Key Characteristics of Adult Education and Literacy Programs

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Abstract: A distinguishing characteristic of adult education programs is that program content and language must be suitable and respectful of adult clients. For example, instead of using the word "student" which may imply a traditional teacher/student relationship where a student is subservient to the teacher, all state program materials use the word "learner" or "customer." Using this type of language acknowledges the adults' existing knowledge and real-world experience and makes them the focus of the program. The Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education Indicators of Program. Quality emphasize the importance of customer satisfaction and learner progress on individualized goals One quality area explicitly states that "program staff and learners jointly develop, regularly evaluate, and update an instructional plan that incorporates the individual's learning styles and preferences" . This is just one example of how learners and staff are equals and collaborate on the learners' participation in the program. [Ali Badragheh and Mohammad Abedi. **Key Characteristics of Adult Education and Literacy Programs.** Journal of American Science 2011;7(5):136-141]. (ISSN: 1545-1003). http://www.americanscience.org.

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Introduction:

Despite landmark reforms in public schools, too many Kentuckians continue to drop out of school, thereby perpetuating the chronic problem of adult illiteracy. Too many young Kentucky parents are unable to read and lack the basic literacy necessary to provide the necessary stimulating, supportive family environments for young children. It is known that children's literacy levels are strongly linked to the educational level of their parents and that children of parents who are unemployed and have not completed high school are five times more likely to drop out. Adult illiteracy feeds the state's unemployment, its welfare rolls, and the correctional institutions. Adult illiteracy severely hinders the life chances of young children, undermines school reform, and limits the opportunities for postsecondary education. The field of adult education and literacy is plagued by confusion about definitions. Over the years definitions have evolved from provisions in federal law and initiatives of groups advocating particular methodologies or the needs of specific adult populations. The result is that definitions tend to merge statements about the goals to be achieved (e.g., improving the literacy of a particular population) with a particular means (e.g., adult basic education) to achieve the goal.

Therefore, it is helpful to distinguish between at least these dimensions of the issue:

- "Literacy" refers to the knowledge, skills, and competencies of individuals. The federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II of the Workforce Investment Act)1 defines literacy as "an individual's ability to read, write, speak in English, compute and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society." Literacy is often defined in terms of specific domains such as "basic academic skills," "workplace skills," "life skills," "parenting skills," or skills necessary to exercise one's rights and responsibilities for citizenship. Different dimensions of literacy are often categorized by terms that cluster several dimensions of literacy important for different clients. Examples include workplace literacy (combining both basic academic skills and workplace skills), and family literacy (combining basic academic skills and other skills essential for successful parenting).

- "Education attainment" usually refers to the numbers of years of schooling completed or the level of credential (e.g., high school diploma or associate degree) an individual has obtained. Despite concerns about the meaning of credentials, there is a strong correlation between educational attainment and literacy.

The objectives related to this goal touch on several of the common elements of definitions listed above, for example:

- Different dimensions of literacy (e.g., academic and workplace skills),
- The level of education attainment (e.g., increasing the number of persons who complete postsecondary degrees),
- The needs of target groups (e.g., parents, minorities, or part-time learners),

- The need to increase the availability of particular educational services, strategies or means (e.g., accessibility of libraries to part-time learners or opportunities for parental involvement), and
- The importance of lifelong learning, both in the learning behavior of individuals and in the educational system's responsiveness to the needs of adult learners.

Adult:

Adult who is able to recognize their needs. He is who knows what will. Refers to individual adults in their lives cross and understand their responsibilities and has accepted the role is social. Adult learners are often those that distinguish each other and have many different targets at the same time and will follow a common challenge to fulfill the goals of building self motivation vectors as educational materials to learn and use the forge.

Adult education:

Several definitions of adult education has been done Community

- Adult Education is a⌉in the following examples are given of them. conscious effort by public institutions or voluntary organizations to promote community awareness comes action.
- adult education teaching is typically specific age group above the legal age⌉ limits as formal and informal, voluntary and at different levels of time, place
- Adult Education is a process in which people who⌉and education is presented. somehow been cut course they consciously to change or advance their skills in information and do organized activities.
- Adult education includes all formal and informal training and volunteer after⌉ school, which by experienced educators and aware of the system.

Educational materials on adult education with daily life, needs, goals, aspirations and past experiences of adults and their relationship helps to results learned in life and career are used.

Adult characteristics:

To understand the characteristics of adult learners, their mental and physical condition should be considered in the following referred to some of them.

Operating speed:

Slow reaction in adults is natural that necessarily means reducing the logic and practice skills, not due to weakness and increased awareness of natural forces and their skills.

