



Effect of Implementation of Adult Vocational Literacy Programme in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The main thrust of this study was to investigate effect of implementation of adult vocational literacy programme in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. Literature review was carried out according to the variable of the study. Survey research design was adopted for the study. A sample of 804 respondents was used for the study. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for the study. The questionnaire titled “Effect of Implementation of Adult Vocational Literacy Programme Questionnaire” (EIAVLPQ)” was the main instrument used for data collection. The instruments were validated by three experts, one expert from Continuing Education and Development Studies and two from Measurement and Evaluation, College of Education, University of Calabar. The reliability coefficient of 0.75 was established as a measure of internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha reliability method. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation in answering research questions while t-test was used in testing the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that, there is no significant mean difference in the implementation of adult vocational literacy programme in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that monitoring and supervision of adult vocational literacy programme should be strengthened by the Ministry of Education and other regulatory agencies to ensure regular attendance of learners and facilitators, proper utilization of resources, and effective achievement of programme objectives.

Introduction

Education is widely recognized as a vital instrument for national development, social transformation, and economic empowerment. In developing countries such as Nigeria, adult education has become increasingly important because many adults were deprived of formal education opportunities during their childhood due to poverty, socio-cultural barriers, unemployment, and other socio-economic factors (Bessong et al., 2026). Consequently, adult vocational literacy programme was introduced to equip adults with functional literacy skills and vocational competencies necessary for self-reliance and improved living standards (Oboqua et al., (2017; Koledoye et al., 2026).

Adult vocational literacy programme integrates literacy education with practical vocational skills acquisition. This programme is designed to enable adult learners acquire reading, writing, communication, and occupational skills that can enhance their productivity and economic participation. Vocational literacy programmes contribute significantly to poverty reduction, employment generation, entrepreneurship development, and sustainable community development. According to Acha et al. (2026), vocational education plays a significant role in empowering rural residents and improving socio-economic conditions in communities. In Nigeria, adult vocational literacy programme constitutes an important component of adult and non-formal education as provided in the National Policy on Education. The policy emphasizes the eradication of illiteracy, provision of lifelong learning opportunities, and development of functional skills for adults and out-of-school youths (Bessong et al., 2026, Akam et. al 2013). The Federal Government, through the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education (NMEC), collaborates with state governments and other stakeholders in implementing adult literacy programme across the country (Asor, & Bessong, 2022).

The importance of literacy education has continued to attract national attention because literacy is closely linked with human capital development and national progress. Despite government efforts toward promoting adult literacy education, the implementation of adult vocational literacy programmes in Nigeria has faced numerous challenges. These include inadequate funding, shortage of qualified facilitators, insufficient instructional materials, poor infrastructure, weak supervision, and inadequate vocational equipment. Ekpenyong and Aniekwu (2022) observed that the availability of physical resources for implementing adult vocational literacy programme in Cross River State was inadequate, while human resources were only moderately available. Similarly, Bessong et al., (2021) reported that educational materials for adult vocational literacy programme in Cross River State were insufficient for effective programme implementation.

Vocational literacy has been an interwoven part of the African traditional education, as well as part of the inherited culture and tradition imparted by parents and master craftsmen who were experts of their own skills and vocations. This type of training is referred to as non-formal education system. The concept

of adult vocational literacy programme refers to an individual learning a unique set of skills which lead to an acquisition of a skill set bordering on how to work (Inyang and Agwadu, 2017). This implies that acquisition of adult vocational literacy programme refers to an individual equipped with skills bordering on having the ability to be self-employed or to be employed to display the acquired skills for remuneration. According to Tombari and Onyemauchukwu (2017), vocational literacy programme is training opportunities designed for individuals to acquire skills which will address issues of unemployment, poverty alleviation and socio-economic empowerment. The various areas where skills could be acquired in this regard include – building trades (block laying/concreting, carpentry/joinery, plumbing, steel works, painting/decorating, draughtsmanship), electronics/electrical trades (general house wiring, electrical appliances' repairs), metal works (welding/fabrication), auto general works (auto mechanics, auto body works, auto electricals) and business studies (Pongo et al., 2021).

