

ROLE OF ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE PEACE, SECURITY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examined the role of Adult and Non-formal education in building a sustainable national peace, security and development in Nigeria. Adult and Non-Formal Education aims at preventing violent conflict in advance and educating individuals and societies for peaceful and harmonious co-existence which in turn promotes tolerance, non-violence, equity, respect for one another and social justice. The study employed systematic method of review. Secondary data was used in the study. Literate individuals and societies resolve conflicts peacefully without resorting to violence or war which adversely affects the socio-economic, political and cultural life of the people and development of any nation. This type of education aims to prevent future conflicts and educate individuals and communities to coexist peacefully and harmoniously, promoting values like tolerance, non-violence, equality, and respect. The findings of the study revealed that educated individuals and societies are more likely to resolve disputes without resorting to violence, which negatively impacts society, politics, culture, and development. In Nigeria, ethnic tensions sometimes arise due to underdevelopment, political, social, and economic disparities, leading to violent clashes and conflicts. This research examines various aspects of adult and non-formal education, such as its relation to sustainable peace and security in Nigeria, sustainable national development, and peace for sustainable development. It also identifies challenges in adult and non-formal education and proposes strategies to achieve national peace, security, and development.

Keywords: Adult and Non-Formal Education, Sustainable peace, Security, and National development

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Introduction

In recent years, Nigeria has faced numerous security challenges, including insurgency, banditry, militancy, kidnapping, religious conflicts, murder, ethnic tensions, political strife, thuggery, and other crises. These issues threaten sustainable national peace, security, and development. The Nigerian government has attempted to address these issues through amnesty for militants and military interventions, but with limited success. As a result, it is crucial to utilize adult and non-formal education as a means to promote sustainable peace, conflict resolution, and national development. Education is widely recognized as a tool for human development, and adult and non-formal education plays a vital role in fostering the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary for preventing conflict and violence, as well as peacefully resolving conflicts at various levels – individual, interpersonal, intergroup, national, and international.

Adult and non-formal education has been identified as a primary profession capable of addressing societal issues, including socio-economic, cultural, political, and environmental challenges (Onyenemezu & Okanezi, 2013). This form of education holds significant influence over sustainable peace, security, and national development in Nigeria. Fasakin, Onyenemezu and Aduwo (2014) emphasize that adult education

is not just about preparing individuals for life but also about helping them become more successful and contributing members of society. Adult and non-formal education has the potential to positively impact society and contribute to Nigeria's peace, security, and overall growth and development. This impact is contingent upon the existence of sustainable economic prosperity within the country. To ensure the well-being of Nigerian citizens, adult and non-formal education initiatives play a vital part in preventing violence and fostering a harmonious society. By offering moral and attitudinal reorientation, as well as vocational and life skills, these programs empower individuals to become self-reliant and productive members of society. This, in turn, leads to a more significant portion of time being dedicated to productive activities rather than conflict and destruction. Adult and non-formal education programs address conflict resolution and peace sustainability by teaching adults how to creatively approach disagreements and employ alternative dispute resolution methods. The knowledge and skills gained through formal, non-formal, and informal learning contribute to lasting peace and national development through non-violent approaches and minimizing future conflicts. It is against this, the study will systematically review Role of Adult and Non-Formal Education Programmes in Promoting Sustainable Peace, Security and National Development in Nigeria.

Concepts of Adult and Non-Formal Education

The concept of Adult and Non-formal education has been viewed by many scholars and authorities in diverse ways. UNESCO in Oyenemezu (2012) viewed Adult Education as; “entire body of organized educational processes whatever the contents, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as apprenticeship, whereby person regarded as adults by the society in which they belong, develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them into new direction and bring about changes in their attitude or behaviour in the two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent, social, economic and cultural developments.” (PP.3.) Adult Education can also be viewed as a practice in which persons regarded as adults by the society which he or she belongs engages in systematic and self-directing learning activities in order to acquire new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that will help in transforming the society that they live, With this, it can also be seen as any form of learning activities adults engages in beyond traditional schooling, encompassing basic literacy to personal fulfillment as a life-long learner. Similarly, Omolewa, Akinpelu Ariya, Ogundele, Abiodun and Saleh (2015) defined the term non-formal education; “as any organized systematic educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal school system to provide selected type of learning to particular sub-group in the population be it adults or children.” (pp. 32). Non-formal education according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) is education designed to encourage all forms of functional education given to youths and adults outside the formal school system such as functional literacy, remedial and vocational education.

