

MANAGING ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMMES FOR SUSTAINABLE HUMAN SECURITY IN NIGERIA

¹Musa Muhammad Usman; ²Dr. Usman Abba Idris & ³Umar Faruk Hussaini

^{1&3}Department of Educational Foundations,
Faculty of Education, Sokoto State University, Sokoto.
E-mail: ¹muhammad.musa@ssu.edu.ng

²Department of Adult Education and Community Services,
Faculty of Education, Bayero University, Kano.
E-mail: usmanaddaidris1@gmail.com or uaidris54732@buk.edu.ng

Abstract

This paper is a discussion on managing adult literacy programmes for sustainable human security in Nigeria. Managing literacy programmes implies to applying the constitutional provisions of Nigeria and using the ethical requirements of the Nigerian National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education (NMEC) to provide sufficient and qualitative human resources, sufficient fund and standardized quality assurance systems for the National headquarters, states headquarters, Local Government Area Offices and centers to efficiently manage literacy centers to ensure inclusive and qualitative adult literacy programmes delivery. The study was necessitated by observing the current conditions of insufficient funds, neglect and non-professional managers that are handling adult literacy programmes as challenges hindering adult literacy programs delivery in Nigeria. The paper reviewed the concept of adult literacy, sustainable human security, nature and scope of human security in Nigeria and managing adult literacy to ensure sustainable human security in Nigeria. It was recommended that stakeholders should ensure that adult literacy programmes are managed and administered by professionals of adult and non-formal education, human security should be incorporated in adult and non-formal education curriculum, government should ensure adequate financing of adult and non-formal education programmes at all levels, facilitators should be adequately employed and remunerated by the government to ensure their job satisfaction and to avoid capitalizing on volunteers.

Introduction

Adult literacy programmes in Nigeria are aimed at reforming human lives for positive and sustainable development particularly those people who were not able to attend formal school at the appropriate time and workers seeking for knowledge to become updated in the discharge of their official responsibilities. Adult literacy is a programme that takes adequate care of the economic, traditional, political, educational, medical, social and environmental problems of the adults in need. Adult literacy consequently changes the philosophical, social and psychological minds of the concerned adults, implants lost hope in them and unshackles them from their prejudgment of seeing themselves as not beings that are capable to learn. Adult literacy awakens adult learners to become cognizant of their environmental, educational, social, economic, cultural, medical and political, psychological and philosophical potentials and hidden abilities. (Onyenemezu, 2012).

Based on the above significances of adult literacy programmes particularly in a country like Nigeria and other African countries, it became mandatory to manage and administer adult literacy programmes with professionalism, adequate care and sufficient funding so as to achieve the desired goal of establishing the agencies managing adult education programmes based on the constitutional and ethical provisions. The success or failure of

any venture including adult literacy programmes is basically associated with the configuration and style of leadership in such organization (Asaju, 2015). Adult literacy programmes in Nigeria enjoys the managerial support of not only the government, but also that of local and international Non-Governmental Organizations, as well as that of other stakeholders. They all make intensive efforts to ensure effective adult education programmes management. But, despite all these supports, there seems to be persistent and intransigent challenges and problems that have been influencing against effective adult education management in Nigeria. Adult education is a vital enterprise that touches the lives of the present and future generations.

Human security is a fragile and significant issue which conveys different meanings to scholars, analysts, policy makers and organizations across the globe. Fundamentally, security has to do with the presence of peace, safety, gladness and the protection of human and physical resources or absence of crisis or threats to human dignity, all of which facilitate development and progress of any human society. The concept of security has become a preoccupation for the decades following the end of the Cold War which could also be referred to as landmark for diverse school of thought with security studies. Security, as a concept, has diverse dimensions. It is aptly used in psychology, finance, information access, public safety, defense and military matters.

