



Received: 15-03-2022

Accepted: 25-04-2022

## International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

### Influence of adult education programmes on poverty alleviation strategies in Oyigbo local government area of Rivers State

**Kobani Doreen**

Department of Adult Education and Community Development, Faculty of Education, Rivers State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Corresponding Author: **Kobani Doreen**

#### Abstract

This study examined the Influence of Adult Education Programmes on Poverty Alleviation Strategies in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprises the four thousand five hundred and thirty-five (4,535) registered small scale industries in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. The random sampling technique is applied to realize a sample size of 325. The instrument used for data collection is a self-construct questionnaire. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire is 0.72. Three research questions were posed and three hypotheses were also formulated for the study. The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed with arithmetic mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were tested with z-test at 0.5 level of

significance. A careful analysis of the data and testing of the hypotheses revealed a significant relationship between adult education programmes and poverty alleviation strategies in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. To this end, the Researcher recommended amongst others that: the government of Rivers state should endeavour to set up poverty alleviation programmes to further support prospective and practicing Entrepreneurs in the State; Entrepreneurship education should be included in the curriculum of both secondary and tertiary education levels in order to promote self-reliance among the people of Oyigbo Local Government Area in particular and Rivers State in general which is one of the basic principles of Community development.

**Keywords:** Adult Education, Adult Education Programmes, Community Development, Poverty alleviation, Poverty Alleviation Strategies

#### Introduction

Poverty is one of the major problems facing the whole world today. Poverty according to World Bank (2010) is a complex human phenomenon associated with unacceptably low standards of living which has multiple dimensions, manifestations and causes. With regards to poverty, Nigeria is a country of paradoxes; it is a country abundantly blessed with natural and human resources, but the potentials remain largely untapped and even mismanaged (Soludo, 2006) <sup>[28]</sup>. With a population estimated at about 180 million, Nigeria is the largest country in West Africa and one-sixth of the black population in the world. It is 8<sup>th</sup> largest oil producer and has 6<sup>th</sup> largest deposit of natural gas in the world. The growth in per capita income in the 1990s was zero while the incidence of poverty in 1999 was 70 percent (Soludo, 2006) <sup>[27]</sup>. In the same vein, Usman (2007) <sup>[29]</sup> notes that Nigeria in the 1990s, witnessed an average growth rate of 2.8 per cent of GDP, with population growth rate of 2.83 per cent. It implies that, on per capita basis, growth was zero or even negative, with consequent skyrocketing in unemployment and the incidence of poverty increased to about 70 per cent. As a result of different economic policies and reforms, people have come to realize that the cause of poverty is the seed of discrimination (Oguntoye, 2009) <sup>[20]</sup>. A family, according to Atemie, (2010) <sup>[7]</sup> is said to be poor if it cannot buy their basic needs of life, for example, food, clothing, shelter and health etc (absolute terms). In other words, some families are poor in comparison with the others (relative terms). Poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, reflecting not only material deprivation but lack of security, peace, access to basic necessities including health, education, sanitation, and so on (Ezirim, 2011) <sup>[10]</sup>. In spite of the fragmentary and limited amount of information in Nigeria about the incidence of poverty among the citizens, the fact remains that the arising trend appears credible. Per capital GDP statistics in the period 1995-2015, for instance, portray a situation of abject poverty for most Nigerians. To really demonstrate that poverty is a worldwide phenomenon and must be alleviated if not totally eradicated, the United Nations declared every

17<sup>th</sup> of October as 'world poverty day' which started in 1993 through the efforts of an American poor-John Whiskey. The day is set aside by United Nations to reflect on the issues of poverty and proffer lasting solution to the deadly scourge. Nigeria is not left behind in this annual celebration.

In Nigeria, poverty is seen to be deep and severe. Depth of poverty can be interpreted to mean the number of people living below poverty line. Severities refer to the spread of the poor around that level of the average poor. Poverty gap measures the development of poverty as well as its incidence (Anele, 2015) <sup>[6]</sup>. According to the World Development indicators, the poverty gap in Nigeria in 1997 was 34.9% the population of people living in poverty in 1980 was 28.1% which later rose to 46.3% in 1985, but dropped to 42.7% in 1992 before rising to 65.6% and 70.9% in 1999. However, the population of people living in poverty declined to 54.4% in 2004. This translated to 17.7% and 34.7million poor people in 1980 and 1985 respectively. Dr. Magnus Kpakol, the NAPEP Boss, believed that as at 2009 the poverty rate had dropped to 50%. (The Guardian Newspaper, 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2015). Poverty in Nigeria is caused by social, economic, political, cultural and environmental factors. According to Adekoya (2011) <sup>[1]</sup> poor access to employment opportunities, inadequate physical assets such as land and human capital, minimal access by the poor to credit, poor access to the means of supporting rural development, poor access to markets where the poor can sell goods and services, low endowment of human capital, destruction of natural resources leading to environmental degradation and so on are all causes of poverty.

