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# The State of Adult Basic Education Programme Since the Implementation of Universal Basic Education Programme in Enugu State

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By

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## **Abstract**

*In order to achieve quality assurance in Adult Basic Education Programmes, which is a component of Universal Basic Education, the assessment of the programme so far becomes imperative. Three research questions were posed while one hypothesis was formulated and tested. The population of the study was four hundred and sixty-five (465) facilitators of Adult Basic Education programme while the sample was two hundred and fifty-nine (259) facilitators. A 26-item structured questionnaire was designed for data collection. The questionnaire was face-validated by two (2) experts in educational research method. Cronbach Alpha co-efficient estimate was used to establish the reliability before the administration to the respondents. Reliability co-efficient of 0.89 was obtained. The data collated were analyzed by computing and comparing the mean scores, and by the use of t-test for the hypothesis. The study showed that the motivational strategies that were employed in the programme are the use of participatory teaching-learning methods, and ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to the learners. However, the sources of funding for the programme is mainly through direct payment of fees by the learners. Also, there was low provision of supervision strategies, which include encouraging in-service training and seminars for facilitators. Finally, the study recommended among others, that government should improve on the incentives given to the administrators of Adult Basic Education.*

## **Introduction**

Education is fundamental to the life of both individuals and nations. It is also a requirement for effective functioning of individuals in any society. Obanya (2008) stated that education is a life-long process enabling people to learn in society, and be

able to live in it. It is a life-wide process by which people learn to adapt to the changing demands, which changing life circumstances dictate.

Since the advent of formal education in Nigeria in 1842, the Nigerian education system has undergone series of changes in order to give the best quality education to its citizens. The latest of the changes is the introduction of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in 1999. Mbachu (2009) regarded Universal Basic Education as a reform measure that aims at addressing inequality in educational opportunity at the basic level. Basic education is the foundation for sustainable life-long learning. It provides reading, writing and numeracy skills. It comprises a wide variety of formal and non-formal education activities and programmes designed to enable learners to acquire functional literacy. In the Nigerian context, Universal Basic Education includes Primary, Junior Secondary, Adult Literacy and Nomadic Education (Mbachu, 2009). The programme is intended to provide free, compulsory and qualitative education to all those concerned. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999: 10), the specific objectives of the scheme are to:

- i. develop in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion;
- ii. provide free, compulsory universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school going age;
- iii. reduce drastically drop-out rate from the formal school, system through improved relevance and efficiency;
- iv. cater for drop-outs and out-of-school children/adolescents through various forms of complimentary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education; and
- v. ensure the acquisition of the appropriate level of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and life skills (as well as the ethical, moral, and civic values) needed for laying the foundation for life-long learning.

Therefore, Adult Basic Education, being a component of Universal Basic Education, centres on the improvement of the knowledge, means and methods, which adults who are not in school or have not had the opportunity to go to school in their youth, use or can use in combining various skills they have so that they may become more productive members of the community as long as they live. Nzeneri (2008) regarded Adult Basic Education as the education organized by government or religious bodies to eradicate illiteracy and to assist the disadvantaged groups to acquire skills to make them employable and to help them perform their social roles effectively. Obanya (2004: 5) explained that the vision of Adult Basic Education programme encompasses:

- ❖ **Literacy:** Using reading and writing for reasoning, communication, exploring the world around us, full participation in societal life, and empowerment through the ability to make informal life choices.
- ❖ **Numeracy:** Mastering of numbers, numeration, computation and their applications to decisions and making an analytical reasoning.

**Life Skills:** Mastering of life challenges and the implementation of Universal Basic Education applications of Social, Civic and Civic Matters (Agbesoro and Chikwuraemeka K. Obetta)

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challenges in nutrition, health, environment issues, earning a living, participation in civil life, human rights, gender sensitivity, etc;

- ❖ **Learning-to-Learn Skills:** Self-driven propensity for continuous self-improvement through continued push to acquire knowledge, to gain new insights, to be open to new ideas, etc.

