

## **TRAINING OF FACILITATORS OF ADULT BASIC LITERACY PROGRAMME IN SOUTHERN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

The study investigated the training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State, Nigeria. One research question and one hypothesis were formulated. Descriptive survey research was adopted for the study. The sample for the study was 1,996 respondents selected from six (6) Local Government Areas using proportionate stratified random sampling techniques. The instrument used for the study was 6 items titled: Training of Facilitators of Adult Basic Literacy Programme Questionnaire (TFABLPQ) designed by the researchers. The instrument was dully validated by three experts, two from the Department of Continuing Education and Development Studies while one from the Department of Mathematics and Computer Education (Measurement and Evaluation) unit in Enugu State University of Science and Technology. A reliability coefficient of .74 was deduced as a measure of internal consistency through the use of Cronbach Alpha Statistic. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation in testing research question while t-test statistic was used in testing hypothesis at .05 level of significance. The findings from the study revealed that facilitators are inadequately trained on effective speaking and listening skills, classroom management, innovative strategies and improvisation of literacy materials in Southern Cross River State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that facilitators should be adequately trained especially in the areas of classroom management, skills, effective speaking and listening skills, use of innovative and improvisation of learning materials for effective teaching and learning.

**Keyword:** Training, Facilitators, Adult, Basic Literacy, Programme

## **Introduction**

Basic literacy is perceived in different ways by different societies. Hornby (2001) viewed basic as the most important and necessary facts, skills, ideas from which other things develop. It is the simplest and most important thing that people need. According to Merriam (2013), basic is perceived as forming or relating to the most important part of something. Merriam maintained that it is forming or relating to the first or earliest part of something, especially basic literacy. This implies that when referring to basic literacy, it invariably means the most important and simplest skills in literacy. Ozochi (2010) opined that basic literacy deals with teaching only the rudimentary skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. It is essentially used to prepare the masses to become literate. Ozochi further stated that a literate person is one who is able to acquire the skills of reading, writing and numeracy necessary for his/ her effective functioning as an individual and as a member of the society.

Basic literacy involves the learning and acquisition of reading, writing and numeracy skills in order to enhance future performance. It is normally targeted to the most vulnerable people in the country who by either the incidence of their birth or their social and cultural peculiarities were unable to attend formal schooling. Possession of such basic literacy will enable the beneficiaries to participate and contribute meaningfully to the societies they were born into. Ugwuanyi (2015) posited that basic literacy is the minimum but adequate ability to read and write in any language. It also describes the programme designed to achieve such basic skills needed for worthwhile living and peaceful co-existence through adult basic literacy. In the word of Ugwuanyi, literacy education is a basic component of adult education and even though education is now seen as something far more extensive than literacy alone; virtually all other aspects of adult education presuppose the ability to

read and write, or are made much more effective in improving adult basic literacy.

Adult basic literacy programme is the improvement of reading, writing and arithmetic skills needed to keep a job. It is also a preparation for post-secondary courses and admissions testing. Adult basic literacy programme is also a foundation for individual and societal development and plays an important role in poverty reduction. In this regard, adult basic literacy promotion is not only at the heart of EFA and UNLD but also supports the achievement of other related international initiatives including United Nations Education for Sustainable Development (UNESD) and (MDGs). It is impossible to lay down a detailed fixed standard of adult basic literacy which will be applicable to every country in the world, since needs and conditions differ widely from one country to another (Ohio Department of Higher Education, 2015).

Adult literacy programme statistics are based on the number of those who have attended literacy classes for a given period and have gained the appropriate certificate. Delaware (2012) posited that the purpose of the adult basic literacy programme and basic education graduate programme is to increase the knowledge and competence of those who are working or will work with adult learners who lack a high school credential. The organization equally highlighted that the objectives of adult basic literacy programme is the provision of universal access to basic education including adult literacy.

Following the above objectives, the State Agency for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education performs the following functions to the smooth running of adult basic literacy programme such as: implementing the national policy on mass literacy, adult and non-formal education in the state; plan, research, organize, develop and manage state mass literacy, adult and non-formal education programme; monitor and ensure quality control of the state

programmes, set up and supervise the activities of the literacy network committees in the state; liaise with non-governmental organizations in the state for the implementation of the mass education programme; and train grassroots personnel and provide support services for adult and non-formal education programmes (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).

