

EXPLORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN CAPITAL IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study adopted co-relational design to explore the contribution of non-formal education to the development of adults in Southern Nigeria. The study used a randomly selected sample of 731 respondents drawn from three Skills Acquisition Centres located at Anambra, Delta and Ondo states. Data was collected from the respondents through an instrument titled 'Contribution of Non-formal Education to Adults Development'. Data analysis was conducted through descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that non-formal education contributed severally to the development of life skills and personal development among male and female, employed and unemployed adults who participated in training programmes. The analysis of variance revealed no significant difference among the three groups regarding the contribution of non-formal education to their development of skills. There was a significant relationship between non-formal education and personal development of adults in Southern Nigeria.

Keywords: Non-formal Education, Human Capital, Development

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Introduction

Education is the most important tool that empowers individuals with the essentials for their survival in life within and outside their society. Every individual requires the right education and training so as to be able to contribute maximally to self and societal growth. Through education nations can turn their adult population into assets in addition to the construction and maintenance of social order. To build a society that is self-sufficient, requires the mobilisation of the educated, uneducated, the poor and underdeveloped, men and women, many of whom have untapped potentials that, if they fully developed, will be of immense benefit not only to themselves but to the nation as a whole. The ability of an individual to contribute to the development of the country lies in his/her ability to read and write, as well as the skills she/he possessed and is able to apply in solving problems. The training and re-training of adults in southern Nigeria is fundamental to meeting the growing need for skilled human resource that will propel economic, political and social development of the country.

Non-formal education is imperative for the development of human capitals economically, socially, politically and technologically (Ukwuaba, 2015). Knowledge and skills which an individual require to function effectively in the society does not mainly rest in the formal education settings. Non-formal education through interaction with peers, parents, educators, and culture can help building knowledge and skills. For the adult citizens of Nigeria to be able to operate successfully in the present scientific and technological age, it is imperative that they become sufficiently skilled in literacy as well as problem-solving and critical-thinking skills necessary to bring about changes in the society. Hanushek and Woessmann (2007) averred that in developing countries, more priority is placed on increasing enrollment of students rather than on how well the students are learning and the level of cognitive skills they acquired in

schools. This situation they argued has made graduates from schools in developing countries to be functionally illiterate.

Oyegbamiji (2012) decried that Nigerian populace is unable to participate effectively in development process due to the failure to equip them with appropriate skills and knowledge. Akubuilu, Okorie, Onwuka and Uloh (2014) contended that more emphasis is placed on formal education in Nigeria with adult and non-formal education being neglected. They argued further that what seems to be needed more in Nigeria is development-oriented non-formal education through which self-reliance is attainable at individual and national levels. Acquiring and developing relevant skills and knowledge is imperative for Nigerian adult citizens to be able to address the complexities of modern technological society.

Non-formal education has been described by Oyegbamiji (2012) as an educational activity which is systematically organized outside the framework of formal school system aimed at providing selected learning experiences to subgroups in the society. The subgroups to be covered in non-formal education include women, men, youths, adults and the marginalized. According to Badu-Nyarko and Zumapkeh (2013), non-formal education has been impacting on people positively especially the poor, marginalized and the excluded. They emphasised that women who participated in non-formal education showed better understanding of their environment and exhibited more ability of changing it to improve their lives.

Statement of the Problem

Majority of the adults especially in southern part of Nigeria are unemployed, loitering about the towns and cities. Some of these adults possess a first degree certificate which they obtained from institutions of higher learning. Employers of labour complain that these adults do not possess relevant skills needed by firms and industries. As an effort of the Nigerian government, Skill Acquisition Centres were established in Ondo State, Delta State, Rivers State and some other States for training and re-training of adults as a way of addressing the problems of unemployment by boosting the skills base of adults. Many adults have participated in the training programmes at these centres. However, this researcher is not quite sure of how these training programmes have impacted on the adults who participated in it in terms of development of life skills as well as its contribution to their personal development as adults. This study's intention is to examine the contribution of training programmes which the adult citizens of the three states in southern Nigeria received to their personal development and the development of their life skills.

Purpose of the Study

The study examined the contribution of non-formal education to the development of adults in Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. examine the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills in adults.
2. ascertain the perceptions of employed and unemployed adults regarding the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills.

find out the contribution of non-formal education to the personal development of adults in three selected states in Southern Nigeria who participated in the training programmes.

