

Non-Formal Education As An Instrument For Empowering Women In Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

In the present dispensation, education can clearly increase workers' human capital and productivity, which make them more valuable to society. Non-formal education (NFE) programme is not left out. The aims and objectives NFE are so embracing that it can make individuals to be self-fulfilled, self-reliant, above all self-actualized. Hence the research topic: "Non-formal as an instrument for empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria." Four research questions guided the study. The population for the study was 3,200 women drawn from six (6) autonomous communities that were selected for the study. The sample for the study was up of 800 women that were selected from 3,200 total number of the members. The instrument used was a structured and guided questionnaire for analyzing the research questions. The major finding of the study is that women can be empowered through non-formal education programmes. Direct establishment of educational institution for training implementation is required. The major recommendation is that efforts should be made by various governments and organizations to recruit more staff for effective supervision of Adult and Non-formal Education programmes to handle the women.

Introduction

No meaningful development can take place in any country without women who make up half or more of the population (UNESCO, 1981). The above statement buttresses the Chinese saying that to train a man is to train an individual, but to train a woman is to train a whole nation. With a population of about 150 million, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and is endowed with a variety of natural resources. Nigeria is one of exporting countries (OPEC) and a leading producer of oil, yet most of its women are still illiterate.

Non-formal education programmes in Nigeria have maintained a trend where literacy and basic education have been given a major emphasis above work-related adult education programmes (Weinberg 1994, Pieck 2000). From all indication, the problem remains almost the same. The women are not developing as expected; they still lack adequate knowledge and skills to be fully empowered to face all the challenges that come with development in our society and Enugu State to be precise. Non – formal education programmes have had poor results in terms of the betterment of the living conditions of the women who live in poverty. Therefore, it is urgent to have programmes that meet the economic needs of the women and allow their productive incorporation (UNESCO/OREL/CEAAL, 1997).

Non-formal education is a productive human development investment. The education of women contributes to self-reliance and personal autonomy, to the exercise of basic rights and increase in productivity and labour efficiency. It is also positively translated into productive investment. In view of the foregoing, one can then say that non-formal education programme is organized for all areas regardless of the content, place of study and form study. Once the programme is flexible and is organized to satisfy the needs and aspirations of the beneficiaries and those of the community, it is expected to fulfill its aim.

Non-formal education programme is recognized as an instrument for empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria. These women need non-formal education programme. Ukeje (1992) has outlined the tasks of effective non-formal education programme to include the process of planning, organizing, communicating supervising and controlling learning situation. Educational planning is the first step in any educational programme.

Planning here means intelligent preparation for action (Gregg, 1977); it is the “analysis of relevant past and present information in assessment of probable future development, so that a course of action (plan) may be determined to enable the organization to meet its stated objectives”. In planning, the first step is needs assessment which is aimed at establishing the gaps or discrepancies that exist between the desired learning outcomes and the prevalent behaviour of the target group. It is the view of many authors that non-formal education programmes especially for women would become meaningful in planning with a careful consideration of the needs of women (Learners) (Rahnema 1976; Ologe 1979; UNESCO 1981). These needs according to Masco (1973) constitute a gap between their existing set of form of knowledge, skills, attitudes and interest. Shah (1977) advised that it is necessary to base the non-formal education programme for women on the needs and interest which they themselves expressed or identified. The identification of need is, therefore, undoubtedly the springboard for the formulation of non-formal education programme (Bayraktas 1979; Apel and Comozzi 1996).

Within the present society in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria, unlike the situation some decades ago, there are variations in academic and socio-economic status of women, which make it more complex to make generalizations on their behaviour with this situation at hand. Experts in designing non-formal education programmes must not lose sight of the varying and one word prevailing status of women in Nsukka, Nigeria. Hence the rationale for this study.

Statement of the Problem

There is an urgent need for women to be educated through non-formal education programme in Enugu State since it is one of the best ways for narrowing the gap between development of the necessary skills so that the women can make use of the technological ways to further their political, social and economic development process for them to be fully empowered and self-fulfilled, self-sufficient and self-actualized.

The paucity of non-formal education programmes among the women can affect their participation in national politics or cause low income earning capacity, derail of credit facilities or negatively influence their right to landed property and exercise power

to be involved in family decision making. Despite all the contributions of the individuals, governments and non-governmental organizations to help actualize the aims and objectives of non-formal education programme towards empowering women, it has proved abortive. Most women still lack the skills that would enable them to earn a meaningful living. It is on this premix that the research examined non-formal education as an instrument for empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to examine non-formal education as an instrument for empowering women in Enugu State of Nigeria.

