UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) IN ADULT EDUCATION AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION IN PORT HARCOURT METROPOLIS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the use of ICT devices in the awareness and participation in Adult Education programmes in Port Harcourt metropolis. Descriptive survey research design was used. Five (5) objectives, five (5) research questions and three (3) hypotheses guided the study. The population comprised of residents of Port Harcourt metropolis. Using the stratified random sampling technique 400 respondents were picked as the sample. A self- designed instrument titled Adult Education Awareness and Participation Questionnaire (AEAPQ) was used for the data collection. The instrument was face and contented validated by two (2) experts from Adult Education and Measurement and evaluation departments. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument which was found to be 0.69. For the data analysis percentages was used to answer the research questions while the Chi-square was used for the test of hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed that the use of ICT devices for Adult Education awareness and participation was very low and insignificant. It was therefore recommended that the government, corporate bodies and well-meaning individuals should support awareness campaigns and participation in Adult Education programmes, provide ICT devices and facilities at subsidized rate to enable residents have access to them amongst others.
Keywords: Adult Education, Information and communication technology, Awareness,Participation, Utilization.

Introduction

Adult education is seen as fundamental in the eradication of illiteracy, ignorance and poverty in the society. This is due to the fact that it focuses on empowering individuals with the needed knowledge and skills for self-development and enhancement, career improvement, political participation and financial empowerment (Nzeneri, 2010). It is an area

of education that has very wide coverage in scope: cutting across all age range, level of education, varied professions, skilled, non-skilled, private individuals and house wivesamongst others. Wikipedia (2019) see Adult Education as education of adults, engaging them in systematic and sustained self-educating activities so as to acquire skills, knowledge, attitude and values for self enhancement. It is intended to carter for non-literate members of the society, skilled, unskilled, and semi-skilled, and school dropout to equip them withuseful skills and knowledge to function effectively in the society (Anyanwu, 2012). Hence, it takes care of all individuals in the society.

Adult Education as an aspect of education, services every group of individuals in the society. Its services include; providing access to education for all citizens through formal and non-formal forms of education. These services are in the areas of providing:

- Opportunities for those who missed out at early years.
- Opportunities for the poor to be educated.
- For individuals to satisfy personal, social, vocational, recreational and self-development needs.
- Avenues for individuals to gain economic power and have multiple streams of income.

Generally, it brings about national growth and development of the society by equipping citizens to keep up with changes in the society, technological development, participate in economic activities and political issues, and enhance individuals understanding in peaceful co-existence and good brotherliness (Igwe et al 2016). As such it helps in keeping at risk youth off the street and out of violence by engaging them in meaningful activities, develop their potentials and help them to pursue better future (https://www.fullstature.net> educati…n.d), and also meet the needs of the adults.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is one ubiquitous device that has facilitated the development of the society, and has impacted every human activity positively (Emeribe and Nnadi, 2013). Its role in projecting and promoting Adult Education programmes cannot be overemphasized. To buttress this point, Igwe et al (2016) stated that the introduction of ICT into education has created;

- Room for more adult learners' centred teaching
- Opportunities for more versatile sources of information
- More opportunities for open and distance learning
- Equipped both youths and adults with quality knowledge and skills to function in thedigital economy
- To be up to date in technological advancement
- For enhanced self-directed and self-paced learning
- To maintain certificate and fulfil job requirements

Despite the benefits of ICT in fostering service delivery in Adult Education, some challenges are still being witnessed amongst which are; high cost of ICT facilities, maintenance and services, poor electric supply, illiteracy, lack of knowledge in the use of ICT facilities and lack of ICT skills.

Premised on the enormous role Adult Education plays in the society, it is therefore pertinent to ask if all members of the Nigerian society especially residents of Port Harcourt metropolis are aware of some of these Adult Education programmes; how knowledgeable

are they about the programmes and activities of Adult Education around them, to what extent are they involved in these programmes, to what extent have these programmes impacted in their lives personally; career wise, skill acquisition, financial empowerment and such like. Furthermore, what role did and has Information and Communication Technology (ICT) played in this regard and how has it been utilized to achieve these impacts. These are some of the questions this research work attempted to address.

