



ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE TOWARDS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

This study examined adult education programmes for sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State. Two research questions generated from two research objectives were used for the study and two hypotheses were tested for the study. Descriptive Survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was anchored on Conscientization Theory. The population of this study consisted of 52,060 members of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) of some communities in twelve (12) Local Government Areas of Rivers State. Twenty (20) Community Based Organizations were selected from each of the selected Local Government Areas of Rivers State which amounted to two hundred and forty (240) Community Based Organizations selected for this study. The sample size was 2,603 members of Community-Based Organizations in the selected Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions with the reliability index of 0.87 while the hypotheses were tested with Z-Test Statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The findings from the study showed that peace education and literacy programmes are aspects of adult education programmes that contributed to the promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in the areas of study. It was recommended that peace education, awareness programme and empowerment programme should be sustained to sensitize the youths on the danger of indulging in any form of vices that will hamper the peace and development of their communities and become useful to the society.

Keywords: Adult Education, Peace Education, Functional Literacy.

Introduction

Adult education programmes for sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State is a very necessary proposition based on the fact that conflict has become a natural phenomenon in every human society. There is bound to be discord, dissensions, rift as people interact and seek for personal and family survival (Ugwu, 2013). A number of issues can cause



disharmony, violence and divisions in the society but if these issues are not properly addressed, it can lead to total disintegration and devastation of lives and properties. Most Local Government Areas in Rivers State have been seen as violent zones due to regular communal conflict, incessant inter cult clashes and abduction of people which led to the annihilation of lives, financial institutions, commercial institutions, educational institutions and health institutions etc as well as the evacuation of people and multi-national companies from the territory to other peaceful areas (Dikewoha, 2016). These problems have made it difficult for sustainable community development to strive as well as achieve its goals in Rivers State and beyond. Tobith (2005:21) looked at adult education in the form of man-power development “as a means of managing conflict”. Adult education is an instrument for social integration and the cornerstone of any nation that guarantees social harmony and the entire enhancement of the living conditions of the people intellectually, economically, occupationally, politically, socially and culturally. Consequently, the people of Rivers State will learn to shun all forms of violence and amicably address issues responsible for the breach of peace in their various communities.

Rivers State is one of the thirty six (36) states in Nigeria that is characterized by crisis and cult clashes leading to the underdevelopment of many communities in the area. Many communities in Rivers State have suffered underdevelopment resulting from chieftaincy tussle, kidnapping, political violence, illiteracy, environmental degradation, insufficient health services, erratic electricity supply, poverty, inadequate employment opportunities, poor agricultural output, lack of potable water, community crisis, cultism etc (Ugwu, 2013; Ihejirika, 2007). In an effort to restore a peaceful environment and interaction in Rivers State, government and non-governmental agencies have introduced suitable adult education programmes such as peace education programme, functional literacy programme, etc. The investigation of these adult education programmes for sustainable peace towards community development is the rationale for this study. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- determine the extent of the contributions of peace education in the promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State.
 - examine the role of functional literacy programme in the promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State.
- The following research questions guided the study:
- To what extent does peace education contribute to the promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State?
 - What are the roles of functional literacy programmes in the promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State?



Two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significance level:
HO₁: There is no significance difference in the mean rating of male and female members of community-based organizations on the level at which peace education can promote sustainable peace for community development in Rivers State,
HO₂: There is no significance difference in the mean rating of male and female members of community-based organizations on the extent to which functional literacy programme can promote sustainable peace for community development in Rivers State.

