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Dr Rashid Aderinoye
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NIGERIA ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROFILE

Dr Rashid Aderinoye

Department of Adult Education, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

Nigeria an Overview

The evolution of Nigeria from the mid-1800s until it attained independence in 1960 is largely the story of the transformation impact of the British on the people and culture of the Niger-Benue area. Nigeria lies between latitudes 4 16 and 13 53 to the north of the equator and longitudes 2 40 and 14 41 to the east of the Greenwich Meridian. With a total land area of 923,768 square kilometers, the country is the fourth largest in Africa. The population according to the recent population census is 140 million.

Nigeria's economic history and development have been closely tied to the agricultural sector. Over the years, the dominant role of agriculture in the economy, especially in terms of the foreign exchange earnings, gave way to petroleum in 1980 as oil production has accounted for more than two-thirds of the gross domestic product and more than 80% of total government revenue.

Administratively, Nigeria was a British colonial territory, administered on the basis of three administrative provinces-northern, eastern and western provinces and the Colony of Lagos. At independence, these provinces became regions and formed the basic administrative structure of the country. More administrative units were subsequently created: 4 regions in 1963; 12 states in 1967; 19 states in 1976; 21 states in 1987; 30 states in 1991 and 36 states with capital in Abuja since 1996. Nigeria is a Federal Republic with a vertical three-tier administrative structure comprising the Federal Government (with a Federal Capital Territory), 36 State governments and 774 Local government councils.

Nigeria is a country of immense ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity.

National Scene

Adult and non-formal education occupies a pride of place in the National Policy of Education (2004), which describes adult and non-formal education as all forms functional education given to youths and adults outside the formal school system. Sponsors and providers include Ministries, Donor Agencies, NGOs, CBOs, Faith-based, Development Associations (DAs), and market women and Universities.

So far, there has been no reduction in either male or female illiteracy as established by findings from Unicef study of 2002. For women, the rate declined from 44% to 41% (FGN/UNICEF, 2001). The DHS Ed Data shows an adult literacy rate of 55% and 60% for the South West and South East respectively 74% in both zones for (males) while the North West and North East record values of 21-22 percent for females band 40-42 percent for males (NPC/FME/USAID/ORC Macro 2004). Information from the Federal Ministry of Education though without empirical support put the literacy rate at 57% of the 140 million population based on the 2006 national census figure, while the illiterate rate was put at 41% translating to about 57 million of the total population

Adult and Non-formal Education Programmes.

In order to cater to the needs of this varied categories of clientele, adult and non-formal education programmes generally on offer are: Basic literacy, Post literacy; Women Education; Functional literacy; Nomadic Education; Continuing Education; Quranic Integrated Education; Literacy for the Blind; Workers 'Education; Vocational Education; Literacy for the Disabled; Prison Education. These programmes are offered in the various states under the supervision of the State Agencies for Mass Education. The open apprenticeship scheme, operating in the informal sector, complements with the requisite income-generating vocational skills that are targeted at eradicating poverty.

Access to Adult and Non-formal Education Programmes

Despite the heightened awareness occasioned by the massive mobilization efforts of NMEC and its State Agencies, the SAPA document (1993) reports a lack of access to adult education programmes for many adults with as many as 46% of the sampled communities not having access, participation is restricted on grounds of non-functional programme offerings and other factors including age, unsuitable programme schedule, irrelevant programmes, lack of interest, ill health and husband's refusal (among the women) NMEC (2001). The report concludes that less than 3% of adults have access to adult and non-formal education programmes.

The report of several studies and ESA project 2005 confirmed the restricted access and participation in non-formal and adult education ESA (2005). That notwithstanding, literacy centres abound in many primary school premises mostly run by state agencies for mass education and NGOs. Churches, mosques, market unions, CBOs and other grassroots associations are also establishing classes for members. In the end, these structures seem to be the strongest avenues to explore for taking literacy to the doorstep of everyone (Tahir, 1991). However, the non-inclusion of life skills and other functional elements in these programmes (ESA, 2005) make the subscription level very low.

