

IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING OF MUSIC IN NIGERIAN ADULT EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Introduction

Over the years, adult education in Nigeria has become very pronounced. There occurred a rise in the urge for continuous learning. The reason(s), although varied from one individual to another, may be traced to that fact that some see it as a solution to poverty and also an opportunity to earn better or higher income at their respective offices; while some see it as a thing of pride to be a graduate. Also, in a country where educational qualification is one of the criteria or yardstick for rating competency and acquisition of knowledge and skills, majority desire and gets enrolled or admitted to Institutions running adult education programs. In Corroboration with this view, Apps (1979) in Nzeneri (2008) suggested that the reasons (or educational needs) of these returnees to the campuses involve: to improve their difficult financial times, employment opportunities, self-esteem, for professional advancement, prestige or to satisfy family expectations, etc.

It is hoped that when the individual is equipped through lifelong skills and knowledge, Nigeria's hope for the realization of the millennium development goals that include eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary basic education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV / Aids, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for development would be enhanced. (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004). Besides the various reasons behind the proliferation of adult education in Nigeria, It is important to note that adult education has been conflated into broader agenda of education and development more at level of discourse than in action. The ability of both male and female adult needs to be considered in respect to

their ability to comprehend, retain lessons and combine academic work with both domestic and office work or business most especially when the study of music requires both theory, history and practical. The physiological and psychological differences among male and female adults also demand a research in Music education in Nigeria.

Theoretical framework

Andragogy is the science of adult education which focuses on the learning process and the learner's internalized needs rather than the teaching process and the teacher's outcomes. The principles of Andragogy were developed to create educational philosophies that focus on the needs of adult students and incorporate their life and career experiences (Lindeman, 1926; Knowles, 1980; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2012). The central tenets of Andragogy, as developed by Malcolm Knowles (2012) and based on the original theories of Eduard Lindeman, are: "(a) the learner's need to know, (b) self-concept of the learner, (c) prior experience of the learner, (d) readiness to learn, (e) orientation to learning, and (f) motivation to learn. In the classroom, this translates to a focus on learning rather than on teaching, and on lifelong learning to where students are taught skills and strategies they can apply to their career(s) and throughout their lifespan (Knowles, 1980). Andragogy has been used or applied successfully in classroom settings.

Knowles theory of Andragogy identified five assumptions that teachers should make about adult learners.

1. **Self-concept:** Because adults are at a mature developmental stage, they have a more secure self-concept than children. This allows them to take part in directing their own learning.
2. **Past learning experience:** Adults have a vast array of experiences to draw on as they learn, as opposed to children who are in the process of gaining new experiences.
3. **Readiness to learn:** Many adults have reached a point in which they see the value of education and are ready to be serious about and focused on learning.

4. **Practical reasons to learn:** Adults are looking for practical, problem-centered approaches to learning. Many adults return to continuing education for specific practical reasons, such as entering a new field.

5. **Driven by internal motivation:** While many children are driven by external motivators – such as punishment if they get bad grades or rewards if they get good grades – adults are more internally motivated.

Concept of Adult Education in Nigeria

Adult education is the practice of educating adults. It is a way to improve individually, to uncover new talents and opportunities and find a way to enjoy new potential career. The core principle of adult education is the conviction that learning should not be restricted to a once-in-a lifetime opportunity. Adult education has proven to be extremely successful in performing multiple roles. For example, attending courses as adults at any age supports people to catch up on learning they missed out when they were younger so that they can reach their potential. It also enables individuals to tackle personal issues or circumstances or help them to respond to changing circumstances – often unforeseen – so that they can find a new direction or cope better with change and transitions throughout life.

Above all, joining an adult education course can be an excellent way to meet different people from a very wide range of diverse backgrounds and learn specific new skills and knowledge. Everyone should have the chance to study and learn at stages throughout their lives. And that learning should be readily accessible in differing forms that meet a wide range of individuals' needs. Adult education in Nigeria is hung on the 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 (Edwards, 1997). The need for adult education in Nigeria is obviously not for use at work place alone but also to apply the knowledge and skill acquired in contributing to the development of society. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004) states the objectives of adult education. To incorporate:

- Provision of practical literacy and long-lasting education for adults and the youths.
- Provision of education for diverse groups of completers of the formal education system to advance their fundamental knowledge and skills.
- The provision of in-service, on-the-job, occupational and professional instruction for diverse groups of workers and
- To offer adult citizens of the Nigeria the needed aesthetics, artistic and public education for communal illumination.

