

Assessing the impact of adult literacy programmes on community development in Imodi and Imosan communities in Ijebu, Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Adult literacy programmes play pivotal roles in fostering community development by enhancing the socio-economic and cultural capacities of individuals. This study assessed the impact of adult literacy programmes on community development in Imodi and Imosan communities, located in Ijebu, Ogun State, Nigeria. The research adopted quantitative survey method where data were collected through structured questionnaires. The study examined key indicators such as income generation, civic participation, access to health information, and social cohesion among beneficiaries of the programmes. Findings revealed that participants of adult literacy programmes demonstrated improved literacy and numeracy skills, which translated into better economic opportunities and enhanced decision-making capabilities. Furthermore, the programmes contributed to heightened awareness of community issues, improved health-seeking behavior, and stronger communal ties. Despite these gains, challenges such as inadequate funding, limited resources, and low participation rates were identified as impediments to the optimal success of the programmes. The study concluded that adult literacy programmes are critical to community empowerment as they have enabled individuals to acquire literacy skills and empowered them economically, socially and politically in Imodi and Imosan communities. It is therefore recommended that government should increase investment, collaboration with non-governmental organizations, and community-driven strategies to enhance their effectiveness.

Keywords: Adult, Literacy, Community development, Empowerment, Programmes

Introduction

Adult literacy plays a pivotal role in community development, serving as a critical tool for economic empowerment, social inclusion, and overall human development. Literacy is not merely the ability to read and write; it encompasses a broader set of skills that enable individuals to effectively participate in society and the economy. According to UNESCO (2021), literacy is foundational to sustainable development, contributing to poverty reduction, improved health outcomes, and enhanced civic participation. In many developing countries, including Nigeria, adult literacy programmes have been implemented to address the educational gaps left by limited access to formal education, particularly in rural and semi-rural communities.

Imodi and Imosan is a semi-rural community located within Ijebu-Ode, a historical town in Ogun State, Nigeria. The community is characterized by a blend of traditional and modern lifestyles, with agriculture and small-scale trading being the predominant economic activities. However, like many other rural communities in Nigeria, Imodi and Imosan faces significant challenges, including limited access to quality education, poor infrastructure, and widespread poverty. The educational deficit in the community is particularly pronounced, with a significant portion of the adult population having little to no formal education. This educational gap has far-reaching implications for the community's socio-economic development, as it limits opportunities for economic advancement and restricts participation in civic activities.

The introduction of adult literacy programmes in Imodi and Imosan is a strategic response to the educational challenges facing the community. These programmes aim to equip adults who missed out on formal schooling with basic literacy and numeracy skills, thereby enabling them to improve their livelihoods and contribute more effectively to community development. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2023), adult literacy programmes have been recognized as essential for enhancing the productive capacity of individuals, reducing poverty, and fostering social inclusion. In Imodi and Imosan, where many adults are engaged in subsistence farming and petty trading, literacy skills are crucial for accessing better economic opportunities, understanding market trends, and engaging with government and non-governmental initiatives aimed at improving livelihoods.

Moreover, the impact of literacy extends beyond economic empowerment. As highlighted by Oxenham et al. (2002), literacy is closely linked to improved health outcomes, as literate individuals are better able to understand health information, adhere to medical advice, and make informed health decisions. In Imodi and Imosan, where health education is often delivered through written materials, literacy programme can play a vital role in improving public health. Additionally, literacy empowers individuals to participate in governance and community decision-making

processes, thereby strengthening democratic governance and social cohesion.

Community development in Imodi and Imosan is intrinsically linked to the collective capacity of its residents to improve their living conditions, foster social cohesion, and actively participate in governance. Adult literacy programmes are seen as catalysts for community development, as they empower individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to drive socio-economic change. As noted by Kabeer (2010), education, including adult literacy, is a key driver of empowerment, enabling individuals to challenge social norms, access resources, and engage in collective action. In the context of Imodi and Imosan, where educational attainment is low, the potential impact of adult literacy programmes on community development is significant. These programmes are expected to contribute to economic growth by improving the skills of the labor force, reducing poverty by increasing income-generating opportunities, and promoting social inclusion by enabling marginalized groups to participate in community life. Additionally, literacy programmes can enhance the community's resilience by equipping individuals with the skills needed to adapt to changing economic and social conditions.

