



EVALUATION OF GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN OKRIKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE

Eliot Igbikiminachin Kalio, Doreen Kobani, PhD

Rivers State University, Nkpolu -Oroworukwo, P.M.B.5080

Faculty of Education, Department of Adult Education and Community Development

-----ABSTRACT-----

The study evaluated Government's Involvement in Adult Education Programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. It adopted a descriptive survey design. The population comprised 98 leaders and 2000 members of registered Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State to make a total of 2,098. Random sampling technique was applied to select a sample size of 395 respondents which comprised 90 leaders and 305 members. The instrument for data collection was a self-designed questionnaire titled "Assessment of Government Involvement in Adult Education Evaluation Questionnaire (AGIAEEQ)". Reliability coefficients of 0.82 and 0.88 were obtained for the two clusters of the instrument. It was established using the Cronbach Alpha Method. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The research questions were analyzed with weighted mean and standard deviation; while the hypotheses were tested using Z-test statistic at 0.5 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that Government has been involved in supporting functional literacy education and workers education programmes in Okrika LGA to a low extent. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended amongst others that Local Government Authorities should partner with companies doing business in communities in Okrika LGA and Rivers State at large to assist with the management of facilities and provision of instructional materials to functional adult literacy centres in various LGAs of the State.

KEYWORDS: Evaluation, Government, Involvement, Adult Education, Adult Education Programmes. ----

INTRODUCTION

Education is an indispensable tool for development of any nation. No community or nation can grow beyond the quality of education provided for its people. This education comprises both formal and non-formal forms of education. Despite all political structures and plans put in place in most communities in Nigeria, signs of under-development still persist. To attain development in society, individual's capacities should be built. True development is not about economic growth only but about building a society where individuals are affluent, educated, highly skilled, healthy, and well fed, and do not face discrimination and political repression, and are not at the mercy of natural or man-made disasters (Kobani & Alozie, 2019).

It is important to note that development is a system that leads to improved quality of life, psychological, political, social, material and spiritual well-being. Individuals need education to enable them maximize their potentials. When one is educated, it removes constraints that prevent them from harnessing their capabilities and realize their potentials.

The people of Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State have been facing such constraints which include illiteracy, lack of skills, discrimination, man-made disasters, poverty, health hazards and malnutrition. In order to address these issues globally, governments of several nations under the umbrella of the United Nations came together to set 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved in 2030. It is worthy of note, however, that education is one of the key factors in achieving these goals.

The National Policy of Education (2013) defined education as that process which helps the individual to develop the whole man physically, mentally, morally, and politically to enable him function in any environment in which he may find himself. The drawbacks of a low-level education have pointed out as a handicap to work performance by hampering a citizen's chance of contributing to nation-building, the family, community productivity and civil matters (Mpofu, 2000). Education could be formal, informal or non-formal. It could also be in the form of adult education (Kobani, 2018).

Adult education, according to UNESCO (2015) is the entire organized educational process, at all levels and methods, whether formal or otherwise; whether they prolong or replace initial education in the schools, Colleges or Universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby person regarded as adults by the society to which they belong



develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualification and bring other changes in their attitude or behavior in the balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development (Kobani & Alozie, 2016).

The Federal Government in the National Policy on Education stresses on the elimination of illiteracy within the next few years by providing equal opportunities for personal growth to all citizens of Nigeria including Okrika LGA of Rivers State (Zuofa, 2006). Specifically, the objectives of adult education as provided in the National Policy on Education include: Provision of functional literacy education for adults who have never gone into the formal system of education to improve their basic knowledge and skills, Provision of in-service or on-the-job vocational and professional training to improve the skills of different categories of workers, provision of functional and remedial education for those young people who prematurely dropped out of the formal school system, and provision of cultural and civil education for public enlightenment.

Adult education is used to refer to all forms of learning activities in which adults participate in order to develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge and improve their technical or professional qualification to enable them to meet their needs and those of their society (Ihejirika, 2012).

