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Q | **Manuscript Review Form**
Adult Education Quarterly

4/03

Manuscript Number: P-027
Manuscript Title XXXXXXXXXXXXX
Reviewer #: 411
Date Review Completed: July 12, 2006

The review process calls for reviewer summary recommendation and open narrative comment.

I. **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:** *Please select one*

_____ Conditionally Accept X _____ Revise and Resubmit **OR** X _____ Reject

(This manuscript has pretty serious flaws but perhaps it could be revised/rewritten to be acceptable, although I have serious doubts about this possibility.)

Note: If you are recommending rejection, please state the main reasons in box 'f' below. If you are recommending conditional acceptance or revise and resubmit, please provide specific recommendations that will guide the authors in improving their work by completing boxes 'a-f' below.

II. **NARRATIVE ASSESMENT:** Type an assessment directed to the author(s) stressing the article's strengths and weaknesses. Indicate unresolved problems for publication and provide specific suggestions for improvement of the manuscript. In your narrative, consider the following criteria as appropriate. The *importance of the problem* means the degree to which the problem or subject contributes to knowledge or theory pertinent to adult education. *Methodological soundness* includes considering whether the methods are appropriate for addressing the research problem, and whether the manuscript includes an introduction to the problem, a stated purpose and research questions where appropriate, and a review of relevant literature. The *inferences and conclusions* should be pertinent and clearly drawn from the findings; importance to the field should be described. Finally, the manuscript should be *well organized, well written, and readable*.

Please use the following questions in your assessment. Simply click inside the box and begin typing. The text will wrap.

a. How important is the research and/or theoretical problem? How well-defined is the purpose?

This is an important area for research. The purpose section of the manuscript does not really define the purpose of the research so much as provide a rationale for the study.

b. How well-developed and appropriate are the theoretical frameworks and literature reviews?

This is an area of major weakness in the manuscript. There seems to be no theoretical framework although there has been a lot of work related to persistence. The study by XXXX et. al was referenced for adult students but surely there are others. Some of the references are dated and some (for example XXXX) do not really apply to higher ed. That study was of adult literacy students; while it might be okay to reference such as study, it should be made clear in the discussion that the study population differed from that of the current study. Another reference (XXXXXX 2000 was called a "study" in the manuscript but it appeared to be a symposium presentation. The section on adult learning theory was only one paragraph and was very general. For example, the text says, "The literature reveals numerous competing perspectives..." but those perspectives are not described nor is any attempt made to say what or how these apply to the study.

c. How sound are the methodological approaches?

The methodology also has weaknesses. The discussion of the data collection using the survey form was nearly nonexistent. Only one sentence beginning “Multiple steps involving direct mail, ...” was included about the process. Also, what about contacting nonrespondents to see if they differed from the respondents? Furthermore, the methodological section seemed to have been taken from a dissertation with no attempt to tailor the findings in a way that were appropriate for an article. Also, why was the institution named?

d. How well-supported and convincing are the inferences and conclusions? Are the theoretical and practical implications appropriately indicated?

This section is not too bad but again, it needs to be edited and sharpened up and focused. The section also appears to be taken directly from a dissertation or other larger study with no thought to the journal audience being different. Again, in this section, sweeping generalities occurred. For example, on page 30 the following sentence appears, “The theoretical foundation for the instructional program should be grounded in whatever maximizes learning for adult students (XXXX, 1984, p. 117).” So what does this mean exactly? Twenty-two years later we do know a lot more about the theoretical foundations for adult learning so what exactly would the best approaches be?

e. How well-organized, well-written, and readable is the manuscript?

As mentioned earlier, this appears to be taken from either a dissertation or a larger study with no real work on making it into an article for a journal. Also, several careless errors were detected such as subject-verb disagreement.

f. Additional comments:

It is unclear if this manuscript can really be salvaged. Perhaps other reviewers will help make the decision.

III. **RETURN COMPLETED FORM:** Save this review as “[your reviewer number] review for [manuscript number]” e.g. *4455 review for B-001-A.doc*. Send the electronic file to AEQ via email at: aduldedquarterly@psu.edu