

REPOSITIONING ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This paper examined the strategies for repositioning the adult and Non-Formal Education towards developing the needed human resources and achieving sustainable youth empowerment and national development. It is based on the aspirations of national development that the paper described the ways by which the adult education and non-Formal education curriculum, pedagogy and instructional approach should be in order to help achieve effective and efficient human resources that are required for the sustainable development of the society. It was therefore concluded that repositioning the Adult Education and Non-Formal Education will provide adequate human resources to drive the wheel of the society to a desirable destination. However, it was recommended that the society's interest should be considered while designing Adult Education and Non-formal Education curriculum; and Adult Education Instructors should be adequately motivated to provide effective repositioning efforts on human resources development for Youth Empowerment and National Development.

Keywords: Repositioning, Adult Education, Non-Formal Education, Human Resources, Development, Sustainable Development

Introduction

The only constant thing in life is said to be change. The adult and Non-Formal Education had a history of contributing immensely to development process all over the world due to its direct bearing on the community needs. It gives people knowledge and skills that enables them function effectively be it as a trainer or as a worker. Non-Formal Education (N.F.E.) and Life-Long-Education synonymous in nature and goal especially when the fields of practice is placed in focused. This is because they share same clients, roll out same kinds of programmes and use same methods and strategies. Non-Formal Education just like "life-Long Education begins in the cradle and ends in the grave. The German usage of the suggestive term "erwachsenbildung" suggests that, it emphasizes the fact that, education assists individuals reach their full potentials.

According to UNESCO in Fafunwa (2014) such programmes are geared towards helping the individual from child-hood, youth and adulthood. This assertion suggests that, Non-Formal Education is not only limited to adult literacy as many perceived it. The programmes just like in Life-Long Education are all embracing in content and clients. They include science and technology, vocational and civic education, humanities, recreational and leisure. The wide and all-embracing scope and nature of Non-Formal Education makes it to be run by several agencies, ministries and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs); while other private sectors run it as skill acquisition centres (Adesina, Fagbonge and Taibi, 2015); without knowing that they are in the field of Adult and Non-Formal Education. The term from the foregoing can be right to adopt the 1976 definition raised by UNESCO which denotes;

“the entire body of organized educational process, whatever the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications and bring about changes in their attitude or behaviour in the two fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development” (Anowor, Ezema and Umezulike, 2013).

On the other view Ngwu (2014); infers that Non-Formal Education covers training and instruction outside the formal education system and may be organized in the form of individualized apprenticeship, vocational training in craft centres, and even as a nation-wide mass literacy campaign. He summed up Duke's work on classification of adult education to be in three major areas. Non-Formal Education targets at:-

- o Training adults for qualifications
- o National mass education programme
- o Deliberate training programme in specific skills a pre-establish curriculum by inventing its own resources for effective learning.

Nature of Non-Formal Education

For a good understanding of non-formal education nature distinguishes it from other forms of education. Therefore, the following constitute the nature of non-formal education in the professional context.

Flexibility

Non-Formal Education is not rigid as in the case of formal school system. It neither rigid about the composition of learners as to whether they are children, youth or adults. Sometimes it is not rigid about venue of learning as the case may arise. It is not rigid also in terms of courses of study because most learning is by problem solving or by case handling. In a way it is not rigid about when to enrol as well as when to graduate from the course as some continue learning till death. Yet that doesn't mean it is without laws and principles of operation organizational structures. Even though the learning process lasts for life yet it has no book plan of instruction to follow. It tries to address educational needs arising in the course of life, this is because life is dynamic and each level of social changes comes with specific educational need to meet such challenges. The typical example is the phasing out of the manual type writer and the advent of computer which is a better technology to go by. In addition, non – formal education (NFE) can take place anywhere.

Non-Formal Education

Non-Formal Education is not formal even though semi-structured in nature and modes of operation. Just like any other educational encounter, there is a facilitator and a participant who comes together to teach/learn. Here also learners come from whatever age grade, consequently with various degrees of experience, interest and goals. Although there is no structured way of teaching the learners especially when the age grade differences are place side by side. Their cognitive development and degree of experiences may not allow them to learn at same pace. Yet they are constructively carried along in same class in the case of skill acquisition centres, where the focus is on the skills in view and graduations only lays on mastery of such skill. This can be observed in mechanical workshops, tailoring centres, metal work centres, etc.