Enrolment in Literacy Programmes

There has been a steady increase in enrolment for adult education from the low 696,367 figures of 1990 and 503,071 of 1991 (SAPA, 1993). The NMEC reports further revealed an enrolment figure of 546,256 in 1991 and 1,143,737 in 1996 (consisting 603,906 males and 539,831 females). Generally, from 1991-1996, the Comprehensive Education Analysis (CEA) observed increase in enrolment by gender from 310,113 for males and 236,143 for female in 1991 to 603,309 for males and 539,831 for females in 1996. the document pointed out the fact that female participation rates in Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Benue, Imo and Abia States were higher than the national female participation rate of 47.20%

Table 1: The NMEC Statistical Digest (2001) published the following enrolment figures for 1997-2000.

Year	Male	Female	Total
1997	598166	557366	1155532
1998	666131	598130	1264289
1999	712326	605370	1317696
2000	701798	705156	1406953

Source: NMEC Statistical Digest, 2001

Curriculum and Instruction

The NMEC with support from UNICEF and technical input from Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) has developed three curricular for use in Non-formal Education. These are curricula for Girl Child Education, Quranic Schools and Boys Dropout. These curricula, which were developed through wide consultations, are in use in literacy centres around the country. Although the NMEC had planned to document its functionality and acceptance in the field, it has been unable to undertake this exercise owing to funds constraint it (unicef 2005).

Facilitators

There are hardly any full time facilitators for adult and non-formal education in Nigeria. They are mostly hired on part time basis; the turnover rate is quite high. NMEC (2001) reports a figure of 34,692 facilitators in 1996 of which 36.28% were females. A distribution of these instructors by states shows that Benue has the highest number of 2609 (1434 males and 1175 females) while Kano came second with 1884 instructors (1313 males and 471 females). Yobe closely followed with 1852 facilitators of which 1294 were males. A general trend shows male facilitators in the North than females (ESA 2005). This has implications for participation of women in adult education programmes in view of the suspicion with which men regard another male teaching their wives. The need for female role models is also highlighted here, as more women would be allowed to participate if female facilitators teach them. Facilitators qualification profile ranges from First School Leaving Certificate (for some retired primary school teachers) to Teacher Grade 11 Certificate, NCE and Graduates with or without teaching experience, the stipend paid to facilitators across the states range between N350-N1500. This is poor compared with the kinds of demands made on these facilitators and the expectations (Pwol, 2006)

Descriptions of Programmes

Non-Formal Education (NFE) Programmes of National Mass Education Commission (NMEC)

In the quest to drastically reduce the high level of illiteracy in Nigeria in line with the EFA goals and make basic education accessible to all the citizenry, the Nigerian government through the National Commission for Mass Literacy and Adult Education introduced a variety of non-formal education programmes as a complementary option to take care of disadvantaged, marginalized and hard to reach children, youth and adults. The non-formal education programmes are supposed to offer a flexible opportunity of receiving basic education to disadvantaged children, youths and adults who could not participate in

formal schooling either due to poverty, cultural or other social barriers. The non-formal education approach permits mainstreaming of learners into the formal system at different levels. The integration of the non-formal education as a component of the basic education system therefore requires that quality standards must be maintained at all levels of the literacy programmes to mainstreaming of learners possible.

As a major step towards quality assurance in this direction, the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education (NMEC), Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) supported by UNICEF, developed three non-formal education curricula for Girl-Child Out-of-School Boys and Quranic School children and youth so that the learners can benefit from quality learning and have the opportunity mainstreaming into the formal school system later. Six set of primers on English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science, Health, Life Skills and Home Economics, Business and Vocational Education, and Citizenship and Social Studies were further developed to support the use of the curricula. The facilitators' Guides developed for each primer were to assist the facilitator in selecting the appropriate learning opportunities for each activity and presenting them in the best participatory and interactive form to the learners (UNICEF, 2005).

