# ASSESSMENT OF MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS IN IMPROVING PARTICIPATION OF ADULT LEARNERS IN POST-LITERACY PROGRAMME IN SOKOTO METROPOLIS, SOKOTO STATE, NIGERIA

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**Abstract**
*The paper examined the motivational factors that can improve participation of adult learners in post literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis. The study adopted descriptive survey research design to study the whole 500 post-literacy learners in three post-literacy centres in Sokoto metropolis. Data were collected through 20-items Motivational Factors and Participation Questionnaire (MFPQ) and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency and percentages. The results showed that consolidating respondents' skills in reading and writing in English, getting certificate for employment purposes were important personal motives for adult learners' participation in post-literacy programme and availability of qualified and friendly facilitators, suitable learning resources, learners' needs-based learning, conducive learning environment institutional motivation-related factors. Efforts must be made by organisers of post-literacy programme to put in place a conducive learning machineries and resources with relevant supports for learners in order to induce adult learners to actively participate in post-literacy programme.*

**Keywords**: Adult Learner; Motivational factors; Participation; Post-basic literacy

**Introduction**

Literacy is an important weapon for socio-economic, political and educational development. Olori (2015) posited that the acquisition of literacy skills is potent in the fight against hunger, ignorance, disease and poverty. Literacy involves a continuum of learning that enables individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potentials and to participate fully in their community and wider society. In fact, literacy is a must for anyone to be active in an information society and it has to be sustainable. Sustainable adult literacy depends on the use of skills acquired and extent to which the recipients are able to consolidate the acquired skills through further learning. This is because, it is very easy for any neo-literate to relapse back to illiteracy if further learning opportunities

are not available and accessed (Rogers, Maddox, Millican, Jones, Papen and Robnson-Pant, 1999; Rogers, 2002; Haladu, 2006; Jerry & Liezel, 2014). This is one of the reasons government in Nigeria through its agencies such as National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education and state agencies for mass education mount post-literacy programme as a follow-up for completers of basic literacy programme.

Post-literacy according to UNESCO (2000) enables newly literates to retain, improve and apply their basic knowledge, skills and attitudes for satisfaction of their needs and to permit them to continue through a self-directed process of improvement of quality of life. To Rogers (2002) post-literacy serves a variety of purposes that are crucial for economic development and sustaining communities. These purposes can only be achieved if opportunities are given to neo-literates to use, sustain and build upon the earlier literacy skills acquired during the basic literacy through exposure to post-literacy programme. It has been observed by scholars (Rogers, Maddox, Millican, Jones, Papen and Robnson-Pant, 1999; Rogers, 2002; Haladu, 2006; Jerry & Liezel, 2014) that neo-literates are easily relapsed back to illiteracy and rarely retain the learnt literacy skills if timely follow-up measures are not taken. One of the timely measures is to create post-literacy opportunities.

As important as post-literacy programme is in sustaining and improving the literacy skills acquired by neo-literates, the transition of adult learners from basic literacy to post-literacy programme is not encouraging in developing countries, Nigeria inclusive. The low transition from basic literacy to post literacy has been reported widely. For example Rogers *et al*., (1999) reported that, in almost every country, the number of participants in Post-Literacy is only a fraction of those participated in basic literacy programme. In India as elsewhere, Bang Eval (1997), remarked that post-literacy learner is usually one to ten basic literacy learners. In Nigeria Omolewa (1998) decried the transition of neo-literates into post-literacy programme as poor in most of the literacy centres in Nigeria. Similarly, Umar (2002) lamented poor participation of adult learners in literacy programmes especially women in Northern Nigeria. She argued that where women managed to attend basic literacy, they are usually prevented most especially by their husbands to proceed to post-literacy programme. According to Umar (2002), some husbands believe that when women are given opportunities to have further education or higher education above basic education, they tend to feel big before their husbands and sometimes, disrespecting their husbands. A number of husbands according to Umar (2002), felt threatened with educated wives as they believe such wives are difficult to control.