Challenges of Adult Education in Nigeria

The challenge of teaching is another problem being faced by adult education and this is in addition to the problem of facilitator. Imhabekhei (2009) is of the opinion that a person that is not a trained adult educator, may not be able to function as expected in terms of teaching the adult and he thus posited that there is need to differentiate between the method for teaching the young ones (pedagogy) and the method for teaching adults (andragogy). Other challenges include:

Inadequate number of qualified facilitators: Appointment of non-professionals and untrained facilitators who do not understand the use of andragogical techniques is an issue that desires to be tackled. Facilitators should learn to incorporate methods of learning that prove effective in every learning situation. Combining methods will help both facilitators and learners to achieve a splendid result.

Poor remuneration: Poor remuneration of facilitators in most institutions is also a nagging issue. Some do not pay the facilitators regularly; the remuneration differs from one institution to another and thus reduces the commitment of lecturers in teaching which turns out to affect students. In some cases, even facilitators are not being paid for so many months. Adult education should be viewed separately from the regular school.

Inadequate funding: The budgetary allocation to adult education at all levels of government and Institutions is grossly inadequate; especially when compared to the regular school. In most cases, most music departments manage the unlimited resources meant for the regular students for adult students. Adequate musical instruments should be available for learning and instructional materials.

Limited time: The allotted time for teaching is too short and thus affects the efficiency of the adult education program. In some Institutions, students only attend lectures at weekends which are not sufficient to learn. Music requires sufficient time to make learning a reality; especially, when students have to learn musical instruments.

Distance: In the world of rapid changes, adult education should be established at the door steps of all interested adult learners; so as to avail the opportunity for learning. Other Institutions should be adequately funded and equipped to commence adult education program to avert having people to travel a long distance in search of a favorable Institution of learning.

Administration: The management and administration of adult education constitute another major challenge to adult education practices. Okafor and Onah (2002) defined administration as the activities of groups cooperating to accomplish common goal. Nwachukwu (1988) sees management as the coordination of all the resources of organization through the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling in order to attain organizational objectives. The question that readily comes to mind is how well is adult education managed and administered?

Insufficient teaching aids: Most of the institutions in Nigeria have the challenge of insufficient teaching aids. The available teaching aids that would have helped to make teaching and learning effective are limited or less to the population of students.

Computer illiteracy: Most adults find it very hard or difficult to cope in this era of computer age. They find it difficult to do research work and assignment. Computer literacy would have been very useful and helpful to get reference materials and as well study on their own online.

Accessibility: Another challenge facing adult students is accessibility to classes. Sometimes getting to class is the biggest challenge. As previously mentioned, many adult learners have extensive time commitments. Whether it is a full-time job or a growing family, other responsibilities make it difficult to attend classes during regular school hours. This can lead to difficulty succeeding at school, or even reluctance to return to school at all.

Life Responsibilities: Many adult students can attest that, school is a huge time commitment. There is time spent in class, time spent preparing for lectures and then the time needed for seminars, assignments and other projects. Above and beyond school commitments, adults who are returning to school face additional demands on their time.

Many adult learners are pursuing their education while still working full time. Many also have families and family obligations. This means less time available for school-related activities. These additional responsibilities can lead to stress and frustration for adult learners.

Clarifying the Purpose of Adult Education: Adult education program provides an array of services. This is achieved through multiple programs with inconsistent indicators of program outcomes. As demand for adult education services continues to grow and available resources are increasingly limited, policymakers and program operators could explore ways to deliver services more efficiently, based on objective data.

Supervision: The role of monitoring cannot be over-emphasized in adult education as this boils down to quality control. Quality Control in education can only be guaranteed through regular and effective supervision. The issue of monitoring should therefore not be taken with levity if adult education is truly to help in creating a progressive society. Babalola and Ayeni (2009) see education as an investment and that it is essential for the development of the nation and that it simultaneously contributes to personal fulfillment and the growth of individual citizen. Adults must therefore not be left out in the issue of personal growth and fulfillment and so adult education must be planned well.

Method of Teaching Adults Music

It is imperative that the music instructor use a variety of teaching materials and methods to take into account differences in learning styles, time, types and place of learning. Lending credence to this strategy, Ihejirika (2007) postulated that the use of several methods instead of reliance on one has, among others, the following values:

- a. It broadens the range of achievable objectives;
- b. It stimulates the interest of both leaders and learners;

- c. It encourages participation; and
- d. It takes account of differential responses of individuals to various approaches.