Specifically, the study was designed to examine:

1. The role of non-formal education in empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria, through non-formal education programming.
2. The planning strategies needed for empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria through non-formal education programme.
3. The implementation strategies for effective administration of non-formal education towards empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria.
4. The supervisory practices that could be used by adult educators to empower women, through non-formal education in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Scope of the Study

The study was limited to non-formal education as an instrument for empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria. It also focused on the various participation, planning, implementation and supervision for ensuring proper non-formal education programme for empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research question guided the study:

1. What is the role of non-formal education in empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria?
2. What are the planning strategies needed for empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria, through non-formal education?
3. What are the implementation strategies for effective administration of non-formal education towards empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria?
4. What supervisory practices can be used by adult educators to empower women through non-formal education programmes in Enugu State, Nigeria?

Design of the Study

This study adapted survey research design. Survey aims at collecting data, and describing it in a systematic manner, the characteristic features of facts about a given population (Nworgu, 1991). It is a survey because women responses were collected in order to identify their needs for non-formal education programme in Enugu, Nigeria.

Area of the Study

This study was conducted in Enugu State of Nigeria. Enugu State is one of the thirty-six (36) States of Nigeria. It has six educational zones: Udi, Enugu, Awgu, Agbani, Obollo

and Nsukka. Due to the enormous nature of the population involved, the six zones could not be used. Since it is a survey research two out of the six zones, representing 33.3% were used for the study. Using simple random sampling technique (Balloting), two zones were selected – Udi and Nsukka zones. The two are located at the central part and North-western part of the state.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all the women in autonomous communities in Enugu State found in the registered women groups.

In Enugu State, there are 396 autonomous communities in 17 Local Government Areas.

Table 1: Distribution of Autonomous Communities Zones of Enugu State

S/N	Education zones	No. of L.G.A's	No. of Autonomous communities
1	Nsukka	3	74
2	Enugu	3	21
3	Agwu	3	74
4	Udi	2	71
5	Agbani	2	67
6	Obollo	4	87
	Total	17	396

Table above shows the distribution of education zones and communities for the study.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The researcher used simple random sampling to draw out of the six educational zones in the state the two used for the study. They are udi and Nsukka. Nsukka is made up of three (3) L.G.A's Igbo-Etiti, Nsukka and Uzouwani, while Udi is made up of two (2) L.G.A's: Ezeagu, Awgu and Udi. Out of the 74 and 71 autonomous communities in Nsukka and Udi respectively, 10% of each of these were sampled randomly for the study of give six (6) autonomous communities as shown in the table z below.

Table 2: Distribution of Autonomous Communities by L.G.A's Selected for the Study.

Education zones	No. of L.G.A's	No. of Autonomous communities	Study sample representing 10% of the population
Nsukka	3	74	3

Udi	2	71	3
Total	5	145	6

Table 3 below shows the number of registered women groups in each of the selected autonomous communities.

Sample of autonomous communities	No. of women groups	Total no of members	25% of samples of the members
Ukehe	5	597	149
Lejja	5	240	60
Ekwegbe	6	237	59
Abor	4	260	68
Okpatu	6	670	168
Egede	9	1,196	299
Total	35	3,200	800

Following the recommendation by Nwani (1991), 25% of the registered women groups were again drawn using random sampling technique to give a total of 35 women groups. Again 25% of the total women in all the groups in each autonomous community were selected to yield a total of 800 women for the study shown in Table 3 above.

Instrument for Data Collection

The research instrument for the study is a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was organized on a four point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A), Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD).

There were two parts in the instrument part A sought to collect personal data such as the sex of the respondents. Part B which has sixteen items was arranged in four clusters to elicit information from participants on their level of non-formal education towards empowering women in Enugu State, the planning strategies needed for empowering women in Enugu State through non-formal education programme, the implementation strategies for empowering women in Enugu State, and the supervisory practices that can be used by adult educators to empower women through non-formal education programmes.

Validation of the Instrument

Copies of the questionnaires were presented first to other colleagues and to experts in educational research for scrutiny and vetting.

Trial Testing

The instrument was further subjected to trial testing using women who are involved in adult and non-formal education programme in Awka, Anambra State. Their copies were not used in the study.

Construct-Validation

Their responses were collected and analyzed to determine the reliability of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

Internal consistency and reliability were estimated using Cronbach Alpha methods for section "A" and "B"; the coefficients were 0.56 for section "A", 0.46 for section "B" and 0.60 for the overall instrument.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher administered 800 copies of the questionnaire to the respondents on their meeting day. At the end of the administration, 780 copies of the instrument were collected accounting for 97.5% return rate. The essence of administering the instrument personally was to make clarifications on the items if the need arises. This reduced avoidable errors that could have occurred in the process of the respondents filling the responses to the items in the questionnaire.

