

**Factors Affecting Apprenticeship Enrollment and Completion in Post-
Secondary Hairstyling Programs in Alberta**

by

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Abstract

Research in the field of hairstyling in Alberta has been tremendously neglected, especially concerning the full term programs offered at private vocational colleges. Current research suggests that there has been a significant decrease of apprentices completing and receiving their Journeyperson certificate in hairstyling. This study identified and examined two factors affecting enrollment and completion of students registered in the full term hairstyling apprenticeship program and completion of students receiving their Journeyperson certificate in Alberta. Three sources of data were used, researcher's field notes, self-administered questionnaires, and one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The research participants consisted of current managers and owners from seven post-secondary full term hairstyling trade institutes in Alberta. The study determined that insufficient support from the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board and lack of financial funding at the provincial level was shown to have the greatest influence on apprenticeship completion rates in private vocational hairstyling institutes in Alberta.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Elizabeth Hazel Stevenson. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name “Factors Affecting Enrollment and Completion in Post-Secondary Hairstyling Apprenticeship Programs in Alberta”, No. 25573, Approval effective April 10, 2012.

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Chapter One

Introduction

It's a licensed trade but most people don't realize that. Most trades have got a lot of respect shown to them and this is probably one of the few trades that a lot of people just kind of go 'oh well, it's just a haircut. How hard can it be?'

Linda, interview, 2012

I first became interested in hairstyling when a family friend offered me a position working as an assistant at her hair salon when I was in grade 11. The Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) wasn't available at the high school I attended so this was my first experience in the trades. I didn't know what you needed to learn, where you would go to school to learn such skills or what a Journeyperson was, but I loved it. The stylists I worked for suggested that I go to cosmetology school, which was conveniently down the block from the salon I worked at. It had never occurred to me that I could go to school somewhere other than a university. I enrolled in beauty school in March of 1998 and haven't looked back since. With the support of my parents, colleagues, and friends I received my Journeyperson certificate and Red Seal in hairstyling in 2000.

It has been 18 years since I first began working in the hair industry and I enjoy it as much now as I did back when I started. I transitioned into the field of education, received my Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree and I currently teach

cosmetology at a senior high school in St. Albert, Alberta. Throughout these varied roles within the beauty industry I have found that potential apprentices who are interested in hairstyling are in great need of assistance. They need guidance with discovering the trade, assistance with enrolling in the right hairstyling school, help with financing and, lastly, support with completing their apprenticeship program. I continually struggle with how undervalued and misunderstood the Journey person hairstyling pathway is in Alberta. These challenges were the beginning of what has slowly evolved into my current research. I will draw on my expertise as a tradesperson, educator, and researcher, while at the same time using careful consideration when conveying my participants' experiences and views.

Research purpose

My objective as a secondary school teacher is to provide accessible, high quality learning opportunities for all students and encourage pathways to post-secondary education. Apprenticeships are a distinct form of education where students learn skills in an academic environment as well as in a work-based practicum, and offer an opportunity to link workplace experience with education. Students are able to earn valuable post-secondary credentials while securing employment opportunities. We must stress the importance of the apprenticeship trades as they help support the community, employers, and provides students with

a career path. However, many studies that I will discuss in further detail in the following chapters have shown that completion rates of Journey person certification in Alberta remain very low. “Evidence from a variety of sources demonstrates that apprenticeship completion rates in Canada have remained stagnant or declined despite an increase in apprenticeship registrations” (Kerr & Stewart, 2010, p. 15). The apprenticeship system is greatly influenced by a multitude of internal and external factors. Although a significant amount of research has been undertaken in the area of vocational education in Canada (c.f., Coe, 2011; Sharpe & Gibson, 2005; Taylor, 2008; Taylor & Watt-Malcolm, 2007); research in the field of hairstyling apprenticeships is greatly overlooked. According to Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education (AIAE) (2013a), in 2013 there were 2,359 students registered as hairstyling apprentices. Although, it is notable that only 358 hairstyling apprentices received their Journey person certificate that same year. The lack of literature and the gap between enrollment and completion rates are cause for further investigation and the motivation for my research.

We speak of women in apprenticeships as the minority; but when placed in the context of hairstyling they become the overwhelming majority. Dostie (2010) notes in his study on completion rates of Canadian apprentices that “because there are so few female apprentices, and because they tend to register in very different and specific trades (such as hairstyling), we drop[ped] them from the sample” (p.

2). The goal of my study was to discover the factors that affect enrollment and completion of full term hairstyling apprenticeship programs in Alberta. This research study identified two major areas that negatively affect the potential completion of these apprenticeships. Hopefully, this research provides useful information to begin to address these issues.

Research question

The key research question for this research is: What are the factors that affect enrollment of students registered in the full term hairstyling apprenticeship programs in Alberta and the successful completion of their Journey person certificate? Building from this question, the following sub-questions were asked:

1. What are some factors that are preventing students from completing their program while enrolled in a hairstyling institute?
2. What are some suggestions for encouraging apprenticeship completion for both the in-school and the in-salon apprenticeship portion of their training?

Limitations

The apprenticeship pathway for youth at the secondary level is of great value and importance in this field of research, but these programs were not examined in depth in this study. Since the research focused on post-secondary

hairstyling institutes, secondary apprenticeship programs were only examined in Chapter Two - Literature review. This topic has had significant research published (c.f., Schofield, 2004; Taylor, 2005; 2007; 2008; Taylor & Watt-Malcolm, 2007) therefore I made the decision to limit the research study to the post-secondary level, which I felt required the most attention and garnered the most concern. Also, this study made no attempts to address the perspectives of students enrolled in the full-term hairstyling programs. I acknowledge that the perspectives and opinions of these particular students are valuable to this area of research, but in order to accommodate for time constraints and cost limitations, I have chosen to focus the study at the administrative level in full term hairstyling institutes. This decision was based on the assumption that individuals at the administrative level would have a far greater understanding of the apprenticeship system in Alberta and could provide meaningful insight for this study. Plans for future study would be to focus on the perspectives of the apprentice and apply it alongside the information gathered from this study.

There are 11 federally designated hairstyling institutes in Alberta that are located in Red Deer, Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Grand Prairie, and Medicine Hat. The limitations of time and finances eliminated the ability to contact all 11 schools. This was the deciding factor for contacting eight of the 11 designated cosmetology institutes. One hair institute that was not included on the list and was omitted from the study is an advanced academy that enrolls hairstylists who

currently possesses a Journeyperson certificate. This research study is centered around apprentices working toward receiving their Journeyperson certificate therefore that designated institute was not included. Special note: since the completion of the research project, an additional hairstyling institute has opened and is an accredited institution as of April 3, 2014. For the accuracy of this study and consistency, I will only be referring to the 11 institutes that were federally designated during the undertaking of this study.

Finally, the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board (AITB) was a large focus of this study due to the responses from the participants. No attempts were made to contact the AITB and delve further into their operations and management of apprenticeship monitoring beyond the existing literature due to time constraints. Suggestions for further research on this topic will be discussed in Chapter Five - Conclusions.

Definition of Terms

A list of specialized terms have been described in the following section to provide clarity in regards to relevant terminology used within the apprenticeship system in Alberta and throughout this study.

Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board - The Alberta

Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board (AITB) is responsible for setting the

standards and requirements for training and certification in programs under the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act. The Board also makes recommendations to the Government of Alberta, through the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology, regarding the needs of Alberta's labour market for skilled workers and the designation of trades and occupations (Nixon, 2011).

Apprenticeship – Apprenticeship is a model of training where you learn a skilled trade by working in that trade. It is a formal agreement between an apprentice, their employer, and the provincial or territorial apprenticeship authority. Most of the training is on-the-job, and it is usually accompanied by mandated periods of in-school technical training (Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship [CCDA], 2014).

Compulsory Certificate Trade – to work in a compulsory certification trade, a person must either hold a recognized trade certificate or be a registered apprentice in the trade. An employer wishing to hire persons to work in the trade must hire only certified Journeyperson in that trade or apprentices registered in the trade and working under the supervision of a certified Journeyperson (Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education [AIAE], 2013b). Refer to Appendix A for the complete list of compulsory trades in Alberta.

Designated Educational Institutes - An educational institute that is “specifically designed to furnish a person with skills for, or to improve a person’s skills in a recognized occupation as per the National Occupation Classification” (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2014). They must also be provincially licensed as a trade school. Certification is issued and maintained by Employment and Social Development Canada.

Designated Trade - A designated trade is one that has been approved by the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology on the recommendation of the industry and the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board, and is regulated by Alberta’s Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act and associated regulations. The legislation provides for apprenticeship programs and certification of trades people as evidence that their qualifications meet the industry-established standards for the trade (AIAE, 2013b).

Hairstylist – commonly referred to as cosmetologist, beautician, hairdresser, and/or beauty culturist. Hairstylist is the official Red Seal occupation title according to the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA).

Journey person - When an individual has completed the required apprenticeship training and has successfully completed all examinations, he/she is issued a Journey person's certificate. Commonly referred to as a Journeyman. Throughout this study, the decision was made to use the gender neutral term of Journey person. The term Journeyman was used in correspondence with participants, and is only used in this document if spoken by the study participants or referenced in literature.

Optional Certification Trade - an individual is permitted to work in an optional certification trade if the employer deems the individual to have the skills and knowledge expected of a certified Journey person in the trade. Employers may employ uncertified Journey person and use uncertified Journey person to supervise and train apprentices on the job (AIAE, 2013b).

Red Seal - The Interprovincial Standards Program (Red Seal) provides greater mobility for skilled workers to move from one part of Canada to another. It encourages the standardization of provincial/territorial training and certification programs. In the 55 Red Seal trades (of which 49 Alberta-designated trades participate), completing apprentices or Journey person may write an Interprovincial exam and, if successful, receive a Red Seal (AIAE, 2013b)

Organization of the Chapters

This research study is organized into five chapters. Chapter Two examines the current field of hairstyling in the literature review and is broken down into two segments: Secondary school career and technology programs, and the Alberta hairstyling apprenticeship system. The methodology and data collection for this thesis study are detailed in Chapter Three. Findings from the study are presented in Chapter Four. Conclusions and recommendations for further study are presented in Chapter Five.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

With a shortage of skilled trades people and a growing economy, we must emphasize the importance of the trades as they help support the community, employers, and provide students with valuable career paths options. “Workers in the skilled trades have been identified as essential to building and maintaining Canada’s place in the knowledge economy. An adequate supply of skilled trades workers is the key to keeping Canada economically strong and socially sound” (Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Forum Canadien sur l’Apprenticesage [CAF-FCA], 2004, p. 7). I have been a strong advocate for the hairstyling trade program since I graduated from hair school and now at the secondary school that I currently work at. This is a growing industry that requires our focus and attention in order to help students navigate through the apprenticeship system successfully.

