

## REAPPRAISING ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR VOCATIONAL CAREER GUIDANCE

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### **Abstract**

Many education policies of various governments in Africa are unable to help young and adult learners participating in adult education programmes prepare for the “realities of life.” The purpose of this paper is to make us understand that education should be more concerned about the total development of an individual’s life. A variety of social, economic, educational and vocational factors underscore the critical need for vocational career guidance in Adult and Non-Formal Education sector. This paper therefore examines the need for education to be concerned with the quality of human life, including the vocational development needs of individual career guidance perform in assisting adults to make good choices of vocational careers which they have to contend with throughout their lifetime. The consequences of a vocational career choice are too great to be left to chance. The paper recommended that vocational career guidance and counseling in Adult and Non-Formal Education should be given enough attention.

As a result of ignorance and limited knowledge of the meaning of adult education, its principles and practice people are not aware of the many educational programmes which falls within the realm of adult education and which the adult participates in. UNESCO (1976) definition of adult education enunciated at the Nairobi conference states that adult education denotes the entire body of organized educational process whatever the content, level and method, whether formal otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges or universities as well as apprenticeship,

persons regarded as adults in the society in which they belong, develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical and professional qualifications and bring about changes in their attitude or behavior in the fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development (Imhabekhai, 2009)

Honle cite in Oduaran (1991) define Adult Education very briefly as the process by which men and women (alone, in groups, or institutions settings). Seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skill, knowledge or their sensitivities: any process by which individuals or groups or institutions try to make men and women improve in these ways.

Non Formal Education involves out of school education for illiterate members of the society, unemployed youth, civic education for men and women to enable them play the various roles assigned to them by their society. In the words of Okedara and Browan (1981),

The rubric of Non-formal Education covers training and institutions outside the formal school system and ranges from individualized apprenticeship to nature-on-wide literacy. It may be vocational such as staff training centers in Nigeria designed to improve employment opportunities for young school leavers and for other unemployed persons or girl’s vocation centers established in many African countries which train girls in vocational skills and prepare young women for marriage and business.

Non-Formal education programmes is basically voluntary. Participants in the

programme come to such programmes because they have some personal or social needs they want to satisfy. This type of education can be directed towards providing the participants who are unemployed with employable skills and the provision of on-the-job training for workers.

There is this erroneous impression that adults “because of their age and experience” do not require vocational career guidance. People with this view should be counseled to make them realize that education is a lifelong activity and that there is nobody who does not require to be guided in career or vocation.

### **Choice of Vocational Career**

Career is general work description that often includes vocation, profession and even occupation. It is a sequence of occupations, job and positions throughout a person’s working life according to Wrenn (2005, p. 105). Vocation means commitment, a sense of purpose for the total activity of one’s life and that occupational choice is part of the larger vocational purpose, in recent decades, there has been growing interest in the interrelationship between occupational aspiration vocational development and career choice. More importantly the focus research has been on the factors that tend to move an individual towards occupation. The choice of a vocational career is one of the most important decisions an individual makes in his life. Choice exists because a number of many other conflicting attracting alternatives exist for the people to choose from and the decision to choose one particular vocational career is influenced by many factors. A vocational career choice is a decision that affects the total life of an individual a career is not something that last for a short time but a lifelong experience it makes it more expedient that the choice of a career should be made after careful consideration.

A vocational career influences a man’s choice of life partner, his social status, his economic associations, his political

advancements and above all the progress of his children. When a man is in a respectable and prosperous career his entire household becomes prosperous and vice-versa.

It is the importance of a career in one’s life that has necessitated the desire to plan the choice. Planning your career means a lot of decisions about the sort of life you see yourself living in the future, decision on the sort of work you would like to do, and the sort of work you will be good at (Voskeh in Imhabekhiah 1992) consequent upon the strategic importance of a vocational career in one’s life the individual needs to be guided and counselled in making a wise choice. The way to develop and mobilize human resources for economic progress is to guide each generation into the various fields which must work together in harmony to bring greater material comfort to the people (Voskeh in Imhabekhai 1992)

### **The Process of Career Development in Adult and Non-Formal Education**

Probably the most basic role of vocational guidance in adult education is to encourage adult learners to grow and realize their full potential. This aims rest on the assumption that each person is capable of utilizing his/her abilities to the fullest if given opportunities to grow and realize his/her full potential. This fully utilize his/her full abilities on completing his/her education to engage in jobs that is commensurate with his/her abilities and interests in other words the schools responsibility is to assist the individual to formulate realistic and realizable career goals. In order to do this the school personnel, and in particular the counselor, needs an understanding of the various stages of career development and be ready and willing to communicate the appreciation of the same to the individual student. Knowledge of the stages through which each individual career goes to help the counsellor and the student to integrate the latter’s education with his future life goal.

