

# **Impact of Adult Education on the Achievement of Government Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Owerri North and West Local Government Areas in Imo State**

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## **Abstract**

*The study investigated the impact of adult education on the achievement of objectives of Government Poverty Alleviation programmes in Owerri North and West Local Government Area of Imo State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted seven hundred and eighty (780) respondents were selected (screened) and used (from) out of 1311 beneficiaries of Government poverty alleviation programmes through 60% proportionate sampling techniques. A set of questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. Five research questions and two hypothesis are amazed at 0.05 level of significant. Finding were made*

(A) *Poor attitudes of adults to education programmes was a hindrance to usage of adult education as a tool for poverty alleviation.*

(B) *Planning, implementation and coordination of adult education programmes lack focus on PAPs etc. base on this, recommendations were giving that adults should be properly oriented with functionality and benefits of adult education programmes, also adult education should be involved in the planning, implementation and coordination of poverty alleviation programmes for the achievement of the objectives.*

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## **Introduction**

Education and poverty are inversely related, the higher the level of education of the population the lesser will be the number of poor persons because education impacts knowledge and skills which is supportive in higher wages (Jaiyeoba 2007). The direct effect of education on poverty reduction is through increasing the earnings/incomes or wages. The indirect effect of education on poverty is important with respect to human poverty because as education improves the income, the fulfillment basic necessities becomes easier and raises the living standard which surely means the fall in human poverty. Education indirectly helps in the fulfillment of basic needs like water and sanitation, utilization, of health facilities, shelter, and it also affects the women's behaviour in fertility decisions and family planning. It is understood that such base needs presence increase the productivity and wages consequently putting people above the poverty line (Raji, 2004). However, one of the main issues in development debates is how to tackle poverty, more than 70 percent of the world poor are to be found in rural areas where hunger, literacy, and low school achievement are common.

Education for a large number of people in rural areas is crucial for achieving sustainable development (UNESCO, 2002). As the majority of the world's poor illiterate and undernourished live in rural areas, it is a major challenge to ensure their access to quality education.

The lack of learning opportunities is both a cause and an effect of rural poverty. Hence education and training strategies need to be integrated within all aspects of sustainable rural development through plans of action that are interdisciplinary (Gomes and Camera 2004).

## **Concept of Adult Education**

Adult education is often referred to as a movement dedicated to making things better, as well as providing professional expertise in teaching and in helping early school leaves and those who do not have the opportunity to go through academic environment to learn. There is a common commitment in making adult and non-formal education work for social amelioration, at the same time there is chronic uncertainty about the effectiveness of adult and non-formal education as a means of

improving both economic living standard and more broadly the quality of life (Oxcnham 2004). Adult education takes many forms, some focus in the individuals right and freedom, to learn for personal development choosing how and where the learning is to be applied. Others attend more to social change and collective achievement. Adult education is inevitably political, to the view that it is a technical enabler of learning and neutral in itself.

### **Poverty:**

The concern over increase poverty level in Nigeria and the need for its eradication as a means of improving the standard of living of the people has led to the conceptualization and implementation of various target or non targeted poverty alleviation programmes. Government programmes and agencies designed to impact on poverty include:

- a. Directorate of food, roads and rural infrastructure.
- b. National Directorate of Employment.
- c. Family support programmes.
- d. Better life programmes etc., with the return of democracy in 1999, the Federal Government embarked on poverty alleviation programmes and specifically put up the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in the year 2000, which took off in 2001. This was aimed at eradicating absolute poverty which consist of four schemes namely youth empowerment, rural infrastructure and development rural welfare scheme and conservation scheme. To implement these programmes, the government place emphasis on complementation, collaboration and coordination between the various tiers of government and non-governmental organizations. Nonetheless, in spite of all the laudable effort at addressing poverty issues, the problem still persist on high progression in Nigeria, especially Imo State whose poverty rate is 50.1% (National Bureau of Statistics 2012) and where the government through her poverty alleviation bureau created programmes such as food processing and capacity growth, which aimed at assisting the rural people in food processing by providing, through micro credit, oil willing kernel cracking, grain grating and egg hatching.
- b. Poverty Alleviation Welfare Scheme, which offers small loans to rural poor women.
- c. College crafts industries, which aimed at helping community based and community run craft centres/groups for a specialist training and production of exportable crafts items.
- d. Keke Napep, which aimed at reducing the number of unemployed able men in the communities.
- e. Youth Must Work Programmes which aimed at bringing all unemployed youths in the State together, identifying their different areas of specialization and empowering them.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In an attempt to tackle the problem of poverty in Imo State, succeeding government has established various poverty alleviation programmes that set out specific objectives to be achieved as mentioned. However, the level of poverty in Imo State with specific reference to Owerri North and West Local Government Area shows that, the government poverty alleviation programmes have not fully achieved the set objectives. To improve the situation, education, especially adult education have been identified as one of the tools capable of improving the level of achievement of the objectives of government poverty alleviation programme in Imo State. This work has expose how far adult Education has impacted the achievement of objective of Government poverty alleviation programmes in Imo State.

