AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.3, May-August, 2021https://ajemates.org

DETERMINATION OF THE ADEQUACY OF PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES IN THE NCCE 2012 MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
The main purpose of this study was to determine the adequacy of the programme objectives in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education in the colleges of Education in Nigeria. The study was a descriptive survey, guided by two research questions and one hypothesis. The population of the study was 220 lecturers in the colleges of education which offer adult and non-formal education courses in Nigeria. The entire population was used for the study. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha. A reliability coefficient of 0.94 was obtained which implies high reliability index. Data collected were analyzed using mean statistics to answer research question 1, while qualitative analysis was used for research question two .t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that all the six items of the programme objectives in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards were considered adequate by the adult educators. However, the qualitative analysis showed the suggestions proffered by the educators and the most frequent among the respondents' suggestions was to train facilitators who are ICT compliant, followed by to provide specific plans to reduce adult illiteracy. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among others, that the Federal government of Nigeria should on regular basis train facilitators to enable them become ICT compliant. The government should also subsidize the cost of laptops to enable the facilitators own them and enhance their learning and instruction.

Keywords: Adequacy; Programme objectives; NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards; Ad and non-formal Education, and Colleges of Education.

Introduction
Programme objective is the bedrock on which learning experience lies. According to Obidiegwu (2021), it is the pivot on which the entire learning experience revolves and should be stated in light of curriculum goals and needs of the learner and the society. The author further stated that learning objective is seen as appropriate and suitable when it has attributes to provide holistic developments in the learner. Learning objective should therefore be stated by the educator bearing in mind development of cognitive, problem finding and problem solving skills and promotion of change in attitudes, values, beliefs or feelings in the learner. Objective establishes criteria and standards against which one can determine programme performance. According to Godin (2018), an objective is a specific result that a person or

system aim to achieve within a time frame and with available resources. Stands4 (2020), defined an objective as clearly defined, decisive and attainable goals towards which every operation is directed. It is a specific target of an action taken. An objective should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound (SMART) (Bogne, 2018).

Programme objective is important because it gives direction and purpose to any education programme. It can be referred to, as the purpose of organizing a programme. It is what the organizers of a programme intends to achieve at the end of programme. Gboku and Lekoko (2007) emphasized that programme objectives are the intended learning outcomes or a guiding policy which is intended to achieve such a result. Sudhakar (2017), opined that objectives are statements that define the expected outcome of a curriculum, course, lesson or an activity, in terms of demonstrable skills or knowledge that will be acquired by a learner as a result of instruction. The author observed that objectives should be clear and concise. Mckeen and O'brien (2006), Choudhur (2020) and Obidiegwu (2021) posited that learning objective is seen as adequate when it provides all round development in a learner.

Objectives are usually flexible so that they can be adjusted if assessment reveals that they are unrealistic or that they are not serving the intended purposes. Is the programme objectives in the National commission for colleges of education (NCCE) 2012 minimum standards realistic, specific, measurable achievable and time bound? Does it satisfy the qualities of a well stated objective in the light of constant changes in the 21st century and preparing learners for the world of work? Certainly, in the viewpoint of the researcher, programme objectives should be structured in line with the need of the learner and socio-cultural, economic, political and technological changes in the society. Escoff (2018) emphasized that when curriculum is infused with technology learning experiences are enhanced. In addition, Grow (2017) affirmed that curriculum integrated with technology helps learners to acquire knowledge and skills needed in the present era to face the world of work after graduation.

According to Gboku and Lekoko (2007),Programme objective provides a sound basis for the selection or designing of learning materials, content and methods of delivering content, provides the basis for evaluating and assessing the performance of the learners, it permits a learner to know precisely what performance is expected of them and to what degree it must be demonstrated. Furthermore, the author noted that it helps to judge whether goals are realistic and achievable and helps a programme developer and stakeholders to understand exactly what they are trying to achieve and the reason for doing so. Similarly, Woodruff (2018), stated that programme objectives are important because they give sense of direction and purpose to any programme, and form the basis to set budgets. In another development, Chaffy (2018), listed some qualities of programme objectives as follows: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time bound (SMART).The quality of specificity implies that objectives should be well defined and clear to other