Understanding the nature of career development also helps the counsellor to assist the adult learner, plan the latter's life, career goal and dealing with occasional career crises that may occur.

### **Need for Vocational Guidance in Adult and Non-Formal Education Programmes**

Unemployment, on one hand and relative man-power shortage as well as utilization in certain occupational areas on the other hand are the diametrically opposed problems which have been claimed, Napier cited in Omoyinbo (2006) as constituting the most pressing problems of developing nations. The research study findings by Okon (1999) and Olayinka (2000) have revealed major sources of these unemployment problems. In general it has been noted that young Nigerian secondary graduates encounter difficulty in making the necessary transition from school to work because they lack relevant information about occupation. Vocational guidance in Adult and Non-Formal Education is of value to the instructors who can be equipped with the necessary skills and how to collect, analyze and interpret and present relevant information about occupation to the adult learners. Through a school's programme of vocational guidance instructors and administrators can be assisted to understand their students and in turn help the latter develop better understanding among themselves, the entire school education programme, and the world of work as well as the relationship between transitions from school to work. After all teachers who helped to understand about themselves, the entire school education programme and the world of work. After all teachers who helped to understand their clients are more likely to have positive clues for making a better teacher-learning situation. Adult learner need various career planning programmes which must stress values, interest, skill, information, gathering and decision making. They need

general orientation to the world of work through the curriculum.

Vocational career guidance in most cases has been limited to secondary schools. Even here, in spite of the strategies role which career guidance services plays in the new national policy on education the 6-3-3-4 system of education, not much progress has been made in developing career guidance. That vocational career guidance is very important in vocational educational programmes cannot be overemphasized. Vocational career guidance cannot be viewed as a service meant for students in secondary schools or university only. It is a service that should permeate every educational level (Aloa 1982).

Vocational career guidance is very important in Adult Education particularly in vocational education refers to:

Systematic learning experiences which are design to fit individuals for gainful employment in recognized occupations as semi-skilled worker or technician or sub-professionals. It includes preparation for employment in any occupation for which specialized education is required for there is social need and which can most appropriately be acquired in socials (Osuala cited in Igbinosun 2004)

In the view of Imhabekhai (2009) any job which is utilitarian in nature and possess the following characteristics will be classified as an occupation within the realm of vocational education:

- (i) The training environment is the working environment itself or replica of the working environment.
- (ii) The training jobs are carried on in the same way as in the occupation itself.
- (iii) The trainee is trained specially in the manipulating habits and thinking habits required in the occupation itself.
- (iv) The training helps the trainee to capitalize his interest and abilities to the highest possible degree.

- (v) The training is given to those who need it, want it and can profit from it.
- (vi) Adequate repetitive training in experiences from the occupation forces right habits of doing and thinking to the degree necessary for employment.
- (vii) The instructor is himself a master of the skills and knowledge he teaches.
- (viii) Training is carried out to the extent where it gives the trainee a productive ability with which he can secure employment or hold employment.
- (ix) Training meets market demands for labour.
- (x) Training is given on actual jobs and not in exercises or pseudo jobs.
- (xi) The content of the training which is taught is obtained from masters of the occupation.

#### **The Necessity for Vocational Development in Adult Education**

Vocational education covers two broad spectrums which include:

- (a) Pre-employment education.
- (b) Training-on and off-the-job.

Pre-employment vocational education is prospective and is designed to prepare the individual for the future by providing him with requisite attitude, knowledge and skills for a particular vocation either in wage employment or in self employment. Training-on-the-job and off-the-job involves a sort of training provided for workers already in employment to empower them the skills needed by the job they perform.

