The Influence Of Community Education Programmes On Poverty Reduction For Sustainable Development In Khana And Gokana Local Government Areas Rivers State

1OSUJI, Catherine. U. (Ph.D) & 2MKPAE, Comfort Nkpunwi

Department of Educational Management
Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

1Email: cathingosuji@gmail.com; Catherine.osuji@ust.edu.ng ; Phone: 08033090298
2Email: commycare@yahoo.com ; Phone: 07035663017

ABSTRACT
The study examined the influence of community education on poverty reduction among the people of Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State. The research work was guided by two objectives, two research questions and two hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and the target population was 3,200 respondents who participated in the community education programmes from the 63 communities in Khana and 17 communities in Gokana local government areas of Rivers State. The sample size for the study was 320 respondents determined using the Taro Yamen sample size determination model. Proportionate and simple random techniques were used to select the respondents. Instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated by the research supervisor and two other experts in the field of study. The reliability of the instrument was established using test re-test method and a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Z-Test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05% significance level. The results of the findings showed that community mobilization; agricultural extension programmes reduce poverty among the people of Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others, that government should focus on the needs of the rural dwellers rather than planning programmes that will be of no benefit to the people and thereby neglecting their poverty reduction needs.

Keywords: Community Education, Influence, Poverty, Community.

INTRODUCTION
Community Education like any other program of in the field of education is not new. It is as old as the human race. It is an organised programme of activities that promotes learning and social development work within the communities with members of the communities which is channelled through formal, non-formal and informal methods of education (Anyanwu, 2002). Community education has to do with programmes of activities to can improve the members of the communities in order to develop and enhance the living conditions of the people. It is interesting to say that community education is the education for the empowerment of the people in the community. It is the education that brings about the acquisition of skills that can promote change, transformation and development of individual, communities, society and nation at large. The philosophy of community education as noted by Anyanwu,
(2002) is tied up with the idea of enabling people to exploit their resources and use such resources to increase their ability and confidence in handling their own affairs.

Community education connotes a process and movement for the attainment of community growth. It is an aspect of non-formal education, adult education programmes that is organized to empower the members of a community for the enhancement of quality life of the people. It is the type of education that stimulates members of the community to participate actively in social activities that create employment, increase their living standard and improve their lives. Akande (2007), Scholar’s sees community education as an education process where the people of the community learn and acquire skills for individual, community and global betterment. This kind of education embraces the people of all ages and it has to do with the acquisition of skills that will make for skillfulness and self enhancement. It is an awareness campaign programme that is organized with the use of knowledge to enable the people acquire skills for self-realisation, improvement, confidence, competence and fulfilment Amirize, (2007). Community education is very necessary and important in a country like Nigeria because it is a means for addressing the needs and problems of poverty in our society, and to bring about sustainable development in the country.

Amirize, (2007) also assured that community education suggest a process of collective enlightenment, conscientization, political awareness, mobilization and the inculcation of values and necessary skills needed for the better living condition of the people in the society. Community education involves all those occupations and methods that are concerned with running education and development programmes within local communities.

Agricultural Extension Programme is a community education programme that is concerned with the increased food production through improved farming methods. The target audience for this programme are the rural farmers and cooperative society. The programme was channelled to this group of people with the aim of solving agricultural problems in the society with the help of the extension officers. The Apprenticeship Programme takes the form of skill acquisition programme, school-to-land and other vocational training and job-improvement programmes which is established and aimed at providing necessary skills for the people in order to provide employment, and improved their standard of living in the society.

Community Mobilization described a system of liberal education and counselling channelled to rural communities to help transform the people by working in close relationship with them. This is an aspect of community education and a system of conscientisation which help to liberate the people in the community from the shackles of fear, ignorant, poverty and slavery, Amirize, (2007). Community mobilization as an aspect of community education increases community awareness of maternal and child health; and build the skills of service providers in planning and executing community-based water, sanitation and primary health and hygiene schemes.

