

Measuring The Performance of Adult Literacy Facilitators

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Abstract

Measuring the performance of adult literacy facilitators is necessary to ensure the desired quality of literacy delivery and help them perform better. In the areas of attendance, enrollment, drop-out rates, facilitation effectiveness, level of involvement, conversation quality, time management, teaching aids content and quality of primer, other literacy materials/tools, and the overall output of the literacy programme are all factors to take into consideration in measuring the performance of adult literacy facilitators. More so, strategies such as the capacity to ask focused and related questions and the ability to repeat what has been heard, are among the skills to utilize. Also, the ability to determine the learners' level of happiness and whether or not some learners are dominating the class. More still, focus, attentive listening, recording, and capacity to draw attention to important issues, identify differences, and emphases are all required to accurately assess the facilitator's work. In addition to the aforementioned, this paper offered insight into the key duties of adult facilitators, such as fostering trust and safety among learners, appreciating and valuing each learner's contributions, assisting learners in directing their interactions, learning, and teamwork, aiding learners in fine-tuning learning objectives, encouraging and involving all learners in the learning process, and helping learners overcome internal barriers or challenges, demonstration of instructional competency, motivating abilities, communication abilities, attitude toward learners and impartiality in grading being key factors of measuring the performance of literacy facilitators through adult literacy classroom observation by the center organizer(s), Learner's evaluation of their tutor, gathering data from other facilitators at the center, surveys from well-known local leaders and self-evaluation of the individual facilitators.

Keywords: *Measuring, Performance, Adult, Literacy, Facilitators.*

Introduction

Contemporary definitions of an Adult Literacy Facilitator emphasize their role in facilitating the learning process for adult learners, particularly in the context of literacy and basic education. An adult Literacy Facilitator (ALF) is a trained educator who guides and supports adult learners in acquiring essential literacy and numeracy skills. They create inclusive and learner-centered environments, using diverse teaching strategies to meet the unique needs of each learner. ALFs play a crucial role in empowering adults to improve their literacy levels and participate actively in society (UNESCO, 2021). Facilitators are adult learning specialist and skilled professional who designs and implements effective learning experiences for adult learners. They have expertise in adult education principles, instructional design, and assessment methods, and they focus on helping adults develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. They facilitate engaging and relevant learning experiences that promote lifelong learning (American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, 2022). An adult literacy facilitator is a trained educator who specializes in teaching adults with no or low literacy levels. They use evidence-based teaching methodologies and materials to address the specific learning needs of adult learners, they work towards fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment, encouraging learners to gain confidence in their literacy skills and apply them in real-life situations. (National Institute for Literacy, 2021)

Adult Basic Education Instructor: An adult basic education instructor is an educator who provides foundational instruction to adults in basic literacy, numeracy, and essential skills. They use a learner-centered approach, tailoring instruction to meet learners' individual goals and needs. Adult basic education instructors empower adults to overcome barriers to learning and achieve their educational and personal aspirations. (American Association of Adult and Continuing Education, 2022). **Adult Literacy Coach:** An adult literacy coach is a skilled professional who supports and mentors' other adult literacy facilitators to enhance their teaching practices. They provide guidance, feedback, and resources to help educators improve instructional methods and learner outcomes. Adult literacy coaches collaborate with facilitators to continuously improve the quality

of adult literacy programs. (ProLiteracy, 2021). These contemporary definitions highlight the importance of adult literacy facilitators in promoting lifelong learning, empowering learners, and addressing the diverse needs of adult learners in various educational settings. There is a need to note that the lack of proper supervision of the centers by adult literacy implementing agents also results in dropouts and eventually the closing of some centers (Carasco, 2016). This means that a tutor's performance measurement can have a significant part in attaining a certain level of literacy.

Responsibilities and obligations of the facilitator

An adult literacy facilitator plays a crucial role in supporting individuals who are learning to read, write, and improve their literacy skills. Their responsibilities and obligations may vary depending on the specific context and program, but here are some common responsibilities of an adult literacy facilitator: **Assessing Learners:** The facilitator assesses the learners' current literacy levels, skills, and needs. This assessment helps in designing appropriate instructional materials and activities tailored to the learners' abilities. **Developing Lesson Plans:** Based on the assessment, the facilitator develops lesson plans and curriculum that address the specific literacy needs of the adult learners. They select appropriate reading materials, exercises, and activities to facilitate learning and progress. **Providing Instruction:** The facilitator delivers engaging and interactive instruction to adult learners, using a variety of teaching techniques and strategies. They guide learners through reading exercises, writing tasks, vocabulary development, and comprehension activities.

