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## **An Assessment of Non-formal Education Programme in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State: The Need for Curriculum Reform in 21st Century.**

**Paulinus Ubaka Ugwoke**

Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu, Enugu State.

Email: ugwokepaulinus22@gmail.com

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### **ABSTRACT**

*In this work, the researcher tried to assess Non-formal education programme in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State and x-ray the need for the curriculum to be reformed in the 21st century to enable it address the needs, interest and aspiration of the non-formal education participants. Four research questions guided the study. The population for the study was 1244 Non-Formal education learners in four council wards: two from Nsukka central and two from Nsukka west local government area of Enugu state. Through simple random sampling, 600 non-formal education learners were selected for the study. The design is descriptive survey while the instrument used for data collection was a well-structured and guided questionnaire. Simple percentage and frequency distribution was used for analyzing the data. The following major findings emerged: The current curriculum of Non-Formal Education (NFE) focuses only on basic literacy; the reform of Non Formal Education Curriculum will make the programme more effective and responsive to current societal needs . Major recommendations were also stated which includes; Government at all levels and NGOs as well as wealthy Nigerians should help in the funding of Non-formal education programmes Adult and Non-formal education curriculum should be diversified so as to enable it cater for the varied needs, problems and interest of its clientele.*

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### **BACKGROUND**

The development of any environment and society is undertaken by persons with correct and appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes as well as commitment to high values to change the society for better. Ivowi (2010) states that education is the factory for human capacity development, in that whatever is learnt in educational institutions is meant to serve as a weapon for dealing with events in the world of work and living. In our present society, education is the basic science curriculum of Non-formal education to verify the much that have been achieved from the stipulated objectives of adult and non-formal education in Nigeria National Policy on Education (2013) which are: to provide functional literacy education for adults who have never had the advantages of any formal education; to provide functional and

remedial education for those young people who prematurely dropped out of the formal school system ; to provide further education to different categories of completers of the formal education in order to improve their basic skills and knowledge, to provide in-service on-the-job vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professional in order to improve their basic skills and; to give adult citizens of the country the necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment. Hence, from the above objectives, the issue of curriculum is very critical in non formal education programmes as Ngwu (2006:55) states that non-formal education has its peculiarities, its specific requirements and its constraints; and these must be taken into account when discussing the non-formal education (NFE)



curriculum. He went further to assert that "traditionally, curriculum is designed at institutional, state or national levels for groups of learners primarily determined by age and levels. This gave rise to one curriculum for primary education, one for junior secondary and one for senior secondary or for technical or teachers education. He also stressed that "in non-formal education, broad areas of concern are covered by educational process; and it is no longer the case of one single curriculum covering all learners.

Ivowi (2006) asserted that "Curriculum reform can take many forms. It may be a routine review of existing curriculum, in which the focus is on its continual relevance and practicability... It may be a response to a need. Hence, it is on this note that the researcher wants to assess non-formal education programme curriculum in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State and state the need for its reform in 21st century.

### **Statement of the Problem**

According to Bondi and Bondi (1989) a good curriculum meets several criteria:

- it is designed to provide rich and varied experiences for a wide diversity of students;
- it is organized and flexible, so that it can be adapted to meet the educational objectives of the organization;
- it uses appropriate resources to meet the needs and interests of the learners;
- and it includes appropriate teaching strategies to carryout identified learning objectives.

Curriculum reform aims at matching the learners' needs and characteristics, the instructors comfort level and available resources, with the learning outcomes desired. To meet these criterion one must

address a number of considerations during the curriculum development process.

In the same vein, Ojukwu (2009) emphasized that with global challenges of the 21st Century, educators have more than ever before been confronted with the problems of presenting subject matter to students with varied learning styles, background, interest, physical and mental abilities and vocational goals. He went further to argue that in spite of the progress and investments in education; the issue of quality education and relevance of learning remain worrying problems in Nigeria. Hence, non-formal education curriculum needs to be reformed so as to make the teaching/learning process more relevant. This is because adults move with baggage of problems that need immediate attention and solution at every point in time. As such the need to re-assess the present curriculum to ascertain its position and how it is serving the present need of the adults in non-formal education programmes in Nsukka L.G.A. of Enugu State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of the study is to assess the curriculum of non-formal education in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State.

The specific purposes are:

- to determine the characteristics of non-formal education participants in Nsukka L.G.A. of Enugu State;
- to determine the extent to which Non-formal education curriculum equips of the learners with functional skills needed in the 21st century in Nsukka L.G.A.
- to examine the availability of qualified instructors and instructional materials for the implementation of non-formal education curriculum in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State;
- to examine the suitability of Non-formal education teaching/learning methods for Non-formal learners in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State.

