

ADULT EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIALIZATION IN THE CONTEXT OF NIGERIA'S VISION 20-2020

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ABSTRACT

This study adopted literature review to examine the place of adult education in the industrialisation and industrial development of Nigeria. It discussed the role of the industry in the education of the adults. The paper concluded that if Nigeria would attain her ambition of becoming one of the world's twenty biggest economies by the year 2020, the industrial sector needs to pay attention to the important role adult education plays in the process of industrial development. The adult educators also need to refocus their programmes for better performance in the industrialization and industrial development of Nigeria.

Keywords: Adult education, industrialization, vision 20-2020, industrial development

INTRODUCTION

The issue of industrial development is a major concern for all nations yearning to catch up with the fast changing world in which we all live. Even the nations we all look up to as the world super powers, such as United State of America, Britain, France, Russia and Germany still have sleepless night drawing plans on how to sustain and improve their existing levels of industrial development. Since one of the indices for describing a nation as developed or developing is her level of industrialization, all nations of the world especially those in Africa, generally believed to be backward, struggle to improve their level of industrial development.

Nigeria, (even before the current economic melt down) has been conscious of the place of the industry in her process of national development and has come up with various national development plans aimed at hastening her level of development to improve her position among the committee of nations. Apart from the various national development plans that span 1962-1985, Nigeria in the 1990s designed the vision 2010 which was never implemented. The last and current of such development plans is the vision 20-2020 which aimed at placing Nigeria among the twenty most developed economies by the year 2020.

To achieve this lofty ambition, Nigeria needs real advancement in industrialization. The existing industries must grow while establishment of new ones must be on the fast track. However, as observed by Egunyomi (1999) no nation can achieve development if her citizens are not sufficiently educated to meet the challenges of the fast changing world especially in the industrial sector. With this fact at the back of our mind, Nigeria as well as other African countries need better and improved strategies for her manpower development. With a population of over one hundred and forty million, Nigeria is sufficiently endowed with adequate manpower to facilitate her industrial development. Those who

constitute this manpower belong to the adult sector of the population. They are the economically active unit of the citizenry. For them to be effective, efficient and perform optimally they need continuous education. Being adults, the only form of education that would satisfy their needs and meet their expectations is adult education.

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND ADULT EDUCATION

Industrialization can be defined as the growth or increase in the share of manufacturing and related sectors of the economy to the Gross Domestic Product of a nation and also in the share of occupation of the economically active labour force in the manufacturing industry. Andy (2003) described industrialization as the process of economic activities in relatively large units of production which make use of large and other capital assets. Anyaele (1990) described industrialization in its simplest form when he sees it as the policy of a nation to establish many industries in different parts of the country with the aim of promoting economic and national development.

Industries are of different types. For instance Anyaele (1990) identified the processing industry, manufacturing industry, mining industry, construction industry, transportation and electricity industry. Also, Aderinto and Abdullahi (1992) classified industries as agricultural industry, manufacturing industry, mining industry and water, construction industry, transport and communication.

No matter how scholars classified industries the functions they perform in the economy remains unaffected. According to Andy (2003) the major roles played by industries in a developing economy like that of Nigeria include: sustenance of other sectors of the economy; this it does by providing finished goods for usage and consumption by the other sectors of the economy, provision of equipment and tools for the operation of the other sectors of the economy. It also serves as source of foreign exchange due to its capacity to support export. In the same vein, industrialisation

reduces over dependency on other countries due to import. When there is less importation resulting from industrialization, the result is always improvement in the nation's balance of trade and balance of payment. Industrialization always supports effective utilization of the local natural resources thus hasten development of national infrastructural needs. Similarly, Anyaele (1990) summarised that the role of industrialization in an economy to include creation of employment, increase in local productivity, price reduction, more and diversified investment, reduction of dependence on imports and increase in foreign exchange earnings.

Nigeria as well as other countries of Africa could not derive maximum benefits from industrialization due to difficulties they encounter in the process of industrialization. Such difficulties according to Aderinto and Abdullahi (1992) and Andy (2003) include shortage of capital, poor infrastructure, shortage of skilled manpower, low technology, under development of agriculture and solid mineral. The Federal Government of Nigeria (2000) observed that the performance of the Nigerian industrial sector is unimpressive. She pointed out that this has been due to low capacity utilisation, high import dependence, low quality of the manpower resources, policy and policy instability, bureaucratic bottlenecks, low access to fund, obsolete technology, massive dumping of sub-standard good inefficient institutional network and so on .