Individualized Support: Recognizing that adult learners have diverse needs and learning styles, the facilitator provides individualized support and guidance. They offer one-on-one assistance, address specific challenges, and provide additional resources or strategies as needed. **Creating a Supportive Environment:** The facilitator establishes a safe and non-judgmental learning environment where adult learners feel comfortable taking risks and asking questions. They foster a sense of community and mutual respect among learners, encouraging peer support and collaboration. **Tracking Progress:** The facilitator monitors and tracks learners' progress, regularly assessing their development and adjusting instructional strategies accordingly. They provide feedback and constructive guidance to help learners improve their skills. **Motivating and Encouraging Learners:** Adult learners may face various barriers and challenges on their literacy

journey. The facilitator motivates and encourages learners, acknowledging their achievements, setting realistic goals, and providing positive reinforcement to build their confidence.

Incorporating Technology: In today's digital age, the facilitator may integrate technology into the instruction, using educational software, online resources, or digital literacy tools to enhance learning opportunities and accessibility for adult learners. **Collaborating with Support Services:** The facilitator collaborates with other professionals, such as social workers, counselors, or community organizations, to ensure that learners' additional needs beyond literacy are addressed. They may refer learners to appropriate support services when necessary. **Professional Development:** To enhance their skills and knowledge, the facilitator engages in ongoing professional development. They stay updated on research, best practices, and new instructional approaches in adult literacy education. **Maintaining Confidentiality:** Adult learners may share personal stories or experiences during the learning process. The facilitator maintains confidentiality, respecting learners' privacy and creating a safe space for open communication.

Advocacy and Outreach: The facilitator may engage in advocacy efforts to raise awareness about adult literacy issues, promote literacy programs, and collaborate with community stakeholders to address the needs of adult learners. These responsibilities and obligations reflect the facilitator's dedication to helping adult learners improve their literacy skills, empowering them to navigate daily life, pursue further education, and participate more fully in society. A facilitator assists adult learners in overcoming internal barriers or challenges so that they can achieve their objectives more quickly and effectively (Bens, 2012). A facilitator promotes safety and trust among learners and themselves while guiding the classwork without giving instructions or giving instructions themselves. Each learner's contributions are valued and appreciated by the facilitator (Wilkinson, 2018). Establishing agreements among learners to direct their interactions, learning, and teamwork is the facilitator's responsibility. Helping learners who do not have clear learning objectives set them, suggesting methods and tactics for achieving them, refocusing learners as needed, and completely involving all learners in the learning process (Metz, 2013).

The instruction required to become trained professionals in a range of trades is provided via vocational education. This style of education, commonly referred to as career and technical

education (CTE), combines academic and technical instruction to prepare learners for the workforce. Adult literacy facilitators have a part in all of these activities. Adult facilitation is also focused on action (Rush, 2013). In adult education programmes, there are pressing problems and difficulties that need to be addressed and resolved. The talents required to carry out the desired action must be the focus of some time. Facilitation remains a crucial clique of abilities for those who work with adults. As facilitators working with individuals or groups of learners to achieve their educational goals, you can use the tools listed below to plan and then guide the process of working together to achieve your goals. All students desire to set and choose their objectives, but doing so without an experienced facilitator who is interested in the way the students will approach and complete their goals is very challenging. Additionally, facilitation extends beyond simply providing training for adults; it supports student participation and fosters real leadership opportunities both among the students and within the classroom. The sincere and skilled tutors are in developing and maintaining an effective learning process, learners will feel earnest at ease expressing their thoughts and appealing in class. A great facilitator must be both imaginative and knowledgeable. It is a gift in that people can learn specific skills and develop their mastery of them through training. It is similar to art in that some people just naturally excel at it more than others. According to Wilkinson (2018).

