1993

A Study to Determine if Telecommunications Can Be Used as a Medium to Teach Basic Literacy Skills to Illiterate Adults in Virginia

Joan Hairston Jones
Old Dominion University

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A STUDY TO DETERMINE IF TELECOMMUNICATIONS CAN BE USED AS A MEDIUM TO TEACH BASIC LITERACY SKILLS TO ILLITERATE ADULTS IN VIRGINIA

A RESEARCH PROJECT

PRESENTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION

by

Joan Hairston Jones

August, 1993
This project was prepared by Joan Hairston Jones under the direction of Dr. John M. Ritz in Occupational and Technical Studies 636, Problems in Education. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science in Education degree.

APPROVED BY:

Dr. John M. Ritz, Advisor and Graduate Program Director

Date 8-7-93
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Also, thanks are extended to Dr. James Worth Pickering who helped to develop the questionnaires for this study.

Finally, sincere appreciation and thanks are extended to Mrs. Patricia Murchison, the adult basic education students, faculty and administrators at the Berkley-Campostella Early Childhood Center.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Reading, writing and arithmetic are basic skills required by all, but taken for granted by many. Comprehension of these skills differentiates between a person being literate or illiterate. Some associate these terms to the age old problem of the have's and have not's. People possessing basic literacy skills rarely consider the problems associated with being illiterate. Yet, the problem exists and we must take an active part in helping to correct the situation or suffer the consequences that illiteracy has on society. At some point we are all affected by illiteracy, whether it is through family members, accidents associated with the lack of basic skills or in the workforce where businesses must deal with illiteracy while attempting to make a profit.

Some of the problems of illiteracy can be corrected though the use of modern technology. While it is difficult for some adults to obtain formal or traditional methods of learning, telecommunications may be an alternative. Telecommunications courses allow a person control of his or her progress. Courses are offered to help adults acquire basic literacy skills through the use of self-paced, self-directed, convenient technology. Consequently, illiteracy may be solved with the assistance of telecommunications technology.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to determine if telecommunications can be used as a medium to teach basic literacy skills to illiterate adults in Virginia. The result of this study will attempt to allow adults to have available a convenient program to learn literacy skills without the embarrassment or pressure of conventional methods of learning.

RESEARCH GOALS

The following goals were selected to guide this study:

1. Determine which methods have been used and how successful they have been in the past to teach basic literacy skills to illiterate adults.

2. Determine the methods currently being used to supplement classroom instruction.

3. Determine how receptive adults are to self-paced, self-directed methods.

4. Determine the type of problems experienced using telecommunications to teach literacy skills.
BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

As America moves toward a global economy and strives to compete in an international workforce, society must address the need to equip workers to become competitive. Many businesses today have had to deal with the fact that employees can not be trained, retrained or retained for advancement, since they do not possess basic literacy skills. Basic literacy skills are crucial for training, retaining, promoting and competing in any economy. Businesses must address the need to help their employees compete in the business world and gain a profit. Some people argue that "businesses are transient, and education is a continuum and spending profits to 'educate' is not good business" (Piskurich, 1991, p. 74).

If we direct our attention to the need to educate employees without interfering with profits, then the need for self-paced, self-directed, convenient technology must be considered. Most workers are not able to attend regularly scheduled classes and must seek means to acquire skills needed for promotion or competition in the workforce. Most businesses must be in a position to deal with the issue of illiteracy along with morale and self-esteem.

A study by the Washington-based Southport Institute for Policy Analysis indicated that "problems with basic skills are a serious barrier to improving the productivity of these firms (small businesses) and the nation's economic competitiveness" (Chrisman, 1992, p. A4). One area to be considered is the use of telecommunications as a means to teach basic literacy skills. Since telecommunications is self-paced, self-directed and convenient, it should be
considered a feasible method to be used to alleviate some of the problems associated with acquiring basic literacy skills.

LIMITATIONS

The limitations that apply to this study included:

1. The information derived was from contact with adult education teachers and students in four classes in the Norfolk area.
2. The technology available may not address the necessary basic skills required by the students.
3. Students may be reluctant to reveal the skills actually needed.
4. The availability of adults with the desire and discipline to seek and receive assistance through nontraditional means of learning.

ASSUMPTIONS

The researcher made the following assumptions:

1. Adults are willing to reveal their need for basic literacy skills.
2. Students have access to telecommunications equipment and know how to properly use the equipment.
3. Telecommunication technology will be used by individuals at their convenience for self improvement.
4. Basic literacy skills can be a personal venture (self taught) with minimum support or reinforcement from a certified instructor.
5. Instructors are willing to support and promote telecommunications courses.
PROCEDURES

The researcher used surveys to conduct this study. Two survey questionnaires were distributed to students and faculty in four adult basic education classes at the Berkley-Campostella Early Childhood Center in Norfolk. The results of those surveys were received and tabulated. The results were determined by totaling the number of responses to each question (broken down by yes, no or failed to respond). Finally, the survey data was analyzed and the results and explanations were given.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms are defined to assist the reader in understanding this study:


2. Basic Literacy Skills - The basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills comparable to a fourth grade level equivalency

3. Illiterate - Having little or no education, unable to read, write or perform simple math skills (Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, 1991, p. 599).

4. Self-paced - Designed to permit the student to learn at his own rate of progress (Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, 1991, p. 1067).

