge about such features by concentrating on exploring just what kinds of definitions of the Hawke's Bay Community College have been developed by its catchment group. The extent to which this has been successfully achieved is contingent on a number of factors.

Firstly, there is the question of whether Symbolic Interactionism, as a theoretical perspective, has been appropriately applied in this study. Because of practical limitations operating in the field, such as time

constraints, the scattered nature of the population involved, and data acquisition problems, necessarily there are deficiencies inherent in the investigation and the consequent results. Such contingencies had to be accepted and have been accounted for where related to the discussion.

There is also the problem of whether the methodology employed by the researcher adequately respects Symbolic Interactionism. The suitability of a semi-structured interview is central here. Arguments for its use were presented in Chapter 3. As was demonstrated, both theoretical and empirical factors had to be taken into account when deciding methodological issues. It was argued that the Interview was a justifiable compromise here. But, the fact remains that the researcher may have 'abused' Symbolic Interactionism by making use of such procedures.

Thirdly, there is the question implicit as to the appropriateness and adequacy of Symbolic Interactionism, and more particularly the construct of the Definition of the Situation, for this investigation. On the one hand, it could be argued that some other theory would have provided a more definitive rationale for directing this study. Symbolic Interactionist's postulates could be viewed as too 'vague' and 'openended'. But, on the other hand, such features were congruent with the aims of the study.

The point was not to predetermine the nature of the social world prior to entering the empirical field. Rather, the objectives focused on exploration, in the attempt to gain understanding as to how a range of Hawke's Bay citizens define the Community College, and what features within their environments may have influenced such conceptions. Such understanding was seen to be of value for two principal reasons. Firstly, it may aid the college to invoke greater control both over future conceptions of the Community College, and consequent dispositions towards it. Secondly, it could provide impetus for further research in this area. Therefore, the discussion, hypotheses and questions included in this chapter are not to be seen as definitive or conclusive. Rather, they are to be viewed as factors emergent from an exploratory study, indicative of environmental elements inherent in the interaction between the Community College and its catchment group. The study as a whole is a starting point, not a final product. All that has been said in this thesis is to be interpreted from such a position.

The principal feature justifying Symbolic Interactionism as the theoretical perspective most apt for a study of this nature, seems to

be that it allowed the exploration to proceed about actors' understandings, feelings, and anticipated behaviour on the basis of what the actors said. The exploration was grounded in the empirical case. For example, this study has demonstrated that there exists a continuum of meanings in relation to the Community College. It is not simply a Community College because it is so called. Rather, it may be perceived in different ways. The success of communication between the college and its catchment group is contingent on such meanings being made explicit. Not only that, but also, if the communication is to achieve appropriate ends, such meanings where incongruent, may have to be reconstructed.

Through using Symbolic Interactionism, the researcher was able to direct the examination towards trying to discover the actors' definitions of an aspect of social reality, rather than have predetermined such definitions to any large extent. Admittedly, certain compromises were necessary, when transferring from the theoretical to empirical world. Generally however, the theoretical perspective was respected as much as feasible, taking into special consideration the Symbolic Interactionist's postulates about human beings living in a social context and the resulting nature of their action and interaction.

But, in the end it is recognized that what has been said in this thesis is subject to various interpretations, and that:

A theory is a theory, not a reality. All a theory can do is remind me of certain thoughts that were a part of my reality then. A statement of a 'fact' is an emphasis - one way of looking at something. At worst it is a kind of myopia. A name is also just one way of seeing something. I can't make a statement about a reality without omitting many other things which are also true about it. Even if it were possible to say everything that is true about a reality, I still would not have the reality; I would only have the words. In fact, the reality changes even as I talk about it.

When I outgrow my names and facts and theories, or when reality leaves them behind, I become dead if I don't go on to new ways of seeing things.

(Hugh Prather)

Appendix 1

THE INTERVIEW DATA

This Appendix gives a description of the data that was 'distilled' from the Interviews carried out. It is divided according to the general topic areas included in the Interview Guides. These are presented in tabulated form, dimensionalized in terms of the responses given and the cognitive groupings that were constructed. The actual figures in these tables provide a record of the frequency each responses category was mentioned by the Interviewees.

