

## Entrenching Democratic Values for Good Governance in Nigeria: The Role of Adult Education

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### **Abstract**

*This paper aims at stressing the need to involve Adult Education as a tool to educate and raise the level of awareness of illiterates on the issues of differences and diversities in building the culture of democracy and attaining sustainable livelihoods in Nigeria in particular and in Africa at large. 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, it should, like liberal education, be animated by democracy. Adult Education serves as transmitters of modern culture, religious institutions, old and new media, families and the Nations at large. There is no society that is static thus adult education has helped Nigeria as a Country to educate illiterates to embrace democracy, it has also further helped her to disagree with the politicians who belief that money can do everything in life to gain/attain their political ambitions in life especially in democratic setting.*

**Key Words:** Adult Education, Democracy, Development, Participation, Governance.

### **Introduction**

Education has been and is still being regarded as a panacea for socio-economic and political problems of a Nation. Education plays vital roles in human endeavour; and brings light to human being in terms of social, economic and political activities in the society (Fafunwa, 1982). Adult Education is all embracing Adult Education can take place in the work place or community and is initiated by either an individual or by a product of organized activities and have structured objectives and time frame (Hassan & Oyebamiji, 2012). Adult Education helps to increase knowledge alongside the concept of lifelong learning or training. It occurs in a planned but highly adaptable way in the community. The motivation for Adult Education may be wholly intrinsic to the learners and it is rewarding in the long run; it is accepted by the society that 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 individual citizens should have been accorded the priority it deserves in the ordering of things by educational planners and financiers.

It is pertinent that Adult Education serve as transmitters of modern culture, religious institutions, old and new media, families and a host of others, in relation to our democracy in Africa in general but Nigeria in particular. On a general note, Adult Education 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 candidates of their choice in an election to political offices. There is no society whether developed, under developed or developing that is static in nature, change is continuous and dynamic irresistible and universal especially the rate and direction by which change may occur depending on whether the Country is developed, underdeveloped or developing like Nigeria (Arikpo, Taiwo & Ojuah, 2007).

Introduction of Adult Education has helped African Countries to reduce the percentage of illiterates in the society and it has also helped to introduce many good things to the population. Adult Education 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 (Elekwa, 2008).

### **Role of Adult Educator 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 to play in life. He/she is seeking to improve his/her performance as a breadwinner of the family. This is only one of the many roles that the end of the family is expected to fulfil. Adult Education has always had an element of role preparation in it. The educator of Adult Education had as an early purpose to make people better members of the

family; or any situation they may have to operate be it religious organisation such as church, mosque or within the community, this through this method, public may be trained on democratisation process of the Country and they will be able to vote for candidate of their choice without much problem (European Commission, 2016). Adult Education will help people to develop the capacity to improve their own lives. Adult Education is an approach that can be used with adults, youth or children within the classroom or outside of it. An integral part of Adult Education is that learner or trainees participate in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of their own learning (Sarumi, Olaniyi, Aibinuomo & Oyewole, 2007).

### **Democracy in Nigeria**

According to Owolabi (2003), democracy and Nigeria are like slam twins; though conjoined, they are uncomfortable and under intense pressure that could result in all forms of hurt even to the extent of death. Although, democracy may not be strange to an overwhelming percentage of Nigerians, what may be strange to them is the brand of democracy that invests, first and foremost, in human and material resources for the purpose of political stability, economic viability, scientific advancement, technological breakthrough, educational development and life-enhancing social services. Looking at the general optimism that Nigeria was going to be the bastion of democracy in Africa following her independence from Britain in 1960, one should normally expect that by now democracy should be deeply rooted and institutionalized in Nigeria ironically and unfortunately, Nigeria, as far as the practice and delivery of dividends of liberal democracy is concerned, is yet to a cripple that can barely stand let alone walk or run.

Obviously, Nigeria democracy has three outstanding features: first, it is spendthrift. Nigeria democracy is a brand that spends so much to accomplish so little (where and when it achieve anything at all). Second, it invests in the comfort of official rather than in human and material resources, and in fact, the welfare of the common man occupies the bottom rung on the ladder of the priorities of the anchors of Nigeria democracy. Third, Nigeria democracy is plagued by hydra-headed and pathological corruption that ensures that the impact of any seeming good policy is either extremely negligible or almost exactly nil (Nzeneri, 2010). At this juncture, the balance sheet of democracy in Nigeria may be less than satisfactory, all hope is not lost as the desire for the practice of true democracy amongst Nigerians remain unassailably high (Okeke & Idike, 2013).