Additionally, a facilitator must: understand the learning objectives of the students and incorporate them into the programme; keep the class focused on the objectives and progress; involve every student in the literacy lesson, including bringing out the quiet ones and containing the obnoxious ones; and ensure that decisions are made democratically. Wilkinson (2018) also made the case that an effective adult facilitator is concerned with both the methods and outcomes of teaching-learning activities, including how the students interact and participate. A facilitator must make sure the procedure is comprehensive, that everyone is actively attractive, and that the learners are having the best experience possible in addition to making sure the specified goals and results are achieved. Chair arrangements are another issue facilitators should think about the arrangement of seats around a table or in a circle promotes conversation, egalitarianism, and familiarity. People feel frightened and formal while seated in lecture-style seating and at speaker's podiums. Facilitators must stay away from them at all costs. One person should talk at a time, raise your hand if you

have something to say, and pay attention to what others are saying are some basic rules that facilitators should follow in literacy classes. No teasing or shaming respect for one another, and other people's ideas, and being punctual while returning after breaks if the lesson is lengthy.

Competency of Adult Literacy Facilitators

Adult literacy facilitators are expected to possess a range of competencies to effectively support and guide adult learners in their literacy journey. These competencies include Content Knowledge: Adult literacy facilitators should have a solid understanding of foundational literacy skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. They should be knowledgeable about literacy development stages, strategies for teaching phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and grammar.

Instructional Skills: Facilitators should be skilled in delivering effective instruction to adult learners. This includes planning and designing engaging lessons, using appropriate teaching methods and techniques, adapting instruction to meet individual needs, providing clear explanations, and employing various instructional resources and materials. **Assessment and Evaluation:** Competent facilitators are proficient in assessing learners' literacy levels and needs. They should be able to use formal and informal assessment tools to gather data on learners' progress, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and adjust instruction accordingly. They should also provide constructive feedback to learners to support their growth.

Individualized Instruction: Adult learners often have diverse backgrounds, experiences, and learning styles. Competent facilitators can tailor instruction to meet the individual needs of learners. They recognize and address learners' specific challenges, provide differentiated support, and offer personalized learning strategies to maximize learner engagement and progress.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills: Facilitators should possess strong communication and interpersonal skills to establish rapport with adult learners. They should actively listen, ask clarifying questions, and encourage open dialogue. Clear and effective communication helps facilitate understanding, resolve conflicts, and create a positive and inclusive learning environment. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Adult literacy facilitators work with learners from various cultural backgrounds. They need to be culturally sensitive and respectful, recognizing and valuing learners' diverse perspectives, experiences, and identities. They should be aware of cultural nuances that may impact learning and adapt their instructional approach accordingly. **Technology**

Integration: In today's digital age, facilitators should be comfortable using technology as a tool for instruction and learning. They should be able to integrate digital resources, online platforms, and digital literacy tools into their teaching practice, making instruction more engaging and accessible for adult learners.

Problem-Solving and Adaptability: Facilitators should be adaptable and flexible in their approach, able to address challenges that arise during instruction. They should be skilled in problem-solving, analyzing learner needs, and adjusting instructional strategies to meet changing circumstances or learner difficulties. **Reflective Practice and Professional Development:** Competent facilitators engage in reflective practice, continuously evaluating their instructional methods, seeking feedback, and identifying areas for improvement. They actively pursue professional development opportunities to stay updated on current research, trends, and best practices in adult literacy education. **Collaboration and Networking:** Facilitators often work in collaboration with other professionals, organizations, and community stakeholders involved in adult literacy. Competent facilitators are adept at building partnerships, networking, and collaborating to leverage resources, advocate for adult literacy, and provide comprehensive support to learners. These competencies contribute to the facilitator's ability to create a supportive and effective learning environment for adult learners, promoting their literacy development and empowering them to achieve their personal, educational, and professional goals by looking at how each adult literacy facilitator carries out their responsibilities, one can determine how competent they are. According to Brockett (1983), the main responsibility of an adult educator is to facilitate learning. He founded this opinion on the idea that adults prefer environments in which they are mostly in charge of controlling their learning. Brockett identifies attending, responding, and understanding as the three abilities necessary for successful facilitation. Attending entails creating a psychological and physical connection where the learner is provided undivided attention. To respond, one must demonstrate empathy, respect, sincerity, and concreteness for the learner and his or her needs. Understanding calls for the delicate application of confrontation, immediateness, and self-disclosure. When combined, these abilities offer ideas for how adult tutors might create a solid basis for meaningful learning.

