Examining the Outcomes of a Government Funded Employment Program for At-risk Youth: Comparing Expected and Observed Proportions

By
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family and friends who were always there to support me throughout my four years at St. Lawrence in the Behavioural Psychology Degree Program.
ABSTRACT

Due to a low employment rate among Canadian youth and strong evidence suggesting that maintaining employment during this time enhances skill, responsibilities, and structure, the Canadian Government has created a Youth Employment Strategy (YES). This thesis will evaluate a nine-week employment enhancement program for youth that is delivered at a local employment agency under the YES Skills Link stream. The chi-square statistical analysis was performed using four years of archival outcome data and suggests that the youth employment program has been meeting and exceeding its objective of 50% participants attain employment post-program and 30% of participants return to school post-program, as outlined by Service Canada. A review of relevant literature outlined the YES, evidence-based targets for employment programs, as well as importance and methods of program evaluation. Strengths and limitations of the study are identified and contributions to the behavioural psychology field and recommendations for further research are discussed.
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Chapter I. Introduction

Youth unemployment is a growing concern and government funded youth employment programs are attempting to fill the gap. The youth unemployment rate is twice as high as the overall unemployment rate in Canada (13.9% youth compared to 7.5% overall) (Canada Newswire, 2011). Evidence shows that maintaining employment at a young age assists in developing concrete job skills, a sense of responsibility, as well as increases psychological well-being (Matsuba, Elder, Petrucci, & Marleau, 2007). As well, young workers lack the skills and training needed to be successful in a more competitive labour market. Thus, Holzer (2012) suggested that employment programs need to focus on providing assistance to those most at risk for long-term unemployment. To address the on-going concern of youth employment, the Government of Canada has developed the Youth Employment Strategy (YES) which is an initiative to create employment programs to assist youth with gaining the employment skills and experience needed to access the labour market and increase the number of skilled Canadians in the workforce (Strategic Policy and Research Branch HRSDC, 2009). The YES initiative consists of three different youth employment programs that assist multiple youth across Canada: Career Focus, Summer Work Experience, and Skills Link.

This thesis evaluated a nine-week employment enhancement program funded by the government of Canada’s Youth Employment Strategy under the Skills Link section. The program was delivered by a local employment agency and is targeted to youth between the ages of 16-30 who have barriers to employment. The Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) (2012) defines a barrier as anything that hinders the ability of youth to attain or maintain employment. The program objectives are met at the conclusion of the nine weeks if 50% of participants attain employment in the public sector and 30% of participants are enrolled in an academic setting.

The program aims to assist the participants in decreasing barriers and increasing employment skills. There are nine skills taught in the program that have been identified and validated by the HRSDC (2012) as essential for attaining and maintaining employment. The nine essential skills are: reading, writing, document use, numeracy, communication, thinking, working with others, computer use, and continuous learning. There are a variety of barriers which the participants enrolled in a YES program may face. Barriers identified by HRSDC result from psychological, social, or environmental concerns. For example, intellectual or physical disabilities, single parent/instability in the home, poor self-management and/or behaviour problems are common among the participants.

There is a high need to implement programs that aim to increase employment skills, decrease identified barriers, and involve ongoing evaluations of effectiveness. The government funded projects under the YES have not been formally evaluated since 2009; specifically, the Skills Link project delivered in the local community has not been individually evaluated.

Therefore, this thesis aimed to evaluate the outcome data of Canada's YES Skills Link branch by comparing the objectives of the program to the actual outcomes of the program. The chi-square goodness of fit test was used to make this comparison by statistically analyzing four years of archival outcome data compared to expectations outlined by Service Canada. The chi
square test determined if the program outcomes were statistically significant at the first percentile (p>0.01). This thesis examined whether the nine-week intensive support program is enough to shift the balance of skills and barriers, and identify potential limitations to employment programs.

It was hypothesized that the results of the chi square goodness of fit test to compare actual and expected program outcomes will indicate no difference in proportions: 50% of the participants were employed post-program, 30% would return to school, and 20% would have other outcomes.

The second chapter of this thesis reviews the relevant literature of employment programs for youth, the importance and methods of program evaluation, and provides an overview of the YES and 2009 summative evaluation. The third chapter outlines the methodology of the thesis. Specifically, that chapter is comprised of details regarding the informed consent, the participants, program design, setting and materials, and program procedures. Results of the study are presented in the fourth chapter followed by a discussion of the strengths, limitations, and recommendations for future research in the last chapter.
Chapter II. Literature Review

Youth Employment and Unemployment

Youth unemployment is a socially significant issue that has been researched extensively. Morisi (2008) analyzed youth employment rates with participants aged 16 to 19, and found that the rate of employed youth has been decreasing since the mid-80s. Findings show that the youth employment rate fell 8.3% from 1985 to 2007, specifically dropping 10% for young teens (16 to 17) and 8 percent for older teens (18 to 19). The trend in the decreasing number of employed youth holds true for sex, race, and ethnicity.

Further research states that importance should be placed on the high-risk youth who struggle with barriers to employment that stem from their demographic or community (Turner & Ziebell, 2011). According to Turner and Ziebell, barriers to employment lead to an external locus of control, which result in the youth believing that they have little control or influence over their lives, specifically with their education or future career. Therefore, an external locus of control hinders the youths' ability to explore and prepare for career or education opportunities.

McLoyd, Kaplan, Purtell, and Huston (2011) studied the effect of employment for youth from low socio-economic backgrounds, and found that employment provides structure, practical skill, and networking as developmental assets. That study also found that employment fosters motivation for continued education or improving prospects for future employment.

Employment Program Targets

Many researchers highlight the need for a holistic approach to employment enhancement programs (Secker, Grove & Seebohm, 2001). Common barriers to employment stem from both personal and environmental factors; addressing these barriers requires an integrated approach. Secker, Grove and Seebohm evaluated a survey that explored vocational issues by identifying employment, education, and training needs. The survey was taken by 156 mental health service users. The primary barriers identified by the respondents were stigma from employers, mental health instability, social assistance not being supportive, and lack of work experience.

In addition to identifying barriers, Secker et al. (2001) aimed to determine users’ long-term goals. The users of mental health services ranked paid employment as their number one long-term goal. Other very common goals among the respondents were educational goals, skills training and certification. In addition to job skills training, survey takers suggested independent living skills would also be valuable in maintaining and attaining employment. However, although training was identified as a primary goal, the survey takers emphasized the need for real work experience in addition to pre-employment training. Partnered with employment, education, and training needs, the survey results suggested that support and guidance from professionals was of high importance.

Limitations to employment. Matsuba, Elder, Petrucci, and Marleau (2008) evaluated an employment training program for youth and found that attaining and maintaining employment was more difficult for youth who are “at risk” or “priority” youth. The following personal factors help define youth at risk or at a priority status: high-school non-completion, disability, aboriginal
ancestry, health, drug- and/or alcohol-related problems, single-parent household, low literacy and numeracy skills, language barriers, street involvement, homelessness or high risk of homelessness, contact with the justice, child welfare or social assistance system, lack of social supports, poor self-management and/or behaviour management. These factors have been identified and validated as limitations to employment (HRSDC, 2012; Turner & Ziebell, 2011). Matsuba et al. argue that the above factors affect the young person’s psychological well-being and that there is a link between psychological health and sustaining employment. Thus, programs targets should aim to assess and address these factors in addition to traditional employment skills. The program evaluation by Matsuba et al. demonstrated the need for a more holistic approach to employment enhancement programs, which goes beyond concrete job skill training to maintain long-term effects/job retention.

