

Perceived Contributions of Non-Formal Education Sector to Human Resources Development by Students of Science Education, Adamawa State University, Mubi, Nigeria

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Abstract — The major thrust of this paper was to determine the contributions of non-formal education sector to human resources development as perceived by students of Science Education, Adamawa State University, Mubi, Nigeria. In line with this, the study investigated the perception of Teacher trainees on the contributions of non-formal sector to national development. The research questions raised sought to identify the forms of non-formal education and their contributions to human resources development. The research questions also addressed the major challenges confronting the sector. The population of the study consisted of all 100-400 level students of Science Education Department, Adamawa State University, Mubi. A simple random sampling technique was used to draw 200 students from the population of 460 students of the Department of Science Education. An instrument constructed by the researcher and tagged “Contributions of Non-formal Education Questionnaire” (CONOFEQ), was used to obtain data from the students. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages were used to answer the research questions. The study revealed the provision of functional literacy education to non-completers of formal education and the reduction of the high rate of illiteracy in the country as the major contributions of non-formal education sector to national development. Poor mobilization and poor funding were identified as major challenges confronting the non-formal sector. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that students in Teacher Education Institutions should be properly inducted in the provision of non-formal education programmes and posted to conduct their internship programme in the related sectors. Government should place more emphasis in the provision of functional literacy and occupational skills to target populations outside the formal education sector.

Keywords— *Development; Formal Education; Human Resources; Teacher trainees; Non-Formal Education; National Development.*

I. INTRODUCTION

It is no longer news that it is a grievous mistake for any nation to under-estimate the importance of education for its citizens. This is because illiteracy is a serious impediment to individual growth and the country's socio-economic progress. This assertion has been made clear with the level

of technological achievement and economic development attained by many developed countries that give high priority to education. Learning takes place under the platform of formal and non-formal educational settings. Non-formal education in general is an effective way of liberating the individual in any society from ignorance, poverty, anti-social activities. Formal educational system alone cannot

respond to rapid and constant technological, social and economic change in the society. They should be reinforced by non-formal educational practices. Reference [1] posited that formal education encompasses the extension of education and learning throughout life while non-formal hampers on acknowledging the importance of education, learning and training which takes place outside a recognized educational institution.

Non-formal education became an integral part of the international discourse on education policy in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Its advent in Nigeria dates back to the colonial periods where colonialists exposed their servants and maids to some basic non-formal learning, e.g. cooking, knitting, dressmaking and teaching of the English language for easy communication etc. This type of education was perfectly and effectively implemented. Prior to colonialism, the traditional societies had organized educational systems which they used to induct the young into the ways of the group. Before the advent of schools and school based education, children were trained to fit into the patterns of their communities and to contribute with sustenance and stability. They were taught how to hunt, fish, and build houses, makes weapons and rudimentary utensils. They were evaluated on the performance of these tasks. These children and adolescents were also taught group ethics, the rules and taboos of the community, myths and other legends, its customs and culture and the initiation of the young through adolescence to adulthood. Thus the multi-faceted traditional African was evaluated as a family and community person as well as a professional in his functional society.

Non- formal education/ training involves out of school education/training for illiterate member of the society, unemployed youths, civic education for men and women to enable them play the various roles assigned to them by their society [2]. In the same vein, Alachi in [3] posited that Non formal education centers on a man and his immediate environment involving people in planned programmes of which they have adequate knowledge and from which they can acquire skills, which in turn will enable them to grapple more successfully with the odds and ends of life. The entire community is called upon to actively participate in this type of training paying keen attention to the contemporary problems affecting people in the society. In order to ensure that, the Agencies of Adult Non-Formal Education an Informal Learning (ANFEAIL) was organized outside the hierarchical structure of the Colleges, Polytechnics, Universities system to provide education for those with little or no formal education such as dropouts, those with no adequate qualification to further their studies and the illiterates.

Non-formal education is perceived to be related to the concept of recurrent and lifelong learning and it is sometimes synonymous with the concept of adult education.