Weli (2009) also insisted that adult education is a process to enable people to accomplish things that they could not do before, that is to learn and apply information, attitude, values and skills previously unavailable to them. However, most aspects of development require capital investment and technical process. Through adult education programme, there is acquisition of skills, values and attitude when learning takes place outside the formal school system, catering for early educational deficiencies of mature people and enhancing their self-fulfillment and active participation and political life of the society. When looking closely, it is an evidence that the educational policy provided to the adult education focused to address the needs, interest, and aspirations of both the individual and the society. If this policy is carried out in Okrika communities, the indigenes will be liberated from ignorance, restraints, poverty, malnutrition, poor health, idleness, social and economic ills and support them to progress towards improvement of themselves and others.

Nigeria Government in recent times has made huge investments in the educational sector. However, it is disheartening that these investments are mainly in the areas of primary, secondary, and tertiary education, neglecting the area of adult and non-formal education. There is service decline in Nigeria particularly in Okrika communities, especially in human capacity building to the implementation of projects that will respond to the felt needs of adult education in terms of Government funding, collaboration and methodology, it is against this background of underdevelopment of Okrika that the research intends to identify and evaluate involvement of Government in adult education Programmes in the area. Evaluation is a systematic process of collecting information, analyzing the information collected, then using the analyzed results to form judgment (Ukwuije, 1993). It is the collecting of data or information to ascertain results or for decision making.

Adult Education can take the form of functional literacy and workers education programmes. Functional literacy programme according to Ihejirika (2015) are a combination of literacy education and socio-economic activities that are usually designed for a group of people to increase their productivity and enhance the possibilities of practical application of information and new knowledge. Functional literacy programme is tailored towards the needs of a group or individuals in content, method and combination of the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic with social technical and occupational training. Functional literacy is required for skills acquisition and consequently to increase the competitiveness of both men and women in community development activities. Low education therefore, generally limits the upward mobility of community inhabitants. Workers education on the other hand is a specialized branch of adult education that attempts to meet the educational needs and interests arising out of workers in the union movement. It is an education given to workers to better understand their status, rights and responsibilities as workers and bring them up to speed with innovations in their field of work. This paper, therefore, evaluates Government's involvement in adult education Programmes in Okrika LGA of Rivers State.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Education plays a major role in the development of any community. People can only harness their potentials and be at their best when they get the necessary training and education. This is especially true for adults who constitute the manpower that drive every sector of the economy. Given this importance of education for adults and children alike, one would expect that the Government would pay more attention to adult education because while we wait



for the children to grow into their respective social roles and responsibilities as tomorrow's leaders, it is however, the adults of today who presently run the society.

Unfortunately, the reverse has been the case as adult education has been observed to suffer a lot of neglect in Okrika Local Government Area like other parts of Nigeria. Government at federal, state and local levels do not provide these programmes or support efforts at organizing these programmes. Consequently, there has been widespread illiteracy, poverty, diseases, hunger, high crime rate and other social ills. Without education, people are incapacitated and can barely solve their own problems because they lack the skills and knowledge to enable them have better lives. Even those who are working, are not efficient as they are not abreast with current innovations in their field of study. This has affected the level of development in this area. This necessitated a study of this nature to evaluate Government involvement in Adult Education Programmes in Okrika LGA of Rivers State.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to evaluate Government's involvement in Adult Education Programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. Determine the extent to which Government is involved in the supporting functional literacy education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. Ascertain the extent to which Government is involved in workers education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent is government involved in the supporting functional literacy education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State?
2. To what extent is government involved in workers education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State?

HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean response of facilitators and beneficiaries on the extent to which government is involved in the supporting functional literacy education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean response of facilitators and beneficiaries on the extent to which Government involved in workers education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population comprised 98 leaders and 2000 members of registered Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State to make a total of 2,098. Random sampling technique was applied to select a sample size of 395 respondents which comprised 90 leaders and 305 members. The instrument for data collection was a self-designed questionnaire titled "Assessment of Government Involvement in Adult Education Evaluation Questionnaire (AGIAEEQ)". Reliability coefficients of 0.82 and 0.88 were obtained for the two clusters of the instrument. It was established using the Cronbach Alpha Method. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The research questions were analyzed with weighted mean and standard deviation; while the hypotheses were tested using the Z-test statistic at 0.5 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research question 1: To what extent is Government involved in the supporting functional literacy education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State?