5. Self-directed - A process in which learners take the initiative, with the support and collaboration of others, for increasing self- and social awareness; critically analyzing and reflecting on their situations; diagnosing their learning needs with specific reference to competencies they have helped identify; formulating socially and personally relevant learning goals; identifying human and material
resources for learning; choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies; and reflecting on and evaluating their learning (Hammond, Merril, Rob Collins, 1991, p. 13).


SUMMARY

The problem of this study was to determine if telecommunications can be used as a medium to teach basic literacy skills to illiterate adults in Virginia. With information provided by basic adult educators and students, it will be decided if literacy skills may be taught using modern technology with minimum reinforcement by instructors. It will be interesting to know how effective and productive an employee will be after acquiring literacy skills.

This project will help determine if adults requiring basic literacy skills are willing to use telecommunications to alleviate the problem and the effective use of nontraditional methods of learning. It will also give us some insight into the current and future use of technology in teaching literacy skills.
Chapter II is a review of literature to determine what information and research had been done in the past. Survey questionnaires and interviews were given to students and teachers. The methods and procedures related to the study are outlined in Chapter III. Findings are detailed in Chapter IV. Chapter V will include a summary, conclusions, and recommendations for telecommunications as a method to alleviate illiteracy.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Millions of adults in the United States can be considered functionally illiterate, which means that they have basic reading, writing and math skills below the fifth-grade level. This poses a problem in the workplace since global competition requires quick technological change and businesses must deal with the issue of basic skills education as a survival issue. Even the definition of basic skills is changing to include problem solving, working with others, communicating verbally and in writing and making decisions.

We have to recognize that employee basic skills as an issue is here with us to stay, and we are going to have to devote thinking and resources to it from now on. Media attention is not enough. Speech making by public figures is not enough. It's going to require some hard thinking, real resources and leadership (Jurmo, 1989, p. 20).

Companies are finding that they must train their workers at the work site and in the community. Technology is the best way for the mass approach to training, however, it can be expensive if done by each individual company. Videodisks, interactive video and computers are used in industry to teach workers to read by applying the technique to a job related skill -- something that's meaningful to the individual worker.

Some recognition must be given to literacy as a business need rather than a social issue. Companies may offer courses during the day if an employee needs additional work in oral communication, written communication, reading, mathematics, and computer skills. The employee may
take classes at night or after work hours, or there may be a local community­
based organization to help prepare new employees for a position with a
company.

Interrelating the spoken and written word with the aid of easy-to-use
word processing software appears to benefit both the reading and writing
development of illiterate adults. In developing these basic skills, adults
increase their self-esteem which helps to sustain them in their literacy
development process. Basic reading and writing skills may be insufficient for
the increasing demands made on individuals in this technological,
information-based society. For this reason, literacy should be considered a
continuum and the goal of adult literacy programs more of expanding literacy
and less those of combating illiteracy.

Faced with functional illiteracy, some firms provide basic skills
instruction in an attempt to alleviate the problem that schools have not solved.
Retraining and retaining employees is more economical and humane than
laying off or dismissal. Companies may also invest in "lifetime or lifelong
learning" since school is never complete. Church related schools may be the
best model or the best proven method of meeting current corporate needs for
training and retraining. Church related schools parallel public instruction
with religious teaching. Although parochial schools have higher cost they
also had committed parents and control over the content of their child's
education. With corporations they would have "committed in-house faculty
and 'participative management' ensuring good education for their employees"
It is evident that industry is taking the initiative to address the need for literacy programs in their training and development program. Even though it has been stated that businesses are profit making, not educational institutions, it is apparent that training and retaining employees is more economical than hiring new people. Employees with high self-esteem, confidence and commitment are real assets to any organization.

INSTRUCTION

In determining instruction -- there are external standards (standards set by others) or internal standards (individual decisions or hopes and ambitions concerning literacy). In adult learning, more emphasis is placed on self-paced, self-directed, distance and continuing education. Adults feel that they should have input into what they are learning since they see a need to put to actual use or practice what is being learned. "Too often, we meet only in a setting in which one is the expert and the other is "in need." "We often forget that teaching and learning are just a form of communicating" (Fingeret, 1990, p. 27).

A CASE STUDY

This case study describes how a functionally illiterate adult coped with the effects of not being able to read. The educational therapy program influenced his attitude toward reading, his self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, coping strategies, and actual progress in reading. The educational therapy model considers the psychological and educational variables affecting the individual. A personal relationship between the
therapist and the individual with the learning disability is needed. There are
four stages involved in the educational therapy relationship: initial contact,
integration of the treatment, focusing on the relationship between the
therapist and client and the termination of the relationship. Initially, trust is
crucial to the relationship between the therapist and the client. The therapist
provides constant support so that the client could feel successful and know he
is not alone in his efforts in learning to read. To provide a sense of
independence and relieve anxiety, books and words were taped so that he could
do his homework independently and could organize his time to prepare for the
next week of classes. Sessions were audiotaped and transcribed. As the client
gained confidence, he began to spend a significant amount of time doing
homework during the week (7 - 10 hours per week). The client made
significant progress in his ability to read and he believed that he could master
more advanced skills on his own.

Establishing a therapeutic relationship on a one-to-one basis
during the initial stages to allow for the development of trust,
the desire to please the "teacher" and ultimately oneself, appears
to mandate this type of approach for real, significant growth to be
achieved in a relatively brief time. Results of this case study
strongly suggests that programs working with functionally illiterate
adults need to account for the psychological ramifications of being
unable to read. Of equal importance was the development of greater
self-esteem and improved social relationships as the client gained
more confidence in himself and his abilities (Scully, Johnston, 1991,
p. 127).