The programmes are of four components, namely, the NFE Quranic Schools spread across the Northern States, the Out of School Boys Programme for the South East States, (Nwangwu, 2000) REFLECT of Action Aid and the Radio/Literacy Initiative For Empowerment (LIFE) of UNESCO.

The Quranic School Non Formal Education Programme

The continued restriction of the Quranic school boys and girls to the knowledge of the Quran necessitated NMEC to find partner in UNICEF for support in developing non-formal education curriculum for these category of children and youths.

The traditional Quranic school is stratified into two levels. The pre-primary called Kuttab otherwise known in Hausa as (makarantar allo), next is the knowledge of Islam known by the name illimyyah Arabic (makaranta ilmi) in Hausa. (UNESCO, 2005).

At the launch of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) the Nigeria version of EFA, concerns were expressed on the learning achievements of the products of Quranic schools and their ability to be integrated into the basic education system. After a series of advocacy with the leaders of the Northern communities and owners of the Quranic schools, progress was recorded and agreement reached that some school basic subjects will be introduced into the Quranic schools without jeopardizing the interest of the original owners of the Quranic schools. Meaning that nothing will tamper with the Islamic religion components.

At this point UNICEF under its non-formal education scheme agreed to work with the National Mass Education Commission (NMEC) in producing curriculum, development of both learner primer and facilitators guide and training of facilitators. This programme is now in operation in all the Northern states of Nigeria through the State Agencies for Adult and Non-Formal Education (AANFE).

A major outcome of the project is that learning in the Quranic Schools is now being conducted in two languages English and Arabic and the following subjects are being taught- English language, Social Studies, Arithmetic, Citizenship Education and Home Economics. Also Thursday and Friday are worked free days.

The Out-of School Boys NFE in the South Eastern States

This is an alternative basic education programme for those boys who choose to stay away from school and take to street trading. In an attempt to reach them with quality basic education and mainstream them back into the basic education programme of the government, classes are organized for them in the market place (Nwangwu 2000).

Like the Quranic Schools in the north, UNICEF developed related curriculum in collaboration with NMEC in line with their learning needs with considerations for the school subjects. Facilitators were trained in the use of the primers produced for the programme. Classes are holding on days convenient for the boys around the market place.

REFLECT: Adult and Non-Formal Education of NMEC/ACTIONAID

In order to make Literacy more relevant and responsive to community needs, the NMEC adopted the REFLECT approach to adult literacy and successfully completed programmes on Tomaro Island community in Lagos, Tako in Egon of Nasarawa state Kpaduma in Abuja and others. The Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT) is Action Aid's contribution to literacy and community development in Nigeria. UNESCO-Abuja (2005) The REFLECT methodology applies the use of participatory techniques that help to generate discussions and analysis on critical issues that are of concern to the community. Pwol (2006). (Newman 2004) in a study titled REFLECT the Nigeria Experience revealed the following on REFLECT

AIMS

1. To empower communities and individuals by improving their communication and mobilization skills to enable them to demand and assert their basic rights. Particular attention was to be paid to challenging gender norms at community level.
2. To build the institutional and programmatic capacity of civil society organizations and government agencies to enable them to engage on issues of quality, accessibility and appropriateness of education of the poor and marginalized.

AAN's strategy is located within the understanding laid out in Action Aid's Fighting Poverty Together (FPT). This is based around the following four aspects.

- recognizing that poor people have a right to life's essentials, including food, water, healthcare, livelihoods and education;
- working increasingly in partnership with others to achieve greater impacts;
- promoting change internationally in favour of poor people;
- counteracting discrimination against women and girls.

