

Adult and Non-formal Education in Nigeria: A Discipline in Search of Scope and Direction

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Abstract.

The study examined adult education as a field of study which is essential for national development because its relevance cuts across all sectors of the Nigerian economy. Yet despite its relevance in all sectors of the economy, it suffered much neglect and accorded low priority from the colonial to post-colonial governments in Nigeria. Also, as a discipline, it has not been properly subscribed for in the Nigerian tertiary institutions and has not been utilized in the development circle to minimize the many socio-economic problems in the society as emphasis is still placed on the formal education school system. However, positive changes and meaningful development cannot wait for those undergoing the formal school system to finish before solutions are found. The current challenges of globalization and the many socio-economic and political crises bedwelling our nations demand that the scope and curriculum of adult education be restructured to respond to the challenging needs of national development. The researchers adopted a documentary research design for the study. Documents on existing adult education curricula at the undergraduate level in some selected federal universities in the country were used for the study. The choice of the federal university was that adult education as a discipline started with the federal universities. Out of 39 federal universities only 15 are presently offering degree programmes in adult education. However, only 6 of the universities were selected based on the country's geo-political zone. The researchers adopted a content analysis method for the study, and the choice was purely based on major thematic areas of adult education programmes as contained in the National University Commission (NUC) requirements. The findings of the study revealed that Community Development, Administration and Planning were adequately reflected in all the selected universities, except Women's Education and Industrial Labour Studies. The study also revealed that ICT, Environmental Education and Cooperative Management were fairly reflected in the universities. Based on the findings of the study recommendations are made which include among other things that adult education as a discipline should properly reflect among other things the prevailing developmental needs of society; and focus on training professional adult educators in Nigerian universities to be in tandem with the contemporary national and global trends.

Keywords: Adult Education, Non-formal education, education managers, & administrators

Introduction

Many Nigerians' negative attitude towards adult education started right from the time of the colonial administrations in the country where emphasis was placed more on the formal education school systems. According to Fasokun (2000), the low status that was accorded to adult education in the country right from the time of the colonial to post-colonial governments has not greatly changed. Emphases are still focusing more on still focusing more on the formal education school system. Consequently, the field suffered total neglect and remained largely under-explored and its products were also underutilized for national development.

Although, during the post-independence period in Nigeria, the relevance of adult and non-formal education was somehow recognized but mainly limited and focused on literacy for the illiterates and semi-literate adults to only acquire the basic skills required for reading, writing and arithmetic (3rs). This type of literacy skills provided by the colonial masters to the natives was mainly created to enable the natives to serve the masters better either as house boys, house girls gardeners, stewards, cooks etc.

This narrow conception of the field unduly influenced official thinking towards supporting only adult literacy programmes to the detriment of other important aspects of the discipline. It is not surprising that; the popularity of adult education in Africa started eroding in the early 1980s concomitantly with the rise of formal basic education. Seye (2005). What could be seen as a focus and direction for adult education in the country was the emergence of the Military regime. The military administration in Nigeria was the one that established the Adult Education Commission on 26th June 1990 under Decree No.17 and officially took off on the 5th day of July 1991. The Commission is known as the "National Commission for Mass Education Adult and Non-formal Education".

The Commission has six zonal offices located in each of the six-geo-political zones in the country namely: (i) North Central zone with its headquarters in Minna,

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Niger state (ii) North East zone located in Bauchi, the Bauchi state (iii) North West zone located in Katsina, Katsina state. Others are (iv) the South-East zone located at Owerri, Imo state and (v) the South-West zone located in Ibadan, Oyo state. (vi) The South-South zonal office has Benin the Edo state as its headquarters. Shuaibu (2011).

In the same vein, Shuaibu further stated that the Commission had also established a National Documentations Centre in the North-West geo-political zone and made Kano, the capital of Kano state as its headquarters. The Kano Centre of the Commission is where the country's middle and lower levels of adult educators are sent for training. Apart from training the Kano Centre is also responsible for developing teaching and learning materials for adult and non-formal education programmes in the country.