**Employment skills.** Based on the literature, there is a high need to create programs with targets and delivery methods that are validated through research. It is important for youth employment programs to aim to increase skills and decrease limitations that have influence in one’s ability to be employed (Stolte, 2006). According to the HRSDC (2012), the following employment skills were identified as essential for attaining and maintaining employment and thus are promising program targets: reading, writing, document use, numeracy, communication, thinking, working with others, computer use, and continuous learning. In addition to HRSDC's essential employment skills, there is significant evidence to indicate that program targets that empower youth, as well as increase personal self-concept and psychological well-being, are most effective in fostering on-the-job success (Matsuba et al., 2007). Research conducted by Stolte (2006) supports the above employability skills as effective targets for intervention. Stolte categorizes employability skills in the following manner: fundamental skills, personal management skills, and teamwork skills. Stolte’s research also suggests that better assessments of these skills will assist in selecting appropriate interventions and thus more effective outcomes.

**Types of Program Evaluation**

An initial step of program evaluation is to decide which type of evaluation is going to be used. Program evaluation falls into two broad categories: formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluations typically occur during the program implementation and focus on development and improvement of the intervention. Summative evaluations generally take place after program is completed to measure the success of the program (Marketing and Communication Strategy Branch, n.d.).

**Formative evaluation.** According to Chen (2006), formative evaluations are generally conducted during the program implementation to provide on-going feedback to foster improvement. Chambers (1994) states that an evaluation should not be defined based on the time it is executed, but instead by the data gathered and the way the data are used. Therefore, results of a formative evaluation can assist the program developers, or other interested parties, in their decisions by providing on-going feedback that will facilitate improvements to increase program efficacy. This type of evaluation is considered formative, regardless of the time it is completed.
The broad category of formative evaluations is comprised of two smaller procedures; needs assessments and process evaluation (Marketing and Communication Strategy Branch, n.d.). A needs assessment determines which population needs the intervention, how severe the need is, and which intervention would be best to address this need. A process evaluation measures the method and design of a program, specifically, the mode of delivery and whether the program is being facilitated as planned. Collectively, the results from the above procedures are used to improve the program.

Research by Chambers (1994) indicated a common limitation of formative evaluations. A formative evaluation could be designed to facilitate program improvements but the suggestions and feedback stemming from the evaluation may not be acted upon. The lack of amendment to the program may be due to a variety of factors. Firstly, the initial program timeline may not allow for changes in the program due to time constraints. Secondly, the original budget may not have accounted for new developments. Lastly, the lack of action may be a result of unwillingness to sacrifice an original high-cost investment, or the developers may have a personal attachment or bias toward the program in its original form. Overall, the purpose of a formative evaluation is to influence the process and format of the program or intervention.

Summative evaluation. As outlined by Marketing and Communication Strategy Branch (MCSB) (n.d.), summative evaluation occurs after a program is well established (i.e. implemented for over six months) and is intended to determine the extent to which the program meets its objectives. Similar to formative assessment, Chambers (1994) argues that the timing of the evaluation has little to do with the definition; if the evaluation is focusing on program efficacy and outcomes, it should be classified as summative.

The MCSB (n.d.) further classifies summative evaluations into outcome and impact evaluations. Outcome evaluation measures the effect and changes resulting from the intervention, specifically, short-term and medium-term results from the program's participants. Impact evaluation measures the long-term change and overall effects of the program on a larger scale, for example, community, society, or environment.

Although Chen (2006) does not dispute MCSB’s classification of summative evaluation, he proposes two different categories. Chen describes efficacy and effectiveness outcome evaluations. Typically, efficacy evaluation involves assessing outcomes when conditions of a program are ideal and all variables are held constant. In contrast, effectiveness evaluation involves outcome assessments of programs in the “real world”. Thus, conditions are not ideal nor are the variables held constant. This can cause effectiveness evaluation to be difficult, costly, and time consuming. Therefore, assessments of efficacy are preferred for their scientific merit and developing theories compared to effectiveness measurements that are preferred for relevance and practical use.

Importance of Program Evaluation

Research shows that evaluation is an important aspect of planning and maintaining programs (Litenburger & Ogle, 2006; Chambers, 1994; Davidson, 2005). Evaluation contributes to the planning stage of programs by providing ongoing learning that fosters development and
improvement of the programs. Evaluation assists with program maintenance by increasing credibility and accountability in the intervention (Davidson, 2005).

**Planning.** According to Briggs (1987), program developers should formulate a plan for evaluation early and build it into program implementation procedures. The developers should decide which type of evaluation will occur and the correct data to be collected. For example, employment programs could choose formative evaluation to obtain feedback for ongoing improvements, or a summative evaluation to compare the program outcome with the program objectives. Appropriate planning should also involve ensuring that the agency has the staff available to follow through with the evaluation procedure, and the funding to do so. Determining clear program objectives that are measurable is a crucial step to program evaluation.

Often, evaluation is used for organizational learning; agencies learning from success and failures and altering the program to account for their deficits (Davidson, 2005). Evaluating what works and what does not can assist program developers to create effective programs based on evidence, and use the knowledge resulting from the evaluation to improve.

**Maintenance** According to Davidson (2005), the primary purpose of evaluation is to ensure the program is accountable. Evaluation results are necessary to ensure programs are credible and meeting their outlined objectives. These results often have an effect on whether or not the program is maintained, for example, through government funding, community support, and other interested parties. With government funding in particular, there is a requirement that participant outcomes are consistent with what the program proposed to do (Briggs, 1987). Holzer (2012) stated that renewal of program grants or funding should be based on the ability of the program to meet their objectives and maintain positive results, such as increased employment opportunity and higher earnings for the targeted population in the case of employment enhancement programs.

Litkenburger and Ogle (2006) state that even if an evaluation produces negative results, it is important for agencies continue these evaluations and to highlight deficits to ensure plans are developed that address the issues identified. It would be more beneficial for the agency to expose program weaknesses through an internal evaluation than to experience external scrutiny as a result of informal evaluations based on inaccurate statistics, outcomes, or assumptions. Without an evaluation integrated into the program, a loss of control over perceptions can result jeopardising funding or other support. With ongoing evaluation and improvement, the invested parties can see that the program deficits are being addressed, controlled, and improved upon fostering continued support and funding.

**Canada’s Youth Employment Strategy (YES) and 2009 Evaluation**

The YES is a youth employment program initiative funded by the government of Canada to address the deficit of skilled youth in the Canadian workforce (Strategic Policy and Research, 2009). The YES involves three different projects with the overall goal of assisting youth in enhancing their employment skills and decreasing the unemployment rate of Canadian youth. Summer Work Experience (SWE), Skills Link (SL), and Career Focus (CF) are the three streams outlined by the YES.
The 2009 YES summative evaluation (Strategic Policy and Research, 2009) involved participants of the three year period from April 2003 to March 2006. Each stream was evaluated by Service Canada based on the program's ability to meet the following three objectives: relevance, success, and cost-effectiveness. There were 128600 participants in the summative evaluation; all participants were unemployed Canadian youth between the ages of 15 and 30, which are legally able to work in Canada. Participants in the study must meet the specific eligibility criteria of at least one YES stream and must have completed one of these programs. The evaluation covers the three YES programs and the 30 initiatives offered under these streams by the thirteen departments and agencies that participated in the YES during this time period. The methods included a literature review, document review, key informant interviews, focus groups with participants, surveys of participants, site visits, pre-post analyses, and net impact analyses. Appendix A outlines assessment questions and data sources for HRSDC’s 2009 summative evaluation for the YES.