Method of Data Analysis

The researcher used mean score in analyzing the data collected. The cut-off point for accepting any item is 2.50. Any item from 2.50 and above represents Agreed. While the mean score of an item below 2.50 indicates that the respondents disagreed with the item.

Research Question One

What is Non-formal Education Programme in empowering women in Enugu State, Nigeria?

Table 4: Mean Ratings (X) and the Standard Deviation (s) level of Non-formal Education programme in empowering women in Enugu State.

S/N	Role of Non-formal Education Programme in Empowering Women in Enugu State.	X	S	Interpretation
1	Women require skills before joining non-formal education programme	2.00	.59	Disagree
2	Non-formal education programme affects women decision-making as far as education is concerned.	3.13	.99	Agree
3	Women are not required to engage in discussion about non-formal education programme	2.02	.56	Disagree
4	Only young women are required to take	2.04	.51	Disagree

	part in teaching non-formal education programme			
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Table 4 shows that out of the four items on role of non-formal education programme in empowering women in Enugu State, three disagreed with the mean rating of 2.00, 2.02 and 2.04. This implies that empowering women in Enugu State through non-formal education does not require skills for the women to join; it does not require women to engage in discussion about non-formal education and finally it does not allow only young women to take part in teaching of non-formal education programme. Only one was agreed on as shown by the mean rating of 3.13. This implies that non-formal education programme affects women decision making as far as education is concerned.

Research Question Two

What are the planning strategies needed for empowering women in Enugu State through non-formal education programme?

Table 5: Mean Rating (x) and Standard Deviation (s) of planning strategies needed for empowering women in Enugu State through non-formal education programme.

S/N	Planning Strategies Needed for Empowering Women through Non-Formal Education Programme	X	S	Interpretation
5	Organizing evening classes to improve women through non-formal education programme	3.05	1.05	Agree
6	Mounting campaigns to acquaint women with non-formal education programme.	3.09	1.11	Agree
7	Using women's need in setting goals and objectives of non-formal education programme	2.22	1.15	Disagree
8	Providing more learning centres for non-formal education programme.	2.97	1.14	Agree

The analysis on Table 5 shows the responses of women on the planning strategies needed for empowering women in Enugu State through non-formal education programme. The table indicates that items 8, 6, and 5 have their mean ratings ranging from 2.97, 3.05 and 3.09 respectively while item 7 has the mean rating of 2.22.

A summary of the above table shows that women agree to the fact the provision of more learning centres for non-formal education, mounting campaigns to acquaint women with non-formal education and organizing evening classes in order to be really empowered as helpful they did not agree with using women need only in setting goals and objectives of non-formal education programme.

Research Question Three

What are the strategies for effective administration of non-formal toward empowering women in Enugu State?

Table 6: Mean Rating (x) and Standard Deviation (s) of implementation strategies for Effective Administration of non-formal Education towards empowering women in Enugu State.

S/N	Implementation Strategies for Effective Administration of Non-formal Education towards Women in Enugu State.	X	S	Interpretation
9	Establishing education institution for training/implementation of planned strategies for enhancing women knowledge.	2.63	1.35	Agree
10	Sourcing for funds for payment of adult educators.	2.65	1.22	Agree
11	Conducting seminars/workshops for women on non-formal education programme.	2.59	1.20	Agree
12	Using supervisory control of check women activities as far as non-formal education is concerned.	2.16	1.21	Disagree

Table 6 shows that three of the implementation strategies for effective administration of non-formal education programme towards empowering women in Enugu state were agreed on by the respondents with the mean ratings of 2.63, 2.65 and 2.59 respectively. This implies that establishing educational institutional for training/implementation of planning strategies for enhancing women knowledge, sourcing of funds for payments of adult educators and conducting seminars/workshops for women on non-formal education programme would have a positive impact on the women through non-formal education while one item was not agreed on, as shown by the mean rating of 2.16. This implies that the women do not require supervisory control to check their activities as far as non-formal education programme is concerned.

Research Question Four

What Supervisory practices can be used by adult educators to empower women through non-formal education programme?

Table 7: Mean Rating (X) and Standard Deviation (S) of supervisory practices that can be used by Adult Education to Empower women through Non-formal Education programmes.

S/N	Supervising practices for Empowering Women through Non-formal Education	X	S	Interpretation
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13	Women should be involved in supervision of non-formal education programmes	3.03	1.20	Agree
14	More supervisors (both men and women) are needed for effective supervision of non-formal education programmes	2.99	1.13	Agree
15	All aspects of non-formal education programme require time to time supervision.	3.14	1.11	Agree
16	The adult educators should be involved in the supervision of non-formal education programme.	2.86	1.06	Agree

Table 7 shows that all the supervisory practices listed for adult educators to empower women through non-formal education were agreed on by the respondents. This is because the mean rating for the four items are 3.03, 2.99, 3.14 and 2.86 respectively. This implies that women should be involved in the supervision of non-formal education programme, that more supervisors (both men and women) are needed for effective supervision on non-formal education programme, that all aspects of non-formal education programme requires time to time supervision and that adult education should be involved in supervision of non-formal education programme.