Research Questions

Three questions were raised and answered in this study. They are:

1. What is the perception of male and female adults regarding the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills?
2. What is the perception of employed and unemployed adults regarding the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life planning skills for enhanced productivity?
3. In what ways has non-formal education contributed to the personal development of adults in the three selected states in Southern Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Four null hypotheses were formulated and tested as follows;

1. There is no significant difference between male and female adults with respect to their perceptions on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills.
2. There is no significant difference between employed and unemployed adults in their perceptions on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills for enhanced productivity.
3. There is no significant difference among adults possessing B. Sc/HND, Diploma/NCE and SSCE in their perceptions on the contribution of non-formal education to their personal development.
4. There is no significant relationship between non-formal education and personal development of adults.

Methodology

The study population comprised 2, 438 adults who received training at non-formal education centres in Warri in Delta State (620 adults), in Onitsha in Anambra State (888) and in Arogbo in Ondo State (930) during the time of the investigation. The study used a descriptive survey design to investigate the respondents' perception on the contribution of non-formal education to their development. A total of 650 adults were sampled through stratified random sampling techniques from the three training centres, from each of the three strata, 30 percent of the population was selected. Therefore, 186, 266 and 279 respondents were selected from Warri, Onitsha and Arogbo respectively.

A questionnaire titled "Contribution of Non-formal Education to Adults Development" was used to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two sections which are meant to elicit information on various aspects of the research questions. Section A elicited information on the respondents' personal data such as gender, occupational status and educational qualification. Section B comprised items of the instruments constructed following the research questions to be

answered. The first set of twelve items was meant to answer research question one. The next twelve items were to answer research question two and the next eight items were to answer research question three. The response option for Section B adopted a four-point Likert-type scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The scale was rated four for strongly agree, three for agree, two for disagree and one for strongly disagree. The mid-point obtained from the summation of the point scores $4+3+2+1=10$ is 2.50. This score (2.50) is used as a decision-making criterion for accepting or not accepting a response.

The draft questionnaire was vetted by experts in educational management in Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria. The reviewers read through the items and checked them in terms of adequacy, structuring and sequencing of ideas. This procedure helped to ensure the face and content validity of the instrument. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to 30 randomly selected participants in two non formal education centres in Enugu State which is outside the study location. The split-half -method was used to test the reliability of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 was obtained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The researchers and two other research assistants went to the sampled non-formal education centres to administer the questionnaire. A total of 731 questionnaires were administered and 690 of the administered questionnaires were completed and retrieved from the respondents. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analysing the data.

Findings

Table 1: Analysis of Respondent’s Demographic Information

Demographic Information		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	360	49.2
	Female	371	50.8
Educational Qualification	B.Sc/HND	380	51.9
	Diploma/NCE	210	28.7
Occupational Status	SSCE	141	19.2
	Employed	331	45.3
	Unemployed	400	54.7

The information in Table 1 shows that 49.2% of the respondents were male and 50.8% were female. 51.9% of the respondents possess first degrees (B.SC/HND), 28.7% had Diploma (ND)/NCE, 19.2% possess Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE). 45.3 were gainfully employed while 54.7% were unemployed.

Research Question One

This research question sought the perception of male and female adults regarding the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills. Data relevant to this question is presented on Table 2.

Table 2: Mean and Standard deviation of responses from participants on the contribution of non-formal education to their development of life skills

ITEMS	Male		Female	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Non-formal education has improved my ability to communicate effectively with others	2.87	0.74	2.90	0.88
Non-formal education has helped me to develop cooperative and team work skills	2.68	0.47	2.80	0.55
I am exposed to accepting constructive criticism from others through non-formal education	2.75	0.70	2.90	0.64
My critical thinking skills increased upon receiving non-formal training	3.00	0.82	2.92	0.57
I developed problem solving skills through non-formal education	3.20	0.90	3.00	0.49
I developed the initiative for starting up small business through non-formal education	2.94	0.99	2.76	0.49
My ability to set goals and pursue it has improved after my non-formal education	3.30	0.73	3.40	0.67
I have improved in creative thinking after receiving non-formal education	2.80	0.66	3.10	0.38
Non-formal education exposed me to how to manage time thus improving my productivity	2.88	0.69	2.79	0.53
Through non-formal education I have improved in my ability to adjust and adapt in any situation	2.46	1.00	2.80	0.55
Non-formal education has helped by improving my research skills	2.10	0.58	2.28	0.88
I feel that non-formal education has helped to improve my productivity	3.00	0.44	2.80	0.94

The information in Table 2 indicated that for all the items except item 10 for male and 11 for both male and female respondents, the mean scores were greater than cut-off mean of 2.50. Therefore, items 1-9, 10 and 12 for female represent the perceived contributions of non-formal education to the development of life skills in adults in Southern Nigeria.

