



Factors that Inhibit the Participation of Women in Adult Education Programmes towards Promotion of Community development in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas of Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

This study was aimed at empirically investigating factors believed to be responsible for the low women participation in adult literacy programme for community development. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study with a total population of 1,547 which comprises women associations from the five selected clans in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas, and a sample size of 464 women representing 30% of the total population of the study. A 22 item questionnaire was adopted as the research instrument for the study and the instrument was validated by the researcher's supervisor. The mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while the Z-test was used to test the hypotheses. Based on the data analyzed the findings revealed that geographical location of adult literacy centers, Family care giving responsibilities, insecurity, and farming activities affect women participation in adult education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas. Therefore, the study recommends that the government should site functional adult education centers in rural communities of the State including Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas. This will certainly enhance their participation in adult education programmes. Government should also motivate rural women with incentives such as non -payment fees, front transportation, and subsidized books, this will encourage the participation in adult education programme.

Keywords: Participation, Adult Education Programme, Community Development

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of adult education serves as a remedial programme and is used to supplement the earlier education experience, that is, people that engaged in adult education programmes are not beginners. They usually have a body of knowledge which they have accumulated over the years. They come to adult education programmes to obtain an addition to what they already have or to remedy what they have not completed or to organize what they have not properly assembled.

However, Ugwu (2003) stated that adult education as the process by which men and women in groups or institutional settings seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skills or knowledge or by their sensitivity. This means that it is a process by which individuals, groups or institutions try to help men and women improve their ways. Angaye (2002) stated that adult education is a vital facet of the gigantic national nay global education enterprises and an important source of social, economic and political development of a nation. Adult education programmes tasks are to eradicate illiteracy, development of skills and adoption of new technologies to the number of skills of the uneducated, the semi-educated and the already educated.

Observably, this laudable programme has continued to experience low participation despite its immense contribution in the lives of women. According to Agbalajobi (2008) pointed out that there are lots of socio-cultural factors hindering women participating in adult education programme, some of these factors stem from the patriarchal ideology of the adult education programme, insecurity, family care giving responsibilities, farming activities, and geographically location of adult literacy centers being unsuitable for them.

Observably, the proportion of Etche and Omuma women involved in adult education programmes is low compared to the number of men engaged, this is due to certain factors peculiar to Etche and Ommua Local Government Areas, hindering women from participating in adult education programme, some of these factors investigated in this study include; geographical location of adult literacy centers, family care-giving responsibilities, insecurity, and farming activities.

Statement of the Problem

The goal of adult education is to empower adult with basic and functional literacy education skills that will empower them to contribute meaningfully to the development of their communities. However, several initiatives by government and individuals have been made to address the needs of women and gender equality, despite all these efforts by Nigerian Government; the researcher observed that women are still limited in accesses to schooling. The relatives low participation of women folk in adult education programmes have become a global concern. Aminichi (2005) observed that this could be attributed to certain factors which include: geographical location of adult literacy centers, family care-giving responsibilities, insecurity, and farming activities. Therefore, the need to empirically examine these factors that influence women participation in adult education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas has become imperative, and this necessitated the study.

Purpose of the Study

The study tends to examine the factors that affect women participation in adult education programmes towards the promotion of community development. Specifically the study focuses on the following objectives.

1. Investigate the extent geographical location of adult education centers affect women participation in literacy education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas.
2. Ascertain the extent family care-giving responsibilities affect women participation in vocational education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local government Areas.
3. Determine the extent insecurity affect women participation in peace education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas.

Research Questions

This study is designed to address the following research questions:

1. To what extent does geographical location of adult education centers affect women participation in literacy education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas?
2. To what extent does family care-giving responsibility affect women participation in vocational education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local government Areas?
3. To what extent does insecurity affect women participation in peace education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas?

Hypotheses

In the investigation, the following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating between women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the effect of geographical location of adult education centers on women participation in literacy education programmes.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating between women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the effect of family care-giving responsibility on women participation in vocational education programmes.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean rating between women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the effect of insecurity on women participation in adult education programmes.

Women are faced with a lot of obstacles which affects their Participation in adult literacy programme and some of these obstacles are identified and stated as follow according to Achuonye, (2004):

1. Low level of parental education: This means that when parnts themselves lack education, they might be reluctant to challenge tradition to educate the girl-children.
2. Role expectations: Girls (female) opportunities for education and scholastic achievements were negatively affected by domestic responsibilities, family financial difficulties, poor influence and early pregnancy or fear of it (Dedjoe, 2008). Also, early marriage and discriminatory cultural practices in low participation and high drop-out rates for girls in primary schools have been documented in the report of the National Conference on Education for all by the year 2000 (Yoloye et al (1993).
3. Long distance: Oladipo (2007) observed that the long distance to school in many rural areas have been hindrance to women. He noted that in fear of them being manhandled on the journey or in sympathy for their alleged physical weakness, parents and society frown at girls travelling long distance to school.
4. Preference to female teachers and opportunity cost: some parents insist on certain school conditions for their girl children. For example, female teacher to teach female pupils. World Bank (2004) found that parents incur opportunity cost of their children's education because they lose their children's availability for chores and wage earning. The poorer the family, the more difficult it is to bear these direct costs and opportunity cost of education.