Vocational Skill Training for skill acquisition among the people in the communities is a form of adult education programmes which presupposes that some occupational skills are lacking. Vocational skill training is therefore used as the driver of change from both poverty and the vulnerability to poverty. Capacity building in this way is an intervention strategy for the transformation and empowerment of those “sunk in the culture of silence”, the wretched of the earth” the dregs of the society”, the oppressed, the neglected, the under-nourished that labour and are heavy laden. There are therefore, very many capacity building programmes depending on the occupation of the people. Such training programmes are therefore planned for farmers, fishermen, nomads, technicians, craftsmen, artisans, traders, homemakers, midwives, herbalists; beauticians etc. by this capacity building, the people are able to fight poverty.

Poverty is a different concept that should be giving thought in this study. Poverty like other concepts has no acceptable definition. But according to (Olori, 2008), poverty means the inability of a person or house hold to meet up with the basic necessity of life. It is a situation where the resources of individuals or families are not enough to support its members. And the conditions not up to the minimum socially acceptable standard of living. Poverty also is an ill condition whereby the basic needs of human being which includes food, shelter, clothing’s etc, are not been provided for. It is a helpless situation where one is not able to live a good and healthy life. The state of poverty is a state of ignorant, fear, sickness,
hunger, and starvation, illiteracy, and death, and a state where there will be high rate of prostitution and criminality.

Adebayo, (2012) explained that poverty is beyond the condition of lack of resources, but it extends to social inequality, insecurity, illiteracy, poor health, restricted of opportunities for personal growth and self-realisation. As a human condition Preece (2007) described poverty as a chronic denial of resources, capabilities, choices, security and power that is needed for enjoyment of adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social right.

Poverty is a universal term and it is challenging to define. Poverty shows itself in different forms like low income, illiteracy, premature death, early marriages, large families, malnutrition, ill-health, etc. According UNDP, Poverty is a condition that is categorized by severe lack of basic human needs which includes food, safe drinking water sanitation facilities health, shelter, education and information. Poverty poses danger to humanity in recent times. It also hinders peace and stability in our society. Poverty in the case of Nigeria has no solution and its reduction has remained a huge problem to the nation. By the nature of poverty it has affected the quality of life of the Khana and Gokana people and Nigerians to a very large extent.

**Statement of the Problem**

Over the years poverty has remained a peril to humanity. In Nigeria, regardless of the government poverty eradications campaign, National Development Plans, and Policies poverty still remain the world’s present menace to peace and stability. Community education as a requirement for community development and progress is an educational process whereby people, individual and collectively learn to help them and improve their living conditions. For the individual, community education is an important determinant of quality of life and the greatest catalyst of change for sustainable development in all spheres of national life; be it economic, social, political, and otherwise.

In view of the fact that problems and needs are numerous and differ from one community to the other, the people suffers from lack of food, good drinking water, social amenities and the access to good medical care due to poverty. It is observed that youths now involve in cultism practices and prostitution because their parent cannot afford to send them to school due to lack of money and poverty. The government effort at reducing poverty in Nigeria has not been successful and the reasons behind this lie in the nature of the socio-political and economic structures, which push away and exclude the poor from decisions affecting their welfare. Community education Programmes that are aimed at reducing poverty has been miss-represent and this has led to the displacement of its goals and objectives. This has become a problem for the people of Khana and Gokana coupled with political instability, rapid turnover of programmes of action and office holders, which led to truncation of programmes midstream and unnecessary duplication and waste.

