

Examining Adult Literacy Approach towards Repositioning Economic Sustainability in Ogun State

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Abstract

The study examines the adult literacy approach towards repositioning economic sustainability in Ogun State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprises all Federal College of Education students, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. A random sampling technique was used to select five (5) schools in the College in which twenty(20) students were randomly selected from each of the chosen schools to make a total of one hundred(100) samples for the study. A self-developed questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. It was developed in closed-ended of Yes or No. The instrument was moderated by experts who affirmed its validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha. Data collected were analyzed using a simple percentage statistical tool. Findings revealed that the Adult education approach is a veritable tool for economic sustainability because training Adults in terms of literacy will make them communicate effectively anywhere they find themselves; this will enhance the economic viability of that Nation. Adult literacy education is a valuable tool and weapon for combating disease, ignorance and poverty. The study also showed that a skilled and informed adult population is necessary both for the advancement of social and economic development and the promotion of internal unity. The study concluded that adult education facilitators or educators agree that adult literacy approaches significantly influence the economic sustainability development of citizens in the study area. Therefore, the study recommended that facilitators or educators use television, social media and local FM radio stations within the localities in which the classes are located to advertise the importance of joining the literacy classes to enroll more illiterates for the progress of the Nation.

Keywords: Adult literacy, Repositioning, Economic, Sustainability, Facilitators

Introduction

The supposed target of every nation is to make life easy, cheap and comfortable for her citizens. It is this intention that drives nations into embarking on many activities, some of which are economic, political, social, religious, cultural, technological etc, to raise the nation's capital base. An increase in the capital base will likely empower the nation to develop infrastructure and produce goods and services that would make life easy, sweet and comfortable. Attempts to grow Nigeria's economy have been bedevilled by poor infrastructural facility development and maintenance, dependence on imported goods and services, reliance on a single economic sector, weak industrial capacity, inefficient and ineffective public utilities, and low literacy levels. These problems constitute a cog in the

wheel of Nigeria's economic growth and development and, as a result, hinder human growth and development and improve human well-being (Onyeka & Oyebamiji, 2015).

This situation calls for an adult education approach to address these problems and challenges facing human beings. Adult education is vital to addressing these problems because it provides adults with the necessary skills, attitudes, knowledge, values, and beliefs required to trigger any society's social and economic sustainability (Onyeka & Oyebamiji, 2015).

Adult literacy education refers to learning undertaken by or provided for men and women outside the formal school system. In other words, it describes the learning activities that adults engage in to further their knowledge, skills and experiences. However, Adult literacy education is often used interchangeably with other concepts such as literacy, adult basic education, lifelong learning, adult primary, non-formal education, further education and continuing education (Ahmed, 2015).

According to Seya (2014), adult literacy education aims to transmit the general process of technical or vocational skills, knowledge, values and attitudes for self-fulfilment and active participation in society's social, economic and political life. Hence, it occurs outside of the formal education system to remedy the educational inadequacies of some individuals in society. Adult literacy education has become very fundamental for the development of society. This is justified concerning the roles an individual has to play in all perspectives of human endeavours. On this note, UNESCO (2015) made some recommendations that bothered on transformation and expansion of equitable learning opportunities for all individuals.

Similarly, there are assertions that literacy education improves citizens' social well-being through decreased fertility rates and lower infant mortality rates. Apart from the reduction in mortality rate, there is an argument that literacy education also impacts citizens' social well-being, hence closing gender gaps, inequality, and generation of equal rights and opportunities regardless of gender (King & Hill, 2014).

Nkememena (2010) is also of the view that adult education programmes have suffered so much neglect, especially in the aspect of human capacity development in the following ways:

- skills acquisition, knowledge acquisition, and upgrading in various fields of endeavours
- development of competence needed for work
- innovations and creativity to improve their job performances

Adult literacy education is a potential tool by which citizen capacity development can be enhanced to attain sustainable livelihoods in society. Nkememena (2010) supported that adult education programmes provide adequate room for human capacity development in various dimensions of skills and acquisitions. Unfortunately, most Nigerians in rural and urban communities continue to suffer a dearth of development and empowerment programmes for lack of primary literacy education.