Across the world, human security and peace building strategies have increasingly assumed major policy priority necessary for good governance. In Nigeria, this has been more prominent in successive regimes' failure to adequately face the recurrent security threats affecting almost every part of the country. This means that peace is neither built on a solid foundation nor has security been achieved in Nigeria. Considering the current security situation of the country, this paper examined the interface between human security and managing literacy programmes and brought to focus how adult literacy programmes could be managed to ensure sustainable human security in Nigeria. Human security is highly needed in Nigeria in response to the complexity and interrelatedness of both old and new security threats ranging from chronic and persistent poverty to terrorism, banditry, ethnic violence, human trafficking, health pandemic, epidemics and economic and financial downturns, all the above security threats could be addressed through effective and inclusive adult literacy programmes (Bashar 2017). Enu & Ugwu, (2021) lamented that, lack of commitment by the state to address the little security challenges and economic deprivation, corruption and selfishness of some leaders and politicians forced the youth to seek alternative methods of negatively drawing government's attention towards their problems as claimed by many bandit gangs in Nigeria.

Concept of Adult Literacy

The concept of adult literacy varies, depending on social, cultural, educational and political contexts. For example, a basic literacy standard in many societies is the adults' ability to read the newspaper in any language, others consider it as the ability to read and write in English language only, others defined literacy as the ability to read and write in any language, whereas some societies require literacy with computers and other digital or modern technologies. Traditionally, literacy is considered to be the ability to read and write, or the ability to use a particular language to read, write, listen, and speak Montoya (2018). In modern contexts literacy refers to reading and writing at a level passable for communication, or at a level that allows one to successfully understand and

communicate in print society. Literacy is the ability to identify, comprehend, interpret, create, converse and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts (Alan 2005).

Sustainable Human Security

The concept of sustainable human security provides an incorporated framework for sufficiently and sustainably or continuously addressing development and collaboration in complex situations of war, violence and fragility, likewise ensuring favourable living condition for human being without turnover. As human security swings the attention from a state-centered to a people-centered approach to security, sustainable human security aims at underscoring the persistence, interdependence and universality of a set of freedoms which are essential to human life. The concept of sustainable human security is a paradigm that advocates most of the modern understandings on human security, human development, human dignity and human sustainability. It emerges from at least thirty years of reflections in line with sustainable development; human rights based development, human security and human development (Singh, & Kumar, 2018). The United Nations Commission on Human Security (2008) identified seven basic areas of human security as follows:

Economic Security

Economic security requires an assured basic income for individuals, usually from productive and remunerative work or, as a last resort, from a publicly financed safety net. In this sense, only about a quarter of the world's population is presently economically secured. While the economic security problem may be more serious in developing countries. Unemployment problems constitute an important factor underlying political tensions and ethnic violence. Yagboyaju, (2019) lamented that; poverty has being a major problem in Nigeria Like in other parts of Africa.

Food Security

Food security requires that all people at all times have economic access to basic food. According to Idris (2020) Nigeria has an estimated population of 205,323,520 persons and has 102,407,327 people living in extreme poverty (50% of the total population) are living below one dollar per day which is the world poverty line. Similarly, poverty food insecurity are twins and as such more than 50% of the Nigerian populace are facing food insecurity (World Data Lab, 2020). Nigeria is unarguably the most populous nation in Africa and ranked number 7 globally with an estimated growth rate of 2.43% per-annum and high dependency ratio of 88% (Worldometer, 2020).

Health Security

Health Security aims to guarantee a minimum protection from diseases and unhealthy lifestyles. Today, lifestyle-related chronic diseases are leading killers worldwide, with 80% of deaths from chronic diseases occurring in low- and middle-income countries. (United Nations Commission on Human Security 2018) The World Health Organization conducted a health security survey in Nigeria and discovered that, out of the nineteen technical areas assessed, there was no single indicator that attained the highest-level score of five in Nigeria. Scores for national legislation, policy, and financing; zoonotic

diseases; and biosafety and biosecurity increased under the present core areas between 2017 and 2019 (Fasominu, *et al*, 2022). This indicated that, the Nigerian health system is weak and it cannot ensure health security for the entire Nigerians.