### **Objectives of this paper**

This paper wishes to establish:

- ❖ The need to involve Adult Education 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;
- ❖ The use of Adult Education to solve socio-economic and political problems in our society, through the use of various forms of Adult Education programmes; and
- ❖ The relevance of Adult Education as a tool for mass enlightenment on democracy in Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

1. How can we make use of Adult Education as a solution for popular participation and democratic development in Nigeria?
2. How can we use Adult Education to enlighten people on democracy in Nigeria governance?
3. Is it justifiable to make use of Adult Education as a tool for sustainable development of democracy in Nigeria governance?
4. To what extent has Adult Education help in the promotion of democracy in Nigeria?

### **Research design and methods**

The research design employed for this paper is a survey method design among the randomly selected citizens of Nigeria. The dependent variable in this research is democracy whilst the independent variable is Adult Education.

### Population and Sample

The population for this study is 150 respondents randomly selected all over the six geo-political zones in Nigeria, namely: North Central, North East, North West, South West, South East and South South. Participants were classified according to sex, age and qualifications.

### Instrument

The instrument used for data collection in this study is a structured questionnaire. The type of questionnaire employed comprises of open and close-ended type.

### Data Analysis

Data were collected through administration of questionnaire from the six (6) geo-political zones of Nigeria. The total numbers of questionnaires administered for this study were 150. Likert scale method of 4-scale point was adopted, that is, Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD) and Disagreed (D) were used for the data analysis (Cohen, Manion & Morris, 2001).

### Research Question 1

**Table 1: How can we make use of Adult Education as a solution for popular participation and democratic development in Nigeria?**

Question	Response					df	X <sup>2</sup>	P
		SA	A	SD	D			
Adult Education can be used as a tool for popular participation and democratic development in Nigeria	Frequency	11	87	11	42	3	103.120	<0.05
	%	7.3	58.0	7.3	27.3			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			
Good governance could be enhanced through citizen participation	Frequency	35	73	11	31	3	53.627	<0.05
	%	23.3	48.7	7.3	20.7			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			
Education will help arouse citizens to participate effectively in policy making	Frequency	36	71	9	34		51.973	<0.05
	%	24.0	47.3	6.0	22.7			
	Expected	37.5	35.5	37.5	37.5			

The results revealed that 65.3% of the respondents agreed that adult education can be used as a tool for popular participation and democratic development in Nigeria. The majority 72.0% of the respondents also agreed that good governance could be enhanced through citizen participation in Nigeria. 71.3% of the respondents also agreed that adult education will help arouse citizens to participate effectively in policy making. This, however, implied that adult education can be used as a tool for popular participation and democratic development in Nigeria.

## Research Question 2

**Table 2: How can we use Adult Education to enlighten people on democracy in Nigeria governance?**

Question	Response					Df	X <sup>2</sup>	P
		SA	A	SD	D			
Adult Education is relevant on the enlightenment of citizens of Nigeria on political	Frequency	31	82	5	32	3	82.907	<0.05
	%	20.7	54.7	7.3	3.3			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			
Good governance could be enhanced through citizen participation	Frequency	28	83	7	32	3	83.227	<0.05
	%	18.7	55.3	4.7	21.3			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			
Education will help arouse citizens to participate effectively in policy making	Frequency	18	70	31	31		40.560	<0.05
	%	12.0	46.7	20.7	20.7			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			

The table shows that majority 75.4% of the respondents agreed that the use of adult education can enlighten people on democracy in Nigeria. 74.0% of the respondents agreed that education is a solution to socio-economic and political problems in Nigeria. 58.7% of the respondents agreed that adult education will help combat ignorance in Nigeria. The implication, therefore, is that adult education is relevant on political enlightenment of citizens of Nigeria.