In addition, to the training and production of teaching and learning materials for adult educators, the Kano Centre has the responsibility of overseeing and supporting the non-formal education (NFE) training Institutes located in Bauchi, Makurdi, Uyo, Gombe, Jos, Maiduguri and Jos. All these responsibilities are in addition to the Commission's superintendence roles on non-formal, individuals, governments and non-governmental organizations that are involved in the literacy and non-formal education (NFE) provision in the country. Nzewi (2012).

The functions of the National Commission for Adult and Non-Formal Education as revealed by Shuaibu (2011) and Nzewi (2012) include the following:

- Works in collaboration with all concerned to properly eradicate illiteracy in Nigeria, design and promote strategies and programmes for the smooth conduct of mass literacy campaigns in consultation with the appropriate Agencies of the Federal, State, and Local Government Councils. Others include Tertiary Institutions and Non-Governmental Organizations.
- Monitor and coordinate activities relating to the National Mass Literacy Campaign to make sure that the campaign has successfully achieved its primary objective of total eradication of illiteracy in the country.
- Monitoring and coordinating the implementation of all forms of activities related to the eradication of illiteracy in Nigeria and also to ensure proper

and adequate collection and dissemination of information of illiteracy in Nigeria to ensure proper and adequate collection and dissemination of information on the implementation,

- Develop and disseminate teaching and materials for distance education programmes that are aimed at uplifting primary and secondary school leavers as well as mass literacy participants and non-formal education facilitators.

Apart from the above-mentioned roles played by the Military regime in Nigeria in promoting adult and non-formal education programmes, the coming of the civilian democratic elected government, in 1999 has witnessed a great breakthrough in the development and promotion of adult and non-formal education in the country which has given the discipline a proper focus and direction in the field.

Shuaibu (2011) further stated that in December 2010 Federal Government of Nigeria established a Tsangaya Qur'anic Education Commission. It was established mainly to settle down the Qur'anic Education pupils (Almajirai) who move around from one place to another with their teachers (Malamai) so that they can now settle down in one place and be provided with some basic needs that would surely guarantee for their permanent settlement to acquire the Qur'anic education alongside modern education. (Western Education) school system of education.

In the same vein Shuaibu (2011) stated that the modern Tsangaya Qur'anic education school system was primarily designed by the federal government as a measure to properly motivate owners of traditional Tsangaya Quranic education school systems (Makarantan Allo) to fully and willingly accept the integration of the two systems of the educations (Qur'anic and Modern educations) to run at the designated Centres so that the tsangaya Quranic education pupils (Almajirai) could become literate in both the Qur'anic and the modern educations so that they can contribute effectively contribute towards national development.

According to Nzewi (2012), most of the modern Tsangaya Qur'anic education school systems established by the federal government are located in the northern

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part of the country where the majority of the people in the region still have a negative attitude towards modern education school system and try to avoid it by means because most of them perceived the modern education school system as a deliberate and a planned strategy to possibly convert them into the religion of the Christianity through back-door. Many based their argument on the rejection of modern education because there was no difference between the type of education brought by the early Christian missionaries and that of the colonial administrators in the region.

Nzewi (2012), further added that the modern Tsangaya Quranic education school of the federal government targeted the youths and children of the sub-region who are not enrolled into the formal school system. It is believed that providing these categories of people in the society who are in the majority in terms of population with both Qur'an and modern education would give them ample opportunities to contribute their quarters towards the development of their fatherland politically, socially and also economically.

Despite the government's efforts in these directions to integrate the two systems of education, in the region desired objectives have not been achieved to a satisfactory level as revealed by Nwagabra (2012) because according to him most of those that are in the corridors of power and authority are those that become what they are today through the formal school system and therefore see nothing good in that of the adult and non-formal education.

