

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING PARTICIPATION OF ADULT LEARNERS IN LITERACY PROGRAMME IN NIGER STATE

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Abstract

The study was designed to examine motivational factors affecting the participation of adult learners in literacy programs in Niger State. Survey research designed was used for the study. To guide the study one research question was raised. The population for the study was drawn from 250 adult literacy centres with a population of 6,000. i.e. 5,750 participants and 250 facilitators. The study sampled 228 out of 5,750 participants and 18 out of 250 facilitators as the target audience. The reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest method. The research formulated a questionnaire of Motivational Factors Affecting Participation of Adult Learners in Literacy Programs in Niger State. (MFAPALLP) which was used to elicit information from the respondents. The finding include environment not conducive for learning, lack of learning materials, curricular not meeting the needs of adult learners and government not coming to the aids of adult literacy programs. The study concludes that the government should employ and adopt motivational strategies to defeat factors affecting participation of adult learners at adult literacy centres. The study recommended that Niger State government through agency for adult and nonformal education should embark on sensitization campaign and providing materials and conducive learning environment for adult learners.

Keywords: Adult, Motivation, Participation, Literacy Programmes

Introduction

Nigeria main objective is to eradicate illiteracy in the society. But unfortunately, the rate of illiteracy is still very high in the country. This means that more effort is required to motivate the adult for increased participation in literacy programmes. Achieving this requires the cooperation and understanding of all the stakeholders which include providers and beneficiaries of literacy programmes. According to Jegede (2003), two major objectives inform the need for motivation in adult learning, the need to develop the interest of the adult in taking part in a programme and the need to sustain such interest in the adult; learner to be able to complete the programme.

Interest in a programme can only be developed in the adult when participation in such programme will satisfy a need in the life of the adult. It is difficult to persuade an adult to attend a programme without an obvious benefit because an adult does not want to learn any new thing for future use, the usefulness must be in the present (now). This means that the ability of a programme to satisfy the need of would-be adult participants is a condition for motivating participation. Most adult learners are busy peoples who are in a hurry to see the benefit derivable from their endeavours. They have many things competing for their time and cannot afford to waste time. When it cannot be obvious that the goal of attending a programme will be achieved at the minimal cost to their time, they tend to lose interest and possibility of withdrawal deepens. There is need therefore to sustain the initial drive-in order to keep the adult learner in the programme. These two objectives that have been discussed can only be achieved when the nature of the programme, organizational structure of the programme and the learner/facilitator relationship in programme come into play (Jegede, 2003). It has to be noted however, that to motivate participation in a programme by adults, the programme must be client specific. This means

that it must be able to meet the needs of an identifiable group of adults. The motivating effect of a programme starts from the title given to it. The title needs to be catchy, clear and simple. The picture of the nature of the programme and possible goals achievable must be given. The content must be such that would be able to meet the needs of the expected participants.

The organization of a programme affects the motivation of learners in various ways. First the timing has to be appropriate for the expected participants, which means that the general schedule of the expected participants has to be taken into consideration both in terms of what period of the year should the programme take place as well as the time-table.

Another motivating factor could be the duration of the programme. When the duration is seen to meet the schedule of the expected participants, more people will be motivated to participate. Location of the place where the programme takes place can serve as a motivating factor. If the programme is located near the work place or residence of the expected participants, it can serve as incentive. The participants may also be de-motivated if fees charged are regarded as high by those expected to participate in the programme. There is need therefore to take into consideration the financial position of the expected participants. Jegede (2003) also observed that learner/facilitator relationship is a very strong motivating factor in adult programmes. The facilitator's attitude to work which include regularity to work, punctuality and thorough preparation before interaction with the learners goes a long way to serve as incentive to the participants. Ability to mark assignments promptly and effectively reaction to the learners and flow of communication, all serve as motivating factors in adult learning. Let the participants have the feeling that they are achieving something especially the set goals. The participants should be convinced that the facilitator has their genuine interest even outside learning situations or set up. In addition to all these motivational strategies, increased efforts are required to sensitize all illiterate adults to spare sometime and register in the nearest literacy centre to them. Functional literacy in particular is to be encouraged as this would mean adults acquiring literacy with vocational skills.

Grassroots participation of adults especially parents would go a long way to encourage increased in participation especially with the introduction of Universal Basic Education (UBE), scheme, which provides for both adults and children. With the emerging trend of new literacy, literate adults required other forms of literacy and should be encouraged to register in various continuing or vocational education programmes located around them. There is need for increased political will on the part of the government to encourage and improve the activities of the State Agencies for Mass Education (SAME) all over Nigeria (36 states).