According to Ukeje and Aisikuin Ariya et al (2015), Adult and Non-formal education goes beyond literacy and includes all forms of training outside the formal school system, such as apprenticeship system in Mechanics, bicycle repairing and carpentry. Moreso, Okedara and Bownin Ihejirika (2013) viewed Adult and Non-formal education as the rubric of education that covers training and instructions outside the

formal education system and ranges from individualized apprenticeship to nationwide literacy. It may be vocational, as in the case of craft training centres in Nigeria designed to provide employment opportunities for young school leavers and for other unemployed persons.

Role of Adult and Non-Formal Education Programmes in Promoting Sustainable Peace, Security and National Development in Nigeria

In the quest for sustainable peace, security, and development in Nigeria, it is increasingly evident that traditional military approaches and short-term initiatives are insufficient. The role of education, particularly adult and non-formal education, has emerged as a crucial factor in resolving conflicts, reducing violence, and fostering peace restoration. Nigeria faces numerous security challenges, including the Boko Haram insurgency, Niger-Delta militancy, herdsmen-farmer clashes, kidnapping, and ethnic and tribal conflicts. These issues threaten the nation's unity and peace. To address these challenges effectively, it is essential to employ adult and non-formal education programs as key measures. Such programs can help raise awareness about the consequences of engaging in conflicts and violent crimes. By educating people on the importance of peace and security, these programs can contribute to conflict resolution and reduction. The involvement of individuals and communities in these educational initiatives can lead to a better understanding of the root causes of conflicts and promote peaceful coexistence.

Scholars like Rabiou and Muhammad (2013) have highlighted the crises and violence that have plagued Nigeria since the return to democracy in 1999, particularly from 2003/2004. In Nigeria, various challenges such as xenophobia, corruption, ethnic tensions, and political conflicts hinder national unity, peace, and security. To address these issues and promote sustainable peace, adult and non-formal education programs play a crucial role. Peace education, an essential component of these programs, aims to create a culture of peace by teaching conflict resolution and universal values. Nwafor (2013) and Kester (2009) emphasize that peace education in adult and non-formal education empowers learners to understand conflict roots, humanitarian laws, and alternative security structures. It also fosters non-violent conflict resolution skills and a commitment to working towards a shared vision of peace.

To combat Nigeria's complex issues, the government should integrate peace education into Adult and Non-formal Education agencies across states. This initiative would help educate individuals involved in violence, such as militants, kidnappers, and armed robbers, to adopt peaceful conflict resolution. Additionally, providing basic education to marginalized groups, like Almajiris and nomadic pastoralists, can reduce insurgency and promote peaceful coexistence. Ebeye, Nworie, and Ukponu (2014) highlight that a peaceful environment eliminates crimes like kidnapping, armed robbery, and terrorism. Adult and Non-formal Education can help identify and implement peaceful solutions, evaluate violent alternatives, and resist peer pressure towards violence. By investing in these programs, Nigeria can foster sustainable peace, security, and national development. The government's support for Adult and Non-formal Education plays a crucial role in fostering sustainable peace, security, and national development in Nigeria. This investment in education promotes a harmonious future for the nation and its people, as well as the global community. Umar (2013) emphasized the significance of peace education in Adult and Non-formal Education

Programs, which helps individuals address real-life issues affecting their lives and society. It fosters unity, nationalism, and patriotism, prepares people for a fulfilling adult life, encourages peaceful conflict resolution, instills appropriate values and skills for moral development, equips youths with knowledge for promoting peace, and cultivates values such as compassion, integrity, hope, justice, gender fairness, caring for life, sharing, and reconciliation.

