



Impact of Adult and Non-Formal Education in Nigeria: The Way Forward for Educational Leaders

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Abstract

This paper examined impact of adult and non-formal education in Nigeria: the way forward for educational leaders. Government has stated that for the benefit of all citizens, the country's educational goals shall be clearly set out in terms of their relevance to the needs of the individuals and those of the society most especially the adult citizens to have a path to educational system without any form of challenge. This paper attempted to provide a partial answer by arguing that Nigeria's inadequate commitment over the years to pursue the development of Adult education as a strategic objective, as well as an instrument for national development has been one of the major drawbacks to the countries efforts to pull itself out of poverty. Adult education represents a solution to the deficiency of formal education as a panacea to the developmental needs of third world countries. The study showed that the skills taught in this programme were more practically oriented and thus enhances opportunities for employment. On this backdrop the evolution of adult education; the forms of adult education and the characteristics were itemized and discussed in this paper. Some adult education programmes which included education for all, school to land and family support programme were reviewed. More so, the thrust of adult education in community development as enshrined in the national policy of education was also examined. The paper concluded that Adult education brings a great sense of dignity and self-esteem, enhanced respect of others, an ability to take control of one's life and a greater desire to participate in society and therefore, adult education should be vigorously pursued as through it there would be an all-round development. Among others, the paper suggested that Government should establish Adult education centres in all the states, since Adult education teaches life planning educational skills which will be of advantage and would in no doubt be optimally utilized by the grassroots.

Keywords: Adult Education, Non Formal Education, National Policy, Education, National Development, Educational Leaders.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is no doubt an instrument for nation-building and national development. According to the National Policy on Education (2014) it is an instrument of 'par excellence' which equips an individual with the right skills, knowledge, abilities, competence, attitudes, behaviour and values in order to function effectively in the society. Education is equally a means to an end which assist citizens of a nation to develop their full potentials and capacity to function effectively in their society as well as attain sustainable livelihoods. Owing to the roles and importance of education in the human society, nations including Nigeria have adopted various forms of education to serve as a means of capacity building through the human development index (HDI).

Education, literacy and knowledge are further acquired through the various forms of education that includes: formal learning, informal learning and non-formal learning. To achieve a nation's national goal(s), build a world of true democracy, attain high level of sustenance/living for citizens of a country and develop all citizenry in various capacities; adult/non-formal education is imperative because formal education which is embedded within the principles of formal school system cannot achieve these alone. Adult and non-formal education includes any organized systematic educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal school system to provide selected type of learning to particular sub-group in the population, adults as well as children.

Adult education is a broad educational concept encompassing diverse educational programmes. It involves a range of programmes and activities conducted by different agencies, having different goals, contents and different methodologies. Thus, the concept "adult education" does not conjure up any specific programme of education. As an amorphous concept, it should not be approached from a narrow perspective in order not to lose sight of important contributions of different collage of organizations, agencies and programmes within it. Therefore, it is very beneficial to focus on different perspectives not minding their organizational bases. In this paper, we shall first, attempt a definition of "adult education". Secondly, we shall highlight some trends in adult education in Nigeria. Next we shall sketch out an action framework outlining programmes and offering agencies.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Adult Education and its Inclusion in National Policy on Education

An adult education agenda for Nigeria would entail the development and implementation of a systemic adult education policy. The policy would be guided both in conception and implementation by a philosophy of continuing education or lifelong learning. Lifelong learning as a philosophy and a way of life emphasizes that learning should be ongoing throughout life. A responsively comprehensive adult education policy should seek to institute and sustain a culture of learning that will lead to the emergence of a learning society (Ololube & Egbezor, 2012). As Nigerian adults grapple with the problems and opportunities in their personal lives, they are simultaneously challenged to contribute to the development of their communities and society. Hence, lifelong learning becomes imperative, not only for the effective functioning of individuals at the workplace and in their own communities, but also for the renewal of society itself. A systemic and comprehensive adult education policy would pursue, among others, the

following key objectives. Provision of incentives for adult participation Adults are generally saddled with occupational and familial concerns.

In a country like Nigeria, where poverty is currently pervasive, people are preoccupied with how to eke out a living. Consequently, motivating adults to participate in education and training programs that are not employer-sponsored would require a variety of incentives, such as subsidised child care services especially in the cities, flexible scheduling, and career and personal guidance services.

In most developing countries, adult education programs are not integrated to ensure a relationship among the programs, and to ensure that each program, at once, addresses the needs of adult participants, as well as the needs of society. Coherence would also seek to ensure that the programs or services prospective participants need are available, and that ways in which participants can transition among programs are provided. A coherent adult education policy would have a unifying mission, as well as organisational structural mechanisms for coordinating programs and activities. The policy would provide a clearly defined framework and guidelines for the participation of non-governmental organisations, the private sector and international organisations in adult education.

