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FACTORS AFFECTING ACTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN ADULT LITERACY AND NON FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN ANAMBRA STATE

Dr. Uche J. Obidiegwu

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FACTORS AFFECTING ACTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN ADULT LITERACY AND NON FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN ANAMBRA STATE

Obidiegwu, Uche J. Ph.D

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to find out factors affecting active community participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes in Anambra state. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The design was descriptive involving 475 respondents selected from participants in the UNICEF assisted adult literacy and non formal education programme through disproportionate stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected using a 27 item questionnaire. Mean scores were used in answering the research questions, while t-test was used in testing the hypothesis at 0.5 level of significance. The findings indicated among others that lack of adequate funds, Lack of financial support and lack of facilities were the key factors affecting active participation in adult literacy and non formal education programme. It was recommended among others that Anambra State government through the Anambra State Agency for Mass Literacy and Non-formal Education should provide micro-credit equipment, facilities and instructional materials for participants in adult and non-formal programme.

Introduction

Literacy is a necessity to human development, hence, the saying, without literacy, there is no development. Literacy is the key to health, wealth and happiness. International agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF and UNO have always spoken of eradicating illiteracy as if it were a disease, of waging war on illiteracy as if it were an enemy. This is to show that illiteracy hinders development and poses great problem to any nation that has greater percentage of the population as illiterates.

In Nigeria, almost half of the adult population cannot read and write. According to Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (2003), 45 percent of the population aged 15 years and older cannot read and write. More women (56%) than men (33%) are illiterates and the illiteracy rate is higher in rural areas (53%) than in urban areas (29%). United Nations Report (2006) showed that Nigeria ranks first in dropout rate in the world. In addition, seven million primary children were out of school due to poor family background. Furthermore, 54.4 percent of the Nigerian population earns less than N135 per day. An educated nation does not have to worry about poverty and underdevelopment since education is a tool towards enhancing development. (Oyedeji, Ornolewa & Asidu 1982). Development of any nation depends not only on the number of infrastructural facilities available in that nation or natural resources she possesses but by quality of human resources (Ani, 2002). As stated by Fadeji and Folaranmi (2002) education for development implies education on part-time basis given to adults of all education backgrounds who are already working, but seek intellectual development. Such education for development which is emphasized by United
Nations (2006) Oyedeji, Omolewa and Asiedu (1982), Ani 2002, Fadeyi and Folaramni 2002 can be seen in no other type of education than adult and non-formal education. The objectives of adult and non-formal education and the importance accorded to it in Section 6 of the National Policy on Education (2004) are summarized as follows: To provide formal education in order to improve basic knowledge, skills and competencies of people who were not opportune to do so in the past. To provide vocational, in-service and on-the-job training for professionals in order to improve their skills and to provide necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment. Adult education is a means of sharing the latest and most pertinent knowledge with people. Through adult education, human resources can be developed to match technological improvement. Harbison (1971) explained adult and non-formal education as a nation-wide learning system which has become internationally accepted and experimented with, not only as an alternative to schooling but also an appropriate educational response to the learning needs of people. Adult education advocates life-long education process from ‘cradle to grave’ which enables people to face challenges of their time, update their knowledge, skills and competencies and maintain right attitude to work (Obi, 1987)

Problem of the Study
In pursuance of the objectives of adult and non-formal education, the federal, state and local governments have embarked on so many programmes in order to provide opportunities for organized learning for adults throughout the nation. Series of apprenticeship educational programmes are mounted by the National Directorate of Employment for youths and adults in order to enable them develop occupational skills for employment according to their talents, aptitudes and interest.
In Anambra State, in 1997, UNICEF tried to address the problem of dropout of school by making provision for out of school youths and women to get enrolled in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes. Opportunities were made for them to attend classes at time and place that were convenient for them. This was done in order to make it possible for them to attend their private endeavours. Despite all efforts by the government and UNICEF, studies (Esenjjor, 1992; Ani, 2002; UNICEF, 2003; Onwudike, 2007) still show evidence of problems encountered by participants and low participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes. This study therefore intends to find out factors affecting active community participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programme in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study was to find out factors affecting active community participation in adult literacy and non formal education in Anambra state.

Research Questions
The following research questions guided the study:
1. To what extent are the identified factors affecting active community participation in adult literacy and non-formal education in Anambra State
2. To what extent could the identified strategies be adopted for active participation in adult and non-formal education programmes in Anambra State?

**Hypotheses**
The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.5 level of significance:

**H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the factors affecting their active participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes.

**H₀₂:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of urban and rural respondents on the factors affecting their active participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes.

**Methodology**
The population of the study consisted of 3,918 participants in the UNICEF-assisted adult literacy and non-formal education programme. It included 143 instructors, 3,551 learners, 32 head instructors and 192 village education committee members.

The samples of the study are 475 participants drawn from the population. It comprised of 50 instructors, 300 learners, 25 head instructors and 100 village education committee members selected using disproportion stratified random sampling technique.

The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire on the factors affecting active community participation in adult and non-formal education in Anambra State (FACPANE). It was constructed by the researcher from literature and with the aid of some experts in the Department of Adult Education and Education Psychology in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The FACPANE has 27 items organized under three sections. Section ‘A’ addressed demographic data of the respondents, section ‘B’ sought information on the factors affecting active community participation in adult literacy and non-formal education while section ‘C’ sought information on strategies that could be adopted for active participation in adult literacy and non-formal education. In section ‘B’ and ‘C’ the response format adopted for the study was the five point likert type rating scale as follows:

- **Very much extent (VME)**: 5 Points
- **Much Extent (ME)**: 4 Points
- **Undecided (UD)**: 3 Points
- **Little Extent (LE)**: 2 Points
- **No Extent (NE)**: 1 Point

The instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Adult Education and Education Psychology in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The internal consistency of the FACPANE determined using Cronbach Coefficient Alpha was found to be high - 0.89

**Data Collection and Analysis**
Copies of the questionnaire for the study were administered by the researcher and two research assistants to 475 respondents and all were collected and used for the analysis of the study. Items with values below 3.50 were interpreted negatively. The following
boundary limits of numbers were used for analyzing the research questions.

4.50 - 5.00 = 5 Very Much Extent
3.50 – 4.49 = 4 Much Extent
2.50 – 3.49 = 3 Undecided
1.50 – 2.49 = 2 Little Extent
0.50 – 1.49 = 1 No Extent

In taking decisions a null hypothesis was rejected if a calculated t-ratio was greater than or equal to the critical t-ratio at .05 level of significant. Otherwise it will be accepted.