First, the relevance portion of the 2009 summative evaluation assessed whether the program realistically addressed a societal need. The researchers used a combination of the following measures to assess relevance: environmental scan, literature review, surveys with youth, interviews with representatives of YES agencies, interviews with youth, employers, youth serving organizations/ business associations, focus groups, administrative files, and review of YES agencies documentation. Second, the success section assessed the degree in which the program was meeting its intended outcomes. To access the success portion, the researchers used benchmarking exercise, YES agencies youth needs assessments and exit surveys, and case studies in addition to the evaluation measures listed above. Last, the researchers evaluated cost-effectiveness by focusing on interviews with representatives of YES agencies, review of YES agencies documentation, and comparisons of similar programs. The following sections will outline the results of the 2009 YES evaluation for each stream.

Summer Work Experience (SWE). The Summer Work Experience stream of the YES outlines similar objectives as the overall YES initiative, which is supporting education and participation in the workforce. The SWE program targets full-time students who are returning to school the following year and seeking employment skills and short-term work experience during their summer holidays. The SWE program is comprised of three days of Group-Based Skill Enhancement (in-class skill development) and seven weeks of Employment Skills through Work Experience (supported work placement). The program is evaluated using the same three categories as other YES initiatives: relevance, success, and cost-effectiveness. The results indicated a positive effect in all categories. Evaluation indicated that SWE demonstrated that the program addressed a societal need (surveyed indicated that the main barriers they faced in obtaining summer employment were not having enough experience for available jobs, and a shortage of jobs), that it was meeting the outlined objectives (participants reported significant gains in all employability and occupation-specific skills assessed), and that the program operated within budget.
**Career Focus (CF).** The Career Focus stream has an overall goal of promoting employment and enrolment in an educational setting, with a more specific aim to create a highly skilled and educated Canadian workforce. The CF stream targets post-secondary graduates who are seeking advanced-skill training for specific careers. The majority of CF participants were seeking work experience in occupations such as social sciences, education, government sciences, and religion. The remainder of the participants were searching for positions in natural and applied sciences, as well as business, finance, and administration. Relevance, success, and cost-effectiveness were the broad categories in which the CF stream was evaluated.

The relevance evaluation indicated that 65% of CF participants surveyed reported that their greatest need was to obtain relevant work experience, 93% of participants stated that they were satisfied with the quality of work experience, and 91% stated that they were satisfied with the opportunities to develop useful skills. Success was evaluated in three ways: (1) by analyzing national employment rates for post-secondary graduates’ pre-post program implementation, (2) using participants' Social Insurance Numbers (SIN) to view income rates pre-post intervention, and (3) the number of participants who returned to school or became employed. Results from initial evaluation demonstrated a rise in the employment rate for this group (from 73.5% before and 80.9% after). However, Service Canada indicated that this analysis does not prove causation. The second analysis involved accessing participant data from Canada Revenue Agency via social insurance numbers. The results indicated that there was a significant increase in annual earnings. For the third analysis, researchers found that 32% of the participants returned to school, and the remainder of the participants indicated that 61% of their time was spent working post-intervention compared to 40% pre-intervention. At the time, the researchers are not able to address the cost-effective portion of the evaluation due to a limited amount of net impact data available.

**Skills Link (SL).** The SL stream of Canada’s YES is targeted toward at-risk youth (15-30 years old) who are experiencing a variety of barriers to employment, for example, homelessness, lack of education, poor social and/or behavioural skills, lack of work experience. The nine-week program is divided into two sections: Group-Based Employability Skills (GBES) and Employability Skills through Work Experience (ESWE). GBES is comprised of three weeks of in-class intensive support through the use of workshops, training, and certifications. The group-based learning is followed by a six week supported work placement at an employer of the participant’s choice. Typical placements include sales and service, trades, equipment operations, business and administration. Results of relevance evaluation indicated that SL programs are addressing an actual need. Researchers found that the common barriers identified by youth included lack of work experience and lack of education or training for available jobs. In addition, participant surveys concluded that 81% of participants were satisfied with the quality of work experience and 91% said they developed useful skills. To measure success of the program, the researchers used three different methods. First, pre-post measures of Canadian youth employment rates were conducted to measure indirect program effect. The Canadian youth employment rate rose from 21% before SL to 45% after SL. Second, an analysis of participant revenue was conducted. Findings indicated an increase from a median of $5000 annual income
pre intervention to a median of $9000 post intervention. Third, self-report survey data were used to measure the number of participants who returned to school or attained full-time employment. The results were 40% and 52% respectively. A cost-benefit analysis indicated that SL programs were operating within budget, however the programs have extremely large variances in budget (24.6%) making it difficult to conclude that the program is cost-effective.

Summary

Although the SL stream of the YES has undergone a recent evaluation in 2009 (Strategic Policy and Research, 2009), the summative evaluation has a variety of deficits. First, the evaluation was based on self-report data and vague labour market information to assess overall effectiveness of the program. Using self-report data and general employment statistics result in a variety of limitations. Specifically, the youth that were surveyed for the 2009 SL summative evaluation were responding to questions about a program they participated in three years earlier. Therefore, the researchers are depending on participant recall which could be subject to recall bias, along with potentially unreliable self-report data. In addition, the employment rates used to measure program success were national averages, not specifically related to the participants of the program. Therefore, the data were not specific to the group being measured and could be a result of the natural maturation process. As a result, it is difficult to determine causation with over generalized data.

Moreover, the SL stream is further divided into multiple programs across a variety of employment agencies across Canada. The 2009 evaluation did not evaluate the smaller divisions of the SL stream. Instead, the data were summarized and the results were generalized across all agencies that may have had very different outcomes. This thesis addressed some of the evaluation deficits of self-report data and overgeneralized evaluation results, by assessing the outcome data of an individual program delivered by a local employment agency under the SL stream. Analysis of actual participant outcomes is a more valid way to determine program effectiveness than self-report. This thesis compared expected and actual results of a local employment program’s outcomes using a chi-square statistical analysis of archival outcome data. It was hypothesized that the analysis would conclude that 50% of participants attained employment post-program and 30% of participants were enrolled in an academic setting post-program.
Chapter III. Method

Participants
There were no immediate participants for this study as the statistical analysis was conducted using archival outcome data. Details of the inclusion criteria for past participants are as follows.

Under the Youth Employment Strategy (YES) the HRSDC (2005) has mandated that participants must meet the following criteria at the time of selection for the employment enhancement program: between the ages of 15 to 30, out of school, a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or has been granted refugee status, legally entitled to work in Canada, not recipient of Employment Insurance (EI), and in need of assistance to overcome employment barriers. The participants must also fit the description of a priority youth defined as meeting the above criteria, as well as demonstrating a minimum of one barrier to employment. Barriers to employment can include personal factors such as social, psychological, or behavioural issues as well as environmental factors such as not completing high-school, and lack of working role models (HRSDC, 2012).

