

Factors That Motivate the Participation of Adult Enrolees in Functional Literacy Programmes in Selected Lagos Vocational Centres

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Abstract: Education is a crucial element for personal and social development, as it enhances awareness, self-confidence, and assertiveness, among other things. It is a transformative act that is necessary for growth, not just a social service. Through education, people can gain access to knowledge and shape their lives, leading to an improved quality of life. This study aimed to investigate the motivating factors for adults to enroll in beneficial literacy programs, considering both physiological and basic human needs that drive their enrollment. Adults often participate in such programs to address what they feel is missing in their lives, and this need persists until they feel satisfied. To select participants for this study, a descriptive survey methodology was employed, and one hundred respondents were chosen from specific Vocational Centers in Lagos State using a simple random sampling technique. Demographic data was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages, while chi-square was utilized for inferential statistics to evaluate the hypotheses. The two hypotheses assessed in the study were rejected. Based on the study's results, it can be concluded that a functional literacy program can positively impact adult participants in society by enhancing their social, political, and economic productivity. It can also lead to increased competence and productivity in various aspects of their lives.

Keywords: Adult Enrolees, Vocational Centres, Functional Literacy, Programmes

Introduction

Education is an industry that plays a crucial role in the economic development of countries as it contributes to the development of human resources. Education reflects the progress and aspirations of a society, according to Bareday in Afonja (2003). Education, particularly functional literacy programs, helps individuals reach their full potential by providing them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Akinpelu (2002) states that education programs are tailored to individuals with pre-existing occupations or professions, and vocational occupation is connected to the development of professional abilities. Functional literacy is more advanced than basic literacy and comprises of the aptitude to apply writing, reading, and computing skills to obtain information and participate effectively in cultural, political, economic, social, and psychological activities of one's community. The primary motivating factors for adults who participate in functional literacy programs are need and motivation.

Oduaran (1991) defines literacy as a means of developing an individual's skills and knowledge to improve their ability to read, write, and perform basic calculations. The goal of literacy is to enhance an individual's understanding of the society they live in.

According to UNESCO (2011), literacy encompasses the capacity to acknowledge, comprehend, construe, generate, transmit, calculate, and utilize printed and written materials in diverse circumstances. Literacy encourages perpetual education and empowers individuals to realize their aspirations, cultivate their aptitudes, and actively engage in their local community and society at large.

Oduaran (1991) describes functional literacy as the practical utilization of reading, writing, and computing skills for personal benefit. Beder (1990) has outlined several reasons for adults to engage in functional literacy programs, such as personal growth, familial responsibilities, employment prospects, career development, social expectations, curiosity, and mental stimulation. Maslow's hierarchy of needs proposes that adult learners' literacy requirements are driven by fundamental psychological, safety, security, social connections, self-esteem, and self-actualization needs. Consequently, it is crucial to address these needs to encourage adult learners to enroll in functional literacy programs without reluctance.

Adults who participate in functional literacy programs can be individuals such as spouses, parents, workers, or young adults. However, they will only enroll if their growth and development needs are met. The attitude of adult educators and the availability of resources in their immediate environment can also impact learners' motivation to participate in literacy programs. The availability of resources and the way learners are treated can significantly influence their motivation to enroll in literacy programs, as per Freire (2001).

Statement of the Problem

As previously noted, literacy is a crucial factor in a nation's development. It is also apparent that high levels of poverty are linked to high levels of illiteracy. This suggests that implementing adult literacy and education programs as a means of promoting economic empowerment can be an effective strategy for reducing poverty. It should be recognized that poverty and illiteracy are closely intertwined.

Purpose of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to identify the motivators that prompt adult learners to enroll in functional literacy programs at selected vocational centers in Lagos State. The research aimed to explore the underlying factors that encourage adults to participate in functional literacy programs, including basic human needs and physiological requirements. Adult learners typically enroll in these programs to address areas in which they feel they are lacking or need improvement, and they seek out the guidance of trained educators who can help them navigate through any challenges they may face. By providing support, motivation, and guidance to adult learners, educators can facilitate growth and change in behavior among program participants and in the broader society.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered to guide the study:

- i. What is the impact of adult enrollees' social interactions or relationships on their participation in functional literacy programs?
- ii. How do the financial situations of adult enrollees impact their engagement in literacy programs?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no meaningful correlation between the social interaction of adult learners and their participation in functional literacy programs.

H₀₂: There is no notable variation between adult learners' financial motivations and their engagement in functional literacy programs.