A lot of youths, children and women are now victim of poverty. Regardless of the community education like the skill acquisition, health education, political education, etc. majority of the people still suffers in poverty. Some families are not able to neither eat nor get access to quality education. Some children are neglected by their parent because of their inability to provide for them. Kidnapping and ritual killing is on the high side in our society today. It has therefore come to the notice of researchers to look into the important areas and also to provide current and reliable indices for informed policy making about the way community education should be planned and organised for the wellbeing of the people especially the rural poor and thus reducing the high rate of poverty in our society. Hence the focus of this research to be carried out in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to explore the effect of community education and its influence on poverty reduction among the people of Khana and Gokana local government areas in Rivers State. Therefore, the objectives of the study are specifically to:

1. examine the contributions of community mobilization programme on poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State.
2. investigate the extent agricultural extension programme influenced poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State.
Research Questions
The following questions are posed with the intention to give appropriate guide to the study:
1. What are the contributions of community mobilization programme to poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State?
2. To what extent has agricultural extension programme influenced poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State?

Hypotheses
The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:
H01: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of respondents from Khana and Gokana regarding the contributions of community mobilization programme to poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State.
H02: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of respondents from Khana and Gokana regarding the extent agricultural extension programme influenced poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State.

METHODS AND MATERIALS
This study employed a descriptive survey design, with a population of 3200 respondents from the 63 communities in Khana and 17 communities in Gokana local government areas of Rivers State. The 3,200 respondents consists of 2000 beneficiaries of community education programmes organised in communities in Khana L.G.A, and 1200 beneficiaries of community education programmes organised in communities in Gokana L.G.As, of Rivers State. These respondents were accessed from the local government council about the number of participant of the community education programmes organised in their communities (Local Government Council).
The sample size for the study was 320 respondents determined by using Taro Yamen Model of sample size determination. To sample the 320 respondents, proportionate sampling technique was used to select 24 communities out of 63 in Khana and 8 communities out of 17 in Gokana local government areas which gave a total of 32 communities sampled. 10 respondents were chosen from each of the communities using simple random sampling technique and the totals of 320 respondents were sampled. This gives about 240 respondents from Khana and 80 respondents from Gokana.
The instrument used to gather information for the study was a structured questionnaire which was administered by the researcher to the respondents in their respective communities. The questionnaire was titled: Questionnaire on the Influence of Community Education Programme on Poverty Reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas (QACEPPR). The validation of the instrument was carried out through a critical evaluation of the questionnaire by the researcher supervisor, and other experts in the field of Adult and Community Education in the department of Educational Foundations. The test-retest method was used to test the reliability of the instrument. And a reliability coefficient r = 0.81 was obtained to establish that the instrument was reliable. The research questions were analysed using the mean, while the null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance using Z-test Statistics.
### RESULTS

#### Research Question 1: What are the contributions of community mobilization to poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State?

**Table 4.1: Mean responses on the contributions of community mobilization**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>GK (N=80)</th>
<th>KH (N=240)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\bar{X}$</td>
<td>S.D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Community mobilization creates awareness about business that can help improve the lives of community members.</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Community mobilization motivates communities to advocate for policy changes that help their economic situation.</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Community mobilization helps in building community capacity to identify and address their community needs.</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Community mobilizations inform the people about the benefits of environmental sanitation.</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Community mobilization promotes sustainability and long-term commitment to a community change movement and poverty reduction activities.</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Mean**

|          | 3.27 | 0.60 | Agree | 3.16 | 0.65 | Agree |

Field survey (A = Agree; $\bar{X}$ = Mean; S.D. = Standard Deviation; GK = Gokana; KH = Khana)

Table 4.1 above shows the mean response for the contributions of community mobilization to poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State. As shown, a grand mean value of 3.27 for Gokana indicates that the respondents agree that community mobilization reduces poverty in Gokana local government area of Rivers state. Furthermore, a grand mean value of 3.16 for Khana indicates that the respondents also agree that community mobilization reduces poverty in Khana local government area of Rivers state. This is because the grand mean values of 3.27 and 3.16 are both greater than the cutoff mean value of 2.50 (See appendix for details).
**Research Question 2:** To what extent has agricultural extension programme influenced poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State?

