

# **A JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY:**

Inclusion of individuals with intellectual disability in university

**MALCOLM JOHN LOBBAN**

Bachelor of Applied Science (Disability Studies)  
Diploma of Public Administration (Australian Public Service)

A thesis presented in part fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Bachelor of Applied Science Honours Degree in Disability Studies

DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITY STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY  
ADELAIDE ♦ AUSTRALIA

APRIL 2002

# CONTENTS

---

Approval of Supervisor.....	VIII
Declaration.....	IX
Acknowledgements.....	X
Dedication.....	XI
List of Tables.....	XII
List of Abbreviations.....	XIII
ABSTRACT.....	XIV
CHAPTER ONE	
LITERATURE REVIEW	
1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.2.1. Overview of Inclusion in Education in South Australia-Primary and Secondary levels.....	3
1.2.2. Overview of Inclusion in Education in South Australia-Post-secondary Education.....	4
1.3. Transition to Adult Life: Issues for young adults with intellectual disabilities.....	5
1.3.1. Competence: A focus on work.....	6
1.3.2. Independence vs Interdependence: A goal for adulthood.....	9
1.3.3. Self-esteem: An important contributor to success in life.....	11
1.3.4. The self-concept: A step closer to identity.....	12
1.3.5. Self-determination: Moving towards independence.....	13
1.4. Why University?.....	15
1.5. Inclusion in University.....	17
1.6. Models of inclusive University settings.....	18
1.7. Up the Hill.....	23
1.8. Aims of the research.....	26
1.9. Summary.....	27

# CHAPTER TWO

## METHODOLOGY

2.1.	Introduction.....	28
2.2.	Why Qualitative Research?.....	29
2.3.	The Research Design .....	30
2.3.1.	Research questions .....	31
2.3.2.	Identification and selection of research participants .....	32
2.3.3.	Rationale for the selection of research participants .....	32
2.3.4.	Reliability .....	33
2.3.5.	Validity .....	35
2.3.6.	Researcher bias.....	37
2.4.	Ethical Considerations .....	38
2.4.1.	Seeking approval .....	39
2.4.2.	The Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee .....	39
2.4.3.	Making the approach.....	40
2.4.4.	Informed consent.....	40
2.4.5.	Ethical considerations during and after the interview process.....	41
2.4.6.	Ethical behaviour by the researcher .....	41
2.4.7.	Transcription of the audiotapes.....	41
2.4.8.	Security of the information .....	41
2.5.	The research participants .....	42
2.5.1.	Yvonne .....	42
2.5.2.	Kathy .....	43
2.5.3.	Hillary.....	44
2.5.4.	Leanne .....	44
2.5.5.	Candace .....	45
2.5.6.	Mary .....	46
2.5.7.	Ruth .....	47
2.5.8.	Brian.....	47
2.5.9.	John .....	48
2.5.10.	William.....	49
2.6.	Data collection .....	50

2.6.1.	Rationale for using structured and open interviews .....	51
2.6.2.	Rationale for using participant observation .....	52
2.6.3.	Rationale for using documentation .....	53
2.7.	Data analysis .....	54
2.7.1.	Narrative analysis .....	54
2.8.	Summary .....	56

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESULTS

3.1.	Introduction .....	58
3.2.	Background information .....	60
3.2.1.	Participants' education and work history .....	60
3.2.2.	Parent and siblings' attendance at University .....	63
3.2.3.	Topics audited by Up the Hill Participants .....	63
3.3.	Survey of participants .....	65
3.3.1.	Yvonne .....	66
3.3.2.	Kathy .....	68
3.3.3.	Hillary .....	69
3.3.4.	Leanne .....	71
3.3.5.	Candace .....	73
3.3.6.	Mary .....	75
3.3.7.	Ruth .....	77
3.3.8.	Brian .....	79
3.3.9.	John .....	80
3.3.10.	William .....	82
3.4.	Survey of Parents .....	84
3.4.1.	Yvonne's parents .....	85
3.4.2.	Kathy's mother .....	87
3.4.3.	Hillary's father .....	90
3.4.4.	Leanne's mother .....	92
3.4.5.	Candace's mother .....	94
3.4.6.	Mary's parents .....	96
3.4.7.	Ruth's mother .....	98

