



Non-formal education programmes and public enlightenment; Tools For effective skills acquisition by youth in Katsina state

Murtala Sale¹, Yaro Umar¹, Dr. Sama'ila Mu'azu Bawa²

¹ Lecturer, Department of Education, College of Vocational and Technical Education, Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic, Katsina State, Nigeria

² Lecturer, Department of Civil Engineering, College of Engineering, Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic, Katsina State, Nigeria

Abstract

This research is primarily aimed at investigating the extent to which non-formal education and public enlightenment programmes are helpful towards youth skills acquisition in Katsina State. The aim achieved by the following set objectives; to examine the extent of youth participation in skill acquisition programmes, to examine the extent levels of public enlightenment encourage youth in Katsina State to engage in skill acquisition programmes and to identify the effect of non-participation in skill acquisition programmes by youth in Katsina State. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The total population of the study were (180) beneficiaries from the three vocational centers in three senatorial zones in Katsina State. Forty one (41) beneficiaries from each vocational center were used as sample size. Sample size was determined by using Krejci and Morgan's table (1970). Simple technique was adopted where (41) folded pieces of paper containing "Yes" and others "No" were kept in a container. The ones that picked "Yes" were issued with the questionnaire to respond to the items. Youth Participation in Skills Acquisition Programmes Questionnaire (YPI SAPQ) was used for data collection. Instrument's Validity was determined by the experts from the Department of Education, Katsina Polytechnic. Instrument's reliability was established using Cronbach Alpha where 0.70 was obtained. Tabulation method, simple percentage and mean value were used for data analysis through Likert Scale of four-points rating, such as Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2 and Strongly Disagree 1. The study found out that participation of youth in skills acquisition had improved their status significantly. The study also recommended that the Government of Katsina State and other stakeholders should continue to support skills acquisition centers with all needed facilities and enlighten youth to be enrolled in any form of skills acquisition programme for their good living.

Keywords: investigating, acquisition programmes, significantly

Introduction

The Nigeria's current population of the citizens is estimated to have exceeded 200 million people, and the National Population Commission (NPC) (2013) states that about half of the population is made up of youth, the category defined as persons of between 15 and 34 years of age. Unfortunately, as the National Bureau of Statistics (2019) explained, as the youth population grows, so does the unemployment rate. Katsina State ranked fourth in terms of population among Nigeria's States in 2006 with a population of 5,801,584 (National Population Commission, 2006) ^[14]. Furthermore, the NPC report showed that 3,075,267 youth, or almost 53% of the total population, lived in Katsina State. This indicates that a sizeable portion of Katsina State's population is made up of people under the age of 35 (National Population Commission, 2006) ^[14]. The demographic trend throughout Nigeria, where youths under the age of 35 make up an important portion of the population, is consistent with the high youth population of Katsina State. Nigeria, where 60% of the population is under 25, has one of the most youth populations in the world, according to the United Nations (United Nations, 2019) ^[19].

Unfortunately, these youths do not find the commensurate number of opportunities to be able to fit in the society, explore their talents and participate in the making of their society. Ladan (2020) laments the fact that Katsina State has

a large number of industries built by both the State Government and the private sector. Yet, youth unemployment remains one of the most critical contemporary issues facing many States of the Federation including Katsina State. According to Nwankwo (2017), youth are the greatest assets any nation can be proud of, and when they are completely positive and involved, they play a key part in country's development.

Statement of the problem

Various non-formal education and public enlightenment programmes visibly exist in all parts of Katsina State, each programme typically focusing their target participants. Some programmes target farmers such as maize farmers, poultry farmers, fish farmers, rice farmers, etc. while others train their participants in different skills such as cell phone repairs, tailoring, beauty salon, computer repairs, leather and shoe making etc. in order to equip the trainees to become productive in the community (K.E. and M.A., 2010). These programmes are implemented in various parts of the State by various governmental and non-governmental organizations. Even political leaders actively participate in these kinds of programmes for their people, so that they improve their political sphere. They plan short-term skills acquisition centers for men and women in periods that range from one week to four weeks. Participants are often given simple materials necessary to take up the skill learned