**Presentation and Analysis of Data**

**Research Question 1**

To what extent are the identified factors affecting community participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes in Anambra State?

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lack of financial support from the government</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>VHE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lack of adequate fund to support activities of the programme</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>VHE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bad leadership</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>UD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Health problems</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>UD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Family problems</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>LE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Not interested in learning new skills</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>LE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Satisfied with acquired skill</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>LE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lack of facilities for learning</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>VHE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Difficulty in mobilizing learners to enroll in the programme</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>UD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lack of qualified personnel that handles the programme</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lack of awareness by the communities</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>UD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Inability to cope with new skills</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>UD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Satisfied with acquired skill</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>UD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Great percentage of illiterates in your community</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Belief that there is no gain in learning a skill</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>UD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Belief that there is more gain in buying and selling business</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Belief that learning a new skill takes long time</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Fear of failure</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>UD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows results of data collected in respect of possible factors affecting active community participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes. It shows that lack of adequate fund, lack of financial support from the government, lack of facilities for learning, great number of illiterates in communities, lack of qualified personnel that handles the programme, belief that it takes long time to learn a skill and choice of buying and selling as better business are factors affecting communities in
Anambra State while participating in adult and non-formal education. They have mean points of 4.58, 4.52, 4.51, 3.87, 3.67, 3.51 and 3.50 respectively. The respondents identified family problems, no interest in learning new skills, satisfied with acquired skills as factors affecting them to a little extent. The items have mean points of 1.55, 2.11, and 1.65 respectively. They were however undecided on the following factors: Bad leadership, health problems, difficulty in mobilizing learners, lack of awareness by the community, inability to cope with new skills, satisfied with acquired skills, belief that there is no gain in learning a skill and fear of failure. The items have mean points of 3.21, 3.10, 2.57, 3.00, 3.02, 2.81, 3.03 and 2.87 respectively.

Research Question 2
To what extent could the identified strategies be adopted for active participation in adult and non-formal education programmes in Anambra State?

Table 2
Means Scores on the Strategies that could be Adopted for Active Participation in Adult and Non-formal Education Programmes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items No</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Advocacy visits to community leaders</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Honour to good leaders</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Training of community members on leadership, planning management, monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Embarking on health campaigns by the government</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>LE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Embarking on literacy awareness campaigns by the government</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>UD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Provision of fund and necessary facilities by the government and international agencies</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>VHE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Sensitizing and mobilizing of community members on the importance of functional literacy and non-formal education</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Special training of instructors and village education committee members that messages the programmes</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Providing micro-credit for participants in the programme</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>VHE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Helping community members to learn skills related to their needs</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that the respondents accepted all but one enlisted strategies as suitable for active participation of community members in adult literacy and non-formal education. The strategies include the following: Provision of micro credits for adult learners, provision of fund and necessary facilities by the government and international agencies, training of community members on leadership and management skills, honouring good leaders, sensitizing and mobilizing community members on the importance of functional literacy and non-formal education. Others
include helping community members to learn skills related to their needs, special training for instructors and village education committee members, advocacy visits to community leaders and embarking on literacy awareness campaign.

**Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents on factors affecting their active participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programme.

**Table 3**

**T-test on the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Respondents on the Factors Affecting their Participation in Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Education Programme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-crit.</th>
<th>p&gt;.05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>N.S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 3 indicate that at .05 level of significance and 473 degree of freedom, the calculated t-0.25 is less than the critical t-196. Therefore the first null hypothesis is accepted. The researcher then concluded that male and female respondents do not differ significantly in their views on the factors affecting their participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of urban and rural respondents on the factors affecting their participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes.
The data in Table 4 indicates that at .05 level of significance and 473 degree of freedom, the calculated \( t = 1.51 \) is less than the critical \( t = 1.96 \). The second null hypothesis is accepted. The researcher then concludes that the mean scores of the respondents from urban and rural locations do not differ significantly on factors affecting their participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programme.

**Discussion of Findings**

The results of analysis in Table 1, identified lack of adequate fund, lack of financial support and lack of facilities as the three major factors affecting activities of adult literacy and non-formal education programme. This is in-line with the report of Ani (2002), Egenti (2005), Development Goals Report (2005) and Onwudiwe (2007) which found lack of adequate funds and facilities as major factors militating against active community participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programme. It was further revealed in the study that high illiteracy level in communities and lack of qualified personnel’s that handles the programme militate against participation in the programme. These finding are similar with findings of Egenti (2005) but contrary with Onwudiwe (2007). However, the findings that it takes long to learn a skill and preference for buying and selling may be associated with the mad rush for money and wrong value system with youths of Anambra state.

The result of analysis in Table 2, agreed that eight out of nine enlisted strategies could be adopted for active community participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programme. These findings corroborate with the findings of Fafunwa (1992) and Omoniyi (2001). From the result of test of hypotheses presented in Table 2 and 3, it was found that the factors affecting active community participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes did not differ significantly as a result of gender and location of the learning centers. This implies that the same factors affect both male and female and urban and rural respondents in the programme and so any strategy adopted for active participation should be applicable to all groups, regardless of their gender and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>( \bar{X} )</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-crit.</th>
<th>p&gt;.05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>N.S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion
The study concludes that there are many factors affecting active community participation in adult literacy and non-formal education programmes among which lack of funds and facilities are prominent.

Recommendations
Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were made:
- The Anambra State government should adequately fund the state agency for mass literacy, adult and non-formal education for improved mass literacy delivery in the state.
- The Anambra State government through the Anambra State agency for mass literacy, adult and non-formal education should provide micro-credit, equipment, facilities and instructional materials for participants in adult and non-formal education programme.
- Anambra State government should intensify re-orientation and building of capacities through training and retraining of personnel who handle adult and non-formal education programmes
- Re-orientation is also required in the lives of youths to enable them shun the get-rich-quick syndrome and embrace life skills which will enable them face challenges of the present era.
- Literacy campaigns should be mounted and efforts should be made to resuscitate the dwindling number of basic literacy centers in communities in order to increase the level of literacy in the state.
References


Fadeyi, T.O. & Folaranmi, O.O. Adult education the core of the department. In M.A. Lanre Omole & A. Sarumi (Eds). 50 years of adult education at Ibadan: University of Ibadan. commission


Abstract

The study focused on steps to be used for developing standardized tests. Construction of good test takes much time and energy and requires adequate planning. However, it is necessary that comprehensive systematic and objective method be followed in order to obtain good estimate of learners’ achievement and consequently take appropriate decision on them. The study recommended regular in service training, seminars and workshops for educators on test construction and item writing rules. It recommended funding of such seminars and workshops by the government and finally inclusion of test construction as an aspect of compulsory courses taught in colleges and teacher training institution.