Environmental Security

Environmental security aims to protect people from the short- and long-term ravages of nature, man-made threats in nature, and deterioration of the natural environment. In industrial countries, one of the major threats is air pollution. Global warming, caused by the emission of greenhouse gases, is another environmental security issue in such nations while in some African countries like Nigeria deforestation and desert encroachment are the threats. Environmental security in Nigeria is one of the major threats to human life, considering the level of desert encroachment and environmental degradation couple with excessive deforestation in the name of charcoal production and the Niger Delta that became so prone to environmental security threats and increasingly neglected (UNDP, 2006). (The Nigerian environmental insecurity contributed a lot to fuel the resurgence of banditry, militancy, poverty, rural to urban migration, inefficient livelihoods and vulnerability (Amadi & Alapiki, 2019).

Personal Security

Personal security aims to protect people from physical violence, whether from the state or external states, from violent individuals and sub-state actors, from domestic abuse, or from predatory adults. For many people, the greatest source of anxiety is crime, particularly violent crime.

Community Security

Community security aims to protect people from the loss of traditional relationships and values and from sectarian and ethnic violence. Traditional communities, particularly minority ethnic groups are often threatened. About half of the world's states have experienced some inter-ethnic strife. According to Odegbunam, (2019) the rising insecurity in Nigeria in the recent times necessitates the calls and agitations for community security and the establishment of state police in Nigeria. The idea of community security is about partnership and cooperation between the citizens and the police to fight, control, and reduce crime. Upon all these efforts and attempts, yet Nigeria cannot secure itself which necessitates the need for strengthening human security through literacy (Mohammed & Isma'ilu, 2021).

Political Security

Political security is concerned with whether people live in a society that honours their basic needs and human rights? According to a survey conducted in March 2021 by Amnesty International, political repression, systematic torture, ill treatment or disappearance *of* persons were still practiced in 110 countries and Nigeria is among the top ranking countries. Human rights violations are most frequent during periods of political unrest, police and military brutality and injustice court ruling in Nigeria (Amnesty International, 2021).

Nature and Scope of Sustainable Human Security in Nigeria

As contained in the sustainable development goals (SDG) as it was equally accepted by the Nigerian government, that in addition to protecting the state from external and internal aggression, sustainable human security in Nigeria expanded the scope of human security to include protection from a broader range of threats, including environmental pollution, infectious diseases, and economic deprivation, hunger, social vices. Similarly, to sustainably make citizens free from illiteracy, vulnerability, fear, , shame and freedom of movement. Thus, sustainable human security involves permanently, progressively and sustainably protecting citizens from poverty, hunger, diseases, unemployment and national disaster. However, all these can only take place where citizens are literate and there is peace and stability in the polity. This exhibited an increase in poverty, diseases, acute youth unemployment, poor health care facilities, poor housing facilities, epileptic power supply and more in the Nigerian society (Orhero, 2020).

Mohammed and Isma'ilu (2021) lamented that, the collective sense of insecurity is now higher in Nigeria than any other time before, because the forces that drive insecurity remain persistent and widespread .Supporting this assertion, Njoku (2019) identified five major security challenges among others that Nigeria is currently confronted with as follow:

Militancy and Biafra Agitation: the southeastern part of Nigeria has become a death zone, particularly to Northerners and some of their Biafra indigenes who refuse to cooperate with their mission.

Boko Haram: The militant group of Boko Haram has destabilized the North-Eastern part of Nigeria since 2009 the group killed tens of thousands of people and displaced millions. About 2.5 million people fled their homes and towns, and the direct consequence of the conflict was that the North-East was plunged into a severe humanitarian crisis - as of 2018 to date been one of the worst in the world, which left about 7.7 million people in need of humanitarian aid (Bette, & Ude, 2011).

