



Level Of Implementation of Adult Literacy Programmes for Sustainable Mass Literacy in South East Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the level of implementation of adult literacy programmes for sustainable mass literacy in South East Nigeria. Two specific purposes in line with two research questions and null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of this study comprised one thousand two hundred and eighty (1280) adult literacy centres in South East, Nigeria. The sample of the study comprised 50 adult literacy centers drawn through simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was adopted Checklist, titled “level of implementation of adult literacy programmes for sustainable mass literacy Checklist” (LIALPSMLC). The Checklist was validated by three (3) lecturers from Ebonyi State University Abakaliki, and scorer reliability method was applied using Kendal’s W Test of Concordance with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), which yielded the overall reliability index of 0.63. Frequency and the percentage were used to analyse the data collected through the checklist. Chi-Square test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that majority of teachers that teach adult literacy programmes do not possess educational qualifications. While the result of hypothesis revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of rural and urban teachers on the qualifications of adult literacy teachers that are involved in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria. Based on these findings, the study recommended that the State Agencies on Adult Literacy programmes should recruit more qualified teachers to adult learning centres for quality learning outcomes.

Keywords: Programme Implementation, Adult Literacy, Sustainability, Mass Literacy

Introduction

Literacy is viewed as the ability to read, write, explore and understand the world around us. Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. The researcher also states that the word “literacy” enables adults to take active part in the development of their communities and nation in general. Similarly, Owede (2022) added that literacy is the ability of a person to function in all the activities in which is required for effective functioning of his/her group, the community and also for enabling him/her to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his/her own and the community’s development. The word of Owede (2022) was the confirmation of Okongwu in Owede (2022) who stated that adult literacy is the ability of someone regarded as an adult by the members of his society to read, write and do simple calculations.

Adult literacy comprises all forms of education and learning aimed ensuring that all adults participate in their societies and the world of work. Wami and Deekor (2020) viewed adult literacy as a practice in which adults engage in systematic and sustained self-educating activities in order to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, or values. Onwuadi et al (2017) posited that adult literacy is virtually any educational activity designed to bring about learning which according to them include the work of aerobics instructor, nurse, private consultant, literacy worker and community activist and many others. It denotes the entire body of learning processes: formal, non-formal, and informal, whereby those regarded as adults by the society in which they live, develop and enrich their capabilities for living and working, both in their interests and those of their communities, organizations, and societies (UNESCO, 2017).

Adult literacy programme is therefore a core component of lifelong learning. This is because it enable the adults to participate actively in the development of the community and society at large (Radhika in Owede, 2022). Therefore, the participants are generally self-motivated; the practice of adult education is regarded as andragogy. Adult education in Nigeria is therefore a core mandate to enhance the literacy rate in the country.

The objectives of adult literacy programme include but not limited to providing educational services as enshrined in the provisions for Adult and Non-formal education in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). Bearing the above objectives in mind, it is envisaged that the proper implementation of adult literacy programmes implies rapid transformation of the society. Nevertheless, it seems that most adults in Nigeria cannot read or write even in this era of global competitiveness. For instance, the idea of cashless economy cannot be achieved if there are still mass illiteracy in any nation. However, one noticeable weakness is that they have not been closely linked to adults' working life or their basic need for economic and socio-political development and empowerment as traditional methods of teaching are employed. It equally seems that most adults in Nigeria cannot read and write even in The question that borders the mind therefore is on the extent to which adult education programmes is implemented bearing the importance of its objectives to the nation’s overall development.

Implementation is the transformation of education policies into realities. Implementation of adult literacy programmes involves working out the plans and suggestions that have been

made by adult education curriculum specialists and subject experts in a classroom or school setting (Offorma, 2019). It is the process of translating educational theories or programmes into practice particularly at the classroom level. The administration of adult education is often plagued with a lot of challenges ranging from improper planning, insufficient funding, poor payment of facilitators, lack of adequate instructional materials, poor monitoring and evaluation techniques, lack of training and retraining of staff and facilitators, inadequate advocacy, poor mobilization and sensitization of key stakeholders, and poor establishment and maintenance of non-formal education centres (Hussain, 2021; Ozoemena, 2013). Researchers linked the shortfall of the adult education programme in Nigeria to managerial issues such as lack of accountability, non-regular meetings of the commission, misappropriation of funds, lack of accurate data, and poor planning, among others (Babalola, 2021; Acha, 2022).