Poverty levels are often measured using economic dimensions based on income and consumption. Amartya Sen's capability deprivation approach for poverty measurement, on the other hand, defines poverty as not merely a matter of actual income but an inability to acquire certain minimum capabilities. Contemplating this dissimilarity between individuals' incomes and their disabilities is significant since the conversion of actual incomes into actual capabilities differs with social settings and individual beliefs. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also emphasises the capabilities' approach for poverty measurement as propounded by Amartya Sen. "Ending poverty in all its forms everywhere" is the first of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations with a pledge that no one will be left behind. Development projects and poverty alleviation programmes all over the world are predominantly aimed at reducing poverty of the poor and vulnerable communities through various participatory and community-demand-driven approaches. Economic growth is one of the principal instruments for poverty alleviation and for pulling the poor out of poverty through productive employment. Studies from Africa, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, and Indonesia show that rapid economic growth lifted a significant number of poor people out of financial poverty between 1970 and 2000. According to Bhagwati and Panagariya, in Singh and Chudsama (2020) <sup>[26]</sup> economic growth generates revenues required for expanding poverty alleviation programmes while enabling Governments to spend on the basic necessities of the poor including healthcare, education, and housing.

### Poverty alleviation

Various countries world over has been awakened to the task

of poverty alleviation. Poverty alleviation according to Kpakol (2009) <sup>[18]</sup> is a set of both economic and humanitarian measures that are intended to permanently lift people out of poverty. According to him, Poverty alleviation also involves improving the living conditions of people who are already poor. In this generation, more than ever before, the strategies adopted for poverty alleviation vary from country to country. Most countries advocate full scale public enlightenment on the menace of poverty. This is followed by involving the poor themselves in identifying what should be done for them. According to Akanji (2010) <sup>[2, 3]</sup>, for any poverty alleviation initiative to last, emphasis should be placed on empowering the poor to get out of poverty not from the angle of charity but from the angle of sound economic productive ventures. Poverty reduction concerns should in modern times, set target as vision for driving persons and resources in the proper direction, possible areas on which emphasis should be placed as given by Ohale (2008) <sup>[21]</sup> include improved access to productive assets, technological development and replication information on inputs and output markets and specifically targeted women programmes etc. From the analysis above, poverty alleviation remains the biggest challenge of every successful government all over the world. It is the greatest challenge of the developing societies. Over the years, one of the most powerful tools of economic transformation that have proved most effective in dealing with poverty in developing economies is adult education (Baridam, 2011) <sup>[18]</sup>.

Various poverty alleviation Programmes have been put in place by the Government, some of them include: the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) which was a main organ for employment. The objectives of NDE included: to design and implement programmes to combat mass unemployment and articulate policies aimed at developing work programmes with labour intensive potentials. Given that poverty manifests itself in the form of unemployment, the schemes of NDE could be said to have poverty alleviation as its focus. For instance, the Directorate has four main programmes that not only create jobs but also enhance the productivity and income earning potentials of youths and other Beneficiaries. It includes: the Vocational Skill Development (VSD), the Special Public Works (SPW), the Small-Scale Enterprises (SSE) and the Agricultural Employment Programmes (AEP). NDE made remarkable progress in its programmes. The Better Life Programmes (BLP) which was set up to enhance the quality of life of rural women, among other objectives. Poverty in Nigeria is a rural phenomenon and the rural women are worst hit by this dreadful phenomenon. This is due to lack of basic skills and education necessary for gainful employment and even access to land (Kobani, 2021) <sup>[16]</sup>. The BLP, therefore, tried to harness the potentials of rural women and thereby impacted positively on their economic activities and income. The BLP improved the quality of life of many women through the distribution of various inputs, granting of easy credits, and establishment of various educational /enlightenment programmes. The BLP was later replaced by the Family Support Programmes (FSP). The People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN) which was set up to encourage savings and provide credit facilities for the underprivileged in both urban and rural areas. The bank was to give out loans to petty traders, food sellers, tailors, weavers, electricians, and so on which aimed at empowering the poor to pull out of poverty. Community banks were also established to provide

banking facilities for rural dwellers as well as to support micro-enterprises in urban areas (Oladeji and Abiola, 1998)<sup>[22]</sup>. These two banking schemes were established in recognition of the indispensable role of finance in poverty alleviation. Although the two banking schemes had some success, many of their goals were never realized. The schemes were bedeviled with many adverse factors including corruption and gross mismanagement. CB's are now called micro-finance banks after the recapitalization exercise in 2005. The Family Support Programmes (FSP) came into being in 1994 during the Late General Sani Abacha's regime as a replacement of BLP through the efforts and commitment of the wife of the Former Head of States, Mrs Maryam Abacha. The Programme strived at improving the social and economic standard of the Nigerian family and the eradication/reduction of destabilizing factors such as poverty, infant mortality, unemployment and rural-urban drift. It also focused attention on health care delivery, child welfare, youth development and improved nutritional status to families in the rural areas. Family economic advancement Programme (FEAP); the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) was established to provide credit facilities to cooperative societies to support the establishment of cottage industries in both rural and urban areas. The Programme was also designed to create employment opportunities at ward levels, encourage the design and manufacture of appropriate plants, machinery and equipments, and provide opportunities for the training of ward-based business operators (Oladeji and Abiola, 1998)<sup>[22]</sup>. In a nutshell, both FSP and FEAP were designed and set up to improve the quality of life of rural dwellers.