Conceptual Review

Adult Education

Adult education is an antique venture considered to be a medium to reshape and restructure the individual and community economically, socially, technologically and culturally. Nzeneri in Ezimah (2004) noted that adult education in its ramifications accommodates all of the forms – formal, non-formal and informal aspect of education. Adult education is a process and agent of liberation, an instrument for adjustment, for personal and national development, for cultural consciousness and integration, for conscientization and group dynamism. Asuka (2002) defined adult education as a process of continuing enlightenment, orientation and re-education of adult population in society. Houle in Ezimah (2004:9) defines adult education as a “process by which men and women (alone, in groups, or in institutional settings seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skill, their knowledge or their sensitiveness; any process by which individuals, groups or institutions try to help men and women improve in these ways”. Part of the objectives of adult education of the Nigerian’s National Policy on Education (2013) include to provide functional literacy education for adults who have never had the advantage of any formal education and to give the adult citizens of the country necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment. The impact of adult education is felt through awareness creation in seminars, workshops, schooling and information communication technology to help men and women gain sufficiently especially on matters that patterns to health, sex, deadly diseases that have limited the numerical strength of social service personnel of any country The people of Rivers State can witness new changes needed in their lives and community through the influence of adult education which has made them improve on their shortcomings and collaboration in stimulating sustainable peace for community development.

Peace

Peace in the context of community development is a state of public tranquility from conflict and warfare. Peace according to Umoh (2015) is not just the absence of war or direct, physical violence but also the presence of conditions of well-being, cooperation and just relationships within the human family as



well as harmony with the natural world. The absence of war, and /or direct violence is merely negative peace as long as oppression, injustice and human rights violation are present. Positive peace implies social, positive interpersonal relations, appreciations of diversity, participation of all in common affairs, and harmony with the natural world (Dokubo, 2015).

Community Development

Community development is the planned evolution of all aspects of community wellbeing - economic, social, environmental, political and cultural (Eya, Ugwu & Alu 2006). The aim of community development as provided by Anyanwuin Oyebamiji and Adekola (2008) is to initiate self-generative, self-sustaining and enduring process of growth. Hence, to bring about the desired change for better living, the willing cooperation of people becomes imperative. Citing Frank and Smith, Ugwu (2013:202) noted that in community development, the important thing is that the process makes community members: (a) become more responsible (b) organize and plan together (c) develop healthy options (d) empower themselves and increase their skills (e) reduce ignorance, poverty and suffering (f) create employment and economic, cultural and environmental goals and above all, improve quality of life. The people of Rivers State experience community development if there is availability of development indices as good roads, schools, hospitals etc. This is possible when the people themselves are developed mentally, emotionally to become the builder of their community and responsible for their wellbeing. When these aforementioned changes live longer to be useful and beneficial to the future generation, sustainability have taken place. Hence, the people of Rivers State need to harness their human skills, creativity and natural resources to achieve community development.

Contributions of Peace Education to Promotion of Sustainable Peace Towards Community Development in Rivers State.

Peace building is the task of every human being and the challenge of the human family. Peace education is essentially transformative and a pathway to culture of peace (Kester, 2009). It cultivates the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that seek to transform people's illusive mindset and negative attitudes of youths that have either created or exacerbate violent conflicts (Oyitso, 2013). It seeks this transformation by building awareness and understanding, developing concern and challenging personal and social action that will enable people to live, relates and creates conditions and system that actualize non-violence, justice, environmental care and other peace values (Ferrer, 2005). The inclusion of peace education curriculum in all educational and developmental initiatives is germane to sustainable peace. This is relevant in such context as the Niger Delta, which Rivers State is part of, where diverse factors that include environmental insecurity, domination, oppression and



exploitation, lack of economic skills and empowerment opportunities, contribute to generating social conflict. Because these factors are inimical to human integral wellbeing and dignity, change must be holistic to boost the emergence of a peaceful and prosperous country. It is very important; therefore, that Niger Deltans especially Rivers people in all works of life should make necessary efforts in participatory approaches to development, to make sure that illiterate citizens receive education, and to accommodate the creativity potential of ordinary men and women in the society. Of course, investing in the future of the Nigeria child is vital to ensuring a better society and by extension better for good of all, considering the values of education (Nwobueze, 2018).

