

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR ADULT EDUCATION JOURNAL

Volume 21 Issue 1, June 2016



A publication of
NIGERIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR ADULT EDUCATION

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Adult Education in Nigeria

Volume 21, Issue 1, June 2016

Theme:

Addressing the Challenges of Adult and Non-Formal Education
Practices in Contemporary Times.



**JOURNAL OF NIGERIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
ADULT EDUCATION**

Published For NNCAE by



**University of Benin Press
Ekehuan Road Campus, P.M.B.1154,
Edo State, Nigeria**

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ISSN: 2536 - 6696

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Editorial – Adult educators should address the challenges of Adult and Non-Formal Education practices in contemporary times

The theme of this issue of our journal is addressing the challenges of adult and non-formal Education practices in contemporary times. The conference was held at the Faculty of Education Auditorium, University of Lagos, Akoka-Lagos State from 13th October – 16th October 2015. The NNCAE Lagos conference was an avenue for Adult Educators to discuss issues of common interest as it relates to the challenges of adult and non-formal education practices in contemporary times. The President, Professor Fatima Umar welcomed all participants and gave her opening address which is contained in this issue of the journal.

There was a key note address which was delivered by Professor Dugje Kadiri and a lead paper delivered by Prof. Ayodele A. Fajonyomi; The said papers are reproduced in this issue for the benefit of all members.

The 31 (Thirty one) papers published in this issue had gone through double blind peer review and were cleared for publication in May, 2015. The articles focused on various researches in the field of adult and non-formal education. In addition the articles provided a wide range of learning concepts for adult educators, both in theory and practice giving room for further research.

In contemporary times, our role as an association has been to contribute meaningfully towards sustaining knowledge, attitude, skills and values in the teaching and learning process in order to stimulate individuals and groups to acquire competency in adult and non-formal education work.

The theme of this issue is broad and all-encompassing especially for a professional journal of this nature, hence adult educators should address the challenges of adult and non-formal education in contemporary times to ensure that learning outcomes are beneficial to all stakeholders.

Professor (Mrs.) Lucy AdesomonOkukpon (PhD)
Editor

From The President NNCAE

Protocol

Let me begin by welcoming you all to this very important and in my opinion far reaching gathering of academics and practitioners in adult education delivery in Nigeria. As you are all aware, the theme of the conference is “Addressing the Challenges of Adult and Non-formal Education in Contemporary Times”.

The choice of the theme is in acknowledgement of the state of affairs of lives individually and as a people. We are painfully aware of the state of our challenges which range from insecurity, poverty, unemployment, epidemics and natural disaster. At the Nigerian National Council on Adult Education we believe that the foundation of Adult Education rests on four (4) strong pillars: namely, learning to live together, learning to know, learning to do and learning to be as developed by Mahatma Chandhi in 1939. As theorists and practitioners, we believe that Adult and Non-formal Education should be geared towards the acquisition, renewal and putting to use of knowledge. So one of our challenges is how education could be extended to the millions of adult illiterates. In conformity and spirit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) and the Education for all (EFA) as well as the International Literacy Day reaffirm the importance of Adult and Non-Formal Education, as a consequence of active citizenship participation as a powerful tool for promoting active awareness and participation in democracy, justice, gender equity, scientific and social development with a view to build a country in which violence, conflict and poverty would give way to easy access to social services, development of functional policies and implementation of programmes and projects that will provide life skills (technical and Manual) to the teeming populace of our dear country, especially the Adult illiterates and neo- literates. The creation of opportunities for people to learn life skills make it possible to successfully link general formal education with vocational and employment oriented training in such a way that the different components reinforce and build one another.

