

Motivational factors and adult learners' participation in literacy education in Ondo State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

The study was on the relationship between motivational factors and adult learners' participation in literacy education programmes. The sample for this study comprised 120 adult learners. The study adopted the multi stage sampling procedure comprising the purposive, stratified and proportional sampling techniques. The instrument used was Motivation Adult Learners' Inventory with reliability (MALPI, $r = 0.83$). Four hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. It was shown found that there was statistically significant relationship between higher earning as an economic motivational factor and adult participation in literacy education, ($r_{(118)} = 0.722, p < 0.05$). There was a significant relationship between ability to secure a job as an economic factor and adult participation in literacy education. ($r_{(118)} = 0.694, p < 0.05$); there was no statistically significant relationship between enrichment and adult participation in literacy education. ($r_{(118)} = 0.073, p > 0.05$) and there was a statistically significant relationship between empowerment and adult participation in literacy education. ($r_{(118)} = 0.578, p < 0.05$). Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, it is recommended that stakeholders in education should encourage more adult participation in literacy education because this will enhance the achievement of sustainable development goals in Ondo State, Nigeria.

Key Words: Adult learners, literacy education, participation and sustainability

Introduction

Adult education permeates all levels of education, and concerns itself with everything that affects the wellbeing of the entire citizens and their societies. It can be seen as the process by which men and women seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skills, knowledge or sensitivity or any process by which individuals, groups or institutions try to help men and women improve in these ways. In a comprehensive definition of adult education, UNESCO cited in Olumukoro (2005) Ihejirika and Onyenemezu (2012) described the concept as the entire body of organized educational process, whatever the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities, as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the two-fold perspectives of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development (Metto, 2014).

In another vein, scholars like Delker (1974), Omolewa (1981) and Aderinoye (1977) observed adult education as organized and sequential learning experiences designed to meet the needs of adults. From these definitions, it is clear that adult education is development-oriented, because it is a programme that is geared towards making an adult to be more useful to himself and his society ((Mohammed, 2005).

Adult literacy was undertaken by many developing countries between 1950 and 1980. The impetus for further promotion and strengthening of individual countries and international efforts came as a result of Education for all (EFA) conference in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, which endorsed education as a fundamental right, and proclaimed education as a tool to help ensure a healthier, more environmentally sound world, contributing to personal and social improvement, as well as economic and cultural progress. Its discourses hinged on learning for life and learning for sustainable development. The Jomtien declaration aimed at meeting the basic learning needs of every person. The conference appealed to international financial agencies to come to the aid of adult literacy programs in terms of funding (Carm, 2013). A decade after the Jomtien Education for All EFA, another AFA conference was held in Dakar, Senegal in 2000. It reaffirmed the Jomtien declaration, and further issued the Dakar Framework for Action which stipulates six EFA goals to be achieved by 2015; goals three and four clearly emphasize the need for countries to promote learning and skills for young people and adults, and to increase adult literacy by 50% by 2015.

Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. It involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve his goals, develop his knowledge and potential and participate fully in community and wider society (UNESCO, 2013). The connection between literacy and development is illustrated by the fact that the world's poorest countries are the ones with the highest illiteracy rates, meaning that literacy liberates untapped human potential and leads to increased productivity and better living conditions (Bamgbose, 1991). This is further reaffirmed by Stiglitz in Kigoni (2013), that *"What separates developed from less developed countries is not a gap in resources but a gap in knowledge, which is why investments in education and technology are so important."*

Adult education embraces the entire life of individuals and its purpose is to improve on the current state of affairs. It is directed to the people and so its curriculum content is based on the present needs and problems of the group or learners, as well as the society (Ochoma, 2010: pg.3). Some criteria that qualify a programme as adult education are as follows:

- The activity must be purposeful.
- The purpose of the activity must be educational.
- The activities must be relatively organized.
- The target audience must be the adult group.
- It must be need-based.
- It is carried out voluntarily without any compulsion on the part of the learner.
- It is often carried out as part time or leisure time activity.
- It is flexible in terms of contents and time.

Any form of education that satisfies the above criteria qualifies as adult education. It could be basic literacy, remedial education, functional literacy, continuing education and vocational education. In Nigeria, the objectives of adult education as contained in the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004, P.25) are as follows:

- 1) Provide functional literacy and continuing education for adults and youths who have never had the advantage of formal education or who did not complete their primary education. These include the nomads, migrant families, the disabled and other categories or groups, especially the disadvantaged women;
- 2) Provide functional and remedial education for those young people who did not complete secondary education.
- 3) Provide education for different categories of completers of formal education systems in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills.
- 4) Provide in-service, on-the-job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills; and
- 5) Give adult citizens of the country necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment.

The above objectives serve a number of purposes, ranging from personal growth to societal development. The major focus of adult education is, first and foremost, to make adults in the community aware of individual and community needs, and secondly to get them educated in order to cope with and tackle immediate problems. It is directed at the people of the community hence, its curriculum is based on principles, needs and problems.