Roles of Functional Literacy Programme in the Promotion of Sustainable Peace towards Community Development in Rivers State

Functional literacy is the first task and stage to embark upon if sustainable community development must be guaranteed. Socio-economic development cannot be sustained in any community or developing nation like Nigeria if there is no advancement on literacy level among adult members (Usman, 2015). Functional literacy programme is geared towards helping illiterate members of a community acquire the ability to read and write and enumerate and linked with whatever occupation or trade they are engaged in (Olomukori, 2015). Intensive literacy programme helps to produce literate people in the society. Literacy education has the potential for sustaining development programmes since a literate population has always been more, resourceful, skilled, enlightened, focused patriotic and more mindful of their environment than others. A literate society is therefore more likely to preserve and protect its infrastructural facilities as well as every other development programmes and projects provided for them in their own communities. Ake in Omedia (2009) asserted that the development of indigenous manpower is to serve as the propelling force for national growth and development. This is because human resources are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organizations and carry forward national development

Theoretical Underpinning

This study is anchored on theory of conscientization by Paulo Friere (1970), and was considered appropriate to explain adult education programmes as tool for liberation of man and the society, for sustainable peace towards community development. The term “conscientization” implies “conscious raising” and “critical consciousness”. It is a socio-political educative tool that engages learners in questioning the nature of their historical and social situations, which Freire addressed as “reading the world”. The relevance of theory of conscientization will help the people in Rivers State to extricate



themselves from ignorance, dependency and social conflict responsible for their backwardness and realize the need for peaceful co-existence and team spirit in order to refuse all manners of marginalization and social vices.

Methods

Descriptive survey is the research design adopted for this study. This survey becomes relevant in the study to determine how adult education programmes promote sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers state. The population of this study consist of 52,060 members of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) of some communities in twelve (12) Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for this study. In the first stage, random sampling technique was used to select twelve (12) Local Government Areas out of twenty three (23) Local Government Areas of Rivers State. In the second stage, four (4) Local Government Areas each, in tripartite arrangement were randomly selected from the twelve (12) selected Local Government Areas to represent the three (3) Senatorial Districts of Rivers State. In the third stage, twenty (20) Community Based Organizations were selected from each of the selected Local Government Areas of Rivers State which amounted to two hundred and forty (240) Community Based Organizations selected for this study. In the fourth Stage, proportionate sampling technique was chosen to get five percent (5%) equal representation of the population of each of the Community-Based Organization (CBOs) due to the fact that the entire population was relatively high. This finally gave a sample of 2,603members of Community-Based Organizations in the selected Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

The research instrument that was employed for the collection of data was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher to conform to the research questions. The questionnaire comprised of A and B sections. Section A provided the details of the respondents' bio-demographical data while section B dealt with items that related to the variables of the study. The questionnaire was structured on four point Likert scale to include: strongly agreed (SA)=4 points, Agreed(A)=3 points, Disagree(D)= 2 points and strongly disagree (SD)=1 point, Very high extent (VHE) (4 points); High extent-HE (3 points); Low Extent-LE (2 Points) and Very low extent- VLE (1 point). It was entirely the respondents' volition to indicate by ticking the option considered to be the appropriate answer.

The validity of the instrument was ascertained by experts in the field of Community Development of Adult and Non-Formal Education option in the Department of Curriculum Studies and Instructional Technology, Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Rumuolumeni Port Harcourt. Their corrections and suggestions led to the modifications and better reconstruction of the questionnaire. The essence was to make sure that the instrument corroborate with the research objectives and research questions, which will ascertain that data collected was measured appropriately. The reliability of the instrument was determined through a test- retest method. The instrument was administered randomly to 15 respondents by the researcher outside the area sampled for the study. The same respondents were



given same instrument after two weeks interval. Their responses were correlated and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the reliability. Reliability index of 0.87 was obtained. The high reliability index of the instrument shows that the instrument was reliable to be used for data collection. The researcher administered the questionnaire to the respondents who are members of Community Based Organizations within the selected communities under study, with the help of five (5) research assistants who are beneficiaries of Adult education programmes. Two thousand six hundred and three (2,603)copies of the questionnaire were administered, retrieved and analysed. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions. The limit for accepting the items was 2.50 and above which signifies agreed while mean score less than 2.50 indicates disagreement. However, Z-Test Statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Respondents answer to contributions of peace education to promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State

