Strategies For Implementation Of Non-Formal Education Needs Of Rural People In Omuma Local Government Area Of Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
This study examined the strategies for implementation of NFE needs of rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State. Two research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. Proportionate sampling technique was adopted to select 362 respondents from the total population of 3,620. This formed 10% of adult indigenes in Omuma LGA of Rivers State. An instrument tagged “Questionnaire on Strategies for Implementation of Non-Formal Education Needs of Rural People (QSIN-FENRP) with r = 0.81 was used for data collection. Completed and retrieved 362 copies of questionnaire were analyzed using mean statistics. Results showed that political education, basic adult education, social education, economic education and cultural education are the non-formal education needs of rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State. Findings also show that participation, social mobilization programme, learners' convenient time, awareness campaign and literacy programme are strategies that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State. The study therefore recommended that government and education providers should from time to time sensitise the rural people on the importance of NFE through, awareness campaigns, workshops, symposium and seminars. Also that education providers should adopt and project the identified non-formal education needs for rural people so as to aid participation in the development of communities.

Keywords: Strategies, Non-Formal Education Needs, Rural People

INTRODUCTION
The most valuable asset in rural areas is people. Rural development basically rests with the development of human resources in rural areas. Thus, education, which is supposed to improve the overall quality of the labour force and achieve well-rounded development of human beings, lies in the heart of the rural development issue. It is the key to turning the large population from a burden to a potential of growth. Development in its nature is a set of changes. The process of rural development is usually accompanied by rapid urbanisation, agriculture industry transformation, technology development etc. Education has been regarded as a potential agent for social change and development and therefore interventions in this direction have been planned and executed at the national and international levels (Karanam & Panigrabi, 2016). Proper training can help rural people to cope with such socio-economic changes, as well as to seize the development opportunity to improve their livelihood. As one of the essential parts of Education for All (EFA), education for rural people is not new. Previous focus of rural education was given to providing basic education to all since the declaration of EFA. However, as stated by Chinapah (2017) at the International Symposium of Education for Rural Transformation (ERT), the dynamics of rural transformation in the ‘globalized’ world has created new
educational imperatives that call for a re-evaluation of present educational policies and priorities and the re-examination of the role of education and learning (formal, non-formal and informal) for rural people from rather new perspectives, there is an urgent need for rethinking education for rural contexts. Re-examining education in rural areas requires first reviewing the characteristics of the rural sector, and then considering the position of education in the current rural development debate (FAO & UNESCO, 2002). As pointed out by EFA assessment report, over-conservative systems were out of touch with people's needs. Rural people and rural areas are not homogeneous, and so for education to be relevant, it needs to respond to the diversity of rural situations. It is clear that the centralised planning apparatus in most countries simply cannot develop effective programmes for diverse rural population. Therefore, rural communities will be increasingly responsible for shaping some of their own educational programme and will be allowed to play a greater role in helping to make these decisions that are vital to their future (Wanjie, 2011). Such flexible strategies involving the decentralisation of planning procedures and the devolution of responsibilities to more locally based agencies.

Most governments are committed to policies that would facilitate rural development but they are, at the same time, committed to the notion that economic and social differentials between regions should be minimized. These considerations based upon notions of social equity frequently turn out to be the most powerful determinants of educational policies in the new states, how to possibly eliminate disparities among rural areas and implementing flexible development programmes would be a tough problem in the whole development process of a nation (Chinapah, 2017). Educational activities have to be linked to the specific needs of the rural community for skills and capacities to seize economic opportunities, improve livelihood and enhance the quality of life. A multi-sectoral educational approach involving all ages and formal, non-formal and informal education is necessary. Therefore, there is general recognition that NFE delivery systems servicing rural communities must be appropriate for the needs of the individuals and the communities as a whole. As with curriculum, delivery modes for NFE must be complementary to the needs of the rural communities being serviced. What is most appropriate for one country or one rural community may not be appropriate for another. The extent of physical infrastructure development, the availability of NFE facilities, the level of education achievement and the extent of social and economic development of a community, as well as the types of enterprises providing work opportunities, should all impact on the decision as to the most effective delivery model. In all cases, it is crucial to take a team approach and to follow the principles of active community involvement, relevance and flexibility of the training programme.