Adult vocational literacy programme and training in Nigeria according to Nwogu (2019) should emphasize entrepreneurship awareness for it to be relevant in achieving the national educational aim of inculcating the right type of values and attitudes for survival of an individual and Nigeria society. Enahoro (2018) and Bessong et al. (2023) viewed adult vocational literacy programme as a utilitarianism and concept of reorganizing the importance of labour. Therefore, to train someone in his appropriate field and for him to substantially contribute his quota to the overall good of the nation, he must pass through vocational literacy and training. It is a fact that needs no further investigation to say that when and if it is good with a nation, it is also good with its inhabitants and vice versa. For this reason, any nation or country that gives proper training in one sided area of importance to her citizenry or gives improper training to people in all areas of importance has nothing to gain. People are differently gifted and therefore, should be given equal vocational technical education and training for self-employment in the different occupational areas (Ibiang et al., 2014; Ibok et al., 2025). Nigeria should be such that people are trained for the different opportunities or openings that abound in the country, in compliance with the tedious task of giving suitable and proper training to individuals for optimum productivity amongst others.

Furthermore, the increasing demand for vocational and digital skills in modern society has created additional pressure on adult literacy centres. Recent studies indicate that the integration of digital technology into adult literacy education in Cross River State remains low because of inadequate infrastructure, poor facilitator training, and limited access to digital resources. These deficiencies negatively affect the effectiveness of adult vocational literacy programme and reduce the ability of learners to compete in a technologically driven economy. In Cross River State, adult vocational literacy programme has been established in different education zones to reduce adult illiteracy and unemployment (Oboqua et al., 2018). The Calabar Education Zone, being one of the major educational zones in the state, hosts several adult literacy centres aimed at providing literacy and vocational training in areas such as tailoring, hairdressing,

catering, carpentry, soap making, ICT, and other entrepreneurial skills. However, observations suggest that many of these centres experience challenges such as inadequate learning facilities, poor funding, irregular attendance of learners, insufficient facilitators, and weak monitoring mechanisms. These challenges may hinder the realization of the objectives of adult vocational literacy programme in the area. The problem of unemployment and poverty among adults in the Calabar Education Zone further raises concerns regarding the effectiveness of the implementation of this programme (Erim et. al 2014).

Reko and Maxwell (2023) carried out a study on technical and vocational literacy/education in Nigeria: issues, challenges and a way forward. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Population of the study was made up of 450 adult facilitators in Oyo state, Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used to elicit data from 200 respondents using questionnaire as the instrument of data collection. Frequency count and simple percentage were used to analyzed data for the study. Findings of the study revealed that in Nigeria, the training of technical personnel has witnessed many challenges ranging from policies which have no beaming with our problems, curriculum that has little or no relationship with workplace and social needs, embezzlement of fund meant for education development purposes, lack of teacher motivation, inadequate facilities, inadequate funding, brain drain, poor staff training, bribery and corruption.

Similarly, Suobere (2018) determined the constraints to the effective implementation of vocational literacy education programme in private secondary schools in Port Harcourt Local Government Area. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 120 teachers and students. The sample of the study consisted of 96 respondents selected using simple random sampling technique. The main instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. Data were analyzed using sample mean and grand population mean. The findings revealed a dearth of professional and qualified teachers for the teaching of vocational/technical subjects; inadequate infrastructure and equipment in schools; insufficient instructional materials and books in schools; and that schools are generally poorly financed. Vocational education/literacy cannot contribute greatly to the reduction of abject poverty, hunger and unemployment because it is handicapped by numerous challenges.

Osagie (2024) assessed the factors affecting the implementation of vocational and technical education policy in private secondary schools in Edo State. Subjects for the study were fifty (50) students, fifty (50) teachers and five (5) principals randomly drawn from five (5) private secondary schools in Edo State. The study utilized interviews, observations and a questionnaire to assess the implementation of government policy on vocational and technical education in private secondary schools in Edo State. Data were analyzed using independent t-test. The findings showed that there was a dearth of qualified teachers for vocational and technical subjects, poor infrastructure, lack of equipment, instructional materials and books. The schools were not adequately financed. It was observed that the federal government did not make adequate preparations before it issued directives for the takeoff of the programs in the schools.