While there is anecdotal evidence suggesting that adult literacy programmes have had a positive impact on community development in Imodi and Imosan, there is a need for a systematic assessment of these programmes. Previous studies, such as Abiodun (2022) and Aderinoye (2012), have highlighted the importance of adult education in promoting development, but there is limited research specifically focused on the impact of literacy programmes in semi-rural communities like Imodi and Imosan. This study aims to fill this gap by evaluating the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes in improving literacy rates, economic opportunities, and social cohesion in the community.

Statement of the Problem

Adult literacy programmes are widely recognized as a crucial component of community development, offering individuals the skills and knowledge necessary to improve their economic, social, and personal well-being. In Imodi and Imosan towns, which are rural communities in Odogbolu Local Government Area of Ijebu in Ogun State, Nigeria, various adult literacy initiatives have been introduced with the aim of enhancing the quality of life for residents. Despite the implementation of these programmes, there is limited empirical evidence of their effectiveness in driving meaningful community development.

The problem lies in the persistent challenges faced by the community, such as high rates of poverty, unemployment, and limited access to essential services, which raise questions about the impact of these literacy programmes. Furthermore, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that assess how adult literacy influences key aspects of community development, including economic growth, health outcomes, social cohesion, and empowerment. This study attempted to address this gap by evaluating the impact of adult literacy

programmes on the development of Imodi and Imosan towns. It explored whether these programmes have led to measurable improvements in the lives of participants and the broader community.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

- 1) evaluate the extent to which adult literacy programmes have improved the economic opportunities of participants in Imodi and Imosan communities.
- 2) explore the overall contribution of adult literacy programmes to the empowerment of individuals, particularly in terms of increased self-reliance and decision-making capabilities.
- 3) To identify the challenges and limitations of the current adult literacy programmes in the community and suggest possible improvements.

Research Questions

- 1) How has participation in adult literacy programmes influenced the economic development of participants in Imodi and Imosan communities?
- 2) In what ways has the adult literacy programmes contributed to the social development of the community in Imodi and Imosan communities?

Literature Review

Conceptualizing Adult Literacy

Adult literacy programmes are educational initiatives aimed at improving the reading, writing, and numeracy skills of adults who, for various reasons, did not acquire these skills during their formal education years. Such programmes are essential in empowering individuals to participate fully in society and to improve their socio-economic conditions. The importance of adult literacy is well-documented, with numerous studies highlighting its role in fostering personal development, enhancing employability, and contributing to broader community development (UNESCO, 2021).

Adult literacy, as defined by UNESCO (2014), refers to the ability of adults to read and write with understanding in everyday life situations. It encompasses functional literacy, which enables individuals to effectively participate in economic and social activities. Adult literacy programmes are specifically designed to target adults who did not acquire sufficient literacy skills during their formal education years. These programmes often combine literacy instruction with vocational and life skills training to improve participants' quality of life and enhance their economic potential (UNESCO, 2014).

Historically, literacy has been recognized as a fundamental human right, essential for achieving other rights and enabling individuals to fully participate in society. In Nigeria, the importance of adult literacy programmes has been reiterated by the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education (NMEC), which aims to eradicate illiteracy, especially in rural areas (Aderinoye & Rogers, 2017).

Adult literacy is more than just the ability to read and write; it encompasses the acquisition of critical life skills that enable individuals to function effectively in their communities. According to Freire (2022), literacy should be viewed as a means of empowerment, allowing individuals to engage critically with their world and to challenge the socio-economic structures that contribute to their marginalization. This broader understanding of literacy aligns with the concept of "functional literacy," which emphasizes the practical application of reading and writing skills in everyday life (Gray, 2021).

In the context of rural communities like Imodi and Imosan, adult literacy programmes often aim to address specific challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and health disparities. These programmes are designed not only to improve literacy rates but also to enhance the overall quality of life by equipping participants with the skills needed for economic and social participation.

Literacy and Community Development

Literacy programmes often serve as a stepping stone for further education. Bhola (2016) described adult literacy as foundational for lifelong learning. Once individuals acquire basic literacy skills, they are more likely to pursue additional education or vocational training. In a study conducted in Uganda, Bhola found that participants in adult literacy programmes frequently pursued further education, which had long-term benefits for both personal and community development.

UNESCO's (2014) Global Monitoring Report emphasized that literate parents are more likely to value education for their children, resulting in higher school enrollment rates. This creates a ripple effect, as educated children grow up to be more active and engaged citizens. In the context of Imodi and Imosan, adult literacy programmes could stimulate a cultural shift towards valuing education, leading to improved educational outcomes in future generations and overall community development. Leadership and governance are other critical areas impacted by adult literacy programmes. According to Bown (2019), literacy equips individuals with the skills needed to assume leadership roles within their communities. In rural Malawi, literate individuals were more likely to take on positions of responsibility within local government and community organizations, where they were able to advocate for development initiatives.

