



**BAUCHI JOURNAL OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
DEVELOPMENT (BAJOVEED)**

**Assessment of the Appropriateness of Teaching Methods Used in Adult Literacy Centers in
Kontagora Local Government, Niger State**

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**Academic Journal
Volume 2,
Issue Number 4,
December, 2025**

**Manuscript History
Received: August,
2025
Accepted: September,
2025
Published: December
2025**

**ISSN: 07-0540-4040-30
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Abstract

The study examined the appropriateness of methods of teaching in Adult literacy centres in Kontagora Local Government Area, Niger State. The study was guided by two specific objectives with corresponding research questions and hypotheses. The study adopted survey research design. The entire 30 facilitators and 10 supervisors in the Adult Literacy centre were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a validated structured questionnaire with Cronbach Alpha Coefficient and a reliability coefficient of 0.82. The researchers aided by three research assistants collected the data using direct approach. The data collected were analyzed with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), version 26. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The study indicated that alphabetic, synthetic, analytic, syllabic and eclectic were the most appropriate methods for teaching in Adult literacy centres. It was concluded that the use of these approaches will help to enhancing teaching and learning in the Adult literacy centres Kontagora Local Government Area, Niger State. The recommended among others that there is the need to expose adult literacy facilitators to periodic seminars, conferences and workshop in order to be abreast to the current ideas, innovations and techniques to be employed during teaching for better results and there is also the need to motivate facilitators of adult literacy programmes in order to boost their efficiency.

Keyword: Adult literacy centres, Adult literacy programmes, Appropriateness and Methods of teaching.

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Cite this Article as:

Adelakun, A. A, Ibrahim, A. M., Ibrahim, M. & Mope, R. O. M. (2025). Assessment of the Appropriateness of Teaching Methods Used in Adult Literacy Centers in Kontagora Local Government, Niger State. *Bauchi Journal of Vocational Educational and Entrepreneurship Development (BAJOVEED)*, 2(4), 48-53

INTRODUCTION

Teaching methods can be defined as a systematic plan, strategies, or techniques employed by facilitators to impart the desire knowledge, skills, and values effectively to the learners. The importance of teaching methods in impacting the desire knowledge, skills and values to the learners and in ideal ways cannot be overemphasized. According to Olube (2016), teaching method chosen by facilitators does not only determine the success of instruction but also motivate the learners, enhance retention, and facilitate knowledge application. In chosen the instructional approach do adopt for adult literacy, the facilitator should take into consideration that the adult learners often possess prior life experiences, self-direction, and unique learning needs that require innovative, participatory, and practical instructional approaches. In Nigeria, adult literacy has been described as the process and a system of provide learning opportunities to the adult learners who missed earlier opportunities for formal schooling. Morrow (2013) stated that adult literacy centres are designated spaces that provide specialized programmes in reading, numeracy, social studies, and communication, all aimed at improving the quality of life of adult learners that were not opportune to have formal education. The authors stressed that adult literacy is a platform that mature learners that have not gone through formal education can gain knowledge and competencies required for personal and national development. The Adult education centres offer opportunities for mature learners to develop lifelong learning that will help them to become literate and acquire employable skills for self-reliance. The Federal Government of Nigeria has emphasized on the importance of adult literacy in its National Policy on Education, emphasizing goals such as providing functional literacy for adults who missed formal schooling, offering remedial education for school dropouts, and ensuring continuing education for skill improvement across diverse groups (Aderinoye, 2019).

