

## **Influence of Adult Non-Formal Education and Informal Learning on Democratization Processes in Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

This paper aims at stressing the need to involve Adult non – formal education and informal training as a tool to educate and raise the level of awareness of illiterates on the issues of Difference and Diversity in Building the culture of Democracy and Attaining Sustainable livelihoods in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general. Specifically, adult educators were convinced that education for democracy must be the prime purpose in their activities and that all education for adults, whatever the subject matter or other purpose it might have, should, like liberal education, be animated by democracy ideals and contribute to education for democracy. Adult Non-Formal Education and Informal learning serve as transmitters of modern Culture, Religious institutions, old and new media, families and the Nation at large. There is no society that is static thus adult and non-formal education and informal learning has helped Nigeria as a country to educate illiterates to embrace democracy. It has further helped us to disagree with the politician who belief that money is everything in life.

### **1.0 Introduction**

Education has been and is still being regarded as a panacea for socio-economic and political problems. Adult Non- formal Education and Informal Learning (ANFEAIL) is all embracing. It is education that occurs in a formal learning environment, but that is not formally recognized. It usually involves workshops, short courses, or conference and style seminars.

Generally, adult non-formal education and informal learning (ANFEAIL) normally occurs outside of the traditional educational institutions and it is not formally recognized by way of certification or a qualification. Adult Non- formal Education can take place in the work place or community and is initiated by either an individual or a byproduct of organized activities that have structured objectives and time frame.

Adult Non- formal education and informal learning help to increased knowledge alongside the concept of Life – Long learning or training. It occurs in a planned but highly adaptable way in the community. The motivation for adult and non-formal education and informal learning may be wholly intrinsic to the learner and it is rewarding in the long run. Since education is panacea for our socio- economic and political problems, one would therefore expect that an enterprise which holds such a vital key that unlock the good fortunes of a Nation as well as those of its individual Citizen should have been accorded the priority it deserves in the ordering of things by educational planners and financiers.

It is pertinent that Adult Non-formal education and informal learning serve as transmitters of modern Culture, Religious Institutions, old and new media, families just to mention but a few, in relation to our democracy in Africa in general but Nigeria in particular. Generally, Adult and non-formal education and informal learning serve as a greater advantage to the development of both individuals and the society at large, thus it has help to develop our democracy in one way or the other to the extent that illiterates can vote for candidate of their choice in an election.

No society, whether developed, underdeveloped or developing that is static. Change is continuous, irresistible and universal. Specifically, the rate and direction of change may vary depending on whether the Country is, developed, under developed or developing like Nigeria.

In recent times, a most dramatic change in government that has affected some African countries like Egypt, Libya, and Benin Republic was due to opportunity obtained by citizen to be educated either through adult and non-formal education or informal learning.

Introduction of Adult Non-formal education and Informal Learning has helped African Countries to reduce the percentage of Illiterates in the society and it has helped to introduce many good things to the population. Adult Non- Formal Education and Informal Learning devoted to, improving participation by individuals in the public life of the societies to which they belong, considering different cultures, religious affiliation and the problems that arise from particular ideological standpoints.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the contribution of Adult Non-Formal education and Informal Learning to the development of democracy and eradication of illiteracy in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular.

## **2.0 Role of Educator, Adult Non-Formal Education and Informal Learning to the Development of Democracy in Nigeria**

The person, who undertakes learning to get a job, or to obtain a better one, is studying for a role; he or she is seeking to improve his or her performance as a bread-winner of the family. This is only one of the many roles head of the family fulfill. Adult Non-Formal education and Informal Learning has always had an element of role preparation in it. In the nineteenth century, when Universal Primary Education was introduced, one of its explicit functions was to prepare children to “live in the situation to which God had called them”. The educator of Adult non-formal education and Informal Learning had as an early purpose to make people better members of the family, or any situation they may have to operate be it religious organization like the mosque or church or within the community, thus through this method, public may be trained on democratization process of the country and they will be able to vote for candidate of their choice without much problem.