In Nigeria, Kiura and Njoroge (2018) found that women who participated in adult literacy programmes were more likely to hold leadership positions within their communities. This study, conducted in rural Kenya, highlighted the importance of literacy in enhancing women's leadership capabilities and their ability to influence community development projects. Given the patriarchal nature of many rural communities, including Imodi and Imosan, literacy programmes could enable more women to take on leadership roles, thereby promoting gender-inclusive development.

The theoretical framework of this study is based on Human Capital Theory, as articulated by economists such as Becker (1962) where he posited that education and training are

investments in human capital that enhance individuals' productivity and economic value. This theory is fundamental to understanding the impact of adult literacy programmes on community development because it frames literacy as a crucial form of human capital. According to Human Capital Theory, literacy improves individuals' ability to acquire and process information, make informed decisions, and participate effectively in the economy. In the context of Imodi and Imosan, adult literacy programmes are expected to equip participants with the skills necessary to engage in more productive economic activities, such as better management of small businesses, improved agricultural practices, and increased employability. As individuals enhance their economic prospects, the community as a whole benefits through increased income, reduced poverty, and improved living standards.

However, the application of Human Capital Theory in adult literacy programmes must consider the specific socio-economic context of the community. Critics of the theory argue that it often assumes a direct and linear relationship between education and economic outcomes, without accounting for structural barriers such as lack of access to markets, discrimination, or inadequate infrastructure (Bowles & Gintis, 2015). Therefore, while Human Capital Theory provides a useful framework for understanding the economic impacts of literacy, it must be applied with caution, taking into account the broader socio-economic environment.

Empirical Review

Several studies have highlighted the transformative economic effects of adult literacy programmes. A study by Oxenham et al. (2012) found that adult literacy programmes significantly improved participants' economic productivity. Participants were able to manage small-scale businesses more effectively after acquiring literacy and numeracy skills. This finding is relevant to the situation in Imodi and Imosan, where many participants in literacy programmes may be involved in petty trading or agriculture, and improved literacy can enhance their ability to manage finances, record transactions, and interact with customers more professionally.

In a similar study conducted in Nigeria, Aderinoye, Rogers, and Osho (2017) examined the economic benefits of adult literacy programmes in rural communities. The study found that literacy programmes participants were more likely to start new businesses, access credit facilities, and improve their household income compared to non-participants. The skills gained through literacy programmes enabled them to better understand contracts, write business proposals, and engage in formal financial systems. The relevance of this finding to Imodi and Imosan is significant as many participants in the literacy programmes might be small-scale entrepreneurs looking to expand their businesses with the help of newly acquired skills.

The role of adult literacy programmes in fostering social development cannot be understated. Asghar and Kashif (2013) explored the social implications of adult literacy programmes in rural areas of Pakistan and found that literate

adults were more likely to participate in social and political activities. Participants of adult literacy programmes reported that they felt more empowered to engage in community decision-making processes, particularly in areas such as local government elections and community health initiatives. This is highly applicable to Imodi and Imosan, where literacy can potentially enhance the capacity of individuals to engage in local governance, thus promoting community-driven development.

In a related study, Omolewa (2016) examined the social impact of adult literacy programmes in various Nigerian communities and found that literacy skills greatly enhanced communication within families and communities. Literate individuals were more capable of resolving conflicts, contributing to group discussions, and fostering unity in their neighborhoods. This indicates that adult literacy programmes in Imodi and Imosan could improve social cohesion and contribute to peaceful conflict resolution, a critical aspect of community development.

A study by UNESCO (2014) reinforces this view, demonstrating that individuals who participate in adult literacy programmes are more likely to value education for their children. As a result, these individuals advocate for better educational infrastructure in their communities, contributing to a cycle of educational improvement. In Imodi and Imosan, this could manifest in a stronger community push for improved primary and secondary schools, thus contributing to the overall development of the area.