Introduction

Tests play a central role in evaluation of learners. Any person who is interested in what happens in the education system should express some concern about production of good quality tests. This is because they show the extent of mastery of skills as well as identify the variability among learners. (Throndike & Hagen, 1977). The teaching-learning process involves a continuous series of instructional decisions concerning ways to enhance learning. Instructional decisions are taken relying on results got from testing learners.

Most achievement tests in Nigeria for continuous assessment and final examination are teacher constructed. The use of teacher-constructed achievement tests in Nigeria education system has been extensive to the extent that achievement tests have become indispensable in the entire system. Tests provide comprehensive, systematic and objective evidence on which decisions are taken about learners. Studies by Fennessy, (1982), and Williams (1991) have shown that adult educators place more weight on tests which they design to determine grades and learners progress but most of the educators have received little or no training on test construction and can be judged to know nothing on standard item writing rules (Obidiegwu, 2008).

Most teacher-made tests have been criticized for their short comings because they are not standardized (Nwagu, 2003). They are said to be of low quality because they are not subjected to item analysis in terms of psychometric characteristics or properties (difficulty, discrimination, distractor) also there is no item analysis, no protest, norms, no set standards, no specific instruction on its administration and scoring (Odihu, 2005). As posited by Klaus, (1998), and Silker (2003), teacher-made tests should follow valid item writing rules. According to Ubani (1991), the performance of
learners depends on a large extent on the quality of training received by teachers on test construction.

As noted by Ezeife (1993), invalid instrument is capable of misleading learners and could generate undesirable and negative effects such as lack of interest, confusion, apathy, misconception and inhibition towards learning. Paulson (2003) asserts that lack of test construction skills results in tests that scares students, which causes mass failure for both high and low achievers and as such incline students to examination malpractice. Test construction is a major source of anxiety among less experienced teachers (Ebinye, 2001). In order to avoid the effects of poorly developed test instrument, and equip educators with skills on test construction, steps need to be taken towards helping educators to learn the standard way of test development.

**Steps to Developing Standardized Achievement Test**

According to Gage and Berliner, (1992) good test does not just happen. Writing items that are valid, reliable and objectively scorable require time, energy and adequate planning (Mehern and Lehmann, 1978). In order to develop a standardized test, it is necessary to follow the underlisted steps.

- Definition of Purpose of Test
- Content Analysis
- Review of Instructional Objective
- Development of Test Blue-Print
- Item Writing
- Validation of the Instrument
- Pilot Testing
- Analysis of Item Psychometric Characteristics (Pilot Test)
- Initial Selection of Test Items
Purpose of test
A test developer or constructor should have a clear outline of what purpose a test should serve such as judging the learners mastery of certain skills and knowledge, measuring growth overtime, ranking pupils in terms of their achievement in a particular instructional objectives, diagnosing pupils difficulties, evaluating the teacher’s instructional method, ascertaining the effectiveness of curriculum, encouraging good study habits and motivating students (Gage & Berliner, 1992). A single test can serve many purposes; however, an educator must plan for this in advance. It is essential that the test developer knows the major use of test results so that the test will be most useful to him and the learners.

Content Analysis
The second important step in the planning stage is to specify or outline the content of the course of instruction (Nworgu, 1992). The test developer should look at the relevant subject content on which the test is to be based and find out what the content is all about. He should be able to answer the question on what subject content will the test be based. As identified by Gage and Berliner (1992) the following check list will assist the test constructor:

a. Specify the course or unit objectives
b. List the major course or unit objectives
c. Define each objectives in terms of students behavior
d. Discard unrealistic objectives.
e. Prepare a table of specification
f. Prepare test items that match the instructional objectives

The content should be specified because it is the vehicle that is used to achieve the expected outcomes of instruction. This involves breaking each topic into subtopics, stating objectives in behavioural terms and writing test items which will be most appropriate to constitute the test.

Review of Instructional Objectives
The next step in the development of an achievement test is the review of instructional objectives. Instructional objectives are those behavioural changes which an educator expects to notice in learners after they have been exposed to a particular topic (Onweh, 1993). Educational objective in its broadcast sense, serves three main purposes: guide evaluation, facilitates teaching and learning process and gives direction to curriculum development (Ekpendu, 1987). Considering the instructional objectives therefore, the test developer must remember to represent the different levels of intellectual functioning such
as knowledge, comprehension, application and higher order thinking processes which include analysis, synthesis and evaluation. This will take the test developer to the fourth stage in the test development which is relating the content and the instructional objectives using a table of specifications or test blue-print.

**Development of Test Blue-print or Table of Specification**
To help in developing a test that has adequate content validity, a test maker should develop a scheme whereby instructional objectives are related to course content (Nworgu, 1992). A test blue-print is a two way-grid table which specifies the level of objectives as they relate to the content of the subject. The use of a test blue-print helps to ensure that only those objectives actually involved in the instructional process are assessed. Test blue-print is used to build content validity into a test and accordingly prevents the construction of biased test. In the blue print, the objectives are written at the horizontal part of the table while the content or topics are written at the vertical part of the table. Each objective will receive a proportional emphasis on the test in relation to the emphasis placed on that objective by the teacher and finally, no important objective or content will be inadvertently omitted. An example of a test-blue print is shown in Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: A Test Blue-print</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic A 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic B 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic C 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic D 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic E 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table I shows that for the test being constructed 5 content areas were covered, each of the six objectives of the cognitive domain is being tested. The test has 120 questions. The weightings for topic ‘A’ is 30%, topic ‘B’ 10%, topic ‘C’ 25%, topic ‘D’ 20% and topic ‘E’ 15%, giving a total of 100% for the objectives, the weighting for knowledge is 40% comprehension 25%, application 20%, analysis 5%, synthesis 5% and evaluation 5%. The formula used for working out the number of question assigned to each cell is weight of topic in percent x weight of objectives level in percent x number questions. For example, for topic ‘A’ and knowledge where 120 questions are to be constructed the number will be:

\[
\frac{30}{100} \times \frac{40}{100} \times \frac{120}{1} = 14 \text{ questions}
\]

For comprehension level, it will be:

\[
\frac{30}{100} \times \frac{25}{100} \times \frac{120}{1} = 9 \text{ questions}
\]

The example as shown above is used to work out number of questions for each cell and this serves as the guide for constructing the test items. After the development of the test blue print the next step is to write out the items based on the test blue-print.

