



## **Activities of Community-Based Association in the Provision of Education Facilities and Rural Development**

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### **Abstract**

Community development in Nigeria has increasingly suffered from government neglect. Rural communities are the worst hit as it relates to the absence of basic infrastructure like access to good roads, potable water, basic health facilities and schools. Therefore, attention in recent times has shifted to non-governmental community-based associations in filling the gap left by lack of government intervention. This study investigated the activities of community –based association in the provision of education facilities and in enhancement of rural development. A stratified and accidental sampling technique was used to select 807 respondents in the area of study. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire titled Activities of Community based Association and Rural Community Development Questionnaire (ACBAACDQ).The test statistics used for data analysis was the simple regression statistical technique. The result of the analysis showed that there is a significant influence of provision of educational facilities by community-based organizations on rural development in Cross River State, Nigeria. Based on the findings recommendations were made.

**Keywords:** Community-based organization, rural development, educational facilities

### **Introduction**

Community-based associations are groups of people who share common interest and have decided to come together to articulate their aspirations and ideas for the socio-economic development of their immediate communities. They are non-profit, community-based associations set up for the development of their members and communities. They undertake all forms of improvement activities such as improving sanitation and health care, provision of electricity and

water, maintenance of roads, youth vocational training, adult literacy programmes and provision of loans and agricultural facilities. In the areas of literacy education, community-based associations carry out enlightenment campaigns to expose the community to the benefit of education which may help in day to day business transactions. In support of the above statement, Nicholson (2007) emphasised that the knowledge of arithmetic obtained in school helps people in carrying out their daily business even in the community. Community-based associations often organise adult education classes that involve productive activities. This will help members of the community to restructure needs and goals of the people to foster development in the community. That is, it creates an opportunity for the illiterate farmers to understand all it takes to engage in sustainable farming and rural development.

Education is a powerful means for social progress. It is a process of acquiring knowledge, skills and ideas that shape and conditions man's attitudes, actions and achievements. It is the process of mastering the laws of nature and utilizing them effectively for the welfare of the individual and for social reconstruction. It is the art of the utilization of knowledge for complete living (Ebong, 2010). Education in the formal sense is a systematic training by specialists within a formal organization of the school. It differs from socialization per say in that (a) education is formal, direct and less generalized than socialization or cultural learning which actually starts informally in the family, churches, mosque, the community and then formally in schools (b) education does not only contribute knowledge, but stimulates discovery and extension of knowledge (c) it is the single most important element in social mobility whereas socialization merely fits the individual into the status quo (Ebong,2011).

A typical rural system is characterized as having seven functional components, related to each other through a linkage of infrastructures, and all grouped into social, political, economic, religious, cultural, and physical environment (Nytes & Musegades, 2005). The functional components are supply, production, marketing, personnel maintenance, education, health care, and governance (Miller & Merritt, 2005). A

change in any of these components affects all the other components and all aspects of the rural system. However, I strongly support that education component plays a unique role as facilitators of transactions for all linkages, and serves to enhance frequency, fidelity, and capacity of the linkages in the rural development processes.

Education has long been recognized as a potential means for rural development. In many developing countries, education has been seen as a panacea for national development (Hegtvedt-Wilson, 1984). The education system is considered as a key factor in the rapid sectorial, regional, and national development in many developing countries. Therefore, a well-supported, easily accessible educational system is an efficient means to make people economically conscious, and therefore, make them to actively participate in their economic prosperity and cultural advancement. In spite of the negative role education played in some countries, rural development planners and leaders still believe that education is a primary means to promote social and economic development among their citizens (Kindley, 1985). Education is both the product of society as well as an important tool for bringing about changes in the rural community. There is a dialectical relationship between education and society. Rural development and educational development are inseparable. Education encourages involvement of individuals from the cradle to the grave in imparting knowledge. Thus, all citizens are well aware of the importance of education for their life. As an educator, I insist that education should be given a first and foremost place in the services of a democracy which dthiands not only that the people be protected against arbitrary decisions but also that they take part in decisions making process which affect the future of their society.

Carter (2009) noted that more than a third of a century after the Great Society initiatives focused the nation's attention on inequalities of educational opportunity, poverty continues to put large numbers of students at risk of school failure. The "invisible" rural poor face particular challenges .The challenges to education and life success are most severe for children living in the nation's poorest rural counties, Teaching and learning happen within the social, cultural, political,

environmental, and economic contexts of a particular "place." These contexts influence the opportunities students have to learn and what we expect of them. Although these contexts are interconnected, efforts to study and improve education, community services, economic development, and environmental protection often "pass in the night." Disciplinary structures of academe, departmentalized funding, lack of a shared definition of "rural," and implicit urban biases create many structural barriers in attempting to cope with the messy, nonlinear complexity of poor rural schools and communities.