There is a tendency in developing countries to concentrate efforts in adult education on literacy or basic education. If the talents and abilities of the adult population are to be developed, mobilised and optimally utilised in national development, there must be comprehensive education and training opportunities for adults (Ololube & Egbezor, 2012). A variety of professional, vocational and general education programs and courses must be available and affordable. Listed and briefly discussed below are examples of broad themes or topics around which programs could be developed and offered not just in cities, but also in rural communities.

National Policy on Education its Provision for Adult and Non-Formal Education

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) outlined the goals of mass literacy, adult and non-formal education to include:

- 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 gender.
- Provide functional and remedial education for those youths who did not complete secondary education.
- Provide education for different categories of completers of the formal education in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills.
- Provide in-service on the job, vocational and professionals in order to improve their skills
- Give the adult citizens of the country necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment. Equally, Gbamanja (2007), writing on nomadic education posited that the aims include the following:
 - To take education to the door steps of children of nomads and migrant fishermen who have been denied their right to education because of their geographical location.

- The programme is aimed at enabling the nomads to acquire functional literacy for general information, enlightenment as well as basic numeracy for accounting and improved management of their stock.
- The purpose of bringing education to all classes of people. Furthermore, the international encyclopedia of Education (2005), identified four major goals of non-formal education which include the following: i. Alternative Route to Upward Mobility. The emphasis on academic competence in the formal system means that only learners who are able to achieve the required level of competence are the only few that will eventually gain upward mobility at the expense of low achievers. Non-formal education afford alternatives routes to cope with the required level of competence in the social education.

Adult and Non- Formal Education in Nigeria: Framework for the 21st Century

As we have seen above, adult education is very broad that it requires all hands to be on deck for effective execution in all its ramifications. The formal education, which is enlist, is for specific period of life. But adult education focuses on the whole lifespan and is non-discriminatory. Therefore, it is very necessary to view adult education from different facets and perspectives. Some perspectives to be presented may not be new but there is need for them to be presented anew because of their significance in the twenty-first century. The Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (NNCAE) in 1973 presented a proposal for inclusion in the Third National Development Plan. This framework for the 21st millennium is adapted from the NNCAE former proposal. Functional Literacy We talk of functional variant of literacy because of the need to relate the content to the cultural, social and economic needs and interests of adults, and in order to motivate the adults. The previous campaigns against illiteracy did not yield the desired result of obliterating illiteracy in the country.

The adult literacy component of the recently launched UBE should constitute a new vision to launch a fresh offensive for the 21st century. However, the new conception for adult literacy should not be limited to initial skill of reading and writing. It should include post-literacy programmes so that the neo-literates will not relapse. Therefore, primers and follow-up reading materials should be provided. This necessitates establishment of public libraries and local newspapers to sustain the literacy skills. For effective functional literacy, the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education; the Stage Agencies for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education; and, Nomadic Education Commission should assume leading roles. Other relevant ministries, which include Agriculture, Health, Social Development and Culture, Community Development, Women Affairs and Industries, should enlist their cooperation. Police Affairs, the Prison and the Military, the National Directorate of Employment and nongovernmental voluntary agencies, should enlist their support. The National Youth Services Corps should be made to include literacy campaign as an aspect of the Community Development assignment, while the orientation programmes should include methodology of adult education.

The religious bodies in the past played a very conspicuous role in adult literacy and some are still playing this noble role. They should be encouraged to double their efforts with moral and financial support from the government. The Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) is required to play much role in literacy education in the country. Also local government and communities should take charge in their areas. Continuing Education The need for learning throughout life

underlies the concept of continuing education. This concept refers to programmes of education following cessation of formal education at a level after primary education. The programme could be in the area of intellectual, vocational or liberal education. In the educational continuum, it is ideal that when a person drops out of the formal system, the one should have opportunity to drop into appropriate level of the non-formal to continue his/her education. Continuing education programmes are couched in different terms, such as, evening classes, extra-mural (for tertiary institutions) and extension classes. As a matter of fact, tertiary institutions extend their services to the public outside their walls through extra-mural classes. This could be done through different methodologies, which include, face-to-face, and print and electronic media. It is worthy of note that the aborted National Open University has now reopened to render it services to different categories of Nigerians. The tertiary institutions should double up their efforts towards continuing education. Professional Associations, Trade Unions and the Industrial Training Fund, should work harder to make much more impact. Furthermore, the tertiary institutions should accommodate examination-oriented and liberal programmes so as to take care of all interests. The important roles played by private efforts should be acknowledged and encouraged. Extension Education Here, one is thinking of tertiary institutions or ministries extending their research findings to the public. For instance, a lot of researchers are done in the Faculties of Agriculture and in the Agricultural Research Institutes.

The findings, such as, improved varieties of crops, new cultivation techniques and improved animal species are sent to the farmers. Hence the relevance of extension departments. Also, in Health, the extension sections reach out and meet the needs of the public in the communities. Such services could come up in terms of inoculation, public lectures, campaigns against some diseases, such as AIDS, cholera and ringworm. Relevant ministries, institutions and agencies are very much called upon to take care of the extension education relating to their fields. Professional associations, such as Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Nigerian Pharmaceutical Association (NPA) and relevant agencies are called upon for services in this area.