members of the team. Measurable implies that it involves selecting what will be measured to show improvement, impact or success. Achievable implies that objectives should be within reach or doable considering available resources and time. Realistic means that objectives should be reasonable. According to Chaffy (2018), setting out to achieve a high level of change within a short time period, is unrealistic for instance, an objective of having 100% reduction in adult illiteracy in Nigeria within two years is unrealistic but an objective of reducing illiteracy by 30% within five years period is more realistic. Time bound implies that an objective should have a beginning and a proposed end. This allows stakeholders to report on the progress that is being made in achieving the objectives. An objective in any programme may be known before the programme starts or it can emerge, when the programme is occurring or it can be perceived subsequently.

Adult and non-formal education as an offshoot of education is more interested in helping learners acquire life skills and competencies for self-reliance in areas, such as tailoring, fashion designing, shoe and bag making, arts and crafts, among others. These skills help to build an individual and empower communities. It equally helps to reduce poverty and illiteracy in the society.

The objectives of Adult and non-formal education (ANFE) at NCE level as contained in the NCCE 2012benchmark are:

(1) Produce dedicated and skilled facilitators of adult learners.

(2) Prepare facilitators with in-depth knowledge of emerging contemporary issues related to adult and non-formal education.

(3) Train facilitators with the right attitude to adult and non-formal education.

(4) Produce facilitators that are able to guide and support learners to acquire relevant knowledge, skills, attitude and values necessary for living.

(5) Produce facilitators who should be able to mobilize communities for education and development and.

(5) Provide opportunities for further education in adult and non-formal education.

Since 2012, a lot of socio-cultural and technological changes have taken place in the society in the theory and practice of education. Some technological developments which are necessary for teaching, acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes in adult education have occurred. For example, electronic examination is replacing paper and pencil test. In addition, computerized laboratory with projectors, practicum centres with skill acquisition, data processing methodologies and online teaching are products of technology. There is, therefore, need to determine the adequacy of the document in meeting with the global best practices in education..

The word, adequacy, was coined in the early 17th century from the Latin word, adequatus, meaning, made equal to. Adequacy may be referred to, as a state of sufficiency or completeness. However, Minor and Muray (2018) defined adequacy as a state of being satisfactory or acceptable in quality or

quantity. Adequacy may equally be defined as much or as good as necessary for some requirements or purpose, fully sufficient, suitable or fit for a particular purpose. It gives a sense of being equal to what is required. Similarly, O' Neil, summer and Collin (2018), defined adequacy as a state of being enough or good enough for what is required or needed, sufficient, suitable. This definition denotes that adequacy is a state of being able to fulfill a need or requirement. In addition, Bullon (2000), explained adequacy as a situation in which there is enough resources for a particular purpose. Mapaderun (2002) asserts that adequacy is a satisfactory condition of resources in an organization. The author noted that adequacy of learning facilities enhances teaching and learning activities in schools. In this study, adequacy implies determining how satisfactory the programme objectives in the NCCE 2012 Minimum standards, for adult and non-formal education in Nigeria is by using the viewpoints of lecturers in the colleges of education in Nigeria to ascertain whether it is good enough to achieve the objectives of Adult and non-formal education in the 21st century.

The respondents used in this study were experienced and less experienced educators in the colleges of education which offer adult and non-formal education courses in Nigeria. These respondents may differ in their responses with regards to their years of service experiences. It may be said that the educators with longer years of service experience could be more equipped with adequate competencies and skills in their job. However, educators with fewer years of service experience could also contribute well enough in this study because of their level of exposure in this technological era. The respondents could offer useful insights and suggestions on the adequacy of the objectives in the NCCE (2012) minimum standards. Based on this backdrop, the researcher carried out this study to determine the adequacy of the programme objectives in the NCCE2012 minimum standards for effective curriculum planning and review in the area of study to enable graduates be employable and acquire veritable skills in the world of work for economic growth and development.