Consequently, "the information, specifically on poor, rural students, communities and schools is sketchy, lack in focus and are not comparable across studies" (Khattari, Riley, & Kane, 2007).

Community-based association provide educational facilities in the following educational programmes (a) non-formal adults education often known as extension education offered to rural communities by experts in agriculture, home economics, healthy small scale industries among others, (b) semi-formal literacy education often known as non-formal adult education is organized for adults who had opportunity to acquire formal education at an early age and (c) formal education offered at the primary and secondary levels to rural children and adolescents. At the primary level, two types of education can be identified in Nigeria. Education can be identified in Nigeria. These are the western type of education prevalent in the south and the Koranic types of education prevalent in the Muslim areas of the country most especially in the Northern part of the country.

Adult education is an empowerment strategy through which adults can uplift themselves socially and economically to enable them participate fully in the development of their communities. Nzeneri (2007) opined that it is in adult education that emphasis is placed on lifelong learning, education as a process and agent of liberation, a tool for adjustment, for self and national development, for cultural awareness and integration, for concretization and group dynamism. He then defined adult education as any education given to adult based on their social, political, cultural and economic needs or

problems to enable them adjust fully to changes and challenges in their lives and society.

The development goals of adult education are viewed by Garcia and Tuan (2004) at three levels namely:

1. On the first level, adult education should seek to resolve the pressing problems confronting participants in everyday life in connection with their survival, their economic situation and the quality of their lives.
2. The second level should seek to integrate concrete activities in a corresponding framework of medium and long range goals to transform society.
3. Initiatives on the third level help the popular masses become social agents capable of exercising their rights as modern citizens.

Adult education is concentrating on programmes and strategies that will help reduce poverty and facilitate development. Jorge (2002) states that educational processes like adult education are geared to strengthen popular organization, citizenship movement, the popular economic sector and local rural development. Recent studies (Picon, 2006; and Palma 2010) prove that adult education is the least conventional branch of education, the one with the greatest degree of heterogeneity and the one that is most closely associated with social and political development.

Akor (2008) carried out a study on the impact of education in rural development. The study was carried out in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State with a total population of 4000 inhabitants as at the time of the study. The researcher used the stratified random sample technique and questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. 200 representing 5% of the total population was sampled. The finding show that access to electricity access to good water supply, good health care facilities and hospital, good road network and access to communication facilities including internet will bring sustainable development in the rural communities. The findings also reveal that education helps in development of rural communities, that government involvement in development projects

will facilitate effective rural development. Further findings reveal that industrialization, establishment of rural development unions and governments involvement will bring rapid development in rural communities.

In the study by Ugwuabonyi (2005) on the role of adult education in rural development, it was observed that the study was carried out in Nsukka urban of Enugu State. The population of the study was 300 registered age grade members in Nsukka urban. The major instrument used as a simple questionnaire. The findings reveal that adult education is a tool for rural development is imperative in the development of various communities. The findings also show that adult and non-formal education liberates people from the shackles of ignorance, powerlessness brings about desired changes in their lives and redirects their potential toward development. Adult education programme laid emphasis on reducing poverty in world's poorest countries. The basic contributions of adult education to rural development were the foundation of literacy and basic skill programme that was constituted to provide practical skills to the marginalized adults in their various localities.

Eweje (2012) found out that community-based associations have contributed towards the social infrastructural transformation of the host communities thereby gingering the developed of these communities. Eweje stated that they rehabilitate and furnish classroom blocks in some institution and adult literacy centres and also provide schools for youths from the communities. The joint venture awards contracts to indigenes because of its conviction that their empowerment will arm them with necessary tools to establish and manage productive ventures capable of stimulating socio-economic development in the communities and other parts of the state.

Ugwuabonyi (2012) proffered that the level of schooling among the adult are highly correlated with levels of economic growth and development. It was also revealed that roles of adult education in national development include assessing and articulating current and

future skills needed. It was also observed that adult literacy acquisition helps to increase the productivity of peasant farmers, particularly when they have access to other inputs needed to enhance their production. Human capital draws link between adult education and poverty in terms of education as a means of poverty education.