Unlike education for children and adolescents, adult education programmes centre on the immediate needs and problems of the adults in their homes, social and occupational roles, and civic and economic interests. Therefore, they have an immediate direct positive relationship with development objectives. Since adults are those already participating in development efforts, there is a need to develop a skilled and informed population of adults who would be capable of understanding national problems and needs and are able to channel their activities towards the fulfilment of national goals. A skilled and informed adult population is vital both for the advancement of social and economic development as well as the promotion of internal unity. This fact makes adult education indispensable for economic, political and social survival (Onyeka & Oyebamiji, 2015).

Adult literacy education is more concerned with an integrated approach to development programmes. There are multifaceted issues that need to be addressed in the communities, focusing specifically on the needs of the people living in Ogun State. Such programmes include education, healthcare, business and so on. Through a practical integrated development approach directed to achieve a far-reaching impact on the community, various programmes are organized to help solve different problems among people. The global effort towards eradicating poverty, ignorance and illiteracy, among other things, cannot be achieved when relevant programmes centred on the population that are the pivot of dynamic and economic sustainable development in our society are not organized or given the needed attention. It is on this premise that Adult literacy education and community development programmes for citizens are considered indispensable tools for transforming communities in Ogun State.

The causes of socioeconomic sustainability of any social impacts are, for example, new technologies, changes in laws, changes in the physical environment and ecological changes. Therefore, educating adults fosters productivity and security and helps them adjust to the changing roles of society. Adult literacy education is a valuable tool and weapon for combating disease, ignorance and poverty. Programmes designed to achieve this economic

sustainability development in Ogun State are Agric-extension, vocational education, workers education, functional literacy, civil and political education, cultural and aesthetic education, remedial/extramoral education etc. (Godpower&Kobani, 2020).

In order to encourage the social, economic, political and cultural progress of the people and keep pace with the rapidly changing society, attention would be placed on adult literacy education and functional education. This would make the adults in the society aware of their individual and community needs and proffer solution for them. This explains why the universal declaration of Human Rights 1948 proclaimed that every person has the right to education and a better standard of living conditions adequate for the health and well-being of him/herself and his family, including food, clothing and all necessities of life. This is why education is generally recognized as a great tool for national and community development (United Nations, 2015).

Adult citizens must be educated and re-educated to acquire basic skills, which they cannot do in isolation. People must be trained as nation builders, farmers, teachers, doctors, family animators etc., in order to encourage the economic, social, political and cultural progress of the people and keep pace with the rapidly changing society; priority should be placed on adult literacy education, functional education etc. This view requires the following adult education approach for developing a literate, informed, skilled and healthy adult population for meaningful economic sustainability. Such approaches are relevant for developing knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, motivation and commitment required for productive efforts, including literacy education, civic adult education, vocational adult education and health adult education.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the adult literacy approach towards repositioning economic sustainability in Ogun State. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Find out how much the adult functional literacy approach influences economic sustainability in Ogun State.
- ii. Investigate how the adult digital literacy approach influences economic sustainability in Ogun State.

Research Questions

- i. Did the adult functional literacy approach influence the economic sustainability of citizens in Ogun State?

- ii. Did the adult digital literacy approach influence the economic sustainability of citizens in Ogun State?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprises all Federal College of Education students, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. A random sampling technique was used to select five (5) schools in the College in which twenty (20) students were randomly selected from each of the chosen schools to make a total of one hundred (100) samples for the study. A self-developed questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. It was developed in closed-ended of Yes or No. To ensure the instrument's validity, the researcher gave the questionnaire draft to the experts to restructure the instrument in line with the research questions. A pilot test was conducted to determine the instrument's reliability, and the scores were tabulated. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula was applied, and a correlation coefficient 0.72 was obtained. Based on the corrections done on the questionnaire items and the test-retest reliability coefficient computed, the instrument was judged adequate, valid and reliable to gather relevant data for the study. The instrument was moderated by experts who affirmed its validity. Data collected were analyzed using a simple percentage statistical tool.

Presentation of Data Analysis and Results

Research Question One: Did adult functional literacy approach influence the economic sustainability of citizens in Ogun State?