Consciousness:

no stimulus and incentives encouraging, despite inhibiting stimuli, slow transfer rate, mental, and weak inhibitors of natural forces (mostly visual and auditory) are factors that slow reaction affect individual mental and cognitive activities, but never able to understand, understanding and learning ability (which varies with the speed of learning) is not relevant.

Health:

what is most age, longer duration is necessary to be heard by listening issue. Why is that when elderly people and old could not hear well, their confidence and vulnerable to the possibility that negative beliefs about their find, they are great. Visual abilities can be like other people, usually decreases with age.

Background of knowledge - skills and beliefs of adults:

adults, social experiences, many have already learned different values and beliefs in their pronouns have stabilized, so changes in the new act very cautiously. The idea of such a manner that skill and applying them older and longer life is, Similar resistance to accept new ideas will be more and more severe. Thus, the adult criteria for the built and paid for their ideas and beliefs that are forming. Because of these criteria and the beliefs that they are afraid of failure, Therefore, to prevent it, sometimes against the resistance of new phenomena are only the material taught and its face that make reinforced concrete and tangible interference situation is.

Ways to Improve Adult Literacy

Adult literacy is a global problem. One in five adults cannot read. Here are 5 ways you can help improve adult literacy.

1. Literacy Websites

Start by researching some of the online resources available to you. Some are comprehensive directories that can help you identify help in your own community.

2. Your Local Literacy Council

Even some of the smallest communities are served by a county literacy council. Get out the phone book or check at your local library. Your local literacy council is there to help adults learn to read and children keep up with reading in school. Staff members are trained and reliable.

3. Adult Education Classes

Your literacy council will have information about adult education classes in your area. If they don't, or you don't have a literacy council, get out the phone book again. If your own county doesn't offer adult education classes, which would be surprising, check the next closest county, or contact your state education department. Every state has one.

4. The Library

Never underestimate the power of your local county library to help you accomplish just about anything. They love books. They adore reading. They will do their best to spread the joy of picking up a book. They also know that people cannot be productive employees if they don't know how to read. They've got resources available, and can recommend special books, to help you help a friend learn to read.

5. A Private Tutor

It can be very embarrassing for an adult to admit that he or she cannot read. If the thought of attending adult education classes freaks someone out, private tutors are always available. Your literacy council or library are probably your best places to find a trained tutor who will respect the student's privacy and anonymity.

Key Characteristics of Adult Education and Literacy Programs:

1- Staffing:

Successful adult education programs have staff members who are committed to adult learners and know how to make the most of available resources with limited budgets. Staff must be flexible and work hours that are more convenient to adult learners. Additionally, staff must be trained in principles of adult education and should attend professional development courses.

2- Volunteers:

Volunteers are critical to the success of adult education programs, as they often provide valuable one-on-one tutoring sessions with adult learners outside of a formal classroom. Volunteers must be trained in principles of adult education and literacy programs, as well as methods to monitor their learners' progress. Having a volunteer coordinator is important, as this person trains the volunteers and serves as their point of contact during the tutoring sessions. If volunteers need advice on how to work with their partners or need new materials to cover during their sessions, a volunteer coordinator is an invaluable resource. Without a coordinator, volunteer retention would be very low. It is important that learners be paired with volunteers for a certain period of time, as it is difficult for adult learners to make progress if their tutor partner changes constantly. Clear expectations should be established for how

often and how long tutors will meet with their learners. Congregations often can serve adult learners through tutoring programs, as congregations have easy access to a steady stream of volunteers. It may be easier for congregations to operate an informal tutoring program versus a comprehensive adult education program, since those programs need a higher level of staffing.

3- Respect for adult learners:

A distinguishing characteristic of adult education programs is that program content and language must be suitable and respectful of adult clients. For example, instead of using the word "student" which may imply a traditional teacher/student relationship where a student is subservient to the teacher, all state program materials use the word "learner" or "customer." Using this type of language acknowledges the adults' existing knowledge and real-world experience and makes them the focus of the program. The Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education Indicators of Program Quality emphasize the importance of customer satisfaction and learner progress on individualized goals (see Appendix A). One quality area explicitly states that "program staff and learners jointly develop, regularly evaluate, and update an instructional plan that incorporates the individual's learning styles and preferences" (p.7). This is just one example of how learners and staff are equals and collaborate on the learners' participation in the program.