Sequel to the launching of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1999, by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's administration, the attention of all the state governments were drawn to the problems of illiteracy which constitute an offence to human dignity and obstacle to development. In Enugu State (like in other states), the Adult Basic Education Programme is handled and co-ordinated by Enugu State Agency for Mass literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education (SAME). The implementation of the Adult Basic Education Programme in the state is based on motivation, funding and supervision, among others.

On motivation, the building of the curriculum of Adult Basic Education around the adult learners' needs and interests is very imperative. Every adult finds himself in specific situation with respect to his work, his creation, his family life and his community life. These are situations, which call for adjustment. So, curriculum must reflect the 'felt-needs' as well as the 'real needs' of the learner groups and be within the framework of national goals for educational programme for adults (UNESCO, 1981). This means that the content must be relevant to the daily lives of the people. According to Obi (1998), participatory learning is another motivational strategy. It is a learning process in which the learners actively participate in the process of learning. It also involves the joint selection of what the adult learners will learn, the methods and techniques by which they will learn, and the joint provision of instructional materials required to make learning successful by both the adult learners and the education providers. Similarly, Nzeneri (2008) pointed out that total involvement of the adult learners in all their learning tasks, or programmes create a learning environment that promotes self-directed learning or inquiry. In a different study, Obeta (2008) noted that the major motivational strategies employed in the Adult Basic Education Programme include: making education free at all levels, giving the learners active choice about the language in which they learn, stimulating the learners through the use of wide range of participatory teaching methods by addressing issues relevant to the lives of the learners, ensuring that one teacher cares for less than 25 adult learners, providing instructional materials to both facilitators and learners, and having literacy centres in village squares for adults. Also, Scribner and Cole (1991) opined that the physical environment must have good seats, tables and the rooms must be lit.

The means of funding Adult Basic Education is *sine qua non* in the real implementation of the Adult Basic Education Programme. It should be the combined effort of all government and non-governmental organizations, voluntary agencies, religious bodies, co-operative societies, town and village unions (Obeta, 1998). These bodies will cooperate with the federal, state and local governments at each of the wards in all the local government areas in the country. Such cooperation will be in the form of provision of volunteer facilitators to facilitate individuals or groups in designated places near their homes. It can also be in the form of paying the volunteer

facilitators for making their people literate and numerate. Fafunwa (1992) stipulated that facilitators and supervisors were trained at local government and state levels, and a total of 2,500 persons were trained in 1992 by National Mass Education Commission (NMEC). As co-ordinators need to move around to supervise centres, Fafunwa (1992) further stated that provisions were made for bicycles at the ward levels, motorcycles at the local government levels as well as motor-boats and vehicles at the state and national levels. Therefore, for effective implementation of Universal Basic Education Programme, government must provide adequate financial resources as all aspects of the programme cannot be done on voluntary basis (Akinpelu, 1992). The programme demands huge financial support in areas such as publicity, motivation, recruitment, training and payment of personnel, provision of equipment and instructional materials.

Finally, a critical function of Universal Basic Education administrative body is supervision of educational programmes. Nwankwo (2000) described supervision as the power position of a leader to ensure that his subordinates are contributing towards the realization of the organizational goals. To Nwagwu, Ehiamefor, Ogunu and Nwadiani (2001), supervision in education means the practice of monitoring the performance of schools, staff and learners, noting the merits and demerits, and using benefiting and amicable techniques to ameliorate the flaws, while still improving on the merits thereby, increasing the standard of schools and achieving educational goals. In a related context, Nwaha (2008: 35) enumerated the following as the purposes of supervision of instruction:

- ❖ to improve the quality of instructions in schools.
- ❖ to ensure that teachers are performing their duties.
- ❖ to attain the educational goals.
- ❖ to ensure proper and continual curriculum development.
- ❖ to provide teacher effectiveness.
- ❖ to ensure that public funds are put into proper use in the school system.
- ❖ to improve guide for staff development.