Thus the Reflect project was conceived in line with these wider goals, and is supported by a rights-based approach to development. Action Aid (2005)

Some examples of REFLECT Project in Nigeria

Anfea-Bauchi's Experience

Anfea-Bauchi decided to work with Reflect because they realized the literacy techniques they were using were not working: “people (at the grassroots) were tired with formal literacy, they didn't like the style of education. In that form of literacy you just learn how to read and write, and then you keep quiet, there was no conscientisation... literacy was not seen as functional. People were saying ‘what can we do with it?’ We didn't have an answer, we were only there to make them literate. Worse still, after two years people had forgotten what they had learnt, or weren't even learning in the first place.” (Gloria David, Reflect trainer)

Four staff members spent two days in the communities with which Anfea-Bauchi planned to work. On the first day they spoke to the chief and showed the relevance of Reflect. The second day was aimed at mobilizing the community using a PRA map with community members and the chiefs. Then the facilitators were selected by the community based on the following criteria: physically fit, reading and writing knowledge, trustworthy, humble, from the community, patient, tolerant, a character accepted by the community.

“Reflect relates education to development. It involves community participants. The facilitators are opinion leaders in the community. It is flexible, adaptable to any situation and clearly different from traditional methods. It involves the community and makes them conscious of their rights and responsibilities.” (Addul Kadir, Director, Anfea-Bauchi)

The Reflect Process

Many communities call the Reflect group meetings ‘community meetings’ and these tend to take place fortnightly or monthly (although in some places groups meet weekly). These meetings are conceived as continuing indefinitely and, interestingly, participation in the meetings tends to grow rather than decrease overtime. This is in contrast to traditional literacy projects with frequently report problems in sustaining on. Both Anfea-Bauchi and CBD-NGO Forum suggest that this is because more people become interested as the development project begin. This implies that the actors planned by the Reflect circle were relevant and interesting to the wider community who, once they saw what was happening, felt they would benefit from involvement in the Reflect meeting.

In most communities groups began by doing a prioritization matrix – examining issues in the community. Once a key issue was decided on, an action plan was designed in order to tackle the issue. This might have been supported by further analysis using additional Reflect tools such as community maps, trees or Venn diagrams.

Use of Tools

Participatory tools and techniques are an integral part of the Reflect approach and many Reflect circles used maps, matrices, trees and Venn diagrams to structure their Reflect discussions. Maps and trees tended to be popular, and people commented that they were easy to use and helped in analysis of community problems. For example, in Damke community they explained how a map was used in their action planning to agree a location for the primary school, and to identify the different families who would benefit from and contribute to the school. Zaranada community comments: “PRA graphics help us to understand, to analyse.” Venn diagrams, however, were seen as difficult to use and understand.

Aspects of a Reflect Process in the Eggon Hills, Nassarawa State

Work in the Eggon Hills evolved simultaneously on different levels. The involvement of different people in different ways strengthened the overall project, for example:

Personal Involvement

Out of one prioritization exercise the idea of micro-finance arose. So when Project-Agape received money to run a micro-finance project, they went to the community see if they were still interested in doing this. They were, and the project started. Project-Agape comments that in Reflect communities participants do not default on their repayments, which is a common problem in other projects areas (and suggest that this is due to participants' feeling of ownership of the project).

Community Involvement

One community was discussing the issue of water (this is always a problem outside of the rainy season). They began by looking at a problem tree of water – discussing the causes and effects of lack of water. Causes included overgrazing, bad use of water, use of chemicals, fishing etc. One obvious effect of lack of water is that you have to spend more time looking for it, meaning less time can be spent on other crucial activities. The group decided to sink wells, and so far have sunk four, which are working effectively.

Cross-Community Work

As well as community meetings there are also general meetings held for the three communities in the hills (as and when these are needed). In these meetings they discuss common projects – one of these was a health clinic (there were no health facilities in the hills). The three groups came to Project-Agape about this, and together they drew up a plan and went to the local government. The local government said that it did not have the staff for a clinic, but that they would pay two of the five salaries if local people could be identified to work in the clinic, and if the communities built the clinic themselves. The clinic is now built, and the local government has donated some furnishings. Unfortunately it is still not operational, but the community members are still hopeful, and are using this experience to inform their future action plans.