The available methods that could be adopted include the following:

Debate and quiz method: A teaching method, according to Paiko (1997) for instance, takes the form of arranging learners into small tutorial groups for debate or quiz; they are specific means by which general objectives are accomplished. When the learners are engaged in debate relating to the study, they apply their various life experiences into situation and at conclusion, the music lecturer sheds light on the points raised by individuals during debate.

Discussion methods: A variety of forums for open-ended, collaborative exchange of ideas among a teacher and students or among students for the purpose of furthering students thinking, learning, problem solving, understanding, or literary appreciation. The music lecturer should consider the fact that adults have a wealth of experience and be willing to engage them in discussions. In teaching African music, the lecturer permits them to discuss on the traditional music of their community and probably festivals they have witnessed in their life.

Discovery method: This is one of the constructivist approaches to focus on teaching critical thinking skills using inquiry, discovery, and problem-based learning strategies (Allen, 2008; Elmborg, 2010; Stern & Kaur, 2010). It is obvious that adults like being independent and this will facilitate learning. This can be applied by giving them music assignments and project to embark on and report back to the lecturer in charge.

Scaffolding method: In the field of education, the term scaffolding refers to a process in which teachers demonstrate how to solve a problem, and then step back, offering support as needed. The teacher breaks down complicated tasks or skills into small components that can be completed one at a time. This makes the task less stressful and more manageable, and helps adult learners see their progress.

It is also imperative to note the personality or nature of adults and apply the following in teaching them:

1. Since adults are self-directed, they should have a say in the content and process of their learning.
2. Because adults have so much experience to draw from, their learning should focus on adding to what they have already learned in the past.
3. Since adults are looking for practical learning, content should focus on issues related to their work or personal life.
4. Additionally, learning should be centered on solving problems instead of memorizing content.

Adult Music Learning Environment

The availability of teaching aids in adult classrooms will also facilitate quick learning. It is important that the adult music classrooms be equipped with physical musical instruments such as the piano or electronic keyboard, the brass, woodwind and percussion instruments to demonstrate or sight examples in the course of the lesson. Agina-Obu (2005) opines that it is very important to use instructional aids for instructional delivery to make students acquire more knowledge and to promote academic standard.

Teaching aids or Instructional materials generally are essential and significant tools needed for teaching and learning of school subjects to promote teachers' efficiency and improve students' academic performance. They make learning more interesting, practical, realistic and appealing. They also enable both the teachers and students participate actively and effectively in lesson sessions. They give room for acquisition of skills and knowledge and development of self- confidence and self- actualization. Musical clips will need to be played and viewed to buttress points made by the instructor.

The classroom should be an emotionally safe and sympathetic space for learning where adult students feel encouraged by the instructor and by each other, and are free to ask questions and admit difficulties. The classroom should also be where diverse experiences, viewpoints, and perspectives are acknowledged and respected by all. The important thing is to value the diversity of adult learners and make the learning environment a place where they can share, explore, and continue to grow (Knowles 2012).

Imel (2001) focuses specifically on race and cultural factors, and how they can affect adult learners' academic experiences. As Imel (2001) reports, "race has been relatively unexamined in research on adult students in higher education," so it is not known how much impact this may have on high levels of students' involvement in the learning environment and a curriculum that is inclusive and culturally relevant. This is a best practice that applies to instruction of all adult learners, regardless of their race, gender, culture, class, educational background, or other factors. If the students are encouraged to interact with and reflect on the material, and if the curriculum is inclusive and relevant to students' past experiences and future goals, they will be self-motivated to learn. (Chen, 2014).

Conclusion

Considering that knowledge and skills have become the means for individuals and nations to be competitive, the high rate of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria, in spite of the country's natural resources, can be attributed to a significant extent, to the lack of an education and training system committed to equipping adults to contribute more effectively to social, economic, political and cultural development. National development, enlightenment and eradication of poverty, no matter how passionately desired, are not likely to occur to any meaningful extent if the objective of adult education is not matched with the consistent effort towards improving adult education.

This research concludes that more viable strategies are needed to improve adult education, especially in the teaching and learning of music in Nigeria. It recommends that music educators should see the need to research more into adult education especially on the challenges relating to the subject. Appropriate teaching methods together with adequate instructional materials should however be employed in teaching adults by music educators to make learning a reality. The government should ensure that adult education is fully funded and the policy should be reviewed from time to time.

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