This is due to the fact that it allows the young and adults to acquire and maintain the skills, abilities and dispositions needed to a continuously changing environment. It can be acquired on a personal learning initiative of each individual through different learning activities taking place outside the formal educational system. Non-formal education covers every aspect of our educational enterprise, which is neither confined to a classroom situation, nor subject to organized strategies, curricula, etc. It is the type of education that is free from rigidity with regards to curriculum, the learning materials, methodology, the venue, duration or the length an individual takes to complete a particular instructional session [4]. Due to its non-formality, non-formal education is very necessary in the Third World countries where the level of illiteracy is still very high, the rate of school drop out as a result of poverty, wars, ignorance, cultural values, carelessness, etc. The illiteracy thermometer keeps rising despite the efforts of individual, state, national or international educational policies and aids.

Section 6 of the National Policy on Education [5] contains the provision of mass literacy, adult and non-formal education. According to the document, the programme provides functional education to youths and adults outside the school settings. The beneficiaries of this programme include nomads, migrant families, disadvantaged gender and non-completers of primary and secondary education. In order to achieve these laudable objectives, the Federal Ministry of Education formulated appropriate policies while the National Commission for Mass literacy Coordinate the implementation of the programmes in all the states and local councils.

Non-formal education in Nigeria has several dimensions, and caters for the adults, disadvantaged (migrant fisher folks, hunters, farmers) disabled (visually-impaired, physical and health impaired, mentally-retarded, emotionally disturbed, speech-impaired, learning disabled, multiple handicapped gifted and talented (children with high IQ) Naturally endowed with special traits and gifted/talented [6]. All these categories of people can enroll in any of the types of non-formal education. According to Hanachor and Olumati [7], the main components of Non-formal education includes: Remedial education, continuing education, labour, education, literacy education, functional literacy, citizenship education, extension education (agriculture, health, distance, women, cooperative education etc.) and environmental education.

Reference [8] describes the urge for continuous learning as 'a cradle to the grave'. It is hoped that when the individual is equipped through life-long skills and knowledge, Nigerians hope for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals that include eradication of extreme hunger and poverty, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women etc. The authors further to assert that the rubric of

non-formal education covers training and institutions outside of the formal school system and ranges from individualized apprenticeship to nation-wide literacy. It may be vocational such as staff training centers in Nigeria designed to provide employment opportunities to young school leavers and for other employed persons, or girls vocation centers established in many African countries which training girls in vocational skills and prepare young women for the future.

It is indeed true that no organization exists without challenges hence non-formal education is not an exception. One does not need to be told that non-formal education (NFE) is facing a lot of difficulties and can never be compared with the formal education. Reference [9] posits the following as the major challenges faced by the NFE in Nigeria: Accessibility, poor funding, poor mobilization, shortage of trained monitoring personnel, poor payment of facilitators, poor record keeping and poor attitude of the target group.

Today Non-Formal education in Nigeria is gradually diminishing and is left on the sideline. This study assumes that students in teacher educational institutions may not be fully aware of the enormous contributions of non-formal education sector to national development and the challenges confronting the sector in the throes of providing qualitative education to the teeming population of illiterate citizens. The study, therefore investigated the extent to which students in teacher education institutions perceive the enormous contributions of non-formal education sector to human resources development and the challenges confronting it.

A. Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- (i). What are the various contributions of the Non-formal Education sector toward National Development?
- (ii). What challenges face the Non-formal Education sector in the Provision of Functional Literacy in Nigeria?
- (iii). What forms of Non-formal Education Programmes are available in your Community?

II. MATERIALS AND METHOD

The ex post facto survey design was used for the study. The population used consists of 460 students of the Education Department, Adamawa State University, Mubi. A random sample technique was used to sample 200 subjects. An instrument constructed by the researcher and titled "Contributions of Non-formal Education Questionnaire" (CONOFOEQ) was used to obtain data from the respondents.