Women Education As a result of the unique position of women in the society, special education programmes are designed for them in order to enable them discharge their functions creditably as mothers and wives, in technical, professional and in commercial areas. The programmes, such as, Better Life For Rural Women, Family Support Programme, Family Economic Advancement Programme and, Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF) should not be seen as belonging to a particular regime. Rather, the Women Affairs Ministry should use such to fashion out enduring programmes of education that could accommodate the interests of women in the country. Other agencies such as Health, Agriculture, Trade and Industry and Religious and non-governmental agencies should embrace women education programmes. In these days of gender sensitivities in the country, studies should be carried out on women education programmes and interests by relevant organizations. Family Education Educated families make a healthy nation. Therefore, there is great need to incorporate family education into adult education so as to enable husbands and wives and relations get new knowledge in family management. Components of family education should include, planning, budgeting, family responsibilities, family planning and rationalization of production of children, children and adolescence psychology.

The Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Women Affairs, Social Development and Community Development, Tertiary Institution, the Nigerian Union of Teachers, Nigerian Medical Association, Voluntary Agencies and Religious bodies have much responsibility

towards success in this area. Business/Commercial/Technical/Industrial Education Traditionally, vocational education is done mainly through apprenticeship system. That is, the system whereby a learner (apprentice) is attached to a master-craftsman for the purpose of undergoing training for acquisition of skills. Opportunities for acquisition of new skills and improvement on working skills should be afforded to people in business, commerce and industries. The Ministries of Education, Industry, Trades, Science and Technology and Labour, Tertiary Institutions; Establishments, such as, Industrial Training Fund; Trade Unions, Vocational Improvement Centres, Professional Associations and other relevant agencies should be expected to prove their mettle in this programme. Forces and Prison Staff Education

The Armed Forces (the army and the police) and the prison staff constitute a special workforce. Apart from their specialized education/training for their specialized services, they need education for integrating them into the society. Even within their specialized fields, they still need more and continuous education to cope with their duties, hence there is army education corps. The Police and the Prison staff also need special education programmes to keep abreast of modern development and orientations.

The Ministries of Defence, Internal Affairs and Education should join hands in the education of the service groups. The Army Education Corps, Police Service Commission and Prison Service counterparts should offer continuing education programmes for the personnel more so as the nature of their work may not allow them benefit from those outside their barracks. Prisoners' Education Prisoners are incarcerated as a corrective measure; therefore, there is need for different programmes of education for achievement of this objective. Already different correctional education programmes are being offered in the Nigerian prisons, such as, literacy, continuing and vocational. Also, citizenship, moral and liberal programmes are necessary for conscientizing the inmates towards responsible citizenship. The National Commission, the State Agencies, the NNCAE and other education associations, Prison services and associations, religious bodies, voluntary agencies and other relevant bodies should co-operate in providing education services to prison inmates

National Policy on Education impact on Adult Education

The role of adult education in national development is multi-dimensional. Indeed, as are of the building blocks of human development, and not just a basic right, education, including adult education, is a foundation for progress in areas such as human capital, health, nutrition and the development of institutions and democracy. Therefore, the role of adult education in development can be appreciated through the complex relationships existing between all its forms and the economic, political, social and cultural determinant factors of Nigerian development in particular and Africa as a whole.

The economic role of adult education in development is apparent in its contribution to human capital formation. It is now well established that, alongside health care, sanitation, and nutrition that improve people's standard of living and productivity by reducing sickness and mortality rates and by increasing life expectancy, adult basic education, by equipping recipients with essential literacy and numeracy skills, yields high rates on investment, thereby enhancing labour productivity. An educated population also provides a more attractive investment climate. Thus, investment in the development of human capital, through adult education, is crucial for developing a labour force and managerial know-how, able to compete in today's global economy (Seya, 2014).

Formal education alone is not sufficient for playing this role as even those categories of the population who have had formal education and training might need to be updated and reskilled through adult education, mainly because today's knowledge society tends to render previously acquired knowledge and skills inappropriate and obsolete.

Adult education is also instrumental in familiarizing the active population of Nigeria with Information Communication Technology (ICT), a decisive tool for the smooth integration of Nigerian economies in the global economy. The importance of this cannot be over emphasized as the world is rapidly moving towards knowledge-based economy as structures and information societies that comprise networks of individuals, firms, and countries linked electronically in inter-dependent and interactive relationships. Adult education also plays a major role in social development. It is now widely admitted that growth will not reduce poverty unless poor people are able to actively participate in it. Such participation can become effective to a large extent through adult education.