### Adult education

Adult education, distinct from child education, is a practice in which adults engage in systematic and sustained self-educating activities in order to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, or values. It can mean any form of learning adults engage in beyond traditional schooling, encompassing basic literacy to personal fulfillment as a lifelong learner. In particular, adult education reflects a specific philosophy about learning and teaching based on the assumption that adults can and want to learn, that they are able and willing to take responsibility for the learning, and that the learning itself should respond to their needs (Kobani and Alozie, 2016)<sup>[13]</sup>. According to Fasokun in Kobani and Alozie (2016)<sup>[13]</sup> Adult education is concerned not only with preparing people for life, but also helping adults to live a more successful and fulfilled life. A successful and fulfilled life is one whereby a member of society is found to be worthy and acceptable because such adult contributes meaningfully to the development and well-being of the society.

Driven by what one needs or wants to learn, the available opportunities, and the manner in which one learns, adult learning is affected by demographics, globalization and technology. The learning happens in many ways and in many contexts just as all adults' lives differ. Adult learning can be in any of the three contexts, i.e., adult formal – structured learning that typically takes place in an education or training institution, usually with a set curriculum and carries credentials; adult non-formal – learning that is organized by educational institutions but non credential. Non-formal learning opportunities may be provided in the workplace and through the activities of civil society

organizations and groups and adult informal education – learning that goes on all the time, resulting from daily life activities related to work, family, community or leisure, for instance, community baking class, and so on.

According to Kobani (2018)<sup>[14, 15]</sup> educating adults differs from educating children in several ways because adults have accumulated knowledge and work experience which can add to the learning experience. Adult education is voluntary therefore the Participants are generally autonomous and self-motivated. The practice of adult education is referred to as Andragogy to distinguish it from the traditional school-based education for children, Pedagogy. Unlike children, adults are seen as more self-directed rather than relying on others for help. Adults are mature and therefore have knowledge and have gained life experiences which provide them a foundation of learning. An adult's readiness to learn is linked to their need to have the information. Their orientation to learn is problem-centered rather than subject-centered. Their motivation to learn is internal. Adults frequently apply their knowledge in a practical fashion to learn effectively. They must have a reasonable expectation that the knowledge they gain will help them further their goals (Amirize and Kobani, 2020)<sup>[5]</sup>. For example, during the 1990s, many adults, including mostly office workers, enrolled in computer training courses. These courses would teach basic use of the operating system or specific application software. Because the abstractions governing the user's interactions with a PC were so new, many people who had been working white-collar jobs for ten years or more eventually took such training courses, either at their own whim (to gain computer skills and thus earn higher pay) or at the behest of their managers. The purpose of adult education in the form of College or University is distinct. In these institutions, the aim is typically related to personal growth and development as well as occupation and career preparedness. Another goal might be to not only sustain the democratic society, but to even challenge and improve its social structures. Adult education can have many benefits ranging from better health, economic growth and personal well-being to greater social inclusion and citizen participation. It can also support the function of democratic systems and provide greater opportunities for finding new or better employment. Adult education has been shown to have a positive impact on the economy. Adult education provides opportunities for personal growth, goal fulfillment and socialization (Kobani and Alozie, 2019)<sup>[12]</sup>. Chris McAllister's research of semi-structured interviews with older adult learners shows a motivation to communicate with people and to get out of the house to keep mentally active. Researchers have documented the social aspects of older adult education.

Friendship was described as important aspects of adult learning and the classroom was seen as an important part of their social network. The development of social networks and support was found to be a key motivation of adult learners. As editor of a book entitled *Adult Education and Health*, Leona English, claims that including health education as part of adult education makes for a healthier community. Some experts claim that adult education has a long-term impact on the economy and that there is a correlation between innovation and learning at the workplace. In the context of this study, adult education programmes targeting economic growth and by way alleviate poverty include the following:

### Adult basic literacy education

This is organized by Government, religious bodies or individual proprietors of private schools to eradicate illiteracy and to assist the disadvantaged groups to acquire skills to make them employable and to help them perform their social roles effectively. Adult basic education is rudimentary or fundamental for it enables its recipient to understand higher, concepts in education. It involves the skills of reading, writing and computing figures (i.e., numeracy). A person is literate when he has acquired the essential knowledge and skills which enable him to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his group or community. The skills may vary from almost none to the equivalent of senior secondary school or university training depending on the extent to which reading, writing and computation of numbers can play a part in community life.