Achieving rapid and sustainable industrial development is not a sector specific issue. It is a multi-sectoral programme that should involve the formal and informal, private and public sector of the economy. To achieve the best result in industrialization, Nigeria in the year 2000 set a target of 24% contribution to the national output by year 2010 for the industrial sector, increase in its contribution to employment from 10% in year 2000 to 30% by 2010 and meeting 50% demand for basic consumer goods (FGN 2000). To meet this target, provision of skilled manpower, training

and retraining and on-the-job learning are the strategies set out for implementation. This then brings to the fore the issue of education with specific emphasis on an aspect of adult education known as power development for the smooth running of the industries.

The Nigeria educational system has experienced a lot of crises in the recent past. According to the FGN (2000) vital literacy indicators revealed a deplorable condition in the education sector. Adult literacy rate according to Aderinoye (2004) is 53%. There has also been an increase in the rate of school drop-out; quality of formal education has also fallen significantly at all levels. At the tertiary level which produces skilled manpower for the industries, banditry, cultism and brain-drain are very rampant. To provide adequate skilled manpower and sustainable human resource development and cope with challenges of industrialization there is the need for continuing education of the employees in the industrial sector. This can only be achieved through adult education.

The concept of adult education has no generally accepted definition. As observed by Omolewa (1985) adult education is one of the most difficult concepts to define. This according to Fasokun (2006) is because adult education means different things to different people. The confusion in the meaning of adult education arises from the variations in interpretation of the roles adult education perform in each society, in different sectors of the national economy and at various levels of national development. For instance, while adult education may mean basic literacy, extra-mural studies or mass education for community development in a developing nation like Nigeria, it may mean workers education, or liberal education for relaxation or entertainment in developed countries like America or the United Kingdom. Thus, Adesanya (2006) concluded that the concept does not lend itself to easy definition.

However, adult education is something to everyone; a field

of study, a philosophy, a way of life or a profession. According to Nzeneri (1996) it is in adult education that emphasis is placed on life-long education, education as a process, and agent of liberation, a tool for adjustment, for self and national development, for cultural awareness and integration, for conscientization and group dynamism. He then define adult education as "any education given to adults 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".

To Delkar (1974), Omolewa (1985) and Aderinoye (1997), adult education is an organized and sequential learning experience designed to meet the felt needs of the adults. While contributing to the meaning of the concept of adult education, Asojo (2001) and Bamisaiye (2001) relied on Akinpelu's definition of adult education as:

All and any deliberate and systematically planned educational activity that has the adult as it's target, that is designed around the interest and self expressed concern of adult, the intention of which is to solve immediate problems, and it is an activity that is part-time. (Bamisaiye, 2001, p.157).

From whatever perspective adult education is perceived, Anyanwu (1981) posited that it affords a pattern of adult development which has in view the needs of the adult not only as an individual but also as a member of the community which help him to function more effectively in the society. In line with the above view, Aderinoye (2004) described adult education as:

a process by which persons who have terminated their initial cycle of continuous education may undertake sequential and organized activities with the conscious intention of bringing about changes in themselves with regard to information, knowledge, understanding or skill appreciation and attitudes (p.5).

In the views of Prosser (1967) as cited in Akintayo and

Oghenekhowo (2004), adult education denotes:

that force which in it's ideal application can bring about a maximum of re-adjustment of attitude within a society to any new and changed situation in the shortest possible time and which helps to initiate changes which evolve and impart new skills and techniques required and made necessary by the change. (p.7)

To clear the confusion in the definition of adult education as a field of study or practice the United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) after two previous attempts defined adult education in 1976 as:

the entire body of organized educational process whether the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges or universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong, develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitude or behaviour in the two folds perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development.

From its 1976 definition, UNESCO in 1997 came up with what it termed adult basic education which was defined as:

all forms of organized education and training that meet the basic learning needs of adults, including literacy, numeracy, general knowledge and life-skills, and values and attitudes that they require to survive, develop their capacity, live and work in dignity, improve quality of their lives and make informed decisions and Continue to learn.