Several factors such as environment, religion, tradition, and culture, etc., have militated against women's participation and involvement in scientific and technological advancement as their male counterpart all over the world. In view of this, Indabawa (2004) noted that there are ten salient socio-cultural factors which militate against girls and women participation in adult education. These factors according to him include: early marriage, hawking practice, the poverty level of families, poor practices on the support of/for girls' education, some misunderstanding on the position of Islam on women's education, society's poor attitude to girls'/women's education, irrelevance of the curriculum to the nature of women, poor female participation in studying the sciences, female's poor self-concept and poor link between education and employment.

Avoseh and Uwakwe (2015) noted that lack of fund, reading materials, strict adherence to religion-cultural values which makes the society conceive of literacy programmes as cultural invasions and the frequent changes in government and of Education Ministers and Commissioners, as major constraints to girls'/women participation in Adult Literacy Programme. Ekpo, Orok, Ekukinam and Okon (2003) observed that other factors militating against women participation in adult education include the social structure of the society, geographical location, family structure, childbearing and rearing and influence from other members of the extended family.

Commenting on the factors militating against women education, Ngwu (2003) stated that majority of Nigerian women and girls live under conditions which threaten their health, deny the choice of about childbearing, limit their educational access and attainment, restrict economic participation for women and fail to extent to them equal rights and freedom with men. Furthermore, Ngwu (2003) stated that the situation is worsened by the fact that currently, in Nigeria, non-formal education programme for parenting and women's education as well as early childhood education is not available and the few places that exist are concentrated in the urban centres.

Insecurity issues within Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas is another factor affecting women participation. Insecurity is the antithesis of security which is the concept of insecurity. It has been ascribed different interpretations in association with the various ways which it affects individuals. Beland (2005) defined insecurity as "the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection." It refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger. Oshodi (2011) argues that the unparalleled spate of terrorism, kidnappings and other violent crimes is to say the least, alarming. Religious leaders, churches, mosques etc are not spared in this onslaught. There is gainsaying the fact that Nigeria is at a cross-road and gradually drifting towards a failed state if this insecurity trend continues.

According to David (2015) stated that “People across all value chains feared movement outside protected areas because of attacks by insurgents,” they wrote, explaining that farm workers feared attacks while grazing animals, processors lost workers when families left the conflict zone, and traders began limiting their movements. Meanwhile, the agricultural sector became a target for militants in need of supplies. Their data shows that cash, food and equipment were more likely to get stolen. Lastly, the danger has made other things like transportation more risky and therefore more expensive, again putting pressure on the economic output. “The impact of militancy and kidnapping on the Nigerian economy is localized for now, but the instability has had an effect on the agricultural productivity in Rivers State.

Kidnapping as a social problem is the act of illegally taking somebody away and keeping him as a prisoner in order to get money or something in return for releasing him. The history of kidnapping in the South-East zone of Nigeria could be traced to hostilities, conflicts and violence in the Niger Delta region. In the South-East zone, especially in Rivers and Abia States, kidnapping activities were mainly targeted at prominent indigenes and residents of these states. This adversely affected the economy of River State as many businessmen and manufacturing companies relocated to other states like Lagos State. Worse still, people were kidnapped while attending church services and village meetings (Ajani, 2010).

RESULT

Research Question 1: *To what extent does geographical location of adult education centers affect women participation in adult education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas?*

Table 1: Mean (\bar{x}) of Respondents’ Scores on the Extent Geographical Location of Adult Education Centers Affect Women Participation in Adult Education Programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas

S/ N	Items	Etche Women 265		Remarks	Omuma Women 199		Remarks
		\bar{x}	SD		\bar{x}	SD	
1	Discouraged due to far distance	3.48	0.78	HE	3.43	0.91	HE
2	It is very stressful due to the distance	3.42	0.74	HE	3.49	0.86	HE
3	My husband would not permit me due to long distance	3.19	0.89	HE	3.08	0.84	HE
4	I am afraid attending the programme due to the long distance	3.11	0.82	HE	3.14	0.78	HE
5	I cannot sit in a long distance journey due to my health	3.48	0.78	HE	3.43	0.91	HE
6	I don't travel long distance when I am pregnant	3.42	0.74	HE	3.49	0.86	HE
Grand mean/standard deviation		3.35	0.79		3.34	0.86	

Source: Field Work (2018).