As this study indicates, improving basic skills will help a person transfer skills
to their daily living, their motivation continues and they are more likely to
persist until their goals are realized.

Even though there are educationally disadvantaged adults that need
intensive one-on-one instruction in reading, writing and computation, they
are hard-to-reach. Hard-to-reach adults normally prefer a community-based
learning site with community leadership and curricula that relates to the ongoing struggles of the community. Most adults desired a community based program with a community leader rather than a professional teacher. Adults requiring basic skills were most interested in computer-assisted instruction which includes drill-and-practice, tutoring, and programs that reinforce skills and/or provide problem-solving challenges and motivation for the learner. Computers can provide individual instruction, remedial instruction, instructional program management, individual-rate learning, visual and audio aids through peripheral devices directly connected to the computer, and an extensive information retrieval base. It appears that a support system including individualized instruction, keeping students involved in learning, offers privacy because it spares students from having to reveal to others how much they do not know and contributes to positive attitudes. The microcomputer can be used for increasing reading speed, assisting in developing visual discrimination skills, or learning spelling words.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM - NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

This proposal is a plan to eliminate illiteracy using educational technology, volunteer tutoring and neighborhood centers to provide literacy education (Johnston, 1985, p. 4). Background information indicated that "Control Data's basic skills program (educational computer program) can raise a child one grade level in reading in twenty hours and one grade level in math in 25 hours." Fifty hours of tutoring are needed to raise an adult one grade level" (Johnston, 1985, p. 5). In Adult Basic Education classes at NCCC, students worked 150 hours to move up one grade level. The Adult Basic Literacy Education had equipment such as microcomputers, videotape players, tape
recorders, ten slide projectors with tape players, telephone lines and carrels. Recruitment was through radio and television public service announcements, flyers with food stamp mailings and one month's water bills. Ministers and community leaders were encouraged to advise illiterate persons and encourage them to visit the center. Students with skills at the fourth grade level and below are given individual tutoring and they learn from computer software packages. Computer lessons dealt with multiplication, spelling, vowels, consonants, alphabetization, word roots, and affixes, antonyms and synonyms, etc. This approach to learning offered students who preferred a more independent, technological approach an alternative delivery of instruction.

The results of this proposal, based on standardized tests, had bettered Control Data's data on the rate of student progress. Students progressed at different rates. This could become a model for the nation in speeding educational progress of adult illiterates; removing the burdens they place on society and enhancing their chances for success.

TECHNOLOGY

Newer communications technology, which includes various forms of video, audio, telecommunications, and computer technologies is transforming education. Communications technology makes the field of adult education challenging, responsive and will help direct changes.

The use of technology to help adults with learning disabilities will bring about a change in the way adults view themselves. Adults need to develop self-esteem skills which use experience and reflection to build self-
awareness (awareness of his or her own skills and abilities), impact on others, and emotional capacity and personal needs; build a positive and realistic self-image; and build self-esteem. "If dislike for school is a major reason for nonparticipation, then the problems of illiteracy and adult nonparticipation are truly lifelong learning issues that must be dealt with systematically from the earliest grades in school, to the point of threatened dropout, and into adulthood" (Beder and Quigley, 1990, p. 20).

It is interesting to note that Huey Long (1983, p. 78) stated that "technology is not an educational medium. It is the science of the application of knowledge to practical purposes. Educational technology is the science of the application of knowledge for the purpose of improving the educational process." The use of technology increases programs for self directed learning skills and this strategy places emphasis of the needs of the learner, the need for homebased resources and the application of innovative techniques. Long (1983, p. 181) also discuss the "electronic cottage" (the availability of powerful electronic media for education and entertainment). Through the use of computers, television, radio, videotape and videodisk equipment, audio recordings, interactive capability picture phones, "electronic blackboards," and the large variety of inexpensive print media, a person can change a person's home into a learning resource center.
SUMMARY

As the literature shows, a trend or move toward communication technology is upon us. Adult education will become closely tied to self-directed, lifelong, distance and continuing education. Technology will allow students to work independently, at their own pace, and in an environment convenient and conducive to their own learning habits or styles. Technology has capabilities that can be used for expanding learning and for achieving many of the generally accepted goals of adult education (Imel, 1990; Gerver, 1987; Tobin, 1987). Adult learners can benefit by learning to use technology and understanding the strengths, benefits and limitation of the process. However, past case studies have proven that once adults begin a program and develop confidence, self-esteem, discipline and determination to succeed, they will continue in their efforts to achieve goals set for themselves.

The review of literature indicates that the problem of adult illiteracy is being addressed by individuals and companies, and successful programs are in place to help alleviate the problem. Current technology and telecommunications is available and can be used by adults at their convenience. Chapter III will deal with the surveys and results in dealing with the research goals of this study.
CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A look at the need for adult basic literacy skills in the workplace and in society causes us to investigate methods to be used that will lend themselves to the self-directed, self-paced and convenience of adults. Since the advancement of technology and telecommunications for distance education is an option, research is being done to determine if adults are willing to pursue this route. Chapter III of this research paper will discuss the population surveyed, the instrument used, the procedures for implementing the instrument, procedures for treating the data and the statistical analysis used. This chapter will detail what actually took place in conducting this research.