Indeed, the African, and of course, Nigerian population will need some kind of formal and non-formal education and training to be able to benefit from basic health care, including sexual and reproductive health services with the development of new medicines, and they will be in a position to free themselves from diseases that devastate poor people, such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other parasites. Adult education will also be needed to enable the Nigerian poor to really take advantage of programmes aimed at protecting orphans and vulnerable children or drastically reducing the number of people without access to safe water and basic sanitation.

Some Adult Education Programmes in Nigeria

The following are adult education programmes launched by different federal and state governments to improve the state of adult education in Nigeria:

Education for All goals

Participants at the world conference in 1990 by UNESCO and other bodies pledged to universalize primary education and massively reduce illiteracy by the end of the decade. Six key education goals were identified with the main objective of meeting the learning needs of all children, youths and adults by the year 2015. The EFA goals also contribute to the global pursuit of the 8 Millennium Development Goals out of which 2 relate specifically to education. The six EFA goals are:

- **Provide early childhood care and education.** The goal calls for better and more possibilities to support young children and their families and communities in all areas where the child is growing – physically, socially, intellectually and emotionally. It lays emphasis on children who suffer disadvantage as for example those living in poverty, AIDS orphan, rural and minority children and girls as a whole.
- **Provide free and compulsory primary education for all.** Primary education must be entirely free and compulsory for every child.
- **Increase adult literacy by 50 per cent.** Here, the goal calls for a certain level of improvement in adult literacy by 2015. That is, it should be 50% better than it was in

2000. The needs of women should receive particular attention and all adults should have opportunities to go on learning throughout their lives.

- **Improve the quality of education.** The goal calls for the improvement of education in all aspects – aiming for a situation where people can achieve excellence. Everyone should be able to achieve measurable learning outcomes particularly with regard to literacy, numeracy and other skills essential for life.

School to Land Programme

The School-to-Land Programme was established by Edict No. 4 of 1985 by the Rivers State Government and formally launched the same year (Eze et al., 2010). It was one of the measures taken by the Rivers State Government to help check the rising trend of unemployment amongst the youths. It is an Agricultural Training Institute charged among others with the responsibility of intensive on-the-job-training of:

- Young secondary school leavers of Rivers origin in modern agricultural practices.
- Encourage the young school leavers to take to agriculture as a viable profession.
- Train the young farmers in processing of grains.
- Production of food crops and livestock for local consumption.

The goals are:

- To train a new breed of small-scale farmers and thus create opportunities for, and encourage self-employment of young secondary school leavers in agriculture, particularly in the areas of crops, fisheries and livestock production.
- To operate and promote modern agricultural practices thus contribute to increased production of food and fibre
- To provide essential inputs and support services as a loan package to eligible young farmers after their training (Lewis, 1954).

The project which took about 3,429.5 hectares of land was located in different communities in the state namely; Bunu-Tai, Iriebe, Kpaa, Egbeke/Nwuba and Bori. Other communities are Agbeta, Okordia, Sagbama, Ogbia and Bukuma, (Tamuno, 2009). The project presently, has three (3) existing farms namely: Rumuodomaya 5 hectares, Kpaa 350 hectares and Bori New Town (Wiiyaakara) 450 hectares (ADP, 2009).

However, in 2008, Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency (RSSDA) acquired Egbeke/Nwuba and Bunu Tai School-to-Land farms with the head office relocated from Port Harcourt Aba road to ADP farm at Rumuodomanya in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. From its inception, the programme has made some Impact in the leaving standard of the rural poor, thus the need investigate the impact of the programme on employment generation, income and poverty level in Rivers state.

The basic objective behind the school to land programme in the Rivers State was to mobilize secondary school leavers into a ‘viable land army’, in my effort to set a new direction that would reverse the trend towards an impending food crisis (Oluwasanmi, 1996). To this end, it was planned that pilot schemes would be set up in every local government areas in Rives State. Highlights of the programme, as planned, included the following:

- Based on specified criteria, participants who were expected to remain as bonafide farmers, were to be selected. Selection criteria included aptitude, physical fitness, staying power, ability to improvise, background and interest in farming.
- Participants initially underwent intensive training in practical farming before actual placement on the land preparation and the provision of inputs.
- All inputs, including a monthly cash allowance of 60 Naira (N60), were to be offered on a loan basis, payable from the first harvest.
- Supervision was to be provided, and the project evaluated regularly by the State Ministry of Agriculture Officials and other experts.
- A governing board with the State Commissioner of Agriculture and Natural Resources as chairman acted as the implementing unit, assisted by a Project Manager. The board was to be made up of representatives of the State Ministry of Agriculture, Universities, construction firms, oil companies, banks, voluntary organizations, school of agriculture, Niger Delta Basin Development Authority and the Chamber of Commerce.
- To facilitate the achievement of the programme's objectives voluntary assistance would be sought in all facets of the programme. Particularly with respect to land preparation, the voluntary contributions of oil construction companies were to be solicited and a roster of land preparation circulated so that such companies could indicate what assistance they would be able to render on a voluntary basis.
- Parcels of land to be prepared were not expected to be less than 100 hectares or greater than 500 hectares and should not, ideally, be less than 10kms from the next project site.
- Allocated a piece of land of 5 hectares each, participants were to have provided on such land a number of facilities including:
 - Accommodation for each participant on his piece of land, starting with a one bedroom house extendable thereafter on his own financial volition.
 - Water for irrigation and household use to be provided by borehole and piped to each holding.
 - Electric power from national grid or a generating plant, to be provided.
 - Efforts to be made to ensure that schools-nursery and primary- were cited on each economic unit.
 - Recreational facilities to be provided, so as to stem the tide of rural 'outmigration'.
 - Road linkages between project units and also with the outside world to be ensured.
- A typical package was to be made available to project participants involving the following items:
 - Land and land preparation;
 - Infrastructure;
 - Inputs;
 - Transportation;
 - Training and supervision;
 - Stipend; and
 - Equipment.