Samuel (2024) investigated the challenges in implementing the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) curriculum in technical colleges in Southern Nigeria. This study aimed at examining the challenges in implementing the TVET curriculum in technical colleges in Southern Nigeria. It sought to respond to three research questions and was guided by one research hypothesis. A questionnaire with 14 items was used to collect data from 60 principals of technical colleges in Southern Nigeria. The data collected were analysed using frequency counts and percentages. Chi-square goodness of fit test was used to test the hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. The study revealed that poor funding, obsolete facilities and inadequacy of instructional materials are affecting implementation of the TVET curriculum in Southern Nigeria technical colleges. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that stakeholders work collectively to address these challenges.

In many cases, graduates of vocational literacy programme are unable to establish sustainable businesses or effectively apply acquired skills due to limited support systems and poor programme implementation (Anipi et al., 2023). This situation calls for a critical assessment of how adult vocational literacy programme is being implemented in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Effective implementation of adult vocational literacy programme is essential because it promotes functional literacy, enhances employability, improves income generation, and supports sustainable development. It also contributes to social inclusion, reduction of poverty, and attainment of lifelong learning objectives (Anyadike et al., 2024). Therefore, this study sought to examine the effect of implementation of adult vocational literacy programme in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria, with the aim of identifying the extent of implementation, challenges affecting the programme and possible strategies for improvement.

Purpose of the Study

1. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of implementation of adult vocational literacy programme in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research Question

1. What is the extent of implementation of adult vocational literacy programme in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant mean difference in the effect of implementation of adult vocational literacy programme as perceived by facilitators and adult learners in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The descriptive survey research design adopted for this study. The population of the study was eight hundred and four (804) comprising (93 adult facilitators and 711 adult learners) in adult literacy learning centres within the study area. The respondents were considered appropriate for the study because of their maturity and as major stakeholders in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in their different communities. Therefore, they are in the best position to give authentic and useful responses on the implementation of adult vocational literacy programme in their communities. In view of the representative and manageable population size for the study, census approach was adopted for the study. Census approach involves collecting data from every member of the population under study, rather than selecting a subset or sample. The sample of the study consisted of eight hundred and four (804) adult facilitators and adult learners who were drawn from adult literacy centers in the study area. A questionnaire tagged “Effect of Implementation of Adult Vocational Literacy Programme Questionnaire” (EIAVLQPQ) served as the study instrument for data collection. The instrument is a structured data collection tool developed to assess various dimensions related to the planning, delivery, monitoring, and effectiveness of adult vocational literacy programme. It is designed to gather quantitative data from stakeholders involved in adult education, including programme facilitators, and participants (learners).

The response options ranged from-Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), to Very Low Extent (VLE) with numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively was adopted to assess the implementation of adult vocational literacy programme in the study area. Face validity was adopted for the study. To ensure validity, draft copies of the instrument were given to one expert from Department of Continuing Education and Development Studies and two experts from Measurement and Evaluation, all from the College of Education, University of Calabar. This was to ensure that the items in the instrument met the expectation of this study’s purpose. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the sub-scale of 0.75, with an overall reliability index of 0.82. The coefficients were considered high enough for the instruments to be considered reliable for data collection. Independent t-test analysis was used to analyze data for the study.

Results

Hypothesis One: There is no significant mean difference in the effect of implementation of adult vocational literacy programme as perceived by facilitators and adult learners in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State. The independent variable is adult vocational literacy programme as perceived by facilitators and adult learners while the dependent variable is implementation. Independent t-test analysis was adopted to test this hypothesis. The result is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Independent t-test analysis of the mean difference in the effect of implementation of adult vocational literacy programme as perceived by facilitators and adult learners (N=804)

Adult vocational literacy programme	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t-value	p-value
Facilitators	93	20.9462	1.56292		
				.294	.769*
Adult learners	711	20.8622	2.69807		

* Significant at .05 level, p-value = .769, df = 802.

The result in Table 1 revealed that the calculated t-value of 1.384 is not significant at 0.05 level of significance with 802 of degrees of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis that there is no significant mean difference in the effect of implementation of adult vocational literacy programme as perceived by facilitators and adult learners in Southern Education Zone of Cross River State was retained. This implies that there is no significant mean difference in the effect of implementation of adult vocational literacy programme as perceived by facilitators and adult learners in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State.

