

ADULT EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT- A KEY TO JOB CREATION

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Abstract

Adult Education is a veritable key to employment and of creation as it equips the individual with knowledge, skills and attitudes. Kanu (2009) and Ali Momoh (2008) have stressed the need for adult education and vocational training for job creation. Ebohon (2008) on the other hand examined problems faced by Western education which produced a generation of Nigerians with education but not marketable skills for employment. This paper examines the role of adult education in job creation. Recommendations are made to help redress the identified problems.

Introduction

According to Verner (1964), adult education is a relationship between an educational agent and a learner in which the agent selects, arranges and continuously directs a sequence of progressive tasks that provide systematic experience to achieve learning for those whose participation in such activities is subsidiary and supplementary to a primary productive role in society.

Similarly, Prosser (1967) holds the view that adult education is concerned primarily with the dissemination of knowledge, the teaching of the mind in

objective reasoning and the teaching of skills to enable the individual fulfill himself and play a full part in development of the society to which he belongs. In the same vein, UNESCO (1976) defined adult education as “the body of organized educational process, whatever the level and method – whereby persons, regarded as adults enrich their knowledge, improve their professional qualifications and bring about changes of full social, economic and cultural development”. Thus, in many ways, adult education might be regarded as the relevant education of persons regarded as adults by the communities to which they

belong. Adult education does not mean literacy alone. It is more than literacy or remedial education to 'fill gaps'. It is something that people need and want as long as they live, regardless of the amount of their previous education. It must therefore be an integral part of any modern country's educational system.

Adult education is concerned not with preparing people for life only, but rather with helping people live more successfully. It assists adults to increase their competence and helps them to solve personal and community problems. Through adult education, an individual no longer deprived of knowledge, enlightenment, recreation and contact with the wider world. He discovers pleasure in a new world of knowledge. It brings personal respect and feeling of fulfillment and contentment. The celebration of the International Literacy year in 1990 brought into sharp focus the need to strengthen the campaign against illiteracy.

From the fore-goings, it is clear that the need for adult education as a strong instrument and catalyst for eradicating illiteracy cannot be over emphasized. This forms the focal point of this study against the backdrop of nearly 50% illiteracy rate in Nigeria and the damaging effects of widespread examination malpractices, under funding of adult education programmes, and failure of many literacy programmes in Nigeria.

Functional adult education in Nigeria will help to guarantee job creation, poverty reduction and crime control. This paper examines the role of Adult Education on job creation.

Definition of Terms

a. Adult

An adult is a person who has assumed (whether by his choice or not) some kind of responsibility for self and perhaps, for others and some degree of independence of parental authority and characteristic to the same degree of adolescents (New England Board of Higher Education, 1965). Thus, adult must be:

- i. Physiologically independent
- ii. Economically independent
- iii. Socially responsible
- v. A spouse, a parent or an active citizen
- vi. Aged above 18 years as in Nigeria

b. Education

Education is the process of transmission of and commitment to a body of knowledge, skills and attitudes which naturally should lead to a change in behavior, Jarvis (1986), defined education as "any planned series of incidents, having humanistic basis, directed towards the participant's learning and understanding". From the above, education implies the transmission of what is worthwhile to those committed to it. It involves knowledge, understanding, skills and vocational training which will help the individual and facilitate his contribution to his/her society economically, culturally, socially and politically.

c. Adult Education

Adult education is the kind of venture that is expected to be undertaken by those who need to catch up on their formal education or who need to use their leisure purposefully or who need to upgrade their skills and knowledge in the face of changing technology.

Aims of Adult Education

Eduwen (1997) opined that the essential aim of adult education is to help man to integrate fully into the society in which he lives and become a functional self – reliant being. According to the general conferences of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) held in 1976, the aims of adult education should be to contribute to:

- a. Promoting work for peace, international understanding and cooperation
- b. Developing a critical understanding of major contemporary problems and social changes and the ability to play an active part in the progress of society with a view to achieving social justice
- c. Promoting increased relationship between physical and cultural awareness of the people and their environment
- d. Creating an understanding and respect for the diversity of customs and cultures on both the national and international levels
- e. Promoting increased awareness of and giving effect to various forms of communication and solidarity at the family, local, national and international levels
- f. Developing the aptitude for acquiring either individually or in groups, or in the context of organized study in educational establishments specially set up for this purpose, new knowledge, qualifications, attitudes or forms of behavior conducive to the full maturity of the personality.
- g. Ensuring the individual's conscious and effective incorporation into working life by providing men and women with an advanced technical and vocational education and developing the ability to create new material goods and new spiritual or aesthetic values.
- h. Developing the ability to grasp adequately the problems involved in the upbringing of children
- i. Developing the attitude for making creative use of leisure and for acquiring any necessary or desired knowledge
- j. Developing the necessary discernment in using mass communication media, in particular radio, television, cinema and the press and interpreting the various addressed to modern men and women by society.
- k. Developing the aptitude for learning to learn

Importance of Adult Education

The need to make an individual learned, informed and enlightened is now felt by all persons, government and institutions in Nigeria. According to Akinpelu (2000), the greater the educational training of adults and workers, the greater the economic and social growth and development of the country. Education develops the qualifications and skills needed in a country's work force thereby promoting economic growth. This is in line with the Nigerian National Policy on Education which stresses that education is not only the greatest force that can be used to bring about redress, but it is the greatest investment that a nation can make for quick development of her economic resources. Since education is a life long process, workers, professionals and adult irrespective of their previous education and training, require more of it to update their knowledge, skills and attitudes in line with changes in information and communication technology.

In the same vein, Ogene (2000) affirmed that most developing countries of the world value education to a level where they look upon education as a panacea for all societal ills or a recipe for development. Thus, education is seen as a magic wand for rapid socio economic and infrastructural development. Ogumah (2001) emphasized the importance attached to education hence, it is single mindedly pursued vigorously in different parts of Nigeria and other parts of the world. He stressed that skills acquired through education raises the income level

of the individual as well as his social status and awareness. Education thus wipes out illiteracy, ignorance and poverty thereby making the individual liberated. This liberation helps the individual to contribute maximally to self development, capacity building and social growth. Osuyi (2001) concluded that education is imperative in modern times because of the ever-changing demands of the environment and technology. The only thing permanent in this modern "Global Village" is change. Education helps the individual to cope (adjust) with these modern changes hence, fit properly into present socio economic environment.

Impact of Education on Job Creation

Adult education has impact on job creation in the following ways:

1. Educated adults can create jobs for themselves
2. Adults who are educated can do better on their jobs
3. Educated adults can fit into new jobs better than illiterates
4. Adults who are educated can relate better with other people.
5. Educated adults can communicate better
6. Educated adults can keep better financial accounts and records than illiterates

Recommendations

1. The government, private individuals, non governmental organizations and communities should set up more viable and well equipped adult education centres.

2. Adult learners should be well motivated and stimulated for maximal benefits in Adult Education
3. Facilitators should be well trained on theory and practice of Adult Education.
4. Candidates who graduate from adult training schools should be given employment.
5. Loan should be made available to adults with marketable skills

Conclusion

This paper has carefully surveyed the practice of adult education in Nigeria. The role of adult education in job creation has been stressed while recommendations are made for improvement.

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