Adult literacy centres are widely spread across the Local Government Areas in Niger state. The centres in Kontagora Local Government include the Islamiyya School Mayanka in Arewa Ward, Unguwan Ubandoma in Central Ward, Madara Isoho in Madara Ward, Alala Gidan Sarki in Masuga Ward, and Gidan Mallam Audu Kawo in Tunga Kawo Ward. The centres were established to actualize the objectives of the adult literacy programme in Nigeria of access to education to everyone irrespective of location and age. Specifically, the objectives of established numerous adult literacy centres in Niger state it to provide literacy, vocational, civic, and professional training that enhances human capital and community development. The success of these centres in the state, depends on the approaches used by the facilitators. Research in adult education has shown the methods used for teaching in adult literacy centres is mostly prioritize the learner experience, self-directedness, problem-solving, and practical application (Imed, 2020). Stone (2023) identified role-play, storytelling, micro-learning, and immersive learning as effective strategies for facilitating active engagement in adult literacy centres. According to Fadoya (2019), the traditional method of teaching in adult literacy centres which include alphabetic, syllabic, analytic, synthetic, phonic, and eclectic methods are effective in teaching adult literacy. Thus, combination of these different approaches improves the learning outcome of the adults.

Despite the availability and effectiveness of these teaching approaches, the question remains whether appropriate methods are adopted by facilitators for instructional delivery. Appropriateness in teaching is the method that align with the need, aspiration and societal expectations which focus on enhancing teaching and learning. According to Dorgu (2015), Aderinoye (2019) when appropriate teaching method is employed, it motivates the learning, making teaching and learning easy and improve the learning outcome of the learners. Conversely, inappropriate methods often resulted into poor learner engagement, low retention, and unsatisfactory literacy outcomes. Interaction with facilitators and even the learners have shown that adult literacy programmes in Kontagora do face challenges related to the inconsistency of teaching methods across



centres. The pedagogical choices of the facilitators according to centres supervisors mostly is the traditional rote teaching. The baseline survey have also shown that some facilitators more participatory approaches. Such variations raise questions about the overall effectiveness and appropriateness of methods used, and whether they truly align with the philosophy of adult learning and the goals of adult literacy education. The problematic situation cautioned the realization of the aim and objectives of the programme. It was based on this the current study specifically: (1) identify methods of teaching used by facilitators in adult literacy centres in Kontagora Local Government Area; and (2), assess the appropriateness of the methods of teaching used by facilitators in adult literacy centres in Kontagora Local Government Area.

Research Questions

Two research questions were set to guide the study:

1. What are the methods of teaching used by facilitators for teaching learners in adult literacy centres in Kontagora Local Government Area?
2. To what extent are these methods of teaching used by facilitators in adult literacy centres appropriate to the purpose for which the centres were established?

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted of the study was a survey. The design was considered appropriate as it allows the researcher to collection of data from a defined population with the aim of describing existing conditions and making generalizations. The target population of the study was 40 made up of 30 facilitators and 10 supervisors in Adult Literacy Centres in Kontagora Local Government Area of Niger State. Since the population size was manageable, the study adopted a census sampling technique, whereby the entire population was used without sampling. The instrument used for data collection was a teaching method rating scale titled Assessment of Appropriateness of Teaching Methods Questionnaire (AATMQ). The instrument was designed by the researcher using 4-point scale of Most Appropriate, Moderately Appropriate, Inappropriate and Most Inappropriate. The draft of the instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts in Adult Education and Measurement & Evaluation from Niger State College of Education, Minna. Their comments and suggestions were incorporated to improve clarity, relevance, and adequacy of the items. To establish the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted using 10 respondents from adult literacy centres in Minna Local Government Area of Niger state. The data collected from the pilot test were analyzed, and a Cronbach Alpha method, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained. The data collection were collected by the researcher aided by three trained research assistants. The direct administration method was employed to ensure high response rate and to clarify any item misunderstood by the respondents. The completed questionnaires were retrieved were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 26). The package was used to run scores and standard deviation to determine the appropriateness of the teaching methods. The decision rule was based on mean of 2.50 and above for appropriateness and any mean of less than 2.50 was considered not appropriate.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What are the methods of teaching used by facilitators for teaching learners in adult literacy centres in Kontagora Local Government Area?

