

# **ADULT EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT; SYNERGY TO RURAL TRANSFORMATION**

**BY**

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## **Abstract**

The importance of rural area to the socio-economic development of any nation cannot be shoved aside; however, rural communities are usually characterized by peasant agricultural and pastoral activities, high level of illiteracy, poverty, ignorance and superstitions belief system that often retard their economy progress as well as subject them to rejection of modern development. Development more often than not; is about people, their needs and their circumstances. For the rural community to embrace holistic development, they have to be educated. There is need to articulate progress that will give them a new lease of life, which will enhance their socio-economic well-being, reduce the tendency of rural-urban drift, better contribution to the national economic growth and development through improved raw material production and supply as well as to improve their social and political responsibility. The need to develop a new approach that revealed the recognition of development activities that represents action calls; for a type of education like adult education, which man and woman seek to improve themselves and subsequently increase their skills, knowledge, understanding as well as advanced their society.

**Keywords:** development, holistic, illiteracy, superstitions, transformation.

## **Objectives**

The main objective of this unit is to enable students and readers understand the intricate of adult education in community development which are necessary for building strategy for rural development.

Other objectives include:

- Showing the needs, circumstances and potentials of rural communities.
- Demonstrate the relationship between adult education, community development and other poverty oriented strategies.
- Explain the role played by stakeholders; universities, non-governmental agencies, community based organization and government in creating awareness and improving the lots of the rural dwellers
- Discuss some policy and institutional biases that operate against the rural community
- To reach a conclusion as to what can be done to alleviate the plight of the peasants community, through adult education/lifelong education and empowerment programmes.

## **Introduction**

In 1948, education's place in the society was officially recognized when the United Nations listed education as one of the basic human rights in the declaration of Human Rights. Today ; most international aid organization, politicians, government leaders and agencies, inhabitants of developing countries and academics throughout the universe are convinced that education must occupy a central place in any developed effort and plan.

The improvement in education in the third world countries can help to alleviate poverty, enhance rapid national growth as well aid a holistic development.

According to Nyerere (1955), “development is for man, by man and of man”. It is no doubt that every government embraces development as a central feature of her official policy. Nigeria governments for example has adopted several rural development programmes as a vital spring board for the survival of the nation, the reason being that over 70% of the Nations population, lives in the rural areas.

The moral, social, cultural, political economic and security reasons for giving the policy of rural developments the pride of place still remain valid as the bulk of our human, natural and mineral resources are located in these rural areas. These human and natural resources are recognized as primary ingredients for any national growth and development. It becomes imperative therefore to awaken the generality of the people especially rural dwellers to the possibilities of effective use of their immediate environment and all the resources available to them in that environment. In order to off-set a meaningful development, a broad based awareness must be created through formal, informal and non-formal education as embraced in the philosophy of education by UNESCO and centered on self-reliance as a means of enhancing the need for people to take their destiny in their own hands. Anyanwu, (1997) and Linda (2008). However, education is not a neutral process; rather such education needed for a holistic development should make learners more aware of their own social reality as well stimulates them to endeavor to build a better society. Thus; adult education and community development are intricately related as a tool to any country’s transformation, growth and development.

### **The Concept of Adult Education and Community Development**

Adult education and community development complement each other in the bid to ameliorate and alleviate the living condition of people in any giving human

environment over time. Community Development through education is the goal of innovative program of extra-moral studies offered by some universities in Nigeria and by some religion organization like the Baptist Church in Nigeria. The universities and the religion bodies embrace policies that will contribute to the economic and cultural development of their predominantly rural hinterland. The overall aim of such education program is to develop the capacity of individuals and total local communities to undertake a type of self-help development initiatives; as attempt is made too to encourage widespread participation in the country's affair. Thereby replacing apathy and indifference with a spirit of participation.. Michael and Cinneide (1987). There is no doubt that adult education synonymously use as; lifelong learning or continuous education that has grown in modern times partly as industrialist required more skilled worker, as technology advances leading workers to continue to update their skills and knowledge. The increasing consciousness of the right of all people (as stipulated by the constitution) for self actualization as well have the chance to fulfill their potential and subsequently enhanced individual wellbeing , supporting the development of each member of the community and the larger society. Each allow encourage them to contribute meaning and fully to their country. Adult education therefore is vitally important in the growth, development, sustenance and success of a society.