Farmer-Herder Clashes: The Middle Belt region of Nigeria faced prolonged violent clashes between farmers and cattle herders. At the core of the conflicts are disputes over access and rights to land and water resources and rapid desertification which has changed the grazing patterns of cattle. Segun (2013) identified other areas that are germane in the discussion of security and sustainable development goals in Nigeria to include: The Nature of politics, Multi-ethnic Nature of Nigeria and Religious Rivalries, Corruption, Unemployment and Poverty (Alemika, 2011), (Salawu 2010), (Egharevba and Chiazor, 2012).

Literacy and Human Security Development

The promotion of human security through literacy has become the central focus of the new development paradigm because provision of arms and ammunitions do not bring sustainable human security. Eradicating hunger, diseases, poverty and unemployment through literacy and sustainable development programmes is the global best practice today to ensure human security that can be sustained forever. Human security hold the key to an enduring national security base on the fact that, when every citizen is literate, the skills and thought acquired through his/her literacy processes could be applied to change his/her life style to the best and that is what can make the development sustainable, as such the individual could utilize the knowledge and skills to adjust

him/herself economically, socially, politically, personally, medically, and so on (Enu, & Ugwu, 2020).

It is obvious that literacy is the only key to be used to encompass and inculcate all the seven factors of human security into human life, therefore, literacy is the best and sustainable solution to ensuring human security (Orhero, 2020). This paper has confidence that for Nigeria to address the issues of human security, the seven factors for human development should be integrated into literacy programmes so as to initiate and ensure that the individual is on the part to attain absolute development not support in form of palliatives (Bette & Ude, 2011).

Managing Adult Literacy to Ensure Sustainable Human Security in Nigeria

To sustainably and functionally manage adult literacy programmes in Nigeria there is need for series of reviews and restructuring in the entire system couple with adequate financing right from National level, State level, Local Government level, ward level and center level. This is based on the fact that, there is inadequate professionalism in the management of adult and non-formal education programmes in Nigeria base on the fact that, there is no standard for appointment, promotion and transfer of staff to and from NMEC, state agencies for mass education, local Government area offices and so on. To complement the Federal Government effort to ensure the success of mass literacy campaign each state established its own Agency for Adult and Non-Formal Education . The roles of these agencies were to eradicate illiteracy within their areas of jurisdiction by providing literacy programmes that are in line with the philosophical, economic, cultural, social and political needs of the concerned people.

Upon all these efforts, illiteracy is one of the major challenges hindering human security in Nigeria, illiteracy level among Nigerians is due to managerial negligence among some of the literacy programmes managers and administrators. Based on this note this paper is advocating for effective and efficient management of literacy programmes in Nigeria so as to ensure sustainable human security in the country, because literacy programmes contained all it takes to ensure human security in Nigeria.

For efficient, effective and sustainable management of adult and non-formal education in Nigeria, there is need for efficient, regular and highly effective monitoring and evaluation system that should have the political will, capacity, dedication and patriotism to ensure qualitative system and delivery of literacy programmes in Nigeria. At the same time, similar system should be provided at the State level, Local Government, ward and centre level to ensure sustainable and efficient management and administration of adult literacy programmes in Nigeria. These teams (monitoring teams) need to be andragogically trained to ensure philosophical, functional, social, economic and culturally oriented facilitation and learning at every learning Centre. To complement these efforts, the monitoring and evaluation departments at all the levels should ensure that, all the legitimate facilitators received efficient and adequate training from NMEC, so that there would be synergy between facilitators and monitoring teams. To provide functional literacy and continuing education for adults and youths who have never had the advantage of formal education or who did not complete their primary education (Kaehler, & Grundei, 2019).