One learned, as one learned child rearing, from practice, from one’s own experience as a child, and from observation of what one’s elders did. Or one learned incidentally, as one learned one’s civic duty or one’s duty as a spouse, from the sermons of one’s priest; in essence democratization may be introduced to participants in the same way child rearing was presented to them and it will help them to perform their civic duty to the nation.

At the root of (ANFEAIL) is a participatory, grassroots approach to helping people to clarify and address their own needs. In West Africa villages and towns in general as well as in Nigeria in particular, young people are apprentice to local blacksmiths, carpenters, and tailors etc to learn a trade through firsthand experience or on-the-job training.

In societies as diverse as Nigeria, clan and village leaders are respected for their age and hereditary status they pass on information about culture agriculture practices, traditional birth attendants, educate new mothers in caring for themselves and their babies, riddles and the influence of their own personal virtue through chance and song and oral narrative, through puppet theater and play acting through one-to-one teaching and group facilitation. People all over the world have used (ANFEAIL) methods to pass on traditional knowledge and ensure that each new generation learns the wisdom harmony and stability of the old.

Adult Non- formal Education and Informal Learning (ANFEAIL) will help people to develop the capacity to improve their own lives. (ANFEAIL) is an approach that can be used with adults, youth or children, within the classroom or outside of it. An integral part of (ANFEAIL) is that learner or trainees participate in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of their own learning.

Adult Non-formal education and Informal learning is combating ignorance among the population of any country, this is achieved through good educator who has taken the implementation of the programme seriously and effectively.

Non-formal education with emphasis on training, according to Ngwu, (2003) is that which is aimed at occupational training in vocational, technical, agricultural and entrepreneurship skills. While non-formal education in terms of social interaction is aimed at involving the personal, interpersonal and social communication skills of the participants, such as in the citizenship and leadership training programmes, ANFEAIL in this context is to develop citizen into a responsible and obedient personality since they must be carried along in the development of the nation.

### *2.1 Different Types Of Adult and Non-Formal Education and Informal Learning*

Adult Non-formal education and Informal learning may be regarded as any form of organized education/ training activity for youths, children and adults who cannot be integrated into the formal school system as a result of some socially, economically and politically imposed conditions. According to United Nations Organization (1978), non-formal education is:

An integral part of the entire system of education, lying institutionally and significantly outside the formal system of education and very much a supplement as well as a complement to it. It is the product of change and development in society and it covers a wide range of activities, depending on the prevailing social, economic and political circumstances.

Non- formal education/ training involves out of school education/ training for illiterate member of the society, unemployed youths, civic education for men and women to enable them play the various roles assigned to them by their society Imhabekhai (2009).

According to Okedara and Bown (1981)

*the rubric of non-formal education covers training and institutions outside the formal school system and ranges from individualized apprenticeship to nation-wide literacy. It may be vocational such as staff training centers in Nigeria designed to provide employment opportunities to Young school leavers and for other employed persons, or girls vocation centers established In many African countries which training girls in vocational skills and prepare young Women for*

*marriage and business.*

The non-formal education/training is all embracing and it includes the following;

#### 2.1.1 Remedial Education

It could be at any level of education, be it primary, secondary, tertiary, professional or vocational level.

#### 2.1.2 Continuing Education

Continuing education accepts that education is a life-long, that is, that education is co-terminal with life Imhabekha (2009). According to Adishesiah (1981) continue education reminds us that education is time-less, throughout one's life and is open-ended in its location and can be acquired in any and many places- in the schools, and colleges, in work, in play, in a temple, church or mosque, in cultural manifestations and centre.

#### 2.1.3 Labour Education

This is a programmes usually provided for trade union officials and sometimes to selected union members. Labour education can be provided in non-formal education institutions like the Michael Imoudu Institute for Labour studies, Ilorin, Kwara State.

#### 2.1.4 Literacy Education

Literacy education is associated with the teaching of reading, writing and numeracy skills at the most rudimentary level.

