

Good practices: Observations from adult literacy, numeracy and empowerment programs in Turkey

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ELINET 2018, Germany

ABOUT AÇEV—an NGO in Istanbul, Turkey

AÇEV (Turkish acronym for Mother Child Education Foundation) was founded in 1993 to improve the lives of vulnerable young children and their families through education.



FACE-TO-FACE EDUCATION

1.028.712 MOTHERS,
FATHERS, CHILDREN AND ADULTS



12.979

VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTORS



TELEVISION AND ONLINE
EDUCATION TOOLS

10.000.000 PEOPLE



EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST, FAR
EAST AND MIDDLE AMERICA

15 COUNTRIES
AÇEV PROGRAMS



NATION-WIDE CAMPAIGNS

57.000.000 PEOPLE

ACEV's literacy, numeracy and empowerment programs

- Since in 1995, education programs in Turkey for adults with limited or no schooling.
- Has reached ~200,000 learners
- Awards: UNESCO King Sejong, USA Library of Congress, USA emPOWER



Participants

Mostly women, of all backgrounds and ages

New programs focus on younger women ages 15-35



Instructors

Delivered by qualified volunteer instructors, making the programs sustainable



Content

- Started as a literacy/numeracy program for people with very low levels of literacy
- The programs have since expanded to include more advanced literacy and numeracy skills as well as empowerment topics such as:
 - Women's rights
 - Human rights
 - Digital literacy
 - Financial literacy
 - Active participation in societal decisions at all levels: home, community and society

What works?

What we learned from 24-years of program development and implementation



1. Evidence-based programs

- Evidence from educational and psychological research used as the foundation for curriculum development and instruction (e.g., importance of phonological awareness, metacognitive strategies, motivation...)
- Continuous development, evaluation (intensive data and feedback collected from the field)
- Revision e.g., currently the textbooks are in their third edition

2. Focusing on both Cognitive + Affective dimensions

Although started with a strong cognitive focus, it was clear that the affective, emotional aspects were just as important. Examples:

- Emphasizing their value and well-being as an individual, as a human being (not only as a mother or spouse)
- Broadening their social networks, including the support systems in the community

MOST IMPORTANT!
Building a community with learners supporting each other, learning from each other



3. Effective and well-prepared educators

First, selecting highly qualified volunteers to train as instructors

However, also providing different types of support:

- A well-structured curriculum
- Intensive professional development before and during the courses
- Professional development which includes pedagogy, theoretical foundations as well as workshops on non-discriminatory practices, gender equality
- Field monitors providing continuous supervision, feedback and support

4. Listening to the learners and treating them with respect

- Modifying the programs based on the feedback from the learners (e.g., requests to include more math, digital literacy)
- **Finally, treating learners as the strong adults that they are, acknowledging their life skills and their ability to survive despite their limited education and strong sociocultural constraints.**

For more information:

www.acev.org

Questions? Comments?

Thank you!

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