### Research Questions

1. what are the characteristics of Non-formal education participants in Nsukka L.G.A?
2. to what extent is non-formal education curriculum equips the learners with functional skills needed in the 21st century in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State?
3. to what extent are qualified instructors and effective instructional materials for the implementation of non-formal education curriculum available?
4. to what are the Non-formal education teaching/learning methods suitable for adult learners in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State?

### Scope of the Study

The study covered the assessment of Non - formal education programme in Nsukka L.G.A. of Enugu state: The need for the curriculum reforms in 21st century.

### Research Method

The researcher adopted descriptive survey designs for this study. Nworgu (2006:77)

defines descriptive survey design as the studies which aim at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. Hence, the choice of this design is appropriate base on the topic which is "An assessment of non-formal education programme in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State: the need for reform in 21st century.

### Area of Study

The research study covers Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu state. The local government is made up of twenty (20) council wards. The researchers however, is making use of four council wards; two from Nsukka central and two from Nsukka West local government area which constituted the two major geo-political zones of the local government area.

### Population of the Study

The population of the study is made up of 1244 non-formal education programme learners from the four towns in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu state. The table below shows the breakdown of the population.

**Table 1:** Population of the study and sample distribution of the participants

S/N	Council Wards	Registered Non-formal 1education learners
1	Nsukka urban	450
2	Obimo	300
3	Ibagwa-Ani	250
4	Edem-Ani	244
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,244</b>

### Sample and Sampling Technique

The researchers adopted simple random sampling technique in selection of respondents to ensure equal representation of the entire study. According to Nworgu (2016), a sample is a smaller group of

elements drawn through a definite procedure from a specific population for inclusion in the study. Hence a manageable sample size of 600 participants was selected from the population to ensure adequate representation of the entire population.

**Table 2:** Sample wards and their non-formal education participation

S/N	Council Wards	Population	Sample Population	Percentage
1	Nsukka urban	450	217	36.2
2	Obimo	300	145	24.2
3	Ibagwa-Ani	250	120	20.0
4	Edem-Ani	244	188	19.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100</b>

### Instrument for Data Collection

The researchers used structured questionnaire which was organized in a four point rating scale of strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD). There are two parts in the questionnaire. Part(A) consists of personal data of the respondents while Part (B) seeks to elicit information from the respondents as regards to the assessment of non-formal education programme in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State: The need for curriculum reform in 21st Century.

### Validity of the Instrument

Copies of the questionnaire for this study were first presented to colleagues and also to experts in educational research for securitization and vetting before its use.

### Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument was subjected to trial testing using forty (40) registered non - formal education participants from neighbouring

council wards. Their responses was however, not used for this study.

### Method of Data Collection

The researcher administered 600 copies of the were returned accounting for 96.7% return rate. Questionnaire to the respondents. At the end of the administration, 580 copies

### Method of Data Analysis

The researcher used simple percentage and frequency distribution in analyzing the data obtained from section A, while section B was analyzed using mean score. The cut-off point for accepting an item is 2.50 . Thus any item below 2.50 is rejected while those above 2.50 are accepted.

## RESULTS

**Research Question One:** What are the characteristics of non-formal education participants in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State?

**Table 3:** Sex Distribution of the Participants

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	239	39.83
Female	361	60.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 showed that 239 or 39.83 % of the respondents were males while 361 or in non-formal education programme were

females 60.17% of them were females. This implies that the majority of the participants

in non-formal education programme were females.

**Table 4:** Range of the participants

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
18 - 25	122	20.3
26 - 33	105	17.5
39 41	218	36.3
42 and above	155	25.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 showed that 122 or 20.3% of the respondents are between the age range of 18-25; 105 or 17.5% are between the age of 26-33 years; while 218 or 36.3% of the respondents are between the age range of

34-41 years; whereas 155 or 25.8% are between the age of 42 and above. Thus, the majority of the respondents are within the age range of 34-41 years.

**Table 5:** Educational Qualification of the Participants

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Non-formal education	362	60.33
FSLC	93	15.50
SSCE/O'Level	40	6.67
OND/NCE	58	9.67
Degree and above	47	7.83
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table above, 363 or 60.3 % of the respondents has no formal education and as such forms the majority of the respondents; 93 or 15.50% of the respondents possess First School Leaving Certificate, 40 or

6.67% of the respondents have their O'Level; 58 or 9.6 % of the respondents possess OND/NCE and 47 or 7.83% had degree and above.