Since the agricultural sector has a limited amount of land to cultivate, the marginal product of an additional farmer is assumed to be zero as the law of diminishing marginal returns has run its course due to the fixed input, land (Omotosho, 1994). As a result, the agricultural sector has a quantity of farm workers that are not contributing to agricultural output since their marginal productivities are zero. This group of farmers that are not producing any output is termed surplus labour since this cohort could be moved to another sector with no effect on agricultural output (Omereji, 2005). Therefore, due to the wage differential between the agricultural and manufacturing sectors, workers will tend to transit from the agricultural to the manufacturing sector over time to reap the reward of higher wages (Tamuno, 2009). If quantity of workers moving from the agricultural to the manufacturing sector equals the quantity of surplus labour in the agricultural sector, regardless of who actually transfers, general welfare and productivity will improve (Awoseyila, 1997).

Agriculture is the process of producing food, feed, fibre and other desired products by cultivation of certain plants and the raising of domesticated animals (livestock). Agriculture is also known as farming. According to Adegbola et al. (1974), it is the preparation of plant and animal products for man's use. The practice of agriculture has remained at the subsistence level before government involvement. One way of looking at agriculture is to see it as a specific activity and profession among many. In this view, agriculture is part of culture, but although this is not wrong, it is also not sufficient for understanding the existential, ethical and aesthetic values involved in agriculture (Evbuonwan, 2003). The complementary and, more fruitful view is to regard agriculture as a form of culture. The claim is, then, that agriculture, in various ways, gives rise to meaning and values, articulates the world in certain ways and provides insights into existentially important questions. Agriculture is not only a profession but also a way of life and includes a way of perceiving and thinking about things. The emphasis is, in other words, on certain basic similarities between agriculture as practiced in different countries. In phenomenological terminology, agriculture constitutes a life-world (Amend & Karanga, 2007)

According to Ekine and Onu (2008), rural development relates not only to a sustained increase in the level of production and productivity by all rural dwellers, including farmers, and a sustained improvement in their wellbeing, manifested by increase in per capita income and standard of living, but also leads to a sustained physical, social and economic improvement of rural communities. In order to achieve the broad goals of agriculture on rural development, the Nigerian government need to focus on specific objectives. While the attainment of specific agricultural goals encompasses the provision of adequate food, fibres and industrial raw materials, employment and foreign exchange generation, the goals of rural development embrace in addition a systematic improvement of the other institutional, physical and social infrastructures in such rural communities. Rural agriculture to a large extent makes productive use of land not fit for construction. This reviews the employability of labour for effective use of arable land.

It is a fact that longer-term strategy on agriculture must focus on the provision of basic infrastructure. They observed that continued progress require rapid employment in the agricultural sector, this will create positive impact on demand for goods and services in the rural sector. A strategy that is effective at reducing rural poverty in developing nations (Kopainsky & Rieder, 2004).

In Rivers State, the agricultural sector is dominated by, not just the poor but the 'poorest of the poor'. These are high risk individuals or groups that are predominantly illiterates (Cookey & Ohale, 2005 p. 47). In view of this, several agricultural projects have continuously been

initiated or adopted as a follow-up to Federal Government effort to boost performance of the agricultural sector by the Rivers State government (Nelson, 2001).

National Open Apprenticeship Scheme

Youth unemployment in Nigeria has become one of the most serious socio-economic problems confronting the country. The magnitude of this problem can be appreciated if accurate data on the number of jobless young people roaming the streets of Nigerian cities, towns and villages is available. Unfortunately, accurate statistics on youth unemployment are lacking. Nevertheless, estimates by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2012) in Sub-Saharan Africa show that unemployment affects between 15-20 percent of the work force; and out of these estimates, young people comprises 40 to 75 percent of the total number of the unemployed.

Unemployment has affected youth in Nigeria from a broad spectrum of socio-economic groups. Given the lack of employment opportunities and consequently the uncertain future, young Nigerians are forced to engage in unorthodox livelihoods (such as; drug addiction, armed robbery, and armed militancy) while others engage in casual work which is highly irregular. In a bid to checking the growing rate of unemployment among Nigerian youths, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) in 1986 established the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the body that designed the National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (Adekola & Ezekiel, 2013).