Knowles is yet another supporter of the enabling strategy. He proposes a seven-step process model to transform adult educators into facilitators of learning rather than content transmitters. According to Knowles (1984), the model entails the facilitator creating an environment that is supportive of learning, developing a system for collaborative planning, diagnosing learning needs, formulating programme objectives to address these needs, designing a pattern of learning experiences, carrying out these experiences using appropriate methods and materials, assessing the learning outcomes, and re-diagnosing learning needs. The fundamental benefit of Knowles' model is that it offers a way to support learners in acquiring information and skills through collaborative inquiry. It also places a strong emphasis on offering the facilitator and the learners the tools and resources they need to collaborate and achieve their goals (Singapore Institute for Adult Learning, 2019).

Indices for Measuring Adult Facilitators' Performance

The performance of literacy facilitators can be based on five variables, including instructional competency displayed, motivational skills, communication skills, literacy facilitator's attitude toward learners, and fairness in grading. And, according to Cattell, A (2019) the facilitator is expected to lead learners' behaviors in a way that supports learning, delivers clear instructions, makes classes engaging, helps learners like learning, and never waste learners' time. Indices for measuring adult literacy facilitators' performance may also include Completion Rates: The percentage of learners who complete the literacy program under the facilitator's guidance is an essential indicator of their effectiveness. Learner Progress: Tracking the progress of individual learners over time can demonstrate the facilitator's ability to effectively impart literacy skills. Literacy Levels Improvement: Assessing the overall improvement in literacy levels among learners in the program can reflect the facilitator's impact on the group. Learner Satisfaction: Conducting surveys or obtaining feedback from learners can gauge their satisfaction with the facilitator's teaching methods and support. Programme Retention Rates: Measuring the number of learners who continue to participate in the programme throughout its duration indicates the facilitator's ability to engage and motivate learners. Literacy Test Results: Administering pre- and post-literacy tests to learners can quantify the knowledge gain achieved during the program, reflecting the facilitator's effectiveness.

The indices of measuring facilitators' performance may include Classroom Observation: Conducting periodic observations of the facilitator's teaching style, class management, and instructional techniques can provide valuable insights into their performance. Use of Teaching Materials: Evaluating the facilitator's use and adaptation of teaching materials, resources, and technology can indicate their ability to create engaging and effective learning environments. Innovativeness and Creativity: Assessing the facilitator's ability to introduce innovative and creative teaching methods can reflect their effectiveness in reaching learners. Learner Engagement and Participation: Measuring the level of learner engagement and active participation during classes can indicate the facilitator's ability to create an inclusive and interactive learning environment. And, Professional Development and Training: Tracking the facilitator's participation in relevant training and professional development opportunities can show their commitment to continuous improvement. It is crucial to use a combination of these indices to obtain a comprehensive assessment of adult literacy facilitators' performance, considering that their effectiveness may vary based on individual teaching styles and the specific needs of the learners they support

Strategies for Measuring Adult Facilitators' Performance

Measuring facilitators' effectiveness is necessary for their training and retraining to ensure their professional development and help them perform better. The facilitator's performance measurement surveys may be done through adult literacy classroom observation and evaluation tools by observing the facilitator's use of andragogical-based instructional strategies, classroom technology integration, management of the classroom, instruction, monitoring, and evaluation follow-up and reactions being observed by the center organizer. Learners can also evaluate the tutor by scoring their facilitator high, average, or low in the areas given above and can also provide information for the facilitator's performance measurement surveys. Moreover, the performance measurement surveys for the facilitators may also be conducted by gathering data from other facilitators at the center who would rate their peers as high, average, or low in the following peer report areas that the facilitator: favorably contributes to the culture of the literacy center, positively

handles criticism, listens to others' opinions, respects coworkers and learners, is communicative, uses data to guide instruction, and actively engages in problem-solving in the center.

It is also possible to collect data for the facilitators' performance measurement surveys from well-known local leaders who are interested in literacy-related activities and who will score the facilitator high, average, or low in the following areas: build a climate that is conducive to learning, establishes high academic standards, readies learners for the next academic level and encourages goal achievement, produces interesting learning opportunities, creates access to learning materials, respect for the local culture as well as consideration for others, learners, and community leaders. Furthermore, the facilitators' performance measurement surveys may be done through self-evaluation of the individual facilitators who will rate the individual self-high, average, or low in the following areas: positively contributes to the culture of the literacy center, positively responds to feedback, listens to others' views, responsive to communication, participates positively in problem-solving in the center, and creates, Make sure they have access to learning resources, respect the local culture, give clear instructions, make lessons engaging, encourage learners to enjoy learning, do not waste learners' time, guide learners' behavior in a way that promotes learning, and treat people with respect (CLCS tutors' performance measurement scale, 2016).

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