POPULATION

The population targeted for this study is adult basic education teachers and students in four classes in the Norfolk area. Teachers and students enrolled in the adult basic education classes at the Berkley-Campostella Early Childhood Center were used as a sample of the population. Members of the sample population range in age from 18 to 40+ and may have children enrolled in the early childhood center classes. Four classes, averaging nine students having various objectives and goals for enrolling in the classes, will be represented in the research.
INSTRUMENT

The instruments used in gathering the research data for this study were a combination of surveys and interviews. The survey and interview questions were designed to examine why the student enrolled in the class, the methods of instruction and reinforcement used by instructors, how the students handled homework assignments and if audiovisual or telecommunications are ever used. The instrument was designed with the assistance of Dr. John Ritz, Graduate Program Director for Occupational and Technical Studies at Old Dominion University and Dr. James W. Pickering, Director of Student Services Research, Old Dominion University Planning and Institutional Research Office. The sample surveys are found in Appendix A and B. The adult student's questionnaire requested information regarding their class enrollment, the use of television and computers in the classroom, the preference for an instructor in the classroom, the use of video and audio taped instruction, the opportunity to take a course in an environment different from the traditional classroom setting and their age range and gender. The questionnaire for the instructor included questions relating to the use of videotapes to enhance instruction, their recommendation for the student to take a course broadcast via television, the methods used to instruct students, the methods used to supplement classroom instruction, the success rate of the students in taking the GED test and if they would be willing to be the facilitator for a telecommunications class.
CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

The instructors were interviewed in person and/or given a survey form to complete regarding their teaching methods and the success of their students. The interviews included an explanation of the reason for the research project. A separate survey form was given to the students (by the instructor) requesting information regarding their use, enjoyment and preference for telecommunication as a method of learning adult basic literacy skills. The letter accompanying the surveys to the instructor and students is included in Appendix C. The completed surveys were picked up from the teachers. The surveys were conducted during the months of June and July, 1993.

PROCEDURE FOR TREATING DATA

The surveys were grouped according to the willingness to take a television or videotaped class and the use of telecommunications to enhance the learning process. These surveys were then broken down into the use of telecommunications by the teacher for reinforcement and by the student for additional help. The data was reported by the number of respondents by each group.
SUMMARY

Two instruments were used for the research, the surveys and interviews for the teacher and the surveys completed by the students. Using the results of the surveys, it may be determined if telecommunications can or will be used by adult students to learn basic literacy skills.

With the determination of the use of telecommunications in the past and present by instructors, it may be determined if students will use this method for their own personal use at their convenience. In Chapter IV of this study, the test scores and research findings will be presented. Chapter V will give a summary and conclusion of the data collected and recommendations for possible future use.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the two survey questionnaires administered to the teachers and students in four adult basic education classes in the Norfolk school system during June and July, 1993. The surveys were completed and returned by thirty-six students and four teachers. The findings were analyzed on the basis of five main points. They are: 1) would you take or recommend a televised class, 2) are you currently using television in the classroom, 3) are you currently using and enjoy using the computer in the classroom as a part of instruction, 4) would you take a class or be the facilitator of a class at the convenience of the student rather than the conventional classroom setting, and 5) the current methods of instruction or supplement of instruction in the classroom.

STUDENTS

The student's response to each question on the questionnaire has been included in a table along with a narrative explanation.

Question 1, Chart 1: Is this your first adult education class? Twenty-six students indicated yes and ten students had attended an adult education class prior to the one they are enrolled in.
Table 1
Responses to Adult Student Questions: 1 - 4

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<tr>
<td>Question 4</td>
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Question 2, Chart 2: Did you choose to enroll in this class? Thirty-four students made the decision to enroll and two did not.

Question 3, Chart 3: Did you enroll in this class as a requirement for participation in other programs? Twenty-six students are enrolled in the current adult basic education class enabling them to participate in other programs. Ten students enrolled without a particular require.

Question 4, Chart 4: Do you have children? Twenty-two students have children and fourteen do not.

Question 5, Chart 5: Have you enjoyed the class? Of the thirty-five responses, eleven students found the class very enjoyable, twenty-five found the class enjoyable and one person did not respond.

Question 6, Chart 6: Do you enjoy meeting in a classroom? Ten students find that meeting in a classroom is very enjoyable and twenty-five find it enjoyable.

Question 7, Chart 7: Would you prefer to study/learn at your convenience? Thirty-three of the respondents indicated a preference for learning or studying at their convenience, one respondent did not and two respondents did not respond to the question.

Question 8, Chart 8: How many hours a week do you spend reviewing class work or doing homework assignments? Twenty-one students spend one-
Table 2
Responses to Adult Student Questions: 5 - 8

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three hours per week, thirteen students take four-six hours a week and two students spend seven-ten hours a week for review or doing homework.

Question 9, Chart 9: Do you review class work or complete homework assignments with other members of your class? Twenty-four students review assignments with others and twelve do not.

Question 10, Chart 10: Do you often need assistance with work when your instructor is not available? Of the thirty-six students responding to this question, twenty-two needed assistance and fourteen did not.

Question 11, Chart 11: Are you currently using a television as part of your classroom instruction? Twenty-eight students are currently using a television in the classroom and seven are not.

Question 12, Chart 12: Do you prefer to learn using the television? Twenty-five students have a preference for television and eleven did not.

Question 13, Chart 13: Do you use a computer in your classroom? The majority of the respondents or thirty students use a computer in the classroom and six do not.