Sokoto State Agency for Mass Education (2017) reported that for a period of 10 years, the percentage of graduates of basic literacy in Sokoto State who were able to enroll into post-literacy programme was very low, as low as less than 18% within the periods. A clearer picture of the transition from basic literacy to post literacy is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Transition from Basic Literacy to Post-Literacy Programme in Sokoto State from 2008 to 2017**

| S/N | Year | Basic Literacy Graduate | Mainstreamed to Post Literacy | Percentage Mainstreamed to Post Literacy |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2008 | 4045 | 334 | 8.3% |
| 2 | 2009 | 9267 | 503 | 5.4% |
| 3 | 2010 | 9654 | 400 | 4.1% |
| 4 | 2011 | 8219 | 1010 | 12.3% |
| 5 | 2012 | 7632 | 1300 | 17% |
| 6 | 2013 | 10432 | 1860 | 17.8% |
| 7 | 2014 | 13421 | 2025 | 15.1% |
| 8 | 2015 | 12987 | 2161 | 16.6% |
| 9 | 2016 | 12763 | 2216 | 17.4% |
| 10 | 2017 | 14237 | 2500 | 17.6% |

**Source**: Sokoto State Agency for Mass Education, 2017.

Table 1 shows a progressive increase in transition over a period of 10 years, but it is unfortunate that the rate of increase is very low, leaving a large number of completer of basic literacy not transiting into post-literacy. This situation, according to Sokoto State Agency for Mass Education (2017) can be linked to the reason for which learners enroll for basic literacy programme. Many basic literacy learners enroll into literacy programme in order to read and write. If such aim is achieved, they believe they have attained their goal and there is no need to enroll for post-literacy. Similarly, Aderinoye (1997), advanced some reasons responsible for low transition from basic literacy to post-literacy. These reasons are: existence of post-literacy centres in most environments, difficulties of people to sacrifice their time for further learning, most organizers of adult literacy hardly make provision for post-literacy and most neoliterates do not see the need for post-literacy as soon as they achieve their objectives at adult literacy programme.

The implication of very large number of graduates of basic education not transiting into post-literacy programme in Sokoto State is that they can easily be relapsed back to illiteracy. This situation will further increase the rate of illiteracy in the State which the report of National Bureau of Statistics (2010) put as the lowest state with adult literacy with 22.1 percent in Nigeria. This situation does not augur well for the State economically, politically, socially and technologically, hence, effort must be made to improve adult learners' participation in post-literacy programme in order to ensure sustainable adult literacy.

What comes to one's mind is that what could actually motivate learners in order to improve their participation in post-literacy programme since motivation and participation in adult learning have been found to have positive relationship (Oluoch, 2005; Aluvsia, 2016). Participation according to Bagnall (1989) involves presence, which refers to the occurrence of a person in an adult education class as opposed to the absence of that person. Motivation is seen as drive, energy, need, incentive, reinforcement, goal and expectancy (Obe and Asiedu, 1988). In this paper, motivation is defined as a drive, because need, incentive, reinforcement, goal and expectancy are the factors that produce the drive. That is, what should be provided or taken care of that will drive adult learners to participate in post-literacy programme? Boeren, Baert and Niceuse (2010) identified two levels (personal, educational institutions and authorizes) of motivation for attracting learners to learning programmes. Personal factors such as meeting socio-economic, cultural and psychological needs of learners, learning new skills, becoming a good role model for children, improving one's self image and enjoying social interaction are key important factors for participation (Buttaro, 2004; Boeren, Baert and Niceuse, 2010; Fuseini and Abudu, 2014). Similarly, educational institutional levels such as flexible access to the curriculum, alternative study methods, financial aid, the provision of support services (such as child care, study advice services, job services and welfare services) and the granting of related benefits (such as the distribution of public transport tickets, offering internet access or giving access to sports facilities) and availability of properly trained facilitators positively attract adults (Schuetze and Slowey, 2002; Fuseini and Abudu, 2014). Studies (such as Darkenwald and Valentine, 1986; Bariso, 2008) showed that a positive learning climate is linked to higher participation of target learners. The focus of this study therefore, is to examine what drives adult learners to participate in post-literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis.

