

Research Topics in Adult Basic Education: Tracking College Placement of ABE Learners

Importance of this Research

Literacy Action Network (LAN) conducted Focus Groups with ABE professionals statewide. There is a critical need for research in ABE. The Professional Issues Committee has identified a number of research topics to be pursued by university students. Additional topics are available at the LAN website:

<http://www.literacyactionnetwork.org/>

You are encouraged to use the LAN Professional Issues Committee as a resource and share results to help improve the ABE field. Potential formats for sharing results include posting links to research on the LAN website, attending a Professional Issues Committee meeting or presenting at the annual ABE Summer Institute conference.

Research Topic:

Tracking college placement of learners who complete an ABE program

Background:

Defining the Issue

There is currently no system to track learners who prepare for higher education at ABE sites. It is difficult to determine the effectiveness of classes once learners leave ABE programming.

Defining the Terms

ABE = Adult Basic Education; a state and federally funded program through the Department of Education to serve adults wanting to earn their GED, learn English, gain basic literacy skills, and prepare for the world of work or post-secondary education. ABE programs can be found throughout Minnesota in schools, correctional facilities and nonprofit organizations.

Accuplacer = “The Accuplacer test is used as a placement test by many technical schools, colleges and universities in the United States. It measures whether learners have the skills needed for study at the institution where they seek admission, or whether they may need to brush-up on some academic skills through “developmental” courses before taking regular college-level classes.” (<http://online.themlc.org> – Online training: “What is the Accuplacer Test?”)

ESL = English as a Second Language (English Language Learning or ELL). ESL classes teach English to immigrants, refugees, and other nonnative English speakers.

Target Learner Population

The study would target ABE and ESL learners who prepare for higher education at an ABE site.

Sample research questions:

- How can learners be tracked after leaving an ABE program?
- How do ABE learners who prepare for higher education score on the Accuplacer?

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- How do ABE learners compare to high school graduates of similar demographic background on the Accuplacer?
- Where are ABE learners who are admitted to higher education programs placed (remedial/developmental, college level or advanced)?

Resources/ contacts:

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Adult Basic Education Web Site
<http://mnabe.themlc.org>

Literacy Action Network Web Site
www.literacyminnesota.org

Research Results

Final reports or results will be shared with Literacy Action Network's Professional Issues Committee to increase our knowledge and help improve the ABE field.