Adult and non-formal education contributes to sustainable national development in Nigeria, encompassing socio-economic, political, cultural, and environmental aspects of life. National development aims to alleviate poverty and create economic freedom for the population. Sustainable development is intertwined with a nation's capacity to address social issues while maintaining the carrying capacity of its systems. Abraham (2012) described sustainable national development as a nation's ability to achieve comprehensive improvements in all aspects of its existence. This involves planning for a better socio-economic, political, and cultural life for both current and future citizens. Education plays a pivotal role in transforming individuals and society towards national development. Adult and non-formal education serves as a vital tool for achieving sustainable national development by promoting socio-economic, political, and environmental changes that enable development to thrive. This sector empowers individuals to participate in and explore developmental processes, ultimately contributing to a prosperous and secure nation.

According to Sharma (2019) Adult and non-formal education programs play a significant role in promoting sustainable peace, security, and national development in Nigeria. These programs cater to individuals who have missed out on formal education or need additional learning opportunities outside traditional school settings. They contribute to various aspects of societal growth and stability, as explained below:

1. **Capacity Building:** Adult and non-formal education programs equip participants with essential skills and knowledge required for personal, social, and economic development. This capacity building empowers individuals to contribute positively to their communities and the nation as a whole, fostering sustainable peace and development.
2. **Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding:** These programs often incorporate modules on conflict resolution, peaceful coexistence, and peacebuilding. By teaching participants how to manage and resolve conflicts peacefully, they contribute to maintaining social harmony and reducing the likelihood of violent confrontations. This, in turn, promotes sustainable peace and security in Nigeria.
3. **Enhancing Civic Responsibility:** Adult and non-formal education programs instill a sense of civic responsibility and national pride in participants. They learn about their rights and duties as citizens, which can lead to increased participation in democratic processes and governance. This active engagement in nation-building helps create a more stable and developed society.
4. **Promoting Gender Equality and Social Inclusion:** Many adult and non-formal education programs focus on gender equality, social inclusion, and human rights. By addressing issues such as gender disparities and marginalization, these programs contribute to creating a more equitable and just society. This fosters a sense of unity and peace, ultimately supporting national development.

5. Economic Development and Employment: Through vocational and skills training, adult and non-formal education programs equip participants with the skills needed to access employment opportunities or start their own businesses. This economic empowerment leads to increased productivity, reduced poverty levels, and overall national development.
6. Cultural Preservation and Exchange: These programs often celebrate and preserve Nigeria's diverse cultural heritage while promoting understanding and appreciation among different ethnic groups. By fostering cultural exchange and mutual respect, they contribute to a more harmonious and united society, which is essential for sustainable peace and development.

Adult and Non-formal Education and Sustainable National Development in Nigeria

National development essentially refers to national growth, encompassing the socio-economic, political, cultural, and environmental aspects of a nation. It involves the comprehensive activities a nation undertakes to achieve a better standard of living for its population. The aim is to free people from extreme poverty and create economic freedom for the growing population. Sustainable development is closely linked to a nation's ability to address social problems while maintaining the capacity of its systems. Abraham (2012) described sustainable national development as a nation's capability to achieve significant improvements in all aspects of its existence, including economic, political, cultural, and religious dimensions. This involves planning for an enhanced socio-economic, political, and cultural life for both present and future citizens. Clearly, no nation can overlook the crucial role of education in transforming individuals and society towards national development.

Sustainable development can be achieved through adult and non-formal education, which serves as a vital tool in this process. This educational sector promotes socio-economic, political, and environmental changes that facilitate development. Adult and non-formal education equips individuals with the skills needed to participate in and explore developmental processes, contributing to ongoing national progress. Onyenemezu and Aduvo (2014) argued that adult and non-formal education can address national problems to ensure sustainable development and future security. They further asserted that future security is assured when adults, who are key players in the nation's production sector, continue their education to acquire new knowledge and skills for socio-economic, political, and environmental advancement within the framework of current infrastructure.

Adult and non-formal education enables individuals to advance their career development, often through informal means such as seminars, workshops, and conferences. In many communities, day and evening classes are organized to provide adults with the skills and qualifications needed for occupational advancement, thereby fostering sustainable national growth. This type of education has been employed to raise awareness on issues affecting people and the sustainability of national development. It encompasses various groups, including the illiterate, out-of-school youth, migrant fishermen and farmers, nomadic pastoralists, prisoners, and the physically challenged. By improving their livelihoods and achieving economic, social, and political independence, these individuals can significantly contribute to the national growth and development of Nigeria.

