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AN OVERVIEW OF TIMING IN ORGANIZING AND IMPLEMENTING OF ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

One of the problem faced by adult education planners is the timing in designing the programme, this is due to the fact that adult learner have a lot of responsibilities either in the society, families and their own personal problem that affect their study. This paper therefore discusses an overview of timing in organizing and implementing adult literacy programme in Nigeria. It also discusses whether there is relationship between timing and success in literacy programme, and also the paper highlight why timing in adult literacy programme should be given consideration and appropriateness. It conclude that timing is an important factor in designing and implementation of literacy programme in Nigeria and that the programme should be flexible to accommodate adult learners tied schedules. Hence adult education policy makers, planners and administrators of adult literacy programmes should recognize a veritable instrument to ensure the success of the programme and also to achieved the desired objectives.

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INTRODUCTION

Adult education is the practice of teaching and educating adults. Adult education can take place in the workshop through extension school. The practice is often referred to as training and development and is often associated with workforce. Adult education is different from vocational education which is mostly workplace-based for skill improvement. Adult education may involve adult basic literacy such as the skill used to prepare individual for a high school certificate, it can also include many various other types of continuing education classes. There are many reasons why one may choose adult education class, adult literacy has become somewhat confusing, adult education in the widest-sense is any form of learning adults engage in beyond traditional schooling, but in the narrowest sense, adult education is about literacy, about learning to read and most basic materials, so adult education encompasses everything

from basic to personnel fulfillment as a lifelong learning even attainment of advanced stage of learning. Some scholars have devoted considerable attention to defining literacy, and their work had direct implications for to practice and policy (Fransman 2005). Earlier on, UNESCO's (1958) statement classified a literate person as one who can with understanding both reading and writing a short simple statement on his or her everyday life. The most common understanding of literacy is that it is a tangible skills of reading and writing that are independent of the context in which they are acquired and the background of the person that require them (UNESCO, 2006). Oxenham et al (2002) report that across studies in several countries, there are vital agreement that people who had completed literacy courses tend to be more confident and more willing to take initiatives in developing their livelihoods. Literacy gains can also improve advocacy capability to secure rights over natural asserts, they may also improve awareness of health threat in that physical environment. Just as adult literacy is more than simply reading and writing, starting an

adult literacy program is more than simply announcing you're there. First, there are the logistics of finding and training staff, whether professional or volunteer; finding space, if you need it, and furnishing it appropriately; scheduling classes or tutoring sessions; etc. Then there are the perhaps larger tasks of recruiting students and gaining the recognition and support of the community. And finally, there's the small matter of actually running the program day to day, ironing out details as you go, until the operation goes reasonably smoothly. In general, it takes about two years for an adult literacy program to really establish itself in a community. At the end of that time, if it's convinced the community that it's there for the long haul, if it's providing the kinds of services that people really need, and if learners feel comfortable with its staff, the program will probably no longer have to recruit students. Word-of-mouth, among both the target population and referral sources, will bring learners in, and the program will be seen by the community as an integral part of the local service delivery network. One of the core issues in literacy efforts in parts of the world where higher rates of adult illiteracy exists is the issue of how to make illiterate adult to enroll in literacy classes and acquire literacy skills. In Nigeria for instance; the adult literacy rate in English language of 15 years and above was put by National Literacy survey, conducted in 2010 as 56.9 percent (National Bureau of Statistic 2010). This means that the need to make those who are left behind in attaining literacy skills to be given considerations in programme planning and implementation so that they enroll into adult literacy programme. Based on this statistic it shows that great importance is attached to manpower development in adult education through adult literacy programme in Nigeria is way to achieve its objectives.

The attitude of adult education administrators play a vital role in execution of adult basic literacy programme which involves carrying along other programme designing, implementation as well as evaluation. The commitment of administrators and instructors in programme implementation is a clear indication of organizational effectiveness. To achieve and ensure successful implementation of adult basic literacy in Nigeria, adult educational administrators require competencies in performing their duties. Oni (2003) observed that the implementation of any programme is as important as involving a stage of development, it is a process of translating action into interpretation and modalities of putting the programme introduction as well as doing the actual job or work. Generally adult are known to be people that have accumulated knowledge, work experience that can add to the learning experience and they are voluntary students, therefore the participation are generally better motivated. Because of the above consideration, when adult enroll into literacy programme consideration ought to be given due to the responsibilities that they have so that they could cope with the learning with the responsibilities associated with the learning in the literacy programme. This is because adult learners would be more committed to the responsibilities which are more likely to care for their daily needs compared to the learning in the literacy programme which would be considered by these adults as means to an end. Another basic responsibilities of an adult literacy organizer/instructors is that of developing an organization which will result in the coordinated efforts of the instructors and adult learners in the accomplishment of the accepted adult literacy educational purposes, unless the programme is well organized and well managed, there will be dissipated effort wasted resources and

poor result. The organizers should always remember that adult literacy is voluntary and therefore must be element of flexibility in its management and organization.