The vitality of any Adult Basic Education programme lies in the supervisors' ability to stimulate, motivate and guide the facilitators and adult learners to co-operate in order to achieve the aims of the instruction and those of the individuals in the learning community. Therefore, the duties of supervisors, according to Agholor (2006: 91 – 94) include:

1. Provision of the necessary resources for effective teaching.
2. Visitation of other literacy centres and curriculum centres for the purpose of finding out the good aspect of their curricular practices that can be utilized by their own literacy centres.
3. Evaluation of all facets of educational process directly related to instruction.
4. Encouragement of teacher participation in in-service training, workshops, seminars and professional organizations.

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5. Working with teachers in the development of instructional goals and objectives and ensuring that they are consistent with the National Policy on Education.
6. Stimulation, encouragement, support and facilitation of all activities designed to improve instruction.
7. Inspection of teachers' lesson notes, class registers, diaries and instructional materials and offering of professional advice for their improvement.
8. Visitation of classrooms often to observe how teachers are teaching.
9. Development of a sound library and instructional resource centres in the learning community.
10. Ensuring that the progress of each learner is systematically and accurately monitored, recorded and regularly communicated to parents.

These duties of supervisors show that government has the responsibility of supervising and inspecting literacy centres regularly to ensure that all centres follow the approved curricular and conform to the National Policy on Education.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The main objective of Adult Basic Education Programme in Nigeria is to make large population of illiterate adults functionally literate. Through this, the social, economic and political emancipation and progress of our people will be achieved. Therefore, the effective implementation of the Adult Basic Education Programme (as a component of Universal Adult Basic Education Programme) depends mainly on the motivation, funding and supervision of the programme.

All the local government areas in Enugu State are fully involved in the task of providing Adult Basic Education to adult learners in realization that it plays an enormous role in national development. However, there is no record or document in all the local government areas to show that any assessment has been done to identify the state of Adult Basic Education Programme in the state. Therefore, the study posed this question: what is the extent of motivation, funding and supervision of Adult Basic Education programmes in Enugu State?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study aimed at the following:

1. To ascertain the ways in which motivational strategies have been employed in the Adult Basic Education Programme in Enugu State.
2. To find out the ways in which the Adult Basic Education Programme is been funded in Enugu State.
3. To ascertain the ways in which supervision of instruction has been carried out in Adult Basic Education Programme in Enugu State.

### **Research Questions**

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The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. In what ways have motivational strategies been employed in the Adult Basic Education Centres in Enugu State?

2. In what ways have Adult Basic Education Centres in Enugu State been funded?
3. In what ways have the supervision of instruction been carried out in Adult Basic Education Centres in Enugu State?

### **Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference ( $P < 0.05$ ) in the mean ratings of male and female Adult Basic Education facilitators on the ways in which motivational strategies have been employed in the Adult Basic Education Centres in Enugu State.

### **Methodology**

Survey research design is used to assess the state of Adult Basic Education Programme in Enugu State. The population of the study was four hundred and sixty five (465) facilitators of Adult Basic Education Programme in three out of the six education zones in Enugu State. The zones are Nsukka Educational Zone (comprising of Igbo-Etiti, Nsukka and Uzo-uwani Local Government Areas); Obollo-Afor Education Zone (comprising of Igbo-Eze North, Igbo-Eze South and Udenu Local Government Areas); and Udi Education Zone (comprising of Ezeagu and Udi Local Government Areas). Simple random sampling technique was employed to select two hundred and fifty-nine (259) facilitators as the sample. It represents 55.70 per cent of the entire population.