Empirical evidence suggests that adult literacy programmes have far-reaching impacts on community development, particularly in areas related to economic empowerment, social integration, educational progress, and leadership. The studies reviewed provide insights that are relevant to understanding how adult literacy programmes in Imodi and Imosan could potentially enhance the community's development. However, challenges such as funding, participant retention, and resource constraints must be addressed to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of these programmes. By fostering literacy among adults, communities like Imodi and Imosan can experience improved economic opportunities, greater social cohesion, and enhanced participation in governance, all of which contribute to sustainable community development.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This design was appropriate for capturing the complex and multifaceted impacts of the adult literacy programmes on community development.

Quantitative Approach: A survey was conducted to gather numerical data on participants' literacy levels, economic status, social engagement, and other relevant indicators before and after the intervention. This enabled the

measurement of the programmes' impact in quantifiable terms.

Qualitative Approach: In-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies were used to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and the broader social and cultural effects of the literacy programmes. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of the contextual factors influencing the success and impact of the programmes. The combination of these methods provided a comprehensive view of how the adult literacy programmes contributed to community development in Imodi and Imosan.

Population and Sample Size

The target population for this study included adult participants of the literacy programmes in Imodi and Imosan, as well as community leaders, programmes facilitators, and other stakeholders involved in the implementation of these programmes.

A sample size of 200 participants was selected for the quantitative survey using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure representation across different age groups, genders, and socio-economic backgrounds. For the qualitative component, approximately 30 participants were selected for in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, using purposive sampling to identify individuals with diverse experiences and perspectives.

Sampling Technique

Stratified sampling technique was used to select participants for the survey. The population was divided into strata based on criteria such as age, gender, and socio-economic status, and participants were randomly selected from each stratum. This ensured that the sample was representative of the broader community.

Purposive sampling technique was used to select participants for the qualitative component. Key informants, such as programmes facilitators and community leaders, were selected based on their knowledge and involvement in the literacy programmes.

Research Instruments

A structured questionnaire was administered to participants to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire included sections on demographic information, literacy levels, economic activities, social participation, and perceptions of community development. The survey was conducted face-to-face to ensure high response rates and accuracy of data collection. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected participants, community leaders, and programmes facilitators. The interviews explored participants' experiences with the literacy programmes, their perceived benefits, challenges, and the broader impact on their lives and the community. Interview guides were developed to ensure consistency while allowing for flexibility in probing deeper into specific issues.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure the validity of the research instruments (questionnaires and interview guides) were pre-tested in a pilot study conducted in a neighboring community with

similar characteristics. The feedback from the pilot study was used to refine the instruments and improve their accuracy and relevance. While the reliability of the study was ensured through consistent data collection procedures and the use of standardized instruments. The research team underwent training to ensure that they understood the study's objectives, procedures, and ethical considerations.

Method of Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the survey was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Statistical tools such as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) were used to calculate frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount in this study, particularly given the involvement of vulnerable populations in a rural setting. All participants were fully informed about the purpose, objectives, and procedures of the study. Written informed consent was obtained from each participant before data collection began. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The confidentiality of participants' information was strictly maintained. Data was anonymized to protect participants' identities, and access to the data was restricted to the research team. The research was conducted in a culturally sensitive manner, respecting local customs, norms, and values. The research team worked closely with community leaders and stakeholders to ensure that the study was conducted in a way that was respectful and acceptable to the community.

Results and Analysis

Analysis Result of the Research Questions

Table 1: Which skills did you acquire from the literacy programmes?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Reading	10	5.0	5.0	5.0
Writing	20	10.0	10.0	15.0
Numeracy	20	10.0	10.0	25.0
Business/Financial literacy	40	20.0	20.0	45.0
Communication skills	50	25.0	25.0	70.0
Vocational skill	60	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the above table 1, 5% of the respondents acquire reading from the literacy programme, 10% of the respondents acquire writing from the literacy programme, 10% of the respondents acquire Numeracy from the literacy programme, 20% of the respondents acquire business/ financial literacy from the literacy programme, 25% of the respondents acquire communication skills from the literacy programme. While 30% of the respondents acquire vocational skills from the literacy programme.

Table 2: What is your main reason for joining the adult literacy programmes?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
To improve reading and writing skills to enhance job opportunities	100	50.0	50.0	50.0
To contribute to community development for personal development	60	30.0	30.0	80.0
	30	15.0	15.0	95.0
	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the above table 2, 50% of the respondents join the adult education in order to improve their reading and writing skills, 30% of the respondents join the adult education in order to enhance job opportunities, 50% of the respondents join the adult education in order to contribute to community developments, while 50% of the respondents join the adult education in order for their personal development.