### **Objectives**

- (1) Identify programmes of adult education designed for poverty alleviation in Owerri North and West Local Government Areas of Imo State.
- (2) To determine the extent adult education has provided skill training for the achievement of the objectives of government poverty alleviation programmes in Owerri North and West Local Government Areas in Imo State.

### Areas of the Study

The Areas of investigation are Owerri North and West Local Government Areas. Owerri North, is a semi Urban Government Area, it has its headquarter at Orié Uratta and it has an areas of 198 square km. with a population of 175, 395 at the 2006 census. It has six major roads that leads to the capital of the state. It has an agricultural resources.

Owerri West, this is located at the Rain Forest Zone, it share boundaries with other Local Government Areas. It has total population of about 250,000 people and covers an area of 15 square km. It also has natural agricultural resources.

### Relevance of Human Theory

Human capital theory is mainly based on education because it impacts knowledge and skills. Numerous studies showed that investment in education allow the poor to escape from poverty. Investment in education increases the ability of the individual and makes them more productive and efficient. Better opportunities help in getting good job, and in doing good business and hence increase the level in competitive market wages. Paid equal marginal productivity of the labour, so higher the productivity, higher the returns. Poverty is negatively linked with the income level of household, so higher wages implies low poverty.

### Methodology

Descriptive Survey research design was used with population of 1,311 beneficiaries of Government poverty alleviation programmes in Owerri North and West Local Government Areas in Imo State, with sample size of 786 respondents selected through sampling technique of 60% of the beneficiaries from each side of the Local Government Areas. Questionnaires was the only research instrument used data was analyzed using mean for research questions and Pearson product moment correlation for the tested hypothesis.

### RESEARCH QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE PROGRAMMES OF ADULT EDUCATION OF ADULT EDUCATION DESIGNED FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN OWERRI NORTH AND WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF IMO STATE RESPONSES

S/N	Items	Responses				Mean x	Total	Remark
		SA	A	D	SD			
1	Basic literacy is one of the programme designed to achieve the objectives of Government poverty alleviation in Imo State.	4	3	2	-	780	3.5	Accepted
		495 1980	210 630	75 150	- -	2760		
2	Continuing education is one of the programmes designed to achieve the objectives of Government poverty alleviation in Imo State.	349	248	183	-	780	3.2	Accepted
		1396	744	366	-	2506		
3	Vocational skill acquisition is another programme of adult education designed for poverty alleviation	319	233	197	31	780	3.1	Accepted
		1276	699	394	31	2400		
4	Post literacy is another programme also designed by adult education for poverty alleviation.	441	201	138	-	780	3.4	Accepted
		1764	603	276	-	2643		
5	Workers training is one of the programme of adult education designed to achieve the Government poverty alleviation in Imo State	230	201	303	46	780	2.8	Accepted
		920	603	606	46	2175		
	Grand Mean $\bar{X}$						3.2	

Research question one, which sought to identify the programmes of adult education designed for poverty alleviation in Owerri North Local Government Areas in Imo States, shows that basic literacy, vocational education, continuing education, post literacy education and workers training are the programmes adult education designed to achieve the objectives of Government poverty alleviation in Imo State.