Consequently, right from the era of the colonial administration in the country to date adult education has not yet been fully appreciated as a discipline relevant to the socio-economic development of Nigeria given the level of its development even at tertiary institutions in the country. This then probed people's negative perception towards adult education, particularly its programmes.

In Nigeria, today the adult education training programmes that are offered in the various universities have led to the general lack of understanding of the actual scope of the discipline and its role in national development. This lack of

appreciation of the scope of the discipline was further strengthened by the fact that the background of a sizable number of lecturers in the discipline were from other disciplines. There are indications that some of these lecturers dominated the discipline to an extent and influenced its curriculum contents and direction over the years to suit their interests even though they are not authorities in the field of adult education. The result of all these was that various departments had diverse curricula offered at different levels in our universities. Even the departmental handbooks from the universities offering adult education show nothing much as a guide towards the professional role that students undergoing training could emulate and back upon.

This problem is not only peculiar to university lecturers. Many of those appointed as directors or secretaries in government ministries and particularly the agencies for mass literacy in various states in the country were not necessarily those with proper adult education backgrounds. The problem was even more compounded by the fact that most of the graduates of the discipline in some universities were neither trained for the classroom work as teachers nor for a specific professionalized of practice except for areas that overlapped with other disciplines such as the community development, basic literacy, post-literacy, agricultural extension services, social welfare, and health services among others.

Consequently, many students who are offered adult education courses in most cases are reluctant to single out and associate themselves fully with adult education as a discipline and feel proud when discussing with their students' colleagues from other departments in the universities.

The Scope and Relevance of Adult Education

Adult education is a transmission process of general, technical or vocational knowledge, as well as skills, values and attitudes which take place outside the formal education school system to remedy early educational inadequacies of mature people or that of the school drop-outs from the formal education school system and provide them with the adequate programme that is capable of

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equipping them properly at all levels with the inessential knowledge and cultural elements required for their self-fulfilment and full participation in the social, economic and political wellbeing of their societies as opined by Seye (2005). He further stated that some of the adult education programmes such as basic literacy and post-literacy in most cases do offer viable opportunities for adult youths, and the formal school-drop-outs who could not be observed in the formal education school due to age barriers or other challenges could continue under the adult education programmes to make up. These programmes also accommodate adults and youth as well as school dropouts who are willing and able to learn and specialize in a particular technical or business skill to advance their career, and return to or begin a class on a topic they are interested in. It is therefore clear from the above that the scope of adult education is not limited to the illiterates and semi-literates alone. It is also an education required for even the most highly educated ones in society. It is based on the significance of adult education to the individual and to national development that UNESCO (1976) defined adult education "as the entire body of organized process whatever the content, level or method, formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and the universities as well as apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical and/or professional qualifications and bring about changes in their attitude or behaviour in two-fold perspectives of full personal development".

In Nigeria, adult educators are found in many organizations in both the public and private sectors. Before the establishment of the National Commission for Adult and Non-Formal Education at the federal level, and the creation of Agencies for Mass Education Adult and Non-formal Education at the State levels, as well as the Department of Social Services at the Local Government Level.

Mera (2004) stated that before the creation of the National Commission for Mass Education Adult and Non-Formal Education adult education suffered from having a permanent Ministry. In some states, it was either placed under the Ministry of

Youths and Sports, or the Ministry for Rural Development. In some states, it was with the Ministry of Information and Social Development. Similarly, at the local government level, it was either under the office of the Chairman of the local government council or under the office of the Education Secretary. These were brought about as a result of a lack of proper direction and focus given to adult and non-formal education at all levels of government in the country.