Discussion Findings

The result of hypothesis one indicated that, there is no significant mean difference in the implementation of adult vocational literacy programme as perceived by facilitators and adult learners in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State. The findings are contrary with the view of Reko and Maxwell (2023) who revealed that in Nigeria, the training of technical personnel has witnessed many challenges ranging from policies which have no bearing with our problems, curriculum that has little or no relationship with workplace and social needs, embezzlement of fund meant for education development purposes, lack of teacher motivation, inadequate facilities, inadequate funding, brain drain, poor staff training, bribery and corruption. Based on the outcome of the study it was recommended among others that adequate resources should be allocated to technical and vocational literacy education. Inadequate funds affect the provision of essentials such as well – equipped laboratories and workshops, relevant textbooks and training manuals.

Suobere (2018) also revealed a dearth of professional and qualified teachers for the teaching of vocational/technical subjects; inadequate infrastructure and equipment in schools; insufficient instructional materials and books in schools; and that schools are generally poorly financed. Two key recommendations are that adequate infrastructure should be provided in schools so that they are properly equipped for

functional teaching and learning, and that an ‘enlightenment’ campaign should be carried out in the society to emphasize the importance of technical and vocational literacy education. Eze (2023) also revealed improper use of funds from government for vocational literacy programme, shortage of qualified vocational educators, lack of facilities and poor perception of vocational literacy by students and parents are major factors influencing effective implementation of vocational literacy in Kwara State Colleges of Education. Recommendations include proper utilization of funds for vocational education programme, regular trainings of manpower in vocational education, provision of well-equipped facilities for implementation of practical work and intensification of awareness on the benefit of vocational education programme among others. Vocational education/literacy cannot contribute greatly to the reduction of abject poverty, hunger and unemployment because it is handicapped by numerous challenges.

Osagie (2024) also noted that one of the issues confronting the design of appropriate curriculum for technical education is preparing students for the shift from the Fordist to Information Communication and Technology (ICT) paradigm in technology practice. The low pace of industrialization and technological growth in Nigeria can be attributed to the widening gap between science and technology as a result of the inability of technical education to adequately utilize the scientific ideas to promote technology. This suggests the need to overhaul technical education curricula in Nigeria. The overhauling of the curricula may not necessarily translate to the production of highly literate technical education experts or ready-made graduates for the industry which may result in rapid industrialization or economic growth of the nation unless solutions are proffered to some constraints that will adequately equip our youths with the relevant skills needed for their daily living.

Samuel (2024) also revealed the factors affecting the delivery of the programme to include inadequate facilities, insufficient funds, poor planning and implementation, inadequate curriculum, inadequate training and retraining of instructors, misconception of the programme by the members of the society and low enrolment. The study concluded with a suggested adoption of the integration of the practical training of the trainees in the industries with their theoretical training in their various institutions, diversification of sources of funding, involvement of stakeholders in the monitoring and supervision of the programme implementation, proposed designed model for effective delivery of the programme, and proposed extension of Prosser’s Sixteen Theorems to support the delivery of effective vocational technical education programme.

Conclusion

The study's findings provide valuable insights into the implementation of adult vocational literacy programme in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. The conclusion that the implementation of adult vocational literacy programme is adequate highlights the progress made in

promoting adult education in the study area. The study's findings highlight the progress made in implementing adult vocational literacy programme in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. The study found that adult vocational literacy programme has been adequately implemented, suggesting that adults have been equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to start and manage their own businesses. This is critical for promoting economic empowerment and reducing poverty in communities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government and relevant educational agencies should provide more adequate funding, modern instructional materials, vocational equipment, and conducive learning environments for adult vocational literacy centres in the Calabar Education Zone to enhance effective programme implementation.
2. Qualified facilitators and vocational instructors should be recruited and regularly trained through workshops, seminars, and professional development programmes to improve the quality of teaching and the delivery of vocational literacy programme.
3. Monitoring and supervision of adult vocational literacy programme should be strengthened by the Ministry of Education and other regulatory agencies to ensure regular attendance of learners and facilitators, proper utilization of resources, and effective achievement of programme objectives.

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