S/N	Items	Response (N = 2603)				Total	\bar{x}	STD	Remarks
		SA	A	D	SD				
1	Peace education helps to promote a peaceful co-existence among community members in actualizing community development.	702 (2808)	1277 (3831)	454 (908)	170 (170)	2603 (7717)	2.96	0.84	Agreed
2	Peace education has the potential of minimizing conflict in the community.	381 (1524)	977 (2931)	1245 (2490)	0 (0)	2603 (6945)	2.67	0.72	Agreed
3	Peace education helps to strengthen relationship between multinational companies and host communities.	884 (3536)	1224 (3672)	403 (806)	92 (92)	2603 (8106)	3.11	0.79	Agreed
4	Peace education promotes the value of human dignity, liberty and mutual respect between aggrieved parties.	595 (2380)	1693 (5079)	275 (550)	40 (40)	2603 (8049)	3.09	0.62	Agreed
5	Peace education paves way for a just and egalitarian society	61 (244)	1137 (3411)	1405 (2810)	0 (0)	2603 (6465)	2.48	0.54	Disagreed
6	Peace education advocates for dialogue mediation and compromise as measures for settling dispute.	268 (1072)	1176 (3528)	1159 (2318)	0 (0)	2603 (6918)	2.66	0.66	Agreed
Grand mean							2.83	0.69	

Criterion Mean= 2.50

The above result in Table 1with grand mean scores of 2.83 shows that these are the contributions of peace education to promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State.

**Table 2:** Respondents answer to roles of functional literacy programmes in promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State

S/ N	Items	Response (N = 2603)				Total	\bar{x}	STD	Remarks
		SA	A	D	SD				
7	Functional literacy helps people to acquire skills that are useful for promotion of sustainable peace towards promoting community development.	198 (792)	1441 (4323)	873 (1746)	91 (91)	2603 (6952)	2.67	0.67	Agreed
8	Functional literacy helps people to acquire skills needed for community development.	45 (180)	1382 (4146)	1033 (2066)	143 (143)	2603 (6535)	2.51	0.63	Agreed
9	Functional literacy programme helps illiterate members of a community acquire the ability to read and write, enumerate and linked with occupation on trade that are engaged in for community development.	62 (248)	1405 (4215)	911 (1822)	225 (255)	2603 (6510)	2.50	0.69	Agreed
10	Functional literacy leads to development of indigenous manpower to serve as a propelling force for national peace, growth and development.	49 (196)	1279 (3837)	1275 (2550)	0 (0)	2603 (6583)	2.53	0.54	Agreed
11	Functional literacy expunges illiteracy social inequality and injustice and help people to think in the right direction of promoting peace and community development.	229 (916)	1505 (4515)	697 (1394)	17 (172)	2603 (6997)	2.69	0.72	Agreed
12	Functional literacy helps to develop the consciousness of people as to be critically aware of their problems and their environment.	48 (192)	1567 (4701)	988 (1976)	0 (0)	2603 (6869)	2.64	0.52	Agreed
							2.59	0.63	
Grand mean									

Criterion Mean= 2.50



The grand mean of 2.59 in Table 2 above indicates that these are the roles of functional literacy programme in the promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State.

Table 3: *z-test analysis on difference between the mean rating of male and female members of community-based organizations on the level at which peace education can promote sustainable peace for community development*

VARIABLES	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	Z-cal	Z-crit	Level of Sig.	Decision
Male	1501	2.83	0.30	2601	0.308	1.96	0.05	H02 Accepted
Female	1102	2.82	0.31					

Table 3 indicates that the mean score of 2.83 for male were higher than the female respondents which was $\bar{x} = 2.82$. The z-cal (0.308) is less than z-crit (1.96), so null hypothesis one is accepted. Therefore, there is no significance difference in the mean rating of male and female members of community-based organizations on the level at which peace education can promote sustainable peace for community development in Rivers State.