Question 14, Chart 14: Do you enjoy using the computer in your classroom? Of the thirty-six responses, twenty-four found computers enjoyable, eight found them very enjoyable and three did not respond to the question.
Table 3
Responses to Adult Student Questions: 9 - 12

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<td>0</td>
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<td>5</td>
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Bar graphs for each question showing the number of responses for "Yes", "No", and "No Response".
Table 4
Responses to Adult Student Questions: 12 - 16

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<tr>
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</thead>
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<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 15, Chart 15: Do you prefer to have your instructor present in the classroom? The majority of the students or thirty-five preferred that an instructor be present during the class period and one did not.

Question 16, Chart 16: Do you have access to a VCR? All thirty-six students indicated that they have access to a VCR.

Question 17, Chart 17: Do you use a VCR? Thirty-three students use a VCR and three do not.

Question 18, Chart 18: Would you be willing to use videotaped, audiotaped, or computer lessons to learn reading? Twenty-six students are willing to use video and audio tapes or the computer to learn to read and ten students are not willing.

Question 19, Chart 19: Would you be willing to use videotaped, audiotaped, or computer lessons to learn to write? Twenty-four students are willing to learn to write using videotapes, audiotapes and computer lessons and twelve students are not.

Question 20, Chart 20: Would you prefer to use videotaped, audiotaped, or computer lessons to learn math? Twenty-four students responded yes and twelve students responded no.

Question 21, Chart 21: If you had the opportunity to take a course at your convenience, in your home, would you do so? Thirty-three students would take a course in their home and three students are not willing.
Table 5
Responses to Adult Student Questions: 17 - 20

Question 17

Question 18

Question 19

Question 20
Question 22, Chart 22: If you had the opportunity to take courses in mobile units in your community, would you do so? Yes was the response from thirty-two students and no was the reply for four students.

Question 23, Chart 23: If you had the opportunity to take courses in a learning laboratory or center open at your convenience, would you do so? Thirty-four students would take a course in a learning laboratory or center with operating hours convenient for them and two student would not.

Question 24, Chart 24: Would you be willing to take a course via television or videotape at a convenient place like a community center? Twenty-nine students are willing to take a televised or videotaped course at a community center and seven students are not.

Question 25, Chart 25: Would you like to take courses via television? Of the thirty-six students responding to this question, twenty-five students would take a televised course and eleven students are not willing to do so.

Question 26, Chart 26: Would you prefer to take a course at your convenience and meet with other members of the class once a week? Thirty-three students would prefer to take a course at their convenience and meet with members of the class once a week and six are not.

Question 27, Chart 27: Would you invite a classmate to share a videotaped lesson? Thirty students are willing to share a videotaped lesson with a classmate and six student would not.
Table 6
Responses to Adult Student Questions: 21 - 24
Table 7
Responses to Adult Student Questions: 25 - 28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 25</th>
<th>Question 26</th>
<th>Question 27</th>
<th>Question 28</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yes or No choices for questions 25 to 28.
Question 28, Chart 28: Do you know of others that you would encourage to take a lesson at their convenience via television or videotape? The majority or thirty-three students replied that they would encourage others to take videotaped or televised lessons and three students would not.

Question 29, Chart 29: What is your age range? One student ranged in age 18-20, the majority or twelve students are 21-23 years old, eight students are 24-26, five students range in age 27-30, seven students are in the range of 31-33 years old, one student range in age 37-39 and two students are forty plus years old.

Question 30, Chart 30: Gender? The majority of the respondents or twenty were female, fourteen males and two did not respond to the question.

INSTRUCTORS

The instructors were given a survey questionnaire requesting information on their methods of instruction and their recommendations for televised or telecommunications as a part of instruction.

Question 1, Chart 31: How many years have you been an adult basic education instructor? One person had been an adult basic education instructor for 1-2 years, another for 3-4 years, another person for 7-8 years and one person did not respond to the question.
Table 8
Responses to Adult Student Questions: 29 - 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 29</th>
<th>18-20 years</th>
<th>21-23 years</th>
<th>24-26 years</th>
<th>27-30 years</th>
<th>31-33 years</th>
<th>37-39 years</th>
<th>40+ years</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The bar charts illustrate the distribution of responses by age groups and gender for questions 29 and 30.
Table 9
Responses to Instructor Questions: 1 - 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Question 3</th>
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<td>1.6</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>1.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>3-4 years</td>
<td>7-8 years</td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Days</td>
<td>Four Days</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Question 2, Chart 32: On the average, how many days per week do you assign homework for your students? Two instructors assign homework three days per week and two assigned homework four days per week.

Question 3, Chart 32: Do you use videotapes to enhance instruction in the classroom? All four of the instructors use videotapes to enhance classroom instruction.

Question 4, Chart 33: How often do you use videotapes to enhance instruction in the classroom? Two instructors use videotapes in the classroom once a week and two did not respond to the question.

Question 5, Chart 34: Do you use videotapes to review lessons? Only one person used videotapes to review lessons, two did not and one did not respond to the question.

There were no responses the question 6 (How often do you use videotapes to review lessons?)

Question 7, Chart 35: How effective is the use of videotapes in instruction? Three teachers found that videotapes are effective to use in instruction and one found them very effective.

Question 8, Chart 36: Would you recommend a class or course broadcast via television or on videotape (telecommunications) for your students? All four of the instructors responded yes to the question. They explained their answer by indicating that videotapes help in teaching, videotape is another
Table 10
Responses to Instructor Questions: 5 - 9

Question 5

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<th>Response</th>
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<td>No</td>
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Question 7

<table>
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<th>Frequency</th>
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Question 8

<table>
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<th>Success</th>
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<td>Yes</td>
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Question 9

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Outcome</th>
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<tr>
<td>Unsuccessful</td>
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media for teaching and videotapes appear to enhance the interest and attention span of students.