during the training; while in other cases the participants are given some token and, or, materials required to start up the business learned in the programmes (Trutkowski, 2016) ^[18]. The existing knowledge that has not been sufficiently addressed or investigated in the reviewed literatures represented the problem of this research. For instance, the precise connection between non-formal education programs, public enlightenment, and effective skill acquisition among Youth in Katsina State; the inadequate exploration of Youth's perspectives for skill acquisition among youths in Katsina State; the inadequate evaluation of the effectiveness of skill acquisition among youth in Katsina State; the lack of integration between non-formal education and public enlightenment as tools for effective skills acquisition has not been extensively explored from all the other studies reviewed. Therefore, addressing these research problems will contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of non-formal education programs and public enlightenment programs in facilitating effective skills acquisition among youth in Katsina State. It will provide insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to design and implement targeted interventions that address the specific needs and aspirations of the youth population in the State.

Objectives of the study

The study was set to achieve the following objectives. They were to:

1. examine the extent of youth participation in skill acquisition programmes.
2. examine the extent levels of public enlightenment encourage youth in Katsina State to engage in skill acquisition programmes.
3. identify the effect of non-participation in skill acquisition programmes by youth in Katsina State.

Research question of the study

The study answers the following research questions:

1. Do youths in Katsina State actively engage in non-formal educational programs for skill acquisition?
2. How frequently is public awareness efforts used to encourage youths in Katsina state to participate in non-formal education programs for skill acquisition?
3. What are the consequences if youths in Katsina state not participating in skill acquisition programs?

Literature review

The study hinges on the Theory of Deschooling, which Ivan Illich (1971) ^[10] described in his book titled "Deschooling Society." Illich contends that conventional education restricts people's capacity for independent learning and thought. According to him, informal and non-formal learning are ignored since the educational system is built on the premise that learning only takes place in official institutions. Illich thought that teachers should mislead students into accepting particular ideas, attitudes, and beliefs because schools give them a false sense of security. He claimed that because of the distance created by the classroom, schools decrease students' possibilities of making connections with the outside world. Illich's theories have had a significant impact on the field of education, particularly in debates over the relative merits of formal versus informal and non-formal education. Therefore, Theory of Deschooling questions the conventional model of formal education and highlights the significance of non-

formal education in learning. Although the idea has its opponents, it has also prompted vital discussions about the function of education in society and the best ways to aid students in their pursuit of knowledge.

Consequently, this study adopts the Theory of Deschooling by Illich to determine whether various non-formal education programmes carried out for the youth in Katsina State really facilitate the learning of the taught skills and, or, trades by the youth participants and therefore leads to upsurge in their socio-economic conditions. The major purpose of the non-formal education programmes to the participants is to improve their general condition socially, politically and economically. This is what the Theory of Deschooling pursues as it exposes the learner to situations and conditions that enable the learner to practically explore his/her potentials.

Non-formal education had been identified by Gajanayake (2014) ^[7], as "any structured, systematic, non-school educational and training activities of relatively short duration, where sponsoring agencies seek concrete behavioral changes in fairly distinct target populations." Mok (2011) ^[13] also, described nonformal education as being "any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population, adults as well as children". Idris *et al.*, (2012) ^[9] described it as a tool for assessing the needs and desires of adults and out-of-school youth in developing countries to interact with them, encourage them to engage, enable them to learn the required skills, adopt behavioral habits, and related activities that will increase their productivity and improve their standard of living. Moreover, Congress, (2014) ^[5] found it more egalitarian and vaster in nature, relatively inexpensive and convenient in contrast with formal education.

In other hands, public enlightenment has been described by Omemu, (2015) ^[16] as a programme carried out by the government department or an organization to achieve clarity of thought, reason and understanding in a society, which he also calls the 'Era of Enlightenment'. In a society like Nigeria, successful public enlightenment brings growth. This is because people's enlightenment helps them live in peace and harmony. He also further stated that the liberals of their day were the thinkers of enlightenment. Omemu further claimed that logical thought was the most valid mode of thinking and could lead to human development. The ability to reason was seen by him as the most powerful and desirable human capability. On the surface, the Thirty Years' War was the most obvious cause of the Enlightenment. Omemu said that this terribly devastating war, which lasted from 1618 to 1648, forced German authors to condemn the concepts of nationalism and warfare with harsh criticism. According to the United Nations Development Programme (2013), even political stability can be attained as a result of public enlightenment because any successful public awareness through non-formal education programs would enable all individuals to obtain simple access to one another.