The National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS) is an intervention programme designed to create employment, with emphasis on self-reliance and entrepreneurship. The Scheme uses productive facilities such as workshops and technical instructors by way of subcontracting arrangement and the informal sector operators to achieve its outlined objectives. NOAS provides different trades in which apprentice skills are acquired from the informal sector, (where some youths are trained in training centres established by the government and some in mechanic villages identified by government). The NDE report of 2012 shows about 90 trades were available for youths to participate as a form of apprenticeship, among them are computer repairs, welding, computer operation, furniture making, electronic repairs, printing, GSM repairs, bookkeeping and accounting trainee.

Apprenticeship is recognized world-wide as a source of acquiring skills in a trade where the master craftsman sells his training products and the trainee gains by acquiring skills that would make him/her economically secured (Robert, 2016). This turns out to mean that apprenticeship system in Nigeria is the major provider of skills in the informal sector. To upgrade apprenticeship system in Nigeria, is to strengthen incentives for master craft people and apprentices to participate in the programme enhancing quality and effectiveness of training process and improving outcomes in terms of employability, productivity and decent work.

The ultimate aim of NOAS' training programme is to make beneficiaries self-employed by establishing their own enterprises with the help of the NOAS' resettlement loan scheme so as to be empowered. Empowering the youth means creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which youths can act on their own behalf, and on their own terms. Hashim (2013) noted that there was a significant connection between NOAS and youths' empowerment. But reports from other studies argued that increasing level of poverty has a direct relationship with unemployment situation and it shows that about 60% of Nigerians live below the poverty line.

Unemployment, a macroeconomic problem is depleting the economy and in a bid to reduce it to minimal level has created a condition that requires concern on whether NOAS is

appropriately designed to change the status of unemployment in Nigeria. It is on the basis of the discussed variables that the background of this study is built; to examine the problems and prospect of National Open Apprenticeship Scheme influence on youths' empowerment in Niger State, Nigeria.

The National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS) is a programme of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) which was tasked to tackle the employment problem that has become one of the key issues in the challenging agenda of Nigeria. Development experience, the world over has indicated that economic progress may not automatically translate into job opportunities and poverty reduction especially among such social groups as the youths, the disabled, retired persons, the vulnerable groups and women. It is in realization of these that the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of General Ibrahim B. Babangida considered it imperative to have a permanent institution to be able to combat the menace of unemployment (Adekola, 2013; Hashim, 2013; NDE, 2013).

The NDE according to NDE (2013) and Hashim (2013), designed intervention programmes which focused on creating jobs through self-employment and vocational skills acquisition. In order to actualize this mandate, NDE adopted implementation strategies and programmes such as the National Open Apprenticeship Scheme the objective of which is to address the problem of unemployment among school leavers and other people whose unemployment status stem from their lack of productive and marketable skills. One method used to fulfill this mandate is to train unemployed youths inside small-scale enterprises, similar to the traditional apprenticeship.

NOAS which took off officially in 1987 involves the use of informal sector operators (Master crafts men/women) as training outlets for unskilled unemployed persons (persons who have not attended school, school leavers and school dropouts, persons with special needs and fresh graduates of tertiary institutions who desire to acquire functional and marketable skills) located in the urban and semi-urban areas. These persons are recruited and attached to the master crafts men/women for a period long enough for the apprentice to acquire necessary skills (Hashim, 2013; NDE, 2013). Moreso, Hashim (2013) said that these persons (apprentices) are provided with necessary skills to enable them become vocationally well-adjusted and economically well empowered by helping them to possess the required skills and knowledge to make them employable as well as prepare them for the world of work so that they are absorbed in the economy.

In trying to highlight the core objectives of NOAS, Adekola and Ezekiel (2013) has outlined three major objectives contained in government gazette, they include:

- To assist Nigerian youths in acquiring marketable skills with a view to ensuring that they are gainfully employed.
- To promote self-reliance among the youths by encouraging and assisting them to set up cottage industries.
- To stimulate the economy by providing employment opportunities for the Nigerian youths through training and resettlement.

In a bid to realizing these objectives, NDE (2013) showed a dichotomy of two schemes under the NOAS as approved by the NDE management. These schemes are: Basic-National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (B-NOAS) and the Advanced-National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (A-NOAS). The B-NOAS is a scheme through which unemployed school leavers are recruited

and posted to master crafts men/women who are informal operators. While the A-NOAS is designed for graduates of B-NOAS whose skills need to be upgraded to ensure a higher level of proficiency.

The ultimate aim of skills acquisition programme is to make beneficiaries self-employed. To achieve this aim, NDE introduced the Resettlement loan scheme to empower the NOAS beneficiaries after graduation through the provision of facilities and funds for them to own their businesses. The activities that are usually carried out by NOAS include: recruitment and screening of apprentices, verification of trainees, training and retraining of trainees and trainers and the resettlement of trainees.