Training of facilitators deals with the development of personnel to make them capable and confident in their jobs, and consequently in their lives. According to Mbagwu (2014), training as a concept focuses on how to teach skills for a particular job, activity or whatever engagement people find themselves. In the word of Olise (2014), training is the systematic development of the attitude, skill and behaviour pattern required by an individual in order to perform adequately a given task. Training is designed to change the behaviour of the employees in the workplace in order to stimulate efficiency and higher performance standards. It is a process aimed at changing the behaviour in such a way that the consequence would be useful for the upliftment of both the facilitators and the adult learners.

Training is considered as a tool for human resources development. Training is about developing people as an individual and helping them to become more confident and competent in their lives and jobs. The learning process is at the core of training and the ways and opportunities for learning are numerous and varied. Agreeing with this, Peretemode (2010) stated that training is a planned organisational effort concerned with helping a facilitator acquire specific skills, knowledge, concepts, aptitude and behaviours to enable them perform more effectively on their present job. In the context of this study, training is the process of enhancing the flexibility, commitment, competencies and productivity of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme through series of learning. A facilitator is a key person in the nation's education enterprise whose quality of training could mar or

improve the educational results of the adult learners (Udofot, 2005). Udofot also suggested that teachers/facilitators should be adequately trained or retrained in order to uplift the standard of education in the country. It has been observed that there are inadequate quality and quantity of facilitators available for adult education programmes in Nigeria. The federal government recognises that educational system has a challenge of insufficient number and quality of facilitators especially in the adult education system. Nzeneri (2008) noted that one of the major impediments to effective adult education programmes is non-availability of qualified facilitators with adequate training. He also submitted that personnel from other educational system are often deployed to handle adult education activities.

Training is a multidisciplinary concept and people-oriented. Monsuru, Abisoye and Agbebaku (2014) stated that adequate training and development, compensation and reward are personal management practices that enhance facilitators' esteem, commitment to work and high productivity. According to the authors, continuous improvement is the objective of all quality systems. It is about ensuring that facilitators have expertise and skills required to make improvements and ensure that there is an organization-wide approach to the improvement of performance. The management needs to be concerned with continuous improvement of instructors through adequate investment in their training and development.

Speaking further, Monsuru et al., (2009) avowed that the agency should regularly upgrade facilitators' training to provide relevant skills, using data to improve their practices, and working collaboratively with other facilitators of adult basic literacy programme and adult learners to create a safe environment. The authors also suggested that employees' training should include: on the job training to enable the employees simultaneously carry

out their duties; off the job training to learn new skills off regular duties; external training – totally outside the organisational environment of the employees in order to equip the staff with emergent strategic planning and information system. External training may include (international) seminars, strategic management workshops, Non-governmental Organisations organised conferences and technical assistance amongst others.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2008) emphasises that government should sponsor and organise seminars, conferences and workshops for adult education instructors training and development on current adult education principles, theories and practices. It is an organized process for increasing the knowledge and skills of any employees. NMEC (2008) identified improved infrastructural facilities provisions (classrooms, learning/instructional materials), investment in human capital through training and improved honoraria to facilitators as potent strategies for the improvement of adult basic literacy programme.

Training and retraining of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme forms a very vital aspect in achieving educational goals in Cross River State. In other words, recruiting facilitators is not an end in itself but a means to an end. Therefore, improving and maintaining set goals and standard presupposes that facilitators are adequately prepared for such a programme. Olojede (2013) reported that training and development is one very important way of enhancing high performance in workers (facilitators) by upholding their knowledge continually through exposure to latest research. The success of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme is largely dependent on the level of its monitoring.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of this study is to assess the training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State.

