ANALYSIS OF HIE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS THAT IMPINGED ON THE DELIVERY OF UNICEF-ASSISTED MASS LITERACY AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

One of the major social problems confronting the educational sector in Anambra State is male drop-out of school. As part of the efforts to stem the tide of this monumental exit of youngsters from school to take up entrepreneurial or economic activities, the United Nations International Emergency Children Fund (UNICEF) came up with the adapted version of Regenerated Freirean Literacy and Non-Formal Education the (PRA/REFLECT) model in its intervention programmes. In order to ascertain the impact of the programme on the beneficiaries, the investigators examined the social and economic performance indications of the study. A multi- stage sampling technique was used to select 950 postliteracy learners in the six educational zones in the state. The sample is made up of 381 (40.11 percent) learners from UNICEF-assisted urban literacy centres and 569 (59.89 percent) learners from Unicef-assisted rural literacy centres. About 46.32 percent were males while 53.68 percent were females. An achievement test containing 50 items of life skills was used to collect data. The (stepwise) multiple regression(R) statistics was used to determine the composite and relative effects of the independent variable; basic literacy. Vocational education and health education on the dependent variables; participants' job performance abilities. The results show that both vocational education and health education could be used to predict participants' job performance abilities. Science and continuing education (extra-mural studies) could be used to predict participants' continuity in learning activities. Some social and economic factors that impinged on delivery of the programme were highlighted and suggestion were made for improvement.

Introduction

An analysis of the social and economic factors that impinged on the delivery of the United Nations International Emergency Children Fund (Unicef-assisted) mass literacy and non-formal education programme in Anambra state deserves to be undertaken for various reasons. First, it is desirable to determine the worth, that is, the socio-economic values of such an educational programme to the beneficiaries. These include the determination of the appropriateness or relevance of the programme with regards to meeting both the short and long term educational needs of the target population. Second, it is also important to ascertain the goodness-of-fit between curriculum and the training needs of rural women and the motivational factors that impinged on learners receptiveness.

Under different but related studies, some analysts (Adewale, 2007; Obashoro, 2004; Provus, 1973) argued that cost-benefit analysis of an educational programme is necessary to determine the impact of the programme on the participants and to identify different sources or areas of discrepancy between expectations (programme objectives) and performance outcome. This implies that cost- benefit analysis of an educational programme is required to determine cause and effect relationship through differentiation between tangible and intangible benefits. In other words, post-delivery analysis of an educational programme is an important function for providing justification of the value of the programme to employers, sponsors, the clientele or society. Lastly, it is imperative to find out how coherent or incoherent the various teaching methods and techniques applied by different development experts stimulate learners' participation and the sustainability of the programme.

As a quick reminder, information obtained from reliable sources, suggest that in recent years, Anambra State has experienced a- high rate of male drop-out- of school in preference for entrepreneurial or economic activities.

According to these sources, Onwudiwe (2007) and Anadi (2000), the drop-out rate between boys and girls was estimated to be in the ratio of 8:3 in the primary schools, while in the secondary schools, the rate of drop-out was in the ratio of 17:15 between males and females. This problem is further compounded by misplaced or wrong value system, ignorance, lack of employable skills, poor management of schools, poor curriculum inadequate or non-existent teaching and learning materials. There is no doubt that the enormity of these problems provoked Unicef-assisted mass literacy and non-formal education intervention programmes.

In the quest to meet the learning needs of out-of-school youth and adults that missed the initial opportunity for formal school, Unicef-assisted programme officers with the assistance of Anambra State Agency for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (ASAMLANFE) and some non-governmental organizations identified six educational zones and established 32 Unicef- assisted literacy and non-formal education centres. While many of the educational centres were located in markets, primary schools, town halls, abbatoirs and technical workshops, data gathered from the reports of two previous studies, Onwudiwe (2007) and Anadi (2000) reveal that between year 2000-2007 about 45, 500 persons were trained in various occupational, vocational and technical fields. This figure comprised about 1342 graduates of adult basic education or basic literacy studies as well as about 3583 graduates of continuing, remedial and distance education programmes. Within the context of this vision, Unicef-assisted programme. Officers adapted the Regenerated Freirean literacy Model (PRA/REFLECT) taking a clue from the experiences of Tanzania in Bhalalisesa (2004) and El-salvador in Mamoon (2004) where non-formal education programmes in the form of adult basic education, (basic literacy), continuing education remedial education, distance education including correspondence education, workers education, health education, environmental sanitation and hygiene were used to tap the creative energies of rural dwellers for increased productivity and employment. An elated graduate of basic literacy programme in one of the non - formal education centres reacted thus:

Knowledge is a pre-requisite for self-determination and self-realization. Being able to read and write allows people to assert individual rights apd participate in society.

On the goodness-of-fit between curriculum and training needs of rural women, skill-based literacy and continuing education programmes covered such issues such as health, nutrition, population control, family planning, fertility and right age of marriage, parenting style, inter-spouse communication, women empowerment, reproductive health and reproductive rights. Other areas of emphasis were agricultural and extension services, the environment, science and technology.

As mentioned elsewhere, teaching methods and techniques constitute part of the major setbacks to learners' internalizing problem solving skills. As observed majority of the volunteer instructors still rely on the traditional methods of teaching which disproportionately failed to maximize the use of classroom resources to promote effective and efficient learning experiences. Even though Unicef evolved an integrated community-based approach in its rural development intervention programmes to stimulate the creative abilities of the participants of the programmes, observable trends show that the delivery of non-formal education programmes was hampered by more serious difficulties, the most prominent among which are the dearth of skilled, innovative and knowledgeable facilitators capable of leading participants in critically analyzing problems and the absence of experts equipped with capacity for writing project proposals. Also linked to these problems are the issues of poor funding, lack of follow up activities and lack of sustainability of the programmes.

The Problem

It should, however, be noted that since the introduction of these various programmes, there has not been little or no systematized empirical study to assess the effectiveness of the programmes. The present study's major concern therefore, was to assess the effectiveness of the programmes from the performances of the learners so that appropriate actions can be taken to improve and re-strategize service delivery in intervention programmes. Oil the stated problem, achievement test was carried out in all the Unicef-assisted literacy aiid non-formal education focused centres in the state.

Research Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses (H_{0}) postulated for the study were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

- H_{o1} There is no statistically significant effect of the following variables; basic literacy, vocational education and health education on the job performance abilities of the graduates of Unicef-assisted mass literacy and non-formal education programmes.
- H_{o2} T here is no statistically significant effect of the following variables: agriculture and extension services continuing education (extra-mural studies) population education, science and technology in the career development of the graduates enrolled of the Unicef-assisted mass literacy and non-formal education programmes.

Methods

Sample and Sampling Technique

The study covered all the 32 Unicef-assisted literacy and non-formal education centres located in the six educational zones of the state. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used in the study. In each educational zone, three Unicef assisted literacy and non-formal education centres with identical characteristics were selected, (one centre was selected for the administration of the instruments. The total sample for the entire state was 950 post-literacy learners. This was made up of 381 (40.11 percent) learners from Unicef-

assisted urban literacy centres and 569 (59.89 percent) from Unicef - assisted rural literacy centres. The sample also consisted of 440 (46.32 percent) male learners and 510 (53.68 percent) female learners. The learners selected were between 10 and 60 years of age. These were made up of 219 (23.05 percent) learners of primary school age (10-12 years); 272 (28.63% percent) learners of secondary school age (12-18 years) while the rest of the learners were between 20 and 60 years old.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in the study tagged Unicef-Assisted Non-formal Education Achievement Test (Unicef-Assisted NFET) is made up of two sections A and B. It was adapted from the United Nation's Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Dhaka, (2002) Training manual on Competency. Based Learning Assessment. Section A solicited information on demographic variables like age, sex, learner's educational zone, Unicef-assisted centre location and so on. Section B contained 50 test items on four broad areas of life skills; literacy skills, functional skills, social skills and economic skills. For instance, in literacy skills, test items covered numeric and computational abilities, health, nutrition, population, agricultural techniques, the environment, science and technology, family life including fertility awareness. These test items were curriculum referenced to reflect the context of the training programmes. The test items were given to experts in test construction in the Institute of Education, University of Ibadan, Ibadan who established both the face and content validity of the test. A sample of 40 learners in a non-Unicef-assisted non-formal education centre (Opportunity Industrialization Centre (OIC), Gbagada Lagos) was used for the pilot testing. The test re-test yielded a reliability co-efficient of 0.82.