Both the concept of both education, country development and rural transformation are faced with several and varied definition, however, the general view of adult education is synonymous with the idea of lifelong learning which envisions citizens provided with learning opportunities at all ages and in numerous contexts. i.e. at work, home, and through leisure activities, not just through formal channels such as the regular school and higher education, both often accomplished through distance learning and correspondence courses.

## **Education**

Education as general belief is the process or art of imparting knowledge, skill and judgment by an institution to an individual, groups or society. According to Durkeim (1922), the process of education was to be understood in terms of its contribution to the promotion and maintenance of the social order. In the word of Mannheim (1925) education is as a means of solving problems and social antagonists. If education is seen on this perspective then formal and informal education is vital to the community and society at large, however, proper formal education entail lots of sacrifice which the poor and poverty ridden could not avoid hence the need for adult education.

Since it is critical of course that people have a good initial education and develop skill that enable them make a living and contribute to the economy, as well a education that is both genuinely lifelong and supporting of people desire to lead fulfilling lives as part of strong and thriving countries.

## **Adult Education**

Adult Education is view from many perspectives according to the need of individual and the society.

In the view of Houle (1972), adult education is a process by which men and women, either alone, in groups of institutional settings seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skill, knowledge or their sensitiveness, moreover, it's any process by which individuals, groups or instructional try to help man and woman improve their well-being. Nzeneri (2012) however faulted the definition as there is no clear cut in respect of age, sex or marital status: To Akinpelu (2002) adult education is posited as a social institution; a common feature of every society;

affirming that nobody, however old is immune to new knowledge, new ideas and new skills, in whatever setting that may be Eleberi & Kosiona (2014).

The UNESCO's definition of adult education is all encompassing with two criticism and thus seems adult education as "the entire body of organized educational process, whatever they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges, and universities as well as in apprenticeship whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications and bring about changes in the two fold perspective of full personal developments and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development. The above generalization of adult education indicative of the attributes of adult education.

### **Attributes of Adult Education**

- It is dynamic in content
- There is a continuous process
- Individuals and groups are considered
- It is remedial in nature and contexts
- Human dignity is recognized by its methodology
- Change is prominent and paramount.
- Provide functional literacy and continuing education for adult and youth.
- It provides functional remedial education for those who cannot complete their secondary education.
- A type of education for different categories of completers of the formal educational system in order to improve third basic knowledge and skills.

The reflections above shows general studies as mass literacy, adult education and non-formal education that encourages all form of functional education given to

youth and adult outside the formal school system such as functional literacy, remedial and vocational education.

### **Objectives of Adult Education as Propounded by UNESCO**

Although there exists variance in objectives of adult education from country to countries but for this unit the United Nation Education and scientific commission (UNESCO) adopted as localized in the federal government of Nigeria in 2004 in the in the National policy of Educationist include:

- Provision of further education for different categories of completed of the formal education system in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills.
- Provision of functional literacy and continuing education for adults and youths who never had the advantages of formal education or who did not complete their primary education.
- Compensating young people who dropped out of formal school system through functional remedial education.
- Encouraging adult citizens of the country through aesthetic, cultural and civil education, enlightened to show civil responsibilities.
- Provision of in-service, on- the –job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skill and competence (FRN, 2004:19) rather, it should make learners more aware of their own social reality so that they are stimulated to endeavour to build a better society Michael & Cinneide (1987).

### **Rationale for Investments in Adult Education Centre's**

- Adult education centre's are the only further education providers with comprehensive offers that take into account the educational potentialities and

learning interests of as many people as possible in different phases of life, maintain collaborations with other institutions of lifelong learning and thereby promote the community as a residential and business location.

- It confront current social problems flexibility, help their participants to survive transitions, recruit the disadvantaged for further education, and implements regional on nationwide education, campaigns is the public interest.
- Meeting the threat of a widening social gap which related to its objectives; education for all.
- More cost-effective and returning more to society
- Implementation of the principle of lifelong learning in practice and centre's usually, competent and innovative.
- Reliability and non-partisan, non- denominational but exclusively committed to the common good. UNESCO (2010).The Belem framework for Action: Hamburg: UIL.

### **Community Development; the Concept**

Community development is a term that and equivocally defined by many students and authors alike, however, for a country. Development to be; it must be robed with this essential elements which are not in dispute but a classical model. They are: (a) the community is the unit of action (b). Emphasis is placed on the mobilization of indigenous human and natural resources. (c) internal resources are supplemented by external supports (d) all segments of the community are given an opportunity to participate and in effect to obtain increased control over decisions and

resources; (e) the approach is holistic or comprehensive, going beyond segmented efforts and the limited interests of particular group within the country; and (f) the process of decision making is rational; that is, based on identification of needs and democracy. (UNESCO 1980, Commins, 1985, Oyebamijo, 2008 & Eleberi 2012).