Family Support Programme (FSP)

The United Nations Decade for woman (1975–85) served as a catalyst in focusing attention on issues confronting women worldwide. In Nigeria, the decade meant very little to the teeming majority of women especially those in rural areas. It is clear that there is need to address the situation of rural women. The better life programme for the rural women was one of the numerous strategic institutional approaches put in place to solve some of identified challenges facing considerable portion of our population. The better life programme for the African rural woman was initiated in September 1986 by Dr. (Mrs) Maryam Babangida. She sought to improve the quality of life and status of the rural women: by creating awareness in women and encourage them to realize, utilize and develop their potentials for a more fulfilling life (Adeboboye, 2009).

It was as a consequence of this that, Her Excellency Mrs. Maryam Abacha reiterated this in observing the deteriorating economic and social condition of the country. The family support programme was conceived and delivered with the, aim of arresting the deteriorating situation and to address the following:

- The crisis in families and the fundamental social problems constituted to the society as a whole.
- The need to consider the rebirth of our society through inculcating our rich culture and traditional family values.
- Realizing that problems of the nations are partly linked to the collapse of the family values and much needed moral and material support to family units.
- Need to sustain discipline, public morality, social cohesion within the society.
- The need to enhance and sustain physical and economic well-being of all members of the family (Adeyemi et al., 1994).

Effects of Family Support Programme in Lagos State

Lagos State was created in May 1967. It is bounded in the North and East by Ogun State, the Atlantic Ocean in the south and an international boundary with republic of Benin on the West. As a trading port, Lagos has a recorded history dating back to the Portuguese explorers of the 16th century. The state is composed of the old federal territory of Lagos – which remains the nation’s financial hob and was the capital of Nigeria up to December 12, 1991, and the old colony province of the defunct Western Region of Nigeria, comprising Badagry, Ikeja, Ikorodu and Epe Divisions. There are twenty (20) local government areas and thirty-seven (37) local

government development area councils. Its main urban centres are Agege, Badagry, Epe, Ikorodu, Ikeja, Surulere, Mushin, Oshodi, Lagos Mainland, Okoyi and Lagos Island. Out of the population in Lagos State, women constitute 48.07% (Eze, 1991).

To empower women in Lagos State, Family Support Programme has been vigorously extended to women in the grassroots to enhance community development for rural women. For example in Egan Seyindo, a rustic rural settlement with about 500 residents located in Epe Local Government Area of Lagos State, is one of the more than 400 rural settlement benefiting from the state governments programme “toward a better life for rural women. The village now boasts of beautiful houses, small scale water scheme at Egan, rural toilets and solar – powered water scheme at Lekki town, pilot community poultry at Erinmope, and the reliabilities micro water scheme at Itoikin in Epe/Ibeju/Lekki axis and Garri processing centre at Shoko. In 2008, the state government has graduated 4,028 young people from its skills acquisition and vocational training spreading across the state (Dada, 2009).

Various non-governmental organizations have been cooperating with the Lagos State government in area of family support programmes. For example, centre for women’s research and development, which is in the forefront for the propagation for the upliftment by the status of women; have been fighting against harmful traditional practices against women. It also have vocational training centre in all local government councils of Lagos State. The less privileged women were trained to acquire skills such as bead making, weaving, fish farming, vegetables farming, small scale business etc, after which micro credit facilities are given to establish on the skills. The Tinubu administration, under the first Lady, Mrs Oluremi Tinubu established alternative for girls schools which primary objective is to cater for women who could not participate in the regular classroom process of teaching and learning or those that dropped out of school and are married with children but are educationally disadvantaged, are given the opportunity to attend school. These ones will use the skills gained in improving the status of their families’ and hence improved the development of the women folks. Under the ministry of women affairs and poverty alleviation (Hon. Mrs) Joke Orelope Adefulire – the Commissioner) and the chairperson’s of LEARN Mrs Abimbola Fashola (1st Lady of Lagos State), advocated strongly the need for children of school age in Lagos State to acquire quality and quantity education that would assist them to become Leaders of tomorrow. To achieve this, a body was created called; LEARN (Lagos State Empowerment and Resource Network). It is a nongovernmental organization which principal aim is to provide secondary school pupils and school leavers with an alternative platform for learning skill acquisition and recreation in an informal and fun-filled environment.

Problems of Adult and Non-Formal Education

Adult education attempts to improve the quality life of the learner, but there are so many factors hinders adult from learning. Adults have barriers and challenges against participating in learning and continuing their condition, some of these barriers include the lack of time, balancing career and family demands, finance and transportation. As well, things such as confidence, interest, and lack of information about opportunities to learn, scheduling problems, entrance requirements and problems with adult education that causes these barriers.

