



## **Strategic Place of Non Formal Education in Community Development in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study assessed the strategic place of non formal education in community development in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. It is a survey study. Two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. 10 beneficiaries of non formal education programmes were used as pilot study while 80 respondents constitute the sample of the study. The respondents filled the questionnaire distributed to them for the survey of the study and they were retrieved through the help of two research assistants. The instrument were analyzed with mean and Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) statistics for research questions and hypotheses respectively. The result of the study showed that non-formal education has through its myriads of programmes engender development in communities by promoting entrepreneurship, promoting youth empowerment, engaging out-of-school in meaningful programmes and equipping the beneficiaries with practical skills to secure gainful employment. Based on these recommendations are made on how to further utilize the developmental programmes provided through non formal education.

**Keywords:** entrepreneurship, non formal education, community development

### **INTRODUCTION**

Non-formal education has the ability to make individuals feel free, better informed, more confident, assume community leadership, make better decisions, gain higher status, feel respected, increase productivity and feel less dependent. In effect, non-formal education helps people and communities to lose their blindness and come out of darkness into light and this shows real development. Duke (2008) sees non-formal education as the new paradigm and argues that the concept has not only come of age but that it has assumed a 'central continuing strategy for development and is neither a stop gap or a temporal second best expedient. He argues that its strategy reaches these least served by the formal system and contributes significantly to the economic and social advancement of the poorest of the poor. Educational intervention enables people to improve their chances, realize their full potential and to improve their well being. Such educational intervention programmes have helped communities to become empowered, foster community level participation, and the creation of social capital.

Jayawera (2009) views non-formal education programmes as imperative for satisfying basic needs of people in developing nations especially with respect to socio-economic development. She contends, rather forcefully, that non-formal education is currently considered a panacea for all socio-economic problems. According to Gayfer cited in Zumakpeh (2005) non-formal education should not be viewed as a handy panacea but as an acknowledgement that mere technical solutions are not sufficient to meet such critical

issues in social and economic development as mass poverty, meeting basic needs, improvement in health and general family life.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Design of the Study**

The study adopted survey design. The respondents filled the questionnaire distributed to them for the survey of the study and they were retrieved through the help of two research assistants. The instrument were analyzed with mean and Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) statistics for research questions and hypotheses respectively.

**Testing of the Hypotheses**

The hypotheses will be tested with Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) statistic tool with the formula:

$$X^2 = \sum (Fo - Fe)^2 / Fe.$$

Where

$X^2$  = Chi-square

$\sum$  = Summation

Fo = Observed Frequency

Fe = Expected Frequency

**ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between non-formal education and promotion of entrepreneurship among beneficiaries in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

**Table 1: Chi-square computation**

Responses	Fo	Fe	fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> /fe= $X^2$
Strongly Agree	35.75	20	15.75	248.06	12.40
Agree	30.50	20	10.50	110.25	5.51
Disagree	9.75	20	-10.25	105.06	5.25
Strongly Disagree	4.00	20	-16.00	256	12.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>				<b>35.96</b>

Therefore the calculated Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) value= 35.96

To compute the degree of freedom

(Df) or critical value

$$Df = (R-1) (C-1)$$

Where R = number of rows which is 4

C = Number of columns which is 4

$$\therefore Df = (4 - 1) \quad (4 - 1)$$

$$(3) \quad (3)$$

$$= 3 \times 3 = 9$$

Degree of Freedom is 9

Testing the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

At 0.05 level of significance, the degree of freedom at 9 = 16.92

Decision rule states that where the calculated chi-square ( $X^2$ ) value is greater than the critical value, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Implication**

From the above computation, the calculated chi-square ( $X^2$ ) value 35.96 is greater than the Chi-square tabulated or critical value 16.92. The null hypothesis is hereby rejected since the calculated chi-square value is greater than the critical or tabulated value.

This implies that there is significant relationship between the type of non-formal education carried out and promotion of entrepreneurship.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the non-formal education and the engagement of out of school children in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

**Table 2: Chi-square computation**

Responses	Fo	Fe	fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> /fe= $X^2$
Strongly Agree	32.00	20	12.00	144.00	7.20
Agree	32.25	20	12.25	150.06	7.50
Disagree	8.00	20	-12.00	144.00	7.20
Strongly Disagree	7.75	20	-12.25	150.06	7.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>				<b>29.40</b>

Therefore, calculated Chi-square value = 29.40

To compute the degree of freedom (Df) or critical value:

$$Df = (R - 1) (C - 1)$$

Where R = Number of rows which is 4

C = number of columns is 4

$$\therefore Df = (4 - 1) (4 - 1)$$

$$(3) (3) = 3 \times 3 = 9$$

Testing the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

At 0.05 level of significance, the degree of freedom at 9 = 16.92.

Decision rule states that where the calculated chi-square ( $X^2$ ) value is greater than the critical value, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Implication :** From the above computation, the calculated chi-square ( $X^2$ ) value 29.40 is greater than the Chi-square tabulated or critical value 16.92. The null hypothesis is hereby rejected since the calculated chi-square value is greater than the critical or tabulated value.

This implies that there is significant relationship between the type of non-formal education carried out and the engagement of out of school children in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

It is pertinent to state that the result of the findings as analyzed through mean and chi-square( $X^2$ ) statistics indicated acceptance of the mean value in all the questions raised in line with the options at above the average mean value of 2.5. The total mean and grand mean corresponded with the responses of the respondents on all the questions raised in line with the options as presented on all the frequency and mean tables. The two hypotheses were tested and confirmed that there is significant relationship between the

type of non-formal education carried out and promotion of entrepreneurship and there is significant relationship between the type of non-formal education carried out and the engagement of out of school children in Obio/Akpor Local Government.

The findings of this study attest to the fact that the essence of the programmes is to ensure that these children do not waste their potentials and talents since they were not able to make it through formal education. The various practical skills acquired through non-formal education opens door for self employment and employment in other establishments.

### **Educational Implications**

Non-formal education as an aspect of education should not be viewed as ordinary or dispense with a wave of hands in our educational system as it has a lot to offer in areas of human needs and development, especially by students (youths) who are the future leaders.

The policy makers in education sector must utilize the benefits of non-formal education to complement the formal education. Most of the students trained through formal education cannot confidently boost of any skill they have acquired. In this case non-formal education can be utilized to equip them with the requisite skills. The learning needs of students who basically rely on theories in areas where practical is required is a huge problem that can be curbed by adopting the practice in non-formal education.

### **CONCLUSION**

Non-attendance of formal schools becomes so remote a reason for unsuccessful livelihood and achievement as non-formal education has provided antidote to all these in any community.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Local government council should stimulate, arouse and identify the learning needs of members of communities within its area and equip them with relevant programme of non-formal education.
2. Cooperatives should be promoted in communities by giving them sound training and knowledge in order to assist members accomplish their dreams in area of skills and business.
3. Professionals and experts in various fields should establish some of their beneficial programmes in communities so as to help in their development.
4. Non-formal education programmes have no bounds, everyone should utilize its manifold benefits for all round development.

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