

UTILIZATION OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ADULT EDUCATION IN NIGERIA.

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Abstract

Every community no matter how small or isolated, harbours varieties of resources which ranges from natural, human, material, services as well as information. The community resources vary from community to community and it offers opportunities for the educators to exploit and explore in the process of teaching learning. This paper focuses on the concept of community resource and environmental adult education. The purpose of the paper is the examination of the utilization of community resources in the implementation of environmental adult education with specific objective to importance and strategies of utilizing community resources in the implementation of environmental adult education. The paper defines some key concepts like community, resources, environmental literacy and environmental adult education. The paper analyzed the various community resources that could be used to promote environmental adult education. Descriptive method is used in analyzing issues raised in the paper. The paper concludes by stating categorically that education cannot be divorced from the community, as the community has a lot to offer in teaching learning processes. Some recommendations were made to the facilitators/educator and administrator.

Keywords: Community Resources, Environmental Adult Education, Environmental Literacy and Community Environmental Care.

Introduction

For so many decades ago, the educators and administrators in the field of education have always been seeking ways of establishing and fostering effective partnership for improved teaching learning. Education generally, requires additional resources apart from the one provided by the government, most especially these days that the budgets of education are getting smaller and

smaller. Agabi (2012) observed that, the resources provided by Government for execution of education projects in Nigeria are inadequate and irregular as highlighted by the frequency of industrial actions in the education sector. Education of any sort whether formal, informal and non-formal is a process that is coterminous with the community. These follows from the time of Aristotle where it was recognized and established that education and the community (socty) are interdependent. Education includes all experiences through which an individual acquire knowledge or ideas, develop intellect and strengthen wills in order to function effectively in the society. Azubuike (2012) sees education as any process by which an individual gain knowledge or insight or develop attitudes or skills useful for his existence in the society. The community harbour and provides varieties of human and material as well as services (resources) which are essential in the lives of people. These resources maybe inside or outside the school system but within the community and are provided for the people for free or at an affordable price, and are used to promote teaching learning, hence community resources.

Conceptual Frame Work

Community: The concept “community” was derived from the French word ‘*communité*’, which also originated from the Latin word “*communitas*” (*cum* ‘with/together’+ *munus* ‘gift’) meaning fellowship of the organized society (Arbor, 2003). According to Knight in Olabode(2013) community has two distinctive communicative meanings, community as a small unit that share common values, and community as a national or international entity sharing common boundaries and locations, secondly, community is a group of interacting living organisms sharing a populated environment. Therefore, a community is a group of people who live or occupy a particular area, share common identity and value.

Resources: This is referred to all the things found in the community that are valuable. Resources can be natural and man-made as well as tangible and intangible, but it is used to meet the needs of people in the area by providing them with assistance, ideas and solutions. Fadeiye in Parua (2019) sees resources as a stimulus, an object, a person, etc which helps the learners in their pursuit of knowledge. It includes a wide range of services and information with specialized assistance.

Community Resources: These covers varieties of human, materials and services (things) found within the community that are very essential in the life of the people. It can be provided to the people of the community either for free or at low price. According to Olabode (2013) community resources are a group of services and/or assisted programme that are provided for the members of a community for free or at an affordable price. Therefore,

community resources include all those things (resource) found in a community both human and materials as well as services and information which are found valuable by the community members. Ezimah (2004) observes community resources for educating learners to refer as those things within the community outside the school which can be used to promote the teaching and learning. Therefore, community resources for educating learners include the totality of human, materials, institutional and services as well as information that are of assistance to the promotion of teaching learning. It could be everything at all within the community as long as it assists the promotion of teaching and learning.