Question 9, Chart 37: How successful do you feel that your students would be in a self-paced, self-directed basic literacy televised course? Each of the respondents felt that their students would be successful taking this type of course. One respondent further explained that the goal of adult education is for the student to be self-directed. A second instructor indicated that students need to have work explained to them.

Question 10, Chart 38: How do you instruct your basic education classes? All four of the instructors use individual tutorial, group work, videotapes and drill and practice. Three instructors also use discussion and games. Two instructors use lecture and simulation to teach the class. Other methods of instruction included problem solving and questions and answers.

Question 10, Chart 39: The primary method used by the instructor. Two instructors use independent learning, one used oral directions and another used questions and answers.

Question 11, Chart 40: How do you supplement classroom instruction? All four of the instructors use homework, two use videotapes, two use reading, two use group activities and one uses quizzes to supplement instruction.

Question 12, Chart 41: How many of your students (based on class size) take the test for a GED? Two instructors indicated that 75-100% of the class take
Table 11
Responses to Instructor Questions: 10 - 12

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<td>Videotapes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q &amp; A</td>
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<td>Videotapes</td>
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</table>
the GED, one instructor replied that 26-50% took the test and one person did not respond.

Question 13, Chart 42: How many of your students are successful in passing the test for the GED? One instructor responded 0-25%, two responded 51-75% and one person did not respond.

Question 14, Chart 43: How many of your students pursue further training or education after obtaining the GED? Two people responded 51-75%, one person indicated 0-25% and one person did not respond.

Question 15, Chart 44: Do you think your students would take advantage of the opportunity to take courses at their convenience (in the home, at a community site or mobile unit)? All four instructors felt their students would take advantage of the opportunity if available.

Question 16, Chart 45: Would you agree to be the facilitator for a self-paced, self-directed course where the students would receive instruction via videotape, or as a televised course and meet periodically (once a week, twice a month or once a month) for review, testing and evaluation? Three persons would not facilitate a telecommunications course and one person replied yes. One instructor explained a no answer by commenting that students need interaction with classmates and the teacher. The instructor who responded yes explained that at the present time, adult students possess skills which allows them to work in the computer lab on an individual basis therefore I see no problem with using a videotape for instruction where the student would be
Table 12
Responses to Instructor Questions: 13 - 16

Question 13

Question 14

Question 15

Question 16
given an opportunity to transfer skills already acquired. Two instructors did not explain their response.

SUMMARY

This chapter reported the results of two surveys. One questionnaire was an attempt to determine if students in adult basic education classes would be willing to take courses via television or audiovisual tapes. The second questionnaire was used to determine what methods instructors are currently using in the classroom and if they would recommend or agree to facilitate the use of telecommunications as a means of instruction. The information will be analyzed in the next chapter. Chapter V will consist of a summary, recommendations and conclusions based on the results of the surveys.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sought to determine if telecommunication can be used as a medium to teach basic literacy skills to illiterate adults in Virginia. This chapter will report the summary of the results of the survey questionnaires answered by thirty-six students and four instructors of adult basic education classes at the Berkley Campostella Early Childhood Development Center in June and July, 1993. The results may be used to develop a curriculum for telecommunications classes for adult basic education students.

SUMMARY

Chapter I of this project is a proposal for a study to determine if adults are willing to use telecommunications as a means to acquire basic literacy skills. Telecommunications courses will allow a person control of his or her progress in acquiring basic literacy skills through the use of self-paced, self-directed, convenient technology. The goals are to determine teaching methods used in the past, teaching methods currently being used, determine how receptive adults are to current teaching methods and the problems experienced using telecommunications to teach literacy skills. There were limitations and assumptions made regarding this research study. Research has been conducted and has concluded that adults need basic literacy skills to gain and maintain jobs as well as compete with others. Businesses are now finding that they need to address the need for basic literacy skills in the workplace.
Illiterate adults acquiring basic literacy skills will benefit the individual, business and industry, society and the world.

Chapter II is a review of the literature to determine available information, a case study and the research done in the past. The case study describes how a functionally illiterate adult coped with the effects of not being able to read. The Adult Basic Education Program at North Carolina Community College also outlined the procedures taken to use technology and mobile units to reach illiterate adults. The success of this program continues as more and more adults participate. The report of the ABE program at North Carolina Community College indicated that adults using technology in convenient locations succeeded in acquiring basic education skills at a faster pace than programs used in the past. As the adults increased their knowledge they gained self-esteem and continued to learn and develop their skills.

The methods and procedures used to conduct this study are outlined in Chapter III. This chapter outlines the population surveyed, the instrument used, the procedures for implementing the questionnaires, the procedure for treating the data and the statistical analysis used. Two questionnaires were used to gather information from Adult Basic Education students and instructors. This information included the use of television and computers in the classroom and the effectiveness of their use in instruction. Questions were asked regarding the willingness of students to take televised or videotaped courses to learn to read, write, or learn basic math. Instructors were asked to respond to questions regarding the success of students in Adult Basic Education classes and if they are willing to recommend televised or videotaped courses for their students.
The findings or results of the two survey questionnaires are detailed in Chapter IV. The responses to the student questionnaire are included in this chapter along with graphs and charts detailing the response. The instructors also responded to a survey that is detailed in a narrative supported by charts and graphs. It was determined that most students currently use and enjoy the use of telecommunications to supplement instruction and would take a course using this method. Instructors use technology to supplement instruction but are not willing to facilitate a telecommunications course.