Education for development, according to Obi (1987), does not imply just formal education for children and adolescents at primary, secondary and the tertiary levels; it implies also education on part-time basis provide for adults of all educational backgrounds who are already working and participating in development efforts. The latter type of education comes under the umbrella name of Adult Education. Perhaps, this is the kind of education that Ake (1998, P. 42) was referring to, when he asserted that “Education is the process of becoming the best you can be. It begins when we are born and does not end until we die. To stop being educable is a sort of death”. This kind of education is not limited to school education, It is the education that continues even after the compulsory school years (Oniye, 2000).

Adult education enables individuals acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies which can be immediately utilised for the good of the individual and the society in general. Application of knowledge and skill gained from adult education programmes leads, first to individual development or what Tight (1996) referred to as ‘micro development’. Derrick (2012) pointed out that education is a major contributor to that development process, because it directly and continuously affects the formation not only of knowledge and ability but also of character and culture, aspirations and achievements.

Adults may be motivated by a range of factors. Brooks, Giles, Harman and Whittaker (2001) concluded that adults are principally motivated to improve their basic skills for self-development, be this personal, social or occupational. Derrick (2012) found that although learners’ motives for joining classes were diverse, they were most often related to the practicalities of improving job performance and employment prospects, supporting their children’s learning, and moving on to study at a higher level and improving confidence, rather than a simple desire to be more literate or numerate (Alao, 2003).

Higher earnings and better, more secure employment are prime motivations for improving literacy skills, both for natives with poor reading or writing in their first language; and for migrants, many of whom may be well-qualified and highly skilled in their country of origin, but may lack the language skills needed for full economic participation in their new home (Derrick, 2012) Parson and Bynner (2007) argued that a key motivational factor for learners can be the possibility of a new professional identity offered by a vocational training programme acting as an entry point to a new vocational “community of practice” (Lave & Wagner, 1991). This new professional identity is often in contrast to their former experience as school pupils, and can enable them to overcome their antipathy to the process of trying to improve their literacy or numeracy skills, by helping to contextualize the learning in a vocational context (Obetta, 2004).

This study will help the policy makers to assist the illiterate adults most especially in the rural areas to alleviate poverty among themselves. The justification for this is that, the participants in the literacy education programmes will acquire various vocational skills that will help them to establish small business ventures and they can use the money realized through this trade to take care of themselves and their family members.

Statement of Problem

The level of ignorance of adult have affected every facet of their lives such as the level of productivity activities of adult who are not educated most especially in the industries located in the locale of the study is very low as compared to the productivity output of the educated adults. The effect of this is that, none educated adults find it difficult to be gainfully employed in the major industries in Ondo State, Nigeria. The inability to read and write among the adults also have negative effect on their self esteem because they are not allowed to take part in the

major decisions affecting the socio-political development in the state. The illiterate adults are not given the opportunity to contest for elective positions because of their level of ignorance..

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out relationship between motivation and adult learners' participation in literacy education in Ondo State. Specifically, this study examined

1. The relationship between higher earning and adult learners' participation in literacy education.
2. The relationship between ability to secure a job and adult learners' participation in literacy education
3. The relationship between enrichment such as developing interest of adult learners and adult participation in literacy education.
4. The relationship between political empowerment and adult participation in literacy education

Methodology

The study was a descriptive cross-sectional design survey. The population of this study comprised 520 adult learners in six literacy centres in Ondo South Senatorial districts. The sample of the study was 120 adult learners, randomly selected from literacy education classes in Ondo South Senatorial district: Eseodo, Ile Oluji and Okitipupa local government. The study adopted the multi stage sampling procedure comprising the purposive, stratified and proportional sampling techniques. In stage 1, purposive sampling technique was used to select Ondo senatorial district as the study setting. The reason for this was due to the few number of literacy education centres in the district. The stratified sampling technique was then used to divide this senatorial districts into local government which comprised Eseodo, Ile Oluji and Okitipupa. These local governments were later stratified into communities such as Aserere, Baikirui, Okeigbo, Dugbolo, Eseoso and Ileoluji. The participants for the study were randomly selected from these communities.

Structured questionnaire tagged Motivation Adult Learners' Participatory Instrument (MALPI) was used in the study. The instrument which contained twelve items (six items on economic motivational factors and the other six items on non-economic factors)structured in a Four-Point-Likert-Scale. The instrument was used to measure the socio-economic motivational factors that influenced adult learners' participation in literacy education. Test re-test was conducted on 10 adults learners in literacy education centres in Akure North Local Government yielded reliability coefficient for the(MALPI, $r = 0.83$).The data gathered for this study were analysed using descriptive statistics of pie chart and inferential statistics of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 alpha level.

Data Analysis

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- H_{O1} : There is no statistically significant relationship between ability to secure a job and adult learners' participation in literacy education
- H_{O2} : There is no statistically significant relationship between higher earning and adult learners' participation in literacy education
- H_{O3} : There is no significant relationship between enrichment and adult participation in literacy education.
- H_{O4} : There is no significant relationship between empowerment and adult participation in literacy education

Ho₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between higher earning and adult learners' participation in literacy education.

Table 1: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between Higher Earning and Adult Learners' Participation in Literacy Education.

Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	df	r-value	Sig	Remark
Higher Earnings	120	15.217	2.652	118	.722	.000	<i>Ho₁ Rejected</i>
Adult Participation		14.835	2.461				

As shown in Table 1, the r-value 0.722 was obtained with p-value 0.000 at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value 0.000 is less than 0.05 alpha level, the null hypothesis one is rejected. Thus, there is a statistically significant relationship between higher earning as an economic motivational factor and adult participation in literacy education. ($r_{(118)} = 0.722, p < 0.05$). This indicates that the higher the earnings after the acquisition of literacy, the more adults would be motivated to participate in literacy education.

Ho₂: There is no statistically significant relationship between ability to secure a job and adult learners' participation in literacy education.

Table 2: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between Ability to Secure a Job and Adult Learners' Participation in Literacy Education.

Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	df	r-value	Sig	Remark
Ability to Secure a Job	120	14.779	2.357	118	.694	.000	<i>Ho₂ Rejected</i>
Adult Participation		14.835	2.461				

As revealed in Table 2, the r-value 0.694 was obtained with p-value 0.000 when computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value 0.000 is less than 0.05 alpha level, the null hypothesis two is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between ability to secure a job as an economic factor and adult participation in literacy education. ($r_{(118)} = 0.694, p < 0.05$). This indicates that when adults are able to secure jobs after the acquisition of literacy, they would be more willing to participate in literacy education.

Ho₃: There is no statistically significant relationship between enrichment as a non-economic factor and adult learners' participation in literacy education.

Table 3: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between Enrichment and Adult Learners' Participation in Literacy Education.

Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	df	r-value	Sig	Remark
Enrichment	120	11.348	2.647	118	.381	.073	<i>Ho₃ Not Rejected</i>
Adult Participation		14.835	2.461				

As shown in Table 3, the r-value 0.381 was obtained with p-value 0.073 at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value 0.073 is greater than 0.05 alpha level, the null hypothesis three is not rejected. Thus, there is no significant relationship between enrichment and adult participation in literacy education. ($r_{(118)} = 0.073, p > 0.05$).

Ho₄: There is no statistically significant relationship between empowerment as a non-economic factor and adult learners' participation in literacy education.

Table 4: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between Empowerment and Adult Learners' Participation in Literacy Education.

Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	Df	r-value	Sig	Remark
Empowerment	120	13.919	2.551	118	.578	.002	<i>Ho₄Rejected</i>
Adult Participation		14.835	2.461				

In Table 4, the r-value 0.578 was obtained with a p-value 0.002 at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value 0.002 is less than 0.05 alpha level, the null hypothesis four is rejected. Thus, there is a statistically significant relationship between empowerment and adult participation in literacy education. ($r_{(118)} = 0.578, p < 0.05$). This indicates that when adults realize economic empowerment through literacy, they would be more motivated to participate in literacy education.

Discussion of findings

It was revealed through the analysis that adult participates in literacy education because of their desire to secure good job as a result of the literacy education they have acquired and also to be very relevant in the labour market. This agrees with the assertion of Clarke (2008) who pointed out that employers usually strive to recruit competent and educated employees in their organizations. Thus, this factor serves as a veritable factor that has motivated adults who are not educated to register in literacy education centres where they would acquire vocational skills that will give them the opportunity to secure job and be more relevant in the labour market. The findings also tallies with the view of Spence (2013) revealed that education plays a central role in preparing individuals to enter the labor force as well as equipping them with the skills to engage in lifelong learning experiences.

The study revealed further that adults who have literacy and vocational skills earn more in various business ventures in the locale of the study than their colleagues who are not education in literacy vocational skill. Thus, the zeal to earn good salaries has motivated the adult to register in literacy vocational skills centres. The findings agrees with the view of Mincer (2009) who asserted that wage differentials are prevalent features in almost all labor markets especially of capitalist economies.

The general view of the participants used for the study was that they were motivated to enroll in literacy education centres because of their perceptions that educated adults who have participated and concluded the literacy education programmes have the opportunity to empower their families to develop socially, economically and politically. This is why enlightened families form the bedrock of community and national development. This correlates with the view of Bhola (2013) that without literacy education, development is not complete. When talking of development, it should not be one sided, it should come from the efforts of both men and women in the society. The study revealed further that the participants have acquired various vocational skills through which they were able to empower themselves through the establishment of small business ventures through which they have been able to use the proceeds from the trade to solve their various economic challenges.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have shown that there was relationship between motivation and adult participation in literacy education. If adults are assured of jobs, higher earnings and economic empowerment, they would be encouraged to enroll for literacy education.

Recommendations

It is recommended that State and Federal Government should encourage the establishment of more literacy centres in the state because of the advantages associated with literacy education. It has been established in this study that through literacy education, the participants have the opportunity to empower themselves and this will also help to alleviate poverty among them

There is need for the stakeholders in literacy education programmes to enlighten the illiterate unemployed adult in the rural and urban areas on the other advantages that are associated with literacy education such as opportunity to secure job after the completion of the literacy education programme, this will motivate more adult to enroll for the programme.

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