

Factors Influencing Adult Learners Participation in Literacy Programmes in Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Education has been seen as an important tool for developing of an individual and community. It is therefore crucial to study the factors affecting the educational program. This study examined the factors influencing adult learners participation in literacy programmes in Atiba Local Government area of Oyo State. A simple random sampling technique was used to select one hundred and twenty respondents in order to identify the factors influencing their participation in the literacy programme. Chi-square analysis was used to analyse the data. The investigations revealed that majority (74.2%) of the respondents are male, mostly (28.3%) between 16 and 50 years of age and high percentage (77.5%) is married. The majority (49.2%) of the respondents are government employed while (35%) are traders. Also more than half (64.2%) have 1-4 family size and majority (60.0%) are Christian. (39.2%) involved in post literacy with (60.8%) just spending less than two years on the programme. The highest percentage (90.85%) indicate that there is availability of adult literacy programme in their community while (1.7%) of the respondents said that literacy for children in existence in their communities. The result also indicated that the majority (55.8%) participated in the programme through contribution of money, materials and own labour. The study identified that factors affecting participation in literacy programmes are lack of funds, insufficient and far centres, and lack of time for study, low assimilation and ill-health. Chi-square analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between age, gender and participation in literacy programmes (Chi-square = 0.02, $p < 0.05$) while there is no significant relationship between marital status, family size and religion of the respondents and their participation in literacy programmes. (Chi-square = 0.001, $p = 0.05$; chi-square = 0.13, $p = 0.05$; chi-square = 0.84, $p = 0.05$ respectively). A need assessment of literacy programmes should be carried out before the commencement of literacy programme in the community. This may be carried out using combination of methods of methods such as use of key informants, community forums and field surveys which when in combination tends to sensitize the people because they are involved right from the beginning of the programmes.

Key words: Adult, literacy, participation, illiteracy

Introduction

Nigeria as a developing country is concerned about the literacy level of its citizen and as such embarked on mass literacy campaign by the use of a programme known as "literacy for all" in the year 2020. But rather than getting a reduction in the number of illiterates, it is disheartening to know that illiterates are on the increase. This is why literacy development activities or programmes are embarked upon so as to improve the existing knowledge, which is meant to be of benefit to the community. Citing a growing demand for global education and global competence Heekans (2001) states that the need for the distance education through technology is on the rise. According to Heekans, this need makes it important for more adult learners to be technologically literate if they want to keep their jobs, seek promotion or change careers. To attain this technological literacy many adults will have to return to school. Semi-literates can be found among people who are able to read mother tongue newspaper and books or sub-standard or pidgin English comic but are virtually unable to write (Street, 1990).

Literacy is defined as the ability to "read and write in the language with understanding" (NPC, 2004). The adult literacy rate is the share of literate persons in the

population aged 15 years and older (Friedrich, 2008). An adult learner is one who returns to school full-time or part-time while maintaining responsibilities such as employment, family and other responsibilities of adult life (Benshoff and Lewis, 1992). On the other hand, adult learners' participation conveys that the intended clients or beneficiaries of the literacy project have some influence over decisions about the focus and content rather merely receiving a share of project benefits. 69.1 per cent adult Nigerians are illiterate (UNDP, 2008). Rural people are responsive to literacy projects if they participate from the beginning in the planning and implementation and if the literacy activity meets their felt needs and aspirations. Akimpelu (1992) expressed concern about the casual relationship between literacy and economic development in the developing countries of the world. Education For All (EFA) agenda is incomplete without adult literacy (Menkiti, 2008).

The various communities provide an ideal setting in which literacy development can help social change to develop in the community over a period of time. Emphasis is on the adults as the child's first teacher and more importantly, the adult learners have been targeted because illiteracy seems to be passed from one generation to the next. Children whose parents are

functionally illiterates are twice likely as their peers to be functionally illiterates too (Kasworm et al, 2000)

Bearing all these in mind, it then becomes obvious that literacy development is a total approach to development. The people should be encouraged to identify their own needs. And then develop interest and enthusiasm to satisfy their needs. This means that adult learners' participation is vital to literacy programme, as it is a democratic process involving self-help by the people and for the people in order to satisfy their utmost needs. It is against this background that the study will attempt to provide answers to the following research questions such as knowing personal characteristic of the adult learners, identifying the literacy programmes being undertaken in the study area and determine the effect of factors affecting level of participation of adult learners in the literacy programmes.