Egbezor and Okanezi (2018:32) outlined Adult and Non-formal education models that can be used in achieving sustainable national development of any nation to include:

- i. **Agricultural Extension Model and Services**; designed for farmers and which is geared towards increased food production through improved farming method.
- ii. Apprenticeship Model; practically designed for skills acquisition through vocational training and job improvement programmes.
- iii. **Age-Group Model**: This is a situation whereby peer groups and youths of the same age range interact and engage in various community activities. This model promotes the understanding of social obligations and rules as well as the acquisition of basic skills, which would enable youths to function as responsible members of society.
- iv. **Self-Help Model**: This model does not only rely on local skills and material, but it also promotes self-reliance and industry. Community leaders and chairmen of community development committees are usually facilitators and their roles include helping and motivating the community through the youths, first to identify their needs and then mobilized and organize them to work in the project.
- v. **Basic Literacy Education Model**: This can also be organized by local government authorities or other voluntary agencies. The intention here is to teach basic literacy-Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3 R's) in the form of adult education classes or night schools. Migrant fishermen's and Nomadic Education programmes can also benefit from this model.
- vi. **Community Mobilization and Development Model**; which involves liberal education and counselling aimed at rural communities, helping to transform the people by working in close relationship with them and liberate the minds of the people from debilitating conditions.
- vii. **Self-Help and Enrichment of Skills Model**; is a process of enablement of the individual through responsible and creative use of leisure, devoted to enriching the minds through creative and constructive engagements. It also assists individuals to rely on local skills and materials in order to promote self-reliance.
- viii. **Sunday School Model**; which goes beyond religion and Moral Instruction including such programmes like Cookery and Home Management for girls, Music and Trade for boys.
- ix. **Training Institutes Model**; designed for on-the-job training at the workplace, meant to improve the occupational competence of the participants.
- x. **Village Craft Centre Model**; sometimes initiated by Local Government Authorities or Community Development Agencies to impart skills to youths in the rural areas thus creating self-employment and discouraging rural-urban migration among youths. It encourages hard-work, creativity and dignity of labour. All these programmes are geared towards economic independence and self-reliance of individual which are the key indicators for sustainable national growth and development.

Adult and non-formal education for sustainable national development can pay special attention on developing a high level of political consciousness in the adult population and conscientize them to be aware of certain behaviours that can jeopardize their

progress; be aware of the roles they should play in preserving the environment thereby securing and sustaining the future of Nigeria.

Peace for Sustainable National Development

Peace is a crucial component of sustainable national development worldwide. Traditionally, peace has been understood as the mere absence of conflict; however, this alone is insufficient for achieving sustainable development. Nigeria's efforts to end armed hostilities through programs like amnesty or militarization, without addressing the underlying causes of conflict, may lead to renewed conflict, disrupting business operations and worsening poverty, hunger, and inequality.

Peace is generally perceived as the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering, and violence. According to Ibeanu in Igbuzor (2011), the concept of peace in sustainable development involves activities that directly or indirectly promote development and reduce conflict both within specific societies and the broader international community. Garubain Mou and Mou (2017) define peace as a condition of social harmony where there is no social antagonism. Peace that fosters sustainable national development is not simply the cessation of war or ethnic rivalries but includes other social factors that ensure freedom for all citizens. Garuba further argues that even in the absence of active warfare, pervasive poverty, oppression of the poor by the wealthy, police brutality, intimidation of ordinary citizens by those in power, oppression of women, or monopolization of resources and power by certain social groups can indicate a lack of true peace.

Galtung (2011) distinguishes between two types of peace that either facilitate or hinder development: negative and positive peace. Negative peace is defined as the absence of violence and war, with three major categories of violence identified: direct, structural, and cultural. Structural violence refers to unjust systems that marginalize certain groups, while cultural violence involves social norms that justify direct and structural violence. Direct violence, such as war and crime, results from structural and cultural violence. Positive peace, on the other hand, involves the integration of human society, focusing on preventing or ending direct, structural, and cultural violence, correcting unjust social structures, and challenging harmful social norms.