### Functional literacy

Functional literacy programmes are a combination of literacy education and socio-economic activities. A functional programme is usually selective and is primarily for a group of people who have the same or identical socio-economic activity. It may be organized for a group of community leaders, a group of rice-growers, cocoa farmers, market women, yam farmers, panel beaters, furniture makers, etc. What is paramount is that the select group must have the same social or economic activity. Since the group has a common occupation or trade, it becomes possible to integrate terminologies or registers of the trade or occupation into the component of the programme. According to Imhabekhai (2009) in Kobani and Alozie (2016)<sup>[13]</sup> the desire and ability to read, write and materials in the vocation will motivate the learners for participation. In fact, the utility of the skills brings about and progress in the vocation or occupation and fosters permanent literacy. Another aspect of functional literacy education is socio-cultural functional literacy which deals with literacy in the context of socio-cultural matters, as family-life, nutrition, sanitation, marriage, religion, and civics. Here literacy skill is geared towards social matters. However, the two aspects of functional literacy education have to be integrated (literacy, vocational cultural and social skills) in order to sustain the interest of the participants fully.

### Extension education

Institutions have primary objectives for which they are established. For instance, universities are primarily set up for teaching and research programmes and to provide community services to the people through dissemination of new findings from research. Ministries of Health and Agriculture also have their primary functions. While the Ministry of Health is expected to cater for the health needs of the populace through the provision of hospitals and medical centres, the Ministry of Agriculture formulates agricultural development policies that would help in the improvement of agricultural development of the state or country. However, where the universities provide extra-mural programmes for dropouts or continuing education opportunities for those who have successfully completed some levels of formal education, they are involved in extension education. In like manner, when the Ministries of Health and Agriculture provide services outside their primary function of extending their services from the

headquarters to the grassroots, they are involved in extension education. According to Akinpelu (1975:230) in Kobani and Alozie (2016)<sup>[13]</sup>.

Extension Education is the reaching out programme of some central institution or agency whether it be a government department of agriculture, a library, a - museum or university. It tends to be based on social needs to be directed towards community and involves active participation of the public.

In essence, there are varieties of extension education that are non-formal in outlook. In sum, we wish to state that the available would be inadequate to discuss all programmes that come under adult and non-formal education. Some of those not discussed include civic education, women education, prison education, health and agricultural extension education retirement and pre-retirement education, population education, nomadic education, cooperative education, education gerontology, death education environmental education, peace education, vocational education, leisure education and a host of others.

### Poverty alleviation strategies

Poverty alleviation strategies in the context of this work may be categorised into four types including: Community Organisations Based Micro-financing, Capability and Social Security, Market-based, and Good Governance (Singh and Chudasama, 2020)<sup>[26]</sup>.

Kobani (2021)<sup>[16]</sup> also noted that the role and importance of women education in not just economic growth and poverty alleviation but lies more in setting standards and foundation in individuals which go beyond physical development. It is obvious that development does not consist in physical structures and facilities alone, but stretches into the ennoblement of human character and integrity (Amirize, 1998)<sup>[4]</sup>. Thus, being found worthy in learning is not sufficient for real education, but being found worthy in learning and character as well. It is a noteworthy fact that as mothers and home builders, women are the first teachers that children have. In a similar way, a critical factor in community development is the nobility of character of the individuals who make up the community. Therefore, the connection between women education and community development lies in the inner sustaining impetus which women can provide by their special nature and which serve as vital supplement to physical developments. No form of development is sustainable without the human character component which is best provided by women by virtue of their special nature and roles.

Micro-finance, aimed at lifting the poor out of poverty, is a predominant poverty alleviation strategy. Having spread rapidly and widely over the last few decades, it is currently operational across several developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Many researchers and policy-makers believe that access to micro-finance in developing countries empowers the poor (especially women) while supporting income-generating activities, encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit, and reducing vulnerability. There are fewer studies, however, that show conclusive and definite evidence regarding improvements in health, nutrition, and education attributable to micro-finance. For micro-finance to be more effective, services like skill development training, technological support, and strategies related to better education, health and sanitation, including livelihood enhancement measures need to be included. Economic

growth and micro-finance for the poor might throw some light on the financial aspects of poverty, yet they do not reflect its cultural, social, and psychological dimensions. Although economic growth is vital for enhancing the living conditions of the poor, it does not necessarily help the poor exclusively tilting in favour of the non-poor and privileged sections of society.