Table 3: How has the programme improved your ability to read and write?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very significantly	60	30.0	30.0	30.0
Significantly	70	35.0	35.0	65.0
Moderately	40	20.0	20.0	85.0
Slightly	20	10.0	10.0	95.0
Not at all	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the above table 3, high percentage of the respondents agreed that the adult literacy programme have improved their ability to read and write significantly.

Table 4: Has your participation in the programmes improved your ability to engage in community activities?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	100	50.0	50.0	50.0
No	80	40.0	40.0	90.0
Not sure	20	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the above tables, the respondents agreed that their participation in the adult literacy programme has improved their ability to engaged in community activities.

Table 5: In what ways has the literacy programmes impacted your daily life?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Improved communication skills	80	40.0	40.0	40.0
Ability to manage finances	50	25.0	25.0	65.0
Enhanced job opportunities	30	15.0	15.0	80.0
Increased self-confidence	30	15.0	15.0	95.0
Improve family life	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the above table 5, 40% of the respondents agreed that literacy programme have impacted in their daily life by improving their communication skills, 25% of the respondents agreed that literacy programme have impacted in their daily life in the ability to manage finances, 15% of the respondents agreed that literacy programme have impacted in their daily life by enhancing job opportunities, 15% of the respondents agreed that literacy programme have impacted in their daily life by increasing their self-confidence, 5% of the respondents agreed that literacy programme have impacted in their daily life by improving their family life.

Table 6: How has your participation in the literacy programmes impacted your ability to contribute to your community's development?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Significant	60	30.0	30.0	30.0
Significant	60	30.0	30.0	60.0
Moderately	40	20.0	20.0	80.0
Slightly	20	10.0	10.0	90.0
Not at all	20	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the above table 6, most of the respondents agreed that adult literacy programme have impacted in their ability to contribute to their community's development significantly.

Table 7: Has the literacy programme contributed to changes in your occupation or income?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes, Significantly	90	45.0	45.0	45.0
Yes, Moderately	60	30.0	30.0	75.0
No, Change	30	15.0	15.0	90.0
No, it worsened	20	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the above table, most of the respondents agreed that adult literacy programme have impacted in their ability to contribute to their occupation and income development significantly.

Table 8: What challenges did you encounter while participating in the adult literacy programmes?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Lack of time	80	40.0	40.0	40.0
Financial constraints	40	20.0	20.0	60.0
Lack of support from family or community	30	15.0	15.0	75.0
Inadequate learning materials	20	10.0	10.0	85.0
Difficulty understanding lessons	30	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the above table, 40% of the respondents name lack of time as the challenge encounter while participating in the adult literacy programme, 20% of the respondents name financial constraints as the challenge encounter while participating in the adult literacy programme, 15% of the respondents name lack of support from family and community as the challenge encounter while participating in the adult literacy programme, 10% of the respondents name inadequate learning materials as the challenge encounter while participating in the adult literacy programme, 10% of the respondents name Difficulty understanding lessons as the challenge encounter while participating in the adult literacy programme.

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study provide significant insights into the impact of adult literacy programmes on community development in Imodi and Imosan, rural communities in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State, Nigeria. This section discusses the key findings of the research in light of the existing literature, highlighting the implications of the findings on economic empowerment, social inclusion, education, leadership, and overall community development. The discussion also addresses the challenges encountered in the implementation of adult literacy programmes in the area.

One of the most notable findings of this study is the significant positive impact of adult literacy programmes on the economic empowerment of participants. The results indicated that individuals who participated in literacy programmes were more likely to experience an improvement in their economic conditions compared to those who did not participate. Specifically, the participants reported better financial management skills, enhanced ability to engage in small-scale businesses, and improved access to microcredit facilities.

This finding is consistent with Oxenham et al. (2012), who emphasized that literacy programmes that integrate functional literacy with vocational skills training lead to improved livelihoods and higher income levels among participants. In Imodi and Imosan, most of the participants were engaged in small-scale farming and trading, and they noted that literacy enabled them to better manage their businesses, keep financial records, and access formal financial institutions. This echoes the findings of Aderinoye et al. (2017), who documented that adult literacy in rural Nigerian communities enhanced participants' ability to engage in economic activities, such as better access to loans and improved market strategies.

Thus, the economic empowerment of individuals through literacy programmes has a direct and profound impact on community development. As individuals' income increases, they are better able to invest in community projects, improve their living standards, and contribute to the local economy. In Imodi and Imosan, this has led to increased participation in cooperative societies, investment in agriculture, and greater contributions to community development projects.