S/N	ITEMS	YES		NO		TOTAL	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	Adult functional literacy provides citizens with the will and powers to combat poverty through saleable skills.	96	96%	04	04%	100	100%
2.	Through adult functional literacy citizens can take active part in resources mobilization.	52	52%	48	48%	100	100%
3.	Adult functional literacy enhances self-reliant.	84	84%	16	16%	100	100%
TOTAL		232	77.3%	68	22.7%	100	100%

The study shows that that majority of the respondents 96% chose ‘Yes’ for item 1 while the remaining 4% chose ‘No’. For item 2, majority of the respondents 52 % selected ‘Yes’ while the remaining 48% selected ‘No’. Majority of the respondents 84% opted for ‘Yes’ for item 3 while the remaining 16 chose ‘No’. Therefore, since the cumulative value of Yes (77.3%) is greater than No (22.7%) value, it is therefore shows that adult functional literacy approach influences the economic sustainability of citizens in Ogun State.

Research Question Two: Did adult digital literacy approach influence the economic sustainability of citizens in Ogun State?

S/N	ITEMS	YES		NO		TOTAL	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	Adult digital literacy enhances desirable attitudes and lifestyle that promote communal harmony.	86	86%	14	14%	100	100%
2.	Adult digital literacy creates opportunity for higher learning.	72	72%	28	28%	100	100%
3.	Adult digital literacy makes citizens to acquire new skills and ideals.	81	81%	11	11%	100	100%
TOTAL		239	79.7%	61	20.3%	100	100%

The study shows that that majority of the respondents 86% chose ‘Yes’ for item 1 while, the remaining 14% opted for ‘No’. For item 2, majority of the respondents 72% chose ‘Yes’ while, the remaining 28% selected ‘No’. 81 of the respondents 81% selected ‘Yes’ for item 3 while, the remaining 11% chose ‘No’. Since, the cumulative values of Yes (79.7%) is higher that No (20.3%) responses. It therefore, finding shows that adult digital literacy approach influences the economic sustainability of citizens in Ogun State.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 indicates that the adult functional literacy approach influences the economic sustainability of citizens in Ogun State. When an adult learner acquires new knowledge, skills, or attitudes, he uses it to get a better job, improving his living standard. He can become

self-employed using his new skills, increasing his earning capacity. This is in line with the findings of Chieke, Madu, and Ewelum (2017), which revealed a high correlation between functional literacy education and standard of living.

Table 2, therefore, shows that the adult digital literacy approach influences the economic sustainability of citizens in Ogun State. It also provides human resources to the economy and influences adult learners' attitudes towards work, investment, productivity, saving and profit-making. In other words, it helps to develop human resources via skill acquisition. This finding is in line with the findings of Chieke, Madu, and Ewelum (2017), which revealed that adult literacy education contributes to economic development because it helps its recipient be productive and acquire the needed skills in the labour market.

Conclusion

This work portrays the Adult Education approach as a veritable tool for economic sustainability in Ogun State. This is owed to the fact that adult education has programmes designed for adults, who constitute up to 55% of Nigeria's population and are economically productive and active citizens. The irony is that majority of the illiterates in the country are located within this category of citizens. It is this category of citizens that relevant adult education programmes are designed to equip with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and commitment required to drive meaningful economic sustainability development in Ogun State. It was concluded that adult education facilitators or educators of adult education programmes agree that these adult literacy approaches greatly influence the economic sustainability development of citizens in the study area.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that;

- i. Government should make available resources for intensive campaigns for adult literacy education programmes to make an impact on the people it is meant for.
- ii. Facilitators or educators of the functional literacy programmes should improve their pedagogical skills to help the state's citizens in their writing ability.
- iii. Facilitators or educators should use television, social media and local FM radio stations within the localities in which the classes are located to advertise the importance of joining the literacy classes to enrol more illiterates.
- iv. The government should support adult literacy education in rural and urban communities to enhance national growth and development.

- v. Government should also encourage non-governmental organizations and other bodies to contribute to the funding of adult literacy education programmes; that way, the burden of the funding will reduce

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