**Item Writing**
Two essential ingredients which every item possesses are validity and reliability. Validity and reliability of the individual items for the test as a whole can be achieved when each item is expressed in a clear, unambiguous language, the students are not given any clues to the correct answer, the scoring is objective and a table of specifications has been prepared and followed (Gage & Berliner, 1992). Some of the guidelines which can be followed in item writing include
constructing more items than will actually be required to ensure that enough items survive the item analysis, using unambiguous and unflamboyant words, ensuring that clues to the right answers are no given, items that are neither too easy nor too difficult should be constructed (Nworgu, 1992). After the items have been written, compiled and organized, procedural instruction should be specified on the test for the testees. A good scoring guide is necessary in order to ensure reliability. After writing the test-items and instructions specified, the test is now ready for validation.

Validation of the Instrument
The sixth step which a test developer should follow in construction of an instrument is validation of the instrument. Validity of a test is the expression of the degree to which a test measures the qualities, abilities, skills and information which it is designed to measure (Mehrens & Lehman, 1978; Obe, 1980; Ali, Ezeadi & Ogbazi, 1988). Content validity has been defined as the extent to which a test measures a representative sample of the subject matter content and the behavioural changes under consideration (Gronlund, 1976, Gronlund & Linn, 1985). Content validation is of primary importance and interest in achievement testing. It is concerned with preparing detailed test specifications as explained above and constructing tests that meet these specifications. In development of an achievement test also, face validation is necessary. Face validation refers to the appearance of a test based on a superficial examination of the test items (Gronlund and Linn, 1985). The essence of ensuring face validity is to build rapport or proper public relationship (Onweh, 1993). It refers to how the tests and other people see the test. The procedure for establishing the face validity of an instrument is subjecting the instrument to the scrutiny of relevant experts in the subject area (Nworgu, 1992).

Item Review
The next step in the development of an achievement test is item review. This involves the test constructor critically going through the test items which have been written choosing the most appropriate ones and using those that survive the scrutiny for trial testing (Nworgu, 1992).

Pilot Test
After item review, the items are sent for pilot testing. This is done by administering the test on an equivalent sample of the group for which the test is developed (Nwana, 1981). Among the purpose of pilot testing are to estimate reliability of the final version of the test, identifying and selecting good items and eliminating and modifying faulty or poor items in terms of difficulty, discrimination and distractor indices (Russel, 1982, Inomesia, 1986). After the scripts have been administered they are marked and graded and used for item analysis.

Item Analysis (Pilot Test)
Item analysis of a test is concerned with analyzing of responses of individual test item to ensure that each item is valid and is measuring what the test as a whole measures (Okoro, 1991; Okoye, 1996). Item analysis can be qualitative or quantitative. Precisely, qualitative item analysis would mean analyzing a test to ensure that the core aspects of the behavior domain under consideration are adequately covered (Nwanna, 1979). This can be done with the aid of test blue-print as shown in Table 1; quantitative item analysis is concerned with the analysis of individual items that are in test to ensure that each item is valid and is measuring what the test as a whole measures. It deals with how hard each item is (difficult index), whether each item distinguishes between the poor and brilliant students (discrimination index) and how all the
options attract responses (distractor index).

**Initial Selection of Test Items**
After item analysis, the test developer selects the items that have satisfactory statistical qualities for inclusion in the final form of a test. Selection of good items involves deciding on which items to be included in the final test. However, according to Anastasi, 1961, Mehrens and Lehmann, 1975 and Ohuche and Akeju 1977, selecting test items only on the basis of psychometric qualities, reduces content validity of a test. Test developers should in the light of this, select items based on both the psychometric qualities of the items, as well as on the specifications of the test blue-print.

**Editing of Faulty Items and Test Assembly**
Items that do not possess the desired characteristics are discarded, modified and tried out again. To this end, test developers are advised to generate many items at the beginning, so that after the bad ones are rejected, there will still be enough items left to make up the test. The test is assembled in a way that the student and the teacher will understand what to do with ease, for example, when and where learners should record the correct answers and the ease with which an educator can locate and score the answers. The general rule is to group all items of the same type and the same content or skill together, number all the items consecutively from the first to the last, arrange each subdivision of tests so that easier ones come before the more difficult ones; state the time and directions for answering the question clearly (Thorndike & Hagen, 1969; Mehrens & Lehmann 1975).

**Final Testing**
After the test has been edited and assembled, it is administered to large representative sample that the test is designed for and whom did not participate in the trial testing (Anastasi, 1961). The sample should consist of learners with all characteristics found in the population. This sample is referred to as standardization sample or norm group (Okoye 1996).

**Analysis of Item Characteristics (Final Test)**
The test developer needs further to analyze the items of the final test to ensure that they have desired psychometric properties (difficulty, discrimination and distracters indices). This will lead to the final selection of the items of the instrument. The items are further subjected to synthetic validation and final test reliability analysis.

**Test Norms**
From the performance of individuals in the test, the test developer obtains test norms. The tests norms represent typical performance of learners in standardization group (Gronlund & Linn, 1990; Okoye, 1996). Test norms provide basis for interpreting the score of any person who takes the test later. Test norms enable us to answer questions such as how does a learner’s performance compare with that of other learners. How does a learner’s performance in one sub test compare with performance in another subtest? How does pupil’s performance on one form of a test compare performance on another form of a test administered at an earlier date (Gronlund & Linn, 1985).

**Prepare and Print Test Manual**
After the test norm has been obtained, the test developer finally prepares and prints a test manual. A test manual is a handbook which contains all necessary information about a test. It
guides the test user. A manual contains such information as what the test is all about, how it was constructed, how it should be administered, scored and interpreted (Gronlund & Linn 1985).

**Recommendations and Conclusions**
Success of assessment procedure in formal adult learning is dependent on the educator’s ability to develop valid and reliable instruments which could generate desirable and positive effects on the learners. Achievement tests can be used to compare pupils success in various subject areas and at different period of time, diagnose strengths and weakness of learners, measure educational growth, determine the extent to which instructional objectives have been achieved and for other guidance purpose. Such functions of a test can be achieved only when educators adhere to more comprehensive, systematic, and objective steps for test construction as discussed in this paper. Based on the above discussion it is recommended that regular seminars and symposium on test construction will help educators gain mastery of item writing rules which will enable them develop systematic, coordinated and well articulated instrument for assessing their learners. Government should encourage educators by financing and funding seminars and symposium on test construction and related areas. Facilities which will enable the educators to acquire such skills should also be provided for them in order to motivate them and enhance positive results. Curriculum developers should include test construction as an aspect of compulsory courses taught in colleges and teacher training institutions so as to equip trainees with required skill in test construction.
References


FACTORS INHIBITING THE ENGAGEMENT OF RURAL WOMEN OF ANAMBRA STATE IN ENTREPRENEURIAL VENTURES: IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATORS

BY

OBIDIEGWU, U.J.
DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION
NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA

Abstract

This study was conducted to find out the factors affecting the engagement of rural women in entrepreneurial ventures. The sample made of 60 rural women selected using purposive sampling technique. Data were collected and analyzed using descriptive statistic (mean). The result of data analysis revealed among others that poverty, lack of education and skill and drudgery of home chores are factors which greatly affect women’s entrepreneurship. The study suggested some roles which could be played by adult educators to enhance entrepreneurship of rural women. Finally the study made some recommendations and concluded that women could be encouraged to engage in entrepreneurial activities using adult education strategies.