**Table 6:** Occupation of the participants

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Trading/Business	54	8.67
Farming	362	60.7
Civil Servant	112	18.67

Unemployed	72	12
Degree and above	47	7.83
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6 indicates that 54 or 8.67% of the respondents are traders; 362 or 60.7% of the respondents are farmers, which indicated that majority of the respondents are civil servants whereas 72 or 12% of the respondents are unemployed.

**Research Question Two:** To what extent is the non-formal education curriculum equips the learners with functional skills needed in the 21st century in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu state?

**Table 7:** Mean Score of the extent to which Non-formal Education curriculum equips the learners with functional skills needed in the 21st century in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu state.

S/N	Extent	SA	A	D	SD	Total weighted	Mean	Remark
1	The NFE curriculum centres only on 3rs, reading, writing and calculation (basic literacy) with little attention to vocational skills.	250	240	100	10	1930	3.22	Accepted
2	The psychological well-being needs of learners in order for them to be able to cope with life during and after the programme are lacking.	300	295	3	3	2094	3.49	Accepted
3	The curriculum and methods of instruction responds to the current needs of learners and also promote future learning opportunities which help in poverty reduction.	36	101	204	209	1264	2.11	Rejected
4	The curriculum is ineffective in addressing life skills which will equip one with knowledge, skills, and attitude needed in 21st century	140	135	250	75	1540	2.57	Accepted

Three of the items were accepted by the respondents with mean scores of 3.22, 3.49 and 2.57. This implies that Non-formal education curriculum centres only on the 3rs (basic literacy). The psychological well-being needs of learners in order for them to be better able to cope with life during and after the programme; and that the curriculum was ineffective in addressing life skills which will equip one with skills,

knowledge and attitude needed in the 21st century. However, one was rejected with a mean score of 2.11 which implies that the curriculum and methods of instruction did not respond to the current needs of learners and also promote future learning opportunities.

**Research Question Three:** To what extents which qualified instructors and effective

instruction materials for the implementation of non-formal education curriculum are available?

**Table 8:** Mean score of the extents are qualified instructors and effective instruction materials for the implementation of non-formal education curriculum are available.

S/N	Extent	SA	A	D	SD	Total weighted	Mean	Remark
1	The instructors are mainly primary schools teachers who are not skilled in the art and science of teaching adults.	312	167	89	32	1959	3.27	Accepted
2	Teaching/learning materials needed to support relevant educational activities in non-formal education in a timely manner is insufficient.	323	203	65	9	2040	3.4	Accepted
3	The teaching/learning methods used in Non-formal education programme are instructors centred.	295	201	99	5	2066	3.44	Rejected
4	The teaching/learning methods and instructional materials available responds to the current needs of learners.	70	76	262	265	1294	2.15	Rejected

Three of the items were accepted by the respondents with mean score of 3.22, 3.4 and 3.44. This implies that the instructors are mainly primary and secondary school teachers who are not trained in adult education practices; the teaching/learning materials needed to support relevant educational activities are insufficient and that the teaching/learning methods in use are instructors centred. One was not accepted

with a mean score of 2.15 which also implies that, the teaching/ learning methods and instructional materials available not respond to the current needs of the learners.

**Research Question Four:** To what extent are the Non-formal education teaching/learning methods suitable for adult learners in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State?

**Table 9:** The mean score of the extent to which Non-formal education teaching/learning methods suitable for adult learners in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State.

S/N	Extent	SA	A	D	SD	Total weighted	Mean	Remark
1	Non-formal education teaching/learning methods encourages passive learning.	207	106	207	2.73	1640	2.73	Accepted
2	Non-formal education teaching methodology is subject centred.	136	209	186	2.64	1582	2.64	Accepted

3	Teaching/learning methods discourages discovery/experiential learning.	129	210	197	2.67	1604	2.67	Accepted
4	The teaching/learning methods are more theoretical and do not encourage practicalisation.	211	195	156	2.97	1779	2.97	Accepted

The result of Research question four were all accepted with mean scores of 2.73, 2.64, 2.67 and 2.97 which shows that the non-formal education participants perceives the teaching/learning methodology as unsuitable as it encourages passive learning; the teaching /learning methodology is subject centred; the teaching/learning methodology does not encourage discovery/experiential learning on the part of learners and also that Non-formal education teaching/learning methods are more theoretical in nature and does not encourage learners to practicalise in the learning situations.

### Summary of Major Findings

1. The current non-formal education focuses only on basic literacy and does not reliant . equip the participants with vocational skills with which to become self-reliant.
2. The instructors are mainly formal school teachers (primary and secondary teaching adults . school teachers) and as such lacks the knowledge on the art and science of teaching adults.
3. The teaching/learning methodology and instructional materials are instructor centered see. The reform of non-formal education curriculum will make the programme more effective and responsive to current needs, problems and aspiration of the learners.