Significance of the study

The research provided valuable insights into the reasons for the low participation rates in adult literacy programs in the area studied, which is important information for policymakers. With this information, education managers can better direct instructors and create literacy programs that meet the needs of learners. Teachers can also be better equipped to manage literacy programs at the center level, which could increase participation rates and ultimately improve the literacy rate of the country. Adult learners will gain the necessary skills to increase their income and quality of life, which will aid in reducing poverty not only in the study area but also across the nation.

Limitations of the study

The study anticipated that respondents may not be completely forthcoming, which could impact the accuracy of the findings, particularly if they provided false information. The researchers took steps to mitigate potential limitations in their study by building a good relationship with the respondents and assuring them of confidentiality for any information shared. Another possible limitation was the lack of control over the learning venues, which could have made it difficult to locate some of the sampled respondents. To overcome this issue, the researchers identified the actual days and times when learning took place.

Literature Review

The reasons that motivate adult learners to participate in functional literacy programs can be categorized into the following groups:

Political Factors: Adult learners recognize the importance of education and are willing to participate in any program that can provide them with essential skills, including the appreciation of literacy, fostering democracy, affiliating with a political party, and exercising their right to vote and be voted for, particularly if they are dissatisfied with the status quo or lack knowledge of the political landscape in their society. Therefore, political education is an essential aspect of social policy that must be accessible to all adult citizens who bear rights and responsibilities. The eagerness of adult learners to engage in functional literacy programs is motivated by their desire

to become politically aware members of their communities or societies, thereby encouraging them to participate in politics and decision-making.

Socio-Cultural Factors:The impact of society on learning and behavior cannot be overstated, and interpersonal relationships are a critical element in this regard. The community and surroundings in which adult learners operate are of great importance. Development is necessary for any community, whether it originates from within or outside the social structure. The responsibility for community growth rests with its members, and in cases where they are insufficient, adult learners are eager to engage in literacy education to promote sustainable and meaningful development. This education leads to social and cultural development, which allows learners to achieve self-reliance, pride in their creativity and ingenuity, and self-sufficiency. The social integration that results from social change encourages collaboration, adaptation, and communication among group members, leading to significant personal and professional growth, and ultimately motivating adult learners to participate in functional literacy programs.

Economic and Physiological Factor: A working adult who desires to contribute to their country's development through their skills, knowledge, and potential understands the importance of enhancing their abilities by enrolling in functional literacy programs. Vallerand (1997) notes that functional literacy goes beyond basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, covering all aspects of human activities. Moreover, functional literacy programs are crucial in meeting the health and nutritional needs of adult learners. Such learners realize that a lack of knowledge regarding appropriate food intake, suitable housing, clothing, personal care, and adequate exercise could affect their well-being. By participating in functional literacy programs, they can acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to meet their fundamental needs and improve their standard of living..

Educational Factor

Adult learners who enroll in functional literacy programs are motivated by their individual needs and aspirations for self-improvement. These needs may arise from a desire for self-actualization, a wish to enhance their learning abilities, or a need to bridge gaps in their knowledge or education. Some individuals may have missed educational opportunities in the past and feel incomplete without further education, while others may seek to acquire skills that enable them to utilize their leisure time more productively. Okukpon (2005) emphasizes the importance of leisure education for adults, helping them utilize their leisure time effectively and avoid boredom. Other reasons for participation in functional literacy programs may include gaining knowledge as an informed citizen or finding creative stimulation in learning. It is crucial to identify and address the diverse personal motivations that drive adult learners to participate in these programs.

Psychological Factor

Recognizing that adults' life experiences can influence their outlook on various aspects of life is critical. Unfavorable experiences, such as unpleasant memories from school or unsatisfactory social interactions, can adversely affect their attitudes. Furthermore, as adults, they have additional responsibilities, such as caring for their families and worrying about work and health concerns. Consequently, to address the emotional and mental health issues of adult learners, functional literacy programs can be a source of motivation. Such programs can help alleviate their fears and increase their understanding of how to deal with demanding situations, whether personal or not. Therefore, it is evident that functional literacy programs play a vital role in meeting the needs of adults who seek to address these pressing issues.

Institutional Factor and Participation

Adult literacy programs are often held in community centers, churches, and mosques, which may not be suitable for adult learning, as noted by Akinpelu (2007). Therefore, for effective adult learning to take place, it is essential to provide a supportive and conducive learning environment. However, in some cases, the learning environment is inadequate, such as poorly ventilated and dimly lit structures with no toilet facilities, which can pose health challenges and discourage participation (Omolewa, 2006). Moreover, the learning approach in such settings is usually teacher-centered, leading to low motivation among learners who are unable to express themselves and share experiences. Even though the physical facilities may be adequate, some adults may prefer to learn outside formal school settings, as they may feel embarrassed or ridiculed by younger people.