There has been growing concern on the economic empowerment of rural women for national development even as majority of the rural women are still unable to earn sustainable income for meaningful livelihood. More than half of Nigerian population are women but majority of them seem to lack access to adequate housing, food, healthcare, clean water, live in unsafe and unhealthy environment, do not enjoy fundamental human rights to a life of dignity and to an adequate standard of living (Onyekpere, Achor & Okoro, 2001). Rural women are indispensable part of human resources for development. Without the contribution of women, the economy of Nigeria cannot be expected to grow better than the present status but unfortunately rural women are marginalized in the development process (Erhariyi, 2009). It is unrealistic for any country to marginalize or exclude from its work force such large and important segment of its society and yet hope to make significant strides in development. According to rural poverty portal (2008), poverty is especially severe in the rural areas, women and household headed by women are frequently the most chronically poor within rural communities. Studies (Ceaver & Donovan, 1995; Jazairy & Alamgir, 1992; and World Bank Statistics, 1997) have shown that 78 percent of rural dwellers live below the poverty line and majority of them are women.

Adebola and Obidiegwu (2007) noted that economic empowerment of women is critical to sustainable development. Empowerment in this regard relates to enabling rural women to gain strength, capacity and confidence to work positively towards the improvement of their living conditions or life circumstances through their full participation. Erhariyi (2009) posited that the level of empowerment of a people can be ascertained by determining the extent of their participation in the decision making processes of their communities and nations. Empowerment of rural women should include improving their incomes and raising their financial capacity through engagement in entrepreneurial ventures for national development (Adebola & Obidiegwu, 2007).
Entrepreneurship is a necessary ingredient for stimulating economic growth and employment opportunities in all societies. According to Asaolu (2002) engaging in entrepreneurial venture enables a woman to get involved in economic, political and social activities which is a sure way for achieving national growth, and development. In developing countries successful small businesses are the primary engines for job creation, income and poverty reduction amongst rural women (Fasua, 2006). Entrepreneurship leads to economic self sufficiency. Through entrepreneurship, rural women can create and manage businesses in which they function as the employer rather than employee and as a result improve their self-esteem, self-concept and become economically empowered. Organizational skills which include time management, leadership, development and interpersonal skills can also be learnt by them. The relevant resources needed in this regard include finance, improved knowledge, imparting of new skills and technology development or adaptation (Ajiye, 2005). Engagement in entrepreneurial activities is the bedrock of any nations industrialization and development. According to Trevor (as cited in Fasua, 2006), Africa’s transformation will be founded on the enterprise of individual household. Most of the developed nations are developed because the citizens are entrepreneurial minded.

According to Azikiwe (1992) development could be interpreted to mean all-round positive change. Development includes political, economic, social, cultural and other dimensions of human life such as physical, moral and intellectual growth of human beings. Development focuses on human beings and implies a better quality of life for all people irrespective of sex, age, status, political and religious affiliations. If development focuses on human beings who inhabit an area, then, it should harness and utilize the inherent potentials of both sexes. Therefore, empowering rural women economically through assisting them to engage in entrepreneurial ventures is very necessary for family and national development.

Majority of the rural women are nurturers of their families and societies. Most often, the responsibilities of managing their households lie squarely on them. Most of these women are illiterates but show keen interest to learn when adequately motivated. Most of them though enterprising are very poor and economically unstable (Azikiwe, 1992).

Poverty and lack of economic empowerment lead so many of the women into prostitution and having multiple sexual partners which might result to contracting sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. Some of these women also take to stealing in the market places and in the village farms. Malnutrition and ill-health during pregnancy and childbirth are also some of the consequences of their poverty-stricken life.

In order to address the above stated problem of rural women, there is need for the potentials of the women to be recognized and utilized by addressing the factors that hinder their engagement in entrepreneurial ventures which is the aim of this study.

**Method**

The target population are the rural women in the six UNICEF focused rural communities in Anambra State which included Irefi and Isingwu in Ekwusigo local government area, Umerum and Umueje in Ayamelum local government area, Nnokwa and Akwu-ukwu in Idemili south local government area. Most of these women have participated in income generating awareness programme of the UNICEF. The questionnaire was administered to the women during the year 2009 August meeting using six research assistants.
The sample consisted of 100 rural women from each rural community. A total of 600 respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique.

The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire on factors in the engagement of rural women in entrepreneurial ventures (FERWEV). The FERWEV has 25 items. The respondents were expected to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement of an item by checking on a weighted five point Likert type scale as follows:

**Strongly Agree (SA)** - 5 points, **Agree (A)** - 4 points; **Undecided (UD)** - 3 points, **Disagree (D)** - 2 points; **Strongly Disagree (SD)** - 1 point.

The instrument was duly validated by three experts in the educational Psychology in University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The internal consistency of FERWEV determined using, Cronback Co-efficient alpha formula was 0.85.

Copies of the questionnaire were administered by the researcher and six research assistants to 60 respondents and all were collected and used for data analysis. Informal discussion and interpretations in vernacular were used when necessary to help the women understand the items better and respond effectively. Descriptive statistics (mean) was used to analyze the data. The acceptance point for the designed items was mean point of ≥ 3.50 while the rejection point was mean point of ≤ 3.50.