Data from Table 1 above, revealed that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 women in Etche Local Government Area had a mean score ranging from (3.11 - 3.48) and a standard deviation score ranging from (0.74 – 0.89), with an grand mean/standard deviation of 3.35/0.79. Accordingly, items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 women in Omuma Local Government Area had a mean score of 3.08 – 3.49 and standard deviation of 0.78 - 0.91 with a grand mean/standard deviation of 3.34/0.86. This indicates that women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Area are discouraged due to far distance, it is very stressful due to the distance, husband would not permit me due to long distance, afraid attending the programme due to the long distance, cannot sit in a long distance journey due to their health, and do not travel long distance when they are pregnant.

Research Question 2: *To what extent does family care-giving responsibilities influence women participation in adult education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas?*

Table 2: Mean (\bar{x}) of Respondents' Scores on the Extent Family Care-Giving Responsibilities that Affect Women Participation in Adult Education Programmes in Etche And Omuma Local Government Areas

S/ N	Items	Etche Women 265		Remarks	Omuma Women 199		Remarks
		\bar{x}	SD		\bar{x}	SD	
7	Cooking and feeding of large family size	3.27	0.49	HE	3.11	0.75	HE
8	Laundrying activities affect participation	3.96	0.48	VHE	3.77	0.53	VHE
9	Stress from family care-giving activities affect women participation	3.09	0.16	HE	3.16	1.04	HE
10	Care-giving for the sick members of the family affects participation	2.98	1.08	HE	2.98	1.06	HE
11	The most important thing for a woman is to take care of her children than any literacy programme	3.00	1.11	HE	3.16	0.94	HE
Grand mean/standard deviation		3.26	0.66		3.24	0.86	

Source: Field Work (2018).

Data from Table 2 above, revealed that items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, women in Etche Local Government Area had a mean score ranging from (2.98 - 3.96) and a standard deviation score ranging from (0.16 – 1.11), with an grand mean/standard deviation of 3.26/0.66. Accordingly, items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 women in Omuma Local Government Area had a mean score of 2.98 – 3.77 and standard deviation of 0.53 - 1.06 with a grand mean/standard deviation of 3.24/0.86. This indicates that women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Area are influenced by some care giving activities such as: cooking and feeding activities of large family size, laundrying activities affect participation, stress from family care-giving activities affect women participation, care-giving for the sick members of the family affects participation, and the most important thing for a woman is to take care of her children than any literacy programme

Research Question 3: *To what extent does insecurity affect women participation in peace education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas?*

Table 3: Mean (\bar{x}) of Respondents' Scores on the Extent Insecurity affect Women Participation in Peace Education Programmes in Etche And Omuma Local Government Areas

S/ N	Items	Etche Women 265		Remarks	Omuma Women 199		Remarks
		\bar{x}	SD		\bar{x}	SD	
12	Fear of being kidnapped affect women participation	3.33	0.57	HE	3.11	0.75	HE
13	Fear of being robbed affect women participation	2.96	0.48	HE	2.77	0.63	HE
14	Fearing of raped affect women participation	3.27	0.49	HE	3.16	1.04	HE
15	Incessant cases of cult attacks affect women participation	2.77	0.63	HE	2.98	1.06	HE
16	Fear of auto crash due to bad roads affect women participation	3.11	0.57	HE	3.16	0.94	HE
Grand mean/standard deviation		3.09	0.55		3.04	0.88	

Source: Field Work (2018).

Data from Table 3 above, revealed that items 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16, women in Etche Local Government Area had a mean score ranging from (2.96 - 3.33) and a standard deviation score ranging from (0.49 – 0.63), with an grand mean/standard deviation of 3.09/0.55. Accordingly, items 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16, women in Omuma Local Government Area had a mean score of 2.77 – 3.16 and standard deviation of 0.53 - 1.06 with a grand mean/standard deviation of 3.04/0.88. This indicates that women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Area are influenced by insecurity activities such as: fear of being kidnapped affect women participation, fear of being robbed affect women participation, fearing of raped affect women participation, incessant cases of cult attacks affect women participation, and fear of auto crash due to bad roads affect women participation.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean rating between women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the effect of geographical location of adult education centers on women participation in literacy education programmes.

Table 4: Z-test on Significant Difference in the Mean Rating Between Women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the effect of Geographical Location of Adult Education Centers on Women Participation in Literacy Education Programmes.

CATEGORY	N	\bar{x}	SD	DF	z-cal	z-cri	DECISION
Etche	265	3.35	0.79				H ₀ Accepted
Omuma	199	3.34	0.86	462	1.77	±1.96	

Source: Field Work (2018).

The data in table 4 showed that the z-calculated value of 1.77 is less than z-critical value of ±1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with 462 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis (H₀₁) is accepted. There is no significant difference in the mean rating between Etche and Omuma women on the effect of family responsibilities on their participation in adult education programmes.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean rating between women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the effect of family care-giving responsibility on women participation in vocational education programmes.