## Research Question 3

**Table 3: Is it justifiable to make use of Adult Education as a tool for sustainable development of democracy in Nigeria governance?**

Question	Response					Df	X <sup>2</sup>	P
		SA	A	SD	D			
Adult Education is a major tool for sustainable development of democracy in Nigeria governance	Frequency	21	65	16	48	3	42.693	<0.05
	%	14.0	43.4	10.7	32.0			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			
Religious organizations has contributed to the development of education in Nigeria	Frequency	23	72	16	39	3	49.733	<0.05
	%	15.3	48	10.7	26.0			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			
Technological advancement has helped to facilitate learning in Nigeria	Frequency	34	76	10	30	3	61.520	<0.05
	%	22.7	50.7	6.7	20.0			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			

This results show that majority of the respondents, 57.4% affirmed that adult education is a major tool for sustainable development of democracy in Nigeria governance. 63.3% of the respondents agreed that religious organisations have contributed immensely to the development of education in Nigeria. 73.4% of the respondents agreed that technological advancement has helped to facilitate learning in Nigeria. These results were significantly confirmed by chi-square figures and it implied that it is justifiable to use adult education as a tool for sustainable development in Nigeria governance.

#### Research Question 4

##### To what extent has Adult Education help in the promotion of democracy in Nigeria?

Question	Response					df	X <sup>2</sup>	P
		SA	A	SD	D			
Adult Education has helped in the promotion of democracy in Nigeria	Frequency	13	96	4	37	3	137.200	<0.05
	%	8.7	64.0	2.7	24.7			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			
Adult Education serves both literate and illiterate members of the society	Frequency	35	56	4	55	3	47.387	<0.05
	%	23.3	37.3	2.7	36.7			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			
Adult Education serves both old and young in the society	Frequency	33	55	18	14		19.973	<0.05
	%	22.0	36.7	12.0	29.3			
	Expected	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5			

The results revealed that 72.7% of the respondents agreed that adult education has helped in the promotion of democracy in Nigeria. The majority 60.6% of the respondents also agreed that adult education serves both literate and illiterate members of the society. 58.7% of the respondents agreed that adult education serves both old and young in the society. This implied that adult education has helped in the promotion of democracy in Nigeria in many dimensions.

#### Discussions of Findings

There were discussions on the research questions raised for this study and also based on the data generated from the field. The discussion was made by carefully interpreting the findings and relating them to the data analysis.

Research question one showed that adult education has helped in the promotion, popular participation and mass enlightenment of people in Nigeria. 74% of the respondents agreed with the statement that adult education has been tremendously useful and a perfect tool to create awareness of people living in the rural areas on the need for political participation in Nigeria politics.

Research question two revealed that 64.7% agreed that adult education enlighten people on democracy in Nigeria. The finding of this study is collaborated with Alachi and Anondowase (2002) found that adult education

programmes may be redressed by participants in occasion and even to have good participation and understanding in voting during elections.

The result from research question three revealed that adult education is being used as a solution for popular participation and democratic development in Nigeria. 74.0% agreed that adult education is a perfect tool to create awareness of people living both in urban and rural areas of Nigeria on the need for political participation, and it is an adequate tool for sustainable development of democracy in Nigeria governance. 71.3% agreed that education will help arouse citizens to participate effectively in policy making. UNESCO (2001) found that adult education as agent of change and development in society, and it covers a wide range of activities, depending on the prevailing social, economic and political circumstances of a Nation.

The result from research question four revealed that 57.3% of the respondents agreed that adult education is a vital and major tool for sustainable development of democracy in Nigeria governance. This finding is in line with Torres (2000) found that adult education is the context to develop citizen into a responsible and obedient personality since they must be carried along with the development of the Nation.

### Conclusion

Adult Education is seen increasingly as independently valuable pathway to knowledge and skills acquisition and in some instances constitutes to more effective avenue than conventional form of education or training. It is an indispensable and powerful instrument that contributes towards the development of any Nation by engineering and motivating the majority of the population to be active members of the society. Adult Education 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 the public in all ramifications of human endeavour.

This study concluded that Adult Education has helped in the promotion of democracy in Nigeria. Adult Education is a major tool for sustainable development of democracy in Nigeria governance. It is being used as a solution for popular participation and democratic development in Nigeria. On this note, it is highly recommended for the Nigeria government to adequately fund Adult Education in all tiers of her government in order to boost the social, economic and political yearnings of the Nation.

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