For simplicity, these groupings have been numbered in the following way: 'Community College': Group 1; 'Vocational Training Centre': Group 2; 'Technical Institute': Group 3; 'University': Group 4; and, 'Unaware': Group 5.

Overall, the presentation of these tables is organized into four parts. Those topic areas related to the cognitive domain are considered first, those connected with the affective domain second, and those related to the evaluative domain third. The fourth part consists of the data concerned with the inter-relationships that were discovered from the information included in the interviews.

1. The Cognitive Domain:

Table 1:1

Knowledge about the Community College's Services

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
Place:	College Only	0	7	9	1	17
	College & Specified Centres	5	8	2	0	15
	Anywhere	12	5	0	0	17
Means to:	Own Transport	15	19	11	1	46
	Transport provided	2	1	0	0	3
Time of:	Day & Night	5	15	11	0	31
	Day, Night & Weekends	9	0	0	0	9
	Depends	3	3	0	1	7
Cost of:	Uncertain	0	2	0	0	2
	Fee	17	18	10	1	46
	Free	0	2	1	0	3

Table 1:2

Services for Whom

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
Area:	Throughout region	15	18	10	1	44
Sex:	Both	15	17	10	1	43
	Primarily Males	0	0	1	0	1
Age:	All Ages	15	13	0	1	29
	Young Age Group	0	5	10	0	15
Ethnicity:	All Groups	15	18	10	1	44
Occupation:	All Occupations	15	18	1	1	35
	Trades/Manual	0	0	9	0	9
Educational Background:	Some qualifications	0	2	0	1	3
Special Needs:	None	15	16	10	0	41
	Yes	14	15	4	0	33
Rural/Urban	No	1	0	1	0	2
	Both	13	18	9	1	41
Other Responses:	Mainly Urban	2	0	0	0	2
	Those wanting to Learn	5	1	1	0	7
	Ordinary People	2	1	0	0	3

Table 1:3

Similarities/Differences with Established Educational Facilities

Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
Similar	0	4	11	1	16
Somewhat Different	7	12	0	0	19
Totally Different	10	0	0	0	10
Uncertain	0	4	0	0	4

Table 1:4

Decisions: Community College Activities

Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
The College	0	6	6	1	13
The Public	3	2	1	0	6
College & Public	13	10	2	0	25
Uncertain	1	2	2	0	5

Table 1:5

Information Source

Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Gp 5	Total
Friends	3	3	2	0	0	8
Media	13	11	7	1	14	46
College	4	6	0	0	14	24
Discussion	1	1	2	0	0	4
Uncertain*	-	-	-	-	2	2

* This category was applicable to Group 5 only, whose responses in this area were in terms of anticipated information sources.

2. The Affective Domain:

Table 2:1

Interviewees' Interpretations of the General Public's Attitude

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
Content:	Enthusiasm	7	6	6	0	19
	Minor					
	Consideration	7	8	3	0	18
	Uncertainty	2	6	1	1	10
	Reservation	3	0	2	0	5
Reasons:	New Opportunities	7	6	4	0	17
	Job Training	0	5	4	0	9
	Inadequate					
	Publicity	6	5	3	0	14
	Inadequate					
	Interest	3	1	0	0	4
Never Discussed	1	3	1	1	6	

Table 2:2

Interviewees' Interpretations of Friends' Attitudes

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
Content:	Enthusiasm	5	6	3	1	15
	Potential Interest	2	2	1	0	5
	Minor Consideration	2	0	1	0	3
	Uncertainty	8	12	5	0	25
Reasons:	New Opportunities	5	6	3	0	14
	Job Training	0	2	1	0	3
	Keen to Learn	2	0	0	1	3
	Provide Stimulus	0	1	0	0	1
	Inadequate Publicity	3	0	0	0	3
	Inadequate Interest	0	1	3	0	4
	Never Discussed	8	10	4	0	22

Table 2:3

Interviewees' Interpretations of Family's Attitudes

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
Content:	Enthusiasm	9	8	6	0	23
	Potential Interest	1	1	0	0	2
	Minor Consideration	1	1	0	0	2
	Uncertainty	3	8	3	0	14
	Not Applicable	3	2	2	1	8
Reasons:	New Opportunities	8	8	5	0	21
	Job Training	1	1	3	0	5
	Keen to Learn	2	1	0	0	3
	Never Discussed	3	5	4	0	12