The study is premised on Human Capital Theory and Motivation Theory of Maslow's Need Hierarchy. The main thrust of human capital theory is that people can invest in educational activities because they want to improve their productivities and skills (Becker, 1964). Human Capital theory suggests that individuals who invest in education and training will increase their skill level and be more productive than those less skilled, and so can justify higher earnings as a result of their investment in human capital. Modern society also relates human capital to the ability to pursue more well-being in other fields, such as culture, social participation and health (Boeren, Baert and Niceuse, 2010). Rational choice theory, which is related to human capital theory, starts from the principle that humans always try to achieve maximum welfare and minimum costs when pursuing goals (Allingham, 2002). The decision to participate, therefore, can be seen as being based on a cost–benefit analysis. Therefore, costs such as payment for participation, transportation, feeding, learning materials, neglecting household duties and the loss of earnings because time normally spent on work is now being spent on learning, have to be weighed with the benefits to be derived from participation (Boeren, Baert and Niceuse, 2010).

These benefits may include increased productivity in the workplace, the opportunity for promotion, the opportunity for obtaining a higher salary, or successful application to a new job. We also can recognise some benefits within a person's private life, such as better health, more social contacts and the ability to pursue a hobby (Boeren, Baert and Niceuse, 2010). Since people participate in learning activities because of what they intend to benefit, it becomes necessary to understand what drives adult learners to post-literacy programme with a view to motivate them through provision of such factors that drive them to learning centres.

Motivation Theory of Maslow's Need Hierarchy is the second theory underlying the present study. According to Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, people are motivated by five basic needs and these needs are arranged in the order in which a person seeks them (Maslow, 1971). The needs are: physiological needs (food, clothing, shelter, etc.), the need for safety and security (freedom from danger, job security, health-care etc.), the need to belong (acceptance by the group, friendships, love etc.), the need for esteem (recognition by others, feeling of achievement etc.) and the need for self-actualization (fulfillment of capacities). The needs are arranged in order of importance under the assumption that a lower level need is satisfied before the next higher level need becomes a motivating factor. According to this theory, adult learners are always looking for value in anything

they involve themselves. By inference, they will attend any programme, provided it has values in meeting their needs. The theory seems to suggest that adults participate in learning so long as they are motivated through meeting their needs for their participation.

It is very clear that for literacy to play its contributory role to the development of individuals and society, it has to be acquired in the right quantity and quality. Basic literacy is found not to be sufficient for people to acquire the needed literacy skills for personal and societal development, hence, the need for post-literacy programme. The number of adult learners who graduated from basic literacy programme that are actually transiting to post-literacy programme has consistently remained low, as low as less than 18 percent of eligible learners over the last ten years in Sokoto State. This implies that if this trend continues, it will not be possible to eradicate illiteracy or reduce it substantially in the foreseeable future. It is against this background that the study found out what drives (motivational factors) adult learners to participate in post-literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis with a view that when they are provided, there will be an improvement in the participation of adult learners in post literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis.

What are these factors that motivate them to participate in post-literacy? This is the focus of the study. The following research questions were raised and answered:

1. What are the personal motivational factors attracting adult learners to post-literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis?
2. What are the learning-centre motivational related factors attracting adult learners to post-literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis?

**Methodology**

Descriptive survey was the design adopted for this study. This research design was appropriate for this study because it involved gathering data from the respondents on the importance of motivational factors in attracting adult learners in post-literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis. The population of this study was 500 adult learners in 3 Post-Literacy Centres of the Sokoto State Agency for Mass Education in Sokoto metropolis. The whole of the population was used for the study since they were not many and they were all accessible.

A structured questionnaire titled Motivational Factors and Participation Questionnaire (MFPQ) was used to collect relevant data as regard what motivates learners to attend post-literacy

programme. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A has 10 items and explored personal related motivational factors and Section B has 10 items which explotred learning-centre motivational related factors using four (4) Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument was face construct and content validated by experts in Adult and Non-formal Education at Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria. The MFPQ was trial-tested in BirniKebbi, Kebbi State, Nigeria at two different occasions in order to establish its reliability. Fortnight interval was given between the first administration and second administration of the questionnaire. Pearson's product correlation coefficient was used and the reliability index of 0.79 was obtained. This index showed that the instrument was reliable. The whole 500 copies of the MFPQ were administered to post-literacy learners in the three (3) post-literacy centres in Sokoto metropolis within 4 weeks by the researcher and 10 trained research assistants. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency and percentages.