The instrument contains three sections: Section A consisted eight items which measured the various contributions of non-formal education to national development while Section B consisted 15 items which addresses the major problems militating against the provision of functional non-formal education to the students. Section C which contained 13 items, measures the types of non-formal education provided in the area of study. A reliability test was run with the instrument and this yielded a Cronbach alpha value of 0.63. The instrument was administered by the investigators and collected the following day. Only 200 out of the total of 250 questionnaires were received and analyzed. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages were used and analyzed to answer research questions 1-4.

III. RESULTS

A. Research Question One: What are the Contributions of Non-Formal Education Sector toward National Development?

Table 1 reported some of the contributions of non-formal education sector to national development as perceived by Education students of Adamawa State University, Mubi. The results in the table shows that about 54.5% and 52.0% of the students perceive that the non-formal education sector provides ample opportunities for all categories of illiterate adults to be educated. This leads to massive reduction in high rate of illiteracy amongst rural and urban populations. 41.5% of the respondents also perceived that non-formal education also takes care of different categories of completers of formal education by providing opportunities for them to acquire better education and skills acquisition. The respondents appreciate the enormous contributions of the non-formal education sector in raising the literacy level amongst out-of-school adults and completers of primary and secondary learning school education.

B. Research Question Two: What are the Challenges facing the Non-formal Education Sector in the Provision of Functional Literacy in Nigeria

Table 2 shows that 48.0% of the respondents supported the assertion that many interested adults and youths are not aware of the existence of non-formal education centers due to poor mobilization. This is as a result of the limited effort in public enlightenment and low publicity about the activities and benefits of the informal education sector. Many people would have enrolled in the non-formal educational sector if only more attention was given to awareness programmes. Another problem that has affected the development of formal education is the inadequate number of trained facilitators. 47.5% of the results show that the majority of the staff in the informal education sector is not qualified. In most cases the teachers are those rejected from the formal educational sector, hence, it becomes a

dumping ground for low level certificate holders who cannot pass on the knowledge they dot have. The opinion of 46.5% of the respondents revealed that government gives more priority to formal education in terms of funding and

development than the non-formal education. This preferential treatment has greatly limited the growth and development of the sector.

TABLE I. Frequency Counts and Percentages of Responses on the Contributions of Non-Formal Education Sector toward National Development

S/No.	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Ranking
1.	Non-formal education reduces the high rate of illiteracy.	104	52.0	2
2.	Many adults who were unable to go to school have the opportunity to be educated under the platform of non-formal education.	109	54.5	1
3.	Non-formal education provides education for different categories of completers of the formal education system to improve their basic knowledge.	83	41.5	3
4.	NFE prepares the individual to change and creates a dynamic frame of mind in the individual.	81	40.5	4
5.	NFE provides distance learning opportunities for those who because of their age, are able to enroll in the regular formal education system.	81	40.5	4
6.	Non-formal education provides remedial education or any level of education.	61	30.5	7
7.	NFE also provides labour education for members of Trade Unions.	76	38.5	6
8.	Education students with non-formal educational background perform better than those with formal education background.	55	27.5	8

TABLE II. Frequency Counts and Percentages of Responses on Perceived Challenges Facing Non-formal Education in Nigeria

S/No	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Ranking
1.	Non-formal education centers are located far away from people who are interested in learning.	79	39.5	9
2.	Inadequate funding of the non-formal education sector.	83	41.5	8
3.	Many interesting adults and youths are not aware of the existence of non-formal education centers due to poor mobilization.	96	48.0	1
4.	Inadequate number of teachers.	91	45.5	4
5.	Inadequate number of trained programme evaluators	70	35.0	12
6.	Poor remuneration of facilitators	81	40.5	9
7.	Inadequate number of trained facilitators	95	47.5	2
8.	Poor record keeping	72	36.0	11
9.	Poor attitude of people towards non-formal system of education.	84	42.0	7
10.	NFE lacks specially trained educators in rural areas.	79	39.5	9
11.	The non formal education system lacks basic teaching and learning facilities for the implementation of the non-formal curriculum.	91	45.5	4
12.	Parents and other members of the community are no longer interested in the training of children according to their customs and values of the community.	79	39.5	9
13.	Due to the influence of western education, Nigerian children and adolescents no longer behave according to the norms and values of the society.	90	45.0	6
14.	Irresponsible sexual behavior, indecent dressing, teenage pregnancies, lesbianism, homosexuals and prostitution are products of western education.	74	37.0	10
15.	The government places more emphasis in the funding and development of formal education sector than non-formal education.	93	46.5	3