Skill Oriented

A walk through the line of history of education, has inform most educators that before the advent of western education, there was a traditional form of education alias Non-Formal Education. Where people are trained in to various skills and trades to help them earn a living as well as support the survival of the community by dispensing their live skills e.g. blacksmith, tailors, farmer, fisher, crafts, hide and skin, bronze work, herding, business, herbal medicine, etc. these were transmitted to learners through daily encounter with patients on different cases as the learner observes how the master or instructor (facilitator) handle the case with what substance. The target here is for the learners to master the skill. Although these skills are attached to homes and communities, yet the educational process stands out to express the schooling dimensions involved.

No Written Curriculum

The divergent field of Adult and Non-Formal Education and the different types of agencies spread across cultures and locations of the society make it difficult to have a wholesome document in form of a curriculum for the sector. The needs of these learners are varied so also with the needs of the larger community. The illiterate nature of most instructors in skills acquisition centres impedes documentation or developing a written book to go by as a learning document, so it avoids a pre-establish curriculum by inventing its own resources for effective learning to ensure that the programme meets the felt needs of the learners as well as the communities it serves. Also the dynamic nature of needs and problems of both the learners and the larger society makes it difficult to develop a written curriculum for most of the Adult and Non-Formal Education programmes. However, short term guiding materials could be developed to aid the process of teaching at a given time to meet certain goals.

Programmes in Non-Formal Education

In order to have a good comprehension of non – formal education (NFE) programmes some silent features must need be carried along. Here a reflection on Ngwu (2014), where he identified some relevance of this form of education on humanism to includes:-

- Its content has a short-term usefulness, and is determined by the community itself.
 - Develops critical and com mitted consciousness of the transformation of the physical and social development.
 - Utilizes methodologies where all may participate in a creative process.
 - Provokes self-appraisal
 - Preserves individual identify without losing the fixed objectives of the learning group.
- etc.

In the lights of the above relevance, this paper highlights the following to be constituents of Non – Formal Education (NFE) from primitive life to post colonist period

Mass Education

This constitutes all forms of educational programs intended at creating awareness on specific issues in a given area of socio-economic or cultural life in order to facilitate the transformation of the peoples' consciousness in order to adopt. In the opinion of this paper, non – forma education (NFE) belief in the adaptive nature of man, and therefore believes that if the man is given proper educational orientation, the people concern will understand and embrace the way towards the change. It can also be in form of continuing education as learning can take place even among the elites. The medium of this educational encounter comes through the mass media such as the radio, televisions, Newspapers. Others include festivals, cultural days, feasts, religious centres, workshops, conferences, seminars, etc. These are believed on by professionals in non – formal education (NFE) as means of reaching out to a large number of people with specific education programs designed in line with the identified community problems/needs such as: illiteracy, poor agricultural production, divorce, cholera drug abuse, political violence, child trafficking, child abuse, early marriage, etc. The problem areas cover health, economics, cultural, political and social areas of human life. These are meant to improve the standard of peoples' lives to the minimum requirement to integrate them into national life (Omolewa, 2018). In the light Denmark's experience, Danish Ministry of Education suggests three main areas of educational training in the Non-Formal Education for national transformation.

Literacy Education Training

These are various forms of educational programmes aimed at helping such community members desiring to obtain literary qualifications or certificates that will enable them continue with their education. These people could be drop outs of formal schools, graduates of adult literacy classes and graduates of senior secondary schools who want to remedy their results. To these, a Non-Formal Educational programme is developed to enable them obtain the kind of educational certificates to help them move on to higher educational institutions for higher certificates. This could be through distance education system or face to face method. Whichever of it that is convenient to the learners for achieving additional qualifications and development.

Skill Acquisition Trainings

These are trainings into skills and trades that will provide participants with live-skills to live on. This form of training is drawn from the primitive life, through the colonial and post-Colonial period. During the primitive life, skills are learnt through family lines. A black smith teaches his children the smiting skill to take over when he faced out of this live. This is why homes and families are identified with a specific skill which enables them cater for such needs in the community as well as gives them employment and payments for the services they provide.

In Nigeria as a general case, it is observed that the various tribes and regions in the country are known for one skill or the other. The North is known for hide and skin work, the Yoruba's are known for gold and bronze smiting while the East and South-South of Nigeria are known for carving and fine art work. A long home and family lines, professions exist in

all dimensions of social-economic and cultural needs of the society. It is a common practice before the advent of the colonies that, medical practice exists in most Nigerian communities, even with areas of specializations. In spite of the limitations of these practitioners, yet they served some forms of community needs in the society with medical services. For instance, using herbs learnt from parents in special areas to handle health challenges. Some even specialized in bones, fertility, blood diseases, wounds, stomach disorder, piles, birth, etc. These services were all there, before the advent of the colonies and the missionaries who by way of proving superior service discouraged us from neither relying on our heritage nor developing our heritage. Hence, people looked down upon these practices with the introduction of their own processed drugs calling our home-made drugs 'local' while refers to their's as 'modern'. This kind nomenclature has work down into African mind and Nigerians in particular to date, where people call Nigerian products 'local;' and refer to the imported one's foreign. Such labels made people not to identify with our local products in the pride of seeing the usage of our home made products as a reduction in social classification in the society. This mind-set walks down on the economic development of our domestic industries. This compelled the Nigerian government to come up with a law banning importation of goods into the country; yet day by day custom keeps napping such goods on smuggle into the country.