Work environment involves adult and Adults by their nature have certain peculiar characteristics and interests. These characteristics include physiological changes, social roles, political roles, economic roles, value system and pattern of behavior there is a decline in muscular coordination especially where the

muscles have not been toned up for the particular exercise or vocation. In some cases, as a result of long usage of some organs deterioration may also occur. Where these physiological processes are in decline the adults should be counselled on what to do to avoid a state of frustration and where necessary to eke another profitable sources of learning a livelihood.

Adults perform a number of social roles which require them to show high sense of maturity and responsibility. They perform the role of parents and member of various social organizations like religious groups, leadership and membership of social committees. Their abilities to perform the roles effectively guarantee a sense of achievement and self-fulfillment. It is therefore necessary to provide the adults with guidance and counselling services to enable them perform their social function effectively.

Adult have developed very rigid personality unlike the personality of children which is still in the progress of formation and therefore quite flexible. The rigid personality of the adult makes him less able to changes his value system even when changes occur in his environment and experience. The adults therefore need to be given adequate vocational career that will enable them make necessary adjustment and achieve greater happiness in their life.

The adult populace constitute the pivot on which the economic development of any nation revolves. The adult provides the essential manpower required for economic progress. According to Voskeh (1990), it is well recognized that the enduring advancement of a country is determined to a large degree by all the homogenous development of its human resources and work force. The various skills required for economic development can only be developed through adequate training in vocational education. This will enable adult to develop his potentials and contribute meaningfully to the economic progress of the Nation.

As a result of economic predicaments Nigeria today, a number of workers are being retrenched daily. This is consequent upon the inability of employees to contribute meaningfully to the production process in the enterprise any longer. The consequences of retrenchment to the affected workers, his family, his society and the economic in general are numerous and devastating. Vocational career guidance will go a long way in exploring the potentialities of the workers with a view to retraining them or renew their skills relevant to the need of the industry rather than get them retrenched as a result of redundancy.

In Nigeria today, vocational career guidance has become more relevant in the face of increasing rate of unemployment. There is an army of unemployment able and willing young men and women in spite of the death of skilled power in the aspects of labour marked. Vocational career guidance will help these group of unemployed men and women to identify those skills which are high in demand, obtain the necessary information regarding entrance into such vocational careers prospect, condition of work, the aptitude required for the job social rating, legality and other necessary information that will help to make a good and favorable decision before choosing or entering into many particular vocational career. It is customary for youths to set achievement goals for themselves and as soon as they notice the approach of old age, they measure their achievement using the age parameter they have realized that the social attitude toward those who show physical signs of aging are unfavourable and that they must achieved their goals before the social groups place any obstacle on their way anxiety and frustration set in. To be able to realize their ambition and set goals, they should be given vocational career guidance services. This will remove the likelihood of frustration arising from their inability to achieve their goals.

Every adult of the society must be given opportunity to work and be gainfully employed and to contribute his quota to the overall development of the nation. Gainfully employed is rewarding both to the individual and to his society.

### **Conclusion**

Activities that foster career development of individuals make career guidance programme. Career guidance activities should be viewed as a consequent series of experiences which begins in the primary school and continues periodically through the explorative years of junior secondary school and into adulthood.

The very nature of adults and the role play in their various communities demand that they must be adequately developed and provided with necessary attitude, knowledge and skills relevant to the roles they play. They need adequate vocational career guidance to enable them make the right choice of a rewarding vocational career which will sustain them throughout their life time. Such vocational career should be seen as a safe for instance an adult who is not emotionally stable whose muscular dexterity and coordinate are not accurate should not take to a vocational career in automation. Those who suffer decline in visual acuity should be counselled to find solutions to their predicaments before getting involved in vocational careers like driving, sewing or watch repairing etc. in other for career guidance to achieve its purposes at various educational levels there is need for active students, staff members, administrators, parents, counselors, community leaders and government involvement in the school programmes. There is also a great need for in-service workshops, seminars, and conferences to help stimulate personal and professional growth among the staff members.

**Recommendations**

- (1) Vocational career guidance and counseling in Adult and Non-Formal Education should be given enough attention.
- (2) Every adult member of the society should be given opportunity to work and to be gainfully employed in order to contribute his or her quota to the overall development of the nation.

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