### Discussion of Findings

The result of research question one shows that majority of Non - formal education participants are women whose occupation are farmers, thus they enroll in the programme to enable them make positive contribution to their community. The result

of research question two shows the extent to which non-formal education curriculum equips the learners with functional skills needed in the 21st century in Nsukka L.G.A. of Enugu state. Three of the items were accepted. Hence, learners agreed that non-formal education curriculum centres only on basic literacy; the psychological well-being needs of learners in order for them to be better able to cope with life during and after the programme are lacking and that non-formal education curriculum was ineffective in addressing life skills . UNESCO (2001) asserts this point when it advised that nothing will be gained by focusing adult literacy programme too narrowly on three 3rs (basic literacy) for individual who are desperately in need of practical lucrative skills and the self confidence to use them. However, the learners did not accept that the curriculum and methods of instructions respond to their current needs and also promote future learning. This implies that the Non - formal education curriculum is ineffective in addressing the current needs/demands, problems and aspiration of the learners as well as in promoting future learning opportunities. Thus the curriculum needs to be reformed Smith (2000) buttress this point by stating that "the real purpose of education is not to have instructors perform certain activities but to bring about significant changes in the student's pattern of behaviour. Ideally, adult and non-formal education oriented should be focused greatly on how to assist its participants to develop themselves and their community in general because the learners are need and problem.

The result of research question three shows how qualified instructors and instructional



materials for the implementation of the curriculum are available. The non-formal education participants accepted that majority of their instructors are primary and secondary school teachers who lacks adult education expertise; the teaching/learning materials needed to support relevant educational activities are insufficient and that the teaching/learning methods in use are instructor centred rather than learner centred. This implies that the learners are passive in teaching/learning situation which is in contrast to Ughamadu (2004:104) who indicates that learners are more likely to derive satisfaction from a learning experience if they perceive it as a functional experience that has relationships with actual life situation that operates both inside and outside school setting . One was rejected by the learners, which indicate that the teaching /learning materials did not respond to the current needs of the learners in the non-formal education programme. The result of research question four were all accepted which shows that the non-formal education participants perceives the teaching/learning methodology as unsuitable as it encourages passive learning, the teaching/learning methodology is subject centred; the teaching / learning methodology does not encourage discovery/experiential learning on the part of learners and also that Non-formal education teaching/learning methods are more theoretical in nature and does not encourage learners to practicalise in the learning the education This implies that the teaching/learning methods of Non-formal education programmes in Nsukka L.G.A. should be reformed to enable it better serve the learners in the programme . A good curriculum must include appropriate teaching strategies so as to enable it carry out the identified learning objectives. Ngwu (2006) also assert to this by stating that "experiential learning opens up the learning process to innovative participatory and critical thinking methods of teaching and learning which promote the capability of

learners" to learn how to learn". He further states that the centerpiece of the teaching/learning process in non-formal education is participation all the challenges posed by curriculum reforms in the 21st century to non-formal education were all accepted. Non-formal education learners perceives curriculum reform as a way forward towards better teaching/learning process; the reform of non-formal education curriculum will have a positive impact on both the instructor/learners; non-formal education curriculum is very pertinent in the 21st century as adult lacks adequate funding. Learners are need - oriented in nature and non - formal education programmes

Ivowi (2006) states that "since curriculum development is a dynamic process, changes in the society and subject content calls for reviews in the form of reforms and curriculum improvement. In support of these findings, Ngwu (2006) emphasize that "the approach to curriculum development in non-formal dimensions so as to meet the needs of the learners education is forward-looking in order to capture the multiplicity of its dimensions so as to meet the needs of the learners.

### **Recommendations**

1. Government at all levels (National, state and local) and Non-governmental organization and well meaningful Nigerians should help in funding of non formal education programmes so as to enable it cater for the varied needs, problems, interest and aspiration of its clientele.
2. The non-formal education curriculum should be revisited or reform to make the teaching/learning process more learners centred, so as to enable the learners acquire the necessary skills, knowledge, attitude, values and other general competencies requisite for

- diverse occupational and vocational interests.
3. Adult and non-formal education curriculum should be diversified to enable it cater for the varied individual needs and interest of the participants.
  4. Training and retraining of instructors. Government should sponsor non formal education instructors to undergo workshops, seminars, conferences education teaching process etc so as to equip them with skills and knowledge for effective adult.
  5. The government should set aside enough funds for the development and improvisation of effective instructional materials to facilitate quality non formal education teaching/learning process.

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