Administration of the Instrument

The researchers with the help of 10 research assistants personally administered the instrument directly to the learners in all the Unicef-assisted non-formal education study centres selected for test administration. The investigators distributed 950 test instruments and analysed all the 950 (100%) copies of the instruments received.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involved the use of stepwise multiple regression (backward procedure) statistics to determine the composite and relative effects of the independent variables (basic literacy, vocational education and health education) on the dependent variables (participants job performance abilities). On the other hand, multiple R was also used to examine the relationship between the independent variables (continuing education, population education, science and technology) and the dependent variables (career development).

Results

Hypothesis 1

H₀: There is no statistically significant effect of the following variables. Basic literacy, vocational education and health education on the job performance abilities of the graduate of Unicef- assisted mass literacy and non-formal education programmes.

Table 1: Regression of Summary Analysis of the Composite Effects of Basic Literacy and Non-
formal Education Programmes on ParticipantsOb performance abilities.

R	\mathbb{R}^2	Adjusted R ²	S.E	F-Ratio	Sig. F
0.86262	0.74412	0.74331	0.2497	917.01020	0.0000

* P<0.05 Df = 3,946

The independent variables (Basic literacy, vocational education and health education) put together correlate 0.86262 with dependent variables. Those variables also account for 74.41% of the variance of the dependent variable ($R^2 = 0.74412$). The R^2 of the variables is statistically significant (F=917-01020). **Table 2: Analysis of Variance**

	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean squares	
Regression	3	170.93509	56.97836	
Residual	946	58.77964	0.06213	

F= 917.01020; Sig. f= 0.0000

Table 3: Relative Effects of the Independent variables on Dependent variables

Independent variables	В	Se.B	Beta	Т	Sig* T
Basic literacy	-0.009263	.008916	.052760	-1.039	.2991
Vocational Education	.113855	0.10060	.2130740	11.317	.0000*
Health Education	305423	.022040	692714	-13.858	.0000*
(constant)	1.439051	.031365		45.881	.0000
* ' 'C' / / D. 0.0F					

* significant at P>0.05

It could be seen in table 3 that the partial correlation coefficient (B) for basic literacy has T- value which is statistically not significant (probability exceeds 0.05). In this case, basic literacy will not be entered into the equation because only the independent variable with significant T-value will significantly predict participants' job performance abilities in Unicef-assisted Non-formal education programmes (dependent variables).

Hypothesis 2 (Ho₂)

There is no statistically significant effect of the following variables: Agriculture and Extension services, Continuing Education (Extra-mural studies) population education, science and technology on the career development of the graduates of Unicef-assisted mass literacy and non- formal education programmes.

 Table 4: Regression Summary Analysis of the Composite Effects of Non-formal Education Programmes

 on Participants Career Development

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R	\mathbb{R}^2	Adjusted R'	S.E	F-Ratio	Sig. F
0.99272	0.98549	0.98541	0.05942	12822.24269	0.000
* D .0.05 DC	5011				

* P<0.05 Df = 5,944

Table 5: Analysis of Variance

	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean squares		
Regression	5	226.38140	45.276228		
Residual	944	3.33333	0.00353		
F= 12822.24269; Sig. f. 0.0000					