Informed Consent
Consent forms were not issued to participants as their data were archival. There was with no identifying information to connect the participants to their data. A consent form (Appendix B) was completed by the agency to ensure that it was informed of the project, and consented to the use of the agency’s archival data. The consent form contained information about the research study, the student researcher, the statistical analysis of the data, details of where the data would be stored, and contact information in the case of further questions. The agency was also informed that the consent form will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at St. Lawrence College for ten years.

Setting/Materials

Setting. The nine week employment program was delivered at a local employment agency funded by the Government of Canada. The sessions were held in a classroom within the agency. There were up to seven participants in each group, with one facilitator. The data collection also occurred within the employment agency.

SL Program. The SL program is a nine-week youth employment program that is aimed to address a variety of barriers to employment that youth may experience. Common barriers include lack of education, poor social and/or behavioural skills, and lack of work experience. The nine-week program is divided into two sections: Group-Based Employability Skills (GBES) and Employability Skills through Work Experience (ESWE). GBES is comprised of three weeks of in-class intensive support through the use of workshops, training, and certifications. See appendix C for GBES delivery. The group-based learning is followed by a six week supported work placement at an employer of the participant’s choice. See appendix D for participant evaluation sheet for placement employers during the ESWE portion of SL. The GBES delivery
schedule and ESWE evaluation sheet have been created by the local employment agency, not Service Canada.

Materials. To compute the statistical analysis, the following materials were required; participant outcome data (provided to the student on a summary sheet) and a computer with Microsoft Excel Program. The statistical analysis was performed in a computer lab at the St. Lawrence College Kingston campus.

Design

Data collection. The data collection phase involved gathering outcome information from four years (2008-2012) of program implementation. After each nine-week program, the program coordinator of the group recorded the participant's program outcome on Part C of a participant’s Personal Identification Form (PIF) (Appendix E). For reasons of confidentiality, the original data collection tool was not used for this thesis. A PIF is a document required by Service Canada which details basic participant information to ensure suitability and eligibility (e.g. age, employment status, and barriers experienced) as well as the individual participant's outcome post-program. The outcome section of the PIF is completed by the program coordinator. Service Canada allowed for a 30 day period post-program for the coordinator to gather this data. Traditional follow-up methods were used including contact via telephone, email, or gathering information from other agency staff that may still have contact with the participant. The data were presented in a summary table (Appendix F) that identified the number of the session that the group participated in, the observed participants' outcome (e.g., employed, returned to school, and other outcome), and the expected outcomes (50% employed post-program, 30% returned to school post-program, and 20% other outcome). Service Canada did not provide the agency with an operational definition of the participants’ outcomes. The summary sheet excluded any identifying information. The data on the summary sheet were used to perform the statistical analysis.

Procedures

Four years (2008-2012) of participant outcome data were recorded by the employment agency on the Participant Information Form (PIF). The PIFs are kept in a locked filing cabinet within the agency. The PIFs could not be accessed by the student due to the confidential information on the forms. Therefore, an agency staff member transposed the data from the PIF and summarized into a Microsoft Excel spread sheet (Appendix G).

Statistical analysis. The data were organized by observed and expected post-program outcome data, based on 50% of participants expected to attain employment, 30% expected to return to school, and 20% classified as other outcome. The archival data were statistically analyzed using the chi-square statistical test to compare actual and expected outcome proportions. The expected results were drawn from the 2009 summative evaluation of the Youth
Employment Strategy Skills Link stream. The statistical analysis was performed using Microsoft Excel in a lab located at the St. Lawrence College Kingston campus.
Chapter IV. Results

To evaluate the employment program, the chi square goodness of fit test was performed to compare observed and expected results of archival outcome data. The statistical test calculated whether the program outcomes (employed, returned to school, or other outcome) were statistically different from national averages. The expected outcome proportions were provided by the program’s funding provider, Service Canada. These expected proportions are as follows: 50% obtain employment post-program, 30% return to school post-program, and 20% are categorized as other outcome (all finished program, but did not obtain employment or return to school). The outcome was considered statistically significant if the Type I error from the chi square test was below the first percentile ($p < 0.01$), therefore rejecting the null hypothesis of no difference between the observed and expected outcomes. To perform the chi-square analysis, the data were summarized based on the observed and expected post-program outcome data for those who attained employment, those who returned to school, and those with another outcome (see Table 1).

Table 1
Frequencies of Participants by Program Outcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Outcome</th>
<th>Observed Freq.</th>
<th>Expected Freq. (prop.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>79.5 (.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>47.7 (.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31.8 (.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $\chi^2 = 33.895$, $p < .01$, $df = 2$. Numbers in parentheses () are expected proportions. Freq. = frequency and prop. = proportion.

As can be seen by the frequencies formulated in Table 1, results of the sample showed a statistically significant difference in the proportion of participant program outcomes as compared to the proportions outlined by Service Canada. Of the participants involved in the employment outcome category, 69% obtained employment which was 19% higher than the expected outcome. The participants in the returned to school category accounted for 11% of the sample which was 19% lower than the expected outcome. The participants in the other outcome category account for 14% of the sample, 6% lower than the expected outcome. More program participants are obtaining employment than expected, however, fewer participants are returning to school. In addition, fewer participants are classified under the “other” outcome category. Overall, this analysis indicates that the local employment program is not only meeting the program expectations, but is exceeding them.
Chapter V. Discussion

Thesis Summary

The program is identified as a Skills Link program which is funded by the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy. Specifically, the employment program was developed for youth with circumstances that are hindering their ability to attain employment. The program involved three weeks of in-class group-based learning, and six weeks of a work placement.

According to Service Canada, the program was expected to have the following outcome proportions: 50% of participants attain employment in the public sector and 30% of participants are enrolled in an academic setting post-program. The chi-square goodness of fit test was computed to compare the expected and actual program outcomes.

The chi square goodness of fit test found evidence of a difference between the expected and the observed program outcomes. However, the difference found by the statistical test indicated that the employment program was not meeting the objectives but exceeding them overall. Expected outcomes were exceeded in the employment category; however, expected outcomes were not met in the back to school and other outcomes categories. Therefore, more participants obtained employment post-program than originally expected, but less participants went back to school. This indicated that over the past four years of implementation, the program surpassed its goals for percentage of participants attaining a positive program outcome.

Strengths

This program evaluation has multiple strengths; however, three specific strengths are highlighted.

First, this analysis provided evaluation information that adds to the overall integrity of the employment program. This evaluation can foster agency learning, by bringing awareness to both success and failures. These current evaluation results contribute to overall improvement and accountability of the program by giving the agency the opportunity to highlight accomplishments identified through the evaluation, or alter their program to address the identified deficits. This evaluation provides the agency with the concrete evidence they need to demonstrate their overall program effectiveness. This evidence would be especially beneficial for Service Canada, the funding organization of the employment program, to assist in the allocations of funds. Specifically Service Canada could benefit from evaluation, because if the employment program was not meeting their objectives, the government can better allocate their funds to programs that are or redirect their funds to address specific program deficits. Overall, this evaluation program shows the employment program is credible, and the results can be used to ensure the program funding is maintained.