To efficiently manage adult literacy programmes in Nigeria, it is necessary to employ and maintain professionally trained managers of adult and non-formal education at all the managerial levels ranging from National level down to ward level, this will ensure professional service delivery which is a foundation to efficient and effective facilitation and learning. The non-professional managers should go for in-service professional training and they should serve as subordinates after their return. Similarly, the strategy of employing facilitators needs to be reviewed. Based on the relevance of adult and non-formal education services in our communities it is imperative to employ permanent and professional facilitators that can work reliably and selflessly. The time has gone for adult and non-formal programs to depend on volunteers and negligibly paid facilitators while the managers remain permanently paid staff. If we really mean business, facilitators should be given the top priority and should be advanced gradually to reach the managerial levels so that, they work based on the foundational experiences they acquired as facilitators to enhance service delivery and learned from their past mistakes (Ayodele, & Adedokun, 2015).

To ensure sustainable human security, in countries with high level of illiteracy like Nigeria and other African countries, it is mandatory to manage adult literacy programmes with utmost efficiency and professionalism. Human security is a vast area that covered several aspects of life ranging from political security, health security, social security, educational security, economic security and so on. It equally includes freedom from fear, freedom from want, freedom from shame, freedom from vulnerability and so on. To ensure these in an adult's life, this requires high level professionalism and technicalities; this informed us that facilitating adult class is not for SSCE graduates neither a job for volunteers nor a work to be paid with negligence or with common allowances (Tavanti, 2013). Therefore, adult and non-formal education managers should bear it in mind that, there is need for a thorough surgical operation in the system for us to be able to achieve human security in this country and other African.

When the above strategies are put in place in Nigeria, it is believed that, the adult literacy programmes would be efficiently equipped with both human and material resources that can help learners to easily learn and assimilate what they learned. The skills and knowledge they will acquire through an efficiently managed adult literacy programme will certainly modify their life styles, they are likely to become conscious of everything that concern their lives, ranging from children education, health care services, economic development, social development, personal development, cultural development, political development and other aspects of their lives. When these are injected into learners lives and been sustained through continuous education, learners will develop the critical thinking ability to carter for themselves to ensure sustainable human security in their various communities, states and the nation as a whole. Base on this fact, the only solution to the numerous challenges facing Nigeria today is to revitalize and manage adult literacy programmes efficiently to make at least 75 % of the Nigerian population sustainably literate to see how life will change in Nigeria (Kapur, 2020).

Conclusion

This chapter concluded that, management is a tactical and dynamic means of manipulating human beings to get the best from them at the same time satisfying their needs and make them feel accomplished. The management of adult literacy programmes in Nigeria is facing managerial challenges at all the levels of its management as such

professionalism is highly required in the management of adult and non-formal education in Nigeria. Human security today is beyond military action to secure society but ensuring social security, political security, food security, health security, educational security and safeguarding human freedom from fear, freedom from want, freedom from shame, freedom from vulnerability, freedom from fear, freedom from want. To ensure the above, literacy programmes need to be adequately funded, efficiently, selflessly and sustainably manage. Adult literacy programmes should be professionally, efficiently, selflessly and effectively managed to produced conscious citizens that could play all the possible roles to secure human life sustainably. Because if managed productively adult literacy programmes can produce functional citizens that that can sustainably secure human life in Nigeria forever.

Recommendations

Based on this review, it was recommended that,

1. Stakeholders should ensure that adult literacy programmes are managed and administered by professionals of adult and non-formal education only.
2. Human security should be incorporated into adult and non-formal education curriculum to ensure comprehensive awareness of the concept of human security and put it into practice.
3. To sustainably and functionally manage adult literacy programmes in Nigeria, the government should review and restructure the entire system couple with adequate financing right from National level, State level, Local Government level, ward level and center level.
4. Learning facilitators should be adequately employed and remunerated by the government to ensure their job satisfaction and welfare. Facilitators should be sufficiently employed like every civil servant to avoid capitalizing on volunteers.

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