Objective of the Study

The general objective was to determine the factors affecting level of participation of adult learners in literacy programmes in Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo State

The specific objectives were to :

1. identify the personal characteristics of adult learners
2. determine the literacy programmes that are available in the study area
3. examine the level of participation of the adult learners in literacy programmes
4. examine what motivates adult learners in literacy programmes technique was
5. determine the constraints faced by adult learners in literacy

Hypothesis of the Study

H₀: There is no significant relationship between respondents' personal characteristics and their participation in literacy programmes

Methodology

The area of study is Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo State with the headquarters at Ofa. Meta. It has a land mass of over 219,753 sq-km which is made of 302 villages. The population for this study includes all adult learners in Atiba Local Government area.

A simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. Twelve respondents were randomly selected from each of the ten-(10) literacy centres to make a sample size of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents.

Data were collected using interview schedule and analyzed using both descriptive and non descriptive statistics. The independent variable in the study are the respondents' personal characteristics and these are age, gender, primary occupation, secondary occupation, marital status, religion, family size and factors affecting adult learners participation. Factors affecting adult learners participation are measured on 5 points rating scale of strongly agree=5, agree=4, undecided=3, disagree=2 and strongly disagree=1. The level of participation was measured by asking respondents to indicate whether they never participated in any literacy programme, or contributed money, materials and own labour, or served on implementation committee or whether they served on committee and contributed.

Tables, frequency counts and percentage were used to present information relating to the personal characteristics of the respondents, type of literacy involved in, number of years spent on the programme, the literacy programme available in the area, the level of participation of the respondents in literacy programmes and the constraints facing respondents in the literacy programme. However, the inferential statistic were used to show whether there is significant relationship between respondents' personal characteristics and their level of participation in literacy programmes.

Results and Discussion

Selected personal characteristics of the respondents

VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
AGE (year)		
< 31	23	19.2
31-35	17	14.2
36-40	19	15.8
41-45	22	18.3
46-50	34	28.3
≥ 50	5	4.2
TOTAL	120	100
GENDER		
Male	89	74.2
Female	31	25.8
TOTAL	120	100
OCCUPATION		
Farming	12	10
Hunting	9	7.5
Fishing	5	4.2
Trading	42	35.0
Transportation	7	5.8
Carpentry	1	0.8
Leatherworks	4	3.3
Others	35	29.2
No response	5	4.2
Total	120	100
NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT		
Self-employed	59	32.5
Government employed	59	49.2
Unemployed	7	5.8
Political functionary	4	3.3
Employment in private sector	11	9.2
Total	120	100.0
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	17	14.2
Married	93	77.5
Divorced	5	4.2
Widowed	2	1.7
Separated	3	2.5
Total	120	100.0
FAMILY SIZE		
1-4	77	64.2
5-8	33	27.5
9 and above	10	8.3
Total	120.0	100.0
RELIGION		
Christianity	72	60.0
Islam	37	30.8
Traditional	11	9.2
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field survey 2007

Selected personal characteristics data were collected from the respondents as shown in table 1 and 2. The result indicated that the highest number (28.3%) of respondents fall within the range of 46 – 50 years, that means that they are adult and majority of them (74.2%) were male with trading as their primary occupation

Large proportion (77.5 %) were married and a significant percentage (64.2%) were made up of family size of 1-4.

Also, the majority (60 %) of the respondents were Christian and mostly (49.2 %) were government workers.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to literacy involved in

VARIABLE PERCENTAGE	FREQUENCY	
LITERACY INVOLVED IN		
BASIC LITERACY	27	27.5
INTERMEDIATE LITERACY	27	22.5
POST LITERACY	47	39.2
FUNCTIONAL LITERACY	13	10.8
TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Field survey 2007

Table 2 shows that 39.2% of the total used for the study are involved in post literacy and it is the largest when compare to the other type of literacy.

Table 3: Distribution of the respondent by number of years spent on the programme

No of years spent on the programme	Frequency	Percentage
< 2 years	73	60.8
2-5 years	47	39.2
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field survey 2007

The table 3 shows that the majority (60.8%) had spent less than 2 years on the program while 39.2% had spent between 2 and 5 years on the adult literacy programme.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by the literacy programme in the area.