Apart from participation, deliberate efforts should be made to ensure that the adult learners are retained in the various literacy programmes. Their interest is likely to be sustained by providing the suitable pinner that has been constructed to suit their life situation with concrete points of reference as bold letters and boldly printed syllabus. Adults could be motivated and retained in literacy programmes when the contents of primers that are introduced relate functionally to their needs and interest and are adopted to their life situations and life experiences. These and more serve as motivation for the adult learner and should form basis on which literacy programmes are planned and implement.

Adult literacy education programmes are activities geared towards educating adults in every country. In Niger State like any other State in Nigeria, efforts are being made to educate the people. This is because of the fact that there is a belief that the higher the level of education among the citizenry of a country, the higher the level of development the citizenry of that country would enjoy and the higher the level of development that would be recorded in the country's economy. Therefore, development in Niger State of Nigeria would only be realized through informed and thinking citizens because according to Otive (2006), the relationship between education (literacy education inclusive) and development is well established such that education is a key index of development. Access to education is an important concern to nations all over the world. In Nigeria, it is observed that many sections of the population have no access to literacy education or the life skills necessary for their economic and social well-being (NPE 2012).

From the definition, literacy education is an aspect of basic education. The National Policy on Education NPE (2004) specified the goals for the promotion of mass literacy delivery, and adult and non-formal education in Nigeria to include the provision of functional basic education, lifelong education, inservice, vocational, professional, aesthetic, cultural and civic education for adults and youths who have never had the advantage of formal education or who left school too early. Basic education which includes literacy and non-formal education is a universal fundamental right. This is generally taken to mean the minimum education requirements for individuals and families to satisfy basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and ability to earn a decent living, and to participate in community affairs (Linda, 2008). Education has been defined as a complex of social process for acquiring knowledge and experience, formally and otherwise (Oduaran, 2000). It has been documented that schooling improves productivity, health and reduces negative features of life such as child labour as well as bringing about empowerment (Oxaal, 1997).

Efforts are therefore being generally made towards the provision of access to education in Niger State of Nigeria. The efforts include the establishment of adult literacy centres, primary, secondary and higher institutions of learning, in the formal education system for children and youths. On the other hand, efforts and provisions are also made by various stakeholders in education such as government and individual to provide access to education regardless of gender, age, race or class through Adult Literacy Education programme within the wider scope of Adult Education. Education at every level is a means by which society intends to transmit what is worthwhile to people who should be committed to it (Peters, 1970).

The concept of adult literacy is derived from the general concept of literacy. Adult literacy therefore has to do with the ability of an individual adult (man or woman) to read, write and communicate in known language as well as the ability to do basic mathematical computation far beyond basic literacy level. Adult literacy should be likened as a tool that can help the individual to improve himself intellectually, economically and make himself socially and politically relevant. In order to realize this, adult literacy education should be seen as a continuous process that requires regular and sustained learning. This, without contention forms the basis of functional adult literacy that would ensure life long process which is opposed to adult literacy that enslaves (Obanya, 2004). Adult literacy as a tool is capable of mutually reinforcing trinity of poverty, illiteracy and gender inequality which can drastically be reduced to the barest minimum. It is in this recognition that Hinzen, (2006) observes that:

“Adult literacy is the fertilizer needed for development and democracy to take off and grow. It is the invisible ingredient in any successful strategy for eradicating poverty and achieving gender equality” However, the broad goal and objectives of adult literacy education within the general concept of adult education is the fulfillment of peoples` needs under any circumstances and to sustain people`s interest in literacy education. It has been observed in Niger State that the effect of these objectives was not met due to the motivational factor affecting participation of adults in adult literacy centres in Niger State. Lack of motivation forces adult learners to abandon classes in favour of traditional agricultural activities; this area has not been addressed in detail by the National Policy on Education.

There is a definite motivational disadvantaged posed on rural life. Because most rural adults are engaged in traditional agriculture, there is no motivation for them to pursue adult literacy programmes. Some of the existing adult education programmes in Niger state such as Takuti shaba literacy centre, Takuti Abuja literacy centre, Gulu Literacy centre Agaie literacy centre to mention but few are not functioning properly due to the motivational factors affecting participation of adult learners in adult literacy programme. It`s this ineffectiveness or poor response to adult literacy education programmes and also the importance of it to the categories of people mentioned in the policy document on the goals of mass literacy deemed it necessary to the researcher to research on the topic and possibly find the solutions to the problem in order to make the great programme initiated by the federal government a huge success.