Research Question Two

This research question investigated the difference between employed and unemployed adults in their perceptions on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills for enhanced productivity. Data for answering this research question is presented on Table 3.

Table 3: Response from employed and unemployed adults in the three selected states on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills

ITEMS	Employed		Unemployed	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Non-formal education has improved my ability to communicate effectively with others	2.70	0.73	2.96	0.49
Non formal education has helped me to develop cooperative and team work skills	2.80	0.44	2.90	0.66
I am exposed to accepting constructive criticism from others through non-formal education	2.30	0.66	2.66	0.84
My critical thinking skills increased upon receiving non-formal training	2.65	0.82	2.86	0.92
I developed problem solving skills through non formal education	3.00	0.64	2.77	0.42
I developed the initiative for starting up small business through non-formal education	2.60	0.80	3.30	0.67
My ability to set goals and pursue it has improved after my non-formal education	2.80	0.83	2.96	0.63
I have improved in creative thinking after receiving non-formal education	2.77	0.54	3.00	0.81
Non-formal education improved my time management skills and productivity	2.84	0.66	2.68	0.72
Through non-formal education I have improved in my ability to adjust and adapt in any situation	2.90	0.56	2.88	0.55
Non-formal education has helped by improving my research skills	2.85	0.78	2.75	0.63
I feel that non-formal education has helped to improve my productive capability	2.78	0.49	3.20	0.58

The data presented in Table 3 indicated an exceeding positive response from the two sets of respondents. Positive responses were obtained for virtually all the items except for item 3 in the employed category. Therefore, non-formal education made an immense contribution to the development of life skills in employed and unemployed adults in the three states.

Research Question Three: This research question sought to find out whether there were significant differences among adults possessing B. Sc/HND, Diploma/NCE and SSCE in their perceptions on the contribution of non-formal education to their personal development. The data for this research question is presented on Table 4.

Table 4: Mean responses on contributions of non-formal education to the personal development of adults based on educational qualification

ITEMS	B.Sc/HND		Dip/NCE		SSCE	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
My exposure through non-formal education has made me to become more aware of my potentials and how to develop them	3.44	0.56	2.65	1.11	2.70	0.99
I have learnt how to maximize my potentials through non-formal education	3.10	0.88	2.77	0.59	2.68	0.77
The knowledge and skills I learnt through non-formal education improved my ability to render services to people and thus enhanced my prosperity in life	2.96	0.48	2.80	0.66	3.00	0.55
I can set goals for myself and strive towards achieving them due to my training through non-formal education	2.80	0.61	2.64	0.78	2.77	0.90
I learnt to plan how to assess my skills through non-formal education	2.88	0.36	2.58	0.94	2.60	1.06
My exposure through non-formal education has helped me in sharpening my choices about issues of life	3.33	1.04	3.10	1.00	2.90	0.85
Non-formal education I received has triggered me into taking actions that would enhance my self-actualization	3.20	0.55	2.88	0.65	2.95	0.72
I feel that non-formal education has contributed to my personal development	3.50	0.60	2.94	0.70	3.20	0.68
Weighted mean	3.15		2.80		2.85	

The data in Table 4 showed the contribution of non-formal education to personal development of adults in terms of educational qualification. The weighted mean score for each category of adults exceeded the criterion mean score of 2.50. This implies that non-formal education contributed to the personal development of the adults irrespective of their educational qualification. The conclusion drawn is that non-formal education contributed to the personal development of adults in several ways.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant difference between male and female adults with respect to their perceptions on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills.

Table 5 is for testing hypothesis one which focused on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills of male and female adults

Table 5: t-test analysis on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills of male and female adults in the three states

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	P	Decision
Male	330	30.22	8.44	808	2.120	0.003	NS
Female	360	29.42	8.19				

Table 5 shows that the calculated t-value of 2.120 is not significant at 0.05 significant level. Hypothesis one is therefore accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between male and female adults in the three states with respect to their perceptions on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference between employed and unemployed adults in their perceptions on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills for enhanced productivity.

Table 6 is for testing hypothesis two. It contains the result of data analysis based on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills of employed and unemployed adults for enhanced productivity.

Table 6: t-test analysis on the contribution of non-formal education on employed and unemployed adults in the three states

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	P	Decision
Employed	300	32.96	7.95	808	3.231	0.001	NS
Unemployed	390	34.92	7.92				

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value of 3.213 is not significant at 0.05 significant level. The first hypothesis is therefore accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between employed and unemployed adults in Southern Nigeria with respect to their perceptions on the contribution of non-formal education to the development of life skills.