Second, a literature review was conducted which highlighted evidence-based employment program targets and emphasized the importance of program evaluation. The literature review also compared and contrasted a variety of different methods to assess if programs are reaching their objectives. Therefore, the agency will benefit from additional research on promising targets for employment programs, and overall program evaluation.
Third, this thesis highlighted the importance of demonstrating effectiveness through statistical analysis. The previous YES summative evaluation used qualitative data such as self-report questionnaires and rating scales to determine whether or not the youth gained relevant skills. However useful this information may be, it does not provide valid evidence of whether or not the program resulted in these youth becoming employed or returning to school, which is the program’s overall objective. As program maintenance depends on an overall success rate of 50% of participants employed and 30% returning to school, quantitative data analysis is required to identify whether or not this objective was met. The literature review concluded that an analysis of quantitative data was the most beneficial way in observing effectiveness in programs that have strict objectives that need to be obtained to maintain funding to continue implementing the program, as this employment program now seems to do.

Limitations and Challenges

The first limitation of this study was the influential factors that may have caused variability in the data. Individual differences in participants, different program facilitators, dates of sessions, and types of work placements can influence the results. Individual differences such as different types of barriers, learning styles, and educational background in the participants may influence their ability to meet program objectives in ways different than the other participants. Some participants face more or just different limitations to employment.

Variability in the data could also be a result of multiple program facilitators within a local agency or due to the absence of a program coordinator, or the use of a guest speaker or individual differences of the placement employer. The SL program is not delivered using a structured manual for group-based employability skills sessions, nor is their specific guidelines for the employability skills through work experience portion of the program. The facilitators have a large amount of flexibility in how they deliver the program; therefore program implementation can differ significantly based on the facilitator’s interpretations of the vague program guidelines identified by HRSDC. Supervision during placement can also cause variability because the employers may differ in their training of the participant.

The dates of when a session starts and finishes also have an influence on the outcome data. For example, the probability of a participant being hired increases in a retail position if the end date of the program is closer to the holidays. However, if the participant is working in a field in which the majority of their work occurs outdoors, the likelihood of being hired in the winter months are low. As a result, it will be difficult to conclude that the program itself was the reason that the program objectives were met, due to the wide variety in variables influencing the outcomes. Therefore, while using quantitative data in this research project is an overall strength, it can also be a limitation when evaluating a program that depends highly on external circumstances; the youth may have developed all essential skills necessary to obtain employment, however, environmental factors are limiting their ability to be hired.

Furthermore, the years that were evaluated during the study may have an effect on the data. The archival data were from 2008-2012 and there was a recession that occurred during 2009. The recession could be an influential factor on the availability of jobs before and after, thus causing variability in the data. The participant outcomes directly after the recession could be a
result of the lack of availability of jobs as opposed to their level of skill or performance during placement.

Second, the conclusions drawn regarding the effectiveness of the program cannot determine the number of participants that maintained long-term employment because there was a lack of follow-up post-program. The employment program coordinator has 30 days post-program to submit the participant outcomes (employed, returned to school, did not complete program, etc.) to the program’s funding provider, Service Canada. The coordinator can submit the outcomes at any time during the 30 day period. If the participant was employed immediately post-program, that outcome is recorded, submitted and the coordinator is not required to contact that participant again. Therefore, conclusions about the effectiveness of the employment program over the long term cannot be formulated because there is no mechanism in place to gather this information after the 30 days allotted for the coordinator to submit the participant outcomes.

Third, the employment agency was not given an operational definition for the outcomes identified by Service Canada, specifically the outcomes this thesis focused on (employed, returned to school, and other outcome). Therefore, the data collected by each program coordinator may not be reliable as each person could have interpreted these terms differently. For example, some coordinators may not classify a position with a low number of hours as employment where another facilitator would. Similar to the returned to school category, some coordinators may classify alternative education as returned to school and other may only count a full-time course load.

**Multilevel Challenges to Service Implementation**

Finding employment is difficult, specifically for youth who have a large number of limitations to employment. The challenges of dealing with the unemployed populations occur at many different levels: client, program, organization and societal.

On a client level, attaining and maintaining employment is no easy task. This is particularly daunting for youth who have a wide variety of barriers hindering their success in the workplace. These barriers can include but are not limited to high school non-completion, learning disabilities, social phobias, behavioural issues, and being long-term unemployed. The youth in this particular program also have multiple skill deficits. These youth need intensive support to address these barriers, and increase the skills required for them to compete in today's labour market.

Creating and implementing group-based programs to address each client’s individual needs can also be difficult. It is unrealistic to tailor the program to address individual’s barriers and skill deficits, because they vary significantly between each person. Time constraints and funding issues make it difficult to give these client's the one-to-one assistance they need. In addition, the program is delivered every 10 weeks with a new group of client's. Therefore, the high number of clients sometime outweighs the number of vacancies in the labour market.

The youth employment program is a paid program offered by a local employment organization. The participants of the program are paid minimum wage for their attendance. The agency also bears additional costs such as work supports, workshop materials and supplies, transportation costs, disability supports, and wages for staff and trainers that facilitate groups.
Therefore, the cost to run a program is high; however, a formal cost-benefit analysis has not been completed. Without a cost-benefit analysis, the agency will not be able to claim that the program benefits outweigh the implementation cost.

In addition to importance of cost within an organization, cost of government funded programs is a societal concern. Without adequate evaluation, government funds (tax payer dollars) may be contributing to the continuation of ineffective practices. Evaluation can ensure that organizations are being held accountable, can facilitate improvements, and increase the benefit of these costly programs. Furthermore, if an evaluation indicates that a program is not meeting its objectives, the funding providers can facilitate more appropriate allocation of funds to projects that demonstrate effectiveness.

Ethical Considerations

As the participant data were given to the student on a coded summary sheet with anonymous data, there was no need to obtain approval from the ethics board for the research. Instead, a consent form was created for the agency to ensure that they were aware of the research project and approved of the use of the agency's archival data. For future research, if data were used that can identify a participant, and then informed consent procedures must be followed.

Contribution to Behavioural Psychology Field

The literature review outlined the purpose of evaluations, methods of evaluations, and circumstances in which those evaluations would be most appropriate. This thesis contributed to the Behavioural Psychology Field through additional research examining evidence-based practices and program targets for enhancing employment skills, and brought awareness to the necessity of program evaluation. The YES summative evaluation (Strategic Policy and Research, 2009) demonstrates the need to use more valid means of assessing program impact than self-report and retrospective analyses. This thesis contributed to the behavioural psychology field by identifying more valid program evaluation methodology than what has been previously reported in employment services.

Recommendations for Future Research

First, it is recommended that a cost-benefit analysis be completed for the Youth Employment Strategy. A large deficit in the YES Summative Evaluation from 2009 was the lack of data regarding the cost of the program and the high variability in the use of funds across different agencies. As stated above, a paid employment program requires a large amount of finances to maintain including training costs, additional client work supports, materials, transportation, facilitator salary, etc. A cost-benefit analysis has not yet been conducted to conclude whether or not the positive impacts of program implementation outweigh the costs.