Today, available definitions of the concept of adult education vary as the number of practitioners and organizations involved in it; thus efforts to have a generally accepted definition of adult education are still on. Every nation of the world use education as

an instrument "par-excellence" of effecting national development. In line with this world view, the Nigeria National Policy on Education (NNPE) is set out to achieve five national goals as stated in the National Policy on Education (2004). These goals are to achieve: a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a great and dynamic economy; and a land of full opportunities for all citizens. Towards achieving these national goals, the National Policy on Education (2004) recognizes the place of adult education and in its Section Six states the goals of adult education as:

- i. 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.
- ii. to provide functional and remedial education for those young people who did not complete secondary education.
- iii. to provide education for different categories of completers of the formal education system in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills.
- iv. to provide in-service, on the job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills.
- v. to give the adult, education for public enlightenment.

These goals, as stated above, are the main purpose of adult education in Nigeria.

However, Nzeneri (2006) noted that man is presently being challenged by constant changes in technology and rapid increase in new knowledge. This according to Adekola (2008) brings about expansion and dynamism in the purpose of adult education 'just not to be left behind' in the race for a fast growing technologically oriented globalization process in a global village. To overcome changes and challenges of life, man must constantly renew his

knowledge. As noted by Adesanya (2006) everyone has to continue to learn throughout life in order to survive and evolve in a world where each has to adapt to constant changes which is more of development and advancement.

For nations to migrate from the uncherished group of developing nations to the desirable class of developed nations, adult education is a vital source of social, economic, educational, and political development which could be used to achieve and promote improved participation and contribution of the adult citizenry towards social, economic, political and technological upliftment of the nation. At the individual level, the purposes of adult education vary with the identified needs. Such needs could be cultural, educational, social, economic, political or even religious. Thus, Olusegun Obasanjo (former President of Federal Republic of Nigeria) in 2006, during his matriculation ceremony into the Nigerian Open University to study Theology observed that: socially, culturally, economically, one cannot be too big, too rich, too powerful or too busy to learn". If this is so, the purpose of adult education is not only to meet the immediate needs of the recipients but also to make them constantly and consistently relevant in the society.

The discussion on the question "why adult education?" can best be anchored on the views of UNESCO (1976) as summarized by Townsend Coles (1978) that the purpose of adult education is: To develop a critical understanding of major contemporary problems and social changes. To develop the attitudes for acquiring new qualifications, new knowledge, attitudes for forms of behaviour. Ensuring the individuals consciousness and effective incorporation into the world of work, promoting increased awareness of the relationship between people and their physical and cultural environment, creating an understanding of and respect for the diversity of customs and cultures.

From the various definitions of adult education given earlier,

it is clear that adult education activities are very wide in scope especially when it is viewed as forming part of life-long education and learning. This support the view of Fasokun (2006) when he observed that adult education has no theoretical boundaries since it meets the specific needs of individuals, groups and organizations as required at a particular point in time.

As observed by Nzeneri (2002) adult education in all its ramifications embraces all forms of education. It could be formal, non-formal or informal. This is in line with Okedara (1981) who claimed that formal adult education involves remedial education or extra-mural classes and lead recipients to obtain a certificate. He noted that Non-formal adult education covers training and instruction outside the formal education system and may be organized as individualized apprenticeship, vocational training or nationwide mass literacy campaign. He went further to describe informal adult education as learning that may come unintentionally or accidentally through interactions, the media or through serendipity. In terms of specific programmes, Fasokun (2006) identified adult literacy, extra-mural studies, continuing education, distance education and community development as the coverage of adult education. Similarly, Adesanya (2006) noted that adult education consist of functional literacy, remedial education, continuing education, vocational, aesthetic, cultural and civic education for youths and adults outside the formal school system.

In his broad classification of the field of adult education, Aderinoye (2004) identified basic literacy, functional literacy, open distance learning, preventive education, vocational skill education and extra-mural studies as the focus of adult education. In a seemingly comprehensive summary of the scope of adult education, Akintayo and Oghenekohwo (2004) claimed that the field of adult education has expanded to include:

- Workers education

- Remedial education
- Life-long education
- Distance education
- Prison education
- Mass education
- Nomadic education
- Women education
- Vocational education
- Community education
- Leadership training; and
- Labour education

A critical observation of the scope of adult education reveals that in practice, its focus is inexhaustible. The scope continues to widen as modernization, technology and globalization bring about new ideas, innovations and inventions that touch the life of the people. Thus, in recent time, the field of adult education has widened to accommodate new areas such as computer education, Information-Communication Technology (ICT) Education, Environmental Education, Retirement education and even Death Education.

From the whole lot of the focus of adult education, it is clear that most of its fields are directly relevant to the industrial sector for the welfare of the workers and improved performance of their roles in the industry. Adult education field such as workers education, vocational education, functional literacy, labour education, life-long learning and social work have specific relevance to the industrial sector.