Table 4.2: Mean responses on the influence of agricultural extension programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>GK (N=80)</th>
<th>KH (N=240)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>S.D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Agricultural extension equips farmers with the modern ways of preserving their farm produce to improve their livelihood.</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Agricultural extension programmes provides community farmers with competent skills that makes them better farmers.</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Agricultural extension programmes provides training that encourage community members to start up small business to improve their living conditions.</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Agricultural extension programmes improved the farmer’s knowledge on how to market their farm produce to improve their lives.</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Agricultural extension programmes provide community farmers the ability to improve on their farming activities.</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Mean**

| 3.07 | 0.78 | HE | 3.10 | 0.75 | HE |

Field survey (HE=High Extent; X=Mean; S.D=Standard Deviation; GK=Gokana; KH=Khana)

Table 4.2 above shows the mean response for the influence of agricultural extension programme on poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State. Thus, a grand mean value of 3.07 for Gokana indicates that the respondents agree that agricultural extension programme reduces poverty in Gokana local government area of Rivers State. Furthermore, a grand mean value of 3.10 for Khana indicates that the respondents agree that agricultural extension programme reduces poverty in Khana local government area of Rivers State. This is because the grand mean values of 3.07 and 3.10 are both greater than the cutoff mean value of 2.50.

**Hypothesis Testing**

H₀: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of respondents from Khana and Gokana regarding the contributions of community mobilization programme to poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State.
Table 4.5: Z-test for contributions of community mobilization on poverty reduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>( \bar{X} )</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Zcal</th>
<th>Zcrit</th>
<th>&amp;</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gokana</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khana</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Field survey

Table 4.5 above shows z-test for hypotheses 1. As shown, calculated value of Z is 2.55 and the critical value is 1.96. Since calculated value is greater than critical value, the hypotheses are rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the mean response of respondents from Gokana and Khana regarding the contributions of community mobilization to poverty reduction in the two local government areas.

**Hypothesis 2**: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of respondents from Khana and Gokana regarding the extent agricultural extension programme influenced poverty reduction in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State.

Table 4.6: z-test for influence of agricultural extension on poverty reduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>( \bar{X} )</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Zcal</th>
<th>Zcrit</th>
<th>&amp;</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gokana</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khana</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Field survey

Table 4.6 above shows z-test for hypotheses 2 as shown, calculated value of z is -0.58 and the critical value is 1.96. Since calculated value is less than critical value, the hypotheses is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents from Gokana and Khana regarding the influence of agricultural extension programme on poverty reduction in the two local government areas.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Research question one sought to ascertain the contributions of community mobilization to poverty reduction in Gokana and Khana local government areas of Rivers state. The results show that respondents from both Gokana and Khana agree that Community mobilization creates awareness about business that can help improve the lives of community members. Secondly, they also both agree that Community mobilization motivates communities to advocate for policy changes that help their economic situation. Further they both agree that Community mobilization helps in building community capacity to identify and address their community needs. Furthermore, they both agree that Community mobilizations inform the people about the benefits of environmental sanitation and lastly, they also both agree that Community mobilization promotes sustainability and long-term commitment to a community change movement and poverty reduction activities.

The z-test for hypotheses one indicates there is a significant difference in the mean response of respondents from Gokana and Khana regarding the contributions of community mobilization to poverty reduction in the two local government areas. Although there is a significant difference in the mean responses, such difference only results from variance in mean responses of the two groups but in terms of agreement on the items, the two groups both agree that community mobilization contributes to poverty reduction in the two local government areas.

This result corroborates the result of Aruma and Ogwo, (2016) who conducted a study to assess the contributions of Community Development programmes to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.
in Rivers State. Aruma and Ogwo found that some community development programmes contribute to eradication of extreme poverty and hunger in Rivers State, however to a low extent.