Amartya Sen cites social exclusion and capability deprivation as reasons for poverty. His capabilities' approach is intended to enhance people's well-being and freedom of choices. According to Sen, development should focus on maximising the individual's ability to ensure more freedom of choices. The capabilities approach provides a framework for the evaluation and assessment of several aspects of the individual's well-being and social arrangements. It highlights the difference between means and ends as well as between substantive freedoms and outcomes. An example being the difference between fasting and starving. Improving capabilities of the poor is critical for improving their living conditions. Improving individuals' capabilities also helps in the pooling of resources while allowing the poor to engage in activities that benefit them economically. Social inclusion of vulnerable communities through the removal of social barriers is as significant as financial inclusion in poverty reduction strategies. Social security is a set of public actions designed to reduce levels of vulnerability, risk, and deprivation. It is an important instrument for addressing the issues of inequality and vulnerability. It also induces gender parity owing to the equal sovereignty enjoyed by both men and women in the context of economic, social, and political activities. The World Development Report 1990 endorsed a poverty alleviation strategy that combines enhanced economic growth with provisions of essential social services directed towards the poor while creating financial and social safety nets. Numerous social safety net programmes and public spending on social protection, including social insurance schemes and social assistance payments, continue to act as tools of poverty alleviation in many of the developing countries across the world. These social safety nets and protection programmes show positive impacts on the reduction of poverty, extent, vulnerability, and on a wide range of social inequalities in developing countries. The same major concern dogging these programmes, however, is their long-term sustainability.

Agriculture and allied farm activities have been the focus of poverty alleviation strategies in rural areas. Lately, though, much of the focus has shifted to livelihood diversification on the part of researchers and policy-makers. Promoting non-farm livelihoods, along with farm activities, can offer pathways for economic growth and poverty alleviation in developing countries the world over. During the early 2000s, the development of comprehensive value chains and market systems emerged as viable alternatives for poverty alleviation in developing countries. Multi-sectoral micro-enterprises may be deployed for enhancing productivity and profitability through value chains and market systems, they being important for income generation of the rural poor while playing a vital role in inclusive poverty eradication in developing countries.

Good governance relevant to poverty alleviation has gained top priority in development agendas over the past few decades. Being potentially weak in the political and administrative areas of governance, developing countries

have to deal with enormous challenges related to social services and security. In order to receive financial aid from multinational donor agencies, a good governance approach towards poverty reduction has become a prerequisite for developing countries. This calls for strengthening a participatory, transparent, and accountable form of governance if poverty has to be reduced while improving the lives of the poor and vulnerable. Despite the importance of this subject, very few studies have explored the direct relationship between good governance and poverty alleviation. Besides, evidence is available, both in India and other developing countries, of information and communication technology (ICT) contributing to poverty alleviation programmes. Capturing, storing, processing, and transmitting various types of information with the help of ICT empowers the rural poor by increasing access to micro-finance, expanding the use of basic and advance government services, enabling the development of additional livelihood assets, and facilitating pro-poor market development. Kobani (2022) <sup>[17]</sup> is of the opinion that when a leader assumes the mantle of leadership it does not mean that he is the most intelligent. Therefore, the ideal leader should be ready to accept constructive criticism to improve his leadership skills. Another character a leader should possess is Fear of God. Really as espoused by Nwakaire in by virtue of a leader saying, "So help me God," in the consummation of his oath of Office he has acknowledged his accountability to the universal Sovereign. In his subsidiary, infinitesimal role as a leader, he must render an account to the Universal Sovereign who allowed him to function in his area of operation. Modesty and humility arising from fear of God are characteristics a leader must possess. The Almighty has exemplified humility by condescending to listen to us as individuals. And that is why we confidently pray with the assurance of being heard. A humble leader is willing to listen to the cries of the poor. Is he a leader only of the rich? He should recognize his limitations as a human. However, this study adopts Micro-finance scheme, agricultural activities and Good Governance as poverty alleviate strategies in order to curb the scourge of poverty in Oyiabo.

### Community development

Economic Commission for Africa, far back in 1972, defined the meaning of rural and community development as "the outcome of a series of quantitative and qualitative changes occurring among rural population." It is a process "by which a set of technical, social, cultural and institutional measures are implemented with and for the inhabitants of rural areas, with the aim of improving the socio-economic conditions of the rural population" (ECA) in Amirize and Kobani (2020) <sup>[5]</sup>.

There is a need to point out the fact that community development is a wide expression of which rural development is a component. This makes it necessary to state the fact that there are wide variations in human environmental settings as well as the nature and condition of the population settling or living in such environments. For example, there are urban, semi-urban and rural settlements whose inhabitants and conditions differ widely. Community development constitutes deliberate efforts to raise the level of awareness and living conditions of the people living in various environments. Although emphasis tends to focus more on the poor, ignorant and less-privileged masses whose physical environment, socio-economic, political and

living conditions are often pathetic, community development is a process with a wider focus.