Teaching and Learning Materials

Akinpelu (2007) suggests that functional literacy textbooks, or primers, should be designed to aid adult learners in reading and comprehending passages in their native or community language. However, Okedara (1999) reports that learners in an adult literacy center in Iseyin, Oyo State of Nigeria lacked literacy support materials at home, and teachers lacked guides, curricula, or reference

materials. This resulted in a lack of detailed content, sequence, uniformity, and standardized teaching. While providing learning resources for adult learners is crucial, there is no clear link between these resources and how they can enhance meaningful learning. To address this issue, Ouso (1994) recommends involving learners in identifying their unique learning needs and developing a curriculum tailored to their specific circumstances.

Furthermore, Aderinoye (2007) proposes the development of learner-generated materials (LGM) that draw upon learners' indigenous knowledge through the concept of "talking a book." This approach can help build learners' confidence and dispel the notion that writing a book is solely the domain of professionals. By participating in the creation of learning materials, learners may also be more motivated to read and engage with them.

Curriculum and Content Delivery

Aderinoye and Ojokheta (2008) suggest that the concept of curriculum should not be confined to a school environment, as it encompasses a body of knowledge, values, and skills that should be imparted to learners in diverse settings. They argue that curricula necessitate careful development as part of any policy initiatives, emphasizing that adult learning goes beyond the classroom and should equip learners with practical skills and knowledge applicable in real-life situations.

Research Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive survey design was employed to study the factors that motivate adults to enroll in functional literacy programs in Lagos State.

Population

The intended group for this study includes all adult learners who are enrolled in literacy programs in Lagos State. The participants who were surveyed for this study were specifically those who were attending literacy programs in vocational centers.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling was employed to select a representative sample from a large population of individuals or phenomena. In this study, a sample of one hundred (100) adult learners from vocational centers in Lagos State was randomly selected to participate in the research.

Research Instrument

The researcher employed a structured questionnaire as the research instrument, which contained questions pertaining to the study's objectives and research questions.

Data Analysis

The investigation employed both descriptive and inferential statistical methods to analyze the data collected. Descriptive methods, including simple percentages and frequency tables, were utilized to describe the data. In contrast, the chi-square statistical analysis was used to test the hypotheses, with a level of significance of 0.05. The outcomes of the analysis are reported and discussed in the subsequent sections.

Research Hypothesis 1

No statistically significant correlation exists between the involvement of adult learners in functional literacy programs and their social interaction, as per the research results.

Table 1: Respondents view on adult enrollees' social interaction and their participation in functional literacy programme.

Items	SA	A	D	SD	X ²	df	Sig.	Remark
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Adult education promotes positive social interactions and relationships among adult learners.	34 (34)	58 (58)	6 (6)	2 (2)	15.84	3	0.001	significant
An adult learners' social class is a determining factor in their willingness to participate in functional literacy programs.	62 (62)	35 (35)	3 (3)	0 (0)				

The table shows that there is a significant involvement of adult learners in functional literacy programs and their social interaction ($\chi^2 = 15.84$; $df = 3$; $p < 0.05$). As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that social class has a significant impact on the participation of adults in functional literacy programs, as individuals from lower social classes may feel inferior or have difficulty interacting within society.

Research Hypothesis 2

There is no notable variation between adult learners' financial motivations and their engagement in functional literacy programs.

Table 2: Presents the responses of the participants regarding notable variation between adult learners' financial motivations and their engagement in functional literacy programs.

Items	SA	A	D	SD	X ²	Df	Sig.	Remark
Participation in literacy programmes can be influenced by factors such as the need for regular employment and academic pursuits.	36 (36)	54 (54)	6 (6)	10 (10)	11.36	3	0.001	Significant
The availability and progress of technology have an impact on the extent to which learners engage in literacy programs.	60 (60)	35 (35)	3 (3)	2 (2)				

The table shows that there are significant adult learners' financial motivations and their engagement in functional literacy programs. ($\chi^2 = 11.36$; $df = 3$; $p < 0.05$). As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. The findings suggest that the desire to access and utilize technology and other opportunities for a comfortable life in society is a motivating factor for adult enrollees to participate in functional literacy programs, given the rapid advancement of technology in the world.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it can be inferred that functional literacy programs contribute to enhancing the social, political, and economic productivity of adult learners in society, in addition to fostering their competence and knowledge.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations have been put forward:

- i. The society would benefit from government support for adult literacy programmes, which would contribute to social productivity.
- ii. It is important for instructors in Lagos State to provide effective and long-lasting instruction to adult learners.
- iii. Political support is needed through the provision of resources and public announcements from leaders.
- iv. In Lagos State, there is a need for collaboration among teachers and all stakeholders to ensure high-quality adult education.

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