Statement of the Problem

Mass literacy and adult education is, is no doubt an imperative for an individual`s self-improvement and community development. The problems of adult learners have been lingering for a long period of time at adult literacy centres in Niger State, such as environment not conducive for learning, lack of learning materials,

curricular not meeting the meeting the needs of adult learners and government not coming to the aids of adult literacy programs. This agree with the view of Catherine and Matt, (2012) that adults are likely to take part in learning just seeking to know what goes around, such adult seek recognition and are likely to dropout from participating in the program if what they expect is not provided. Because of these problems were overlooked adult are no longer participating at the literacy programs, which still made adults to be illiterate. It is these problems that had raised the researcher's interest to conduct research on a topic motivational factors affecting participation of Adult learners in literacy programs in Niger State, with a view to finding possible solutions to the problem.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to examine motivational factors affecting participation of Adult learners in literacy programmes in Niger State. Specifically, the objective is:

To examine the influence of motivational factors on participation of Adult learners in literacy programmes in Niger State.

Research Question

What are the motivational factors affecting participation of adult learners in literacy programmes in Niger State?

Research Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the means score of participants and facilitators on the motivational factors on participation of adult learners in literacy programs in Niger State.

Methodology

The study adopted survey research design. Two local Governments were selected from each of Geopolitical zones of the Niger State. The population for this study comprised facilitators and participants numbering 6,000 comprising 5,750 participants and 250 facilitators. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select representative (individual selected) from each Geo-political zones of the state. The researcher sampled 18 out of 250 adult literacy centers in the state. Total number 246 representatives were used for this study in order to have a fair representation. The study sampled two hundred and twenty-eight (228) participants and eighteen (18) facilitators as the respondents.

The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire title: Motivational Factors Affecting Participation of Adult Learners in the Literacy Programmes. (MFAPALLP)

A modified Likert 4-point scale was used for this study. Items were scored ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The question contained 4 items and was scored from research questions. Two experts in the field of adult education validated both face and contents of the questionnaires and validity of the instrument was ensured. The reliability of the of the instrument was established through test-retest method.

The instrument was administered to 10 respondents not used in the study but have the characteristics with the target population on the study. The reliability estimate was established using Cronbach alpha. The reliability value was 0.98 which is considered enough for the study. The researcher administered 246 copies of questionnaires to facilitators and participants with the help of research assistant. It took the researcher two weeks to administered and retrieve the properly filled and completed questionnaire. Only 239 copies of the questionnaires were properly complete and collected by the researcher and the research assistant. Mean statistic was used to answer the research question and t-test statistic was used to test null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance with decision rule: reject the null hypothesis (Ho) if the calculated value of the test statistic is greater than critical value and if the calculated value of test statistic is less than critical value do not reject the null hypothesis. Mean 2.50 and above was regarded as high while below 2.50 was regarded as low. In analyzing research question and hypothesis two groups were used separately (Participants and facilitators). But the result obtained from research question was added together for easy analysis. The responses were categorized into

Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Furthermore, Strongly Agree (SA) and Agree (A) were considered Agree (A) while Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) were considered as Disagree (D). This was used in order to have easy analysis, interpretation and better decision making.

Zones	Location of Centres	Number of Participant	Sampled Participant	Number of Facilitator	Sampled Facilitators
Zone A Bida	1. Model centre esso (bida)	35	15	1	1 1
	2. Emi liman umaru(bida)	31	13	1	1
	3. Women centre saabon Gida(bida)	29	10	1	
Zone A Lapai	1. Takuti-shaba(lapai)	32	12	1	1
	2. Gulu centre				
	3. G/sarki lapai centre (lapai)	35	15	1	1
		33	13	1	1
Zone B Paiko	1. Gidan bire (paiko)	32	13	1	1
	2. Dadausman gunduma(paiko) Gidan	32	13	1	1
	3. tela (paiko)	36	15	1	1
Zone B	4. Radio niger centre (minna)	28	10	1	1
Minna	5. Nurul huda tayi vilage (minna)	31	11	1	1
	6. Malama khadijat da'awah centre(minna)		12	1	1
		34			
Zone C Kontagora	1. Gidan mal. Isah mailanbu (kontagora) Usubu	31	12	1	1
	2. gidan sarki (kontagora)	33	13	1	1
	3. Old nepa nurul islam (kontagora)	29	10	1	1
Zone C New busa	4. Rofia jijima(new busa) Mahuta primary	30	14	1	1
	5. school (new busa)	34	12	1	1 1
	6. Agwara women centre (New Busa)	37	15	1	
Total:	18	582	228	18	18

Results

Following the research question and hypothesis that guided the study, the summary of the analysis of the data collected are presented in the table below:

Research Question: What are the motivational factors affecting participation of adult learners in literacy programmes in Niger State?

Table:1 Responses on the motivational factors affecting participation of adult learners in literacy programmes.