Rural communities often can offer significant human, material and intellectual resources. Once these resources are mobilized and given adequate support and direction, rural communities and their members can become both beneficiaries and important actors in the provision of NFE and in the transformation of the rural space. Non-formal education is not only an alternative means to provide education to people who are unable to attend school, but also as part of providing youth and adults alike with lifelong education. It is becoming popular to include non-formal education as a component within assistance projects, especially in those for comprehensive rural development. In such non-formal education, the acquisition of literacy and numeracy as well as practical skills for making a living are centrally positioned (IIED, 2010). As a problem-centered activity, non-formal education becomes a tool that will build the capacity of rural people to satisfy the imbalance or lack of adjustment between the present condition in the life of the community and a new set of condition that will be more desirable. In identifying those gaps, they could be basic adult education needs, social education needs, political education needs, economic education needs, cultural education needs, health education needs, and environmental education needs. These are important because, they will equip the individuals with the desired knowledge and skills that will make them participate effectively in the development of their communities. NFE has long been considered a crucial means of providing competent power of individual for socio-economic development in rural areas. Hence the need for this study to examine the strategies for implementation of NFE needs of rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State.

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Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

1. What are the NFE needs of rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State?
2. What strategies can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed the survey research design which was descriptive. The descriptive survey design makes use of representative samples of the population in their natural settings. The design is considered appropriate, because it is useful in gathering data about the belief, opinion, attitude, behaviour and records of events that can be analysed and interpreted to measure relationship between variables without any manipulations. The population comprised 3,620 adult indigenes in Omuma LGA of Rivers State. Proportionate sampling technique was used to select 362 respondents from the total population. This formed 10% of adult indigenes in Omuma LGA of Rivers State. A validated self-developed research instrument tagged “Questionnaire on Strategies for Implementation of Non-Formal Education Needs of Rural People (QSI-NFENRP) with reliability coefficient of 0.81 was used for data collection. The questionnaire was designed on modified four-point Likert rating scale. The numerical rating of responses in the questionnaire was scored thus: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The data collected were analysed with mean $\bar{x}$ statistics. Criterion mean for taking decision was 2.5 (4+3+2+1 divided by 4 = 2.5). All items whose values are below 2.5 were rejected while those above 2.5 were accepted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What are the NFE needs of rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean analysis on NFE needs of rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>STATEMENTS</th>
<th>SA (4)</th>
<th>A (3)</th>
<th>D (2)</th>
<th>SD (1)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\bar{x}$</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Political education is a non-formal education need that can aid rural people to participate effectively in community development</td>
<td>239(956)</td>
<td>93 (279)</td>
<td>18 (36)</td>
<td>12 (12)</td>
<td>362 (1284)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Social education is another non-formal education need of rural people</td>
<td>246 (984)</td>
<td>86 (258)</td>
<td>15 (30)</td>
<td>15 (15)</td>
<td>362 (1287)</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Basic adult education is one of the non-formal education needs of rural people</td>
<td>246 (984)</td>
<td>92 (276)</td>
<td>9 (18)</td>
<td>15 (15)</td>
<td>362 (1293)</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Economic education is another non-formal education need of rural people</td>
<td>227 (908)</td>
<td>80 (240)</td>
<td>38 (76)</td>
<td>17 (17)</td>
<td>362 (1241)</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Another non-formal education need of rural people in the participation of community development is cultural education need</td>
<td>254 (1016)</td>
<td>78 (234)</td>
<td>8 (16)</td>
<td>22 (22)</td>
<td>362 (1288)</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 showed that respondents agreed political education is one of the non-formal education needs of rural people with mean 3.54; they also agreed that social education is another non-formal education need of rural people with mean 3.56. The table also revealed that basic adult education is a non-formal education need that can aid rural people to participate effectively in community development as this has mean of 3.57. Also, the respondents agreed that economic education is another non-formal education need of rural people with mean 3.43 and that another non-formal education need of rural people in the participation of community development is cultural education need with mean 3.56. However, the grand mean 3.53 shows that basic adult education, social education, political education, economic education and cultural education are the non-formal education needs of rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State. The finding supports International Standard Classification of Education (ISCE) in Wikipedia (2011) that basic adult education is the formal and informal fundamental training or knowledge, skills, and experiences that people acquire or attain to enable them function effectively in their communities. It is the prerequisite to further education. Basic learning needs include literacy, family planning, nutritional values, vocational skill, to mention but a few.