Over 11,600 Albertans are employed in the hairstylists and barbers occupational group which is expected to have an annual above average growth of 3.5 percent from 2013 to 2017 in Alberta. It is forecasted that about 406 new positions will be created each year in addition to new job openings created by employment turnover. (Alberta Learning Information Services, 2014, “Employment and Advancement,” para. 6)

I have felt frustration over the years that I have been teaching cosmetology for the lack of respect and equality that my program receives from parents, administration, and colleagues. This has led me to pursue graduate studies and has become the catalyst for my research. As I have worked through my program, I have noticed a significant gap in areas of vocational research in Canada, especially concerning scholarly publications. Much of the literature addresses the need for more expansive education to provide greater mobility once in the workforce, increasingly difficult school to work transitions, and the need for stronger critical thinking skills of students.

There are notable works published by many authors in the field of apprenticeship and trade programs, many are specific to the male dominated trades such as welding, carpentry, and heavy machinery. Even so, there is little research that targets hairstyling apprenticeship programs in Canada. Why has this area of vocational education been so largely overlooked in research? The available research on vocational education in the broad spectrum (c.f., Lehmann & Taylor, 2003; Taylor, 2008; Taylor & Watt-Malcolm, 2007) has provided a valuable framework for my future research. Although, I question if we can we adequately apply the information gained from the broad spectrum of vocational research in other areas to the specific arena of cosmetology and hairstyling apprenticeship programs? I have found numerous articles written by Alison Taylor (2005; 2007; 2008) to be extremely informative on the apprenticeship system in Canada.

However, information and research about the effects of these factors and barriers in relation to the female dominated trade of hairstyling in Alberta is much needed. “Workplace learning must be studied in context to understand the factors that influence the learning environment and possibilities for change” (Taylor & Watt-Malcolm, 2007). It is important to understand the secondary program of studies and the Alberta apprenticeship system in order to begin to investigate the current challenges faced in the hairstyling industry. This chapter has been divided into two major sections: Part one focuses on the introduction of Career and Technology Studies (CTS) at the secondary high school level and, part two, on the post-secondary pathways of vocational education.

Secondary School Career and Technology Programs

Although in this research study I focus on the post-secondary apprenticeship program in Alberta, I feel it is of importance to make note of the path for a student to follow in the hairstyling trade starting at the secondary high school level. The Alberta senior high program of studies for Career and Technology Studies (CTS) has been revised and new curriculum has been implemented over a three-year span that began in September 2009. The cosmetology program underwent major curriculum changes, and was implemented in September 2010 in the classroom. Prior, the available CTS programs were organized in 22 occupational strands with a modular approach to

the curriculum. Although the modular format remains the same, the occupational strands have changed. The 22 program strands have been labeled and organized into five clusters. Cosmetology is now listed under the cluster entitled HRH: Health, Recreation, and Human Services.

The CTS program centers around five clusters and more than 1000 1-credit courses in 28 occupational areas. A cluster is a group of CTS courses that represent occupations with broad industry commonalities.

Clusters in CTS are aligned with the National Occupational Classification (NOC) and function as an organizing tool for the CTS program. (Alberta Education, 2014b, “Senior High School Program of Studies,” para. 1)

The National Occupational Classification (NOC) is the nationally accepted reference on occupations in Canada. It classifies, describes, and organizes over 30,000 job titles into 520 occupational group descriptions. The NOC is reflective of the Canadian labour market and is updated using Statistics Canada five-year census. Within the cluster of HRH, the cosmetology curriculum is now divided into three occupational areas. Cosmetology has been divided into two areas that include *COS: general cosmetology* and *HSA: hairstyling apprenticeship*. The esthetics program, which was formerly grouped into hairstyling, is separated into its own occupational area. Esthetics is not recognized in Alberta as an apprenticeship program, and is taught separately from the Journeyman program of hairstyling. The esthetics curriculum has also had major changes implemented

to better reflect industry practices and a broader educational scope for students learning technology and trade skills. The revised cosmetology and esthetics curriculum includes goals such as the aptitude to build personal skills, to think and problem solve, and to learn continuously. The former cosmetology curriculum only contained tactile and communication skills specific to the salon environment and the specific outcome of the module. These changes reflect the need for better student transitions from school to work, mobility once in the work force, and a stronger focus on critical thinking skills.

Many of the articles discuss the need for reform in vocational education in order to adequately prepare students for the work force. Lehmann and Taylor (2003) state: “Governments and employers suggest that students are not adequately prepared to meet the ‘knowledge economy’ demand for skilled workers and that continued economic prosperity requires educational reform” (p. 45). The new curriculum is designed to educate students in a broader scope and provide them with a better understanding of the industry they are training to work within. Many students enroll in CTS courses at the senior high level to earn credits and meet the requirements for receiving a diploma. We must be careful not to exclude those students from registering in CTS courses because they feel the curriculum is too narrow. Broadening the skills taught in CTS modules will affect not only the students who are interested in continuing in the trade after graduation but perhaps attract students who may never have thought about registering in

apprenticeship programs.

Students can explore their interests by selecting and creating personalized pathways. A pathway is a selection of courses to give students the opportunity to explore and acquire the attitudes, skills and knowledge for a career that is relevant to their interests. Pathways support goals that may include university, college, apprenticeship training or moving directly into the workforce. Teachers and students can select and combine CTS courses to create pathways for exploration, specialization and credentialing.

(Alberta Education, 2014b, “Senior High School Program of Studies,” para. 5)

Career and technology courses offered within the secondary school system provide students with an opportunity to try a vocation to see if they enjoy it, to ease transitions into the workforce, and to begin their apprenticeship before leaving high school. Schools have been criticized “for focusing on university-and college-bound students and failing to offer practical alternatives to those who want jobs right after high school” (Schofield, 2004, p. 3).

The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board has created successful programs (e.g., Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP), Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP)) to help connect high school students to possible employment within the trades. These programs help to meet the needs of employers while providing transition opportunities from school to work for

students. Alberta schools provide opportunities within the trades through a number of available programs at the secondary level. The Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) was introduced in 1991 and allows students to earn high school credits and hours towards an apprenticeship in any of the 50 offered trades (Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education [AIAE], 2014a). Students are able to register in the program at the age of 16 years old and can earn up to 40 credits towards their high school diploma requirements. The Alberta apprenticeship board also offers programs such as the Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP) that introduces youth ages 12-15 to the trades; and the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project (AAP), which aims to support Aboriginal youth's entry into the apprenticeship programs.

In 2011, Alberta schools enrolled 1,295 students, and hairstyling is the second highest enrolled trade in RAP (AIAE, 2014a). The provincial government has also introduced a RAP scholarship of \$1,000.00 to high school students registered in the program. RAP and similar work experience programs are vital sources of funding for secondary schools and can help to support additional CTS programs. These programs can allow the opportunity for students to enter the trades and to find meaningful employment directly out of high school. According to Schofield (2004), "going through [RAP] is better than someone coming out of high school and starting from scratch ... they've proven that they're serious, and they're much more appealing to an employer" (p. 2). The newly implemented

CTS curriculum along with RAP should allow for greater opportunities for students to have success in their apprenticeship program and work placements. Lehmann and Taylor (2003) further describe that an integrated curriculum is said “to make academic knowledge more meaningful” (p. 47).

A significant barrier for students transitioning into the workforce is the ability to make informed decisions about career paths that are available to them. Students need to be provided with the necessary information regarding the different options available to them within the secondary school system so they are able to make informed decisions regarding their future. The question I ask is whether completion rates of apprenticeship programs would increase if students had more opportunity to work in the trade during their secondary schooling. Enrollment in all apprenticeship programs has increased by 73 per cent over the last five years; but completion rates are still very low. While most trades have a completion rate of 51 per cent, hairstyling has one of the highest completion rates at 66 per cent (Desjardins, 2010).

Reasons suggested for the high non-completion rates include: the instability of employment; the lack of compulsory certification in some trades; discrimination in the workplace faced by women, some visible minority groups, Aboriginals and people with disabilities; the cost of programs; and the inadequate skills of some apprentices. (Taylor & Watt-Malcolm, 2007, p. 30)

When we address the issue mentioned of discrimination of women in the work place, does that affect women working in hairstyling apprenticeship programs? Although there are a high number of articles addressing these issues outside of the hairstyling trade, the available statistics show that there is a significant difference in the program enrollment and completion with hairstyling service trades. Are the factors for non-completion still applicable to hairstyling apprenticeship programs and what are the different variables? There has been research looking at women in male-dominated apprenticeships and the challenges presented that may hinder their success. What are the challenges for women working in the female dominated trades such as hairstyling? As of December 31, 2013, there were 65,880 registered apprentices in Alberta and 5,846 were women (AIAE, 2013a). Although women are growing in numbers in the trades, it remains constant that the majority of women are drawn to the so-called female trades. There were 2,134 women registered in hairstyling apprenticeship programs in 2013 (AIAE, 2013a). Women represented approximately 47 per cent of the employed workforce in Canada, although, women only represent approximately 11 per cent of registered apprentices.

The majority of employed women continue to work in occupations in which women have traditionally been concentrated. In 2006, 67% of all employed women were working in one of teaching, nursing and related

health occupations, clerical or other administrative positions or sales and service occupations. (Ferrao, 2010, p. 21)

Information on women in male-dominated trades is a valuable area to research, but shouldn't we also address the fields that women predominantly enter?

Research has also noted that lack of awareness and information regarding apprenticeships is a significant disincentive for secondary students considering vocational education. According to CAF-FCA (2005), only 14 per cent of youth said that their school guidance counsellors encouraged skilled trades as a career option (p. 5). However, we cannot rely simply on the availability of programs to ensure that students are aware of their possible options. The Alberta Ministry of Education has mandatory career planning classes that students must take to meet graduation requirements. These courses introduce topics of career planning, finances, and life management in hopes of educating students about their options after high school graduation. Counselling and guidance at the secondary level should also play a key role in promoting trades as a career choice for students and encouraging interested students to enroll in programs such as RAP, work experience, or a career and technology option class offered at their school. In Alberta, 74.9 percent of students complete high school within six years of entering grade nine (Alberta Education, 2014a). Despite that, many trade programs have lower admission standards and require grade 10 equivalent math and English.