The following boundary limits of numbers were used for analyzing the research questions: 4.50-5.00 = 5, Strongly Agree; 3.50-4.49 = 4, Agree; 2.50-3.49 = 3, Undecided, 1.50-2.49 = 2 Disagree; 0.50-1.49 = 1, strongly Disagree.
## Results

Table 1

Mean scores on the Possible Factors Inhibiting Rural Women Engagement in Entrepreneurial Ventures (EV)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Poverty and inadequate capital affects your engagements in EV</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Poor health affects your engagement in EV</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lack of management skills/expertise affects your engagement in EV</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Inability to obtain loans affects your engagement in EV</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Non-support of husband affects your engagement in EV</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lack of education and skill affects your engagement in EV</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Drudgery of home chores affects your engagement in EV</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Inability to form cooperatives affects your engagement in EV</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lack of experience in management of entrepreneurial activities affects your engagement in EV</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Low level of technology affects your engagement in EV</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lack of time affects your engagement in EV</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Non recognition of women in development plan and policy affects their engagement in EV</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Non inclusion of entrepreneurial and functional education in the curriculum of adult learners affect your engagement in EV</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that the respondents accepted all but one factor as affecting their engagement in entrepreneurship. It was found that the greatest factor affecting rural women’s engagement in entrepreneurship is poverty (X = 4.77), which is ranked ‘1’ in the table because it has the highest mean point followed by item six lack of education and skill (X= 4.75) which is ranked ‘2’ and item seven, drudgery of home chores (X=4.64) which is ranked ‘3’. Item ‘3’ has the least mean point (X=3.23) and ranked 13 among the strategies. This shows that the respondents were undecided whether lack of management skills and expertise affects their engagement in entrepreneurship.
Table 2: Mean Scores of Adult Education Strategies that could be Adopted to Enhance Engagement of Women in Entrepreneurial Activities (EA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Organizing periodic sensitization programmes through workshops conferences media mobilization and rallies on the need for entrepreneurial activities.</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Embarking on periodic awareness campaign to enlighten women on the need to form partnerships and cooperatives for easier access to loans and grants</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Strengthening the existing literacy and adult education centers in the rural areas and creating new ones to enable rural women acquire basic functional education</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of adult learners from the basic level to enable the beneficiaries become entrepreneurial minded and acquire basic entrepreneurial skills</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Organizing regular workshops and seminars for rural women on management and entrepreneurship skills</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Using advocacy to influence community leaders and government to build and equip cottage hospitals in the rural areas</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Using advocacy to influence the government on gender budgeting which will help to make sure that government or organizational budget affect men and women</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Creating awareness through media education, rallies and workshops on the benefit of economic empowerment of women in the family and the nation</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Use advocacy to influence the government to embark on women friendly programmes</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Organizing periodic programs on skill acquisition and vocational training for women</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Lobbying authorities and policy makers on the need to enunciate policies and programmes that will promote the well being and human rights of women</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Conscientizing and encouraging rural women on the need to form community based organizations in order to promote their interest</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that the respondents accepted all the enlisted strategies as suitable for adoption by adult educators for enhancing their active engagement of women in entrepreneurial activities. As shown in the table, item 14 (X=4.82) organizing periodic sensitization programmes is ranked 1. It has the highest mean score of 4.82 followed by item ‘22’ (X=4.79), use of advocacy to influence the government which ranked ‘2’. Item 15 has the lowest mean point (X=3.58) and is ranked ‘12’ among the adult education strategies that could be adopted to enhance engagement of women in entrepreneurial activities.
Discussion

The result in Table 1 shows that poverty and inadequate capital, lack of education and skill and drudgery of home chores are the greatest factors affecting women engagement in entrepreneurial ventures. Onyegu and Essiet (2002) noted that women in the country are poverty-stricken. They explained that women are marginalized and discriminated against in the employment fields as a result; poverty has assumed the status of their second nature. Ill-health, inadequate shelter and blighted environment, malnutrition, inability to provide for their children are some of the features of their poverty-ridden life. This identified problem of poverty can be addressed by using the strategies as identified in Table 2. Item 17 (X=4.41); inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of adult learners, item 20(X=4.50) using advocacy to influence government on gender budgeting and item 23 (X=4.75), organizing periodic programs on skill acquisition and vocational training. Obasanjo and Mabogunje in 1991 observed that the role of Nigerian women in economic activities even though significant has not been accorded the recognition it deserves, the unpaid domestic work, childbearing, rearing and child-care, limits the time and energy available for entrepreneurial activities. Their contributions are generally neglected, disregarded and unrecognized in development and that contributes to their impoverishment. Many credit associations and export-crop marketing cooperatives limit their membership to household heads thereby excluding women. Banks demand collaterals in the form of landed property and male approval before making loans available to women. As a result women have limited access to credit, land and other readily convertible capital generative resources needed for entrepreneurship. All these are bottlenecks on economic activities of women. In addition the poor financial status of women and their limited access to social resources make some families that are headed by women more impoverished and very vulnerable to economic downturns recessions and adjustment policies. This exerts immense hardship on the health and social well being of the members of such families (Onyekpere, Achor & Okoro, 2001). As shown in Table 2, the limited economic activities and empowerment of women can be taken care of by using strategies identified in item 14 (x=3.58); embarking on periodic awareness campaign on the need to form partnership for easier access to loans and grants and items 21 (X=4.22); creating awareness on the benefit of economic empowerment of women in the family and the nation.

Studies (Erharuyi 2009; Azikiwe, 1992) have shown that a woman’s education is a reliable route to economic empowerment and high standard of living. Both as formal, informal and non-formal processes, education is central to the enjoyment of all other rights and to human existence in general. Education is also a reliable predictor of lower fertility, improved infant survival, reduced maternal mortality and enhanced levels of child development and educational attainment. However, few women are found in scientific and technology education (Enweani, 2005) where they could develop better skills to become self reliant or secure better paying jobs. Formal education and entrepreneurial training for self reliance will help to empower women generally as well as improve their social positioning and economic status. Education has been found to be the single most important instrument for breaking the deeply entrenched vicious circle of poverty in which the majority of women are submerged as well as for fostering a more respectable and honourable status of womanhood in general. As shown in Table 2, item 23, (X=4.75), the rural women strongly agreed that organizing periodic programs on skill acquisition and vocational training for them is among the strategies which would enhance their engagement in entrepreneurial activities. They also agreed that item 17; (X=4.41) inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the
The curriculum of adult learners will enable the beneficiaries become entrepreneurial minded. The provision of formal and entrepreneurial education will boost a woman’s confidence, teach her skills, empower her economically and equip her to make right choices in matters that affect her personal life, social roles, attitudes and overall well being.

The 1991 population figures indicate that women constitute about 49.6 percent of the population (National population Census). Any nation that fails to accord priority to the education and acquisition of skill of such a significant percentage of the population would be courting disaster (Onyegu & Essiet, 2002). Through education marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty. Education has a vital role in empowering women and safeguarding children. Education decreases the chances of failure in entrepreneurial venture by teaching the basic business functions, best practice approaches, skills of dealing with customers and finances and the social networking side of business (Fasua, 2006). Though a lot has been achieved in the past few years regarding women education, illiteracy rate of women still stands at 64 percent showing that a lot still need to be done. Since education is the vehicle for social mobility, women’s low educational status in this respect accounts a great deal for their poverty. As agreed by the women in Table 2, item 16: strengthening the existing literacy and adult education centers in the rural areas and creating new ones would enable rural women acquire basic functional education.

