AN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER’S EVALUATION OF MIXED PRACTICE AND
BLOCKED PRACTICE IN HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS

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ABSTRACT

The researcher conducted a quantitative study to compare mixed practice to blocked practice in mathematics. Patton’s (2008) utilized focused evaluation along with Rossi, Lipsey, and Freeman’s (2004) program evaluation were used as a framework to determine if mixed practice produced any positive results in college readiness as evidenced by ACT mathematics scores as suggested by Rohrer (2009a).

The ACT mathematics scores of a class of 2010 high school graduates who learned mathematics with blocked practice were compare to 2011 high school graduates who learned mathematics using mixed practice. All students attended the same high school. However, these students converged to high school from one of six K-8 districts.

The findings of this study have implications for mathematics department heads, administrators, and curriculum directors. One finding is that students who transfer into high school from other school districts perform better on the ACT mathematics test than those who transfer to high school from other districts and learn with mixed practice. No significant differences were found which indicate that mixed practice is ever the best practice for high school mathematics.