Many students will not complete their high school graduation requirements and are unaware that they could still be successful in an apprenticeship program. Lehmann and Taylor (2003) suggest that “there have always been good programs in place for special education kids...and there have always been opportunities for the top 15 to 20% of young people who are very focused. What we haven’t done is have something for the rest of the kids” (p. 51). Some students require more assistance to make appropriate school to work transitions and many students complete high school without knowing about career options. In Alison Taylor’s (2008) article entitled “You have to have that in your nature: Understanding the trajectories of youth apprentices,” she addresses the issue of vocational habitus and how this plays a role in successful apprenticeship programs. She describes habitus as “ways of operating, inclinations, values and rationales developed from various formative contexts such as the family and education system” (p. 394). Taylor believes that there has been very little evaluation on why youth choose to enter apprenticeship programs in the first place. Taylor also addresses the challenges that students have once they have entered the apprenticeship training and “although trades have been characterized as working-class occupations, apprenticeship training ironically does not necessarily favour working-class youth” (p. 409). According to Taylor, dispositions formed in school, family, and the workplace support the notion that certain students are more likely to experience problems with the transitions into

apprenticeship training programs. Authors Harris and Simons (2005) also note that one of the factors that affect completion rates of apprentices is “particular personal characteristics of the trainee” (p. 354). I agree that certain students will face challenges within trade programs and we need to address what those are specific to each trade, as they would vary significantly.

Problems within the programs are also driven by the inability to attract and retain skilled Journeyperson to teach within high school career and technology classes and the post-secondary apprenticeship system. The faculty at an institution plays a valuable role with their expertise in the trades for they are most often the first experience a student will have in that field of work. Alberta Education and the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board require teachers of compulsory trade programs, often Red Seal, within high schools to be licensed teachers as well as Journeyperson certificate holders within that specific trade. The Albert Teachers’ Association recognizes Journeyperson certificates as vocational experience but not as formal post-secondary education when assessing qualifications for their placement on the salary pay grid when the evaluation of the certification is outside of the Bachelor of Education degree. The value of that training and its corresponding salary varies according to specific school jurisdiction policies. This can be an enormous disincentive as the salary can be significantly lower for trade people considering becoming educators within the secondary school system.

We need to ensure that certificates and diplomas have currency in the labour market in order to attract skilled instructors (Taylor, 2007). Introducing students to the trades and providing them with access to pre-apprenticeship training in the secondary school system with certified instructors would benefit society in a number of ways. Schofield (2004) states, “we also need to dismantle common misconceptions and prejudices that can prevent young Canadians from considering careers in skilled trades and technologies” (p. 2). By having educated and skilled teachers working in the secondary school system, we are providing students with role models and skilled and knowledgeable individuals to receive direct information about the specific vocation that they are interested in.

Alberta Hairstyling Apprenticeship System

Once a student has completed high school and/or is above the minimum 16 years of age, he/she is able to register in an apprenticeship program to begin their training in a specific trade. To successfully complete apprenticeship training and receive a Journeyperson certificate, a student must complete both in-class academic training and hands-on practicum that requires formal employment. Each province and territory governs its own apprenticeship system. “In Alberta, [the] Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board oversees the apprenticeship system and, in conjunction with industry committees, sets Alberta’s training and certification standards” (Kerr & Stewart, 2010, p. 7).

Provinces or territories are responsible for deciding whether or not a trade is compulsory or voluntary. If a trade is designated as compulsory an apprentice must work under the supervision of a certified Journeyperson in order to be employed (AIAE, 2013b). Hairstyling in the province of Alberta is considered a compulsory trade. The ratio for certified Journeyperson in the trade to working apprentices that they can employ cannot be higher than one Journeyperson to two apprentices. “Results suggest that apprenticeship programs for which certification is mandatory have completion rates that are about ten percentage points higher than those without mandatory certification” (Coe, 2011, p. 16). Although not mandatory, once a Journeyperson has completed his/her training and has received trade certification in one of the designated trades, he/she is eligible to receive a Red Seal if he/she has met the national standards set out by the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA). A designated Red Seal trade is one that has been chosen by the CCDA to be included in the interprovincial standards program and the province or territory has agreed to participate in the Red Seal program for that particular trade. Red Seal standards were created to provide opportunities for greater worker mobility across Canada, and to allow them to work in other provinces without having to take additional examinations. There are 55 designated Red Seal trades in Canada. Hairstyling became a designated Red Seal trade in 1986. Alberta has issued 6,514 Red Seals to Journeyperson in 2013, which is the highest amount of any other jurisdiction in Canada (CCDA, 2014).

The hairstyling trade has issued 650 of those Red Seals. “It should be noted that in all provinces except Quebec and Alberta, the Red Seal examination is used as a final examination albeit with a higher pass mark for Red Seal certification” (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005, p. 41).

The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board establish entrance and educational requirements, and provide the examinations for the certification of a Journeyperson. The board has updated the entrance requirements for apprentices effective August 1, 2012 and they have grouped trades into four categories with a recommended path and minimum requirements specific to each. Hairstyling is listed under Category A where minimum requirements needed are successful completion of Math 10-3 and English 10-2. Category A has the lowest minimum entrance requirements for all trades (see Appendix B). Previously, the entrance requirement for the hairstyling trade was successful completion of Math and English courses at the grade eleven level. “We [...] find that the education backgrounds of apprentices are important, with those having less than a high school education less likely to complete. This suggests that a high school education is not a substitute for, but rather complementary to, apprenticeship training” (Laporte & Mueller, 2011, p. 4).

The newly implemented lower admission requirements are arguably a poor choice for encouraging program completion. “There is some evidence that higher education requirements to enter an apprenticeship are associated with higher

completion rates” (Coe, 2011, p. 4). Sharpe and Gibson (2005) suggest that one reason for low completion rates is “inadequate essential skills, including literacy and mathematics” (p. 63). Work in the trades is becoming more technically challenging and requiring more complex skills and knowledge from apprentices in order to succeed. “For example, an individual who has completed high school is 44% more likely to be a ‘completer’ than an individual whose highest education level is less than high school” (Dostie, 2010, p. 14).

To receive a Journeyperson certificate in hairstyling, students must complete academic training and examinations that require knowledge of chemistry and mathematics beyond the scope of the minimum requirements establish by the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board. High school completion should be a stepping stone into a successful career in the trades. Students require these skills and knowledge for their apprenticeship so “[t]his could mean that restricting entry into apprenticeship to individuals with high school diplomas would increase the completion rate” (Dostie, 2010, p. 18). By enforcing higher educational requirements for trade programs, we are establishing a standard in which apprentices will feel adequately prepared to enter the work force. “We believe that the educational community needs to reclaim new vocationalism and to view it as a legitimate educational alternative, rather than seeing it as employment preparation for less academically inclined students” (Lehmann & Taylor, 2003, p. 64).

The hairstylist apprenticeship system in Alberta is structured slightly differently than most other regulated trades. There are two routes a potential apprentice can choose to become a hairstylist. The first option is a traditional trade block release program and the second is the full term program, which was the focus for this study. The block release hairstyling apprenticeship program in Alberta requires a total of two periods of 1,400 hours each of on-the-job training and two sessions of 10 weeks each of technical training, consisting of 35 hours per week. Hairstyling block release sessions are only offered at two designated schools, one in Edmonton and one in Calgary. This route is heavily reliant on workplace mentorship and coaching. Workplace support has been cited as a concern for students and a reason for discontinuation of an apprenticeship. “While, in theory, they are supposed to create the necessary link between school-based instruction and the ‘real’ world of work, the quality and nature of work placements, as well as their monitoring do not always contribute to this goal” (Lehmann & Taylor, 2003, p. 56).

The apprenticeship begins by the apprentice finding an employer who provides on-the-job training supervised by a certified Journeyperson. Both periods of technical training sessions are available twice a year for students to enroll in. Once a student is registered in a technical training session, a pass mark of 70 per cent is required to move to the next level of training. For instance, once students complete and successfully pass their first period of training and are working in

their second portion of training they would then be considered a second-year apprentice in hairstyling. When students have completed the required two periods of in-class training and the required hours working under the supervision of a certified Journeyperson they can write their final examinations. Upon successful completion of all these requirements, they receive their Journeyperson certificate.

During the past year (August 1, 2012 to July 31, 2013), the block release registration for hairstyling technical training in Alberta was 142 students. The year prior, during this same time period, saw 230 students attending block release training (AIAE, 2013a). These numbers account for approximately 16 per cent of registered hairstyling apprentices in Alberta in 2013. Block release training is subsidized by the government therefore the cost of tuition is significantly lower. Students must pay \$965.00 per period of technical training. The cost associated to block release programs still remain a large disincentive due to cost of tools, tuition, and foregone income during training particularly if travel is required to attend the training sessions. Numerous studies (CAF-FCA, 2004; Coe, 2011; Ménard & al, 2007) mention the largest barrier to program completion is the financial burden associated with block release training. Students registered in block release are able to apply for Employment Insurance benefits for the duration of their classroom training to help offset the loss of income during those 10 week sessions. However, payment delays in Employment Insurance benefits have also

been cited as a concern for students. The financial structure for student assistance will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

The full term hairstyling apprenticeship program has a different training structure from the block release and therefore present challenges specific to that program, which was the focus for this study. The full term program requires 1,400 hours of classroom education and 1,400 hours of practical work experience in a salon. Students do not need to first acquire employment to register in this program. Schools must be licensed and regulated under the *Alberta Private Vocational Training Act* to operate (AIAE, 2014b). The technical training is delivered in one continuous course and upon completion of this training a student must then find an employer to provide on-the-job training supervised by a certified Journeyperson. Once the apprentices have completed the required hours working, they are then eligible to complete their final examinations to become certified as a Journeyperson hairstylist.