### **Research Question**

1. What is the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State?

### **Hypothesis**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of facilitators and adult learners on the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 19,959 comprising 19812 adult learners and 147 facilitators drawn from thirty adult literacy centres who are involved in the training. Multi stage sampling technique was adopted for this study. Simple random sampling techniques was used to select 6 local government areas from the study area, proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select 30 literacy centres. The proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select 1,920 learners and 76 facilitators. A self-developed questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection titled: Training of Facilitators of Adult Basic Literacy Programme questionnaire (TFABLPQ) designed by the researchers. The instrument had two sections, A and B. Section A contained respondents' demographic information, while section B contained 6 items on research questions. The instrument was dully validated by three experts, two from the Department of Continuing Education and Development Studies while one from the Department of Mathematics and Computer Education (Measurement and Evaluation) unit in Enugu State University of Science and Technology. A reliability coefficient of .74 was deduced as a measure of internal consistency through the use of Cronbach Alpha Statistic. The questionnaire was personally

administered by the researchers with three research assistants trained for the purpose. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer research question while t-test statistics was used to answer hypothesis. Here, the mean score of 2.50 was used as criterion for accepting and rejecting items. Items with mean score

below 2.50 were rejected while mean score above 2.50 were accepted.

## Results

### Research Question

1. What is the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State?

**Table 1: Summary of Mean rating and standard deviation showing the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State**

S/N	Item Statement	N = 1996		
		$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec.
1	Training of facilitators on effective speaking and listening skills.	2.23	0.06	NA
2	Training of facilitators on how to adapt to different styles of adult basic literacy programme.	2.41	0.08	NA
3	Training of facilitators on classroom management skills.	2.44	0.02	NA
4	Training of facilitators is conducted periodically.	2.35	0.04	NA
5	Training of facilitators on the innovative strategies to use literacy materials for effective teaching-learning delivery.	2.06	0.99	NA
6	Training of facilitators on the improvisation of literacy materials to enhance learning.	2.02	0.67	NA
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.13</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>NA</b>

**Key:**  $\bar{x}$  - Mean, SD – Standard deviation, DEC – Decision, VHA-Very high adequate, HA- High adequate, A-Adequate, NA-Not adequate

The result of the study as presented in Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviations of the respondents on the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State. The result shows that items 1-6 have mean ratings of 2.23, 2.41, 2.44, 2.35, 2.02 and 2.13 with standard deviations of 0.06, 0.08, 0.02, 0.04, 0.99 and 0.67 respectively. Since the mean ratings are below the criterion level of 0.05 set as the benchmark for accepting an item, this means that the respondents disagreed with the item statements. The grand mean of 2.13 with a standard deviation of 0.24 means that facilitators are inadequately trained on effective speaking and listening skills, classroom management, innovative strategies and improvisation of literacy materials.

## Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of facilitators and adult learners on the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State.



**Table 2: Summary of t-test analysis of the mean ratings of facilitators and learners of adult basic literacy programme on the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State**

Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t-cal	Sig. (2-tailed)	DS
Facilitator	76	2.27	0.36	1994	.99	0.32	NS
Adult learners	1920	2.28	0.57				

The result of the study as presented in Table 2, shows the t-test analysis of the significant difference between the mean ratings of facilitators and learners of adult basic literacy programme on the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State. Result shows that a t-value of 0.99 with degree of freedom of 1994 and a probability value of 0.32 were obtained. Since the probability value of 0.32 is greater than 0.05 set as level of significant for testing the null hypothesis, this means that the result is not significant. The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of facilitators and learners of adult basic literacy programme on the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State is therefore not rejected. Inference drawn is that the responses of facilitators and learners of adult basic literacy programme did not differ significantly on the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State.

### Discussion of Findings

The finding of this study as presented in Table 1 showed that Facilitators are inadequately trained on effective speaking and listening skills, classroom management, innovative strategies and improvisation of literacy materials. In line with the above findings, Nzeneri (2008) states that one major impediment to effective adult basic literacy programme is non-availability of qualified facilitators with adequate training. Supporting, Taiher (2006) opined that

facilitators of adult basic literacy programme are inadequately trained especially on classroom management and improvisation of literacy materials. The result also revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of facilitators and learners of adult basic literacy programme on the adequacy of training of facilitators of adult basic literacy programme in Southern Cross River State.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that facilitators are inadequately trained on effective speaking and listening skills, classroom management, innovative strategies and improvisation of literacy materials in Southern Cross River State.

### Recommendations

Based on the conclusion the following recommendations were made that:

1. Facilitators should be adequately trained especially in the areas of classroom management, skills, effective speaking and listening skills, use of innovative and improvisation of learning materials for effective teaching and learning.
2. Seminars, workshops and conferences should be organized for facilitators regularly to enable them make meaningful contributions for the effective implementation of adult literacy programme in the state.

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