Statement of the Problem

It is on record that Nigeria is the poverty capital of all the nations of the world. This is not far-fetched looking at the level of education of the Nigerian masses. Statistics has it that 53% of Nigerian children are out of school, 23.10% are unemployed and 38% are not literate as stated by National Bureau of statistics (2019), Augusto & Co - Businessday NG (2022) and Ojekunle, (2018). The issue of environmental degradation and pollution, militancy, kidnapping, banditry, terrorism, and ritual killing amongst others are other taunting challenges that Nigeria is faced with presently (The New Humanitarian, 2021). Adult Education is one form of education that focuses on educating the masses, ranging from literate, non-literate, skilled, semi-skilled, and unengaged, and what have you. Its business is to equip and empower very youth and adult in the society who are out of formal school system, making them to become functional in the society so as to contribute meaningfully to the growth and development of the society. It also helps in giving value orientation to individuals, and equip them with information and knowledge about such issues as environmental issues like deforestation, pollution, climate change, global warming, and flood amongst others (Ephraim, 2013).

It is therefore imperative that this aspect of education be given adequate attention as it is a ley way to checkmating if not completely eradicating the economic situation of the country as it is today, and giving individuals adequate information on environmental management strategies. Information and Communication Technology devices today are like water to every individual in the society, playing significant role in every human activity. Nobody can stay without it. It has become our companion in everyday affairs; ranging from information gathering, health, security, commerce and industry, fashion, governance, education, religion and what have you. At this point one would ask how have these ICT devices which have become part of our everyday helped in fostering the programme and activities of the Adult Education: making citizens to be aware and to participate in Adult Education programmes and activities. If ICT devices are judiciously and deliberately used for Adult Education programmes and activities, it will go a long way to achieving its aim and objectives. It is against this backdrop therefore, this research study intends to find out if residents of Port Harcourt metropolis are aware of the Adult Education programmes around them, their perception of its relevance to functional living as individuals in the society, the impact they have made on them and how ICT has contributed in all of these.

Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study is carried out to ascertain if:
1. residents in Port Harcourt metropolis are aware of Adult Education programmes around them.
2. they participate in such programmes.

3. their perception of the relevance of such programmes to functional living
4. how such programmes have enhanced their lives
5. and how ICT has contributed to their awareness and participation in such programmes

Research Questions

   To find answers to the issues raised above, the following research questions were raised.
1. What is the level of awareness of Port Harcourt metropolis residents about Adult Education programme?
2. What is their perception about the relevance of Adult Education programmes to living functional lives?
3. What impact has these Adult Education programmes made on Port Harcourt residents?
4. How has ICT devices facilitated in the awareness of these programmes?
5. How has ICT devices helped the residents to participate in these Adult Educationprogrammes?

Hypotheses

   To guide this study the following hypotheses were raised:
1. There is no significant difference between residents of Port Harcourt metropolis that areaware of Adult Education programmes and those that do not.
2. There is no significant difference between residents of Port Harcourt metropolis on theimpact of Adult Education programmes and those with no impact.
3. There is no significant difference between those that use ICT facilities for Adult Education programmes and those that do not.

Methodology

   The research design used for the work is the descriptive survey design. This design is suitable for this work because it is aimed at finding out the existing knowledge of the variables under investigation; in this case the level of awareness of Port Harcourt metropolis residents on the existence of Adult Education programmes in their locality, their relevance to the individual and the society, its impacts and how ICT facilities has helped the residence in this regards.

   The population for this study consisted of all residents in Port Harcourt metropolis. Port Harcourt metropolis is made up of two (2) local government areas; Port Harcourt and Obio/Akpor, with a mixed population. The total population of Port Harcourt metropolis as at 2019 is 2.8million (World Population Review Commission, 2019). This constituted the population for this study. To get the sample, the population was stratified into groups based on some demographic issues using the stratified random sampling technique. The strata used are as follows;

Table 1: Showing the distribution of the sample

LOCATION	GENDER		VOCATION		
Urban	Male	50	Self-Employed	Male	50
	Female	50		Female	50
Semi-Urban	Male	50	Civil/Public Servant	Male	50
	Female	50		Female	50

Source: Field survey (2020)

Summing up the above gave a total of four hundred (400) respondents which formed the sample for the study. The sample was purposively chosen due to accessibility. A likert scale questionnaire was designed to gather the data for the study. The questionnaire had 24 items questions bordering on the issue under investigation. The instrument titled "Adult Education Awareness and Impact Questionnaire" (AEAIQ) was face and content validated by two (2) experts from Adult Education and Measurement and Evaluation department. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument which was at 0.69. They were then distributed with the help of research assistants. In the case where the respondent could not write, the research assistant helped to fill out their responses. The study lasted for about one month with the help of the research assistants. Outof the 400 questionnaires distributed, 316 of the questionnaires were correctly filled and returned. These were used for the analysis.