**Results and Discussion**

**Results**

The research questions were answered and presented in tables using mean score statistics.

**Research Question One:** What are the personal motivational factors attracting adult learners to post-literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis? This research question was answered using frequency and percentages and the results were presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Personal Motivational Factors Attracting Adult Learners to Post-Literacy programme.**

| S/N | Personal Motivational Factors | Agree | % | Disagree | % | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Consolidating my skills in reading and writing in English is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 481 | 96.2 | 19 | 3.8 | Agree |
| 2. | Getting post-literacy certificate for employment is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 373 | 74.6 | 127 | 25.4 | Agree |
| 3. | Building my self-confidence is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 427 | 85.4 | 73 | 14.6 | Agree |
| 4. | Boosting my financial status is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 431 | 86.2 | 69 | 13.8 | Agree |
| 5. | Enjoying social interaction is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 431 | 86.2 | 69 | 13.8 | Agree |
| 6. | Freely use of social media is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 319 | 63.8 | 181 | 36.2 | Agree |
| 7. | Rendering assistance to my children in their school work is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 289 | 57.8 | 211 | 42.2 | Agree |
| 8. | Participating actively in community activities is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 294 | 58.8 | 206 | 41.2 | Agree |
| 9. | Creating opportunities for further education is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 356 | 71.2 | 144 | 28.8 | Agree |
| 10. | Improving efficiency in my business operatives is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 363 | 72.6 | 137 | 27.4 | Agree |

All the items on Table 2 have been consented to by the respondents to have being attracted them to participate in Post-Literacy programme in the metropolis as the percentages of agreeing to the issues raised were more than the percentages of disagreeing. This shows that the respondents agreed to all the personal factors to have motivated them to participate in post-literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis. It was observed specifically that 96% (481), 74.6% (373), 85.4% (427),

86.2% (431), and 86.2% (431) of the respondents agreed that consolidating their skills in reading and writing in English, getting certificate for employment purposes, building self-confidence, boosting financial status and enjoying social interaction respectively were important personal factors motivating them for participation in Post-Literacy programme in the Metropolis. Similarly, 63.8% (319), 57.8% (289), 58.8% (294), 71.2% (356) and 72.6% (363) of the sampled adult learners agreed that freely use of social media, rendering assistance to children in their school work, participating actively in community development activities, creating opportunities for further studies and improving business efficiency of participants respectively were other important personal motives for adult learners' participation in post-literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis.

**Research Question Two:** What are the learning-centre motivational related factors attracting adult learners to post-literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis? This research question was answered using mean statistics and the results were presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Learning Centre Motivational Factors Attracting Adult Learners to Post-Literacy programme**

| S/N | Learning Centre Motivational Factors | Agree | % | Disagree | % | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Availability of qualified facilitators is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 438 | 87.6 | 62 | 12.4 | Agree |
| 2. | Existence of friendly facilitators is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 481 | 96.2 | 19 | 3.8 | Agree |
| 3. | Availability of suitable learning resources is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 373 | 74.6 | 127 | 25.4 | Agree |
| 4. | Relevance of learning activities to learners' needs is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 431 | 86.2 | 69 | 13.8 | Agree |
| 5. | Creating conducive learning environment is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 402 | 80.4 | 98 | 19.6 | Agree |
| 6. | Flexible access to curriculum is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 363 | 72.6 | 137 | 27.4 | Agree |
| 7. | Provision of child care services is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 306 | 61.2 | 194 | 38.8 | Agree |
| 8. | Provision of support services is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 346 | 69.2 | 154 | 30.8 | Agree |
| 9. | Acceptable location of learning centre is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 461 | 92.2 | 39 | 7.8 | Agree |
| 10. | Convenient time of lessons is a motivation for participation in post-literacy programme | 461 | 92.2 | 39 | 7.8 | Agree |

