A COMPARISON RESEARCH MODEL FOR ADULT DISTRIBUTED TRAINING

by

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This study presented a comparison research model to examine the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of online adult distributed training compared to a traditional classroom setting. The model was applied to First Connections, an online infant and toddler care provider training program.

One hundred and thirteen participants were given a pretest composed of 40 questions prior to training. The control group (n=29) received training in a traditional community college classroom. Treatment group 1 (n=26) received training online but chose to receive continuing education credits (CEU) instead of college credit. Treatment group 2 (n=58) received training online and 4.5 college credits. A demographic survey was administered to all three groups. Posttests were administered to each group at the end of the training. Treatment groups completed a 55-item 5-point Likert-type after training to measure three variables: content, presentation and student reaction.

Posttest scores indicated no significant differences between groups $F(2, 59) = 2.58$, $p = 0.084$. The reliability of the testing instrument was established using a Cronbach’s alpha (0.77) and experts ratings. Mean scores and alpha coefficients for the content, presentation and student reaction were ($M = 3.98$, $\alpha = 0.86$; $M =
3.73, $\alpha=0.90$; and $M = 4.05, \alpha=0.84$) respectively. Attrition bias was examined and no significant differences were found in pretest scores, age or job experience between participants who completed the training and those who did not.

A cost-effectiveness analysis indicated ratios of $1,791 for the control group, $4,019 for treatment group 1 and $2,557 for treatment group 2. The cost-effectiveness ratio (CE) for the combined online group was $1,557. The study revealed that CE ratios decrease with increased enrollments in the online groups.

The study concluded that First Connections set standards for infant and toddler care in Nebraska, a stated goal of the program. In less than two years, 10% of all providers in the state had participated to some degree in First Connections, increasing the continuity of care.
I wish to thank my mentor, Dr. David W. Brooks, who over the course of one Thai lunch challenged me to pursue a doctoral degree. His unyielding support, encouragement, and advice made this dissertation possible.

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“Let’s Roll”

Dedicated to all victims of terror.