Chapter V will include the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CONCLUSIONS

In response to the research goals the following questions were answered:

1. Determine which methods of instruction have been used and how successful they have been in the past to teach basic literacy skills to illiterate adults.

Instructors are currently using lecture, discussion, individual tutorial, group work, videotapes, drill and practice, games and simulation to instruct adult basic education classes. The primary methods used are independent learning, oral direction and questions and answers.

2. Determine the methods currently being used to supplement classroom instruction.
Homework, videotapes, reading, group activities and quizzes are methods used to supplement classroom instruction. Students are using videotapes, televisions and computers in the classroom and they indicate they are enjoying the use.

3. Determine how receptive adults are self-paced, self-directed methods of instruction.

According to the questions answered, students are willing to use videotaped, audiotaped, or computer lessons to learn reading, writing and math. They are willing to take advantage of the opportunity to take courses at their convenience in the home, mobile units in the community, learning laboratories and community centers. These students would also encourage others to take a televised lesson via television or videotape at their convenience.

4. Determine the type of problems experienced using telecommunications to teach literacy skills.

The only problems that could be determined from the survey included the student's preference for an instructor's presence in the classroom and the need for assistance. The other problem is the unwillingness of instructors to be a facilitator for a telecommunications course.

This study indicated that students enrolled in adult basic education classes prefer to have an instructor present in the classroom and enjoy the use of television and computers to enhance instruction. The majority of the students also indicated that they are willing to use videotaped, audiotaped or computer lessons to learn reading, writing and math. If the opportunity presented itself, students would take courses at their convenience, in the
home, in mobile units in the community, in learning laboratories or community centers. These students surveyed would take a course via television and encourage others to take a lesson at their convenience via television or videotape.

The majority of the instructors responding to the questionnaires would recommend a class or course broadcast via television or videotape for their students and feel that the students would be successful in completing such a course. The instructors currently use video and audio tapes as a part of their instruction or to supplement instruction. Seventy-five percent or three of the four instructors responding would not agree to be the facilitator for a telecommunications course.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and conclusion of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. A pilot program be instituted to determine if students would actually take advantage of the opportunity to take a convenient self-paced, self-directed telecommunications class to acquire basic literacy skills.

2. That instructors be given the opportunity to learn more about the telecommunications to dispel what appears to be fear of the change from the traditional classroom setting to another type of learning environment.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Questionnaire - Adult Basic Education Student
APPENDIX B - Questionnaire - Instructor Adult Basic Education Class
APPENDIX C - Letter to Students and Instructors
APPENDIX D - Results of Student Questionnaires
APPENDIX E - Results of Instructor Questionnaires
APPENDIX A

Questionnaire - Adult Basic Education Student
QUESTIONNAIRE - ADULT STUDENTS

The purpose of this survey is to determine if telecommunications can be used as a medium to teach basic literacy skills to adults in Virginia.

Directions: Please circle one answer for each question.

1. Is this your first adult education class? Yes No
2. Did you choose to enroll in this class? Yes No
3. Did you enroll in this class as a requirement for participation in other programs? Yes No
4. Do you have children? Yes No
5. Have you enjoyed the class? very enjoyable enjoyable not enjoyable
6. Do you enjoy meeting in a classroom? very enjoyable enjoyable not enjoyable
7. Would you prefer to study/learn at your convenience? Yes No
8. How many hours a week do you spend reviewing class work or doing homework assignments? less than one hour 1-3 4-6 7-10
9. Do you review class work or complete homework assignments with other members of your class? Yes No
10. Do you often need assistance with work when your instructor is not available? Yes No
11. Are you currently using a television as part of your classroom instruction? Yes No
12. Do you prefer to learn using the television? Yes No
13. Do you use a computer in your classroom? Yes No
14. Do you enjoy using the computer as a part of class instruction? very enjoyable enjoyable not enjoyable
15. Do you prefer to have your instructor present in the classroom? Yes No
16. Do you have access to a VCR? Yes No

TURN OVER - COMPLETE QUESTIONS ON BACK OF THIS PAGE. THANK YOU.
APPENDIX B

Questionnaire - Instructor, Adult Basic Education Class
QUESTIONNAIRE
INSTRUCTOR - ADULT EDUCATION CLASS

The purpose of this survey is to determine if telecommunications can be used as a medium to teach basic literacy skills to illiterate adults in Virginia.

Directions: Please circle one answer for each question.

1. How many years have you been an adult basic education instructor?
   1-2  3-4  5-6  7-8  9-10  more

2. On the average, how many days per week do you assign homework for your students?
   one  two  three  four  five

3. Do you use videotapes to enhance instruction in the classroom?
   Yes  No

4. If so, how often? once a week twice a week three days a week

5. Do you use videotapes to review lessons?
   Yes  No

6. If so, how often? once a week twice a week three days a week

7. How effective is the use of videotapes in instruction?
   very effective  effective  ineffective  very ineffective

8. Would you recommend a class or course broadcast via television or on videotape (telecommunications) for your students?
   Yes  No
   Please explain your previous answer?

9. How successful do you feel that your students would be in a self-paced, self-directed basic literacy televised course?
   very successful  successful  unsuccessful  very unsuccessful
   Please explain your previous answer.