There are 11 designated full term hairstyling schools in Alberta that can offer this training route (CanLearn, 2013). Tuition at private colleges varies from \$9,500.00 to \$18,000.00 for a 1,400 hour hairstyling program in Alberta. The cost of hairstyling programs at private vocational schools can be very expensive and “[t]he most commonly cited obstacle encountered during apprenticeship training was insufficient income or delays in funding including employment insurance payments and training allowances” (Ménard & al., 2007, p. 21). It is important to

note that students registered in the full term program are not eligible to apply for Employment Insurance benefits, unlike block release training. Perhaps funding challenges are a large reason for discontinuation of their apprenticeship training compared to block release students. “I find that across province-trade combinations the delivery technical training via block release is associated with a higher completion rate than training delivered by other methods” (Coe, 2011, p. 4). This exemplifies the fact that research is needed to investigate why hairstyling students in full term programs are not receiving their Journeyperson certificate, especially considering that the majority of students enroll in full term programs. The full term apprenticeship program in Alberta is so greatly overlooked in scholarly literature that I was unable to find any current articles after an extensive search that specifically mentioned this training route in more detail in ways different than “other method” of training. In the following chapters I will be investigating two significant barriers towards program completion that were discovered through the research study.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology used to obtain the data for this research study. The research identified and examined the factors affecting enrollment and completion of students registered in full term hairstyling apprenticeship programs and completion of students receiving their Journeyperson certification in Alberta. A mixed methods procedure was used, using the sequential explanatory design for data collection and interpretation. This is a strategy for the collection and analysis of the data from an initial phase of the study (survey) “followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data in a second phase that builds on the results of the initial [data]” (Creswell, 2009, p. 211). Data collection was carried out from April 2012 to July 2012. Three sources of data were used, researcher’s field notes, self-administered questionnaires, and one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The use of survey and interview methods was considered to be the most appropriate tools to acquiring responses to the research question. Field notes were taken by the researcher throughout the planning stage and up until the completion of the research project. Personal communications, ideas, discussions and observations made throughout the study were included in the field notes. The field notes along with the literature review provided the framework for creating the survey questions. The questionnaire was

administered to select participants in an online format. The online format was chosen for the research to increase response rates, for ease of completion, and cost effectiveness (Creswell, 2009). The online questionnaire contained close-ended questions with a small amount of open-ended questions at the end of the survey. The survey was pilot tested online by two individuals prior to the survey being administered to participants. The two individuals that pilot tested the survey were in the field of education and both hold hairstyling Journeyperson certificates. These individuals were chosen due to their expertise in the area of the research and could provide appropriate and valuable comments. Feedback was provided with regard to ensuring clarity of the intended questions, ease of completing the survey and ensuring that the online survey program worked effectively. The data obtained from 10 survey responses provided additional guidance and focus for the interview questions, which were administered to select participants after the completion of the survey.

The interview study participants consisted of four current managers, educators, and owners from seven post-secondary hairstyling trade institutes in Alberta. This number of full term hairstyling institutes contacted provides a breadth and depth of data that presents the opportunity for these findings to be applied to other hairstyling apprenticeship schools in Alberta. This study involves only those employers and upper level employees in the post-secondary hairstyling field of education. I did not address the perspectives of students enrolled in the

full-term hairstyling programs in this study. I acknowledge that the perspectives and opinions of these particular students is valuable to this area of research, but to accommodate for time constraints and cost limitations, I have chosen to focus the study at the administrative level. My recommendation for further research would be to continue this study at the same seven full-term hairstyling schools with the research being directed at the students registered and completing their program. This added layer of study would make it possible to analyze two different data sources and provide further in-depth findings in regards to the hairstyling trade.

Ethical considerations

To comply with the ethical guidelines established by the University of Alberta, the ethics review application was submitted and approved prior to the undertaking of this study. The Research Ethics Board (REB 1) at the University of Alberta reviewed this study for its adherence to ethical guidelines. Ethical considerations for the participants were included and described in the invitation to participate in the study (see Appendices C and E) and the letter of consent to participate in the study (see Appendices D and F). These letters of consent outlined the research purpose and the requested involvement of the participant. Participants were made aware that all data obtained during the survey and interview will be safely and securely stored in an encrypted hard drive and written materials kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's personal domain. Also, their

participation was strictly voluntary and they had the right to withdraw at any point leading up to and during the survey or interview with no consequence. I did not receive requests to withdraw from the study at any point from participants. Due to the small number of owners/ managers in the beauty education industry, no city locations are noted and pseudonyms are used in this thesis to maintain anonymity of the participants. The online format for the questionnaire reduced the risk to exposure of the participants by providing the opportunity to complete the survey from any location with Internet access. Participants chosen for the interview process had the ability to choose the location for the interview to take place, which minimized risk to their anonymity and confidentiality.

Data collection

Personal contact was made to eight accredited full term hairstyling training institutes in Alberta to request their cooperation and discuss their potential participation in the research study. As previously mentioned in Chapter One, there are 11 federally designated hairstyling institutes in Alberta. I acknowledge that no contact was made to three of these institutes. The limitations of time and finances eliminated the ability to contact all 11 schools. This was the deciding factor for contacting eight of the 11 cosmetology institutes. Seven of the eight institutes contacted agreed to participate in the study. I had the opportunity to explain the survey over the phone to a personal contact at each school prior to the survey

package being couriered to their location. The survey package included: an invitation letter to formally detail the survey portion of the study and ethical guidelines, and an unaddressed envelope containing a staff survey participation instruction letter with a random access code for each employee willing to participate (see Appendix H & I). Survey participation was open to all staff currently employed in a teaching or management position as well as school owners. Properties important to the selection of the participants were current employment within the field of post-secondary hairstyling education. Participants were not required to have a Journey person certificate in hairstyling. Letters with individual random access codes were made available to each staff member so they could access the online survey from home or any location of their convenience that had a computer with internet access.

Participants were provided with an overview of the ethical guidelines and consent agreement when they logged on to the website for the survey. Participants could not continue with the survey if they didn't choose to agree and provide their consent. The questionnaire examined participants' experiences about challenges facing the hairstyling industry and perceived reasons for low completion rates (see Appendix G). The survey took approximately 15 minutes to complete. An estimated number of potential volunteers were determined through phone calls placed to each school. A total of 54 invitations were couriered to the seven schools during the first week of April 2012. The survey was available online to the

participants from April 16 to April 27, 2012. A follow up call was made after eight days to ask my personal contact at each school if he/she could remind staff of the survey deadline. The survey had a response rate of 18.5 per cent. Ten individuals responded to the online survey, which was far lower than anticipated. Although, the data provided from the survey were more detailed than expected and participants chose to elaborate on multiple choice questions where comment boxes were provided. The survey data and comments were used to develop questions for the interviews.

The interviews were used to provide qualitative data for the research and to add detailed insight into the challenges concerning apprenticeship completion rates. Interview participants were managers/directors or school owners.. These participants were chosen for their experience in operating a hairstyling trade program and having access to a wide variety of information pertaining to the apprenticeship system in Alberta. For this reason I chose to omit hairstyling trade teachers from the interview process. Four managers/owners volunteered to participate in the one-on-one interviews. The professional and educational credentials of my interview participants play a significant role in their expertise in the field. However, due to the incredibly small group of owners and managers in hairstyling institutes in Alberta, I made the decision to omit any references to this information as to protect their confidentiality.

The semi-structured interviews included topics of current challenges for students, management strategies for retention and successful program completion, and views on the Alberta hairstyling apprenticeship system. All interviews were approximately 30 minutes to one hour in length and took place at a location chosen by the participant. The interviews took place on May 27, May 28, and May 31, 2012. Questions asked in the interview are documented in Appendix J. Additional questions were asked and discussed as the conversation progressed and based on previous answers to documented questions. The tape-recorded interviews were later transcribed by the researcher and transcripts were sent to each participant to review and make any changes or corrections they felt necessary (member checks).

Once participants reviewed and returned the final transcript to the researcher, they were no longer able to withdraw their participation from the study. Minimal corrections were made to one of the four interviews (i.e., removed wording such as “like”, “so”, and “umm”). A follow-up phone call was made after the completion of the transcribing process to have one participant clarify and elaborate on a question discussed in the interview. Upon reviewing the transcripts it became clear that two main themes were presenting themselves in the interview data; Challenges with the Alberta Apprenticeship and Training Board and the availability of financial support.

The participants' comments were organized into the two main themes and then the comments were colour coded by topic. I was surprised to find that during the interview all participants discussed the same perceived issues with enrollment and completion of hairstyling apprentices in Alberta. The data were grouped into four sub themes and no topics were discussed that didn't fall within those themes. The strategies of member checking, peer debriefing, and triangulation were used to look at the data obtained from the survey, interviews and the researcher's field notes (Creswell, 2009). The details of the research findings are discussed in Chapter Four and Five.

Chapter Four

Findings

The main question for this research study was: What were the perceived barriers for students completing their program and receiving their Journey person certification in full term hairstyling programs in Alberta? In the previous chapters, I described the field of hairstyling education in Alberta and my research methodology. Throughout this chapter, I will explore the two significant barriers to hairstyling apprenticeship completion that were discovered during the research study; challenges with the apprenticeship board and the availability of financial support. The analysis of the data obtained for this study was a mixed methods procedure, using the sequential explanatory design for data collection and interpretation. Data collection was carried out from April 2012 to July 2012. Three sources of data were used, researcher's field notes, self-administered questionnaires, and one-on-one semi-structured interviews.

Part 1: The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board

The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board (AITB) establish the standards and requirements for training and certification, as well as the designation of trades and occupations in the province. The AITB is regulated under the *Provincial Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*. The AITB is

composed of 12 members, with eight members representing designated trades and four members representing other industries. AITB members are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor for a three-year term with the possibility of continuing for an additional three year term. “Board members, once appointed, report to the Minister of Enterprise and Advanced Education through the Board Chair” (AIAE, 2013b, “How to get involved,” para. 2). Board members must have knowledge of the apprenticeship system in Alberta. Currently the qualifications of the board members represent the pipe-fitter, glazier, painter, millwright, iron-worker-metal building, crane and hoisting equipment operator, welder, and baking trades. It is important to note that a member representing the hairstyling trade was on the board from 2004 (the first year that the annual reports are available online) until 2011 (AIAE, 2013a). Also, there were two members on the board that held a Journeyman certificate in hairstyling in 2004/2005. The hairstyling trade has been represented at the board level for many years in Alberta although not in the last three years. The AITB relies on committees to advise on industry needs. For each of the designated trades there is a Provincial Apprenticeship Committee (PAC) with a minimum of nine people, Local Apprenticeship Committees (LAC) with a minimum of five people, and Occupational committees with a minimum of three people for each designated trade. Each Provincial Apprenticeship Committee gathers recommendations and information from their Local Apprenticeship Committee(s) and Occupational Committees and provides recommendations on

training and certification to the AITB. Some of the larger trades in Alberta may have up to 10 LACs. More than 800 individual industry representatives compose the 165 LACs and PACs in Alberta (Nixon, 2011, p. 3).