Researchers designed and developed a four-scale Lickert-type structured questionnaire for the collection of data. Face and content validation of the instrument were done by two (2) experts in Research methods; one from the Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies and the other from the Department of Science Education, both at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. According to Eze (1992), face validity refers to how the testee and other people see the test, whether the items and examples appear childish for a test meant for adults or too much like 'a commercial school stuff' when it is meant for technical school boys. Also, content validity refers to the extent to which the test measures both the subject matter, content and the instructional objectives designed for a given course. They made corrections and modifications. The questionnaire was administered to 19 facilitators of Adult Basic Education Programme in Oji-River Local Government Area of Enugu State. It was done to establish the reliability of the instrument. Agbaegbu, (1997) regards reliability as the degree of consistency of test results obtained from the same individual, or group of individuals using the same instrument. The local government area was chosen as it has similar characteristics with the study area. Reliability coefficient estimate of 0.89 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha method.

The questionnaire was finally administered to the respondents by the researchers. Out of 259 questionnaires administered, only 250 were correctly filled and returned giving a percentage of 96.53. The data were collated and analyzed using weighted mean. The cut-off mean was 2.50. Therefore, items with mean rating of 2.50 or above were regarded as accepted, while items with mean rating below 2.50 were

regarded as rejected. In addition, t-test was used for the test of the hypothesis, at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** In what ways have motivational strategies been employed in the Adult Basic Education Centres in Enugu State?

**Table 1: The Mean Ratings on the Motivational Strategies Employed in Adult Basic Education Programme.**

S/N	Motivational Strategies	Total Score	Mean Score	Decision
1.	Ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to the daily life of the learners.	760	3.04	Accepted
2.	Use of participatory teaching-learning methods.	996	3.98	Accepted
3.	Making the physical learning environment conducive through adequate provision of ventilation, light, sitting and writing desks.	632	2.53	Accepted
4.	Ensuring that one facilitator cares for less than 25 learners.	535	2.14	Rejected
5.	Having literacy centres in village squares.	273	1.09	Rejected
6.	Providing instructional materials to both Facilitators and learners.	654	2.62	Accepted
7.	Making education free at all levels.	607	2.43	Rejected
8.	Training facilities through seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.	510	2.04	Rejected
9.	Involving the community in the funding of the programme.	428	1.71	Rejected
10.	Providing vehicles for supervision and monitoring of the programme.	366	1.46	Rejected
11.	Giving the adult learners active choice about the language in which they learn.	555	2.22	Rejected
12.	Paying facilitators promptly.	250	1.00	Rejected

Table 1 above indicates the various motivational strategies employed in the Adult Basic Education Centres in Enugu State. From the table, it was found out that ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to the daily life of the learners had a mean score of 3.04, while the use of participatory teaching-learning methods had 3.98 as the means score. Others are: making the physical learning environment conducive (2.53); ensuring that one facilitator cares for less than 25 learners (2.14), having literacy centres in village squares (1.09), providing instructional materials to both facilitators and learners (2.62), making education free at all levels (2.43), training facilitators through seminars, workshops, conferences (2.04), involving community in the funding of the programme (1.71), providing vehicles for supervision and monitoring of the programme (1.46), giving adult learners active choice about the language in which they learn (2.22) and paying facilitators promptly (1.00).

It is therefore inferred that the motivational strategies that have been employed in Adult Basic Education Programme in Enugu State are the use of

participatory teaching-learning methods, ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to the daily lives of the adult learners, providing instructional materials to both facilitators and learners, and making the physical learning environment conducive.

**Research Question 2:** In what ways have Adult Basic Education Centres in Enugu State been funded?

**Table 2: The Mean Ratings on the sources of Funding Adult Basic Education Programme**

S/N	Sources of Funding	Total	Mean Score	Score	Decision
1.	Community / village		250	1.00	Rejected
2.	Local government		413	1.65	Rejected
3.	State government	635	2.54		Rejected
4.	Federal government		575	2.30	Rejected
5.	International Donor Agencies	733	2.93		Rejected
6.	Direct payment of fees by Adult Learners	952	3.81		Accepted
7.	Non-Governmental organizations (NGO)	390	1.56		Rejected
8.	Philanthropist		375	1.50	Rejected

Table 2 above shows the various sources of funding Adult Basic Education Centres in Enugu State through various means. It shows that the funding by community/village is 1.00 while local government is 1.65. Others are: state government (2.54), federal government (2.30), International Donor Agencies (2.93), direct payment of fees by Adult learners (3.81), NGO (1.56) and philanthropists (1.50).