Community development has its ancestry as a union of community organization and economic development, rural sociology, adult education and the extension movement, it is relatively new as a discipline Anyanwu in Kobani and Alozie (2019) <sup>[12]</sup> and was first mentioned internationally at the 1948 Cambridge Summer Conference. There it was agreed that the compound word 'community development' should be used in place of 'mass education' and defined as:

A movement designed to promote better living with the active participation and if possible, on the initiative of the community but if this initiative is not forth coming spontaneously, by the use of techniques for arousing and stimulating it in order to ensure its active and enthusiastic response to the movement.

Notable among the organizations is The United Nations Organization (UNO) who in 1963 gave a definition that today enjoys wider acceptability. It defined community development as:

A process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities, to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of community, to integrate those communities into the life of the nation and to enable them contribute fully to national progress.

Community development is also defined as:

An educational method in which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities and integrate them into the life of the nation and enable them contribute fully to national progress (Onyeozu in Kobani and Alozie, 2019) <sup>[12]</sup>.

Community development programmes usually include improving physical living conditions of people, occupational engagements, but the greatest emphasis is directed towards human capital development. Building roads, houses, bridges, etc., but without a conscious effort to build and improve the mindset and perception of the people, both high and low, would not be an ideal development programme. Generally, programmes would include; agriculture, health-care, education, industries, communication network and infrastructure facilities, yet development blueprints cannot afford to be one-sided. Because of cost implication, and ideal development programme is meant to be comprehensive but with emphasis on the weakest and most vulnerable section of the population. Therefore, there are usually moral, ethical and humane values in community development designs, apart from economic, political and other considerations, to ensure that other competing sectors are not ignored or undermined.

### Statement of the problem

It is common knowledge that poverty is one of the major problems facing the whole world today. It is a complex human phenomenon associated with unacceptably low standard of living with multiple dimensions, manifestations and causes. Various countries world over has been awakened to the task of poverty alleviation. Poverty alleviation which is a set of both economic and humanitarian measures that are intended to permanently lift people out of poverty. Poverty alleviation also involves improving the living conditions of people who are already poor. In this generation more than ever before, the strategies adopted for poverty alleviation vary from country to country. Most

countries advocate adult education by way of full-scale public enlightenment programmes on the menace of poverty. This is followed by involving the poor themselves in identifying what should be done for them, for any poverty alleviation initiative to last, emphasis should be placed on empowering the poor to get out of poverty not from the angle of charity but from the angle of self-help and self-reliance through sound economic productive ventures. Over the years, one of the most powerful tools of economic transformation that have proved most effective in dealing with poverty in developing economies is adult education, adult education, distinct from child education, is a practice in which adults engage in systematic and sustained self-educating activities in order to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, or values geared towards alleviating poverty.

The Problem is that various poverty alleviation strategies have been put in place by the government in the past and even in the present, some of them include: the national directorate of employment (NDE), The Better Life Programmes (BLP) which was set up to enhance the quality of life of rural women, amongst other objectives, the Family Support Programs (FSP) the People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN) which was set up to encourage savings and provide credit facilities for the underprivileged in both urban and rural areas amongst others. Several Community Based Initiatives have been set up to address most pressing needs of the people and improve living conditions with or without the intervention of Governmental and Non-Governmental Bodies in the Community through various poverty alleviation programmes. However, it has been observed that despite these laudable programmes, poverty still ravages through Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers state. Furthermore, adult education has not been fully embraced by the general populace. Could this be attributed to the prevailing poverty and illiteracy levels that people prefer to work and earn money to take care of their livelihoods rather than engaging their time in adult education programmes which they consider time-wasting? These reasons amongst others could be responsible for the bleak realization of the objectives of adult education programmes in the area. Moreso, one other major concern dogging these programmes is the possibility of their long-term sustainability.

These poverty alleviation strategies will focus on Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.

### Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of adult education programmes on poverty alleviation strategies in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives are to:

1. Examine the influence of adult basic literacy programme on micro-finance scheme in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. Assess the influence of agricultural extension programme on agricultural activities in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.
3. Determine the influence of functional literacy programme on good governance in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.

### Research questions

This study will provide answers to the following research

questions:

1. What is the influence of adult basic literacy programme on micro-finance scheme in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State?
2. What is the influence of agricultural extension programme on agricultural activities in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State?
3. What is the influence of functional literacy programme on good governance in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State?

**Research hypotheses**

The following hypotheses are formulated to guide the study.  
**Ho1:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the influence of adult basic literacy programme on micro-finance scheme in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.  
**Ho2:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the influence of agricultural extension programme on agricultural activities in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.  
**Ho3:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the influence of functional literacy programme on good governance in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Methodology**

This study adopted the survey design, as data are obtained

from a number of small-scale businesses accessible to the researcher. Hence, the study is survey research, and the researcher felt that this design is appropriate for a study of this nature. The study is carried out in the Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. The population of the study includes all the registered small-scale industries in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. Information from the Rivers State ministry of commerce and industry shows that the Oyigbo Local Government Area harbours a total of 4,535 (four thousand five hundred and thirty-five) duly registered small-scale business. This is otherwise known as the target population for the study. A sample size of 325 was gotten through the simple random sampling technique. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used in this study. In analyzing the data for this study, the arithmetic means and standard deviation method of analysis was used, while the hypotheses was tested with the Z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

**Data analysis**

This chapter presents the analysis of data and results of the findings gathered from the research questions posed in chapter one. The presentation is made in tables according to each research questions posed in chapter one.