3.4.8.	Brian's father.....	101
3.5.	Survey of academic staff.....	103
3.5.1.	Lecturer 1 .....	104
3.5.2.	Lecturer 2 .....	106
3.5.3.	Lecturer 3 .....	108
3.5.4.	Lecturer 4 .....	110
3.5.5.	Lecturer 5 .....	112
3.5.6.	Lecturer 6 .....	114
3.5.7.	Lecturer 7 .....	115
3.5.8.	Lecturer 8 .....	117
3.5.9.	Lecturer 9 .....	118
3.5.10.	Lecturer 10 .....	119
3.6.	Common Perceptions .....	121
3.6.1.	What is University like?.....	121
3.6.2.	The student ID Card .....	124
3.6.3.	Increased maturity and self-confidence.....	126
3.6.4.	Friendship and inclusion .....	128
3.6.5.	Perceptions of the University experience by academic staff.....	131
3.7.	Summary .....	134

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DISCUSSION

4.1.	Introduction.....	135
4.2.	University: A valued experience.....	137
4.2.1.	The Up the Hill project and Universities' place in society .....	137
4.2.2.	The values families place on University .....	138
4.2.3.	The value witnessed by academic staff.....	139
4.3.	The benefits of an inclusive University experience .....	142
4.3.1.	Levels of involvement on campus .....	142
4.3.2.	Involvement in a wider community .....	144
4.3.3.	Involvement and parental expectations.....	145
4.3.4.	Involvement witnessed by the academic staff .....	147
4.4.	Self-esteem, self-confidence and the self-concept.....	148

4.4.1.	Impact upon self-esteem .....	149
4.4.2.	Impact upon self-confidence .....	151
4.4.3.	The self-concept.....	152
4.5.	Friends, Acquaintances, Mentors: Stakeholders in the journey .....	153
4.5.1.	Who are the stakeholders? .....	153
4.5.2.	Up the Hill management .....	154
4.5.3.	Supportive families .....	155
4.5.4.	The role of the mentor.....	156
4.5.5.	Supportive academic staff.....	157
4.5.6.	Friends and acquaintances .....	158
4.6.	The road to self-determination.....	160
4.6.1.	What does the future hold? .....	160
4.7.	Limitations of the study .....	161
4.7.1.	Interviewing people with a limited communication repertoire.....	162
4.7.2.	Manager of the Up the Hill project as researcher .....	163
4.7.3.	Preaching to the converted.....	164
4.8.	Suggestions for further research .....	165
4.8.1.	Up the Hill participants with high support needs.....	165
4.8.2.	Trial of a full-time study load for Up the Hill participants.....	166
4.8.3.	Recognition of studies for Up the Hill participants .....	167
4.8.4.	Expansion of IPSE programs to other Universities and TAFE colleges .....	167
4.8.5.	Links to Pre-employment training .....	168
4.9.	Summary and conclusion .....	169

## REFERENCES

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX

- A. Letter of Application to Up the Hill Project Steering Committee seeking approval to conduct research using Up the Hill project participants.  
Letter granting conditional approval from the Chairperson, Up the Hill project Steering committee
- B. Letter of Application to the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee  
Letter granting conditional approval from the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee  
Letter granting approval from the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee
- C. Consent form to conduct interviews and observation of Up the Hill participants
- D. Consent form to conduct interviews with parents / caregivers of Up the Hill participants
- E. Consent form to conduct interviews with Academic staff from Flinders University who have had Up the Hill participants in their classes
- F. Guiding questions for interviews of Up the Hill participants
- G. Guiding questions for parents / caregivers of Up the Hill participants
- H. Guiding questions for Academic staff from Flinders University who have had Up the Hill participants in their classes