Summary of the Findings

The following constitutes a summary of the results of this study:

1. The women in Enugu State do not require any skill to join, discuss or allow only the younger ones in order to partake in non-formal education programme.
2. There was significant difference between the mean ratings of women on the planning strategies needed for empowering women in Enugu State through non-formal education programme.
3. To empower women through non-formal education programme, direct establishment of education institutions for training/implementation is required.
4. The women need to be involved in all the listed supervisory practices above to be empowered through non-formal education programme.

Discussion of Findings

The result of research question one shows that of the four identified items on the role of non-formal education programme towards empowering women in Enugu State, the women did not agree that they should engage in any form of non-formal education/discussion before they could be empowered; also they did not agree that only the young women should be taught the non-formal education programme. The women agreed that their decision making is affected by non-formal education programme and this agrees with the assertion of Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy on Education (1981) that non-formal education programme is voluntary, and brings about changes in human behaviour which at the end empowers the women to be self-reliant,

self-sustained and self-fulfilled. Tomasevski (2001) also agreed that non-formal education is the most viable and inevitable instrument for inculcating the right values, attitudes, skills, abilities and competencies in order for the women to contribute to the development of larger society. Neal and Joy (1994) crowed it all, when they agreed that non-formal education is the only instrument for achieving the lasting legacy of a permanent change in attitude and behaviour from generation to another generation. The result of research question two reveals that many planning strategies need to be put in place to improve and empower women in Enugu State, through non-formal education programme. Some of these strategies include:

Organizing evening classes to improve women through non-formal education programme of these strategies include:

- ❖ Organizing evening classes to improve women through non-formal education programme.
- ❖ Mounting campaigns to acquaint women with non-formal education programme.
- ❖ Providing more learning centres for non-formal education programme (Tomasevski, 2001). These strategies are aimed at inculcating in the minds of the women the right knowledge and attitude for them to be fully empowered to participate in the country's socioeconomic and political growth and thereby improve their status in society.

The result of research question three reveals that women in Enugu State showed high positive knowledge that educational institutions for training/ implementation for planned strategies for enhancing women, that sourcing of funds for payments of adult educations and that conducting seminars/workshops had a positive impact of women as far as their empowerment is concerned. Sadik (1993) recognized the fact that women are the key to the management of many systems in society. As such, any planned action directed to promote these systems in a society should attract the cooperation and involvement of women towards their fulfillment – empowerment. Obi (1993) equally contended that without education, which comes in the form of training, workshops, seminars, non-formal education programmes, the women will be resistant to innovations, as was the case with grassroots women development organization which initially resisted new farming techniques introduced by Imo State Agricultural Development Authority, until they were educated on the possible benefits associated with the new farming techniques.

The result of research question four shows that the four items on supervisory practices to be used by adult educations to empower women through non-formal education were all agreed to by the women. They agreed that women should be involved in the supervision of non-formal education programmes and that more supervisors (both men and women) are needed for effective supervision of non-formal education programme. They equally agreed that all aspects of non-formal education programmes require time-to-time supervision for effectiveness and full achievement and that adult educators should be involved in the supervision of non-formal education, because no nation or individual can rise above its teachers. Anyakoha and Igboeli (1993) are of the view that women given all the necessary supervision, would be enabled to acquire all

education to succeed and participate fully and contribute their quota in society and community in which they live.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of this research:

1. Empowering women motivates women towards achieving better standards.
2. Efforts should be made by various governments and organizations to recruit more qualified staff especially graduates of adult and non-formal education for effective supervision, implementation of the various adult and non-formal education programmes directed to women.
3. Every community should be made to be actively involved in the organization of adult and non-formal education programme, by State or Federal government through community efforts.
4. Women programmes should be developed to train in business and health (particularly child care).
5. Adequate materials should be provided for tutors of adult and non-formal education programmes by employers and local government authority to help the women to be fully empowered.
6. Allocation of Federal, State and Local Government should be made regular to help the government to identify adequate measure of implementing women programme in future.
7. Organizers and supervisors of adult and non-formal education programmes should have more access to various ways of improving supervision programme and time for effective and prompt actions for more success.

Conclusion

Non-formal education is a productive human development investment. If non-formal education is used very effectively and efficiently, it will enable the women to be self-reliant, self-sufficient and self-fulfilled in their various localities and to larger society.

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