Drudgery of home chores was also identified as an inhibiting factor in the engagement of rural women in entrepreneurial ventures. One of the roles particularly assigned to women is domestic work which they carry out judiciously for the upkeep of their families. Fraser (1985) reported that unpaid domestic work is everywhere seen as a woman’s work, a woman’s responsibility. Food must be cooked, infants and husbands fed, water and firewood collected. Azikiwe (1992) noted that women spend several hours a day on back-breaking and hard-boring work. They work under rain or sunshine sometimes with babies on their back. This long hours of domestic work of rural women gives them little or no time to engage in meaningful economic activities and yet these works are unrecognized, unpaid and undervalued. Hong (1984) revealed that although the non-paid domestic sector is not included in most studies on the labour force, work by women in this sector comprises one of the most arduous and back-breaking. Hong noted further that in Kenya, women on the average, work 15 to 16 hours a day either in the fields and rubber gardens, gathering fruits and vegetables, looking for fuel (which sometimes took two to three hours) fetching water, cooking, bathing the children and feeding them, feeding pigs and preparing swill for the animals. The unshared responsibility between men and women at home resulted in women spending all their time in home chores and having less time for economic activities. On interaction with some of the rural women, they explained that they start-up some ventures but the conflict it has with their home chores, farm work, social activities and sometimes non-support of their husbands made them to stop and they found it difficult to start again. As agreed by the women in Table 2, item 24 (X=3.80) lobbying authorities on the need to enunciate policies and programmes that will promote their well being and their human rights would enhance their engagement in entrepreneurial ventures.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, rural women’s engagement in entrepreneurial activities requires actualization of certain human rights and provision of access to economic and social resources. Such rights include the right to a means of livelihood, education, health, social security, food, participation and livable environment. The result of the analysis in
Table 2 showed that all the enlisted strategies could be adopted by adult educators in order to enhance engagement of rural women in entrepreneurial ventures.

**Recommendations**

In the light of the above discussion, the following recommendations are made:

1. There is urgent need for governmental, nongovernmental, community and private organizations to collaborate in order to provide policy framework and institutional structures that will enhance the involvement of all stakeholders in the promotion of the well being of rural women in the society. This will include raising awareness and the enlightenment of the citizenry on the plight of the rural women particularly their impoverished status and marginalization and the need for them to engage in entrepreneurial activities for economic empowerment.

2. Women friendly programmes should be embarked upon by the government. The government should integrate gender concerns into policy making and research so that policies and programmes will encourage women engagement in entrepreneurial activities. Regarding this, women formation of community based organizations with the aim of promoting their interest will play a major influential role.

3. Education of women and impartation of skills will help them to start-up entrepreneurial ventures. Functional education programmes for imparting knowledge and vocational skills will help to empower women as well as improve their social positioning and economic status, since it has always been emphasized that education is the single most important instrument for breaking the vicious circle of poverty in which the majority of women have submerged.

4. Government should repackage the poverty alleviation programme and make it a source of credit to rural women. This will be complemented with initiatives by financial institutions to willingly lend money to rural women at low interest rate without frustrating them. Women should also be encouraged to form thrift and cooperative societies to make obtaining loan easier for them. Vocational skills will help to empower women as well as improve their social positioning and economic status, since it has always been emphasized that education is the single most important instrument for breaking the vicious circle of poverty in which the majority of women are submerged.

5. The current poverty alleviation programme should also articulate strategy to provide necessary skills and technologies to enable rural women participate better and effectively as well as lighten their workload in farming and household chores. Simple, cheap and well balanced farming tools, animal drawn or manual ploughs for clearing and tilling the land will help to make their work less arduous and more productive. Manual mills, graters, shellers and threshers, stoves, solar cookers, solar dryers, etc would make rural women’s life easier and reduce time and effort spent in these tasks. Agricultural extension services should also be provided for rural women.

6. There is an urgent need to meet the practical and health needs of rural women. Improving women’s access to housing and providing amenities like good roads, water supply systems, drainage facilities, telecommunication linkages and garbage disposal services will help to improve the overall wellbeing of women. Pre and postnatal services, family planning and immunization should be provided for them because
they are responsible for the basic needs of their families and to perform their duties they must be healthy and strong. Government should build health centers and cottage hospitals in the rural areas to bring medicare to the reach of the rural women. Finally, women’s problems should be seen as national problems and not just as women’s problems.

Conclusion

The study concluded that there were many factors affecting rural women’s engagement in entrepreneurial ventures. However, adult education strategies could be adopted for enhancing their engagement in entrepreneurial activities for economic empowerment, national growth and development.
References


EFFECTS OF HOME FACTORS ON THE ACADEMIC PURSUIT OF WORKING WOMEN

Obidiegwu Uche .J.
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka

Abstract

This study investigated the effect of home factors on working women’s academic pursuits in selected tertiary institutions in Anambra State. A total of 1513 participants constituted the sample of the study. Data for the study were collected using questionnaire on the effect of home factors on working women’s academic pursuits. Means and ANOVA were used to analyse the data. Result of data analysis revealed that home factors discouraged working women from finishing their academic programmes on time; make working women academically unambitious; difficult for them to concentrate; unable to finish their assignment in good time; contribute to their making poor grades in their examinations; do not motivate them to attain higher in their education; and discourage them in their academic pursuits. The study also revealed that marital status and place of work have no significant influence on working women’s perception on the possible effect of the home factors militating against their academic pursuit.

Introduction

Researchers have found out that home factors affect the academic pursuits of working women. Fraser (1985) revealed that women do almost all the world’s domestic work, which together with their additional work outside the home; add up to a double day. He also noted that a women’s domestic role as a wife and mother is quite vital to the well being of the whole society but consumes around half of her time and energy.

The present researcher has interacted with so many working women and found them complaining about the difficulty of their programmes. These women’s complaints are reflected on the way they absent themselves regularly from classes. Orameh (1992) found out that household responsibilities are hindrance to women education. Yeld (1960) found out in his own study that early marriage was the major factor militating against women education followed by family responsibilities.

Problem of the Study

It has been observed by researchers that working women are not performing up to expectation in their academic works. The working women have been complaining about the distress of their programmes and their complaints are prevalent in poor attendance to classes.