The intimidating disposition of Nigerians on Nigerian products must be stooped if Nigeria must progress. Today our birth attendants are called traditional birth attendants; yet, many states and local government are beckoning on them to complement their duty in clinics. The herbs neglected, Nigerians are embracing it due to either tireless period of treating ailments which could not go with the orthodox drugs, or the high cost of drugs which is unaffordable to many Nigerians living below the poverty line whose access to quality medical services and affordability to this modern drugs is not feasible due to poverty (Clinton 2018). This disposition is what is responsible for the high case of unemployment in Nigeria. A report on 22/05 2015 on VOA; 08:11-15 AM where Kano State marketers lamented about china stealing their dying technology to print clothes in china and bring it to sale in Nigeria. This tells that the imperialist's took our indigenous technologies, improved on them, and brings such product back to us to buy in high cost based on what I call hypnotization doctrine services given during colonial era.

In the post-independence era, Nigeria has had several attempts to create employment through government polices at different administration who introduced the concept of 'special work' meant to give applicants skills in various fields of life towards productive services. But how many could afford to live their village to a township where such opportunities exist was a major challenges to the villagers who are the worst hit population by unemployment. Even though most of the opportune graduates got the kills, some of the skills are not self-employable. This led to another facet of frustrated life. The introduction of National Directorate for Employment (NDE), which going by its name, it aimed at creating employment among Nigerians. Yet not much of that programme was felt due to policies and administrative inconsistencies. Along that line, programmes like better life for rural women was introduced by Mariam Babangida, the then 1st lady, focused on women on whom the weight of poverty lies. But corruption and dishonesty could not allow the rural women to access the programme. It started well but towards the end, city and town women hijacked the programme from real target population and it went that way. Other programmes used for

reducing poverty by creating employment to the citizens are Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP), Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), etc. (Umoruyi, 2001). All were establish to positively change lives, but the expected change which turned blurred, as the disappointing unemployment growth rate is the experience in Nigeria. the involvement of Industrial Training Fund (ITF) in the recent days by organizing trainings for youths on one skill or the other attests to the fact that, repositioning Nigerian education to the Non-formal educational approach could go a long way to make our graduates very functional members of the society. This paper must applaud the ITF for its extensive effort to build human efficiency by not only sponsoring the industrial attachments by students, but by going ahead to give Nigerian youths vocational skills which makes them economic, socially and politically active.

Therefore, this paper opined a fall-back on Adult and Non-Formal Education as the way out. The Non-Formal Education according to Omolewa (2018) is imbedded in the tradition education system. Where both teachers and learners reside in the same environment; ones' choice of the skill is based on local marketability of that skill. This implies that at completion the learner or graduates begin his sale of the products.

The Rationale of the Non-Formal Education

This section will pick up by reflecting on the words of Coombs in Anyanwu (2018) who summed up the contributions of Adult and Non-Formal Education to nation building as follows:-

“the programmes are varied and cover such areas as literacy, community development family planning, agricultural extension, industrial training health education, technical and vocational training, workers education, nutrition, trade and labour union, cooperatives small scale industries, manpower development and military training. All these areas are vital in nation building”. (Anyanwu, 2018).

Going by the above summative description of what Non-Formal Education comprised. The rational of Non-Formal Education is seen in its objectives. According to preservearticles.com (2015).

The broad-based objective of Non-Formal Education may be enumerated as under:-

- i. To enable the maximum number of non-school going children of 9-14 age group to join the non-formal stream so that we may help in achieving constitutional directive.
- ii. To enable learners to learn basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic so as to make the self-reliant in day to day life.
- iii. To develop general awareness about the socio-politico-economic problems of local, state and national importance so as to seek their solutions.
- iv. To enrich knowledge/experiences in the vocational/professions in which the clientele isinvolved by utilizing local and outside resources.
- v. To develop basic skills to handle/repair modern ordinary gadgets with which the learners are familiar and have access to.
- vi. To develop desirable personal and social habits as well as healing attitudes towards our cherished national ideals and values.