My dear colleagues at the NNCAE, I am of the conviction that our presentations and deliberations at this forum would gear towards the foregone reminder of the role of Adult and non-formal Education. Towards this end, the new Executive of the Council has planned to take the following steps to move the council forward and make it more functional:

- ◆ Ensure a cordial working relationship as paramount to the success of the present leadership. As such, there shall be a National Executive Council meeting at least once a year (modalities to be developed later)

- ◆ State branches shall be established as a way of attracting non-academic members into the council.
 - As a pilot activity of forming state branches, the meeting proposed to start with ten (10) states namely: Kano, Sokoto, Borno, Osun, Oyo, Kwara, Enugu, Benin, Rivers, Lagos and Anambra.
 - Universities and Colleges of Education with Adult Education Departments shall liaise with respective agencies for mass education to form state branches of the council.
- ◆ NNCAE should strengthen relationship with international development partners such as; UNESCO, UNICEF, DFID, British Council and Sister Organizations- UBEC, NMEC, Nomadic Education Commission, MDGs, NUC, TETFUND and indeed the Revitalization committee.
- ◆ Write advocacy letters and pay courtesy calls to the above organizations.
- ◆ **FUNDING**, it was resolved that:
 - All state branches are to contribute to the national body
 - Revive annual due payment (N2,000)
 - Revive payment of membership fee (N5,000 was agreed upon) and provide certificates of membership (renewable every 3 years).
 - Conference registration should be closely monitored.
 - fund raising activities through partnerships with Banks, network providers, philanthropists, companies, old friends of NNCAE etc.
 - Liaise with immediate past Exco to get up to date statement of account, especially the account of the last conference.
 - **October of each year** was proposed as the national conference month.

I am happy to report that we have been able to publish our journal after the last conference. The journal is of high quality in both print and content and is on display and sales.

With your support, I believe we are on very positive path, a path that would recommend future policies and priorities that would uncover wide range of diverse possibilities for Adult and Non-formal Education in Nigeria, a philosophy which the NNCAE stands for. We thank the Lagos University for taking the pains of hosting this year's conference. As you can see we all have been adequately taken care of.

Once again I pray we have a very successful and beneficial Conference.
Thank you very much.

Prof. Fatima Umar
President.



WOMEN EDUCATION: A PANACEA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mohammed R.M.O.

**Department of Adult & Primary Education, University of Ilorin,
Ilorin Nigeria.
mopeedun@gmail.com**

and

Sholagberu A.O.

**Department of Educational Foundation, Kwara State
College of Education Ilorin
Saadabdulsalam34@gmail.com**

Abstract

Women play a significant role in nation building. Their education is seen as a vehicle for sustainable development in Nigeria. The paper x-rays the concept of women education, sustainable development and the factors militating against women education. It also highlights the need for women education and the challenges faced to achieve sustainable development. The paper suggests that since the roles played by women in sustainable development are of great importance, they should be availed with good educational opportunities to enhance their social, political, and economic participation towards enhanced sustainable development.

Keywords: *Women education and sustainable development.*

Introduction

All over the world, education is recognized as the cornerstone for sustainable national development (Oyitso & Olomukoro, 2012). In the last two decades, according to Olaleye (2008), debates on the status of women and the need to integrate them into development process of any nation have been discussed at national and international workshops, seminars and conferences. He further asserted that the problems of women opportunities for education looms larger at the turn of the twenty-first century in Africa and that women represents two-thirds of the world illiterate adults while girls account for a similar

proportion of the world's out- of-school population. However, for women to be integrated into the development process, they need quality education, in order to become co-partners in national development.

UNESCO (2002) states that women form a high percentage of the population, and as such they need quality literacy education to be able to contribute their quota to the development of the nation. There is the realization that sustainable human development cannot be effective if half of the human race (the womenfolk) remain ignorant, marginalized and discriminated against. The provision of quality literacy to them will greatly improve lives and livelihood and will no doubt have a great and sustainable social and economic impact on the women. This was based on the belief that the full integration of women in all aspects of political, economic and social life, at the international, regional and national levels, is essential if the obstacles to the achievement of the goals and objectives for women are to be overcome (Okojie, 2011).

In Nigeria today, women have come a long way in businesses, politics, education, sports and other professions. They have made an indelible mark in their efforts to conquer the limitations of the past which have sought to place them permanently in the kitchen and bedroom. Majority of Nigerian women have not been fully mobilized and empowered to contribute to national development. Onwubiko (2012) asserts that they have been dehumanized and traumatized in so many ways, as out of over 1.3 billion people who live in abject poverty around the globe, about seventy percent are women. For these women, poverty does not just mean scarcity and want, it implies rights denied, opportunities curtailed and voices silenced. According to Unagha (2006), poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom, and all these are mainly encountered and faced by women.