Obidiegwu (1998) found out 13 home factors, which affected working women’s academic pursuits. Some of the factors included pregnancy, unhealthy condition, nursing babies, strains and stresses, early marriage and health care responsibilities. The problem of this study was the effects of these home factors on the academic pursuits of working women in Anambra State.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the effect of these home factors on working women’s academic pursuits.

Research Question
What do working women perceive as the effect of home factors on their academic pursuits?

Hypotheses
i. Marital status will not have significant influence on the perception of the working women on the possible effects of some home factors on their academic pursuits.
ii. Place of work of working women will have no significant influence on their perceptions of some possible effects of home condition on their academic pursuits.

These were tested at the .05 level of significance.

Methodology
The population consisted of all working women studying during 1996/97 session in the Sandwich, Continuing education and Uni-air programmes in three tertiary institutions in Anambra State, namely; Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Federal Polytechnic Oko, and College of Education, Nsugbe. The total population of the study was 6,055.

The sample comprised 1513 working women selected from the three institutions of higher learning. The random sampling technique was used to select the sample.

The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire on the effect of home factors on working women’s Academic Pursuits (EHWAP). It was constructed by the researcher from literature and with the aid of some lecturers in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

The EHWAP has 13 items organized under two sections. Section one addressed demographic data of the respondents, while section two sought information on the effect of home factors on working women’s academic pursuits. In section two, the respondents were expected to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement of an item by checking on a five points Likert scale as follows:

- Strongly Agree (SA)
- Agree (A)
- Undecided (UD)
- Disagree (D)
- Strongly Disagree (SD)

The instruments were validated by experts in Adult Education and Educational Foundations in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. The internal consistency of the EHWAP determined using Cronbach Co-efficient Alpha formula was found to be high (0.82)
Data Collection and Analysis

Copies of the questionnaire for the study were administered by the researcher to 1513 respondents and all were collected and used for the analysis of the study. The level of acceptance for the designed question was 3.5 mean point and above, while the rejection point was 0-3.49 mean point.

In taking decisions a null hypothesis was rejected if a calculated F ratio was greater than the critical F – ratio at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 1 shows results of analysis of the data collected in respect of effect of home factors on working women’s academic pursuits in tertiary institution in Anambra State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Single N=386</th>
<th>Married N=1042</th>
<th>Separated Divorced N= 85</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Encourage finishing ones programme in time</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Make working women academically ambitious</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Make it difficult for working women to concentrate</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>11.73</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Contribute to working women doing their assignment in good time</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>6.63</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Contribute to working women making poor grades in their examinations</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Motivate working women to attain in their education</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Discourage working women in their academic pursuits</td>
<td>19.85</td>
<td>18.92</td>
<td>19.40</td>
<td>58.17</td>
<td>19.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that home factors contribute to working women not finishing their programme in time, makes them unambitious academically, difficult for working women to concentrate, contribute to working women delays in finishing up their academic assignments, contribute
Hypothesis 1

“Marital status will not have significant influence on the perceptions of the working women on the possible effects of some home factors on their academic pursuit”. The result of testing this hypothesis is presented in table two below.

Table 2: ANOVA on the Marital Status Influence on the Working Women perceptions on the possible effects of some home conditions on their academic pursuits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of variation</th>
<th>Sum of Squares SS</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean squares</th>
<th>Cal-F</th>
<th>Crit-F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>3459649.965</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17298298.98</td>
<td>1.092</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within groups</td>
<td>28522459.85</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>158485.103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31782109.81</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3314411.083</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The summary of ANOVA on Table 2 reveals that marital status does not have any significant influence on the perceptions of the working women on the possible effects of some home conditions on their academic pursuit. The hypothesis was therefore accepted.

Hypothesis 2

“Place of work of the working women will have no significant influence on their perception of some possible effects of home factors on their academic pursuit is presented in table three below.

Table 3: ANOVA testing the influence of place of working women on their perceptions of possible effects of some home factors on their Academic pursuits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>Sum of Squares SS</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>Cal-F</th>
<th>Crit-F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>5329041.40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2664520.70</td>
<td>1.143</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>41961328.41</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2331184.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47290369.81</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4995705.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result on Table 3 shows that place of work of the working women has no significant influence on their perception of some possible effects of home conditions on their academic pursuits. The null hypothesis was also accepted.

Findings of the Study

It was found that home factors:
- Discourage working women from finishing their programmes in time
- Make working women academically unambitious
- Make it difficult for working women to concentrate
- Make working women not to finish their assignment in good time
- Contribute to working women making poor grades in their examinations
- Do not motive working women to attain higher in their education.
- Discourage working women in their academic pursuits

The test of hypothesis of this study revealed that:
1. The working women’s perceptions of the effect of some home factors on their academic pursuits do not differ as a result of their different marital status.

2. The working women’s perceptions of the effects of some home factors on their academic pursuits do not differ as a result of difference in their working places.

**Discussion of Findings**

The result of analysis in Table 1 revealed some effects of home factors on the working women’s academic pursuits. It was revealed that the greatest effect of home factors on working women’s academic pursuits was that home factors make it difficult for them to concentrate, followed by others, namely: contribute to making poor grades, discourage academic pursuits, contribute to lack of motivation, delay in completing academic assignments and makes them academically unambitious. Orameh (1992) observed that Nigerian women are really very eager to be educated but household responsibilities are hindrances to them. Similarly, studies by Durel (1982), and Ugwoegbu (1985) also confirmed that women are affected by family chores when they are involved in any learning programme. Yeld (1960) and Odu 1986 also identified that home factors could lead to academic problems, poor health conditions and emotional and social adjustment. This as a result shows that home factors have a strong relationship with academic as well as other problems of working women.

From the result of the test of hypotheses presented in Table 2 and 3, it was found that the effects of some home factors on the working women’s academic pursuits did not differ significantly as a result of difference in their marital status and places of work. As shown in Table I, there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the respondents (married, single, divorced/separated). This in essence implies that home factor have similar effects on the academic pursuits of working women and so any solution should be applicable to all women regardless of their marital status and places of work.

**Conclusion**

The study concludes that there are many negative effects of home factors on the academic pursuits of working women in Anambra State.

**Recommendations**

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

i. Working women need to be encouraged in their academic endeavours by their family members and employers. Government should make a law protecting working women in such a way that they will have work-free studies. They have to be given study-leave with pay for the period they go in for studies.

ii. Government and parents should ensure that young girls obtain their first degrees before employing them or allowing them to get married, in order to reduce the burden of women in their homes.

iii. Spouses should help each other in the completion of the home-chores of their families.
References