Gurusu Community

Through discussion we came up with so many problems facing us. We prioritised them and came out with our immediate need (access to health provision). We used a problem tree to analyse our problem, and a Venn diagram to decide where we could go for assistance. We then went to an action point – the construction of a dispensary. The circle members were (involved from the start, but we then transmitted our idea to the whole of Gurusu community, who joined hands together to see that the project was executed. However, we as the community could not do this alone, so we went to see the local government to seek their assistance, with some materials such as health workers. We also got moral support from the Agency for Mass Education, Niger State. We faced enormous challenges in the project, as there was a lot of opposition from unprogressive people, who are always against any developmental programme that is initiated. What these people want to do is create confusion in the community. But we were bent down to see the end of the project, today the clinic is there for the community use, with health workers posted by the

local government. We learnt many lessons from this – it gave me encouragement to continue with Reflect. The coming together as a team is of great importance. Reflect is participatory and this was demonstrated in the project. The project today is owned by everybody and not for an individual. (project supported by ANFEA-Niger)

Gaskiya Cooperative

It all began when I was asked to attend facilitators' training. When I came back from the course. I met with the District Head to brief him all about the benefits of Reflect. In turn the District Head called some of his village heads to brief them on Reflect also. They all welcomed Reflect and today the circle members, wider community, village head and other villages are involved in the programme. I was a member of Gaskiya cooperative and I worked with the rest of the group. We used a prioritization matrix and looked at what we needed in the community. We agreed to set up a committee to come up with an economic project that would reduce the poverty, and to start adult literacy classes. We decided to set up a poultry farm. To make our dream come to reality, an NGO, quickly disbursed loans to us. We are still facing funding problems to carry through the project. But we are continuing to try, we have learnt the lesson that 'together we stand, divided we fall.' We need to have more support from NGOs and other agencies and this would motivate us more. We also need to develop proper monitoring and evaluation systems for the project.

I myself have gained a lot from my involvement in Reflect – I have benefited from experience-sharing and social interactions, and communication within the community has improved. I feel I have good relations with the rest of the community, and that our self-reliance and sustains increased since we started working with Reflect. (a participant view point from, Gombe State) (Newman 2004)

The Radio/LIFE Literacy programme

The programme which started in 2000 had the support of UNESCO. It was planned along the Cuban radio literacy programme.. The programme was originally to cover 12 states but at the launch of the programme by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2006, it was mainstreamed into the Literacy Initiative For Empowerment (LIFE) and its scope broadened to cover the whole country,. At the planning stage personnel were trained and primer developed in Yoruba, Hausa, Kolokuma, Efik, Ijaw, Igbo, Nupe and Fulfude with the assistant of a Cuban expert. More than 132,000 Radio sets were purchased and distributed to learners across the country. Among the personnel trained were radio producers, announcers and facilitators. Twenty learners per learning community were recruited in each of the local government, so by the time the programme take of in the 774 local governments, 15480 learners would have been trained. Currently the programme enjoyed a lot of good will from Nigerians as they have been mobilized to participate in effective implementation of the programme.

In the view of the Executive Secretary of the National Commission for Mass Education (NMEC) Dr Oyinlola, he said if the participating governments can pay their counterpart fund and ensure that the local government support the initiative, the programme will go a long way in reducing illiterate population and fast track the realization of the EFA and the MDGS goals.

NGO Intervention

University Village Association Functional Literacy Programme.

Description

Laoye (1999) in her evaluation of the University Village Association functional literacy programme found that the programme which started in 1989 had trained more than 5,000 adult learners in the acquisition of literacy and vocational skills. The functional literacy programme had a flexible curriculum with reading, writing and arithmetic as the core aspect of the literacy components, while making of candles, pomade tie and dye constituted the life improvement aspect.

Lessons hold three days a week, running Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for nine months. At the end assessment is conducted in writing with performance based on two categories-the 'A' and the 'B' group. The A stand for those who through their performance they can proceed from beginner class to intermediate while those with B will still need to stay at the beginners' class. The B was adopted so as not present a picture of failure. Participants at the literacy programme over the years have benefited from many community development and political programmes of the community because of their empowerment through literacy education.