However, as a way forward and to give adult and non-formal education a proper direction and focus Ouane (2009) stated that scholars and practitioners in adult education at both the National and the International levels have had intense debates on issues relating to adult and non-formal education as a field of study and also as a practice. These moves were aimed at finding a more coherent agenda for adult and non-formal education in the developing countries of the world and also to formulate policies that would transform the adult and non-formal education practice of developing countries of the world. This move according to Mera (2004) was arrived at because adult education in most developing countries of the world particularly Nigeria is not a priority part of public policy and not a priority among many governments and policymakers. This has made adult education in Nigeria continue to be a poor and neglected form of education "termed as education targeted at the poor people, or education meant for the not well to do people in the society; and also, an education reduced to temporary efforts at basic literacy".

However, on the contrary, Ouane, (2009) strongly opposed or disagreed with the notion most people have towards adult education that it's an education meant for the poor people, and also the education for the not well-to-do people in the society. He also frowned at all those that limit adult education to only the acquisition of basic literacy and post-literacy programmes according to him adult and non-formal education is a lifelong learning context; an inclusive education that focuses on self-esteem, empowerment, concentration, citizenship building, labour skill. It also covers organization, income generation and poverty alleviation.

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In Nigeria, and many other African countries that are currently faced with daunting challenges such as unemployment, eradication of poverty, poor health conditions prevention and above all resolving conflicts and insecurity among the citizenry, adult education could be the only viable educational programme capable enough to address these problems.

The imperative of utilization of adult education programmes in most developing countries and Nigeria in particular in addressing the contemporary cannot be over-emphasized. Ouane, (2009) added that adult and non-formal education cannot only be relevant and focused only on the economic and social spheres, but it plays a significant role and contributes to the strengthening of democracy. He added that for a democracy to be achieved, adult education would be very much needed to properly educate and sensitize the citizenry in the democratic culture and enlighten them about the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

Fasokum (2000) revealed that globalization is "the intensification of the worldwide social relations which links distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many kilometres away from them and vice versa". This then has dual effects on society which include the intended and the unintended consequences. The intended consequences are of different dimensions but as it is now there is hardly a greater threat to global peace and stability than the present upsurge of international terrorism terrorizing people in both the developed and the developing countries of the world.

Ouaune (2009) also affirms that to meet the challenges of globalization Worldwide and, or to properly contain the effects of its unintended consequences there is the need for a well-informed, literate and well-active citizenry, and this can only happen through the provision of adult education.

Despite the significance of adult education in developing and also sharpening of individuals or groups of individuals in accepting and adjusting to changes as opined by Ouaune (2009) the major challenges facing the adult education

programmes in the developing, countries of the world and Nigeria in particular make it to be ineffective and unattractive is the widening gaps between the policy provisions and that of the implementation. Although there are many good numbers of adult educators and adult education practitioners in almost all of the developing countries of the world and Nigeria in particular, they are hardly or occasionally allowed to occupy such professional positions and participate in activities that would enable them to properly mitigate the challenges emerging global threats that also hinders development efforts.

Adult Educators and Professional Development

The term adult education whether among adult educators or adult education practitioners, is a multidisciplinary field that overlaps with so many fields. These include basic literacy education, continuing education and extension services. Others are vocational and technical education, higher education and above all adult education are perceived at all times as professional development education which are fully offered through formal and non-formal means by a variety of actors. These actors have different backgrounds and operate from different conceptions of what is adult education all about. This, then makes it a bit complex and very difficult to properly define the profession, thereby creating the challenges of professional development in the world of work. Nwagabra (2012). He further stated that the different roles which are performed by adult educators in different fields and organizations they found in themselves is not what matters but the disparate practices in the different sectors of adult education and the different educational and professional biographies and that of the employment statutes are what makes the definition of the profession of these adult educators very difficult.

Marcos (2011) revealed that the spectrum of adult education staff is extremely broad and the integration of adult education in all societal sectors has made it somehow borderless discipline.