In the study carried out by Bila, Oyasele and Lorlaha (2004) on adult education and effective tool for rural development of Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State. 100 adults trainees were sampled. The respondents were women, men and youths. The researchers used structured questionnaire and oral interview to elicit information from the respondents. Six questions were prepared and posed to adult education organisers and the area inspector of education in Ushongo Local Government Area. Their findings revealed that the people of Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State benefited immensely from adult education programmes as indicated in the increased literacy rate in the rural communities. The standard of living of the people has improved as a result of acquired skilled and knowledge from adult education. Further findings show that adult education can give rise to changes in attitudes, values and habits as well as acquisition of skills, abilities and competencies. That illiteracy could be eradicated through adult education programmes and that the three tiers of government, local states and federal should support adult education.

In the study of Omeje (2007) on the participation in adult and non-formal education programmes in Nsukka Local Government: Implication to development, a survey design was used and the population of the study was 500 but 250 participants were used as respondents representing 50% of the total population. Structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The findings shows that adult and non-formal education help to improve the academic status of participants, participation in adult and non-formal education leads to development of literacy education, development of farming occupation, leadership qualities, equal participation. The major instrument used was structured questionnaire. The finding showed that adult and non-formal

education empowers people through skill acquisition. Adult and non-formal education as a strategy for rural development is a vital element for national development. It was also observed that through education individual develops of heightened consciousness of self and his surroundings and can clearly see the need for change and any change he wants to carry out.

In the study by Eze (2007) on non-formal education as a strategy for rural development, the researcher sought to find the benefits of adult and non-formal education to rural development, the problems and the strategies. The researcher used survey research design. 200 people out of entire population were sampled and used random sampling technique to select the size of the population to ensure for sustainable development. Youth education will increase future development of the community and nation in general. The findings also reveal that education is a means of increasing knowledge and problem solving ability. The research recommended that government agencies for creation of awareness should be decentralized and established at each ward with resource person attached for the creation of the much needed awareness. Different adult education programmes should be brought into the curriculum design of the programme to help give series of education to these individuals for proper development. There should be creation of employment by the government to help people get employed. Eze proffered some strategies for rural development which include: Popular education, civic education and concretization. Attention should be given to the need for greater investment in adult and non-formal education for national development.

In the study of Obicheta (2007) on education as a strategy for empowering women for sustainable development, it was observed that the population of the study was 283 respondents sampled from 13 communities in Uturu, Abia State. The main instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire. In the study, the findings reveal that a large number of respondents were mostly male. Many of the respondents were single and their age range fell between the age of 21-30 years. The findings also show that there is insufficient



funding for existing literacy education centres. Youth education and empowerment is necessary on occupational development, women education and community health. The participation in adult and non-formal education can be increased through creation of awareness, provision of expert personnel, facilities, government assistance and provision of funds. These studies are related to the present study because they are looking at the roles of adult education to development. However, this study differs from them because it addresses the issue of sustainable development and specifically laid emphasis on strategies to be adopted in achieving this sustainable development. This is the peculiar gap this study intends to fill.

Umezulike (2006) carried out a study on the contributions of adult education programmes to the economic development of Enugu state. The researcher adopted descriptive survey research design for the study. The population of the study was 292 respondents, which comprised 222 adult educations from the seventeen Local Government Areas of Enugu State and seventy adult education coordinators structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The research finding shows that adult education programmes have always been directed towards providing adults with functional literacy to remedy their deficiencies in formal education to equip them with skills and knowledge. For the individual adult members of the society to contribute his/her quota in developing the states economically, education should be made accessible to them in order to perform their civic responsibilities. It further revealed that adult education programmes can equip the youths and adults with skills that can make them employable and participate in industrial and business economy of the country.

The findings also reveal that there are several problems seen to militate against adult education programmes in performing their roles in economic development of the state, it showed that due to the misinterpretation of adult education programmes by different people, the programmes could not achieve what they set out to accomplish. Other findings of the study showed that such problems like inadequate provision of finance leads to other problems of lack of

infrastructural provision for use in adult education and lack of training for adult education personnel for the implementation of the programme. More importantly is the problem of non-continuity of adult education programmes by government due to frequent changes of government machinery in power. Therefore, for a functional adult education programmes to meet the expected challenges, government should enforce the implementation of its policies as contained in the national policy guidelines. Effort should therefore be directed to reduce the percentage of illiteracy among the adult members of the society. The findings also revealed the need for grassroots enlightenment of the people about the meaning of adult education to influence the society's attitudes towards it. It will also enhance the people's appreciation of the contributions of adult education programmes to the economic development of the nation. If all hands are on deck and bottlenecks bedevilling as the adult education programmes are revealed the nation will develop economically as the adult members of the community will be empowered through adult education activities.