Therefore, it can be deduced from the analysis that adult learners, International donor agencies and state government are the main sources of fund for Adult Basic Education Programme in Enugu State.

**Research Question 3:** In what ways have the supervision of instruction been carried out in Adult Basic Education Centres in Enugu State?

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**Table 3: The Mean Ratings on the Supervision strategies employed in Adult Basic Education Programme**

S/N	Supervision Strategies	Total Score	Mean Score	Decision
1.	Regular provision of instructional resources for effective facilitation.	430	1.72	Rejected
2.	Encouraging facilitators' participation in in-service training, workshops, seminars, etc.	645	2.58	Accepted
3.	Regular inspection of facilitators' lesson.	565	2.26	Rejected
4.	Frequent classroom visitation to observe how learning is being facilitated.	608	2.43	Rejected
5.	Encouraging the development of sound library and instructional resource centres in the learning centre.	340	1.36	Rejected
6.	Ensuring that the progress of each learner is systematically and accurately monitored and recorded.	505	2.02	Rejected

Table 3 above indicates the various supervision strategies were employed in Adult Basic Education Programme in Enugu State. The respondents' means scores are as follows: Regular provision of instructional resources (1.72), encouraging facilitators' participation in in-service training, workshops and seminars (2.58), regular inspection of facilitators' lesson notes, diaries, class registers and instructional materials (2.26), frequent classroom visitation to observe how learning is being facilitated (2.43), encouraging the development of a sound library and instructional resource centres in the learning centre (1.36), and ensuring that the progress of each learner is systematically and accurately monitored and recorded (2.20).

It is therefore, inferred that the supervision strategy that are employed mostly are the encouragement of facilitators' participation in in-service training, workshops and seminars.

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference ( $P < 0.05$ ) in the means ratings of male and female Adult Basic Education facilitators on the ways in which the motivational strategies have been employed in the Adult Basic Education Centres in Enugu State.

**Table 4: Mean Ratings of Male and Female Facilitators on the Employment of Motivational Strategies in Adult Basic Education Programme.**

Variables	Mean Score	S.D	No.	Level of Significance	df	t-cal.	t-tab	Decision
Male Facilitators	2.16	24.80	186		185			
Female Facilitators	2.28	15.07	64		63			
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>39.87</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>0.34</b>	<b>1.97</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Table 4 above revealed the t-test mean ratings of both male and female Adult Basic Education facilitators on the ways in which motivational strategies have been employed in Adult Basic Education Programme in Enugu State. The analysis showed that the calculated t-ratio of 0.34 is less than the critical t-ratio of 1.97 at degree of freedom of 248, and at the 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted showing that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female Adult Basic Education facilitators on the extent to which motivational strategies have been employed in the Adult Basic Education Programme. It means that both male and female facilitators perceived that the motivational strategies employed are just to an extent.

## **Discussion**

The findings showed that the respondents accepted that use of participatory teaching-learning methods, ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to the daily lives of the learners, providing instructional materials and making the physical learning environment conducive are the major motivational strategies that are employed in Adult Basic Education Programme. On curriculum relevance, UNESCO (1981) asserted that the curriculum must reflect the 'felt-needs' as well as the 'real needs' of the learner groups and be within the framework of national goals for adult educational programmes. While supporting the use of participatory teaching, Obi (1998) stressed that it enhances learning as it involves joint selection of what the learners will learn, the methods and techniques by which the adult learner will learn, and the joint provision of instructional materials required to make learning successful. However, the employment of the various motivational strategies is low. To this, Obeta (2008) suggested that they would be improved by making education free at all levels, giving the learners active choice about the language in which they learn, ensuring that one facilitator handles less than 25 adult learners and having literacy centres in village square for adults. So, there is need to improve on the motivational strategies for proper implementation of the Adult Basic Education Programme.