Environmental Literacy: This is the ability to comprehend environmental issues and make sound decisions and take appropriate action in providing lasting solution to existing environmental problems and prevent further occurrence of such issues. An environmental literate person, both individually and together with others, makes informed decisions concerning the environment: is willing to act on these decisions to improve the wellbeing of other individuals and participate in civic life (North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) n.d)

Environmental Adult Education-This is an educative process concerned with the creation of awareness about environmental issues (challenges) and the development of the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours as well as commitment required for successful and sustainable interaction of the people (adult) within the environment. Ehezue (2013) sees environmental adult education as a process of developing in adult (by whatever criteria they are identified), certain attitude, skills and knowledge that will enable them to successfully interact and live in harmony with the forces and elements that surrounds them as they engage in their daily activities for survival.

Forms of Community Resources

Community resources for educating learners may be of different forms though related in types as they include people, places, services and information. According to Ezimah(2004) they may be natural, human, material or institutional.

Natural Community Resources

These are referred to those things(resources) that are not man-made that are found in the community. They vary from community to community. In some parts of the country, some communities are blessed with vegetation's, highland in the form of mountains and hills, bodies of water such as rivers, lakes, streams and trees in the bush as well as animals in various kinds.

Material Community Resources: These are those things that are man-made which are found within the community. They are practical application of science and technology, which includes television set, radio, the types and patterns of houses built in the communities, it is the material product of art and crafts etc.

Institutional Community Resources: These could be seen as some large important organs that serve a particular purpose in the community. Ezimah (2004) refers to institution as a practice or pattern of behaviour which have serve the need of a people for such a long time that the community has cultivated a strong faith in it as a desirable component of the lifestyle of the people. These may include religion, age grade, political economics, social and environmental health institution.

Community Resources Personnel: This is a fellow community member(s) with a wealth of knowledge and experience in their field of endeavour. Akudolu (2012) sees a resource person as one who is an expert in a particular subject or type of study.

Importance of Community Resources in The Implementation of Environmental Adult Education

Education administrators and curriculum developers have realized that the immediate community of a learner is a wonderful experience which provides extremely dynamic, interested and real life opportunities for learning. The southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL)(2001) observed that changing the educational experiences of the people by moving beyond the classroom walls diversify the arrays of learning opportunities and connect school lessons with daily life and real problems. Accordingly, the people experience, create and solve problem together. The community harbour and provides varieties of natural, material, human as well as services and information which are very essential for the promotion of teaching and learning in environmental adult education. Basic environmental literacy and problems are easily appreciated within the community contest, Wrigley in Eheazu (2013) opinions that environmental literacy is mostly effective if it is tied to the live of the learners and reflects their experiences as community members, parents and participants in the work force. Therefore, integrating community resources into environmental adult education can enrich, stimulates local interest and give a lot of significance to the study of environmental adult education. This will facilitate the achievement of the core aim of the environmental adult education which is the development of responsible environmental behaviour. The people (adults) must appreciate and become real members or part of the community in which they live and interact with before a meaningful impact can be made at global level. UNESCO in Mbalisi (2013) emphasizes in its guiding principles that environmental

sensitivity, knowledge, problem solving skills and values clarification to every age but with special emphasis on environmental sensitivity to the learners own community in the early years. Again venturing into community environmental care gives the community members the opportunity to observe, acquire and participate in the basic environmental activities that characterize living in the community. Members of the community can be grouped into age and gender groups under the guidance of and corporation of the community leaders or senior citizens to participate in the basic environmental care in order to improve the quality of their life and that of the environment. These also investigate the many human activities in the community that degrades and degenerates the environment. There are so many community problems that constitute subject matter in environmental adult education. Such as community environmental protection, beautification, conservation and restriction. In these, the community members make appropriate contribution to the level of their understanding and development.