During the study, all interviewed participants mentioned problems associated with the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board. This was an unexpected result for me, therefore the survey, which was distributed prior to the interviews, did not include any questions specifically involving the board. Coe (2011) and Sharpe and Gibson (2005) both discuss the structure of the apprenticeship system as being one reason for low apprenticeship completion rates. In the analysis of the data, two key components were highlighted as the predominate challenges associated with the AITB. First is the perceived lack of monitoring, regulating, and supervision on behalf of the AITB. Secondly is the perceived lack of awareness about the board and its systems with students and staff at trade institutes. “Although the number of apprentices in the apprenticeship system is important, the efficacy of the system at producing certified Journeyperson is of even greater importance” (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005, p. 46). Nixon (2011) describes the three key goals of the apprenticeship board to be providing and supporting a skilled workforce, aligning with labour market demands, and ensuring Albertans are aware of and knowledgeable about the apprenticeship system. Given the results from this study, it would appear that

industry professionals perceive the AITB to be lacking in two of their three main goals.

Monitoring

Workplace monitoring from the apprenticeship board was mentioned numerous times by participants as lacking and sometimes all together absent during the short length of an apprenticeship. According to some participants, there was a lack of follow-up by apprenticeship authorities to track training progress, to identify problems, and to guide apprentices through to completion. “Other notable features [of the Alberta apprenticeship system] include regular worksite visits by Alberta Ministry of Learning staff, close to 14,000 in 2003/2004, in order to monitor the quality of training” (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005, p. 74). Even though Ministry employees do monitor workplace conditions for apprentices, these visits must increase in frequency and in quality. Apprentices require support in order “[...] to know their responsibilities, especially in regards to the paperwork, and has to understand the steps required to progress through the apprenticeship system” (CAF-FCA, 2011, p. 24). During a personal communication with an owner who employs multiple Journeyperson and apprentices in Edmonton, he/she stated that a Journeyperson in their shop may work for the entire duration of the apprenticeship, receive the Journeyperson certificate, and leave to work elsewhere before someone from the AITB has ever stopped by (Personal communication,

December 15, 2012). These comments suggest that employers and business owners are feeling as though their apprentices are being abandoned. Some apprentices may be fortunate to find employment within a salon that is aware of the pathway through the apprenticeship system and can provide the appropriate training and support. However, apprentices can also find themselves working in a salon where they are not receiving support or adequate training. This was a concern voiced by most of my participants:

“[There is] a lack of apprenticeship inspectors to ensure that apprentices are being treated fairly and to ensure that employers are giving their apprentices the things they need” (Survey, 2012).

“They [AITB representatives] maybe go to inspect a salon every two years or so, if that” (Linda¹, interview, 2012)

Fair pay for apprentices and projected income was another concern brought up by many participants. They felt as though salary must be monitored by the AITB to ensure that apprentices are receiving what they deserve for their level of education. Through personal communications with a salon owner, it was noted that his/her apprentices do not have their salary documented in their records book (Personal communication, May 15, 2014). However, employers are required to document pay for their employees registered in RAP. Once a hairstyling student

¹ Due to the very small number of owners/ managers in the beauty education industry in Alberta, all four interview participants were assigned a pseudonym (Linda, Carol, Anita, and Kelly) to maintain anonymity.

has completed his/her schooling, she/he would be considered a second-year apprentice until the completion of the examination for the Journeyperson certificate. According to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), the average pay scale for first-year apprentices should be 60 per cent and second-year apprentices should be receiving 75 per cent of a Journeyperson's salary (HRSDC, 2011). According to the mean wage for hairstylists in Alberta, an apprentice who has completed schooling and is working as a second-year apprentice should be earning approximately \$10.57 per hour. "Albertans in the Hairstylists and Barbers occupational group earned on average from \$13.17 to \$26.15 an hour. The mean wage for this group was \$17.61 an hour." (Alberta Learning Information Services, 2014, "Wage and Salary," para. 2). During my interviews, comments were made concerning the low pay for apprentices. For example, Linda states: "We do have people [employers] that try and take advantage of new apprentices and work them to the bone and pay them next to nothing."

When talking to Kelly concerning high tuition costs, she made this comment: "I can't in good conscience [charge more], they are going out there and making \$12.00 an hour, how can I possible charge them [more than we do] for a hair program." One participant discussed how he/she had to personally discontinue his/her own apprenticeship due to the inability to earn adequate money: "Really, I dropped out in my apprenticeship because of money basically

[and] went on to do different things.” Another participant noted that he/she felt that many students discontinued their apprenticeship to pay back student loans by acquiring employment in another field of work because their wage as an apprentice hairstylist was minimum wage. In my own personal career as a hairstylist, I struggled through my apprenticeship barely earning enough to support myself. Thankfully, due to the financial support of my parents, I didn’t have the burden of student loan repayments so was able to finish my apprenticeship. I earned minimum wage plus tips from clients for the first two years after completing my training, which made it very difficult to afford to pay for living expenses. “The industry is ever changing, yet the wages have not changed that much in the past years. All other trades have increased the wages; yet the hair trade has not kept up” (Carol, interview, 2012). The AITB should be monitoring the pay of apprentices in order to ensure students can afford to continue on to complete their Journeyman certificate. “Well listen, you know you can’t just get away with paying minimum wage these days. Kids can make that and more working at McDonalds without ever having to come [to our school]. So they need to adjust how they look at compensating their staff” (Linda, interview, 2012). If one of the AITB goals is to ensure Alberta has a qualified and skilled workforce, we must support apprentices in their ability to continue in their apprenticeship. In support, Linda notes that:

In hairstyling because there isn't a big union or anything that sets prices, the apprenticeship board, when they do their checks, should be taking a look at the books and [asking] what is the average one in this salon making and they should be getting 60 per cent of that number and that kind of support is not happening. There's lots of times where they're making far less than 60 percent of what's going on (Interview, 2012).

Student awareness and fear

Awareness about the AITB and its operating system was the second barrier mentioned by many participants as a problem for students in school and during their apprenticeship, as well as for staff at the full term hairstyling institutes. The approximate graduation rate for the institutes that participated in this study ranged between 88-95 per cent. So the question becomes what is happening that is causing them to discontinue their apprenticeship? Improved communication and enhanced learning supports were noted in the report on improving apprenticeship completion in Canada published by the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum. Kelly argues that "There should be a little more connection between the apprenticeship board and the students that are finishing here, like a full afternoon of a little presentation of what they should be expecting and how they get through this" (Interview, 2012).

Interview participants discussed feelings of fear, anxiety, and the discouragement of students during their apprenticeship. Students are fearful of failing their exams, not meeting all the requirements, and perhaps fear of the unknown. If their teachers and mentors are unsure, students cannot rely on them as a resource to help calm their nerves and get them to the finish line. “I think after a year of being out of school I think they get nervous about not being able to pass. [...] I think there is a lot of fear” (Kelly, interview, 2012). Participants noted that students felt they were unaware of what to expect from the final written and practical examination. The Canadian Red Seal program (CCDA, 2014) has incorporated into its website multiple sections for preparing Journeyperson for their examination to become Red Seal certified. It includes a counselling sheet with a breakdown of exam topics, sample exam questions specific to each trade, and a study preparation guide. In all provinces and territories excluding Alberta and Quebec, the Red Seal examination is used as the final apprenticeship examination, although it requires a higher pass mark for Red Seal certification (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005, p. 41).

Many provinces, including Alberta, have sample exam banks to assist students for their Red Seal certification. However I have been unable to find any similar resources for the Alberta apprenticeship examination. Interview participants also noted that apprentices felt unsure about the necessary requirements for hours and the process towards receiving their Journeyperson

certificate once they were working in a salon. Apprentices need more support from the AITB in order to assist students with ensuring that they meet all the requirements for their Journeyperson certificate. “Apprentices and the apprenticeship authorities should keep in contact so that progress is tracked and requirements are made clear” (CAF-FCA, 2011, p. 8). Anita comments that:

I wouldn't have minded this myself is if the apprenticeship board gave you more notification of how much time is left until your hours are completed. I didn't know and [...] all of a sudden I get this letter that says you need to get in or you're going to have to go back to school. Well it'd be nice to have that kind of notification before, just reminded maybe. (Interview, 2012)

The perceived lack of value on the part of the apprenticeship board toward hairstyling was a common thread that was felt throughout the interviews. This is a fundamental issue that can cause significant damage to an industry that is struggling to provide skilled and qualified workers. “[Hairstyling] is not seen as a priority by the apprenticeship board” (Linda, interview, 2012).

Most participants discussed feelings of frustration and anger towards the AITB. It would be of interest to further explore whether apprentices share these same perspectives regarding the challenges in their ability to complete their program and receive their Journeyperson certificate. “[A] lack of awareness of how the apprenticeship system works, no credits for prior work or technical

training, problems with apprenticeship board and programs (including paperwork, administration, communication, lack of information, cancellation, lack of classes) was reported by 21% of discontinuers” (Ménard & al., 2007, p. 22). When speaking to one of the participants about the hairstyling profession and the AITB, she commented that “[it] comes back to the fact that this is primarily a female-based industry in a province that the trades that it values tend to be very masculine in nature” (Linda, interview, 2012).

Part 2: Availability of Financial Support

Much of the available research on trade programs in Canada makes note of the financial struggles students face and how this can be a large barrier towards apprenticeship completion (CAF-FCA, 2011; Coe, 2011; Sharpe & Gibson, 2005). Full term hairstyling apprenticeship programs are heavily challenged with that burden. All interview participants in this study as well as 70 per cent of the survey respondents stated that availability of financial assistance was felt to be the biggest reason for student non-completion rates in Alberta. “The biggest issue we have time and time again is the financing. Some [students] have to drop out due to having to go back to work to even pay rent” (Survey, 2012). Tuition at private colleges varies from \$9,500.00 to \$18,000.00 for a 1,400 hour hairstyling program in Alberta. Financial support for apprentices is offered through three ways:

Students loans, federal grants and incentives, and Employment Insurance (EI) benefits.

Loans & Grants

Canada Student Loan Program (CSLP) will financially assist students that are attending a recognized institution, either full or part time. There are currently 11 cosmetology schools recognized as designated institutions by the CSLP in Alberta (CanLearn, 2013). Schools must be licensed under the *Private Vocational Training Act* to access financial assistance for students. The *Private Vocational Act* establishes and regulates criteria for obtaining licenses, creating student contracts, and monitoring instructional materials (AIAE, 2014b). If an institution is designated, students are eligible to receive federal student loans of “60 per cent of the assessed need, up to a maximum of \$210.00 in loans per week of study” (CanLearn, 2014, “Student Loans,” para. 2).

