



Assessment of Non Formal Education in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State: A Strategy for Community Development

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed non formal education as a strategy for community development in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. It is a survey study. Two research questions guided 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: non formal education, community development, youth empowerment

INTRODUCTION

In some countries where there are gaps in the formal public and private education systems, non-formal education programmes become a way to reach children, youth and adults with instruction. Non formal education, encompasses a wide array of activities, including alternative primary schools, youth training, literacy programmes and professional education, can be an important complement to formal education.

Non-formal education programmes are extremely diverse and spread over a large number of agencies including many community programmes. Non-formal education programmes can be focused on specific skill development or 'second chance' general education (literacy programmes and can be for children, youth or adults (UNESCO, 2007).

Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning. It also refers to the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programmes undertaken for the purpose of improving students learning and development.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study adopted survey design. Eighty (80) respondents constituted the sample of the study. The respondents filled the questionnaire distributed to them and were retrieved through the help of two research assistants. The data obtained were analyzed with mean and Chi-square (X^2) statistics for research questions and hypotheses respectively.

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Research Question 1: *What are the various non formal education programmes carried out in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area?*

Table 1: Responses on the Various Non Formal Education Programmes.

S/N	Question Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Non formal education provides functional and literacy education programmes.	39	28	10	3	3.29	Accepted
2	Personal and professional development programmes are carried in non formal education.	35	27	11	7	3.13	Accepted
3	Non formal education provides community health and environmental sanitation programmes.	37	25	12	6	3.16	Accepted
4	Skill acquisition and vocational training programme are carried out in non formal education.	40	24	10	6	3.23	Accepted
Total Mean						12.81	
Grand Mean						3.20	

Source: Survey work 2016

Analysis of the Results

The calculation in table 1 above and the analysis, all the four mean were accepted with the mean value 3.29, 3.13, 3.16 and 3.23 in line with the research question. The total mean value is 12.81 and 3.20 is the grand mean value. The result above confirmed that various non formal education programmes are carried out in Obio/Akpor local government area.

Research Question 2: *To what extent does non-formal education programmes promote entrepreneurship among beneficiaries in Obio/Akpor local government area?*

Table 2: Responses on how Non Formal Education Programmes Promote Entrepreneurship.

S/N	Question Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Remark
5	Non formal education helps beneficiaries to seeks out investment opportunities.	38	27	11	4	3.24	Accepted
6	Non formal education provides enabling environment for beneficiaries to establish and run enterprises and businesses.	30	37	8	5	3.15	Accepted
7	Non formal education assists in stimulation of industrial output.	36	28	12	4	3.20	Accepted
8	Non formal education creates an avenue for the beneficiaries to do exploit in different field.	39	30	8	3	3.31	Accepted
Total Mean						12.90	
Grand Mean						3.23	

Source: Survey work 2016

Analysis of the Results

The calculation in table 2 above and the analysis, all the four mean were accepted with the mean value 3.24, 3.15, 3.20 and 3.31 in respect of the sub-questions presented. The total mean value is 12.90 and 3.23 is the grand mean value. The result above confirmed that non-formal education programmes promote entrepreneurship.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of research question 1 indicated that various non-formal education programmes were carried out in Obio/Akpor local government area. Such programmes include community health education, community development, sanitation and nutrition education, apprenticeship, adult education, personal and professional development programmes, vocational training, skill acquisition programmes, entrepreneurship programmes, functional and literacy programmes, agriculture extension service, cooperative programmes, mass mobilization campaigns, rural development training, in-service programmes, workers and students industrial training, citizenship and leadership programmes, small and medium scale business training, etc. This is in agreement with the assertions of Aghenta (2001), Ngwu (2003) and Oyebamiji (2006).

The findings of research question 2 indicated that non-formal education programmes promote entrepreneurship in Obio/Akpor local government area. Individuals consciousness is aroused to take advantage of entrepreneurial opportunities available in different fields and professions, engaging in adventure by setting goals, thinking, planning, observing, reflecting, experimenting and making decisions and taking actions and reviewing. The beneficiaries diagnose personal learning needs, fostering the development knowledge and skills, identify resources, implementing strategies and evaluating the outcomes, stimulating industrial output. Beneficiaries are well prepared for efficiency in their jobs and self employment through training, human resource development, boosting their morale, and affording community members potentialities for assumption of more responsibilities. This is in agreement with the assertions of Duke (1988), Amirize (2001), Ngwu (2006) and Nwafor (2007).

The findings of this study attest to the fact that non-formal education provides numerous programmes for the benefit of individuals which engender development in any community which members embrace them. Non-formal education promotes entrepreneurial training programmes in which people are acquainted with entrepreneurial and managerial skills and knowledge to exploit in different fields.

CONCLUSION

Non-formal education encapsulates many programmes which are capable to bring about community development when properly harnessed. The benefits derived from the programmes of non-formal education can position members of a community in the path of progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. The stakeholders should arise and make necessary input to realize the objectives of non-formal education by supporting its programmes in their communities for increased and sustainable community development.
2. The community members should be mobilized and encouraged to undergo non-formal education programmes so as to improve their living condition.
3. Wealthy community members should not relent in contributing to any non-formal education programme that can transform their communities.

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