In recent times, Nigerian communities have faced significant violence and conflicts that threaten peace and promote insecurity. Conflict-prone areas such as the Niger-Delta and the North-east region suffer from developmental neglect and limited business investments compared to less conflict-affected areas. A peaceful and healthy environment attracts development and business opportunities, while conflict-ridden societies often experience disruptions in business operations due to unreliable social services and prevalent social disorders like inequality, hunger, and poverty. To escape these issues, businesses may relocate to safer areas, leading to reduced opportunities in conflict zones. For peace to promote development in Nigeria, the nation needs a well-functioning government, a sound business environment, equitable resource distribution, respect for individual rights, a free flow of information, high human capital, and low corruption levels. These factors will strengthen society by creating an environment that supports and nurtures businesses, thus fostering peace and sustainable national development.

In a society where peace prevails, all sectors of the economy will help bring about positive economic, political and social development that will lead to sustainable national development. Businesses will thrive, employment opportunity will open to the people, basic needs can be afforded while allowing people to be more productive, business organizations can source for materials within and execute projects without spending much money in bribing those that perpetuate violent conflicts. These will help discourage businesses and government from enabling corruption. These indices will also help in bringing about a high-level profit maximization for business organizations both at present and the future thereby promoting peace and sustainable national development that will reduce poverty and prevent conflict while translating to a healthier business environment that allows for a more effective product, deliver, services and income generation for the nation.

Problems Facing Adult and Non-Formal Education in Promoting National Peace, Security and Development in Nigeria

The challenges facing Adult and Non-formal education in the maintenance of sustainable national peace, security and development in Nigeria are enormous. Adeyinka (2010), states that there are lots of challenges affecting the management of Adult and Non-formal education in Nigeria which hinders full implementation of programmes that will lead to national peace and development to include poor funding, inadequate provision of human and material resources, politicizing Adult and Non-formal education, lack of professionals in the field, inadequate and unstable facilitators, problems of staff development and training, inadequate programme monitoring, evaluation and supervision, etc.

From the above, some of the problems that become an impediment in achieving sustainable national peace and security are as follows:

- i. Inadequate trained facilitators
- ii. Poor funding of Adult and Non-formal education programmes
- iii. Lack of proper supervision, monitoring and evaluation of Adult and Non-formal education Programmes

Politicizing funding and administration of Adult and Non-formal education. The funds meant for Adult and Non-formal education Sector might be appropriated but being diverted into political programmes of the incumbent Administration or being used in settling political and party big wigs make it impossible to realize the aims of using Adult Education in sustaining peace and security in Nigeria. The appointment of relations, business cronies and political supporters who are non-professional to manned Adult and Non-formal education Agencies, offices and institutions as a political compensation or settlement also hinders the proper implementation of programmes that are tailored towards sustainable peace and nation-building.

Conclusion

This review underscores the importance of adult and non-formal education in promoting sustainable national peace, security, and development in Nigeria. By fostering dialogue and consultation in conflict resolution, this type of education can encourage peaceful and harmonious coexistence. Sustainability involves not only

economic growth but also social, political, and cultural development, as well as maintaining peace and security. Governments at the federal, state, and local levels should prioritize and support adult and non-formal education at the grassroots level, including empowering the adult population to continue their educational programs. Adequate funding should be allocated to this sector to ensure sustainable peace, security, and national development.

To address the nation's security crises, the government should provide in-service training for facilitators to enhance their knowledge and skills. Increasing funding for adult and non-formal education programs is crucial, along with proper supervision, monitoring, and evaluation to ensure successful implementation and achievement of program goals.

As a way forward, integrating Qur'anic education into the basic education system can help educate Almajiris. Additionally, adult education professionals should be given leadership roles in adult education offices, agencies, and institutions. The National Orientation Agency should focus on raising awareness among Nigerians about the benefits and importance of adult and non-formal education.

Recommendations

Based on the review made, the following recommendations were forwards:

1. The government should establish a dedicated ministry or agency for adult education to coordinate the development of adult education programmes across the country.
2. Community-based initiatives should be supported through funding and resources to ensure their sustainability.
3. Vocational training programmes should be developed in collaboration with industry stakeholders to ensure that they are relevant to the needs of the labour market.
4. Life skills development programmes should be integrated into existing adult education programmes to promote peace, security, and national development to be more security-conscious.

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