According to Anyanwu (1992) community development represent a bottom-up approach, to development which involve (i) local groups in organizing, planning, cooperating and implementing projects for the benefit of their community.

ii. Emphasis on indigenous human and natural resources and (iii) interaction with outside bodies; government agencies, NGO and CBN from which necessary advice and support is derived. (iv) the nurturing of local leadership and the development of the community capacity to function effectively on a self-help basins, these are pointer to the fact that country development is basically an education process and the intrinsic merit of adult education in this process cannot be overemphasized.

As such, community development represents an approach to local and regional development that emphasized investments in human resources as opposed to the more traditional approach of assisting backward regions through aids but rather the people development paradigm. It is therefore paramount to look at community development as an integrated concept and not as the combination of community and development.

### **Community and Development**

The Webster's Dictionary (1995) defined community as an organized social body, and to Anuanwu (1981) as a social group occupying a more or less defined geographical area as well based on the teaching that people have for each other and Adekola (2008) contributed thus; as a localized population which is interdependent and which develops nature's provides the essential needs to meet their common

goals and hence perpetuate their existence. In a word, it is seen as a geographical area occupied by group of people who share both, social, political, cultural, religious/ belief and economy.

While development as a concept a wider and varied scope from economic to political, social and infrastructures. However, according to Oni and Bellow (1987) development is both qualitative and quantitative, if yes, then; it would be seen as “the process of economic and social transformation within countries, conceived as almost exclusively in terms of growth. Moreover, development at individual’s level as well as groups implies increase skill, creativity, in narrative, awareness, responsibility, well-ness and increased capacity to regulate both internal and external relationship. Okunola (1998) and Eleneri (2014).

According to UNESCO (1989) Oduaran (1994) & Onyeozu (2009), community development is both, educational method and the process of social action and movement meant to improve the economic social and well-ness of the communities align with the national life and thus contribute fully to national growth and development.

### **Component of Development**

Gouleh (1985), distinguished tree basic components of development as

- i). Life sustenance, that which concerns the provision of basic needs.
- ii). Self-esteem, i.e. feeling of self-respect and independence obtainable through education and character
- iii). Freedom implies from the three evils paramount in the rural communities and the poor in urban society i.e. want ignorance and squalor.

## **Holistic Development through Country Development**

It is not easy to divorce community development from education and for that matter adult educations as well as rural development or rural transformation. One is an off-shoot of the other and the intricacy of the concepts help people in a number of ways and according to Okunola (2015) it includes:

- i). Enables the people to learn to help themselves as well grow in the process
- ii). It makes it possible for them (people of community) to define and determine their own objective.
- iii). Enables them to identify their need and work towards the satisfaction of such need.
- iv). Helps them to define new goals and to formulate the ways and means of advising them.
- v). Help them to use their resources to execute their plan and evaluate the results.
- vi). Enables them to appreciate their need for change towards better life.
- vii). View situations comparatively other than their own.
- vii). Give them deliberate intent to study and act in order to bring under control their limiting circumstances of life like; poor education, housing, health, poverty and other challenges.

Adducing meaning to the above especially when it focuses on communities and rural community for that matter, adult education is a bedrock and spring board.

## **Adult Education, Community Development and Rural Growth in Nigeria**

It is worth of note that all stakeholders for growth and development in the Nation are partner in progress from the government to several local, national, international NGO and CBO's as well as leaders, opinion leaders and the entire country are facets in rural transformation.

Major programmes for community development in Nigeria includes,

1. Agricultural extension education,
2. Community education
3. Extra-moral/ literacy education,
4. Cooperatives
5. Health development and
6. Cottage industries. Ezimah (2004), Dokubo (2012), Juhabekai (2009), and Omolewa (1991). The explanation of the above concept is done in another unit.

#### **RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES IN DEVELOPING RURAL COMMUNITIES**

Efforts have been made over the years by the government and its agencies to focus attention on various components of rural development process in Nigeria.