Successful adult education programs recognize that adult learner needs and learning styles may require non-traditional methods of teaching and accommodate them whenever possible. This means holding classes and sessions outside of typical working hours for adults that work, providing one-on-one tutoring, group classes, and other methods of delivering services that are flexible. It is also important to hold the classes where it is convenient for adult learners to attend, such as local houses of worship, residential facilities, libraries, or other community centers. Understanding this key principle is difficult sometimes for organizations that have worked in child education, but not in adult education. Congregations that have held learning programs for children may feel that they are suited to take on adult education without realizing the differences in program structure and content. It is important that congregations research training opportunities before embarking on an adult education program.

4- Practical program content:

Related to the program quality area of "respecting adult learners," curriculum should be practical and relevant to the individual learner's goals. Many adult learners are interested in advancing their careers, starting a new career, transitioning into post-

secondary school, or attending other educational or training programs. Program content should help learners work on their personal educational or vocational goals. Materials from their current or future job can be utilized as part of the curriculum to make it hands-on and practical for the older learner. Some programs that have provided educational programs for children may have learning materials and textbooks that they think they can use with older learners. However, this is not an effective way to teach adults and participants may be turned off from a program that uses children's books for their teaching materials.

5- Assessment and evaluation:
To have an effective adult learning program and demonstrate program success, learners' progress must be monitored during their participation. There are many official assessments that state funded programs use for standard programs, such as the adult diploma program or GED classes. However, informal measures should also be used to monitor learners' progress and help learners' view their improvement. Seeing concrete improvement over time is important to keeping learners motivated and committed to the program.

6- Space:
The learning environment where an adult education program takes place should be well-lit, clean, and suitable for adults. Additionally, having computers available is useful for learners and staff to access online resources. Many learners want to improve their computer literacy as well as language or numerical literacy, so having a computer lab is valuable.

7- Community relationships:
It is important for adult learning programs to have working relationships with libraries, local businesses, work-ready programs, and other community resources. Since many learners attend adult education programs to advance their career goals, it is important that programs be able to refer them to job readiness or placement organizations. Libraries are also a valuable resource for organizations that are looking for materials that are appropriate for adult literacy programs. The Philadelphia Free Library has a program called the "Reader Development Program" which gives away two free library books a year to adult learners who have a library card.4 Books cover topics such as reading, writing, math, job skills, parenting, biography, fiction, GED and ESL. Program staff can also access these books for their own classes.

Conclusion:
Additional material for the next stage of learning often means to be expected when developing your

learning skills Learners to increase awareness and enjoyment of reading and studying to operate. To improve the quality of life, learning materials should reinforce the skills they acquired previous. This material should have access to information and provide new technology. should also have to make learning more fun. Additional materials should provide opportunities for literacy skills to read and to strengthen their cognitive awareness.

Incentives aimed at providing content that audiences are produced primarily to attract different groups of adults interested in design, so that their participation in learning programs are encouraged. Motivational training materials for learners and have great importance even in support of successful applications over learners, planners and executors for educational programs is important.

Material often set different types of materials and educational content in books and pamphlets, books, training guides, trainers, equipment auxiliary audio, visual and material are included such that during actual teaching sessions, are used in the transmission and content but also to achieve the goals of making education programs are important.

Track materials (continued) which increased literacy skills and knowledge gained is also effective in enriching learning environment for learners are important. Participatory materials to ensure the participation of learners in the learning process and codification are included out of class activities, dialogue, role playing, etc.

In traditional programs that the principles of psychology and curriculum planning, less attention is the form of content presentation ie codification and providing books, original format and have the dominant form, while for adult content that could have valuable experience in addition to writing, other ways also be provided Affect the selection of pictures and images related to the concepts and content produced by including them. Learning activities such as activities outside the classroom, dialogue, role playing and ... Another type of content is presented. Duties are placed on the learner, a resource for developing knowledge, skills and insights he considered.

The task force's policy recommendations are guided by these principles:

- Recognize that adult illiteracy is not an isolated problem but a fundamental barrier to every major challenge facing Kentucky. Without significant improvements in adult literacy the Commonwealth will be unable to make progress on issues such as early childhood education, education reform (elementary/secondary and postsecondary), economic development, and improving the

health and well-being of Kentucky's families and communities.

- Shift from top-down implementation of a federal or state program to leading a statewide public campaign that depends fundamentally on a bottom-up commitment of communities, employers, and educational institutions. The campaign must engage all aspects of Kentucky life—all dimensions of state and local government, all education levels, the state's business and civic leaders, voluntary organizations, and all others whose work affects—or is affected by—the problem of adult illiteracy.
- The future of Kentucky depends on narrowing the disparities among counties by improving the adult literacy of the population in all regions of the state.
- Shift from an emphasis on providers to the needs of clients. Measure performance and progress in terms of impact on the quality of life and economic well being of:

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