The table above shows the responses that basic literacy with a measure of 3.5 is one of the programmes of adult education designed to achieve the objectives of Government poverty alleviation in Imo State. The result on item 2 shows that continuing education is also one of the programmes designed to achieve the objectives of Government poverty alleviation in Imo State as the mean score 3.2 is greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. Item 3 with mean score of 3.1 revealed and another programme of adult education designed for poverty alleviation is vocational skill acquisition. The result on item 4 shows that post literacy is one of the programmes of adult education designed for poverty alleviation as the mean score 3.4 is greater than the criterion mean of

The mean score of 2.8 on item 5 shows positive response of the respondents that workers training is one of the programmes of adult education designed to achieve the objectives of Government poverty alleviation in Imo State. In all, a grand mean of 3.2 was record and confirmed about the programmes designed by adult education.

S/N	Items	Reponses				Total	Mean x	Remark
		SA	A	D	SD			
6	Adult learning upgrades the skills of participants in adult education programmes to increase their employability and job performance	4	3	2	1	780	3.6	Accepted
		510	225	45	-			
		2040	675	90	-			
7	Adult learning leads to an increase in productivity and income thereby reducing poverty level.	187	186	212	195	780	2.5	Accepted
		748	558	424	195	1925		
8	Improvements in basic skills during adulthood improve access to benefits of poverty alleviation programme in Imo State	143	333	109	195	780	2.5	Accepted
		572	999	218	195	1984		
9	Vocational adult education provide adults basic training for skill development towards achievement of objectives of government poverty alleviation in Imo State.	456	229	75	20	780	3.4	Accepted
		1824	687	150	20	2681		
10	Adult learning equip beneficiaries of Imo State poverty alleviation programmes for effective use of opportunities provided by the programmes	454	245	81	-	780	3.5	Accepted
		1816	735	162	-	2713		
Grand mean x							3.1	

Research question two which sought to find out if adult education has provided skill training for the achievement of the objectives of Government poverty alleviation programmes in Owerri North and West Local Government Areas of Imo State, shows that adult learning upgrades the skills of

participants in adult education programmes to increase their employability and job performance increase productivity and income thereby reducing poverty level.

The above table shows that items 6 with a mean score of 3.6 indicate adult learning upgrade the skills of participants to increase their employability and job performance. For item 7, the result shows  $x = 2.5$  that adult learning leads to an increase in productivity and income thereby reducing poverty level. Item 8 with mean score of 2.5 reveals that improvements in basic skills during adulthood improve access to benefits of poverty alleviation programme in Imo State. For item 9, the result shows that vocational adult education provide adults basic training for skill development towards achievement of objectives of government poverty alleviation in Imo State as the mean score 3.4 is greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. the mean score of 3.5 generated on item 10 shows that adult learning equip beneficiaries of Imo State poverty alleviation programmes for effective use of opportunities provided by the programme.

In response to research question two, a grand mean of 3.1 recorded confirmed that adult learning upgrade the skills of participants to increase their employability and job performance, leads to an increase in productivity and income thereby reducing poverty level.

### **Findings**

1. It was discovered from the findings that poor attitudes of adults to adults education programme is a hindrance to the usage of adult education as a tool for poverty alleviation.
2. Planning, implementation and coordination of adult education programmes lack focus on poverty alleviation programmes.
3. Organizers of poverty alleviation programmes in Imo State do not see any need to involve agency for adult education in the programmes.

Beneficiaries of Imo State poverty alleviation programmes do not participate actively in community development programmes.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings the following recommendations were made

1. Adults should be properly oriented with the functionality and benefits of adult education programmes towards the achievement of objectives of government poverty alleviation programmes in Imo State, this will positively enhance their attitudes towards participation in adult education programmes.
2. Agencies for adult education should be well equipped in the planning, implementation, and coordination of adult education programmes with the necessary materials needed to achieve the desired results in the achievement of objectives of government poverty alleviation programmes in Imo State.
3. Organizers of poverty alleviation programme in Imo State need to integrate their programmes into the activities of agency in adult education as these will enable adults to understand the objectives of government poverty alleviation in the State.
4. Beneficiaries of Imo State poverty alleviation programmes should endeavour to participate in community development programmes to showcase the basic skills for development acquired towards achievement of objectives of government poverty alleviation in Imo State.
5. Agencies of Government in Imo State should endeavour to work together as a team as these efforts will enhance achievement of objective of government poverty alleviation programmes in the State.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that poor attitudes of adults to adult education programmes is a hindrance to usage of adult education as a tool for poverty alleviation.

Planning, implementation and coordination of adult education programmes lacks focus on government poverty alleviation programme.

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