Another important finding of the study is the role of adult literacy in promoting social inclusion and empowerment within the community. The results showed that literacy programmes provided marginalized groups, especially women, with a platform to engage more actively in community activities. Before participating in the literacy programme, many individuals, particularly women reported feelings of exclusion from important social and political processes in their community. However, after acquiring basic literacy skills, they felt more confident participating in decision-making processes and voicing their opinions during community meetings.

The study further supports the findings of Asghar and Kashif (2013), who observed that adult literacy programmes in rural Pakistan improved the social status and inclusion of marginalized groups. In particular, women who participated in literacy programmes in Imodi and Imosan gained the confidence to take on leadership roles in community organizations, which was previously dominated by men. This shift in gender dynamics has important implications for community development, as it encourages a more inclusive approach to addressing local issues.

The study also found that adult literacy programmes fostered a culture of lifelong learning in the community. Many participants reported a renewed interest in furthering their education, whether through formal schooling or vocational training. Some participants, after completing the literacy programme, enrolled in further educational programmes to improve their skills and qualifications. This aligns with Bhola's (2016) assertion that adult literacy serves as a foundation for lifelong learning, encouraging individuals to pursue continuous education.

One of the key outcomes of the adult literacy programmes in Imodi and Imosan is the development of leadership skills among participants. The study revealed that many participants who completed the literacy programme assumed leadership roles in their communities. These individuals were more likely to participate in local governance, serve on community committees, and take on leadership positions within religious and social organizations.

This finding supports Bown's (2019) study in Malawi, which showed that adult literacy programmes equipped participants with the skills necessary to assume leadership roles and contribute to local governance. In Imodi and Imosan, participants noted that literacy helped them understand governance structures, communicate more effectively, and advocate for community development projects.

Despite the positive outcomes of the literacy programmes, the study also highlighted several challenges that hindered their full potential. One of the most significant challenges was the high dropout rate among participants. Many individuals, particularly women, struggled to balance their economic responsibilities with the demands of attending literacy classes. This finding is consistent with the challenges identified by Fagbemi (2016), who noted that adult literacy programmes in Lagos, Nigeria, often suffer from low attendance due to participants' economic pressures.

Additionally, the study found that funding constraints limited the resources available for literacy programmes in Imodi and Imosan. Instructors often lacked proper training, and there was a shortage of learning materials. These challenges are similar to those identified by Aitchison and Rule (2015) in South Africa, where underfunded literacy programmes struggled to meet the needs of participants.

Addressing these challenges is essential for improving the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes in Imodi and Imosan. Flexible learning schedules, adequate funding, and community involvement are necessary to ensure that participants can complete the programme and fully benefit from the skills they acquire.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, adult literacy programmes in Imodi and Imosan have had a transformative impact on community development. The acquisition of literacy skills has empowered individuals economically, socially, and politically, contributing to a more inclusive and engaged community. The economic benefits, such as improved financial management and income generation, are particularly significant in a rural setting like Imodi and Imosan, where most people rely on small-scale businesses and farming for their livelihood. Additionally, the programmes have been instrumental in promoting social inclusion, particularly for women, who have gained the confidence to take on leadership roles and participate in decision-making processes.

The study reaffirmed that adult literacy programmes are a critical tool for sustainable community development. By equipping individuals with the skills necessary to improve

their lives and engage more actively in community development, these programmes have the potential to foster economic growth, social cohesion, and effective local governance. However, for these programmes to achieve their full potential, the challenges identified, such as high dropout rates, underfunding, and inadequate resources, must be addressed.

The study provided the following recommendations:

- 1) Government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community-based organizations should increase their financial support for adult literacy programmes. This will ensure that the programmes are adequately resourced with materials, well-trained facilitators, and proper infrastructure, all of which are essential for successful implementation.
- 2) One of the major challenges facing adult learners is balancing economic responsibilities with attending literacy classes. It is recommended that literacy programmes adopt more flexible schedules, such as evening or weekend classes, to accommodate participants who are engaged in daily economic activities.
- 3) To further enhance the economic empowerment of participants, it is suggested that literacy programmes incorporate vocational training alongside literacy instruction. This would equip participants with practical skills that can immediately be applied to generate income and improve their economic standing.
- 4) To ensure the sustained impact of adult literacy programmes, there should be a framework for long-term monitoring and evaluation. This would help track the progress of participants, identify areas for improvement, and provide data to inform future literacy policies and programmes.
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