Table 2:4

Interviewees' Interpretations of Work Colleagues' Attitudes

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
Content:	Enthusiasm	3	5	1	0	9
	Minor Consideration	2	1	0	0	3
	Uncertainty	4	4	4	0	12
	Not Applicable	7	11	6	1	25
Reasons:	New Opportunities	4	4	0	0	8
	Job Training	1	2	1	0	4
	Interested	1	0	0	0	1
	Never Discussed	3	4	4	0	11

Table 2:5

Interviewees' Interpretations of Employer's Interest

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
Interest:	Yes	4	7	2	0	13
	No	2	3	0	0	5
	Uncertain	1	2	3	0	6
Reasons:	Interest Education	2	1	0	0	3
	Job Training	3	6	2	0	11
	Seen as Irrelevant	0	1	0	0	1
	Never Discussed	1	2	3	0	6

Table 2:6

Interviewees' Interpretations of Membership Groups' Attitudes

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
Content:	Enthusiasm	6	5	3	0	14
	Minor Consideration	1	2	0	0	3
	Uncertainty	4	9	6	0	19
	Not Applicable	8	4	1	1	14
Reasons:	New Opportunities	5	5	2	0	12
	Interested	2	0	0	0	2
	Inadequate Publicity	0	2	0	0	2
	Never Discussed	4	9	7	0	20

Table 2:7

Interviewees' Personal Attitudes

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Total
Content:	Enthusiasm	16	19	11	1	47
	Potential Interest	0	1	0	0	1
	Reservation	1	0	0	0	1
Reasons:	New Opportunities	13	13	4	1	31
	Job Training	0	6	5	0	11
	Keen to Learn	3	1	0	0	4
	Provide Stimulus	1	0	0	0	1
	Inadequate Publicity	1	0	0	0	1

3. The Evaluative Domain:

Table 3:1

Interviewees' Evaluation of Friends Use

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Gp 5	Total
Use:	Job-related	3	4	5	0	1	13
	Cultural/Leisure	4	5	1	0	4	14
	Conditional Use	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Uncertainty	1	2	0	0	5	8
	No	6	7	4	0	19	36
	Not Applicable	0	0	2	1	1	4
Reasons:	Job Training	1	4	4	0	1	10
	Gain Knowledge	4	2	1	0	3	10
	Further Interests	2	3	1	0	1	7
	Socialize	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Unawareness	0	3	0	0	5	8
	Too Settled	0	3	2	0	4	9
	Too Busy	2	1	1	0	6	10
	Too Old	1	1	1	0	2	5
	Uninterested	2	2	0	0	6	10
	Not Applicable	1	0	0	0	3	4

Table 3:2

Interviewees' Evaluation of Family's Use

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Gp 5	Total
Use:	Job-related	2	4	1	0	4	11
	Cultural/Leisure	5	4	1	0	5	15
	Unspecified Use	2	1	1	1	0	5
	Conditional Use	3	5	2	0	0	10
	Uncertainty	5	7	3	0	11	26
	No	2	1	3	0	10	16
Reasons:	Job Training	0	4	1	0	4	9
	Gain Knowledge	7	3	1	1	11	23
	Further Interests	2	2	0	0	0	4
	Socialize	1	2	0	0	0	3
	Use Facilities	1	4	1	0	2	8
	Unawareness	3	4	4	0	2	13
	Too Settled	1	0	1	0	1	3
	Too Busy	1	0	0	0	5	6
	Too Old	1	1	3	0	3	8
	Uninterested	0	0	0	0	2	2

Table 3:3

Interviewees' Evaluation of Work Colleagues' Use

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Gp 5	Total
Use:	Job-related	3	4	2	0	1	10
	Cultural/Leisure	3	0	0	0	2	5
	Uncertainty	2	2	3	0	5	12
	No	2	3	0	0	5	10
	Not Applicable	7	11	6	1	17	42
Reasons:	Job Training	2	4	1	0	1	8
	Gain Knowledge	3	0	1	0	0	4
	Further Interests	1	0	0	0	1	2
	Unawareness	2	2	3	0	5	12
	Too Busy	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Too Old	0	3	0	0	2	5
	Uninterested	2	0	0	0	3	5