Table 6: Relative effects of independent variables on dependent variables

Variable	В	Se.B	Beta	Т	Sig. T
Agricultural and Extension services	-6.02328	.003753	-0.0000017	.859	.9520
Continuing education (Extra-mural' studies)	.666667	.015872	0.667941	42.003	.0000
Science	6.333333	.016720	.331940	19.937	.0000
Technology	-1.73404	.010772	0.0000016	.222	.9893
Constant	2.363184	.016814		.321	.9721

* Significant P<0.05

As shown in Table 4, agriculture and extension services, continuing education (extra-mural studies), population education, science and technology when taken together to predict career development in non-formal education yielded a coefficient of multiple regression (R) of 0.99272 and a multiple regression square (R^2) of 0.98541. The table also indicates that the analysis of variance for the multiple regression data for career development produced an f-ratio of 12822.24269 which is statistically significant at 0.05 level of confidence.

According to Table 6, it could be seen from the results that the partial correlation coefficient B for continuing education (extra-mural studies) and science that the two independent variables produced T-value which are statistically significant. In essence, the results in Table 6 clarified that continuing

education (extra-mural studies) and science could be used to predict career development in non-formal education programmes.

Discussion

The results of the study showed that vocational education and health education could be used to predict participants' job performance abilities. The statistically significant T-value of health education at 0.05 level of confidence shows that participants valued learning which made them gain knowledge about health and nutrition. These findings reflect the changes in job structure and labour market demand for educated and skilled workers. This assertion is supported by some scholars (Ojo- Ajibare and Obidiegwu, 2007; Akintayo and Oghene Kohwo, 2006; Semchenkow, 2004) who noted that the standards that were developed more than 15 years ago have become outdated and skill profiles do not meet the requirements of employers. With the re-design of jobs, vocational training has become part of a new system of social order with the particular goal of producing new types of specialists who will be competitive in the labour market as soon as they finish training.

The non-significant effect of basic literacy in participants' job performance abilities suggests some deficiencies in programme planning and incoherence of teaching methods applied by the different programme co-ordinators. The results demonstrated that even though the acquisition of basic literacy skills cannot be isolated as a factor for enhancing workers' job performance abilities, emphasis differs from context to context. The contribution also of basic literacy as a good predictor of work ability in non-formal education programes depends on the learning needs of the trainees and the expert knowledge of instructors and facilitators. It must be noted that in literacy sessions as it occurred in this situation, adults learn incrementally from the simple to the complex and move gradually to deeper concepts, knowledge, comprehension and application tasks.

The results also showed that participants who enrolled in extra-mural studies and science continued in learning. The reasons for these findings are not far-fetched because initial education and the background knowledge in science propelled the people with the ability and interest in acquiring knowledge to continue in learning. That is, participants who have genuine desire to acquire knowledge continue learning. This fact is apparently consistent with the views of Anderson (1991) that the factors which influence participants end of programme achievement and success in subsequent or future learning endeavours are contingent on human ingenuity and readiness to learn. Other factors adducible to the participants' continuation in learning include internal empowerment, role perception, diligence or motivation to hardwork and the physical health of the individual participants.

Recommendations and Conclusion

The study revealed that the almost complete lack of coordination of non-formal education (NFE) programmes stemmed from the fragmentation of NFE into discrete subjects such as preventive health care, environmental protection, literacy and agriculture. Many of the programmes conducted over brief periods of time for different target groups transferred basic skills or technical knowledge to limited clientele. The study also demonstrated that many donor funded programmes fail to continue once donor assistance is reduced or withdrawn. This programme was community-based, and hence its ownership was supposed to rest upon the community. Therefore, indigenes of the communities benefiting from government-supported or donor-assisted programmes need to take a more proactive role in social mobilization and advocacy. In terms of trained and skilled facilitators, efficient delivery of non-formal education programmes demands skilled, knowledgeable and innovative facilitators. Unfortunately in Anambra State, adult education activities continue to rely heavily on untrained volunteer facilitators, most of whom have low education attainments and on primary school teachers who have proved to be unsuited to working with adults. With the harsh economic realities and insufficient resources pervading throughout and into every part of the world, the government needs.to revive its commitment to the adult education sector.

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