The importance of literacy and women empowerment in promoting gender equality and the advancement of women was further stressed by the Millennium Development Goals (2000), the Education for All (EFA) and Dakar goals (2000). Olomukoro (2012) opines that the National Policy on women was approved and adopted in Nigeria in the year 2000, of which the goal of the policy is the full integration of women into the social and political status as a means of developing the nation's human resources for national economic development. Its objectives included the promotion of gender mainstreaming into all policies and programmes.

Meaning of Women Education

The education of women was earlier limited to the informal system of education which is education acquired in the family. The informal method of educating women was the major system of acquiring knowledge which women

were exposed to for a very long time. According to Barry (2013), women education dates back to the 18th century in America where women were being taught how to handle household chores. Women education during this period was therefore fashioned towards assisting the girl child become a wife material and manage her home properly after marriage.

Today, the education of women has gone beyond the task of being home managers to that of managing small and large business organizations. Women now acquire formal education in order to contribute effectively to the management of various sectors of the society. Since women are now exposed to the same learning environment available to their male counterparts, they have been empowered to contribute equally to the advancement of the society. It refers to all platform of education established to provide women with equal opportunities and access to formal education just like their male counterpart. This means that education of women must be tailored to meet their societal and health needs.

Concept of Sustainable Development

Literarily, development has been defined as a qualitative increase in the output of a nation from all productive sectors of the economy. It is a state in which the various sectors of the economy are operating at full capacity to provide a better life for the citizens. However, sustainable development goes beyond the qualitative and quantitative increase in output from all sectors of the economy. According to Wikipedia (2013), sustainable development has to do with human development in which resources are used to meet human needs while ensuring the sustainability of natural systems and the environment, so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for generations to come. Sustainable development therefore goes beyond meeting the immediate needs of the present generation, it also deals with securing a comfortable future for generations yet unborn. On their part, the International Institute of Sustainable Development (IISD) (2013) defined Sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Development is sustainable when the level of qualitative and quantitative output from the various sectors of the economy is able to meet the needs of the present and future generations respectively.

Sustainable development can similarly be said to be development that has maximum importance to both the present and future generation according to their needs. As such, women in the society have important roles to play in sustaining the development of the nation. This role can be effectively achieved when women are given equal opportunities to contribute to the growth of the economy like their male counterparts.

Factors that Inhibit the Education of Women in Nigeria

The economic, political, social and religious sectors of the economy will perform better if women are involved in managing the affairs of the various sectors of the economy. This will assist the nation in achieving national objectives. However, there are so many factors that have hindered the education of women in order to empower them to contribute meaningfully to the sustainable development of the nation. Some of these factors include the following:

Cultural Beliefs: The African culture over the years has relegated the position of women into that of a home tender. This belief system has been upheld by various societies and has contributed to the slow progress recorded by women both nationally and internationally. According to Shinaba (2008) cultural beliefs in the past suggest that training a woman was just a waste of time and resources. This has contributed to the unwillingness of parents, communities and the nation from providing an enabling environment for women education to thrive.

Low Self-Esteem: According to Glover (2000) most women have failed to pick up science and technology related tasks even though they possess the needed intellectual ability. They have deliberately shied away from responsibilities that they also have the capacity to execute. Women all over the country have passionately embraced the position of a home tender which society has relinquished them to. Very few women are willing to rise up and compete with the men in areas where they have comparative advantage. This is due to the low self-esteem that has been developed by them.

Fear of Dominance: Another factor that has inhibited the drive for the education of women in the country is the fear of domination by their male counterpart. Anugwom (2009:131) stated that "men see themselves as the rightful owners of the formal economic sector and abundant socio-cultural practices support this. It appears that the will and possibility of succeeding in the society is solely reserved for the men. Therefore, most men fear that when women are given the opportunity to acquire the needed education, it may imply that they may have to relinquish some of their positions to the women in the society.