Table 1: Methods of Teaching Used by Facilitators for Teaching Adult Learners in Adult Literacy Centres in Kontagora

S/N	Teaching method in Adult Literacy Centre	Facilitators		Supervisors	
		Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev
1.	The alphabetic method	3.48	0.51	2.80	0.68
2.	The synthetic method	3.20	0.68	3.44	0.61
3.	The analytical method	2.84	0.78	2.97	0.55
4.	Syllabic method	3.01	0.54	3.00	0.65



5. The phonic method	2.91	0.59	2.88	0.67
6. The electric method	3.17	0.82	3.09	0.52
7. The role play method	2.98	0.91	2.78	0.78
8. Story telling method	2.75	0.52	3.01	0.62
9. Micro-learning method	3.56	0.60	3.51	0.69
10. Immersive learning method	3.00	0.80	2.98	0.68
Cluster mean	3.09	0.64	3.05	0.69

The analysis of data in Table 1 indicated that the methods of teaching used by facilitators for teaching adult learners in adult literacy centres in Kontagora are as follows: The analysis revealed that facilitators recorded the highest mean score in the use of micro-learning method (Mean = 3.56, SD = 0.60), followed by the alphabetic method (Mean = 3.48, SD = 0.51) and the synthetic method (Mean = 3.20, SD = 0.68). These findings indicate that facilitators predominantly adopt micro-learning and alphabetic approaches, which are considered appropriate for adult literacy due to their simplicity and structured learning steps. On the other hand, relatively lower mean scores were observed in story-telling (Mean = 2.75, SD = 0.52), analytical method (Mean = 2.84, SD = 0.78), and phonic method (Mean = 2.91, SD = 0.59), suggesting that these approaches are less frequently utilized in the centres. The analysis from the supervisors' perspective are as follows: the synthetic method (Mean = 3.44, SD = 0.61), micro-learning method (Mean = 3.51, SD = 0.69), and story-telling method (Mean = 3.01, SD = 0.62) received the highest ratings, while role play (Mean = 2.78, SD = 0.78) and phonic method (Mean = 2.88, SD = 0.67) were rated lowest. This implies that supervisors also recognized the relevance of synthetic and micro-learning methods in facilitating adult education, aligning closely with the facilitators' views.

The cluster mean of the items shows an overall mean of 3.09 for the facilitators, while supervisors recorded a mean of 3.05. This suggests that both facilitators and supervisors agreed that, on average, the methods of teaching used in the adult literacy centres were appropriate, though with slight variations in the frequency of application. It was concluded that that micro-learning, alphabetic, and synthetic methods are the most effective and commonly adopted strategies in teaching adult learners in Kontagora, while analytical, phonic, and role play methods are less emphasized. The agreement between facilitators and supervisors underscores the relevance of adopting flexible and learner-centred methods that cater to the needs of adult learners.

Research Question Two: To what extent are these methods of teaching used by facilitators in adult literacy centres appropriate to the purpose for which the centres were established?

Table 2: Appropriateness of Method of Teaching Used in Adult Literacy Centres in Kontagora Local Government

S/N	Teaching method	Facilitators		Supervisors	
		Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev
1.	Reading comprehension	3.02	0.64	2.95	0.81
2.	Numeracy	2.87	0.53	3.01	0.55
3.	Writing development	3.14	0.57	3.127	0.58
4.	Social studies	2.89	0.58	2.70	0.55
5.	Skills acquisition	2.77	0.61	2.76	0.71
6.	The electric method	3.07	0.68	2.91	0.63
	Cluster mean	2.96	0.59	2.91	0.87