**Research question 1:** What is the influence of adult basic literacy programme on micro-finance scheme in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State?

**Table 1:** Mean and standard deviation on the influence of adult basic literacy programme on micro-finance scheme in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. (N = 303)

S. No	Item Statements	Male = 151			Female = 152		
		$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1	Adult Basic literacy skills have reduced the poverty level of households in Oyigbo LGA of Rivers State.	3.05	0.83	Agreed	3.00	1.10	Agreed
2	Entrepreneurship skills have been activated in residents of Oyigbo LGA through adult basic literacy.	3.47	0.57	Agreed	2.96	1.18	Agreed
3	Low self-esteem has been eradicated from residents of Oyigbo LGA through adult basic literacy skills.	3.09	1.15	Agreed	2.94	1.19	Agreed
4	Adult Basic literacy skills have brought about self-reliance among the people of Oyigbo LGA of Rivers State.	3.2	1.00	Agreed	2.89	1.21	Agreed
	Total Mean & SD =	12.81	3.55		11.79	4.68	
	Grand Mean & SD =	3.20	0.88		2.94	1.17	

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table above showed that all the items were agreed. The respondents agreed that adult basic literacy skills have enhanced micro-finance scheme in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. The confirmation was made with a grand mean of 3.20 and standard deviation of 0.88 for teachers while that of students were 2.94 and 1.17

for mean and standard deviation.

**Research question 2:** What is the influence of agricultural extension programme on agricultural activities in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State?

**Table 2:** Mean and standard deviation on the influence of agricultural extension programme on agricultural activities in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State (N = 303)

S. No	Item Statements	Male = 151			Female = 152		
		$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1	Agricultural extension education has helped inculcate the skill of productive, self-initiative in Oyigbo business owners.	2.96	0.89	Agreed	3.18	0.89	Agreed
2	Non-formal education has enhanced the motivation of the business populace in Oyigbo LGA of Rivers State.	2.82	0.91	Disagreed	3.17	0.89	Agreed
3	Agricultural extension education has increased the level of knowledge in methods of preservation and production of farm produce of the Oyigbo people	2.95	1.23	Agreed	3.06	0.74	Agreed
4	The people of Oyigbo are now more business inclined.	3.04	1.09	Agreed	3.04	0.83	Agreed
	Total Mean & SD =	11.08	4.12		12.45	3.35	
	Grand Mean & SD =	2.95	1.03		3.11	0.83	

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table above which is for research question two showed that all the items were agreed. The respondents agreed that agricultural extension programme influences agricultural activities in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. The confirmation was made with a grand mean of 2.95 and 4.7 while standard deviation of 1.03 and 0.83 for both male and female respondents.

**Tests of hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the influence of adult basic literacy programme on micro-finance scheme in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Test 3:** Z-test Analysis of significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the influence of adult basic literacy programme on poverty alleviation strategies in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State

Respondents	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Std Error	DF	A	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male	151	3.20	0.88						
				0.14	301	0.05	1.85	1.96	Accepted
Female	152	2.94	1.17						

Source: Field Survey, 2021

From the z-test in the table, the z-calculated value of 1.85 is less than t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 levels of significance and 301 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is accepted, meaning there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the influence of adult basic literacy programme on micro-finance scheme in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the influence of agricultural extension programme on agricultural activities in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Test 4:** Z-test Analysis of significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the influence of agricultural extension programme on agricultural activities in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State

Respondents	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Std Error	DF	A	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male	151	2.95	1.03						
				0.01	301	0.05	1.06	1.96	Accepted
Female	152	3.11	0.83						

Source: Field Survey, 2021

From the z-test in the table above, the calculated value is 1.06 while the z-critical value is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The z-calculated value is lesser than z-critical value, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. Hence, there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the influence of agricultural extension programme on agricultural activities in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Conclusion and recommendations**

**Conclusion**

The study concluded that Adult basic literacy programme enhances micro-finance scheme in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study also revealed

that agricultural extension programme has reduced the poverty level of households in Oyigbo LGA, and that entrepreneurship skills have been activated in the residents of Oyigbo as well as helped reduce low self-esteem in them. It has inculcated self-reliance among the people of Oyigbo through adult basic literacy programme. Non formal adult education and agricultural extension education programmes have to a great extent increased the level of knowledge in methods of preservation thereby improving production of farm produce of the Oyigbo people and has also enhanced motivation of the Oyigbo business populace by inculcating in them the spirit of entrepreneurship.