Items		Responses		Total	Mean	Std.dev.	
A	D	A	D	A	D		
1.Lack of conducive environment militate you to participate in literacy programmes.		731	49	780	3.48	1.68	33.63 6.10
2. Lack of material inducement militate you to participate in literacy programmes		716	53	769	3.50	1.65	33.73 6.22
3. Lack of curricular not meeting the needs militate you to participate in programmes		734	49	783	3.52	1.63	34.10 5.76
4. Problem of government policy on literacy militate you to participate in programmes		720	55	775	3.51	1.61	33.35 6.42
Total:		2901	206	3107	3.50	1.64	50.19 8.93
Grand:						3.26	50.01

Table 1 above shows the responses of the respondents on the motivational factors affecting participation of adult learners in literacy programmes. Item 1 sought out lack of conducive learning environment militate adult learners’ participation in literacy programmes. Under this item, agree had 731 responses with the mean of 3.48 and standard deviation of 33.63 while disagree had 49 responses with the mean of 1.68 and standard deviation of 6.10. Item 2 seek the extent to which lack of material inducement militate adult learners’ participation in literacy programmes. 716 responses with the mean of 3.50 and standard deviation of 33.73 for agree, against 53 responses with the mean of 1.65 and standard deviation of 6.22 for disagrees. Item 3 shows the responses of the respondents on the problem of curricular not meeting the needs militate adult learners’ participation in literacy programmes. 734 responses with the mean of 3.52 and standard deviation of 34.10 for agree, against 49 responses with the mean of 1.63 and standard deviation 5.76 for disagrees. Item 4 sought for the problem of government policy on literacy education as a militating factor affecting adult learners’ participation in literacy programmes. 720 responses with the mean of 3.51 and standard deviation of 33.35 for agree responses against 55 responses with the mean of 1.61 and standard deviation of 6.42 for disagree responses.

An overall response of the items under research question was 2901 with the mean of 3.50 and standard deviation of 50.19 was recorded for agree while 206 responses with the mean of 1.64 and standard deviation of 8.93 were recorded for disagree.

The grand mean was 3.26 with the standard deviation of 50.13. This show that motivational factors affecting participation of adult learners in literacy programmes in Niger State are lack of conducive learning environment, lack of material inducement, problem of curricular not meeting the needs of adult learners and problem of government policy.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean score of participants and facilitators on the motivational factors on the participation of adult learners in literacy programmes

Table 2: Shows the respondents to the hypothesis on motivational factors affecting the participation of adult learners in literacy centres in Niger State.

Variables	N	Mean	Std.dev	df	Std.Error	t-cal	t-crit
Participants	221	13.13	63.37	237	4.76	0.27	1.96
Facilitators	18	11.33	9.05				

Table 2 above shows that respondents to this hypotheses were 239 with 237 degree of freedom. The participants had the mean response of 13.13 with standard deviation of 63.67 while the facilitators had the mean of 11.33 with the standard deviation of 9.05. The calculated value was 0.27 while the critical value was 1.96. The result from this table shows that there is no significant difference between the mean score of participants and facilitators, because the calculated value of 0.27 is less than the critical value of 1.96 at alpha level of 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Discussion

Research question 1 elicited responses from the respondents on the motivational factors (absent of motivation) affecting participation of adult learners in literacy programmes. The result of the finding shows that motivational factors affecting participation of adult learners are; lack of conducive learning environment, lack of material inducement, problem of curricular not meeting the needs of adult learners and problem of government policy. This agrees with the view of Catherine and Mtt, (2012) supported adults are likely to take part in learning just seeking to know what goes around. Such adults also seek recognition and are likely to drop out from participating in the programme if what they expect is not provided. The hypothesis revealed that the value of the t-cal (0.27) was less than the value of t-crit (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore, not rejected. This implies that there was no significant difference between the mean score of participants and facilitators on the motivational factors affecting participation of adult learners in literacy programmes in Niger State.

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to investigate the motivational factors affecting participation of adult learners in literacy programmes in Niger State. In this study one research question and four items under it were answered and analyzed. Data analyzed on research question showed that motivational factors such as lack of conducive learning environment, lack of material inducement in literacy programme, lack of curricular not meeting the needs of adult learners, problem of government policy in literacy programmes.

One research hypothesis was formulated, tested and was not rejected, because the t-test calculated value was less than the table or critical value. This implies that there was no significant difference between the participants and facilitators on the variable of the study.

Recommendations

1. Based on the finding, the researchers recommended that the agency for Adult and Non-Formal Education through government efforts should employ and adopt motivational strategies to defeat militating factors affecting adult learners' participation in literacy programmes. Strategies in this concept mean blue print that are intended to guide and achieve a particular purpose of goal.

2. Government agencies should place more emphasis on poverty eradication programmes for adult learners and provide learning materials, conducive learning environment for adult learners

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