A second recommendation is to expand on this research would be a program evaluation by dates. As a result of the participant outcomes being highly dependent on environmental factors, the time of year can affect the program outcome percentage. For example, positions in hospitality and construction are more available in summer months, as compared to retail positions that are more available before and during the holidays. Results of an evaluation by date...
could result in better planning of when each program starts and concludes based on labour market trends.

A final recommendation is the need to conduct a prospective, rather than retrospective program evaluation of this and other employment programs, so as to include measures of program implementation, as the impact of the program could be modified by how it was delivered. Further investigation of program implementation is suggested to rule out whether variation in program integrity influences the data. It is recommended that a manual be developed to ensure program integrity and consistency across facilitators and work placement supervisors.

**Concluding Statements**

Over all, this thesis has added valuable research to the Behavioural Psychology Field by analyzing evidence-based practices, as well as identifying and implementing appropriate evaluation procedures. Ensuring proper evaluations for human programs is a socially significant issue that researchers must consider when planning and maintaining projects; specifically, those which are funded by the Government of Canada with specific mandated objectives. Evaluations need to be conducted to ensure Service Canada is allocating funds appropriately and supporting empirically validated projects, as well as maintaining ethical guidelines by providing effective and appropriate service to clients.
References


## Appendix A: Assessment Questions and Data Sources for YES 2009 Evaluation

### Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Data Source/Collection Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Q1. To what extent do YES related activities continue to address Government of Canada and Departmental and Agency priorities?</strong> 1a) Level of consistency between YES objectives and activities, and priorities of the Government of Canada. 1b) Level of consistency between YES objectives and activities, and priorities of the participating YES Departments and Agencies</td>
<td>(1) Environmental scan  (4) Interviews with representatives of YES dept/agencies  (8) Review of YES dept/agencies documentation</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Q2. To what extent are YES programs and services relevant to current and evolving youth needs? Employer needs from various sectors?</strong> 2a) Level of congruence between the identified needs of youth and employers, and the objectives and activities of YES programs (including the sustainable development of various sectors e.g., not-for-profit, private, etc.) 2b) Level of consistency between YES objectives and activities, and findings from current research/trends</td>
<td>(1) Environmental scan  (2) Literature Review  (3) Surveys with youth  (4) Interviews with representatives of YES dept/agencies  (5) Interviews with Youth, Employers, Youth Serving Organizations/ Business Associations  (6) Focus groups (8) Review of YES dept/agencies documentation</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Q3. Do work experience opportunities continue to be offered in any of the following sectors of the economy: Growth sectors? Sectors experiencing deficits of skilled workers? Sectors in need of workers for non-standard employment opportunities (e.g., seasonal, contractual, etc.)? Sectors that have a high ratio of volunteer to paid employment (e.g., not-for-profit)? Sectors that correspond to governmental priorities?</strong> 3a) Level of congruence between identified sectors of the economy, and areas of work opportunities offered by YES programs</td>
<td>(1) Environmental scan  (2) Literature Review  (3) Surveys with youth  (4) Interviews with representatives of YES dept/agencies  (5) Interviews with Youth, Employers, Youth Serving Organizations/ Business Associations  (6) Focus groups  (7) Administrative Files  (8) Review of YES dept/agencies documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Q4. To what extent are YES programs and services consistent with current research and thinking about youth employment needs?</strong> 4a) Match between YES design and latest research trends</td>
<td>(2) Literature Review  (4) Interviews with representatives of YES dept/agencies  (8) Review of YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streams</td>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Question</td>
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</table>
| Cost Effectiveness | Q5. | Have YES programs and services operated within budget? What are the reasons for any variances? | 5a) Financial performance  
5b) Factors explaining financial performance (including timing of funding received)  
(4) Interviews with representatives of YES dept/agencies  
(8) Review of YES dept/agencies documentation |
| Cost Effectiveness | Q6. | Have YES programs leveraged from other sources? | 6a) Level of funding leveraged from other sources (financial and in-kind)  
(4) Interviews with representatives of YES dept/agencies  
(8) Review of YES dept/agencies documentation |
| Cost Effectiveness | Q7. | Are there more cost-effective alternatives to YES programs and services? | 7a) Cost-Effectiveness analysis  
7b) Comparison to other federal programs that provide similar/identical employment services to Youth  
7c) Comparison to similar/identical programs in other jurisdictions  
7d) Identification of current YES procedures and processes that could be changed to enhance cost-effectiveness  
Information obtained from all sources |
| Success | Impact on Employability | Q8. | To what extent did Youth Employment Strategy programs assist youth in enhancing employability skills (hard and soft)?  
Q8a) As a positive effect of participation, to what extent do YES alumni experience improved employability? | 8a) Participants self-reported perceptions of skill gains using Conference Board of Canada defined Employability Skills and potentially other defined skills (e.g., Essential Skills) - to be compared pre/post intervention and potentially with comparison group  
8b) Employers perceptions of skill gains  
8c) Alumni's post participation experience  
8d) Profile of YES interventions  
- #, profile of work opportunities (e.g. international work experience, mentors provided, learning/ training plans etc.)  
- #, profile of learning opportunities (e.g. field of study, level of schooling)  
- extent of consistency between field of study/level and YES intervention  
8e) Level of Youth satisfaction with impact of interventions on employability overall and employability skills in particular  
8f) Level of Employer satisfaction with youth progression re. skills enhancement  
8g) Level of youth Case Manager/Counselor satisfaction with Youth progression re. employability skills enhancement  
(3) Surveys with youth  
(5) Interviews with Youth, Employers, Youth Serving Organizations/ Business Associations  
(6) Focus groups  
(10) Benchmarking exercise  
(11) YES dept/agencies youth needs assessments and exit surveys  
(12) Case studies |
### Impact on Employment Status

**Q9.** To what extent did participation in YES activities assist youth in obtaining employment? Improving income?

- **9a)** # / % of previously unemployed or underemployed (to be defined) YES participants who find employment post-intervention
- **9b)** # / % of previously unemployed or underemployed (to be defined) YES participants who find career-related employment post-intervention
- **9c)** Average earned income of YES clients who find employment
- **9d)** YES participants’ post participation experience
  - Income levels
  - Employment experience characteristics
    - Employment status
    - FT, PT duration
    - Number of jobs held
    - Occupation details
    - Match with skills obtained
    - Match with education
    - Underemployment (to be defined)

- **9e)** Differences between profiles of participant and non-participant employment experience (e.g. average duration of employment/average number of weeks employed compared to non-participants)

### Impact on Schooling Decision

**Q10.** As a positive effect of program participation, to what extent have participants decided to further their education?

- **10a)** Greater recognition by YES participants of benefits of education for labour market participation and impact of YES on this recognition
- **10b)** # / % participants returning to school (after participation in program)
- **10c)** # / % of participants finishing high school or returning to post-secondary, advanced studies, programs or certifications
- **10d)** Fields of study YES clients returned to and impact of YES experience on this decision
- **10e)** Differences between return to school rates of participants and non participants

### Impact on Financial Capacity to Return to School

**Q11.** As a positive effect of program participation, to what extent did the funds earned through Summer Work Experience enable youth to return to school?