Timing in literacy planning and programme implementation

The timing and duration of instruction is the first design element that the planners most consider, since it dictate the scope and structure of the programme. A well planned and smooth operating planning is important to the success of adult education. Adult learners often have responsibilities that take priority over study, sometimes in the year farming demands prevent some participant from attending literacy classes in the rural areas, and sometimes festivals and other traditional celebration often close down some literacy centres especially in the rural areas because they have less time to participate in literacy classes, and because of these 6 months time period, a programme of approximately 250 hours could take a schedule for may be two hours, and 6 days a week for five months. In urban areas it could be schedule for 2 hours per day, 3 days a week for ten months (Abadzi, 2003). Although a programme that takes in 8 hours a day for 30 days might achieve the same result as the programme for 2 hours a day for 3 months, but there is insufficient evidence to make this determination.

However programme planners must identify the period during a year and hours a day for the potential student to have opportunity to participate. Practitioners in adult and non-formal have time and again have time and again encountered difficulties in determining the level at which a youth has been in the non-formal sector can get back into the mainstream (Obanya, Nwangwu, Fagbula, Aderoba, Ayodele, Yusuf and Kalu (2005). It is necessary that timing in adult education literacy programme is given due consideration and appropriateness, because adults are more likely to dedicate their personal time over a sustained period to something that is seen to be focused on learning in a way that they would rarely do so. (Global Campaign for Education 2005). The most successful adult literacy programmes are the ones that time table are flexibly respond to the daily life of the adult learners (Action Aid, 2005). Unsuitable timing of classes could become an internal barrier to the adult learning programme especially for women who have never been to school or who had to drop out for marriage will need a programme that has timing. The timing of the programme will need to take account of women's different life experience that is the younger women and the older women and expectation to be successful Mccaffery, Merrifield and Millican (2007). The National Policy on Education (FRN 2004:32) list about seven component of adult and non formal education, these are functional literacy, remedial, vocational aesthetic, cultural and civic education for young adults outside the formal school system and because of this, adult learners need timing in which even of the programme they have enroll into. A study conducted by Mualoku, Mathamma, Odeo and Samuel (2009) adult learners who dropout from adult literacy programme revealed that they dropped out because of the instructors' attendance was irregular, they further said even those that care, comes very late and sometimes not even appear. This shows that the attitudes of instructors towards the programme are not encouraging. Adult education programme will fail if we gathered inadequate facts, the needs, interests in the programme planning have great significance. It is generally understood that the adult learners themselves must participate

in the decision making in considering plans and implementation. An adult learner was unable to cope and the person had to drop out because he was unable to get what was taught. Some of the instructors taught several concepts within one hour and some adult learner were confused as observed by the researcher; therefore timing must be giving consideration in teaching each of the learning activity. To achieve the objective of adult education programme, it is necessary that everything desired must be put in place. Apart from provision of adequate learning experience and quality, adequate and relevant facilities and equipment need to be provided.

Implications for policy and practice in Adult Education in designing policies for adult literacy education programme in Nigeria, the adult learners must be part and parcel in determining the timing appropriate for the adult learners and programmes, so that it would be successful. Also for the programme to be more effective timing for literacy programme should be reviewed, so that it would be suitable for the adult learners. Aderinoye (2007), the withdrawal of participant from adult literacy programme is due to time constraints. Feedback should be given to adult learners on the appropriate timing schedule for the programme to avoid complains. It is also important that the adult education programme planner must identify the suitable period time and hour of the programme when the potential adult learners have the time to participate. Camong et al (1995). The Action Aid (2005) also suggests that time table for adult learners should be flexible to meet their demand for the daily life of the adult learners. In my own experience, planning for most literacy programs extends only to what goes on in the classroom. A community need becomes apparent, funding becomes available, and a group or organization jumps in to tackle the issue. The funder wants a response now, and the program has to start right away. There isn't time to assemble a planning team, talk with the community, and design a program to meet actual community needs. What follows is an ideal scenario, with the understanding that you probably won't have the opportunity to do things in an ideal way. Remember that all of this can happen while a program is already going on as well, and that what you're doing can - and should - change continually to conform with the real needs and desires of learners and the community, and with your experience of what works and what doesn't.

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