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Therefore, to make adult education and its staff more functional and goal-oriented special knowledge and skills are needed to be performed as professionals in specific fields which are very much lacking in the field of adult education. He added that a professional body that attracts and enjoys a level of respect from the general public which is yet to be said of is the adult educators in most developing countries of the world and Nigeria in particular. Marcos (2011) further stated that the adult education as a field of study has remained largely not a regulated body in the Nigerian educational systems and policy because it has long suffered lack of having basic requirements such as a clear monopoly on the occupation, the definite entry requirements, and specific professional body or an association that could maintain a code of conduct and common core required for its competencies such as professional bodies like that of the Medicine, Law, Teachers' and Engineering among others before the establishment of the body known as the "Nigerian National Council for Adult Education" (NNCAE) in 1971 and also that of the "National Commission for Mass Education Adult and Non-Formal Education" (NCMLANE) in 1990. However, despite all these there has been good work done by the federal government of Nigeria by establishing the National Commission for Mass Literacy Adult and Non-formal Education at the Federal, the State Agencies for Mass Education at the State level and the Department of Social Services at the Local Government levels so that all forms of learning various societies of today needs at whatever level are made available and affordable. Knowing fully that all forms of learning societies of today need life-long education for sustainable building of the "knowledge society of the 21st century" and such can only be achieved through adult education and the professional development of adult educators who are critical to these changes to effectively take place in most developing countries and Nigeria in particular.

Shuaibu (2010) also stated that the attainment of adult education and the professional development of adult educators for a sustainable building of the "knowledge society" of the 21st century may be difficult to meet because the

training of adult educators at the university level focuses less on the practical aspects. Most universities in Africa and those in Nigeria in particular lay more emphasis on academic discipline at the expense of the practical aspect of the programmes that may have direct bearing and positive effects on the lives of adult persons. Therefore, the practical component of the programmes provided by adult education in most Nigerian tertiary institutions is usually inadequately funded. Recently a Nigerian university that offers degree programmes in adult education for its undergraduates and postgraduate students has threatened to scrape the field experience and teaching practice for its students due to lack of funds to continue sponsoring such programmes which is an indication that even some university management have negative attitudes towards adult and non-formal education programmes.

Therefore, to balance theory and practice among students studying adult education in Nigerian universities, Okech (2006) suggested that all universities that are offering adult education degree programmes should try and revisit their earlier roles played and exhibited during the country's Mass Literacy Campaign (MLC) programme of the early 1980s. It will be recalled that during the mass literacy campaign organized by the federal government of Nigeria in the early 80s, to eradicate illiteracy among the citizenry; all universities that were involved in the exercise did very well. They engaged actively and did very well in areas of research work, manpower development, advocacy and materials development

In the same vein, Youngman (2005) suggested that training adult educators on both academic and non-academic levels should be directly related to the needs of the labour markets. This argument no doubt will have a great positive bearing on the knowledge contents that are acquired by adult educators during their training programmes which invariably are directed to the curriculum. He further stated that the availability of competent and dedicated personnel on the ground that would effectively develop, organize, promote, teach and also evaluate the modes of learning to the adults at all levels should be the sole indispensable

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condition required for the successful and proper implementation of adult education policies and programmes in the Nigerian universities.

Shilbeck (1976) and Anwukah, (2000) also reported that for the training of adult educators to be successful and goal-oriented in Nigerian universities there should always be an important component of discussions on the future of adult education in the universities offering adult education courses. They (Shilbeck and Anwukah) then, suggested the curriculum for adult education should properly accommodate and also agree with the totality of the process of education within the entire courses for study, learnings and other related themes in the curriculum should be well defined and well-connected with the entire educational system encompassing the programmes of the study programmes of the activities and that of guidance and counselling in Nigerian tertiary institutions offering adult education courses leading to the award of degree programmes.

