

Teacher Characteristics and Types of Text Used in Adult Literacy Classrooms

What was the goal of the study?

The researchers wanted to determine whether there is an association between teacher characteristics and the types of texts they use in adult literacy classrooms.

Why was the study conducted?

Research has not explored the extent to which teacher characteristics are associated with types of texts used in adult literacy classrooms.

What did the study find?

The researchers found that teachers' gender, program location, and geographic location were not related to text selection. However, many other teacher characteristics were significantly associated with text selection. The type of adult literacy program in which the teachers worked was significantly associated with the use of certain text types. For example, teachers in public schools were more likely to use digital texts, whereas teachers in correctional institutions were more likely to use documents. Teachers' payroll classification was significantly associated with the use of short stories. Full-time teachers were also more likely to use short stories. Teachers with higher levels of training were more likely to use computer-based or online digital texts, biographies, documents, informational material, and poetry or song lyrics. Teachers who taught multiple levels of reading classes (as compared to just one) were more likely to use computer-based or online digital texts, newspapers, short stories, biographies, poetry or song lyrics, information material, magazines or periodicals, and materials that students bring to class.

Who participated in the study?

The participants in this study were 556 adult literacy teachers.

How was the study conducted?

An online survey was administered to adult literacy teachers across the United States. This 35-item survey asked questions about instructors' demographic background, training, preferred instructional texts, and instructional practices.

How can people use the results?

The results of this study demonstrate to practitioners the importance of specific teacher characteristics, such as training and experience, on text selection in adult literacy classrooms.