TURN OVER - COMPLETE QUESTIONS ON BACK OF THIS PAGE. THANK YOU.
APPENDIX C

Letter to Students and Instructors
June 14, 1993

Berkley Campostella Early Childhood Center
1530 Cypress Street
Norfolk, VA 23529

Dear Instructor/Student:

I am a graduate student in the Department of Vocational and Technical Studies at Old Dominion University. As a part of the requirements for my degree, I am asking instructors and students in adult basic education classes to answer survey questions relating to literacy skills. The purpose of this study is to determine if telecommunication can be used as a medium to teach basic literacy skills to adults in Virginia. The information obtained from this survey may be used to assist instructors and help in developing a curriculum for self-paced, self-directed classes.

Enclosed is my survey for collecting this data. I trust that you will assist me in gathering this important information.

It should take you approximately 15 - 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Please answer all of the questions as accurately and honestly as possible. Only the final results will be used in this project and your responses will be kept confidential.

Thank you for your time and assistance in helping me in this effort.

Sincerely,

Joan Hairston Jones

Enclosure
APPENDIX D

Results of Student Questionnaires
### RESULTS OF STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is this your first adult education class?</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did you choose to enroll in this class?</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you enroll in this class as a requirement for participation in other programs?</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Do you have children?</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Have you enjoyed the class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>very enjoyable</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>enjoyable</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Do you enjoy meeting in a classroom?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>very enjoyable</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>enjoyable</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Would you prefer to study/learn at your convenience?</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. How many hours a week do you spend reviewing class work or doing homework assignments?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-3 hours</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>4-6 hours</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
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<td>7-10 hours</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<td>9. Do you review class work or complete homework assignments with other members of your class?</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Do you often need assistance with work when your instructor is not available?</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Are you currently using a television as part of your classroom instruction?</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Do you prefer to learn using the television?</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Do you use a computer in your classroom?</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Do you enjoy using the computer in your classroom?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>very enjoyable</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>enjoyable</td>
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<td>15. Do you prefer to have your instructor present in the classroom?</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>16. Do you have access to a VCR?</td>
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<td>Questions</td>
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<td>17. Do you use a VCR?</td>
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<td>18. Would you be willing to use videotaped, audiotaped, or computer lessons to learn reading?</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>19. Would you be willing to use videotaped, audiotaped, or computer lessons to learn to write?</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Would you prefer to use videotaped, audiotaped, or computer lessons to learn math?</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21. If you had the opportunity to take courses at your convenience, in your home, would you do so?</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. If you had the opportunity to take courses in mobile units in your community, would you do so?</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>23. If you had the opportunity to take courses in a learning laboratory or center open at your convenience, would you do so?</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Would you be willing to take a course via television or videotape at a convenient place like a community center?</td>
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<td>25. Would you like to take courses via television?</td>
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<td>26. Would you prefer to take a course at your convenience and meet with other members of the class once a week?</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>27. Would you invite a classmate to share a videotaped lesson?</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>28. Do you know of others that you would encourage to take a lesson at their convenience via television or videotape?</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>29. What is your age range?</td>
<td>18-20</td>
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<td>21-23</td>
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APPENDIX E

Results of Instructor Questionnaires
RESULTS OF INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How many years have you been an adult basic education instructor?
   1-2 years (1)  3-4 years (1)
   7-8 years (1)  no answer (1)

2. On the average, how many days per week do you assign homework for your students?
   three days (2)  four days (2)

3. Do you use videotapes to enhance instruction in the classroom?
   yes (4)

4. If so, how often? once a week (2)  no answer (2)

5. Do you use videotapes to review lessons?
   yes (1)  no (2)

6. If so, how often? no responses

7. How effective is the use of videotapes in instruction?
   effective (3)  very effective (1)

8. Would you recommend a class or course broadcast via television or on videotape (telecommunications) for your students?
   yes (4)

   Explain: Videotapes help in teaching
   Videotape is another media for teaching
   Videotape appear to enhance the interest and attention span of students.

9. How successful do you feel that your students would be in a self-paced, self-directed basic literacy televised course?
   successful (4)

   Explain previous answer. The goal of adult education is for the student to be self-directed.
   Students need to have work explained to them.

10. How do you instruct your basic education classes?

    Lecture (2)  Discussion (3)  Individual Tutorial (4)
    Group Work (4)  Videotapes (4)  Drill and Practice (4)
    Games (3)  Simulation (2)
    Others: problem solving and questions and answers

    Primary method: Independent learning (2)  Oral Directions (1)
    Questions and Answers (1)
RESULTS OF INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONNAIRE (cont.)

11. How do you supplement classroom instruction:
   
   Homework (4)  Videotapes (2)
   Reading (2)  Group Activities (2)
   Quizzes (1)

   Primary Method:

12. How many of your students (based on class size) take the test for a GED?
   
   75%-100% (2)  26%-50% (1)  No response (1)

13. How many of your students are successful in passing the test for the GED?
   
   0-25% (1)  51-75% (2)  No response (1)

14. How many of your students pursue further training or education after obtaining the GED?
   
   0-25% (1)  51-75% (2)  No response (1)

15. Do you think your students would take advantage of the opportunity to take courses at their convenience (in the home, at a community site or mobile unit)?
   
   Yes (4)

16. Would you agree to be the facilitator for a self-paced, self-directed course where the students would receive instruction via videotape or as a televised course and meet periodically (once a week, twice a month or once a month) for review, testing and evaluation?
   
   Yes (1)  No (3)

   Explain: (Yes response) At the present the adult student possess skills which allows him/her to work in the computer lab on an individual basis therefore I see no problem with using a videotape for instruction where the student would be given an opportunity to transfer skills already acquired.

   (No response) Students need interaction with classmates and teacher.

   Did not write an explanation. (2)