#### 2.1.5 Functional Literacy

Functional Literacy programmes are a combination of literacy education and socio-economic activities. A functional literacy programme is usually selective is primarily designed for a group of people who have the same socio- economic activity.

#### 2.1.6 Extension Education

Provision of extra-moral programmes, remedial education for school drop outs, and continuing education for successful completers of some levels of formal education, are regarded as extension education. Others include; Agricultural Extension Education, Health Extension Education, Distance Education, Women Education, Retirement and Pre- retirement Education, Civic Education, Population Education, Cooperative Education, Prison/ Correction Education, Nomadic Education, Educational Gerontology, Death and Dying Education and Environmental Education.

Specifically, there is none of the mentioned means of Adult and Non-formal Education and Informal Learning above that cannot be used to inform or train or educate the public. They are good forum because, illiterate will believe he has gone there to achieve specific training and if knowledge of governance is introduced to them it will be using a stone to kill two birds, thus through ANFWAIL public may be corrected to have good understanding of participation in voting during any election.

Therefore, ANFEAIL should be encouraged throughout the country in order to get to the grassroots where it is mostly needed. Although the public media-Radio, Television, Print (posters and leaflets) was introduced to disseminate information to the public, they will obey face-to-face training through ANFEAIL to comply with the knowledge acquired in the programmers organized for them.

The bone of contention here is that all form of ANFEAIL will help to develop public who are not literate and it will help them to participate in all activities of the Nation.

### 3.0 Adult Non-Formal Education and Informal Learning as a Concept

Non-formal education connotes alternative to schooling hence the term out of school education (Okedara and Bown (ed) 1981:18). Thus non-formal education covers training and instructions, out of formal education system and ranges from individualized apprenticeship to nationwide literacy.

Alachi (1996:63) in Alachi and Amondowase (2006) is of the view that:

*Non-formal education centre's on man and his immediate environment thus involving people in planned programmes of which they have adequate knowledge and from which they can acquire skills, which in turn will enable them to grapple more successfully with the odds and ends of life.*

This type of training, calls for full participation of the entire community being in this regard all embracing and taking account of the problems arising from issues affecting the lives of the public. Taking the cue from above, ANFEAIL is the organized and systematic activity out of the conventional institutionalized chronologically graded and hierarchically structured school, college and University system. Thus the trainees of ANFEAIL are those who have little or no formal schooling such as Nods, dropouts, those without adequate qualification to further their education and the illiterates.

### 4.0 Agencies of Non-Formal Education and Informal Learning

Agencies of Adult Non-Formal Education and Informal Learning include:

Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) that was later changed to Green Revolution (GR) to improve the agriculture production and to help people to become self reliance.

The War against Indiscipline (WAI) was introduced to inculcate discipline and moral uprightness to Nigerians irrespective of their level of education. It makes people to be orderly in the society and to become good citizens of the country.

Directorate for food and rural infrastructure (DFPRI) It was formed to listen and rectify rural calamities.

Mass Mobilization for economic Recovery, self reliance and social Justice (MAMSER) it has these same function as National Orientation Agency (NOA). It embodied the principle of mobilizing and concertizing the rural man for self reliance. Without organizing people in a formal school all the agencies above train and serve the purpose and function of ANFEAIL aim at educating and training people on certain issues aimed at making their lives better.

## 5.0 Conclusion

Adult Non- formal Education and Informal learning (ANFEAILT) is seen increasingly as independently valuable pathway to knowledge and skills acquisition and in some instances constitutes a more effective avenue than conventional form of education and training. It is an indispensable and powerful instrument that contributes towards the development of any nation by engineering and motivating the majority of the populace to be active members of the society Nzeri (1996) in Okpoko (2006). Adult Non-formal Education and Informal learning plays a great role in human development processes due to the fact that it serves both old and young, literates and illiterates thus it helps public in all ramifications.

However, knowledge is the enemy of ignorance. This is based on the premise that awareness is heightened with increased education and training. The more public is aware of their right the more we shall be at peace in Africa in general and in Nigeria in particular.

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