The 11 full term hairstyling institutes discussed in this study are all designated for students to receive federal student loans. The remaining 40 per cent may be provided in the form of provincial student loans. However, students registered in full term hairstyling programs at private vocational schools are not eligible to apply for provincial student loans. “Consequently, apprentices may find themselves unable to finance the costs of training, which include the expenses of classroom sessions and tools, especially older apprentices with family

responsibilities (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005, p. 24). In my own apprenticeship training, I did not have to access financial assistance so I was completely unaware that this issue existed for my current students transitioning into their post-secondary schooling. During my interview with Linda I posed the question of why provincial loans are not available to her students. She responded by stating that:

In the fall of 1994 when the government was cutting funding, one of the areas they were trying to save money on was student finance. They identified a standard as to what they wanted to see for repayment rates on student loans and anything that didn't meet that repayment rate was de-listed. In 1994 hairstyling was one of them. (Interview, 2012)

After an extensive search looking for documentation of the changes in provincial student loans for vocational schools, my search came up empty. Another participant (Carol) noted that, "this is due to former hairstyling students not paying their loans, so the current students have lost this privilege" (Interview, 2012). Upon further investigation and through personal communications with an employee at a government facility it was discovered that no current documentation is publicly available to show the changes in provincial designations. However, this individual confirmed that full term private hairstyling schools are not designated to receive provincial student loans since the early 1990s due to these programs having the highest rate of defaulting on their loans in the past (Personal communication, July 31, 2012). The designation was removed

in 1994 and has not been re-instated since. During the reign of Premier Klein beginning in 1993, the province experienced major cutbacks to eliminate the provincial debt as promised in his political platform. The Progressive Conservative Party introduced a four-year plan to balance the provincial budget. “The four-year plan was based on the *Deficit Elimination Act* which was passed into law prior to the calling of the election in May 1993” (Magnus, 1994, p. 1). This debt elimination strategy saw cuts to post-high school education implemented in the 1994 budget of 15.8 per cent (Hughes & al., 1996). This strategy removed designation for any program that had a default repayment rate that remained over a pre-determined percentage consecutively for three years. Hairstyling was one of those programs that was immediately removed from the designation list. Linda confirms that:

We got a letter in August of 1994 saying that effective September there would be no more provincial student loans or provincial grants for hairstyling students. That effectively, across the province, saw a drop in attendance of I’m going to say 30-35 per cent for schools. (Interview, 2012)

Further, Kelly notes:

So I think the financial struggle is a big one and of course they start missing [school] because they’re working at night to provide for themselves living-wise. They’re working at lounges or bars or whatever

until one or two in the morning and so you know you have to be a pretty diligent person to get up and do this day after day right? (Interview, 2012)

We need to address the reason for high default rates and why students are not able to repay their loans once they have completed their training. “So there was a net effect of reducing the provincial student loan money [that] basically took a whole sector of potential students right out” (Linda, interview, 2012). The question to ask is whether or not full term hairstyling students would still be in the highest group that defaults on their provincial student loans if they were available today? “We estimate that 50 per cent of students [who apply] can’t attend due to [lack of] funding” (Anita, interview, 2012). It has been 20 years since this decision was made and perhaps it is a decision that should be addressed once again.

Employment Insurance Benefits

Apprentices struggle with foregone income during their training and Employment Insurance (EI) benefits is government assistance that provides money to help ease the burden of tuition and loss of income while enrolled in their formal in-class training. Employment Insurance benefits are available for individuals who meet the requirements of this support while unemployed. The federal government in Canada contributes directly to apprenticeship training by providing income support through the Employment Insurance benefits to apprentices enrolled in the classroom portion of their training. In 2002, \$28.4

million dollars was transferred to the provinces for this purpose (Sharpe & Gibson, 2005, p. 42). Students are eligible for EI benefits if they have worked the required total of hours prior to beginning their in-school apprenticeship training. Students are paid a basic rate of approximately 55 per cent of their insurable weekly earnings. The maximum yearly insurable earnings is \$48,600, allowing the students to potentially earn up to \$514.00 per week during the duration of their in-school training (Service Canada, 2014b). However, students registered in full term apprenticeship programs are not eligible for EI benefits. Only students registering in the block release training method are eligible to apply for these benefits.

I find it interesting that if somebody is rather than going to a private trade school route, if they went to the two years [block release] component that that student can qualify for EI programs and things like that and that my students cannot. [...]Well why couldn't my students still qualify for the same 20 weeks worth of benefits? (Linda, interview, 2012)

The federal government has introduced several initiatives to financially assist apprentices during their training, as well as incentives for employers willing to train apprentices. AITB has awarded over \$5.9 million in the form of scholarships to Alberta apprentices (AIAE, 2013a, p. 4). To assist students with tuition costs, the federal government has created the Apprenticeship Incentive Grant (AIG) in 2007 and then followed by the introduction of the Apprenticeship

Completion Grant (ACG) in 2009. “Both the ACG and the AIG represent a total investment of \$115 million per year. Approximately 25,000 apprentices who complete their apprenticeship training and become certified Journeyperson in a designated Red Seal trade receive an ACG each year” (Service Canada, 2014a, p. 1).

The Apprenticeship Incentive and Completion Grants can provide up to \$4,000, which is awarded to apprentices once they have completed their training in a designated Red Seal trade and receive their Journeyperson certification. To apply for these grants, students must be registered apprentices in a designated Red Seal trade and able to show progression within their program. Since the grants were introduced “Service Canada has issued more than 107,000 ACGs and more than 320,000 AIGs” to apprentices (Service Canada, 2014a, p. 1).

If students are attending a full term hairstyling program, they will be in school for a total of 35 weeks, based on a 40 hour training week. For this example I will use the tuition cost from one of the 11 institutes in Alberta, which is approximately \$14,000.00 for the full program. The student would be paying \$400.00 per week of schooling. A federal loan can cover up to a maximum of \$210.00 per week of training, totaling \$7,350.00. The student would be left with \$6,650.00 remaining in tuition costs that they are unable to acquire provincial student loans for. The Apprenticeship Incentive and Completion Grants would certainly assist with this financial burden. Despite that, an apprentice would be

still left with \$4,650.00 after receiving the incentive grant upon completion of their schooling. Note that these numbers are approximates for the purpose of illustrating the financial issues faced by hairstyling apprentices and do not include interest rates and charges. They also do not take into account the student's additional costs of living and tools required for his/her training.

The federal government has also introduced a Tradesperson's Tool Deduction program that allows apprentices to claim eligible tool costs up to \$500.00 annually to help alleviate added financial burden from purchasing required equipment (Canada Revenue Agency, 2014b). Alongside the financial challenges for students is the necessity of finding employment within their trade. To encourage employers to hire and train apprentices, the federal government introduced into its 2006 budget an Apprenticeship Job Creation tax credit equal to 10 per cent of the salaries and wages paid to qualifying apprentices to help offset the cost to employers of hiring and training apprentices (Canada Revenue Agency, 2014a).

Although the federal government is certainly attempting to assist apprentices with the financial burden they face, the availability of provincial student loans remains a large problem for these students. "They just don't get enough [money] to be able to go to school properly. [...]. We get lots of single parents here that are trying to make a go of it. It's hard. I think, absolutely the financial thing is probably the biggest issue" (Kelly, interview, 2012). Should

there be more support during the schooling portion of a student's apprenticeship by ensuring students and staff have an in-depth knowledge of what is available to them in the form of grants and incentives? The data revealed major areas of need for apprentices in full term hairstyling trade programs. In addition, many participants felt that they were assisting their students to the best extent that they could.

Chapter Five

Conclusions

The paramount goal of this research study was to discover information to aid in achieving higher completion rates for apprentices trying to earn their Journeyperson certificate in hairstyling in Alberta. It was clear from my interviews that the participants spent a great deal of their professional career focusing on how to better help their students navigate themselves through the apprenticeship system into a meaningful career. I was concerned that perhaps there would be too many different opinions on the topic of completion rates between the four interview participants. I found it surprising that there were such consistencies in the survey and interview responses, and those two main issues were the focus for each interview participant. The survey and interview data made it very clear to me that these issues are in need of further exploration and study. Most participants told me of their excitement to be able to participate and assist in a research study that could benefit their students and industry. The primary purpose of this study was to address the issues plaguing full term hairstyling programs in Alberta, and to identify potential areas where improvements can be made. The research findings suggest that most owners/ managers interviewed felt that the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board was neglectful in its role of supporting and guiding hairstyling apprentices and that the provincial government

did not provide the necessary financial support for hairstyling apprentices.. The goal is to provide information that could help address and ultimately increase completion rates in the full term hairstyling programs and successful completion of their Journey person certificate. The analysis of the research data has been broken down according to each major topic introduced in the previous chapters. These findings include challenges with Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board and difficulties with financial support for apprentices. Hopefully this study will be the beginning of much more research undertaken that will better assist hairstyling apprentices. This study begins to bring hairstyling into the conversation of apprenticeship training in Alberta.

Recommendations for further study

As mentioned in previous chapters, the perspective of students attending full term hairstyling institutes was not addressed in this research study. This focus will be an integral part of the puzzle to look into, which will provide the most in depth solutions to this complex problem. The input from students registering and attending these programs is vital to assessing this problem. “There is agreement within the literature that apprenticeship systems face challenges from both the supply (employer) and demand (potential apprentice) sides of the equation” (Kerr & Stewart, 2010, p. 11).

Another area of future study should be with regard to the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board. As previously noted in Chapter One in the limitations of this study, only a small portion of research addresses the operations of the AITB. Exploring AITB operations would be a significant area for further research, specifically, an in-depth look into the policies, daily operations, management, and monitoring of hairstyling apprentices. Investigating what is the current criteria in place for monitoring hair salons in Alberta that employ apprentices and the ability to analyze the data concerning the AITB and how many resources they have to allocate to assist employers and apprentices working in hair salons would contribute to this area of vocational education. Is this criterion consistent across all trades or is there an uneven allocation of AITB resources? It begs the question of why participants in this study unanimously felt that challenges with the AITB were one of two significant barriers to hairstyling apprenticeship completion in Alberta. Perhaps AITB should provide a mandatory educational session at each hairstyling institute to ensure that the necessary information is being relayed to students before they embark on the second portion of their apprenticeship training. I believe that some of the onus does need to lie with the salon owners/ managers and administration at hairstyling institutes for acquiring information that is pertinent to their students' success in the industry in regards to the AITB. If salons are approved to train apprentices, they should be required to know the appropriate information should their students need it. I

question how easily they can access the specific information they need, and does the perceived lack of importance towards hairstyling hinder their ability to access such information from the board. Interview participants felt as though support was lacking from the AITB.