The finding also supports the study by Lee (1980) which suggests that social education is a non-formal education need that can be used to cover “all those teaching or informal activities which are planned by curriculum developers, teachers or other professionals to enhance the development of one or more of the following: knowledge, understanding, attitudes, sensitivities, competence, in relation to the self and others, social institutions; structures; and organizations, and/or social issues”. Indian American Forum for Political Education (2009) sees political education as non-formal education need that empowers people politically by raising their civic consciousness and increasing participation in community affairs and the mainstream political process. The study is also in line with the view of Okafor (2004) who stated that political awareness is referred to attitudinal term that connotes one’s consciousness as regard to his political duties to nation and that of the nation to the citizens. It is the process of making the citizens of a country to know their political rights which entitle them to participate in the national political life of the state. Cheng (2001) agreed with the above statement when he said that political education enlightens residents from different perspectives about political points of views and knowledge and values of ideological events.

The study by Ibukunolu (2015) sees economic education as need provided to assist a rational man in organizing his different thoughts whenever he is faced with day-to-day economic issues and problems. However, Darren (2012) posits that cultural education need is an attempt to ensure that every child experience a wide variety of high quality cultural experiences to help him/her function effectively in the society. In other words, cultural education is concerned with the transmission of a people’s cultural heritage from one general to another. This will help to transmit the attitudes, values, customs, and traditions of the people from old generation to new ones.

The non-formal education needs according to European Youth for Media Network Association (2012) will help to raise the civic consciousness and increasing participation of rural farmers in the community affairs and the mainstream political process as well as assist a rational man in organizing his different thoughts whenever he is faced with day-to-day economic issues and problems.
Research Question 2: What strategies can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean analysis on the strategies that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural People in Omuma LGA of Rivers State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>STATEMENTS</th>
<th>SA (4)</th>
<th>A (3)</th>
<th>D (2)</th>
<th>SD (1)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Participation is a strategy that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in my community.</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Social mobilization programme is another strategy that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in my community.</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Learners’ convenient time is another strategy that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in my community.</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Awareness campaign is a strategy that can aid implementation of NFE needs of rural people in my community.</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Literacy programme is a strategy that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in my community.</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 revealed that respondents agreed that participation is a strategy that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in their community with mean 3.75; social mobilization programme is another strategy that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in my community with mean 2.97; Learners’ convenient time is another strategy that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in my community with mean 3.17. Also, the respondents agreed that awareness campaign is a strategy that can aid implementation of NFE needs of rural people in their community with mean 3.17 and they also agreed that literacy programme is a strategy that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in their community with mean 3.51. The grand mean 3.31 corroborates the finding that participation, social mobilization programme, learners' convenient time, awareness campaign and literacy programme are strategies that can be adopted to implement the NFE needs of the rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State.

This finding is in support of a study which says Adult literacy programmes have created opportunities for adult learners to acquire and apply the knowledge and skills needed to propel economic development. The role of literacy programme in economic development is apparent in its contribution to human capital formation. Adult literacy programmes motivate learners to develop interest in reading and writing and a positive attitude to the effective use of ICT and media within the context of life-long learning. Literacy helps people to move around independently, read their own personal and leisure documents, and seeks employment in large firms without fear. The confidence gained from literacy extends to many other
spheres of daily life as well (Openjuru, 2009). The finding also affirmed the study by International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) (2010) which sees participation as empowering people to mobilize their own capacities, be social actors, rather than passive subjects, manage the resources, make decisions, and control the activities that affect their. The institute further posits participation as an approach through which beneficiaries and other stakeholders are able to influence project planning, decision-making, implementation and monitoring phases. The institute on the other hand, says participation is considered to be a prerequisite for project ownership, successful implementation and sustainability of the projects in question.

CONCLUSION
This study exposed non-formal education needs as tools that can build the capacity of rural people to satisfy the imbalance or lack of adjustment between the present condition in the life of the community and a new set of condition that will be more desirable. In identifying those gaps, basic adult education needs, social education needs, political education needs, economic education needs, and cultural education needs were pointed out. It is in lieu of this that the study further identified those vital strategies such as participation, social mobilization programme, learners' convenient time, awareness campaign, and literacy programme that can aid implementation of NFE needs of the rural people in Omuma LGA of Rivers State. Without mincing word, if the aforementioned strategies can be adopted by stakeholders in the education sector and the community people, there will definitely be positive change not only in the lives of the rural people but their community as a whole.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, it is recommended that:

4. Education providers should adopt and project the identified non-formal education needs for rural people so as to aid participation in the development of communities.
5. Government and education providers should from time to time sensitise the rural people on the importance of NFE through, awareness campaigns, workshops, symposium and seminars.
6. There should be proper and adequate flow of information needed by rural people to participate in available NFE programmes in their communities.

REFERENCES