LITERACY PROGRAMME	AVAILABLE		NOT AVAILABLE	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Children	2	1.7	118	98.3
Youth	71	59.2	49	40.8
Adult	109	90.8	11	9.2

Table 4 shows that 90.8% of the respondents stated that literacy for adults is available in their community while only 1.7% of the respondents said that literacy

programme for children is in existence in their communities.

Table 5 : Distribution of respondents by level of participation.

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	AGREED		DISAGREED	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
NEVER PARTICIPATED IN ANY LITERACY PROJECT	18	15	102	85
CONTRIBUTED MONEY, MATERIALS AND OWN LABOUR	71	59.2	49	40.8
SERVED AS IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE	36	30.0	84	70.0
SERVED AS COMMITTEE AND CONTRIBUTION	8	6.7	112	93.3

Table 5 shows that 59.2% of the respondents participated through contribution of money, materials and labour, 30.0% participated as member of committee on implementation while 6.7% combined both the

contribution and committee work together. However, 15% of the respondents never participated in any literacy project at all.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents by the factors influencing adult learners participation in literacy programmes.

Factors influencing adult learners participation	SA		A		U		D		SD		NO RESPONSE	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1 To know how to read write & calculate	77	64.2	40	33.3	-	-	1	0.8	2	1.7	-	-
2 Influence of educated people	20	16.7	81	70.0	5	4.2	9	7.5	2	1.7	-	-
3 To know more people & make more friends	18	15	77	64.2	9	7.5	11	9.2	4	3.3	1	0.8
4 Because of husband's marriage to educated	7	5.8	21	17.5	4	3.3	34	28.3	54	45.5	-	-
5 To increase my happiness	21	17.5	86	71.7	5	4.2	7	5.8	-	-	1	0.8
6 It would make me more recognized by the people in the society	33	27.5	80	66.7	4	3.3	2	1.7	1	0.8	-	-
7 It would make people respect me more than before	30	25.0	73	60.8	10	8.3	6	5.0	1	0.8	-	-
8 To boost my ego among friends colleagues and contemporaries	56	46.7	54	45.0	1	0.8	5	4.2	3	2.5	1	0.8
9 Because of some of my friend already attending the programme	10	8.3	77	64.2	8	6.7	17	14.2	6	5.0	2	1.7
10 To be able to speak English language	38	31.7	71	59.2	3	2.5	7	5.8	1	0.8	-	-
11 To gain satisfaction that I have attained a desired level of the education ladder	19	15.8	85	70.8	7	5.8	6	5.0	3	2.5	-	-
12 Because of people's advice	15	12.5	61	50.8	13	10.8	24	20.0	6	5.0	1	0.8
13 Because of campaign handed on the programme	12	10.0	20	16.7	18	15.0	62	51.7	8	6.7	-	-
14 To get government job	19	15.8	29	24.2	16	13.3	43	35.8	12	10.0	1	0.8
15 To help my daily activities	44	36.7	59	49.2	9	7.5	6	5.0	1	0.8	1	0.8
16 Age is a barrier to educational achievement	20	16.7	35	29.2	13	10.8	44	36.7	8	6.7	-	-
17 My present environment has helped me a lot in achieving my educational desire	15	12.5	73	60.8	14	11.7	16	13.3	-	-	2	1.7
18 My social status has contributed to my academic achievement	12	10.0	63	52.5	15	12.5	26	21.7	3	2.5	1	0.8
19 I was able to acquire the literacy certificate due to self determination	29	24.2	61	50.8	14	11.7	15	12.5	-	-	1	0.8
20 My home affect my academic achievement	17	14.2	39	32.5	16	13.3	40	33.3	7	5.8	1	0.8
21 I think that my age do affect my level of assimilation	26	21.7	52	43.3	13	10.8	25	20.8	4	3.3	-	-