State Agencies are Bodies or Organisations established in Nigeria to ensure the effective administration of adult literacy programme. According to Ajiye (2022), the National Commission for Mass Education (NMEC), the central coordinating agency for adult education in Nigeria, was established as part of the national effort to eradicate illiteracy and was given the responsibility to develop the sectoral blueprint, coordinate, implement, and monitor the various strategies and agencies that are established for the eradication of illiteracy. The State Agencies for Mass Education (SAMEs) were established in 1980, the National Adult Education Centre in Kano, the Nomadic Education Commission in 1989, the National Commission for Mass Education in 1991, and the National Open University of Nigeria. The Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (NNCAE) was founded in 1971 by a league of adult education practitioners and scholars. Along with numerous extracurricular activities, several educational institutions and individuals are also offering distance learning programs throughout. This is most likely a result of the incorrect assumption that credentials from the field of adult education are irrelevant to any employment schedule in such organizations.

Teaching qualification is one of a number of academic and professional degrees that enables a person to become a registered teacher (Offorma, 2019). It gives a teacher authorization to teach and grade in pre-primary, primary and secondary, and tertiary education in Nigeria. Qualification of adult literacy teachers can directly affect the implementation of its programmes. This is because, Igbokwe in Akintolu (2019) maintained that instructional delivery system of teachers is depended on qualification as qualified teachers were observed to use diverse instructional methods and facilities which motivate the interest of students to learning while unqualified teachers do not. However, it seems that most teachers that handle adult literacy programmes are not qualified. For instance, UNESCO Report of (2020), adult teachers used various qualifications in facilitating adult learning and education in Nigeria. According to the report, about 33.3% of them possessed only Post Literacy Certificates; 54.5% of them possessed WAEC/NECO while 84.8% were Teachers Grade II certificate holders. The result further shows that 32.73% were NCE and Degree holders of certificates in adult education; 64.9% were diploma holders while 57.6% were graduates from the Universities. This situation could invariably affect the effective implementation of adult education programmes in Nigeria.

However, no matter how qualified adult literacy teachers might be, they require instructional materials to be functional in the field.

Instructional materials refer as anything a teacher/facilitator will use to facilitate teaching and learning. They are sometimes called audio-visual materials, instructional media or audio-visual resources. Evaluation strategies are the techniques or tools adopted by the teacher to measure the students' learning outcomes in the three domains of educational objectives (Cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain). Evaluation involves making judgments about the quality, value, or worth of a response, product, or performance based on established criteria. According Hardik and Vikas (2019), evaluations strategies the parameter, technique are usually based on multiple sources of information and can be used (i) to inform adult learner, and their about the progress they are making towards attaining the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be learned; and (ii) to inform the various agencies who make adult educational decisions. According to Offorma (2019), the evaluation strategies adopted by teachers must be used for instructional, diagnostic, placement, promotion, graduation, curriculum planning, programme development, and for policy formulation and implementation of adult literacy. It is therefore important to note that the evaluation strategies adopted by teachers can make or mar the active participation of adult learners in instructional process. Hence, for learners to be actively involved in learning process, the teacher must adopt learner-centred evaluation strategies. Nevertheless, the extent of which Stage Agencies adopt these strategies in the implementation of adult literacy programmes may vary depending on centers' characteristics in terms of location.

Statement of the Problem

A good number of male and female citizens who had not gotten opportunity to attend formal education opted for adult education programmes. Despite the efforts to eradicate illiteracy in Nigeria, the country is still witnessing lots of illiterates. For instance, the report of UNESCO and UIS in 2020 indicates that Nigeria has an adult illiteracy rate bordering above 41% as at 2018-2019 representing 62.02% literacy rate. The report showed that 38 percent of the estimated 200 million population, representing over 76 million adults are non-literates from 2021-2022 respectively. A survey conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 2019 cited in Wami (2022) indicates that the population of out-of-school in Nigeria has risen from 10.5 million to 13.2 million, the highest in the world. This situation could be directly attributed to the inadequate number of literacy instructors/facilitators, poor methods of teaching, inadequate instructional materials/facilities, poor remuneration of facilitators, withdrawals from service by facilitators due to lack of mobility for effective monitoring, and poor evaluation due to unsustainable political among others. In addition, the way that the majority of literacy centers are run across South East Nigeria serves as another telling sign of the marginal status of adult education in the area. The researcher is however, optimistic that adult literacy programmes can be improved in the area if the problems affecting its implementation can be reduced by Adult Education Agencies.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to assess the level of implementation of Adult Literacy Programmes by State Agencies for Sustainable Mass Literacy in South East Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined the:

1. Qualifications of adult literacy teachers that are involved in the implementation of mass literacy programmes in South East Nigeria.
2. Evaluation strategies used in the implementation of adult literacy programmes for sustainable mass literacy in South East Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the qualifications of adult literacy teachers involved in the implementation of mass literacy programmes in South East Nigeria?
2. To what level are the evaluation strategies used in the implementation of adult literacy programmes for sustainable mass literacy in South East Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance to guide the study

- 1: the level of qualifications of adult literacy teachers that are involved in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria is dependent on location.
- 2: the level of evaluation strategies used by teachers for effective implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria is dependent on location.

Methodology

The design of this study was the descriptive survey design. The area of this study is South East geo-political zone of Nigeria. The zone covered Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States .The Zone is bounded by the River Niger on the west, the riverine Niger Delta on the South, the flat North Central to the North, and the Cross River on the East. The population of this study comprised one thousand two hundred and eighty (1280) adult literacy centres in South East, Nigeria. As at the time of this study, there were 262 adult literacy centers and 339 Adult literacy teachers in Enugu State; 171 adult literacy centres and 259 adult literacy teachers in Ebonyi State; 209 adult literacy centers and 312 adult teachers in Imo State; 283 adult literacy centres and 279 adult teachers in Anambra State; 355 Study Centers and 533 teachers in Abia State. The sample of the study was 250 Adult literacy teachers from 50 adult literacy centers. The instrument for data collection was adapted Checklist, titled "level of implementation of adult literacy programmes for sustainable mass literacy Checklist" (LIALPSMLC).The items of the checklist were derived from the literature review. The response opinions were under 2-points scale of Highly Implemented (HI) = 50% and above and Lowly Implemented (LI) = 49% and below for research question 1; Highly Used (HU) for 50% and above and Lowly Used (LU) for 49% and below for research question 2. Frequency tables and Percentages were used to analyse the data collected on research questions while Chi-Square statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. For the checklist, items with 50% rating and above were accepted as high implementation while 49% and below were not be accepted. The null hypotheses would be upheld when the probability value is greater

than 0.05 level of significance ($P > .05$), and not upheld when the probability value is less than 0.05 level of significance ($P < .05$).

Results

Research Question 1: What are the qualifications of adult literacy teachers that are involved in the implementation of mass literacy programmes in South East Nigeria? The analysis of research question 1 are presented in table four below:

Table 1: Percentage Response on the qualifications of adult literacy teachers that are involved in the implementation of mass literacy programmes in South East Nigeria

S/N	Qualification of Teachers of Adult Literacy Programme	Number of Teacher		N	Percentages (%)	Decision
		Rural	Urban			
1	O' Level	08	06	14	5.6%	Not Qualified
2	TCII	03	10	13	4.8%	Not Qualified
3	NCE	38	21	59	23.6%	Qualified
4	B.Ed	23	31	54	21.6%	Qualified
5	B.Sc	19	29	48	19.2%	Not Qualified
6	B.A	14	32	46	18.4%	Not Qualified
7	OND/HND	07	09	16	6.4%	Not Qualified
8	Others	-	-	-	-	-
Total				250	100	

Field Work, 2024

The data presented in Table 1 shows that 14 adult literacy teachers representing 5.6% hold O' Level; 13 teachers representing 4.8% hold TCII certificate; 59 teachers representing 23.6% hold NCE; and 54 teachers representing 21.6% hold Bachelor of Education (B.Ed). It also shows that 48 teachers representing 19.2% hold Bachelor of Science (B.Sc); 46 teachers representing 18.4% hold Bachelor of Arts (B.A) while 16 teachers representing 6.4% hold Ordinary National Diploma or Highest National Diploma. It implies that out of the 250 teachers participated in the study only 113 teachers with NCE and B.Ed are qualified to teach adult literacy programmes according to the stipulated minimum standard; hence, majority of teachers that teach adult literacy programmes are not qualified as most of them were not with educational qualifications.

Research Question 2: What are the level of use of evaluation strategies in the implementation of adult literacy programmes for sustainable mass literacy in South East Nigeria?