The use of innovative methods of Real Literacy Material (RLM), Learner Generated Material (LGM), and Literacy Shop assisted in making more people attend the UNIVA literacy programme. In addition the teaching of learners on how to use their cell phone to send text messages is another innovation that has attracted learners to the class as they have discovered that they have a lot to gain.

Income Generation

The income-generating component of the programme was developed at the request of adult learners who needed to supplement their incomes. Because most participants in the UNIVA are subsistence farmers, income generation activities focus on agriculture. Cooperative farming is encouraged through the provision of small loans, and time saving crop processing machines have been installed in several villages (Aderinoye 1997).

Women are the focus of the programme because of their crucial role in the development of the community. Their activities include tye and dye (adire), soap and cream production and fashion design. Eleven villages participated in the programme, of which three are involved in tye and dye, one in soap making and farming, and seven in farming alone. Through the project, 47 villages have benefited from small-scale loans or grants for agricultural or other income-generating activities.

Health

The health programme of the project has two major components:

- the distribution of Mectizan tablets to fight river blindness (onchocerciasis), and
- health education.

Project staff collaborate with members of the National Onchocerciasis Task Force, which is comprised of government and NGO representatives involved in the control of river blindness. Over 100,000 mectizan tablets have already been distributed in Irewole and Ido Local Government Areas.

Health talks and demonstrations are conducted regularly in village literacy centres on subjects such as mixing oral rehydration therapy and preparation of nutritious food

including soya bean recipes. Health education is also provided to instructors during teacher training workshops on a variety of topics including cleanliness, nutrition, maternal and child health.

Civic Education

In character and content all mass literacy programmes also contain certain basic civic instruction aimed at generating qualities of good citizenship and active involvement by all in the national development process.

This programme provide civic education awareness to grassroots women and exploring strategies for women participation in politics. The programme meets a felt need following the consistent neglect of women in the filling of key political positions at every level and tier of government in Nigeria. The transition to a democratically elected government in 1998 provides a much needed opportunity to increase women active participation in the electoral process and to end years of marginalization. To be able to ameliorate this situation, women requires basic training, mobilization and awareness, building in civic education to compete favourably and adequately in the emerging democratic process right from the grassroots. Owing on the fact that majority of women live in the rural areas and they constitute the poorest of the poor, and since politics is about allocating resources to various groups realizing the fact that women’s knowledge of politics, justice, equity, human rights and political consciousness is very low, the civic education is therefore set to prepare the women group of UNIVA for future effective participation in political issues.

UNIVA programme on Democracy and Governance focused on four Local Government Areas of Egbeda, Ido, Isokan and Irewole in Oyo and Osun States respectively. Over 200 women drawn from these LGAs participated fully in the Civic Education/Awareness Training. These 200 women constituted the nucleus of the programme which the training was to promote Democracy and Governance initiatives at the grassroots level. Over 4,000 women from different trade groups have been mobilized for active participation in the political process introduced by the transition programme. So far, summary of participants is best illustrated by the table below.

Table 2: Showing the Total Number of Adult Learners in the UNIVA Literacy Programme between 1989-1997

Year	Number Graduated		Total
	Certificate A	Certificate B	
1989	175	-	175
1990	181	34	215

1991	242	66	308
1992	366	239	605
1993	466	289	755
1994	551	324	875
1995	845	409	1,254
1996	801	412	1,213
1997	171	170	341
Total			5,741

Source: UNIVA Office(1998) University of Ibadan, Ibadan

Conclusion

The expectations of Nigerians , if we are to move close to achieving the EFA and MGDs goals is for government to strengthen political commitment to literacy, mobilise greater resources and improve mechanisms for flow of funds from Federal to State governments and LGAs, improve data base with intensive advocacy and social mobilization followed by capacity building at all levels. This is the only way by which more than 57 million people can become literate by the year 2015.

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