Numerous related empirical studies have been examined. Some of these researches are highlighted in this review.

In a 2019 study, Umar and Abubakar looked at how well non-formal education programs in Katsina State helped out-of-school adolescents build their abilities. The study discovered that the participants' development of skills and

knowledge was significantly impacted by non-formal education programs.

Another study by Bako and Abubakar (2017) ^[4] looked at the impact of public awareness campaigns on your ability to pick up new skills as people of Katsina State. The study found that community outreach programs were important in increasing youth awareness of the availability of non-formal education programs and the benefits of skill development.

In addition, a research by Aliyu and Abdullahi (2019) ^[2] investigated the difficulties and opportunities faced by non-formal education programs in Katsina State. Numerous issues were raised by the study, including inadequate money, a lack of political will, and inadequate infrastructure. The survey did, however, also highlight the potential of non-formal education programs in bridging the skills gap among youths in the state.

Jibril and Bala's (2018) ^[11] study looked at the effect of non-formal education programs on youth poverty reduction in Katsina State. The study discovered that participation in non-formal education programs significantly impacted the ability of participants to create income and become self-sufficient.

Due to its primary objective on the combination of non-formal education programs and public enlightenment as tools for effective skills acquisition by youth in Katsina State, the study titled "Non-Formal Education Programmes and Public Enlightenment; Tools for Effective Skills Acquisition by Youth in Katsina State" stands out among other related literature. The effectiveness of non-formal education programs in encouraging youth skill acquisition has been the subject matter of numerous studies. Therefore this study takes a step further by examining how the inclusion of public awareness can improve the efficacy of these programs. In Katsina State, where there is a high prevalence of youth unemployment and a need for creative methods of skill development, this is particularly important. Another aspect that distinguishes the study from other literatures is its focus on the particular difficulties that youths in Katsina State face. In order to create effective non-formal education programs and public awareness that are suited to the needs of the youth population, the researchers therefore take into account the socioeconomic and cultural background of Katsina State. This study also is a valuable addition to the body of knowledge on youth education and development because it focuses on the use of non-formal education programs and public awareness as tools for youth in Katsina State to acquire skills effectively.

Methodology

Descriptive survey method was used in this research. According to Boru (2018) a descriptive survey research design is a study process in which a small number of people or products from a large population are researched by collecting and analyzing data from a sample. Shona, (2020) opined that a descriptive survey research design means a

study of group of people or items by collecting and evaluating data from a few people or items that are considered representative of the entire group. The population of this study comprises beneficiaries of these skills/trades such as Beauty Salon, Tailoring, Cell Phone Repairs, and Computer Repairs of January to December, 2022. The population therefore consists of the total number of one hundred and eighty (180) beneficiaries of the three vocational centers in three senatorial zones, Katsina State. Forty one (41) beneficiaries from each vocational center were used as sample size. Sample size was determined by using Krejci and Morgan's distribution table (1970) where against the total number of the study population in the table was one hundred twenty three (123). One hundred twenty three (123) was distributed to four skills/trades of each of the three vocational centres in three senatorial zones. Simple technique was adopted where Forty one (41) folded pieces of paper containing "Yes" and others "No" were kept in a container at vocational centre. The ones that picked "Yes" were issued with the questionnaire to respond to the items. A self-developed questionnaire titled Youth Participation in Skills Acquisition Programmes Questionnaire (YPISAPQ) was used for data collection. The instrument contained two sections – A and B. Section A dealt with personal data of the respondents, while Section B contained items raised by the research questions. Instrument's Validity was determined by the experts from the Department of Education, Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic. Instrument's reliability was also established using Cronbach Alpha where 0.70 was obtained. Having intent to use the coefficient of 0.70, the researchers further re-established the reliability of the coefficient using the sample beneficiaries that were not captured in the study to trial-test the coefficient for the research instrument to further support the chosen coefficient which permitted the use of the instrument for this study. The researchers also employed and trained the two research assistants among the beneficiaries of each skill/trade from the three vocational centers who administered and retrieved the instrument together with the researchers. Tabulation method was used for data analysis through mean point of Likert Scale of four-points rating, such as Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2 and Strongly Disagree 1. All information from respondents were treated through comparison of calculated mean point with the weighted mean point on the significant role that Non-Formal Education and Public Enlightenment Programmes played in improving the status of youth in Katsina State. The weighted mean point was calculated as $(4+3+2+1=10) \div 4= 2.5$. The decision criteria was; if the calculated mean point is less than weighted mean point, the result is Negative and, if the calculated mean point is greater than or equal to the weighted mean point the result is positive.