RELEVANCE OF ADULT EDUCATION IN THE INDUSTRY

Adult Education as a practice is an important element that should not be lacking in the structure/system of an industry. This is so because; it is the adult that constitute the functional human element of the industry. This human element comprises people of

diverse experience, educational background, technical know-how, ability, belief and needs. To ensure their continuous relevance in the industrial setting, they need education. Such education may be to augment previous ones or increase the level of educational attainment. As adults in employment, the only form of education suitable and relevant to their condition is the adult education. Specifically, adult education can be used in the industry to achieve the following:

- i.** To introduce new technology. The issue of technological development in an industry is a very dynamic one. New machines and industrial materials are frequently being introduced into the system. This is often accompanied with new ways of doing things that always require new knowledge. Programmes such as on-the-job training, short-term courses, conferences and seminars are adult education programmes that come to mind as useful tools for introducing new knowledge generated by technological changes.
- ii.** Teaching basic or post literacy to the lower cadre of the industrial labour force who often, are illiterates and semi-illiterates.
- iii.** Adult education is also useful for labour education; this could be in the form of organizing talks, seminars, conferences or workshops for the leaders or representatives of the workers especially through their union.
- iv.** To improve managerial competence. For effectiveness and efficiency, managers in the industry need to be dynamic, creative and possess the ability to positively and promptly respond to challenges as they manifest in the industry. To prevent usage of old ideas which may not be adequate in a new situation; managers in the industry need continuous

training through adult education. This could be in the form of short-term courses in relevant formal institutions, conferences, workshops or in-house training for low and middle level managers.

- v. For vocational development, the improvement of skills and acquisition of new ones is an ingredient for optimum performance of technical staff in the industry. Adult education provides opportunities for training and re-training for improved skills and acquisition of new ones especially through the establishment of training school in the industry. However, it needs to be pointed here that most industries with training school are yet to see the need to employ professional adult educators who are well versed in the use of andragogical method, to man and manage the training schools.
- vi. Adult education can also be used to achieve improved performance especially among the unskilled and semi-skilled labour through functional literacy.
- vii. For entertainment and relaxation, through liberal education, industries can provide opportunities for their staff to learn new ideas in games, sports and usage of musical instruments. This is with the aim of removing job stress and making the staff physically and psychologically prepared for the daily challenges of their job. Other relevance of adult education in the industry could be to promote industrial peace among the actors in the industry, to introduce new employees to the operational system of the industry and to cater for personal problems that can affect the psychology and personality of the individual staff through industrial social work and social welfare.

ROLES OF THE INDUSTRY IN ADULT EDUCATION

As adult education has significant roles to play in industrial development of a nation so also do industries have important roles to play in the promotion of adult education? As observed by Akintayo and Egenti (2000) business and industrial sector have the responsibility of undertaking sponsorship in terms of providing scholarship awards to deserving candidates and adult learners in their education venture. Also, industries can support adult education through provision of educational and teaching materials. Thinking in this direction, Hanbeth (1988) asserted that the focus of industrial support to adult education should include provision of infrastructural facilities in both rural and urban communities. This Akintayo and Egenti (2000) observed would serve as incentives to adult educators and change agents to work in the rural areas.

The industrial sector would also do a lot of benefits to adult education through funding of researches. This could be by providing research grants to professional adult educators or research institutions to conduct investigations into topical issues and problems in the education of the adults. The industries could support adult education by providing opportunities for cross-fertilisation of ideas through organization or sponsorship of workshops, conferences and seminars where issues of labour education, industrial relation, literacy etc can be discussed.

Adult education and professionals in the field would also expect the industries to support them through the usage of research findings on adult education related matters in the industries. This would definitely be a motivating force for the adult educators to do more and the industries too to benefit from their investment on adult education. This is because usage of research findings from adult education would promote sustainable peace among the actors in the industry.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Paper discusses the place of adult education in industrialization and industrial development in Nigeria. It established that for Nigeria to attain her target of becoming one of the 20 biggest economy in the world by the year 2020, the industrial sector need to pay attention to the important role adult education plays in the process of industrial development This paper concludes that industrialization, a major tool in the process of national development, would be easier and perform better if adequate recognition is given to adult education by the actors in the industry. This conclusion derives from the recognition of the ability of adult education to promote human resource development and bring about peaceful coexistence especially between labour and management in the industry.

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