- **11a)** $ paid to Youth through SWE
- **11b)** duration of interventions
- **11c)** # / % of Summer Work Experience clients who indicate income from SWE job helped pay for education (post participation)

### Possible Factors Impacting on Success

**Q12.** To what extent did the assessment tools and action plans that were prepared assist in the decision-making process for youth?

- **12a)** # / % of YES clients who were assessed and developed an Action Plan before participating in a program
- **12b)** Extent to which the assessment and action planning process helped the YES client make a decision as to which program to participate in
- **12c)** Extent to which program objectives and activities correspond to the main employability/employment barriers identified in client assessments

### Success

[Note: Each question under this issue will be asked for each of the three streams]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Q13. What, if any, unintended impacts (positive or negative) have occurred as a result of youth employment strategy activities?</th>
<th>13a) Impact analysis for each of the three streams.</th>
<th>All sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Q14. Do impacts, intended or unintended, vary by region or target group? What are the reasons for any variances noted?</td>
<td>14a) Observed variations among YES clients according to key factors (e.g. region, field of study, field of work experience, age, gender, ethnic origin, disability status, prior work experience, pay level, enjoyment of work/work environment, relationship between field of study and work experience)</td>
<td>All sources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Success                              | Q15. How accessible is employment-focused information produced for youth/employers? What other means might be used to make information more accessible in the future? To what extent does the information provided assist youth in making career-related decision/employers in making HR related decisions? | 15a) Level of youth knowledge and use of available information products  
15b) Level of employer knowledge and use of available employment-related information products  
15c) Level of Youth Case Manager/Counselor knowledge and use of available employment-related information products  
15d) Assessment of usefulness/value of material, tools and information (available and accessed information), by Youth, by Youth Case Managers/Counselors, by Employers  
15e) Identification of additional means to circulate employment-related information products | All sources |
Appendix B: Consent Form

Project Title: Examining the Skills Link Program through a Statistical Analysis
Principal Investigator: Sarah Hannah
Name of Supervisor: Lana Di Fazio
Name of Institution: St. Lawrence College
Name of Partnering Agency: N/A

Invitation

Your agency is being invited to take part in a research study. My name is Sarah Hannah and I am a student in my 4th year of the Behavioural Psychology program at St. Lawrence College. As a part of this placement, I am completing a research project called an applied thesis. For my applied thesis I will be examining the participant outcomes of the Shine Skills Link Program. I would like to ask you for your assistance and permission to complete this project.

Why is this study being done?

The study is being done to examine the outcomes of the Shine Skills Link Program using a statistical analysis. The research will benefit the agency in identifying if positive outcomes are statistically significant.

Do you have to take part?

Agency participation in this study is voluntary. The agency can withdraw for any reason at any time and can request that any of their data not be used.

Will the data collected be kept confidential?

We will make every attempt to keep any information that identifies the agency strictly confidential. Data will be represented in code, with no identifying information of the agency or the past participants in the program in any reports, publications, or presentations resulting from this project.

Contact for further information

The project will be developed under the supervision of Lana Di Fazio, my supervisor from St. Lawrence College. I appreciate your cooperation and if you have any additional questions or concerns, feel free to contact me, Sarah Hannah (shannah31@student.sl.on.ca). You can also contact my College Supervisor (lana.difazio@csc-scc.gc.ca).

Consent

If you agree to take part in this research project, please complete the following form. A copy of your consent will be retained at the agency, and in a secure location at St. Lawrence College.

I hereby consent to take part.

____________________________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Name Printed</th>
<th>Signature of Agency Representative</th>
<th>Date</th>
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____________________________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name Printed</th>
<th>Signature of Student</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</table>

24
Appendix C: GBES Description

**Week One:**
- Introductions and expectations
- Team building
- Career Exploration
- Labour Market Information
- Resume Development
- Targeting Employers – creating a job search plan

**Week Two:**
- Ensure Resumes are completed/perfect
- Job Search Skills/Coaching
- Interview Skills/Mock Interviews
- Ideally Job Search is well underway – you should schedule guest trainers for the days after job search to allow time to make follow-up employer calls/job development

**Week Three:**
- Certification Courses (allowing for employer calls/job development time)
- Solidify Placements
- Goal Setting
- Work place expectations
- Certification Courses (allowing for employer calls/job development time)
Appendix D: ESWE Participant Evaluation Sheet for Placement Employers

DEAR EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR,
The purpose of this document is to outline the sequence of tasks and skills which the Skills Link Participant will undertake. These tasks and skills are then evaluated over the course of the placement typically at the end of the month. Please review the report with the young person.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
PARTICIPANT GOAL:
To function/gain experience and become a productive member of a work group through hands on contact on a daily basis

KNOWLEDGE:
To apply the concepts necessary to function in the workplace
To understand the relevancy of the course/program and how it relates to a career

SKILLS:
Developing the teamwork skills necessary to be a productive member of the team
Developing problem-solving skills including co-operation, decision-making and thinking
Developing organization skills such as time management and task management
Developing interpersonal skills such as effective communication, punctuality, attendance and adaptability

ATTITUDES:
Developing appropriate expectations and attitudes towards work
Developing other work attitudes such as patience, understanding, respecting the needs of others, and self-confidence

ORIENTATION - This should be completed during the first week

BY EMPLOYER:
Provide tour of facilities and introduce participant to co-workers
Discuss work policies, regulations and job responsibilities
Outline all job safety procedures and health requirements
Explain work structure for the first few days
Modify learning opportunities to ability and skill level of young person

BY PARTICIPANT:
Introduce yourself to co-workers and explain your position
Learn co-workers names, job functions and titles
Learn physical layout of premises - washrooms, lunchroom, staff facilities, emergency exits
Follow all job safety procedures and health requirement
ESWE Participant Evaluation Sheet for Placement Employers Continued

Participant: 

Employer Name: 

Supervisor: 

Please complete this evaluation by: 

Evaluation of Skills and Tasks

N - Needs Improvement       S – Satisfactory       G - Good       E – Excellent       N/A - Not Applicable

PARTICIPANT is to indicate the major tasks/skills he/she performs and the employer is to rate his/her performance using the descriptors listed above in the Appraisal section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Opportunities</th>
<th>Performance Appraisal</th>
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</table>
ESWE Participant Evaluation Sheet for Placement Employers Continued

N - Needs Improvement     S – Satisfactory     G – Good     E – Excellent     N/A - Not Applicable

Rate the participant’s skills below using the above descriptors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>Performance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teamwork</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>· contributes to the team approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>· contributes to the organization's goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>· follows organization's rules, procedures and policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>· demonstrates leadership when appropriate</td>
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<tr>
<td>· plans and makes decisions with others and supports the outcomes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>· exercises &quot;give and take&quot; to achieve group results</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>· uses the terminology of the workplace appropriately</td>
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<tr>
<td>· reads, comprehends, and uses written materials related to work</td>
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<tr>
<td>· seeks answers when necessary</td>
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<tr>
<td>· listens to understand and applies the learning</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thinking</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>· ability to solve a problem</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>· uses tools, instruments and information systems when necessary</td>
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<tr>
<td>· knows where and how to obtain specialized information</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>· demonstrates enthusiasm and a positive attitude towards learning</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>· interested in future training/education</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Positive Attitude and Behaviours</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>· demonstrates self-esteem and confidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>· displays honesty, integrity, and personal ethics in all actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>· demonstrates positive attitude towards learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>· strives to complete goals</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>· displays initiative, energy and persistence to complete a task</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>· sets goals and priorities in work and personal life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· plans and manages time to achieve goals</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>· is accountable for actions taken</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adaptability</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>· demonstrates a positive attitude toward change</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>· respect for diversity in people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· offers suggestions and ideas to complete a task</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consistency/Conscientiousness</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· appropriate dress for the workplace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· attends daily, reports absence as required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Employer’s Comments:**