Table 1: Mean Responses on Government Involvement in Supporting Functional Literacy Education

S/N	Items	Facilitators (N=25) \bar{X}_1SD_1		Remarks	Adult Learners (N=225) \bar{X}_2SD_2		Remarks
1	Government has carried out functional literacy programmes in Okrika LGA.	2.46	0.79	LE	2.28	0.77	LE
2	The Local Government provides instructional materials in Adult literacy centres in Okrika LGA.	2.21	0.79	LE	2.27	0.64	LE
3	The Local Government pays facilitators in literacy and vocational centres in Okrika LGA	3.32	0.69	LE	2.19	0.84	LE
4	Government supports efforts in mobilizing adults in communities to participate in literacy and vocational centres in Okrika LGA	2.41	0.86	LE	2.21	0.77	LE
5	Government give grants to private organization organizing literacy and vocational training programmes in Okrika LGA	2.10	1.09	LE	2.23	1.06	LE
6	Local Government support in the maintenance of building and other facilities in literacy and vocational training centres in Okrika LGA.	2.19	0.77	LE	2.29	0.64	LE
Grand Mean		2.29		LE	2.25		LE

The analyzed data on Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of facilitators and adult learners on the extent to which Government is involved in the supporting of functional literacy education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. The analyzed data revealed that all items in the table have mean scores that fell within the range of low extent. This indicates that majority of the respondents (facilitators and Adult learners) disagreed with the items. Respondents are of the opinion that Government has not carried out functional literacy programmes in Okrika LGA effectively, they do not provide instructional materials, learning facilities, pay facilitators, support mobilization of learners and they do not support private functional adult literacy centres. With grand mean scores of 2.29 and 2.25 for facilitators and adult learners respectively, the answer to research question one is that Government has been involved in supporting functional literacy education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State to a low extent.

Research Question 2: To what extent is Government involved in workers education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean Response on the Extent Government Involves in Workers Education Programmes

S/N	Items	Facilitators (N=25) \bar{X}_1SD_1		Remarks	Adult Learners (N=225) \bar{X}_2SD_2		Remarks
7	Government organizes workshops for teachers in public primary and secondary schools in Okrika LGA.	2.59	0.60	HE	2.62	0.09	HE
8	Government establishes a workshop where crafts men can update their skills with modern equipments.	2.43	0.55	LE	2.44	0.88	LE
9	Local Government organizes periodic trainings for their staff.	2.36	0.82	LE	2.14	1.20	LE



10	Government supports the training of farmers on modern farming techniques and tools.	2.26	0.71	LE	2.40	0.54	LE
11	Government supports the training of fisher-folks on the right and modern methods to adopt to increase their production	2.49	0.54	LE	2.33	0.70	LE
12	Government supports on-the-job training of health workers in primary health centres in Okrika LGA.	2.45	0.56	LE	2.29	0.66	LE
13	Government supports vocational centres where individuals with skills can update their knowledge.	2.53	0.95	HE	2.50	0.53	HE
14	Government periodically organizes Information and Communication Technology trainings for workers.	2.19	0.77	LE	2.29	0.64	LE
Grand Mean		2.42		LE	2.38		LE

The analyzed data on Table 2 showed the mean and standard deviation of facilitators and adult learners on the extent to which Government is involved in workers education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. The analyzed data revealed that items 8,9,10,11, 12 and 14 in the table have mean scores that fall within the range of low extent. This indicates that majority of the respondents (facilitators and adult learners) disagreed with the items. While items 7 and 13 had mean scores that fall within the range of high extent indicating majority of the respondents agreed with these items. They were of the opinion that, Government does not establish workshops where craft men can update their skills with modern equipments, they do not organize trainings for LG staff, farmers, health workers and fisher folks. However, they organize trainings for teachers in public primary and secondary schools and support vocational training centres. With grand mean scores of 2.42 and 2.38 for facilitators and adult learners respectively, the answer to research question two is that Government has involved in workers education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State to a low extent.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean response of facilitators and beneficiaries on the extent to which Government is involved in supporting functional literacy education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 3: Z-test Analysis of Difference in the Mean Ratings of Facilitators and Beneficiaries on the Extent to which Government is Involved in Supporting Functional Literacy Education Programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State.