Statement of the Problem

There is need for constant review of the objectives of any programme to affirm its efficacy in bringing about desirable behavioral changes in a learner. The programme objectives in the NCCE 2012 document has lasted for 9 years, within this period, so many notable socio-cultural and technological changes have taken place in the society in the theory and practice of education; it is therefore, due for re-assessment in order to align it with the current socio-cultural and technological changes which have occurred in the society. Furthermore, interaction by the researcher with some educators in the institution confirms this need. This study was therefore carried out in order to re-appraise and fill gaps in the needs of the learners, educators and the society.

Research Questions

Two research questions guided the study:

1. How do adult educators in the colleges of education in Nigeria rate the adequacy of programme objectives in the NCCE 2012

Minimum Standards for adult and non-formal education?

2. What suggestions could be proffered to improve the programme objective requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for adult and non-formal education?

Hypothesis

A null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho: There is no significant difference between adult educators who have long years of service experience (10 years & above) and those with who have fewer years of service experience (9 years & below) in their mean ratings on the adequacy of the programme objectives as prescribed in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education.

Research Method

The design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey design. The area of the study was Nigeria. The population of the study was 220 lecturers in the colleges of education in Nigeria which offer courses on adult and non-formal education. The total population was studied because the population was small and manageable. The instrument used for the study was a researcher made questionnaire, titled, Adequacy of Programme Objectives in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards Scale (APONMSS).The APONMSS has 6 items, structured on a 5- point rating scale of Very adequate (VA), 5 points; Adequate (A), 4 points; Fairly adequate (FA), 3 points; Inadequate (INAD), 2 points; Very Inadequate (VINAD), 1 point. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement of items by ticking on the weighted five points scale. The instrument was duly validated by three experts from the Department of adult and continuing education, Educational Foundations and science education, all in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Cronbach alpha coefficient formular was used to determine the reliability coefficient of APONMSS which stood at 0.94, which is a high reliability index. A total of 220copies of questionnaire were produced and distributed to the respondents. Only 203 copies were completed and returned, representing 92.2%. The data analysis was therefore, based on the 203 completed and returned copies of the questionnaire. Mean statistics, frequency and percentages were used to analyze research question 1 and 2 respectively while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Nworgu (2015) affirmed the use of t-test to test hypothesis about the difference between two population means when the sample size is large. Therefore, the use of t-test for this study is deemed most suitable. The decision rule for research questions was determined using true limits of numbers in a five-point scale response category. In respect of the decision rule 3.50 mean points and above were regarded as adequate, while 3.49 and below were interpreted as inadequate. The null hypothesis was accepted at 0.05 level of significance if the calculated value of t is less than the critical or table value, otherwise, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question one: How do adult educators in the colleges of education in

Nigeria rate the adequacy of programme objectives in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for adult and non-formal education?.

Table 1: Mean Ratings of Adult Educators on the Adequacy of Programme Objectives in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards (N=203)

S/N	Items on Programme Objectives	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1	To produce dedicated and skilled facilitators of adult learners	203	4.31	0.77	Adequate
2	To prepare facilitators with in-depth knowledge of emerging contemporary issues related to adult education and non-formal education	203	4.23	0.72	Adequate
3	To train facilitators with the right attitude to adult and non-formal education	203	4.18	0.77	Adequate
4	To produce facilitators that are able to guide and support learners to acquire relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for living	203	3.59	1.27	Adequate
5	To produce facilitators who should be able to mobilize communities for education and development	203	3.82	1.12	Adequate
6	To provide opportunity for further education in adult and non-formal education	203	3.85	1.03	Adequate

Table 1 shows that the educators rated the six items in the programme objectives as adequate

Research question Two: What suggestions could be proffered to improve the programme objective requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for adult and non-formal education?