Table 5: Z-test on Significant Difference in the Mean Rating Between Women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the Effect of Family Care-Giving Responsibility on Women Participation in Vocational Education Programmes.

CATEGORY	N	\bar{x}	SD	DF	z-cal	z-cri	DECISION
Etche	265	3.26	0.66				H ₀ accepted
Omuma	199	3.24	0.86	462	1.29	±1.96	

Source: Field Work (2018).

The data in table 5 showed that the z-calculated value of 1.29 is less than z-critical value of ±1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with 462 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis (H₀₂) is accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating between women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the effect of family care-giving responsibility on women participation in vocational education programmes.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean rating between women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the effect of insecurity on women participation in adult education programme.

Table 6: Z-test on Significant Difference in the Mean Rating between Women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the effect of Insecurity on Women Participation in Adult Education Programme

CATEGORY	N	\bar{x}	SD	DF	z-cal	z-cri	DECISION
Etche	265	3.09	0.55				H ₀ accepted
Omuma	199	3.04	0.88	462	1.02	±1.96	

Source: Field Work (2018).

The data in table 6 shows that the z-calculated value of 1.02 is less than z-critical value of ± 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with 462 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis (H_{03}) is accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating between women in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas on the effect of insecurity on women participation in adult education programme.

Summary of Findings

The Summary of Findings emanating from this study revealed the following:

1. Geographical location of adult education centers affect women participation in adult education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas
2. Family care giving responsibilities such as family size, domestic activities, stress, and care for the children were identified as the family responsibility factors that affect women participation in literacy programmes. influence women participation in adult education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas
3. Insecurity is also a factor affecting women participation in adult education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings from research question one revealed that to a high extent, geographical location of adult education centers affect women participation in adult education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas. This finding agrees with Oladipo (2007) observed that the long distance to school in many rural areas have been hindrance to women. He noted that in fear of them being manhandled on the journey or in sympathy for their alleged physical weakness, parents and society frown at girls travelling long distance to school.

This finding emanating from research question two revealed that to high extent family care-giving responsibilities influence women participation in adult education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas. This agrees with Ekpo, Orok, Ekuinam and Okon (2003) who observed that other factors militating against women participation in adult education include the social structure of the society, family structure, childbearing and rearing and influence from other members of the extended family. Commenting on the factors militating against women education, Ngwu (2003) stated that majority of Nigerian women and girls live under conditions which threaten their health, deny the choice of about childbearing, limit their educational access and attainment, restrict economic participation for women and fail to extent to them equal rights and freedom with men.

The findings from research question three discovered that to a high extent that insecurity affects women participation in adult education programmes in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas. This finding agrees with David (2015) who stated that "People across all value chains feared movement outside protected areas because of attacks by insurgents," they wrote, explaining that farm workers feared attacks while grazing animals, processors lost workers when families left the conflict zone, and traders began limiting their movements. Meanwhile, the agricultural sector became a target for militants in need of supplies. Their data shows that cash, food and equipment were more likely to get stolen. Lastly, the danger has made other things like transportation more risky and therefore more expensive, again putting pressure on the economic output. "The impact of militancy and kidnapping on the Nigerian economy is localized for now, but the instability has had an effect on the agricultural productivity in Rivers State.

Kidnapping as a social problem is the act of illegally taking somebody away and keeping him as a prisoner in order to get money or something in return for releasing him. The history of kidnapping in the South-East zone of Nigeria could be traced to hostilities, conflicts and violence in the Niger Delta region. In the South-East zone, especially in Rivers and Abia States, kidnapping activities were mainly targeted at prominent indigenes and residents of these states. This situation was pervasive shortly after the 2007 general elections in Nigeria. This is partly because, the youths that were used as political thugs by politicians during the 2007 general elections in these states subsequently engaged in kidnapping as means of livelihood after the elections.

CONCLUSION

Adult education is a vital facet of the gigantic national development and an important source of social, economic and political development of a nation. Adult education programmes seek to eradicate illiteracy, development of skills and adoption of new technologies to the number of skills of the uneducated, the semi-educated and the already educated. Therefore, the study concludes that the factors that affect women participation in adult education programmes are geographical location, poverty, domestic role and their occupation. However it is believed that with good motivation women participation in adult education programme will rapidly improve.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were proffered:

1. Government should site functional adult education centers in rural communities of the State including Etche and Omuma local government areas. This will certainly enhance their participation in adult education programmes.
2. The time and venue for the adult literacy programme should be convenient and conducive for rural women due to their domestic role and occupation.
3. The government and security agencies should adopt more proactive strategies to curb all forms of criminal activities responsible for insecurity situations in the state.

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