Hypothesis three: There is no significant difference among respondents with B.Sc/HND, Diploma/NCE and SSCE in their perceptions on the contribution of non-formal education to their personal development.

Table 7 is for testing hypothesis three which focused on the contribution of non-formal education to the personal development of adults based on educational qualification.

Table 7: ANOVA summary of difference among mean scores on the contribution of non-formal education to personal development of adults based on educational qualification

Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	of Mean Square	DF	f-Cal	f-Crit	Decision
Between Groups	216.52	88.16	2			NS
Within Groups	1432114.31	1251.21	608	0.0262	3.00	
Total	1432330.83	1339.37	610			

The calculated f-score of 0.0262 is less than the f-critical score at 0.05 alpha level. Therefore, there is no significant difference among mean perception scores of respondents based on their educational qualifications. This implies that the respondents in the three categories of educational qualification did not differ significantly in their perception regarding the contribution of non-formal education to their personal development.

Hypothesis four: There is no significant relationship between non-formal education and personal development of adults in the three states.

Table 8 contain data analysis for testing hypothesis four which focused on the relationship between non formal education and personal development of adults.

Table 8: Relationship between non-formal education and personal development of adults in the three states

Variables	N	Mean	SD	DF	R	P-value	Remark
Non-formal education	690	33.58	9.10				
Personal development	690	34.05	8.14	688	0.433	0.000	Significant

The decision was based on 0.05 alpha level. Therefore, if p-value is greater than 0.05 ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted. But if p-value is less than ($p < 0.05$) or equal to 0.05, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

The result presented in Table 8 indicates that calculated r-value of 0.433 is significant at 0.05 alpha level. Thus, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between non-formal education and personal development of adults.

Discussion

This discussion is hinged on the outcome of data analysis. The first and second findings showed that non-formal education contributed greatly to the adults in the three states in Southern Nigeria irrespective of their gender and occupational status. Through non-formal education which the adults received, they developed life skills which were reflected in their improved ability to communicate effectively, work cooperatively with team mates, developed the initiative for starting a business as well as critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The adults further said that their ability to reason creatively and adjust to situations improved. The hypothesis tested for the first research question showed no significant difference between male and female adults in their perception regarding the contribution of non-formal education to their development of life skills. The finding of this study has the support of Souto-Otero, Ulicna & Schaepekens, (2013). They found that soft-skills such as communication skills, numeracy, organizational planning skills, leadership and decision-making skills and competences were developed through youth involvement in non-formal education in youth organizations. Similarly, the finding lends credence to Krupar, Harvatek. And Byan (2017) that participation in non-formal education increased the scores of participants in areas such as literacy and numeracy skills.

The third finding revealed that through non-formal education the personal development of adults was enhanced. The adults having participated in non-formal education made several improvements in their personal lives. Thus, with the knowledge and skills they acquired through non-formal education, the adults were able to render services to people which improved their prosperity in lives. They began to take actions which enhanced their self-actualization. A greater proportion (88.8%) of the adults said they were able to set goals for themselves and take steps towards achieving the set goals. Additionally, a very significant proportion (82/3%) of the adults said the non-formal education they were exposed to increased their awareness

of their potentials and how to develop them. The hypothesis tested showed no significant difference between employed and unemployed adults in their perception with respect to the contribution of non-formal education to their personal development. This finding agrees with Badu-Nyarko and Zumapkeh's (2014) position. Their study revealed that women in Nadowli district Ghana expressed personal fulfillment, feeling of confidence, increased productivity and assuming leadership responsibilities as dividends of non-formal education.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study it is clear to say that non-formal education contributed immensely to the development of human capital in the three states where the study was conducted. Non-formal education helped the adults who participated in it to develop life planning education skills needed for sustenance and personal development. The non-formal education they received helped in improving their capabilities for effective communication, team work, entrepreneurial drive and spirit amongst other benefits. The study therefore concludes that non-formal education is a panacea for improving skills development of Nigerian adults for self-sustaining living in the long run. The conclusion drawn is that non-formal education contributed to the personal development of the adults in several meaningful ways.

Recommendations

This exploratory study has been able to show that adult citizens of the three states who actively participated in non-formal education developed life planning skills. It becomes imperative for different state governments in the country, wealthy individuals, trade unions, social clubs, multi-national firms, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations in different states and local communities of the country to support this category of individuals by sponsoring them to skills training and non-formal education programmes either in the short term or long-term. Through this means, Nigerian adults would be given adequate opportunities to harness and develop their skills for living a self-sustaining life and to make maximal contribution to the development of their nation.

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