Insufficient Infrastructure: Infrastructure play a significant role in the provision of quality education in any nation. The availability of appropriate infrastructure such as school library, classrooms, workshops, laboratories, electricity and water supply contributes to the in- effectiveness of the school system. Similarly, women require certain infrastructure that need to be put in place in order for them to learn effectively in the school system. Infrastructure that will boost their entrepreneurial skills need to be put in place in order to make schooling interesting to them.

Insecurity: The level of insecurity in the nation has affected the educational sector as a whole. However, the worse hit is women who are already

marginalized in the past and are unable to defend themselves in times of crisis and violence. Most parents would prefer their children to attend schools where security is guaranteed. Also, with the increasing level of insecurity in the country. Students both male and female alike have been deprived the privilege of acquiring education of their choice.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment at all levels of education in the country is more pronounced between male teachers and female students. In the same way, the type of job secured by women is dependent on the type of education acquired. Women are therefore exposed to sexual harassment both in school and at work.

Leathwood (2005) noted that the preference for different job types contribute to sexual enticement in selected job types. With more male teachers in the educational sector, there is bound to be an increase in the level of sexual harassment between male teachers and female students than the other way round. This has contributed to the reasons why most girls especially in the north have been deprived the opportunity of attending formal education as this may serve as an avenue for the married women around them to be exposed to sexual advances from their male teachers.

How Women Education can be used to achieve Sustainable Development

According to Omolewa (1998) described women education as the types of education specifically designed for women. They require skills & knowledge to be able to contribute meaningfully and productively in their various communities.

No Nation has ever attained sustained development without embracing education. There are so many indicators for sustainable development which women education can facilitate, these includes; family planning, skills acquisition, social integration, economic growth and health status. However, these could be achieved through functional and effective women education programmes. Women education could be used to achieve sustainable development through the process of realization the inherent talent in them with the ability to read and comprehend and to write successfully and communicate in a variety of settings. Women will be able to realize their social worth and self-esteem.

Social responsibility is incorporated in the Nigeria educational settings. This has to do with humanistic social etiquettes and manners. If a woman is educated, such a woman would be socially and culturally responsible. Many educational programmes are aimed at promoting values such as equity, inclusion, and respect for cultural diversity, peace and active democratic practices (Carr-Hill 2001).

Conclusion

This paper examined how women education can enhance sustainable development socially, economically, politically through appropriate empowerment programmes like basic literacy, skills acquisition, and access to information. Education, formal or non-formal, is the foremost agent of empowerment and attainment of educational status in any nation.

Recommendations

The government, international development partners, civil society, non-governmental and private organizations should ensure that the use of women education programmes towards national development assumes higher priority attention.

Empowering Nigerian women towards national development should be a matter of national priority which demands the attention and genuine commitment of all responsible members of the society. It is along this line that the paper feels inclined to put across some recommendations which could be brought into play for the realization of the noble goals of women's contribution to sustainable development.

The Nigerian government has a crucial role to play in providing an enabling environment for Nigerian women to rekindle their hope and faith in the ability of the system to provide avenue for development for them irrespective of sex, age, ability, religious inclination and other mundane considerations.

- The Nigerian nation owes the women folk the responsibility of removing those artificial and institutional barriers based on religion, culture or traditional considerations which have incapacitated their ability to participate effectively and freely in national affairs particularly at the political and economic levels.
- Women on their part should strive to break through developmental barriers with great determination, perseverance, unbreakable solidarity and genuine desire to conquer the natural challenges facing them.
- Women organizations and movements have important roles to play by seeking to protect the interest of women. These organizations and movements should shoulder the responsibility of seeing that institutions in society are deliberately structured to remove hindrances and constraints on the paths of women.
- The nation needs to understand that laying a solid and stable foundation for the girl child is a vital link in the overall development and advancement of the society. The girl child should not be denied access to education.

- The Federal, state and local governments should work hand in hand to support the effective implementation of women education programmes in the country.

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