Research question two sought to explore the extent agricultural extension programmes influenced poverty reduction in Gokana and Khana local government areas of Rivers state. The results show that respondents from both Gokana and Khana agree that agricultural extension programme equips farmers with the modern ways of preserving farm produce to improve their livelihood. Secondly, they also both agree that agricultural extension programmes provides community farmers with competent skills that makes them better farmers. Further they both agree that agricultural extension programme provides training that encourages community members to starts up small business to improve their living condition. Furthermore, they both agree that agricultural extension programme improved the farmer’s knowledge on how to market their farm produce to improve their lives and lastly, they also both agree that agricultural extension programme provide community farmers the ability to improve on their farming activities.

The z-test for hypotheses two indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents from Gokana and Khana regarding the extent agricultural extension programmes influenced poverty reduction in the two local government areas. Although there is a significant difference in the mean responses, such difference only results from variance in mean responses of the two groups but in terms of agreement on the items, the two groups both agree that agricultural extension programmes influenced poverty reduction in the two local government areas.

This result corroborates the result of Aruma and Ogwo (2016) who conducted a study to assess the contributions of Community Development Programme to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger in Rivers State. Aruma and Ogwo found that some community development programme contribute to eradication of extreme poverty and hunger in Rivers State, however to a low extent.

**CONCLUSION**

This study recognised the fact that education with certain reference to community education is crucial and contributes to knowledge, economic, social and cultural development of the nation. In this respect, an effort was made in giving an operational definition of community education. It was examined in this study the various community education programmes and activities which offer high level of learning and involvement of community members in acquiring skills and knowledge that can help improve on their lives, empower them economically and brings sustainable development in the local government areas.

This is why this study was conducted to examine the influence of community education and its actualization in the aspect of providing opportunity for the acquisition of the required knowledge, practical and social skills for the development of the people in Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State.

In Khana and Gokana local government areas, the programme has failed in some ways to actually address the need of the rural people by helping in eradicating extreme poverty from the communities. Community education has some positive impact on community members especially in rural areas, because it has not be funded and planned properly by the government to meet the target objective and the community needs. The agricultural extension programme which is supposed to be a trot for empowerment of the community people has not been given the needed attention required for food production, security, and the improvement of live. Agricultural extension Agents and other professionals on the field are neglected by the government. Community education programme beneficiaries are not involved in decision making-processes of the projects and programme that will improve on their lives, and this has affected the poor implementation and outcome of community education programme.

The findings of the study revealed that community education if planned appropriately and channel to the rural people it will greatly improve and enhance the standard of living of the people, and make them self-reliant which will help in the reduction of extreme poverty from the communities. Community mobilization also motivates and creates awareness in the communities on health and other related issues that is affecting standard of living of the people. This has also contributed to the poverty reduction process in the communities. Community education introduced vocational skills training programme for
community member to help improve on their living situation as well as reducing poverty in the communities. Health education also contributes to the promotion of healthy living of the people in the communities of Khana and Gokana local government areas. Although government has not been giving the attention needed for community education to achieve its aims and objectives in contributing to the reduction of poverty in the communities of Khana and Gokana local government areas of Rivers State. The implication of these is that if these programmes are properly implemented, it will reduce the level of poverty among the people, and will contribute to the sustainable development of the entire local government areas.

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

1. Community development agents should focus on the needs of the community dwellers rather than planning programme that will not benefit them and thereby neglecting their poverty reduction needs.
2. Government should pay more attention on how to improve the lives of the people first before anything, it should be their priority to make sure that community members have all it takes to be in a better condition in order to live above poverty.
3. More attention should be given in the area of agriculture by the government for food production, security and rural development as well as the nation at large. Farmers should be given loan and incentive to carry out their farming activities to produce more food for the country.
4. Agricultural extension programme require more fund by the government so that it will make a good impact on the rural poor.
5. Government should organize conferences, workshops and seminar for extension workers on regular basis so as to keep them informed with trend in development in their field of specialization.

REFERENCES


