

Research Topic in Adult Basic Education (ABE): Impact of Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) Program

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:

Measuring the impact of STAR (Student Achievement in Reading) on ABE learners, teachers, and programs

Sample research questions:

- How do learner outcomes compare in STAR vs. non-STAR reading classes as measured by standardized NRS-approved reading assessments? As measured by diagnostic reading assessments in the areas of alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension?
- What impact does STAR implementation have on learner retention?
- How does participation in STAR impact ABE program practices?
- What impact does participation in STAR have on teacher practices?

Background:

Defining the Issue

The goal of the STAR Project from the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) is to implement evidence-based reading instruction for learners performing at the National Reporting System (NRS) Low and High Intermediate Basic Education levels (approximate GLE 4.0-8.9). Minnesota ABE programs serve a large number of intermediate level learners who plateau in their reading development and do not make level increases, do not complete high school diploma programs, nor pass GED tests. Participation in and implementation of the STAR Project is expected to result in significant intermediate level reading reform for programs, teachers, and learners. Minnesota ABE is entering its third year of STAR implementation.

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 the entire state of Minnesota in schools, correctional facilities and nonprofit organizations.

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NRS = National Reporting System; the federal process that defines educational functioning levels and acceptable measures and tools to measure learner levels.

Target Learner Population

ABE learners performing at low intermediate and high intermediate NRS functional levels who have not progressed beyond that level after ongoing assessment

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ATLAS Website (go to STAR page)
www.hamline.edu/atlas

Literacy Action Network Web Site
<http://www.literacyactionnetwork.org/>