Repositioning Non-Formal Education for Human Resources Development

In Nigeria, it observed that education as a whole is not positioned in the right place where it can achieve mass as well as quality human development. In the first place it is not domesticated to suite the context of our society. We continue simply with what the colonies gave to us not checking to see if it agrees with our national development objectives or not. The present educational system is making Nigerians citizens of Europe because we give them what does not suite our loving Africa. This accounts for the current high number of illiterates, out of school children, poor development, unfriendly social environment, to mention but a few. The polity seems not to have the will for aiding human development. This is seen in the annual budgetary allocation to the education sector which is far below the UNESCO recommendation of 26% of national budget to go to education.

Non-Availability of Fund

Non-Availability of Fund for planning a capacity building can be as good as nothing if it is not backed up with finance. It was explained by Clement (2019) that the amount of money the LGCs usually have are not enough to meet all the needs of the people and communities at the same time. The fact that little is being allocated to education in general and Non-Formal Sector inclusive; it is another crisis when it comes to fund disbursement. It is either it is not disbursed or not disbursed at a very late moment when the set training programme period has passed. In practice refresher trainings are organized for facilitators in the Non-Formal Education before the take-off of annual programme, if the fund is not there what happens to it? If the fund is released late what impact will the late training make for the year under review? So funding in the Non-Formal sector is highly inadequate thus affecting human development in the country at large and the local communities where more than 70% percent of our citizens resides (National Bureau for Statistics, 2016).

To accomplish this, the following recommendations are raised:-

- Redefine and redesign our educational content to give us what can develop Nigeria and give Nigerians working skills for national development.
- Government should urgently conduct a mass mobilization campaign to create awareness among Nigerians on this form of education.
- Government should direct states and local government to identify and register such centres within their domain.
- Government should facilitate the establishment of committees from federal, state local government and communities to ensure adequate monitoring and evaluation of the centres.
- Government and other stake-holders in education should organize routine trainings and re-trainings for the non – formal education (NFE) facilitators for effective service delivery at the grass-root for human capital development towards national growth.
- Government should organize orientation training for the proprietors on the strategy of non –formal education (NFE) nation-wide but at local government level.

While the above points reveal why local government exists; the Federal Government of Nigeria (1999) constitutionally strengthens the above reason by legally defining the functions of the local government councils in four major areas. According to section 7 (1) and (2) of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

They are:

- i. provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocation education;

- ii. the development of agriculture and natural resources other than the exploitation of minerals;
 - iii. The provision and maintenance of health service, and
 - iv. Other matters conferred on the local government by the state house of assembly.
- To make it clearer and specific, the Federal Republic of Nigeria in National Policy on Education (2018) mentioned that, the local governments are responsible for the:
- i. Day to day control and administration of local mass literacy and adult education programme
 - ii. Recruitment of adult literacy instructors and enrolment of adult learners for functional literacy and post literacy programme.
 - iii. Feedback to the state via ministry of education.
 - iv. Ensuring efficient and effective operation of the literacy network committee at all levels.
 - v. Provision of physical facilities for rural libraries, reading rooms, television viewing centres and radio listeners clubs.

Strategies to Enhancing Human Proficiency Development among Nigerians Communities.

The anticipated roles of the local government in meeting in improving human proficiency towards meeting the socio-economic and cultural needs of the citizenry are very enormous. Yet the issues raised above made achieving this societal goal difficult. Against this background, the following strategies are here suggested:

- Conduct of induction training for all elected persons in to the local governments on the need for building human proficiency for their economic development at the local government level.
- Establishment of vocational centres in rural Nigerian communities.
- Recruitment of vocational instructors at local communities.
- Training of community facilitators.
- Government should engage in training and further training of Community Development workers to enhance their productivity for Community Development healthy human resources.
- Government should collaborate with private and donor organizations as well as educational institutions for funding the programme toward national economic development.
- Adequate fund should be regularly allocated to training and re-training of Adult Education staff at local government level for man power development towards economic growth.

Conclusion

Nigeria is a country blessed with both human and material resources capable of carrying out any social duty as well as supplying and maintaining every need of the citizens for improving human proficiency. Yet a lot has been going on to ensure that citizen got the kind of education that will make them functional members of the society. Many graduates today cannot evolve with employment for themselves; unemployment rate is on the increase in Nigeria day by day. Most criminal activities such as terrorism, kidnapping and armed robbery are blamed to unemployment in Nigeria. Some of the key players in such criminal

activities are said to be graduates who have no job. If learners can graduate from our educational system and yet have no job, then something is either wrong with our educational system or with our curriculum. Hence, the need to reposition our educational system by falling back to the Adult and Non - Formal Education system.

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