### **Methodology**

The study investigated the role of community-based associations in the provision of educational facilities in Cross River State, Nigeria. Therefore, the following hypothesis was stated:

Hypothesis: Activities of community based associations in the provision of educational facilities do not significantly influence rural development.

Consequently, a questionnaire with Cronbach alpha of .9 was used for data collection. It was titled Activities of Community based Association and Rural Community Development Questionnaire (ACBAACDQ).The questionnaire was administered to respondents in each of the identified community-based associations in the sampled Local Government Areas. The respondents were informed of the exercise and the essence of giving objective responses to the items. They were also told to be honest in their responses to the items as the information obtained would be created with all amount of confidentiality and be used as data for the research only.

A sample of 807 was selected through the stratified and accidental sampling techniques. First the state was stratified into three zones according to the political delineation of the state. Thus, Southern senatorial district became strata 1, Central senatorial district became strata 2 and Northern senatorial district became strata 3. In each stratum, the researcher applied 5 % to determine the total number of community based associations that were used for the study. Thus, a total of 30 community based associations were selected. The researcher used the simple random sampling technique to further select the CBAs from each strata. This was carried out through the hat and draw procedure where the researcher blindly selected from the box the number of CBAs as already determined by the percentage. In stratum 1, 11 CBAs were selected. In stratum 2, 10 CBAs and in Stratum 3, 9 CBAs were selected for the study. Secondly the accidental sampling technique was applied to select the subjects for the study. The sampling technique was adopted since it was practically impossible to use any probabilistic technique because of the subject characteristics. The researcher therefore applied 5% of the population to select the sample. From both male and female community based organization associates.

### **Data analysis and result**

To test this hypothesis, the simple regression analysis was used and the result as presented in Table 1 shows the correlation coefficient of the variable as .510 which implies that there is a strong relationship between provision of educational facilities and rural development. Also, the result showed that  $Adj R^2 = .256$  which implies that the variation in the dependent variable (rural development) can be accounted for by 25.6% of provision of educational facilities. A cursory look at the table also showed an analysis of variance result of ( $F=282.42, p<.000$ ). This implies that even though the percentage contribution is small, the result also showed that provision of educational facilities influences rural development. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 1

Simple regression analysis on the influence of community based association activities in terms of provision of educational facilities on rural development

Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error	
Educational facilities	.510	.260	.259	6.2301	
Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	10962.252	1	10962.252	282.424	.000
Residual	31245.966	805	38.815		
Total	42208.218	806			

### Discussion of findings

Hypothesis one that stated that there is no significant influence of community based organizations in terms of provision of educational facilities on rural development was rejected. This implies that provision of educational facilities by community based association influences rural development. This could be due to the fact that education itself has a chain effect on the lives of the people. Where the people in the rural community are provided with education, it helps in making them objectives, breaks the cans of prejudice as well as provides enlightenment on how things are done. Education when provided to the rural community helps them to embrace new visions, learn to respond to new necessities, create new ones to serve economic, social and political purposes Most of the beliefs that government provides everything to the community would be discarded and the community would likely participate in providing most of those facilities that are relevant for development. More so, it could also be due to the fact that when rural people are provided with education, it exposes them to better opportunities in the society that can facilitate the establishment of government presence in the area through projects

The findings of the study was in line with that of Hilary(2016) that carried out a study on activities of community based organization and community development in Lagos state. The study adopted a descriptive survey design with a purposive sampling technique to select a total of 240 community leaders in the area. Interviews and

questionnaires were used for data collection data collected were analysed using simple percentage and Pearson product moment correlation. The result of the analysis showed that provision of educational facilities and health care facilities by community based n organizations relates with community development,. The findings collaborate that of Akinbode (2007) that agreed that the activities of non-governmental association in Calabar South and Odukpani Local Government Areas of Cross River State actually educated farmers and other members of the communities on proper methods of food production, processing; preserving and marketing.

### **Recommendations and conclusion**

Educational facilities should be provided in schools by community based association and other agencies to help the people acquire the right knowledge and skills that can help them meet up with the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges

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