The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a correlation between the adult learner’s achievement of basic skills and computer anxiety. The Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) instrument was utilized to measure the skill levels of the adult learner in reading, language, and mathematics. The Computer Anxiety Rating Scale (CARS) was administered to determine the level of computer anxiety in the adult learner. The impact of other factors—gender, age, and computer experience—were also examined.

A total of 100 applicants seeking admission to an adult technical school in central Florida participated in this study. Applicants were seeking admission to programs in computer technology, business, agriculture, commercial foods and culinary arts, health occupations, cosmetology, drafting, agriculture, marketing, and public safety. All subjects completed a demographic data form, Computer Anxiety Rating Scale (CARS) and the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE).

The Computer Anxiety Rating Scale was designed to represent the major components of computer anxiety (Brooke, 1989). Brooke identified the four elements of computer anxiety as feelings of unresolved anxiety, feelings of disorientation, perceived threat responses, and personification responses. Brooke further defined subcomponents for each element. Feelings of unresolved anxiety were identified as anticipation of negative feelings, avoidance behavior, and avoidance of new learning. Feelings of disorientation or uncertainty could be reflected by feelings of confusion, feelings of being overwhelmed, and immobilization. Perceived threat responses were determined to be a