Data presentation and analysis

Table 1: Demographic information

Item	Category	Number	Percentage
Age	15 – 20 years	36	29.3
	21 – 25 years	38	30.9
	26 – 30 years	33	26.8
	31 – 35 years	16	13.0
Gender	Male	70	56.10
	Female	53	43.1

Educational Status	Primary	37	30.1
	Secondary	48	39.0
	Tertiary	20	16.3
	Qur'anic	18	14.6
Marital Status	Single	76	61.8
	Married	29	23.6
	Divorced	17	13.8
	Widowed	01	0.8
Skill Learning	Beauty Salon	37	30.08
	Handset Repairs	38	30.9
	Tailoring	28	22.8
	Computer Repairs	20	16.3

Source: Questionnaire Responses

Research Question 1: Do youths in Katsina state actively engage in non-formal educational programs for skill acquisition?

Table 2: Youths in Katsina State actively engage in non-formal educational programs for skill acquisition.

Items	Response				Total frequency	No of respondents	Cal. Mean	Remark
	SA	A	SD	D				
Youths are aware that in Katsina State government and non-governmental organizations offer non-formal educational programs for developing skills.	111 444	6 18	4 8	2 2	472	123	3.8	SA
In Katsina State, youth took engaged in non-formal educational programs for skill development.	116 464	5 15	2 4	0 0	483	123	3.9	SA
Due to the involvement of local community leaders, there has been an increase in youth participation in skill development programs in Katsina State.	106 318	9 27	5 10	3 3	358	123	2.9	SA
The stakeholders in Katsina State encouraged youth to take part in non-formal educational programs.	115 460	3 9	3 6	2 2	477	123	3.9	SA
In Katsina State, youths who were interested in non-formal educational programs for skill acquisition found difficulties or barriers.	113 452	7 21	2 4	1 1	478	123	3.9	SA

Source: Questionnaire Responses

Research Question 2: How frequently is public awareness efforts used to encourage youths in Katsina state to participate in non-formal education programs for skill acquisition?

Table 3: the frequent levels of public awareness efforts used to encourage youths in Katsina state to participate in non-formal education programs for skill acquisition.

Items	Response				Total frequency	No of respondents	Cal. mean	Remark
	SA	A	SD	D				
Youths in Katsina State are aware of any public enlightenment campaigns or activities that promote youth skill development programs.	99 396	13 39	8 16	3 3	454	123	3.7	SA
Youths frequently encounter public enlightenment campaigns about youth skill development programs in Katsina State.	100 400	10 30	7 14	6 6	450	123	3.7	SA
Youth in Katsina State believe that public awareness campaigns have a significant role in encouraging youth to participate in skill-building activities.	119 476	2 6	1 2	1 1	485	123	3.9	SA
As a result of the public awareness efforts in Katsina State, you personally took part in any skill-acquisition programs.	120 480	2 6	1 2	0 0	488	123	3.10	SA
The impact of the public awareness campaigns for skill acquisition programs in Katsina State greatly benefited youths.	122 488	1 3	0 0	0 0	491	123	3.10	SA

Source: Questionnaire Responses

Research Question 3: What are the consequences if youths in Katsina state not participating in skill acquisition programs

Table 4: The consequences may occur if youths in Katsina state not participating in non-formal education programs for skill acquisition.