RESPONDENTS	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	Level of Sign.	z-Cal	z-Crit.	Decision
Facilitators	25	2.29	0.83	248	0.05	0.47	1.96	Ho ₁ Failed to reject
Adult Learners	225	2.25	0.79					

The analysis on Table 3 showed that the z-test calculated value is 0.47 while the critical z-value is 1.96, with 248 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean responses of facilitators and beneficiaries on the extent to which Government is involved in supporting functional literacy education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State was accepted.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean response of facilitators and beneficiaries on the extent to which Government is involved in workers education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State.



Table 4: Z-test Analysis of Difference in the Mean Ratings of Facilitators and Beneficiaries on the Extent to which Government is Involved in Workers Education Programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State.

RESPONDENTS	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	Level of Sign.	Z-Cal	Z-Crit.	Decision
Facilitators	25	2.42	0.69	248	0.05	0.08	1.96	Ho ₂ Failed to reject
Adult Learners	225	2.38	0.79					

The analysis on Table 4 showed that the z-calculated value is 0.08 while the critical z-value is 1.96, with 248 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean ratings of facilitators and beneficiaries on the extent to which Government is involved in workers education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State was accepted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of the findings for research question one revealed that Government is involved in the supporting of functional literacy education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State to a low extent. Respondents are of the opinion that Government has not carried out functional literacy programmes effectively in Okrika LGA, they do not provide instructional materials, learning facilities, pay facilitators, support mobilization of learners and they do not support private functional literacy centres. The corresponding hypothesis one revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean response of facilitators and beneficiaries on the extent to which Government is involved in supporting functional literacy education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. This finding is in line with the findings that LG councils do not provide instructional materials for these centres, they do not engage in sensitization of community members to participate in these programmes, they do not pay facilitators and they do not engage in maintenance of physical facilities in these centres. Similarly Amadi (2013) reported that Nkanu East Local Government Area has not promoted basic literacy programmes in most communities under it and this was attributed to lack of autonomy of LGAs which was a major factor attributive to poor funding.

The result of the findings for research question two revealed that Government has involved in workers education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State to a low extent. Respondents were of the opinion that Government does not establish workshops where craft men can update their skills with modern equipment, they do not organize trainings for LG staff, farmers, health workers and fisher folks. However, they organize trainings for teachers in public primary and secondary schools and support vocational training centres. The corresponding hypothesis two revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean response of facilitators and beneficiaries on the extent to which Government is involved in workers education programmes in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. This finding disagrees with the findings of Mgbenka, Mbah and Ezeano (2015) which revealed that Local Government helps to provide rural infrastructures such as vocational centres, health centres, water and electricity, build more primary and secondary schools, provide agro-services to mention but a few. It is also the responsibility of LGCs to ensure that land preparation equipments such as heavy duty equipments to open the land and tractors are available.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that Government has not been actively involved in supporting Adult Education Programmes in Okrika LGA of Rivers State and this has led to increase in illiteracy rate, poverty, unemployment, oppressions, intimidation and discrimination. Government has not done much in supporting Adult Education Programmes such as functional literacy and workers education.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions above the following recommendations were made:

1. Local Government Authorities should partner with companies doing business in communities in Okrika LGA and Rivers State at large to assist with the management of facilities and provision of instructional materials to functional adult literacy centres in various LGAs of the state.
2. State and Local Government Authorities should periodically organize workers education for different Government workers in different sectors to bring them up to speed with innovations in their field.



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