It is broadly classifies into three main components viz, (1) Economic (2) Social and (3) Infrastructural.

a).The economic activities in the rural areas can be bifurcated into the farm and non-farm sectors. While the farm sector dealt with agricultural production on subsistence

level, the non-farm dealt with petty trading, crafts processing, small scale; cottage industries as well as the establishment of cooperative societies.

b).The social component: The rural social structure revolves around the family as daily performs the basic social roles of procreation, socialization and educating the child. According to ILO (1976), the basic need component of the daily include: food, shelter and clothing and secondly; the essential services, provision of drinkable water, sanitation, transportation, health, security and education. While

c).The infrastructure components include: road development, rural electrification, health centres, Youth & Creation Centre's and Schools.

### **Government effort to transform rural communities in Nigeria**

In Nigeria since 1963, each regime of government conceptualizes, crystallizes and operates their respective strategies for rural development which has been in form of policies held firmly and tenaciously followed, however each of the components discussed earlier attracts a policy aimed at alleviating and eradicating of poverty in the rural areas. These policies includes: economic, social and administration whose impacts are suppose to affect the well-being and psyche of the rural dwellers tremendously.

Some of the programmes put in place in Nigeria are:

- (i). The river basin development authority
- (ii). Mass Mobilization for Economic and Social Recovery (MAMSER)
- (iii). The Directorate of Food and Rural Infrastructure (DFRI)
- (iv). National Directorate of Employment (NDE)
- (v). The Green Revolution

(vi). Operation Feed the Nation

(vii) Better Life for Rural Women and SURE-P among others.

### **Obstacles to Effective Utilization of the Policies**

- i. Over centralized
- ii. Inadequate delivery mechanism
- iii. Lack of trustworthy local co-ordination
- iv. Inappropriateness of project technology
- v. Irrelevant project content
- vi. Lack of local structures
- vii. Culture of silence-no access to voice participation in development
- viii.** Conservatism of the rural dwellers

### **Policy and Institutional Biases on Adult Education Community Development and Rural Transformation**

Acknowledging the complexity of the causes of poverty all over Africa and the Sub-Sahara region, one can accept that rural poverty is created by a number of closely linked processes that are mainly policy-induced. National as well as institutional biases exclude the poor from the benefits of development. The prominent of these is urban bias that preempts resources from rural areas and bias towards cash crops, as opposed to food crops needed by rural households. (Jaizairy, et al. 1992; Smith 1992; Lele & Adu-Nyako 1992). Whereas institutional biases are a lack of access to productive assets such as land, and water. Other includes inequitable share cropping and tenancy arrangements, lack of access to credit and

inputs and lack of grassroots institutional biases. According to Moipone (2008), large commercial farms are generally found in areas of greater potential; hence budgetary allocation sometimes favours the large sub-sectors producing for export resulting in a negative impact on pure farmers and pastoralists.

### **Redressing the Issues**

To re-address these issues, government needs to focus on

- 1).Organization of the poor cooperatives
- 2).Government decentralization of policies and budgetary allocations
- 3).Encourages planning at the local level.
- 4).Introduce full participation as the basis of rural development projects
- 5).Mass education through adult education, lifelong education and awareness campaign.
- 6).Mass mobilization through adult education and country development. Specially, rural development can realize their full potential only through motivation, active involvement and organization at the grassroots level of rural people participatory programmes according to FAO and UN-Food and Agricultural organization and the United Nation.

### **Conclusion**

Community development represents a bottom-up approach to development which placed the rural communities to strive towards self-reliance through awareness created by education. For that matter, adult and lifelong education involves and encourage rural people in meeting the need and aspiration of their own community, in tandem with such a slogan ;(train a man, build the community).

However, rural communities are associated human capacity building in Nigeria; on these bases adult education and country development are intrinsically indispensable for the transformation of the rural areas of Nigeria. Apart from the fact that certain key issues such as access to land and land tenure ship, a balanced approach is needed, a clear policy on adult education as a vital tool in community development, rural transformation and all actors will act.

### **Some Questions Raised**

- i).How can access to land be achieved within the rural set-up?
- ii).What is the biases that perpetuate poverty in the rural areas in Nigeria?
- iii).Is there difference in how people live in village and township in Nigeria?
- iv).How do people cooperate in the rural areas of Nigeria to solve their teething problems?
- v).What is the main characteristics of adult education?
- vi).What is the basic features of country development?
- vii).Why are the poor remain poor in Nigeria
- viii). Differentiate between the social, political and economic issues of development
- ix).How do they influence each other?
- x).What is the relationship between adult education, country development and rural development?

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