Curriculum Development

Curriculum development is a unique educational activity which faces the challenges of defining the objectives and selecting the appropriate learning experiences and contents. Others are organizing and integrating these contents to be of positive value for national and international developments. Moreno (2006) and Nwagbara (2012) stated that Curriculum development should always be a continuous process aimed at ensuring the continued relevance and responsiveness of the curriculum to societal needs at all times. The curriculum should always be seen as an inevitable continuous reform process aiming at infusing changes into the entire educative process. Moreno and Nwagbara further stated that the continuous reform process in the curriculum has become necessary because educational reform all over the world is increasingly curriculum-based with mounting pressure and demands for changes. After all, life itself is dynamic.

Bhola (2000) similarly stated that apart from designing a proper curriculum, other challenges confronting adult education would be reduced by creating a vibrant

professionalized sector of adult education where Nigerian adult educators would be equipped with modern facilities that could enable them to practice well in modern-day globalization with ease. Bholu further stated that the starting point of personnel preparation and training in adult education and life-long learning should be the restructuring of the curriculum of adult education in all the training institutions in the country.

Similarly, Anwuka (2000) stated that at the international level, UNESCO had played a significant role in the development of adult education and adult educators all over the world. He added that among the few international conferences organized under the umbrella of UNESCO which laid more emphasis on the development of adult education and adult educators was that of Hamburg, 1997 which brought about improving conditions for the professional development of adult educators and its facilitators in both the developed and the developing countries of the world. They include among other things that adults should have enough and adequate knowledge of learning social issues, participatory, methodologies and also applied information technology, attitudes formation such as commitments to the values of social justice and working properly in cross-sectoral partnerships. Unfortunately, adult education curricula in most Nigerian universities that offer adult education degree programmed not adequately reflect these current temporaries concerning issues that are related to globalization, security, and poverty. Others lacking in such Nigerian universities are information and communications technology (ICT) unemployment as well as environmental degradation. This is so because a good number of the curricula in most Nigerian universities were designed by those that studied the adult education as a theory with little or no much practical experiences in the field.

Evaluations of the Adult Education Curricula in Selected Nigerian Universities

Methodological Issues

This study is a documentary research design. It examined existing documents of adult education curricula at the undergraduate level in some selected federal universities in the country. The choice of only the federal universities in the

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country was arrived at because adult education as a discipline started with the federal universities before it reached other educational institutions in the country such as the colleges of education and polytechnics that recently followed suit with a few state-owned universities.

Similarly, the National Universities Commission of Nigeria (NUCN,2022) revealed that it has approved a total of one hundred and ninety-eight (198) universities in (Nigeria) as of September 2024. Forty-five (45) are owned by the federal government, fifty-four (54) are owned by states and ninety-nine (99) are owned by individuals or private organizations. However, the concern of the researchers of this study is only the federal universities that offer adult education courses. Out of the forty-five (45) federal universities, only fifteen (15) are presently offering degree programmes in adult education.

The fifteen universities offering degree programmes in adult education are classified based on the country's geo-political zones. For instance, the universities of Jos and Ilorin are in the North-Central zone. The North-East geo-political zone has the University of Maiduguri. Bayero University Kano and that of Usumanu Dan Fodio Sokoto are in the North West. Nnamdi Azikiwe University is located in the South-East geo-political zone. The universities of Benin, Calabar, Niger Delta and Port Harcourt are all in the South geo-political zone. In the South-West geo-political zone there are the universities of Ibadan, Lagos and Obafemi Awolowo.

From the above analysis, the South-South geo-political zone has the highest number of federal universities offering adult education in the country. However, for this study, the researchers selected only six out of the fifteen federal universities offering degree programmes in adult education.

The restriction to only six federal universities was largely determined by the presence of the curriculum as well as the efforts put in by the researchers to get an up-to-date curriculum on the programmes from colleagues in these selected federal universities that assisted in forwarding the information required.