C. Research Question Three: What forms of Non-formal Education Programmes are available in your Community?

TABLE III. Frequency Counts and Percentages of Responses on Perceived Type of Non-Formal Education Programmes available in Nigerian Community

S/No.	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Ranking
1.	Skill Acquisition Centers (Local Apprenticeship Scheme, LAS).	100	50.0	1
2.	Tailoring	90	45.0	2
3.	Adult Education	64	32.0	4
4.	Extra-moral programme	57	28.5	7
5.	Remedial Education for school dropouts	48	24.0	8
6.	Agricultural Extension Education	61	30.5	5
7.	Health Educational Education	40	20.0	9
8.	Women Education.	61	30.5	5
9.	Retirement and Pre-retirement Education.	30	15.0	10
10.	Population Education.	25	12.5	11
11.	Nomadic Education.	75	37.5	3
12.	Death and Dying Education.	20	10.0	12
13.	Environmental Education.	20	10.0	12

The result from the Table 3 shows the various non-formal education programmes that are provided in the cultural communities across the state. The findings of the study are shown in Table 3 reveal that 50% and 45% of the respondents identified Local Apprenticeship Scheme (LAS) and tailoring as the major non-formal education programmes that are provided for the unemployed youths and rural women in their various communities in the state. Nomadic and Adult Education with 32.0 and 37.5 respectively was also a very popular non-formal education people enroll in within the state. The prevalence of these programmes in their communities across the state is not unconnected with Murtala Nyako's Skill Acquisition Programme aimed at equipping the youths with various occupational skills.

IV. DISCUSSION

The study investigated the perceived contributions of non-formal education sector to national development by education students of Adamawa State University, Mubi. Research Questions 1 determined the various contributions of non-formal education sector to national development. The study revealed that non-formal education programme provides opportunities for all categories of illiterate adults to acquire functional literacy and occupational, skills thereby reducing the high rate of illiteracy and unemployment among the rural and urban populations. This finding is a confirmation of the previous studies such as [10] and [6] who reported that the provision of non-formal education services in Nigeria keep all categories of learners to acquire functional literacy and occupational skills.

Research question two investigated the problems militating against the provision of functional literacy and job skills by the non-formal education sector. The results identified poor mobilization, poor funding, inadequate number of trained facilitators and instructional equipment as the major challenges facing the implementation of the provisions of non-formal education programmes as contained in the national policy on education. This finding is confirmed by the work of [9] who identified poor funding, poor mobilization, poor remuneration of facilitators, poor record keeping and negligence of the non-formal education sector by government as the major challenges faced by the non-formal education sector.

Research question three investigated the various types of non-formal education programmes provided in the various cultural communities as perceived by students of education, Adamawa state University, Mubi. The result of the study revealed Local Apprenticeship Scheme, Adult Education, Tailoring and Nomadic education as the major services rendered by the non-formal education sector. This finding corroborates with the work of [7] that identified remedial education, labour and literacy education as the major components of non-formal education in Nigeria. Murtala

Nyako's Administration's policy of equipping the youths with occupational skills in order to reduce the high level of youth unemployment in the state has contributed in equipping the youths with occupational skills in the various local government areas.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The contributions of non-formal education sector to national development are enormous. Government and individual commitment to the implementation of the programme would lead to a massive reduction of the high illiteracy rate and youth unemployment in the country.

It is therefore recommended that students in Teacher Education Institutions should be properly inducted in the provision of non-formal education programmes and posted to conduct their internship programme in the related sectors. Government should place more emphasis on the provision of functional literacy and occupational skills to target populations outside the formal education sector.

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