Also, the findings revealed that the major sources of fund for the programme are by direct payment of fees by the adult learners, international donor agencies and state government. These few means of funding the programme affect the realization and actualization of the noble objective of the Adult Basic Education in particular and lifelong education in general. Fafunwa in Obeta (2008) advocated for a policy that calls for the support of all government and non-governmental organizations, voluntary agencies, religious bodies, co-operative societies, town and village unions and such other bodies to co-operate with the federal, state and local governments at each of the wards in all the local government areas in the country.

On the employment of supervision strategies for the success of the programme, the findings showed that encouraging facilitators' participation in in-service training, workshops, and seminars are the major strategies carried out. It is not encouraging. It is in contrast to the postulation of Agholor (2006) which stated among other things, that for effective supervision of Adult Basic Education Programme, provision of resources is necessary. Also, working with facilitators in development of instructional goals and objectives, inspection of teachers' lesson notes, class registers,

diaries and instructional materials are part of supervision strategies. Furthermore, supervision strategies include offering professional advice for facilitators' improvements, visiting classrooms often to observe how facilitators are facilitating (instructing), and developing a sound library and instructional resource centres in the learning community. The strategies also involve ensuring that the progress of each learner is systematically and accurately monitored, recorded and regularly communicated to them. It therefore shows that the present supervision strategies need to be overhauled so as to make the Adult Basic Education Programme functional in Enugu State.

### **Conclusion**

Adult Basic Education, as a component of Universal Basic Education is the best thing that has occurred in the development of Adult literacy programme in Nigeria. Motivating the Adult learners through the use of participatory teaching-learning methods, provision of conducive learning environment and making the curriculum relevant to the daily lives of the learners will help a great deal in reducing the high rate of adult illiteracy in the country to the barest minimum. It will also improve the retention of learners. However, there is need for improvement on the funding of the Adult Basic Education programme in Enugu State. The funding of the programme should not be left for the learners alone. It should be a joint effort of all government and non-governmental organizations, voluntary agencies, religious bodies, co-operative societies, town and village unions and such other bodies. They should co-operate with the federal, state and local governments at each of the wards in all the local government areas in the country and see that the Adult Basic Education programme is properly funded.

Finally, for adequate supervision of Adult Basic Education programme to be ensured, there should be regular visitation to classrooms to observe how the facilitators are working. Also, instructional resource centres need to be established within the learning communities. The facilitators need to be encouraged to be attending workshops, seminars and in-service training on regular basis. These strategies will go a long way to improving the present state of Adult Basic Education Programme in Enugu State in particular and Nigeria in general.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the findings highlighted and the implications of the study, the researchers hereby proffer the following recommendations:

- ◆ The local, state and federal governments, through the State Agency for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education, should equip the adult learners with learning and instructional materials. They can be in form of learning kits, writing and sitting desks that are suitable to the age of the adult learners.
- ◆ Enugu State Government should improve on the incentives given to the facilitators and administrators of Adult Basic Education. Salaries and allowances (stipends) should be paid as and when due.

- ◆ The government, non-governmental organizations and all-good spirited individuals should be motivated to fund the programme by creating budgeting/statutory allocation for literacy programme. The programme should be free for the adult learners as it is contained in the UBE Blue Print.
- ◆ Local, state and federal governments should make vehicles available for the Adult Basic Education Programme. This is for easy accessibility to all parts of local governments for purposes of effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programme.
- ◆ Heads of community development associations, traditional rulers and other opinion leaders should be involved both in the planning and execution of the programme. It is a way of motivating the people in the community
- ◆ Government should arrange for the organization of workshops, seminars and conferences for supervisors and administrators of Adult Basic Education.
- ◆ Supervisors and co-ordinators of Adult Basic Education should regularly visit literacy centres to ensure that facilitators are performing their duties effectively and efficiently.

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