According to Ololube and Egbezor (2012), so many factors combined to hinder the programme of adult education, which include inadequate funding, the budgetary allocation to adult education at all level of government is grossly in adequate especially when compared to the

formal education sector. More importantly non-formal education is excluded in the share of two percent consolidated fund meant for basic education in spite of policy provision. However, it is noted that there is problem of accountability and transparency in the management of funds allocated to non-formal education sector. He further stated that there is lack of inadequate number of instructors or personnel who possess information and communication technology skills, is a serious challenges to Nigeria desire of becoming a key player in the information and communication technology skills across non-formal education literacy in the country.

Ngwu (2016) asserted that there is inadequate number of qualified personnel, appointment of non-formal professionals and trained facilitators who do not understand the use of andragogical techniques. Primary school teachers and even school certificate holders are usually appointed as facilitators. According to Maduagwu (2003), Nigerian certificate in education (NCE) should be the minimum teaching qualification in compliance with the provision of national policy on education to ensure that quality delivery in adult and non-formal education. Statistic revealed that there are still grade 2 teachers and even less qualified personnel teaching in the non-formal education centers and are not fully trained in the anagogical methods. He also stated that there is poor record keeping in NFE. This has seriously affected the data base needed for adequate planning and implementation of non-formal education intervention programmes. This also affects the tracking of learners performance and transition from one level to another.

Adavani and Michael (2013) stated that ignorance and poverty is another major problem of adult education because individual who suffer from ignorance and poverty, even if they join adult education course by compulsion are under pressure and they soon drop out. There is also gender related problem that is woman and girls are major clientele for adult education programme. The superiority of men and the secondary status given to women keep many women and girls away from education. Some men, by and large do not approve of women going out to attend classes to educate themselves, because housekeeping and child rearing will be neglected or will have to be shared. The customs tradition and superstitions add to the dropout rate. Aderinoye (1999) mentioned that there is confidence related problem. If the teacher has a correct perception or opinion of his/her students the teacher will have confidence in the students' progress and ability. A negative attitude will contribute to the failure of the programmes. If the teacher has a positive attitude to students, it will result in the success of the programmes. He again view migration problem as another factor of adult education because learners mostly of socio-economic status migrate in search of jobs or are less stable in their occupation. They move in search of jobs or are less stable in their residence, in fact their life are distributed that they do not have any time for adult education programme. They need to put in more time in learning, which again is in conflict with their migrating life

The Way Forward for Educational Leaders

One is inclined here to accept that there was general misdirection in the use of literacy education in Nigeria in the last decades for the purpose of national development. Most Nigerian citizens live in rural areas and have to make their living by farming. Unfortunately, the kind of education they were exposed to in primary schools could no longer equip them to be better farmers. This has led many young adults to move into towns, seeking white collar jobs, which are difficult to find. These maladjusted young adults who could not be provided with these jobs often later become a burden to the society leading to excessive unemployment it is unfortunate that the effect of giving people the wrong type of education is to ruin both the country side and towns. At

this juncture, this paper strongly desires to propose the following as ways educational leaders and stakeholders can adopt to improve on adult education in Nigeria:

- The adult and non-formal education programme should provide the rural populace with agricultural education through the extension agents who will show the primary school leaver and illiterate farmer's new seeds and animals as well as new farming techniques to improve their agricultural production.
- Adult and non-formal education programmes should design curriculum for the training and retraining of school dropouts, unemployment adults, skilled and semi-skilled workers in current job as well as in job that are likely to exist beyond the 21st century.
- The adult and non-formal education curriculum should be designed to develop the appropriate skill of adult students who would be better prepared to meet the challenge of the future. This means that adult learners should be taught the skills they need to anticipate and solve problems of the future.

CONCLUSION

Adult education aims at improving the situation of people by increasing their skills, knowledge and awareness. It is the adult that could transform the nations not children. The development of any nation depends on the quality of adults that the nation has. Adult education brings a great sense of dignity and self-esteem, enhanced respect of others, an ability to take control of one's life and a greater desire to participate in society. Adult education should be vigorously pursued as through it there would be an all-round development. Therefore adult education should be re-positioned to meet the ever increasing demand of its time and to enable the nation to achieve the Development sustainable goals and Education for all goals. Educational leaders are saddled with the responsibility of emphasizing the need for the implementation of the policies guiding the provisions of adult and non-formal education in Nigeria as enshrined in the National Policy on Education. This will help to curb the issues of unemployment, social ills, and other criminal/violent activities that has plunged the nation to a perpetual state of insecurity. Farmers-headers clashes can be mitigated if this policy is adequately executed.

Suggestions

Based on the following, suggestions were made:

- Government should establish Adult education centres in all the states, since Adult education teaches life planning educational skills. The proximity advantage would no doubt be optimally utilized by the grassroots.
- Government should encourage the Adult education programme currently undertaken in prison.
- Vocational Guidance Counsellors should be provided bearing in mind the decision for life work can take place at various ages and levels in an individual

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