Expanding the Research Base on Using Technology in Adult Basic Skills Programs: Current Efforts and Future Directions

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EBSN Annual Conference 2022 | Vienna, Austria

June 9, 2022

BOLD THINKERS DRIVING REAL-WORLD IMPACT

Parallel Session 1: Expanding the Research Base on Using Technology in Adult Basic Skills Programs: Current Efforts and Future Directions

PRESENTATION on:

- Framework for research on using technology tools to teach and support adult basic skills learners
- Current research
- New directions to consider in expanding the research base

Judith Alamprese
Abt Associates

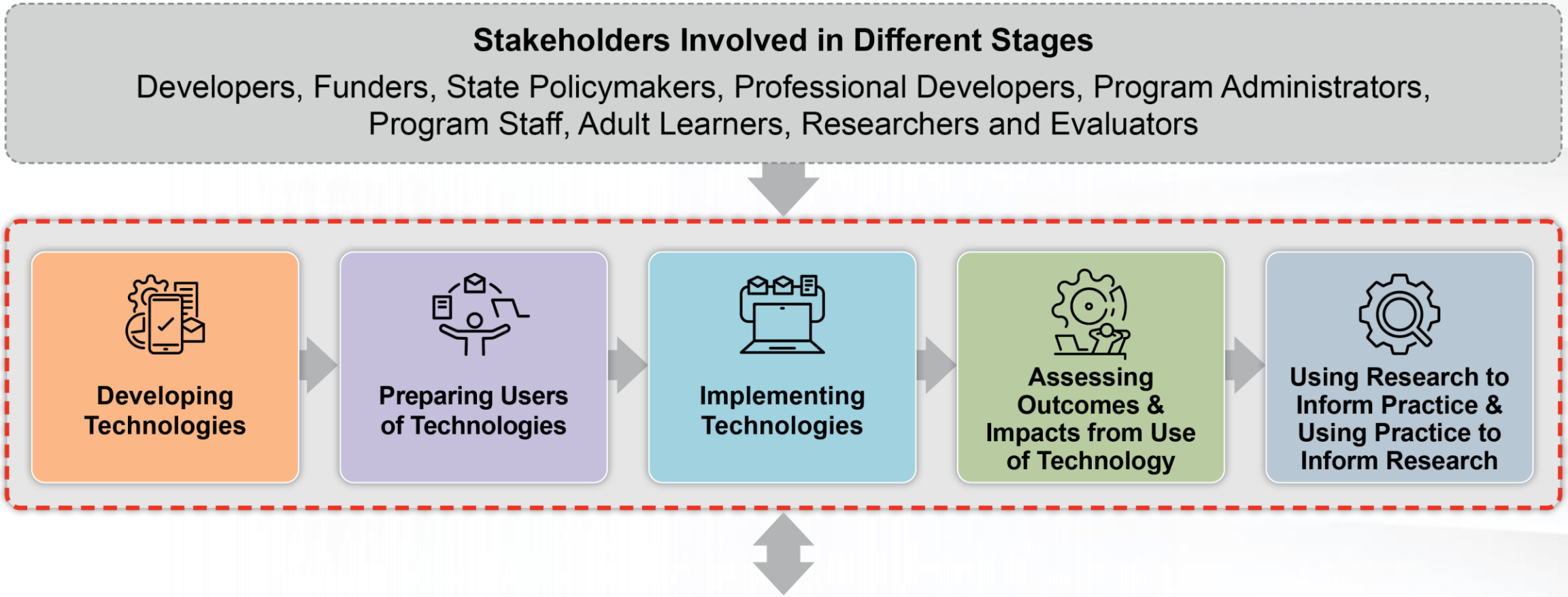
- ✓ **Questions from participants**
- ✓ **Question to participants**: *What are pressing needs for knowledge about the use of digital technologies in adult basic skills?*

Context for Session

- Expanded use of digital technologies in adult basic skills programs
- Interest from U.S. local, state, and federal stakeholders about what is working for whom and under what conditions
- Global activities underway to build knowledge and evidence that can benefit adult basic skills stakeholders
- Opportunity for collaboration among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to strengthen practice and policy in adult basic skills

Framework:

Stages of Development and Use of Digital Technologies in Adult Education



Note: Created by Judith A. Alamprese

Current U.S. Research: CREATE Adult Skills Network

Collaborative Research for Educating Adults with Technology Enhancement

Network Lead: Develop research and learning agendas; Identify promising practices | Provide forums for collaboration | Disseminate

American Institutes for Research, Abt Associates, EdTech Center @ WorldEd, Jobs for the Future

Six Research Teams

1. Adult Numeracy in the Digital Age	**2. Adult Skills Assessment Project**	**3. AutoTutor for Adult Reading Comprehension**
4. Content-Integrated Language Instruction for Adults with Technology Support	**5. Teaching Skills That Matter - SkillBlox Instructional Support**	**6. Writing in Adult Secondary Education Classes**

Funded by U.S. Department of Education, Institute for Education Sciences

Technology-Based Coaching in Adult Education (TBCAE)

Purpose

Provide technical assistance to state adult education (AE) offices and local AE programs in exploring the use of technology-based coaching approaches that:

- Motivates AE students persist in their learning
- Helps students achieve their educational goals

Partners

- Abt Associates, **Judith Alamprese**, *Project Director*; **I-Fang Cheng**, *Deputy PD*
- State AE offices and AE programs participating in the project

Funder

- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), 2019-2021

TBCAE Question

- How can text messaging facilitate adult education learners' persistence and success?
  - Developing skills
  - Attaining a secondary credential
  - Participating in postsecondary education/training
  - Addressing barriers to participation

Illustrative Topics: Developing Technologies

Developing Technologies

- Use of technology tools with a range of target populations of learners
- Adequacy of functioning of technology tools with target population
- Adequacy of technology tools to address content to be taught to target population
- Use of pilot test and how results can guide next steps

Illustrative Topics: Preparing Users of Technologies

Preparing Users of Technologies

- Availability of professional development to prepare staff and learners
- Types and adequacy of training provided to prepare learners to be able to use tools
- Types and adequacy of training provided to instructors to be able to use tools

Illustrative Topics: Implementing Technologies

Implementing Technologies

- Extent to which learners' baseline technology skills were adequate for using technology tools
- Extent to which staff used technology tools as intended
- Extent to which of purposes of technology tools were aligned to learners' needs
- Adequacy of technology infrastructure to support use of technology tools

Illustrative Topics: Assessing Outcomes and Impacts

Assessing Outcomes & Impacts from Use of Technology

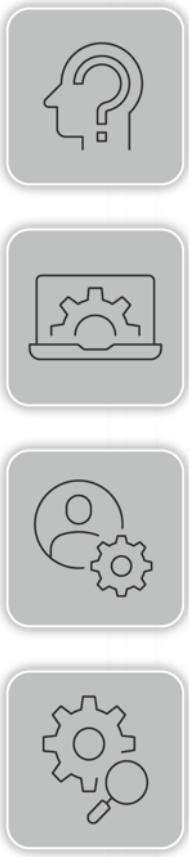
- Extent to which learners developed their skills and knowledge from using tools
- Learners' perceptions of technology tools' helpfulness in developing their skills and knowledge
- Instructors' perceptions of technology tools' helpfulness in developing learners' skills and knowledge

Illustrative Topics: Using Research to Inform Practice

Using Research to Inform Practice & Using Practice to Inform Research

- Extent to which instructors can apply research findings in using technology tools to teach adult learners
- Types of formats/packaging of research findings that instructors find most helpful in applying findings
- Methods that can be used to gather lessons from practice to guide new research

Considerations in Building Knowledge



- Assumptions about learners in developing or adapting tech tools, and expected outcomes from use of tools
- Variety of tech tools being used and implications for structuring knowledge about tools
- Factors affecting learners' engagement in using tech tools and implications for supporting learners use of tools
- Range of knowledge needed to understand current practices and their effectiveness and implications for research designs, types of data, and cycles of studies needed to answer questions of interest

New Directions in Expanding the Research Base on Use of Digital Technologies

- Embed data collection in ongoing teaching and learning involving digital technologies
  - Learner surveys, interviews
  - Documentation of trends in practice

- Develop focused programs of research on critical topics

- Consider global research base in conducting studies

Discussion Question

What are pressing needs for knowledge about the use of digital technologies in adult basic skills?

Contact Information

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Thank you!