**Recommendations**

The Study recommends that:

1. The Government of Rivers State should endeavour to set up poverty alleviation programmes to further support prospective and practicing entrepreneurs in the State.
2. Entrepreneurship education should be included in the curriculum of both secondary and tertiary education levels. This is in order to promote self-reliance among the people of Oyigbo Local Government Area in particular and Rivers State in general.
3. Government both at the state and local government levels should endeavour to put in place loan schemes to further assist prospective entrepreneurs to be self-reliant thereby enhancing the economic development of Rivers State at large.

**References**

1. Adekoya SH. Studying Values, Personal Adventure, Future Directions. Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology. 2011; 42(22):90-110.
2. Akanji SO. Analysis of The Factors Influencing the Choice of Investment by Small Scale Manufacturers in Enugu," An MBA Project (in Finance) University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, November, 2010.
3. Akanji WC. A Handbook for Successful Management of Organizations. Okigwe: Avan Global Publications, 2010.
4. Amirize B. Liberal Education and Community Development. Port Harcourt: Osia Int'l Publishers Ltd, 1998.
5. Amirize B, Kobani D. The Adult Educator as Disaster Manager. Owerri: Beauty Concepts, 2020.
6. Anele EA. Small -Scaled Industries - South-Eastern and Benue Plateau States of Nigeria, Nsukka: Industrial Research Unit, Department of Economics, University of Nigeria Nsukka, 2015.
7. Atemie JG. The Nigerian Economy. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 2010.
8. Baridam DM. Overcoming Obstacles to Effective Delegation, Management Review, January, 2011.
9. Donnell LW. A New paradigm: Entrepreneurial leadership. Southern Business Review. 1997; 30:1-10.
10. Ezirim KA. Problems and Prospects of Managing a Small-Scale Manufacturing Firm in A Recessed Economy, Project in Management, Okigwe, Imo State University, July. Business. 2011; 15(9):19-27.
11. Kobani D. Socio-Economic Empowerment Programmes and Women's Participation in Community Development in Rivers State of Nigeria. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Port Harcourt, 2014.



12. Kobani D, Alozie K. Essentials of Community Development in Nigeria. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Owerri: Beauty Concepts, 2019.
13. Kobani D, Alozie K. Adult Education: Principles and Practice. Owerri: Beauty Concepts, 2016.
14. Kobani D. Impact of Adult Education on Youth Empowerment in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State. *Journal of Technical and Science Education (JOTASE)*. 2018; 21(1):137-145.
15. Kobani D. Adult Education: Methods and Materials. Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press, 2018.
16. Kobani D. Women Education in Nigeria. Owerri: Beauty Concepts, 2021.
17. Kobani D. Leadership Literacy as a means to enhance Sustainable Community Development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*. 2022; 12(3):166-172.
18. Kpakol AM. Entrepreneurial Development in Nigeria, Onitsha: New Age Educational Publishing Co. Ltd, 2009.
19. Momodu PL. Innovation in Industry: Industry gets Religion. *The Economist*, 2013.
20. Oguntoye RC. Fundamentals of Business and Management in Nigeria. Aba: Unique Press Limited, 2009.
21. Ohale JM. Management: Quality and Competitiveness, Boston: Irwin McGraw - Hill, 2008.
22. Oladeji IU, Abiola UO. Small -Scale Industries and the Challenge of National Mobilization and Economic Recovery Public Lecture at the 1987/88 Orientation Course of NYSC, Anambra State, Awgu, September, 1998.
23. Sen AK. Poverty: An ordinal Approach to Measurement *Econometrica*. 1976; 44(2):219-231.
24. Sen AK. A Sociological approach to the Measurement of Poverty: A reply to Professor Peter Townsend. *Oxford Economics Papers, New Series*. 1985a; 37(4):669-676.
25. Sen AK. Social excursion: Concept, application, and scrutiny. *Social Development Papers No. 1* Office of Environment and Social Development, Asian Development Bank. Manila, Phillipines, 2000.
26. Singh PK, Chudasama H. Evaluating Poverty Alleviation Strategies in a developing country. *PLoS ONE*. 2020; 15:e0227176.
27. Soludo JA. New Venture Creation Homewood, III, Richard D. Irwin. Third National Development Plan 1975 - 80, 2006.
28. Soludo CC. Law, Institution and Nigeria's quest to join the First World Economy: A Lecture delivered at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria on 25 July, 2006, 2006.
29. Usman UI. A Handbook for Successful Management of Organizations. Okigwe: Avan Global Publications, 2007.
30. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Eradicate Poverty and hunger. Where do we stand? New York, USA, 2014.
31. United Nations. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The UN General Assembly, A/RES/70/1, 2015. Available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/57b6e3e44.html>
32. World Bank. The World Bank Annual Report, Washington D.C. USA, 2015.