The results show that all the items in Table 3 were considered by the respondents as important learning centre motivational factors that attracted adult learners to post-literacy programme in the metropolis. Specifically, 87.6% (438), 96.2% (481), 74.6% (373), 86.2% (431) and 80.4% (402) of the respondents agreed that availability of qualified, friendly facilitators, suitable learning resources, learners' needs-based learning, and conducive learning environment respectively were significant motives for adult learners motivation for participating in Post-Literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis. In the same vein, 72.6% (363), 61.2% (306), 69.2% (346), 92.2% (461) and 92.2% (461) of the respondents agreed that flexible access to curriculum, child-care services, support services, acceptable location and convenient time of lessons were as important institutional motivation-related factors for participation in post-literacy programme.

**Discussion of Findings**

The importance of Post-literacy programme as an opportunity for neoliterates to consolidate the attainment of basic literacy requires that participants are encouraged and motivated to participate. The study established the importance of the provision of personal motivational factors for the participants in order to encourage their participation. The findings of Boeren, Baert and Niceuse (2010) that personal motivational factors are motives for people's participation in literacy programmes corroborates this study's discovery as reflected in Table 2 which answered the research question one. In specific terms, the current study is a confirmation of earlier studies such as Buttaro (2004); Boeren, Baert and Niceuse (2010); Fuseini and Abudu (2014) that adult learners' motivation to learn included improving themselves, becoming better members of the society, being better able to help their children and communicating with school staff. The study concluded that literacy learning also led to better jobs and extra training to enhance their jobs, better overall everyday communication on the phone and in the store, improving reading and writing skills plus the ability to help their native country. The finding confirmed Maslow's Need Hierarchy theory that emphasizes on the importance of meeting the needs of human being. The implication of the finding is that adult learners will patronize post-literacy programme if the programme addresses their personal needs.

The findings of the current study further affirmed the earlier findings of  Darkenwald and Valentine (1986), Schuetze and Slowey (2002), Bariso (2008), Fuseini and Abudu (2014) on the importance of institutional motivational related factors to adult learners' participation in learning activities. In fact, findings from Darkenwald and Valentine's (1986); Bariso's (2008); Fuseini and Abudu's (2014) studies confirmed positive relationship between positive learning climate and higher participation of target learners in literacy programmes. Positive learning climate which Bariso (2008) regarded as availability of properly trained teachers, suitable learning resources and an appropriate learning environment were parts of the important learning centres motivational factors identified as motives for adult learners' participation in post-literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis. Similarly, the findings of this study showed similar findings to that of Schuetze and Slowey (2002) which identified flexible access to the curriculum, alternative study methods, financial aid, the provision of support services (such as child care, study advice services, job services and welfare services) and the granting of related benefits (such as the distribution of public transport tickets, offering internet

access or giving access to sports facilities) as educational institutional levels of motivation for adult learners' participation in learning programmes.

**Conclusion**

Based on the findings, it was concluded that, understanding and attending to personal motives of adult learners for literacy programme will largely improve their participation in post-literacy programme. This requires that Post-Literacy centres should package learning activities that reflect the personal needs of learners and information about meeting the needs of learners should be made available to prospective learners. This can only be achieved if needs assessment of learners and enlightenment campaigns are conducted during enrolment drives.

Similarly, creating conducive learning environment with needed supports will induce adult learners to participate in post literacy programme in Sokoto metropolis. Therefore, efforts must be made by organisers of post-literacy programme to put in place a conducive learning machineries and resources with relevant supports for learners in order to induce adult learners to actively participate in post-literacy programme.

**Recommendations**

1. Organisers of adult literacy programmes must make effort to reflect curriculum contents that will address the personal needs of learners in the post-literacy programme.
2. Conducive learning environments must be created at literacy centres in order to motivate the learners to participate.
3. More post-literacy centres must be created by individuals, groups and governments in order to create access for participation.
4. Enlightenment campaigns on the importance of post-literacy must be done by the Agency for Mass Education in the State.

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