**Employer’s Signature:**

**Date:**
### Appendix E: Blank Personal Information Form

#### YOUTH EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY - PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

The information collected in this form will be used to determine your eligibility for the Youth Employment Strategy (YES) program and for subsequent evaluation and accountability analyses (parts A, B, and C only). With the execution of the Employment Services component of Skills Link, participants must not be in receipt of Employment Insurance (EI). A priority will be given to non-Indigenous youth, specifically youth not entitled to Part 1 and Part 2 benefits. This information will be verified through the Employment Insurance program. This statement is made under penalty of law. An incorrect statement may result in the ineligibility of the participant to receive YES benefits. The provision of incorrect, false, or misleading information (including, but not limited to, the provision of false or misleading personal information) may result in the ineligibility of the participant to receive YES benefits.

**Participant Consent To Release Information**

I, ____________________________, give my consent for [ ] to release the information contained in this form regarding my participation in a YES program to HRDC. I acknowledge that the information is collected and administered in accordance with the Privacy Act and applicable privacy laws, and that it may be used to determine my eligibility for the YES program and provided to HRDC for the evaluation and accountability of the YES program.

#### PART A: PROJECT INFORMATION - TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CONTRIBUTION RECIPIENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Contribution Recipient</th>
<th>File Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Start Date (yyyy-mm-dd)</th>
<th>Anticipated End Date (yyyy-mm-dd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### PART B: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION - TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARTICIPANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>Given Name and Initial</th>
<th>Social Insurance Number</th>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permanent Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Postal Code</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you meet the eligibility criteria outlined on page 27?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you meet the definition of youth in page 2 for Skills Link only?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever experienced employment insurance?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you receive Employment Insurance in the last 5 years?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Birth (yyyy-mm-dd)</th>
<th>Employment Status Prior to the Intervention</th>
<th>Employment Status Post Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence Status</th>
<th>Canadian Citizen</th>
<th>Permanent Resident</th>
<th>Refugee under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest Level of Education Completed</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Post-secondary incomplete (college, GED, etc.)</th>
<th>Secondary completed</th>
<th>Post-secondary completed</th>
<th>University incomplete (1 or more years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Official Language</th>
<th>Language Spoken</th>
<th>Language Written</th>
<th>Language Preference</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Federal Government is committed to equity in employment. You are encouraged to complete the following voluntary questions and indicate if you are a member of any of these groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Member of a Visible Minority</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Person with Disability</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inuit</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aboriginal Group</th>
<th>Registered on-reserve</th>
<th>Registered off-reserve</th>
<th>Non-status</th>
<th>Metis</th>
<th>Inuit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participant Consent To Release Information**

I, ____________________________, give my consent for [ ] to release the information contained in this form regarding my participation in a YES program to HRDC. I acknowledge that the information is collected and administered in accordance with the Privacy Act and applicable privacy laws, and that it may be used to determine my eligibility for the YES program and provided to HRDC for the evaluation and accountability of the YES program.

**Participant’s Signature**

**Date (yyyy-mm-dd)**

#### PART C: TO BE COMPLETED BY CONTRIBUTION RECIPIENT AFTER INTERVENTION TERMINATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Did Not Complete the Intervention</th>
<th>Participant Completed the Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>Date of Early Termination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did not follow through</th>
<th>Identification</th>
<th>Skills Enhancement</th>
<th>Date of Completion (yyyy-mm-dd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employer / Self-employed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not active in labour force</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned to school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contribution Recipient’s Name**

**Contribution Recipient’s Signature**

**Date (yyyy-mm-dd)**
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Basic Criteria
At the time of intake/selection, you were:
- Between 15 and 30 years of age (inclusive)
- Out of school
- A Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or person who has been granted refugee status in Canada under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
- Legally entitled to work according to the relevant provincial legislation and regulations
- Not in receipt of Employment Insurance (EI) benefits (does not apply if you are participating in the Employment Services component of Skills Link)
- In need of assistance in order to overcome employment barriers

Priority Youth
HRDC has several programs to assist young people. Some programs have been expanded to assist priority youth. For participants to be considered priority youth, they must meet the basic eligibility criteria above and have barriers to employment. This is usually characterized by a lack of significant attachment to the labour force and poor future prospects under current circumstances.

In addition to the above, priority youth have at least one of the following barriers to employment:
- High school non-completion
- Disability
- Aboriginal ancestry
- Health, drug and/or alcohol-related problems
- Residence in a rural or remote location
- Lone (single) parent, Visible or ethnic minority
- Low levels of literacy and numeracy
- Language barriers
- Stress involvement
- Contact with justice, child welfare or social assistance system
- Homeless or at risk of becoming homeless
- Lack of social supports: family, friends or community supports
- Poor self-management and/or behaviour management abilities
- Other

Please note that underemployment by definition is not considered as an obstacle for employment. It must be combined with other enumerated reasons.

CAREER FOCUS

To assist us in capturing information on the youth programs as well as the results achieved, please indicate if you meet the following basic program criteria:

Basic Criteria
At the time of intake/selection, you were:
- Between 15 and 30 years of age (inclusive)
- Out of school
- A post-secondary graduate
- A Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or person who has been granted refugee status in Canada
- Legally entitled to work according to the relevant provincial legislation and regulations
- Not in receipt of Employment Insurance (EI) benefits

PARTICIPANT DECLARATION FOR CAREER FOCUS

The purpose of the Youth Employment Strategy (YES) is to provide a work experience that would facilitate the transition to the labour market. It is recommended that normally a young person has access to the Career Focus program under the YES only once. To my knowledge, I certify that I have not participated in any of the Youth Employment Strategy Work Experience Programs targeted at post-secondary graduates.

__________________________  ____________________________
Participant's Signature     Date (yyyy-mm-dd)
### Appendix F: Data Summary Sheet (Raw Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group #</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Exp Em</th>
<th>EM</th>
<th>Exp RTS</th>
<th>RTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>159.00</td>
<td>79.50</td>
<td>110.00</td>
<td>47.70</td>
<td>17.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N= number of participants in group
Exp Em= expected number of participants to be employed post-program
Em= actual number of participants who were employed post-program
Exp RTS= expected number of participants to return to school post-program
RTS= actual number of participants to return to school post-program.
Appendix G: Chi Square Statistical Test

### Chi-Square Equal Expected Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>fo</th>
<th>fe</th>
<th>ChiSqDst</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed Post-Program</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>11.70126</td>
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<tr>
<td>Return to School</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>19.7587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Outcome</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>2.43522</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- $k = 3$
- $\text{Chi}_\text{Sq} = 33.8951782$
- $df = 2$
- $\text{Alpha} = 0.05$
- $\text{Crit}_\text{Val} = 5.991464547$

**Conclusion**: Reject Ho