[B]y [the AITB] not supporting the students by just even following what, in my opinion, is just standard labour relations so the student has gone through school so they get discouraged because they're still working for less pay than they should be getting, and as a result they tend to move around a lot. When you do move around a lot, you're constantly starting over which means you never seem to be getting anywhere so that's where that discouragement really comes from. (Linda, interview, 2012)

Another major concern discussed by participants was the challenge with provincial funding. We really need to delve into the issues surrounding why students can't access financial support at the provincial level anymore and how were successful graduates able to manage the financial burden without provincial loans? Finally, there is a need to broaden the research field across the Canadian landscape. For example, begin to compare studies in apprenticeship programs in other provinces and territories that also offer hairstyling as a designated trade. Are the challenges discussed in the previous chapters of this study specific to Alberta or do we encounter similar issues across the provinces and territories? Hopefully this research study provides useful information to begin to address these issues.

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Appendix A



List of Compulsory and Optional Certification Trades

Apprenticeship and Industry Training

COMPULSORY CERTIFICATION TRADES – to work in a compulsory certification trade, a person must either hold a recognized trade certificate or be a registered apprentice in the trade. An employer wishing to hire persons to work in the trade must hire only certified journeypersons in that trade or apprentices registered in the trade and working under the supervision of a certified journeyperson. Compulsory certification trades usually involve work where public and worker safety needs to be closely monitored.		
Appliance Service Technician	• CHEO-Boom Truck	• Ironworker-Metal Building Systems Erector
• Appliance Service Technician	• CHEO-Wellhead Boom Truck	• Ironworker-Structural/Ornamental
• Commercial Appliance Service Tech.	Electrician	• Ironworker-Reinforcing
Auto Body Technician	Elevator Constructor	Motorcycle Mechanic
• Auto Body Technician	Gasfitter	Plumber
• Auto Body Prepper	• Gasfitter (A)	Recreation Vehicle Service Technician
• Auto Body Repairer	• Gasfitter (B)	Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Mechanic
• Auto Body Refinisher	Hairstylist	Rig Technician
Automotive Service Technician	Heavy Equipment Technician (HET)	• Rig Technician-Rig Technician 1
Boilermaker	• Heavy Equipment Technician (HET)	• Rig Technician-Rig Technician 2
Crane and Hoisting Equipment Operator (CHEO)	• HET-Heavy Duty Equipment Mechanic (Off Road)	• Rig Technician-Rig Technician 3
• CHEO-Hydraulic Mobile Crane	• HET-Truck and Transport Mechanic	Sheet Metal Worker
• CHEO-Conventional Mobile Crane	• HET-Transport Trailer Mechanic	Steamfitter-Pipefitter
• CHEO-Mobile Crane	Ironworker	Welder
• CHEO-Tower Crane	• Ironworker	• Welder • Welder-Wire Process Operator
OPTIONAL CERTIFICATION TRADES – an individual is permitted to work in an optional certification trade if the employer deems the individual to have the skills and knowledge expected of a certified journeyperson in the trade. Employers may employ uncertified journeypersons and use uncertified journeypersons to supervise and train apprentices on the job. An employee working in an optional certification trade and learning the trade MUST become a registered apprentice if that employee is to work in the trade.		
Agricultural Equipment Technician	Insulator	Powerline Technician
Baker	Landscape Gardener	Power System Electrician
Bricklayer	Lather-Interior Systems	Roofer
Cabinetmaker	Locksmith	Sprinkler Systems Installer
Carpenter	Machinist	Structural Steel and Plate Fitter
Communication Technician	Millwright	Tilesetter
Concrete Finisher	Natural Gas Compression Technician	Transport Refrigeration Technician
Cook	Outdoor Power Equipment Technician (OPET)	Water Well Driller
Electric Motor Systems Technician	• OPET-Power Equipment	
Floorcovering	• OPET-Recreational Equipment	
Glazier	Painter and Decorator	
• Glazier	Parts Technician	
• Auto Glass Technician	• Parts Technician	
Instrument Technician	• Parts Technician-Materials Technician	Total designated trades = 49

Source: Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education, 2013b, “Certifications,” p. 1

Appendix B

Apprenticeship entrance requirements

	RECOMMENDED PATH Alberta High School Diploma with:	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS Successful completion of:
CATEGORY A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 30-2 • Math 30-3 • Physics 20 <i>OR</i> Chemistry 20 <i>OR</i> Science 20 • Related Career and Technology Studies courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 10-2 • Math 10-3 <li style="text-align: center;"><i>OR</i> • A pass mark in all five Canadian General Educational Development (GED) tests <li style="text-align: center;"><i>OR</i> • Entrance Exam
CATEGORY B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 30-2 • Math 30-3 • Physics 30 <i>OR</i> Chemistry 30 <i>OR</i> Science 30 • Related Career and Technology Studies courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 20-2 • Math 20-3 • Science 10 <li style="text-align: center;"><i>OR</i> • Entrance Exam
CATEGORY C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 30-2 • Math 30-3 • Physics 20 <i>OR</i> Chemistry 20 <i>OR</i> Science 20 • Related Career and Technology Studies courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 10-2 • Math 10-3 • Science 10 <li style="text-align: center;"><i>OR</i> • A pass mark in all five Canadian General Educational Development (GED) tests <li style="text-align: center;"><i>OR</i> • Entrance Exam

Equivalencies will be considered for Entrance Requirements.

CATEGORY A	Baker Bricklayer Cabinetmaker Carpenter Concrete Finisher Cook Crane and Hoisting Equipment Operator Floor Covering Installer Glazier Hairstylist Insulator Ironworker Lather-Interior Systems Mechanic Locksmith Painter and Decorator Parts Technician Sheet Metal Worker Structural Steel and Plate Fitter Tilesetter Water Well Driller Welder	CATEGORY B	Agricultural Equipment Technician Appliance Service Technician Automotive Service Technician Boilermaker Communication Technician Electric Motor Systems Technician Electrician Elevator Constructor Gasfitter Heavy Equipment Technician Millwright Motorcycle Mechanic Natural Gas Compression Technician Plumber Power System Electrician Powerline Technician Sprinkler Systems Installer Steamfitter-Pipefitter Transport Refrigeration Technician	CATEGORY C	Auto Body Technician Landscape Gardener Machinist Outdoor Power Equipment Technician Recreation Vehicle Service Technician
				CATEGORY D*	Rig Technician Roofer Instrument Technician Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic *see tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca

Government of Alberta



Source: Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education, 2013b, “Eligibility & Educational Requirements,” para. 2

Appendix C

Letter of invitation to participate in the survey

Dear potential participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled “Factors affecting apprenticeship enrollment and completion in post-secondary hairstyling programs in Alberta.” Your participation in this survey involves an online survey about full term hairstyling apprenticeship in Alberta.

My name is Elizabeth Stevenson and I am currently a Master’s student at the University of Alberta, working under the supervision of Dr. Watt-Malcolm. I am a Journeyman hairstylist and I currently teach cosmetology at a high school in St. Albert, Alberta. I have spent my career focusing on advancing students’ success in hairstyling apprenticeship programs. This is a letter to request your participation in this survey that is part of my Master’s thesis research study.

This study will examine factors that affect enrollment of students registered in the full term hairstyling apprenticeship program and their completion of the Alberta Journeyman certificate. Current research suggests that there is a significant decrease in the number of apprentices completing and receiving their Journeyman certificate, along with a significant increase in enrollment. Research in the field of hairstyling in Alberta has been tremendously neglected, especially concerning the full term programs offered at private vocational colleges. Through my research, I anticipate obtaining valuable data that will potentially increase student success in hairstyling apprenticeship programs.

The research study will involve managers, educators, and owners from private vocational hairstyling schools in Alberta. I would like your participation and completion of the survey between the dates of April 16 to April 27, 2012, on a day of your convenience. You will have survey link and login given to you in the following letter. You have the right to refuse to answer a question if you feel necessary. You also have the right to opt out of the survey at any point leading up to and during the survey process. The survey results will be used as part of a thesis study that will be submitted to the University of Alberta in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master’s Degree in Education and in articles, presentations, conferences, and a potential Doctoral study.

A letter of consent to participate in the study is located on the first page of the online survey, which will explain the purpose and nature of the research and will outline the conditions to the study. Participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the study at any point up until you submit the results or April 27. Your participation will remain completely anonymous and confidential. My university supervisor, Dr. Watt-Malcolm, and I will be the only individuals with access to data, and all information will be safely and securely stored in an encrypted hard drive and written materials kept in a locked cabinet.

If you consent to participate in this research study, please refer to the attached letter for the survey website and your login.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at ehs@ualberta.ca or my supervisor, Dr. Bonnie Watt-Malcolm at bwatt@ualberta.ca. Thank you for your consideration to participate in this important research.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Stevenson

Appendix D

Letter of consent to participate in the survey study

I, _____, consent to be a survey participant in the research study entitled “Factors affecting apprenticeship enrollment and completion in post-secondary hairstyling programs in Alberta.” Elizabeth Stevenson, a graduate student in the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, will conduct this study, under the supervision of Dr. Watt-Malcolm.

This consent is further subject to the following conditions:

- 1) I will be asked to participate in an online survey.
- 2) I have the right to withdraw at any point leading up to and during the survey with no repercussions.
- 3) I will receive a letter of invitation/ consent to participate in this study
- 4) Participation is strictly voluntary, and I have the right to withdraw from the study without penalty at any point, up until final online submission of survey.
- 5) Participation is to remain completely anonymous and confidential.
- 6) Data obtained from the survey will be used as part of a thesis study that will be submitted to the University of Alberta in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master’s Degree in Education and used in articles, presentations, conferences, and a potential Doctoral study.
- 7) All information obtained during the survey will be safely and securely stored in an encrypted hard drive and written materials kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher’s personal domain for five years, from which time all the data will be destroyed.

Contact person in case of concerns, complaints or consequences:

Researcher: Elizabeth Stevenson, Department of Secondary Education,
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Email:
ehs@ualberta.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Bonnie Watt-Malcolm, Department of Secondary Education,
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Email:
bwatt@ualberta.ca

Participant Signature
signed

Date

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Stevenson

Appendix E

Letter of invitation to participate in the interview

Dear participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled “Factors affecting apprenticeship enrollment and completion in post-secondary hairstyling programs in Alberta.” Your participation in this interview is about hairstyling apprenticeship in Alberta.