Table 2: Percentage Response on the Level of Use of Evaluation Strategies in the Implementation of Adult Literacy Programmes for Sustainable Mass Literacy in South East Nigeria

S/N	Item Statements	N0	YES				N0				Dec
			Rural	%	Urban	%	Rural	%	Urban	%	
9	Pepper and pencil assessment	250	69	27.6	88	35.2	50	20.0	43	17.2	HU
10	Instructor-made Test	250	101	40.4	72	28.8	49	19.6	28	11.2	HU
11	Continuous assignment	250	60	24.0	76	30.4	64	25.6	50	20.0	HU
12	Anecdotal records	250	38	15.0	51	20.4	97	38.8	64	25.6	LU
13	Portfolio assessment	250	44	17.6	58	23.2	76	30.4	72	29.6	LU
14	Computer-Based Test (CBT)	250	51	20.4	77	30.8	84	33.6	38	15.2	LU
15	Project-Based Assessment (PBA)	250	28	11.2	41	16.4	108	43.2	73	29.2	LU

Field Work, 2024; Key: HU= Highly used, LU= Lowly Used

The data in **Table2** shows that out of 250 teachers surveyed, 27.6% of them from rural and 35.2% from urban area agreed that they pepper and pencil assessment strategy while 20.0% from rural and 17.2% from urban secondary schools disagreed; 40.4% from rural and 28.8% from urban schools agreed that they use Instructor-made Test (Teacher-made text) while 19.6% from rural and 11.2% from urban schools disagreed; 24.0% from rural and 30.4% from urban schools agreed that they use continuous assessment techniques in teaching adult learning programmes while 25.6% from rural and 20.0% from urban schools disagreed. The data also shows that 15.0% from rural and 20.4% from urban secondary schools agreed that they use Anecdotal Records while 38.8% from rural and 25.6% from urban schools disagreed; 17.6% from rural and 23.2% from urban schools agreed that they use Portfolio assessment strategy in teaching of adult literacy programmes while 30.4% from rural and 29.6% from urban schools disagreed. 20.4% from rural and 30.8% from urban secondary schools use Computer-Based Test (CBT) as assessment technique in adult literacy programmes while 33.6% from rural and 15.2% from urban schools disagreed. The data equally shows that 11.2% from rural and 16.4% from urban schools agreed that the use Project-Based Assessment (PBA) while 43.2% from rural and 29.2% from urban secondary schools disagreed that they use CBT as a strategy in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria. This analysis indicates that only paper and pencil assessment, teacher-made text and continuous assessment are the evaluation strategies used in adult literacy programmes while Anecdotal records, Portfolio assessment, Computer-Based Test (CBT), and Project-Based Assessment (PBA) were not used by the teachers in the adult literacy centres in South East Nigeria.

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: The level of qualifications of adult literacy teachers that are involved in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria is dependent on location.

Table 1: Chi-Square statistic on the level of qualifications of adult literacy teachers that are involved in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria is dependent on location

	Df	$\chi^2\alpha$	Sig.	Alpha Level	Remarks
Chi-Square	49	56000 ^a	.229	0.05	NS
Number of valid Cases	6				

Df = degree of freedom, $\chi^2\alpha$ = chi-square calculated, Sig. = P-value; P < .05, NS= Not Significant

The data in **Table 3** shows P-value of 0.229 which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance and with 6 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of rural and urban teachers on the qualifications of adult literacy teachers that are involved in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria was upheld. This indicates that the qualification of teachers that are involved in the implementation of adult literacy programmes was almost the same in rural and urban public secondary schools in South East Nigeria.

H₀₂: The level of evaluation strategies used by teachers for effective implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria is dependent on location.

Table 10: Chi-Square statistic on the level of evaluation strategies used by teachers for effective implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria is dependent on location

	df	$\chi^2\alpha$	Sig.	Alpha Level	Remarks
Chi-Square	36	42000 ^a	.227	0.05	NS
Number of valid Cases	7				

Df = degree of freedom, $\chi^2\alpha$ = chi-square calculated, Sig. = P-value; P < .05, NS= Not Significant

The data in **Table 4** shows P-value of 0.227 which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance and with 7 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of rural and urban teachers on the evaluation strategies used in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria was upheld. This indicates that the evaluation methods adopted by teachers in

the implementation of adult literacy programmes were almost the same in rural and urban public secondary schools in South East Nigeria.