The researchers adopted a content analysis method for the study. The choice of content analysis was purely based on major thematic areas of adult education programmes reflected in the National Minimum Standards of National Universities Commission (NUC). These are (i) Functional Literacy (ii) ICT (iii) Women’s Education (iv) and Industrial and Labour Education. Others include (v) Administration and Planning (vi) Community Development (vii) Cooperative Management(viii)Teaching subjects and (ix) Environmental Education. Suffice it to mention that some relevant courses and themes are already covered by the General Studies (GST) programmes of the selected universities even though some are outside the adult education context, hence, they were not looked for in the content evaluated. Because some of them are entrepreneurship education, peace and conflict resolutions. The criteria adopted for the evaluation of the study was a Likert-type response pattern of (i) very adequate (VA), (ii) adequate (A), (iii) moderately adequate (MA), and not adequate (NA).

Evaluation and Discussion

Table 1: Extent of Reflection of Relevant Undergraduate Programmes of Adult Education from the Universities.

Literacy	ICT	W/Edu	I & L Studies	Admin & planning	C/Dev	Coop Magt	T/ Subjects	Environ mental Edu
A	A	A	MA	VA	VA	NA	A	NA
A	NA	NA	A	MA	A	NA	A	NA
A	A	A	VA	A	VA	NA	A	VA
A	NA	NA	NA	NA	A	NA	A	NA
A	A	A	NA	A	A	NA	A	A
MA	NA	NA	VA	VA	VA	NA	A	NA

According to Table 1 out of the six federal universities that were evaluated for this study functional literacy and teaching subjects are adequately reflected except in the Nandi Azikiwe University where such programmes are moderately

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reflected. It also revealed that Community Development, Administration / Planning were adequately reflected in the University of Maiduguri. Similarly, the universities of Port Harcourt and Lagos were also reported to have adequately been reflected in areas of Community Development, Administration and Planning in adult education degree programmes. However, these programmes were just adequate at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University. Furthermore, the ICT and Community Development programmes were also adequate at the universities of Usumanu Dan Fodio, Port Harcourt and Maiduguri. However, programmes leading to the degree awarding in Women's Education and Industrial Labour studies have not been adequately reflected in most of the federal universities. Such programmes are only available at the University of Jos and Nnamdi and Nnamdi Azikiwe. The study also revealed that ICT, Environmental Education and Cooperative Management are the major casualties in all the federal universities, except that of the Maiduguri, Usumanu Dan Fodio and Port Harcourt therefore, on comparatively speaking, the Usumanu Dan Fodio University Sokoto appears to be in the leading ahead of other universities in reflecting adequate majority of the courses in the key thematic areas evaluated. Given the present socio-economic and political challenges confronting Nigeria, adult education programmes should have been given an adequate representation of the I.C.T-based and Environmental education courses. This will adequately and efficiently equip adult educators to be able to properly confront developmental challenges facing the nation at all times.

According to Marcos (2011), the provision of adequate Environmental education in studying adult education programmes for the adults and the youths in the society is imperative and should be encouraged at all times.

Marcos further argued that various texts and authors in adult education acknowledged the need to include Environmental issues and Environmental education programmes in adult and youth training at all levels of educational attainments.

In a related development, Nzewi (2012) stated that the effects of climate change, as well as conflicts and environmental degradation, poverty, I.C.T, and population growth, are some of the major emerging global issues that should shape the educational curriculum in Nigerian universities where emphases are placed on adult education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, adult education as a discipline in Nigeria needs a new direction that should properly reflect the prevailing developmental needs of the society at all times. More importantly the training of the professional adult educators in all the Nigerian universities must be in tandem with contemporary national and global trends. To successfully achieve all these the National Commission for Mass Literacy Adult and Non-formal Education (NCANFE) and also the Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (NNCAE) which is the umbrella body for adult education in Nigeria should try and make concerted efforts in widening and deepening this discipline by reflecting some currently neglected courses that can properly enhance its relevance to the contemporary issues of the society.

Similarly, the National Universities Commission (N.U.C.) which is the regulatory body of all universities in the country should ensure that adult education as a field of study is encouraged by the managers of the institutions of higher education learning in the country to establish an adult education department.

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