Table 3:4

Interviewees' Evaluation of Membership Groups' Use

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Gp 5	Total
Use:	Cultural/Leisure	3	4	0	0	3	10
	Conditional Use	1	4	2	0	0	7
	Uncertainty	4	3	4	0	5	16
	No	2	5	4	0	12	23
	Not Applicable	8	4	1	1	10	24
Reasons:	Gain Knowledge	1	1	0	0	1	3
	Use Facilities	2	3	1	0	2	8
	Unawareness	5	8	6	0	5	24
	Too Busy	0	1	0	0	2	3
	Too Old	0	1	0	0	1	2
	Uninterested	2	2	4	0	9	17

Table 3:5

Interviewees' Evaluation of their Own Use

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Gp 5	Total
Use:	Job-related	1	6	3	0	1	11
	Cultural/Leisure	9	3	0	0	4	16
	Conditional Use	4	4	1	0	1	10
	Uncertainty	5	5	1	0	6	17
	No	3	5	6	1	18	33
Reasons:	Job Training	1	4	2	0	1	8
	Gain Knowledge	9	3	1	0	5	18
	Socialize	2	3	0	0	0	5
	Unawareness	4	4	2	0	6	16
	Too Settled	0	0	0	0	2	2
	Too Busy	0	1	0	0	7	8
	Too Old	2	4	6	1	4	17
	Uninterested	1	1	0	0	3	5
	Not Applicable	0	0	0	0	2	2

Table 3:6

College Becoming a Part of the Interviewees' Life

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Gp 5	Total
How:	Job-related	2	3	0	0	1	6
	Cultural/Leisure	1	0	0	0	3	4
	Unspecified Use	5	1	0	0	1	7
	Conditional Use	2	4	3	0	4	13
	No	7	12	8	1	21	49
Reasons:	Job Training	2	3	0	0	1	6
	Gain Knowledge	6	1	0	0	3	10
	Too Settled	4	3	3	0	5	15
	Too Busy	3	6	3	0	6	18
	Too Old	2	7	4	1	5	19
	Uninterested	0	0	1	0	3	4
	Not Applicable	0	0	0	0	2	2

Table 3:7

Relevance of the College to Interviewee's Needs

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Gp 5	Total
Needs:	General Education	2	3	1	0	6	12
	Help Community	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Practical Skills	1	4	2	0	2	9
	Hobbies	3	3	0	1	5	12
	None	9	10	6	0	17	42
	College any Help:	Yes	5	6	2	0	0
No		0	0	0	0	2	2
Uncertain		3	4	1	0	11	19

4. Inter-relationships

Table 4:1

Interaction between Descriptive Variables and Cognition

	Category	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Gp 5	Total
Age Range:	15 - 35 years	8	8	2	0	12	30
	35 - 55 years	6	8	3	0	14	31
	Over 55 years	3	4	6	1	4	18
Distance from	Less than 5 miles	7	7	5	1	9	29
	5 - 10 miles	7	8	3	0	9	27
College:	More than 10 miles	3	5	3	0	12	23
Sex:	Female	7	6	6	1	20	40
	Male	10	7	3	0	19	39
Ethnic	Maori	3	1	2	0	4	10
Origin:	Pakeha	14	19	9	1	26	69
Educational Background:	Primary	1	6	1	0	2	10
	Secondary	7	8	6	0	16	37
	2ndry & S.C.	1	2	2	0	6	11
	2ndry & U.F.	5	3	2	0	5	15
	Tertiary	3	1	0	1	1	6

Table 4:2

Interaction between Descriptive Variables and Evaluation

	Category	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Age Range:	15 - 35 years	16	8	6
	35 - 55 years	13	7	11
	Over 55 years	0	3	15
Distance from	Less than 5 miles	12	6	11
	5 - 10 miles	11	8	8
College:	More than 10 miles	6	4	13
Sex:	Female	16	7	17
	Male	13	11	15
Ethnic	Maori	6	3	1
Origin:	Pakeha	23	15	31

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