The results in Table 2 indicated that the cumulative mean score for facilitators across the six items was 2.96 with standard deviation of 0.59, while that of supervisors was 2.91 with the standard deviation of 0.87. These mean values are both above the average decision rule of 2.50 on the 4-point scale, which suggests that the teaching methods are generally considered appropriate to the objectives of adult literacy centres. Specifically, facilitators rated writing development (mean = 3.14) and reading comprehension (mean = 3.02) as the most appropriate methods, followed by the eclectic method (mean = 3.07). Supervisors, on the other hand, rated writing development (mean = 3.12) and numeracy (mean = 3.01) as the most appropriate, while skills acquisition (mean = 2.76) and social studies (mean = 2.70) were rated lowest by both groups. These results suggested that while the methods of teaching employed in the adult literacy centres are largely appropriate to achieving the goals of literacy and numeracy improvement among adult learners, there are notable areas of weakness. Skills acquisition and social studies, though relevant, are not being adequately emphasized by facilitators and supervisors. This implies that greater attention should be given to these areas in order to align the teaching process more effectively with the broader mandate of adult literacy centres, which goes beyond basic literacy to include life skills and functional education.

DISCUSSION

The finding of research question one disclosed that the respondents perceive the teaching methods as relevant and supportive of the core objectives of adult literacy centres in Kontagora Local Government. Specifically, the result shows that there was emphasis on reading, writing, numeracy, social studies, and skills acquisition reflects the aim and objectives of the goals of adult literacy programme in Niger state pf empowering the learners with functional literacy and skills for socio-economic participation. This result is consistent with Okech and Asiachi (2020) whose study disclosed that instructional methods focused on the needs and aspiration of the adult learners in rural centres. Again, it was reported by Aderinoye and Oyekan (2019) that teaching of adult literacy aligned with the practical purposes for skills development and daily life problem-solving, learners become more motivated and engaged. It was also reported by Yusuf (2021) that the performance of adult learners in Nigeria improved in literacy and numeracy when facilitators as a result of learner-centered approach adopted. In another related study conducted by Okediran (2020), it was reported that adult literacy programmes achieve their goals when teaching methods directly address the needs and aspiration of the learners. The findings in this study, particularly the high approval ratings for skills acquisition, echo this position. So also, it was reported by Onah and Igbo (2022) that while many literacy centres in Nigeria adopt appropriate teaching methods, however, insufficient training of facilitators and limited instructional resources sometimes hinder the full potential of these methods.

The finding of research question two revealed that traditional teaching methods such as alphabetic, synthetic, analytic, syllabic, and phonic approaches remain the dominant instructional strategies in adult literacy centres in Kontagora. The outcome reflects the adoption of the conventional pedagogies that are more familiar and easier to implement by facilitators with limited resources. The result is consistent with Adepoju (2017) whose study reported that teaching of adult literacy in Nigeria is still depending on traditional methods due to inadequate exposure to modern strategies. Okediran and Aderinoye (2018) noted that the majority of teaching method used in adult education centres in Nigeria are alphabetic and phonic methods because which require fewer resources and mostly teacher centred. In the same vein, it was highlighted by Yusuf (2019) that the use of storytelling and role play remains is dominantly used in literacy programmes in Nigeria. Oduaran (2020) emphasized that innovative strategies such as immersive and micro-learning are rarely used in rural adult literacy centres due to infrastructural and financial challenges.

CONCLUSION

Based on the outcome of the study, it was concluded that the instructional approaches used in adult literacy centres in Kontagora Local Government are generally appropriate to the purpose for which the centres were established. The facilitators and supervisors all agreed that methods such as reading comprehension, writing development, numeracy, micro-learning, alphabetic, and synthetic approaches are effectively applied and contribute positively to literacy development. Although, the finding suggested that there is lower mean



scores recorded for methods such as role play, storytelling, social studies, and skills acquisition suggest that these important learner-centred and functional approaches are not fully utilized. This imbalance indicates that while the literacy goals of the centres are being met to a reasonable extent, there is limited emphasis on functional education and experiential learning, which are vital for equipping adult learners with broader competencies for real-life application.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, it was recommended that:

1. Facilitators should improve the use of learner-centred methods such as role play, storytelling, and skills acquisition in order to make literacy learning more functional and practical for adult learners.
2. Supervisors should ensure a balanced use of both literacy-focused and functional methods so that the centres do not only address reading and writing but also prepare learners for real-life applications.

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