Items	Response				Total Frequency	No of respodents	Cal. Mean	Remark
	SA	A	SD	D				
120 480 Youths in Katsina State who don't participate in non-formal education programs for skill development may have less job opportunities.	3 9	0 0	0 0	0 0	489	123	3.10	SA
The absence of youth in Katsina State from non-formal education programs for skill acquisition may impede regional economic development.	118 472	4 12	1 2	0 0	486	123	3.10	SA
The lack of engagement by youths in Katsina State in non-formal education programs for skill development may be a factor in the rise in poverty.	101 404	18 54	1 2	3 3	463	123	3.8	SA
Youth in Katsina State who do not participate in non-formal education programs for skill development may lack the particular skills required for different businesses and sectors.	112 448	8 24	1 2	2 2	476	123	3.9	SA
Youths in Katsina State may be more likely to engage in social vices or criminal activity if they don't participate in non-formal education programs for skill acquisition.	100 400	20 60	2 4	1 1	465	123	3.8	SA

Source: Questionnaire Responses

Research findings

According to the findings of the data analysis in table 2, all respondents, they actively participate in non-formal educational programs to develop their skills. More so, the respondents stated that non-formal education had given them useful skills and knowledge. Therefore, the respondents concurred that non-formal educational programs have benefited their career and personal growth. The range of non-formal educational programs offered in Katsina State was praised by every respondent. However, the respondents agreed that non-formal education has enhanced their employment prospects and therefore stated that they would advise youths that are looking for opportunity to learn new skills to enroll in any non-formal educational programs.

The results of the data analysis in Table 3, the respondents were strongly agreed and expressed unanimously regarding the efficiency of public awareness campaigns in encouraging youths to participate in non-formal education programs for skill acquisition. The statements in the questionnaire covered a range of issues related to public awareness campaigns, including their frequency, potency, and influence on encouraging young people to enroll in non-formal education programs. The respondents' agreement with these assertions implies that they believe public awareness campaigns have been successful in enticing youth participation in skill-building activities. Additionally, the results imply that the respondents recognized the value of non-formal education for developing skills and the function of public awareness campaigns in raising awareness and inspiring young people to engage. This agreement on viewpoints emphasizes the success of public awareness efforts in Katsina state, as well as its capacity to win support and boost young people's participation in non-formal education programs.

The analysis of the questionnaire results in table 4 showed that all of the respondents agreed on the negative effects of not participating in non-formal education programs for skill development.

The fact that all of the respondents were in agreement on the negative effects of participating in non-formal education

programs highlights how urgently Katsina State has to address this problem. The results show that youths who don't take part in these programs have a difficult time learning useful skills, getting a job, and being financially independent. Youths' general development is also hampered by the lack of opportunities for personal growth and the scarcity of social connections. The findings highlight the significance of putting into place and advocating for non-formal education programmes that give youth in Katsina State access to useful knowledge, mentorship, and networking opportunities to empower youths in Katsina State.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it concluded that youths in Katsina State actively engage in non-formal educational programs for skill acquisition. The unanimous agreement among the respondents regarding their participation and positive experiences highlights the importance of non-formal education in facilitating the development of skills among the youth population. Also, the research findings indicate unanimous agreement among the respondents regarding the effectiveness of public awareness efforts in encouraging youth participation in non-formal education programs for skill acquisition in Katsina state. Therefore public awareness campaigns play a vital role in creating awareness, generating interest, and motivating young individuals to engage in skill acquisition through non-formal education programs.

The research also shed light on the consequences of non-participation in non-formal education programs for skill acquisition among youths in Katsina State. The unanimous agreement among the respondents indicates the need for immediate attention and investment in non-formal education initiatives. Policymakers, educational institutions, and stakeholders must collaborate to design and implement effective programs that equip youths with practical skills, enhance their employability. Therefore this research can serve as a basis for further policy development and interventions to enhance and expand non-formal educational opportunities for skill acquisition in Katsina State. The

research has emphasized the importance of continued investment in public awareness initiatives to further enhance youth participation in non-formal education and promote skill development in Katsina state.

Recommendations

The following recommendations if carefully applied by both governmental and non-governmental organizations will go a long way towards better life improvement of Youth in Katsina State.

1. Government of Katsina State and other stakeholders should motivate the youth to enroll in skills acquisition programmes in order to continue to keep up the improved of their social status.
2. Government of Katsina State should adequately support any form of public enlightenment on youth skills acquisition so that to ensure youth empowerment throughout the State.
3. Increase the number of non-formal education centers and facilities in Katsina State, especially in underserved areas, to ensure easy access for all youths. Vocational centres in the State should always strive to put into the skills acquisition in order, so that youth to run away from poverty and unemployment which can in turn lead them to the social vices.

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