Table 2: Percentage Analysis of suggestions by Adult Educators to improve the requirements in the Section of Programme Objectives (N= 16)

	Suggestions by Educators on Programme Objectives	Frequency	Percentage(%)
1	To provide specific plans to reduce adult illiteracy	2	12.50%
2	To provide startup funds for adult education programmes	2	12.50%
3	To create continuous awareness on adult and continuing education	1	6.25%
4	To train facilitators who are ICT compliant	4	25.00%
5	To ensure better standard in the field of adult and non formal education	1	6.25%
6	To integrate ageing process study (Gerontology) in the study of adult education	2	12.50%
7	To provide opportunities for lecturers and community leaders to participate in the review of NCCE 2012	1	6.25%
8	To produce graduates with lively conscience for good models for younger ones	1	6.25%

9	To provide networking partnership opportunities for facilitators	1	6.25%
10	To provide practical oriented programmes in adult education	1	6.25%
	Total	16	

Table 2 shows the percentage responses of the suggestions by the adult educators onprogramme objectives. Out of 203 lecturers, only 16 made suggestions. The most frequent item among the respondents is the training of facilitators who are ICT compliant, followed by to provide specific plans to reduce adult illiteracy in Nigeria.

Ho: There is no significant difference between adult educators who have long years of service experience (10 years & above) and those who have fewer years of service experience (9 years & below) in their mean ratings on the adequacy of the programme objectives as prescribed in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards.

Test of Hypothesis

Table 3: t-test of significant difference between inexperienced and experienced lecturers on the Adequacy of Programme Objectives

Variable	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	LS	Decision
Inexperienced	61	3.99	0.62	199	-0.17	1.96	0.05	Not sig
Experienced	142	4.00	0.57					

Table3shows that at 0.05 level of significance and 199 degree of freedom, t-cal (-0.17) is less than t-crit (1.96). Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the `mean ratings of adult educators who have long years of service experience and those who have fewer years of service experience on the adequacy of programme objectives was not rejected.

Discussion

The result of the study shows that the 6 items on the programme objectives in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education in the colleges of education in Nigeria were considered as adequate by the adult educators. This confirms the appropriateness of the objectives and provided data to affirm its suitability. Mckeen and O'brien (2006), Choudhur (2020) and Obidiegwu (2021) noted that learning objective is seen as adequate when it provides a well-integrated development in a learner. It is therefore a pivot on which the learning exercise revolves. Woodruff (2018) also maintained that good programme objectives give sense of direction and purpose to any educational programme and form the basis to set budgets. Ugwuanyi (2013) attributed adequacy of resources to education to the wealth of a nation. The author noted that wealthy societies establish good schools with quality facilitators and adequate learning infrastructures which, will invariably lead to good academic achievement. On the qualitative analysis of the

suggestions to improve the adequacy of programme objectives in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards, the most frequent among the respondents is the training of the facilitators who are ICT compliant. The importance of technology in education curriculum cannot be overemphasized. Ecoff, (2018) stressed that if technology is integrated in curriculum, it enhances learning experience. Grow (2017) affirmed that curriculum infused with technology engages learners in any learning environment and helps them acquire skills and knowledge needed to prepare them for the world of work.

The null hypothesis shows that both the adult educators with long years of service experience and those with fewer years of service experience attested to the adequacy of the programme objectives in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards. Therefore, there is no difference in their opinions as to the adequacy of the programme objectives. This may be because the objectives are still in line with the current needs of the society.

Conclusion

The paper concluded that the programme objectives in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education in the colleges of education in Nigeria is adequate, however, it could be improved upon by training facilitators who are ICT compliant as suggested by the adult educators, among others.

Recommendations

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

1. In other to achieve such lofty objectives as affirmed by this study, the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) in Nigeria should organize periodic training for the educators to ensure successful implementation of the stated objectives in other to fully equip the graduates for the world of work, for relevance to themselves and the society.

2. In other to achieve desirable learning outcomes and make methods and materials more effective, the Federal government should as a matter of urgency, train facilitators in the colleges of education in Nigeria who are ICT compliant. The government should also provide laptops to lecturers in the colleges of education, free of charge to help them be technologically sound in education.

3. The federal government should roll out specific plans to reduce adult illiteracy in the country. The percentage of adult illiteracy in the country stands at 62% (Knowema, 2018), which is quite alarming.

4. The Federal government of Nigeria should budget enough funds for the development of adult education agencies at states and local governments in the country. Currently, the fund Federal government of Nigeria budgeted for education is below the UNESCO's recommendation of 26% of a country's total budget.

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