My name is Elizabeth Stevenson and I am currently a Master’s student at the University of Alberta, working under the supervision of Dr. Watt-Malcolm. I am a Journeyman hairstylist and I currently teach cosmetology at a high school in St. Albert, Alberta. I have spent my career focusing on advancing students’ success in hairstyling apprenticeship programs. This is a letter to request an interview with you as part of my Master’s thesis research study.

This study will examine factors that affect enrollment of students registered in the full term hairstyling apprenticeship program and their completion of the Alberta Journeyman certificate. Current research suggests that there is a significant decrease in the number of apprentices completing and receiving their Journeyman certificate, along with a significant increase in enrollment. Research in the field of hairstyling in Alberta has been tremendously neglected, especially concerning the full term programs offered at private vocational colleges. Through my research, I anticipate obtaining valuable data that will potentially increase student success in hairstyling apprenticeship programs.

The research study will involve managers, teachers, and owners from private vocational hairstyling schools in Alberta. I would like to conduct a one-hour interview with you between the dates of May 7 through May 31, on a day of your convenience. You will have question guidelines sent to you via email to provide you time to consider the topics. You have the right to refuse to answer a question if you feel necessary. You also have the right to opt out of the interview at any point leading up to and during the interview process. The interview will be used as part of a thesis study that will be submitted to the University of Alberta in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for a Master's Degree in Education and in articles, presentations, conferences, and a potential Doctoral study.

You will receive a letter of consent to participate in the study, which will explain the purpose and nature of the research and will outline the conditions to the study. Participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the study at any point up until June 8, 2012. Your participation will remain completely anonymous and confidential, if necessary a pseudonym will be used to conceal your identity in the final publication. My university supervisor, Dr. Watt-Malcolm, and I will be the only individuals with access throughout the data collection, and all information will be safely and securely stored in an encrypted hard drive and written materials kept in a locked cabinet.

If you consent to participate in this research study, I request that you sign the attached letter of consent, and return it in the stamped envelope provided. With your consent, I will contact you by phone or email to arrange a date and location to conduct the interview.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at ehs@ualberta.ca or my supervisor, Dr. Bonnie Watt-Malcolm at bwatt@ualberta.ca. Thank you for your consideration to participate in this important research.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Stevenson

Appendix F

Letter of consent to participate in the interview

I, _____, consent to be an interview participant in the research study entitled “Factors affecting apprenticeship enrollment and completion in post-secondary hairstyling programs in Alberta.” Elizabeth Stevenson, a graduate student in the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, will conduct this study, under the supervision of Dr. Watt-Malcolm.

This consent is further subject to the following conditions:

- 1) I will be asked to participate in an interview.
- 2) I have the right to withdraw at any point leading up to and during the interview with no consequences.
- 3) The interview will be audio-recorded and a written summary sent to me by mail.
- 4) I shall have an opportunity to respond to, delete, or clarify points in the summary.
- 5) I may be contacted by email or phone for further clarification.
- 6) Once the interview summary is checked and changes made if needed, I will sign each page and return it to the researcher by mail.
- 7) Participation is strictly voluntary, and I have the right to withdraw from the study without penalty at any point, up until the summary is signed and mailed to the researcher.
- 8) Participation is to remain completely anonymous and confidential.
- 9) Data obtained from the interview will be used as part of a thesis study that will be submitted to the University of Alberta in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master’s Degree and used in articles, presentations, conferences, and a potential Doctoral study.
- 10) All information obtained during the interview will be safely and securely stored in an encrypted hard drive and written materials kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher’s personal domain for five years, from which time all the data will be destroyed.

Contact person in case of concerns, complaints or consequences:

Researcher: Elizabeth Stevenson, Department of Secondary Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Email: ehs@ualberta.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Bonnie Watt-Malcolm, Department of Secondary Education,
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Email: bwatt@ualberta.ca

Participant Signature

Date signed

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Stevenson

Appendix G

Research study survey questions

Study: Factors affecting apprenticeship enrollment and completion in post-secondary hairstyling programs in Alberta

Online Survey to be completed within two weeks of receiving letter containing login information

The goal of this research study is to increase Journeyman completion rates in hairstyling apprenticeship programs by identifying student needs.

Consent question must be answered YES in order to proceed with the survey

Any information that you share in this survey will only be used for this research study. The only people to have access to the information will be Dr. Bonnie Watt-Malcolm from the University of Alberta (supervisor) and Elizabeth Stevenson. The information provided by you will be anonymous and confidential. At no point during this research study will your name be revealed, nor will any other information that could potentially identify you, your school, or what city you live in be revealed.

You may choose not to answer a particular question or you may withdraw from completing the survey at any point prior to submitting. However, once you have completed the survey and you hit the submit button, you can no longer withdraw from the study.

I have read and give my consent to participate in this study YES NO

Lets begin!

1. What is your position at the school?
 - a. Owner
 - b. Manager/ Director
 - c. Educator

2. How long have you been working at/ owned this school?
 - a. 0-5 years

- b. 6-10 years
 - c. 10+ years
3. Do you have your Journeyman Certificate in hairstyling?
- a. No
 - b. Yes
- If yes: what year did you receive it: _____
 From where: _____
4. Describe your Journeyman training experience: *Comment box*
5. Do you have your Red Seal certificate?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
6. What is the estimated number of students enrolled at your school per year?

7. Approximately what percentage of students enrolled at your school successfully complete their program each year? _____
8. Do you feel that students are being adequately prepared for the workforce in full term hairstyling programs?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
- Comments:
9. Research has identified many potential reasons for non-completion rates of students in hairstyling apprenticeship programs.
10. In your opinion, to what extent is student completion rates affected by each of these issues?

Check boxes will be present below for answering this question

Unsure	Minimally Affected	Somewhat Affected	Greatly Affected
---------------	-------------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------------------

- Cost of programs
- Availability of financial assistance
- Length of program
- Parental support
- Instability of employment

Negative perception of trades
Lack of program awareness in high schools

11. In your experience, are there other issues and/ or factors that are preventing students from completing and receiving their Journeyman certificate in Alberta?
12. How does your school try to address some of these issues?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey and for assisting in this research study

SUBMIT

Appendix H

Participant instruction letter

Thank you for agreeing to participate in a research study entitled “Factors affecting apprenticeship enrollment and completion in post-secondary hairstyling programs in Alberta.” Your participation in this survey involves an online survey about full term hairstyling apprenticeship in Alberta.

Each envelope can be distributed to the owner/director and staff members in a management or teaching position within the hairstyling academy. I would ask that you hand out the envelopes to your staff and the rest will be handled online. The envelopes will be randomly distributed as I do not need to be aware of staff names. Within each envelope will be a letter detailing the research and consent to participate. There will be a letter with the survey link and random login number in each envelope.

I would like your participation and completion of the survey between the dates of April 16 to April 27, 2012, on a day of your convenience.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at #(780)___ - ___ or ehs@ualberta.ca or my supervisor, Dr. Bonnie Watt-Malcolm at bwatt@ualberta.ca. Thank you for your consideration to participate in this important research.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Stevenson

Appendix I

Staff Survey Participation Instruction Letter

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the research study entitled “Factors affecting apprenticeship enrollment and completion in post-secondary hairstyling programs in Alberta.”

Within the next two weeks, I would ask that you complete this online survey using the web address and login provided below.

You may choose not to answer a particular question or you may withdraw from completing the survey at any point prior to submitting. However, once you have completed the survey and you hit the submit button, you can no longer withdraw from the study.

Survey website: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/albertahairstyling>

Login: XXXX

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at ehs@ualberta.ca or my supervisor, Dr. Bonnie Watt-Malcolm at bwatt@ualberta.ca. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation with this important research.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Stevenson

Appendix J

Interview Protocol and Questions

Study: Factors affecting apprenticeship enrollment and completion in post-secondary hairstyling programs in Alberta

Time of Interview: *TBA*

Date of interview: *TBA*

Location: *TBA*

Interviewer: Elizabeth Stevenson

Interviewee: *Participant's name*

** The interviewer and each individual participant will determine mutually convenient time, date, and location for the interviews**

“To begin, I would like to ask you if it is okay to audio record this interview? Thank you *Participant's name* for taking the time to assist me in my research study. The title of this research study is “Factors affecting apprenticeship enrollment and completion in post-secondary hairstyling programs in Alberta.” The goal of my research study is to increase Journeyman completion rates in hairstyling apprenticeship programs by identifying student needs. Some of the questions in this interview will give you opportunities to share your insight and experiences in the industry. I will also be asking you specific questions relating to student enrollment and completion at your school, and ways in which your school works towards higher completion rates.

Any information that you share with me in this interview will only be used for this research study. The only people to have access to the information from this interview will be Dr. Bonnie Watt-Malcolm from the University of Alberta (supervisor) and myself. You may wish to stop the interview or request a break at any time. The information provided by you will be confidential. At no point during this research study will your name be revealed, nor will any other information that could potentially identify you, your school, or what city you live

in be revealed. You will be given a pseudonym or “made-up” name in the research study if needed.

After this interview, I will transcribe the interview word for word. Once I have completed this task, I will send you a copy via mail so that you can make any changes to the information, you may choose to add things in that you thought about since the interview, or you may choose to take things out. I would ask that you only take one week from receiving the transcript to do this. Once you have made your changes, I would ask you to sign each page and return it to me via mail with or without changes. Once you have signed each page and mailed it back to me, you cannot withdraw from the research, nor can you make any additional changes. However, up to the point that you return the transcript to me, you may decline from being a part of this research study.

Shall we begin?

Questions:

1. Tell me how you came to working in the hairstyling industry?
 - a. Do you have a Journeyman certificate/ Red Seal? (if not mentioned in question #1)
2. How long have you been working in the industry? (if not mentioned in question #1)
3. Tell me how long have you been working at/ owned this school?
 - a. What made you switch into education?
4. Tell me your thoughts about the hairstyling profession in Alberta, Canada?
5. What is the completion rate for students at your school?
6. In your opinion, what are some factors that you feel are preventing students from completing their program at your school?
7. What are some of the ways in which you try to address those issues?
8. Are there any issues in regards to student program completion that you haven't been able to find a solution for?

9. Do you feel that students are being adequately prepared for the workforce in a full term apprenticeship program?
10. In your opinion, what are some factors that you feel are preventing students from completing and receiving their Journeyman certificate in Alberta?
11. What would be some suggestions you might have for improving hairstyling Journeyman completion rates?
12. The results from the online survey show that *TBA* was felt to be the highest cause of non-completion rates in full term programs. Do you agree?
13. *Additional questions may be added based on the survey results*