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3	To know more people & make more friends	18	15	77	64.2	9	7.5	11	9.2	4	3.3	1	0.8
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12	Because of people's advice	15	12.5	61	50.8	13	10.8	24	20.0	6	5.0	1	0.8
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16	Age is a barrier to educational achievement	20	16.7	35	29.2	13	10.8	44	36.7	8	6.7	-	-
17	My present environment has helped me a lot in achieving my educational desire	15	12.5	73	60.8	14	11.7	16	13.3	-	-	2	1.7
18	My social status has contributed to my academic achievement	12	10.0	63	52.5	15	12.5	26	21.7	3	2.5	1	0.8
19	I was able to acquire the literacy certificate due to self determination	29	24.2	61	50.8	14	11.7	15	12.5	-	-	1	0.8
20	My home affect my academic achievement	17	14.2	39	32.5	16	13.3	40	33.3	7	5.8	1	0.8
21	I think that my age do affect my level of assimilation	26	21.7	52	43.3	13	10.8	25	20.8	4	3.3	-	-

Factors Influencing Adult Learners' Participation

22	I enrolled in order to avoid being cheated as a result of my illiteracy	46	38.3	49	40.8	15	12.5	6	5.0	2	1.7	2	1.7
23	Government should assist me in the provision of printed or unprinted materials	33	27.5	57	47.5	16	13.3	9	7.5	4	3.3	1	0.8
24	To make me reach self actualization	29	24.2	76	63.3	9	7.5	3	2.5	1	0.8	2	1.7
25	To increase my social political awareness	39	32.5	42	35.0	15	12.5	19	15.8	5	4.2	-	-
26	To afford me the opportunity to be more active or relevant in social gathering	40	33.3	55	45.8	14	11.7	8	6.7	3	2.5	-	-
27	To encourage people to be serious with their studies	58	48.3	43	35.8	7	5.8	9	7.5	3	2.5	-	-
28	For more recognition and acceptance in the society	58	48.3	51	42.5	8	6.7	3	2.5	-	-	-	-
29	It will make my friends and family members happy because of the age at which I am making the effort	45	37.5	50	41.7	9	7.5	12	10.0	4	3.3	-	-
30	As an adult, I do have enough time to study	18	15.0	26	21.7	16	13.3	48	40.0	12	10	-	-

Table 6 shows that 71.7% agreed that pursuing literacy education would bring happiness, 66.7% agreed that literacy education brings recognition in the society, 63.3% of the respondents agreed that literacy education would make adult learners to reach self actualization and only 49.2% of the respondents agreed that literacy had helped in his or her daily activities, likewise only 45% of the respondents agreed that literacy education boosts one's ego among friends, colleagues and contemporaries and thus helps to remove the problem of inferiority complex.

Based on the above findings, the factors affecting adult learners' achievement in literacy programmes include the desire to overcome the feelings of inferiority complex caused by literacy, to gain self confidence, avoiding embarrassment and discomfort, to be admired by others as a result of his or her educational achievement and as well as to satisfy curiosity and win love and respect of others.

Test of Hypothesis

Table 8 : Chi-square analysis of participation and selected personal characteristics of respondents

VARIABLES	VALUE	DF	ASSYMPT.SIG.	CONCLUSION
Age	8.722	5	0.022	Significant
Gender	0.929	1	0.021	Significant
Primary occupation	2.571	7	0.023	Significant
Marital status	19.122	4	0.061	Not significant
Religion	0.349	2	0.840	Not significant
Family size	4.047	2	0.132	Not significant

Source: Field survey 2007

Table 8 shows that while age, gender and primary occupation is significantly related to participation ($\chi^2 = 8.722, p = 0.022$; $\chi^2 = 0.929, p = 0.021$; $\chi^2 = 2.571, p = 0.023$ respectively; marital status, family size and religion are not related to their participation in literacy programmes ($\chi^2 = 19.122, p = 0.061$; $\chi^2 = 0.349, p = 0.840$; $\chi^2 = 4.047, p = 0.132$ respectively).

Conclusion and Recommendation

The finding shows that age, gender, occupation, nature of employment and type of literacy involved in by the respondents determines the kind of literacy programme they engaged in, however, it was recommended that a need assessment of literacy programmes should be carried out before the commencement of literacy programmes in the community, this may be carried out

using combination of methods such as use of key informants, community forums and field surveys which when in combination tends to sensitize the people because of the literacy programmes.

Also there should be initiation, planning and implementation process in literacy programmes which require the role performance of various leaders or opinion leaders.

Since publicity is most important in adult literacy programme, towncriers, television and radio broadcasters, journalists, political functionaries and village heads could be involved in propagation of the programme.

Finally, enough and adequately equipped literacy centres should be made available through out the state. This will forestall problems such as distance and knowing where to enroll.

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