Strategies of Utilizing Community Resources in the implementation of Environmental Adult Education Programme

Community resources are all those things both human and material or otherwise found within the community that are very essential to the life of the community members. These resources (things) found within the community can be utilized in the implementation of environmental adult education using many strategies such as:

Field Trip: This is a study visit which the learners undergo about the environment. through within the community in order to reinforce things which necessarily have been learnt in the formal situation. Nnamuma (2020) sees field trip as a learning activity which takes learner outside the classroom setting under the guidance of the teacher, to enable them get the first hand information about the environmental issues of discussion. In this, the learners are taken to a particular environment, where the learning subject matter is taking place. These environments may be forest reserve, the vegetation, highland, table land, water bodies as well as animals of different kinds as it varies from community to community etc. Through field trip, the learners may come to realize the environment in ways which class room learning cannot by its very nature allow. Field trip is the best strategy of learning in environmental adult education, because the particular environment to be studied is visited, explored and familiarized. Learners understand, discuss on ocean, erosion, volcano etc. better by visiting the site (Akodulu 2012)

Community Environmental Care:- This is a process whereby community members come to identify their environmental challenges or problems and needs, seeks solutions among themselves by mobilizing the necessary resources within the community execute a plan of action and learning to solve

their problems. In this, the traditional community leadership or senior citizens are utilized as serving as the agents which facilitates the processes through social mobilization and cohesion of the community members in inducing changes to the better. Most of the local people, natives and indigenous base possess an individual knowledge of nature, wild life and their environment. Taboos, traditions and religious believes, deeply rooted in native populates have been effective instrument of conserving nature and wild life, since time immemorial.(Asthana &Asthana, 2009)

Promotion of Community Organized Groups: grouping is a common phenomenon in human relationship. As no man is an island. It can be age grade, social class, gender etc. Grouping can be done by bringing together of people who share common expectations about environmental issues. Sproutin Imhabekhai(2009) sees community group as a unit consisting of plural members of organization or (agent)who have collective perceptions of their units and who have the power to act, or are acting in a unitary manner towards the environment. Age grade and gender groups are clear examples of this, the community groups like age grades makes and enforces laws concerning their environment and serves as an effective instrument to the community development and can constitute a useful resource for mobilizing of people for environmental activities meant for environmental improvement.

Promotion of Community Knowledge and Belief System:

The knowledge and belief of every community is the soul of the community where every dealing within the community is hinged on. Eheazuin Ezimah(2004) emphasized that this should be taken into consideration in the planning of the environmental activity or programme and majority of the people are illiterates and belief in the market days and moons phase as an accurate calendar system for scheduling events. Therefore, this traditional calendar system should be accommodated in the scheduling of environmental adult education programme such as path clearing, sanitation, community environmental care etc. Also in the community and or traditional settings, some forests are considered as evil forest and it is taboo to enter such forest for either gaming or otherwise. This help in the preservation and conservation of the forest and forest environment.

The Use of Resource Person: Majority of community, no matter how small or insolated has in it certain individual who have wealth and varied background of knowledge who can “open door” to vivid learning experience in the field of the subject matter. The environmental health workers, metrologist, educationists etc. are community human resources which can be utilized to enrich and vitalize the environmental adult education. Akudolu(2013) observed importance of resource person to include the development of interest

and inspiration towards professionalism as they have face to face conflicts with professionals.

The following service project can prove quite useful in the utilization of community resources in the environmental adult education.

- Social services among the members of the community such as cleanliness, anti-mosquito campaign etc.
- Labour services or activities among the community members such as plenty of trees erosion control etc.
- Beautification of the villages or community by the community members through planting of trees, cleaning up of public places like drains etc.

Conclusion

Education is a process that cannot be divorced from the community. This is why no system of education can be analyzed or criticized in the absent of the community. Which the system is designed to serve. The aspiration of the community is the manifestation of the educational system. Community resources are the essential aspect of the community which must be utilized in the programmes of environmental adult education. This is because it enriches, stimulates local interest and gives lots of significance to the study of environmental adult education and facilitates the achievement of the core subjects of the environmental adult education which is the development of responsible environmental behaviours.

Recommendations

Based on the discussion of this paper, the following recommendations were made.

- The educational administrator and curriculum planners should always consider community resources before any other things for effective teaching and learning in environmental adult education.
- Utilization of community resources should be encouraged by the educator in environmental adult education for clarity purpose.

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