Basic English Language skills, Civic Education Contents and HIV and AIDS prevention and Basic hygiene and nutrition were the contents of adult literacy implemented while entrepreneurship education contents and Basic technology were not implemented in adult literacy programmes; hence, there was no significant difference ($p>0.05$) in the mean ratings of rural and urban teachers on the methods used in the implementation of Adult Literacy Programmes by State Agencies in South East Nigeria.

Conventional lecture methods and stakeholder meetings were the only methods used in teaching adult literacy programmes while Each–One–Teach –One (EOTO) methods, literacy clubs, literacy by radio, and literacy campaigns are lowly used; hence, there was no significant difference ($p>0.05$) in the mean ratings of rural and urban teachers on the methods used in the implementation of Adult Literacy Programmes by State Agencies in South East Nigeria.

Improved technology gadgets like Radio broadcast, Language laboratories, Microphones with loudspeakers, television, Computer with internet services, Learner-Generated Materials (LGM), Text related software and Projector with electronic boards were not used by teachers in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria; hence, there was no significant difference ($p>0.05$) in the mean ratings of rural and urban teachers on the instructional materials used in the implementation of adult literacy programmes by State Agencies for sustainable mass literacy in South East Nigeria.

Discussion

The finding of the study revealed that majority of teachers that teach adult literacy programmes are not qualified as most of them were not with educational qualifications. This finding is the confirmation of the idea of Akinola (2013), who observed that people recruited to teach in adult education programmes will need to undergo some sort of orientation training to acquaint them with current methodologies in the field. This is because, most adults behaves like children and they need teachers with knowledge of psychology and androgical experiences to be able to motivate them to learn.

The finding was also supported by the idea of Offorma (2016) that the teaching methods used by teachers are significantly depended on their qualifications. It is imperative therefore, to note that qualified teachers are usually equipped with requisite skills which help them to change their method of teaching at any time in order to achieve the objectives of adult literacy programmes.

The result of null hypothesis 1 revealed that there was no significant difference ($p>0.05$) in the mean ratings of rural and urban teachers on the qualifications of adult literacy teachers that are involved in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in South East Nigeria. This indicates general agreement between teachers from rural and urban adult literacy centres that most of them are not qualified. This indicates that more qualified teachers to be employed to ensure that adult learners are given quality education for overall transformation and sustainable adult living in the society.

Paper and pencil assessment, teacher-made text and continuous assessment are the evaluation strategies used in adult literacy programmes while Anecdotal records, Portfolio assessment, Computer-Based Test (CBT), and Project-Based Assessment (PBA) were not used by the teachers in the adult literacy centres in South East Nigeria. This findings collaborates with Derrick and Kathryn (2016) that teachers do not use innovative assessment or evaluation technique in assessing students' learning outcome in schools. Nevertheless, the use of portfolio assessment does not support large class as teachers of adult learning need to keep the records of every adult learning for feedback and supports. This process is cumbersome and might mar the use of the strategies in evaluation. In addition, the use of CBT as evaluation strategy require experienced and qualified adult teachers who can assess internet and use computer effectively. It is crucial to note that the teachers' inability to use computer software and internet facilities could mar the use of CBT in the implementation of adult literacy programmes by the agencies. This correspond with the idea of Alonso-Tapia and Garrido-Hernansaiz (2017) who submitted that teachers who approach assessment in this manner, who utilize various types of assessment and who offer quality and constructive feedback, will positively affect learners' efforts.

Conclusion

For this to be achieved the programmes of adult literacy must be effectively implemented for sustainable mass literacy. This indicates that the State Agencies must as a matter of urgency recruit qualified teachers into the centres, provide adequate teaching-learning materials, train teachers on the innovative methods and evaluation strategies for them to effectively implement the programmes of adult literacy. In the line of the above, the researcher concluded that for the country to have contributive adult population, the adult literacy programmes must empower them to take active participation in the all-round development of the area.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were based on the findings of the study

1. The State Agencies on Adult Literacy programmes should recruit more qualified teachers to adult learning centres for quality learning outcomes.
2. The Universal Basic Education Board, National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the National Orientation Agency, and the Industrial Training Fund should periodically train teachers of adult literacy in the use of innovative evaluation strategies like Anecdotal records, Portfolio assessment, Computer-Based Test (CBT), and Project-Based Assessment (PBA) for them to develop skills and use them for comprehensive assessment of learning outcomes.

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