Table 4: *z-test analysis on difference in the mean rating of male and female members of community-based organizations on the extent to which functional literacy programme can promote sustainable peace for community development*

VARIABLES	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	Z-cal	Z-crit	Level of Sig.	Decision
Male	1501	2.59	.28	2601	0.637	1.96	0.05	H03 Accepted
Female	1102	2.58	.28					

Result in Table 4 reveals that the mean score of male and female members of community-based organizations are 2.59 and 2.58. And that the standard deviations of their scores are 0.28 and 0.28 respectively. However, when this means difference was subjected to an independent z-test statistics, it was observed that the z-cal (0.637) is less than z-crit (1.96), so null hypothesis two is accepted. Hence, there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female members of community-based organizations on the extent to which functional literacy programme can promote sustainable peace for community development in Rivers State.



Summary of Findings

1. The grand mean scores of 2.83 shows that these are the contributions of peace education to promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State. Hence, there is no significance difference in the mean rating of male and female members of community-based organizations on the level at which peace education can promote sustainable peace for community development in Rivers State
2. The grand mean of 2.59 implies that these are the roles of functional literacy programme in promotion of sustainable peace towards community development in Rivers State. Hence, there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female members of community-based organizations on the extent to which functional literacy programme can promote sustainable peace for community development in Rivers State

Discussion

The result in table 1 revealed that peace education helps to promote a peaceful co-existence among community members in actualizing community development and has the potential of minimizing conflict in the community, promotes the value of human dignity, liberty and mutual respect, change their lives, their perception, mindset towards a life of peace and social harmony. This is in tandem with Kester (2009) who commented that peace education is geared towards establishing a world devoid of arms where communities and society can co-exist in relationships and structure based on values and principles of non-violence to guarantee sustainable community development. Therefore, peace education is critical in addressing the underlying causes of conflict and violence while providing the skills needed to build and maintain peaceful societies. It helps to bridge divide by teaching mutual respect and understanding and by emphasizing the importance of inclusion and diversity. It can also teach individuals the skills to peacefully mediate disputes, build strong communities, and promote dialogue and active participation. It instills values such as empathy, tolerance, and justice, which foster a culture of peace that is conducive to long-term societal and economic growth.

Table 2 revealed that functional literacy helps people to acquire skills that are useful for promotion of sustainable peace towards promoting community development. It helps people to acquire skills needed for community development and illiterate members of a community acquire the ability to read and write, enumerate and linked with occupation on trade that are engaged in for community development with mean score greater than 2.50. Ihejirika (2007) noted that human resources constitute the ultimate basis for wealth of a nation while capital and natural resources are passive factors of production. Adult education therefore, becomes the vehicle of socio-economic and political development of any society. Through improved local literacy, the potential for sustainable community development is increased. Communities



become empowered to take action and develop solutions to local issues. This includes the ability to obtain and understand information on topics such as healthcare, economic development, education, energy, and environmental protection. With an understanding of these topics, local people are better able to identify and address their local problems.

Conclusion

The findings prove that peace education and functional literacy are aspects of adult education programmes that promote harmony for sustainable peace towards community development. Thus, there was no significant difference between male and female members of community-based organizations' opinions towards sustainable community development in the study area. As a result, when the people co-exist and engaged in meaningful activities, they are bound to achieve development goal of their community

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. There should be peace education and awareness programme to sensitize the youths on the danger of indulging in any form of vices that will hamper the peace and development of their communities and the need for peaceful co-existence and tolerance. This will go a long way reducing conflict in the society.
2. The three levels of government – local, state and national should support adult education programmes to eradicate illiteracy in the society, which will lead to development of indigenous man-power to serve as a propelling force for national peace, growth and development.

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