The statistical tool used for the data analysis for this study is Percentage (%). This statistics is used to describe the frequency of the occurrence of an event or variable. To test the hypothesis, Chi-Square was used at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Result

Research Question 1: What is the level of awareness of Port Harcourt metropolis residents about Adult Education programmes?

Table 2: Responses on the level of awareness of Adult Education programmes in Port Harcourt metropolis

S/N	ITEM	YES	%	NO	%
1	Have you heard of adult education before	208	65.8	108	34.2
2	Have you attended any adult education programme before	202	63.9	114	36.1
3	Do you have any adult education programme in your locality	180	56.9	136	43.0
4	Did you pay to attend the programme	68	21.5	248	78.5
5	Through what means did you hear about it	61	19.3	255	80.7

Source: Field survey (2022)
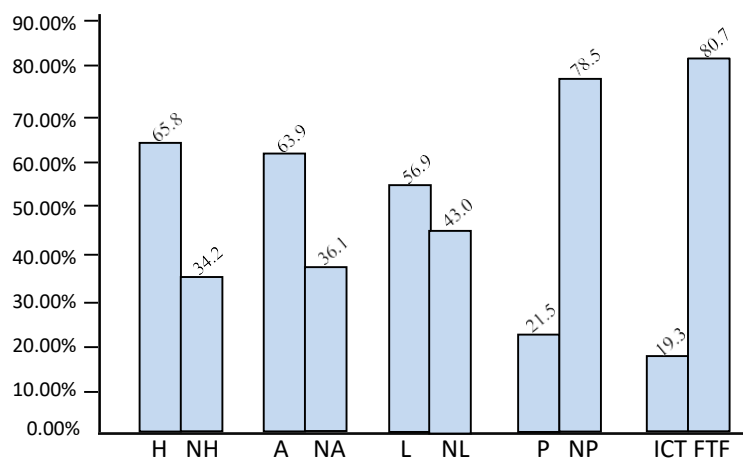
Fig. 1: Chart showing the responses of the respondents on their level of awareness

Key:
H –	Heard	L –	Learning centre	ICT –	ICT
NH –	Not Heard	NL –	No learning centre	FTT –	Face To Face
A –	Attended	P –	Pay		
NA –	Not Attended	NP –	Not Pay		

Research Question 2: What is their perception about the relevance of Adult Education programmes to living functional lives?

Table 3: Responses on the relevance of Adult Education programmes on residents of Port Harcourt metropolis

| S/N	ITEM	VR	%	R	%	I	%	V I	%
1	Do you attend AE programmes regularly	79	25.0	146	46.2	79	25.0	12	3.8
2	Do you encourage others to attend such programmes	111	35.1	193	61.1	-	-	12	3.8
3	Would you like to attend more of such programme whenever you have the Opportunity	122	38.6	100	31.6	84	26.6	10	3.2
4	Can you say that the AE programme is relevant tothe individual	145	45.9	130	41.1	34	10.8	7	2.2
5	To the society	205	64.9	113	35.8	-	-	-	-

Source: Field survey (2022)
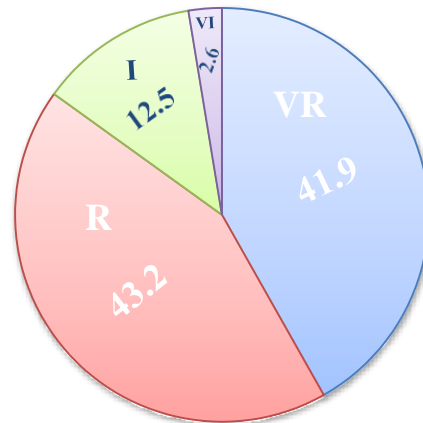
Fig. 2: Chart showing the responses on the relevance of Adult Education programmes

Research Question 3: What impact has the Adult Education programmes made on Port Harcourt residents?

Table 4: Responses on the level of impact of Adult Education programmes on Port Harcourt metropolis

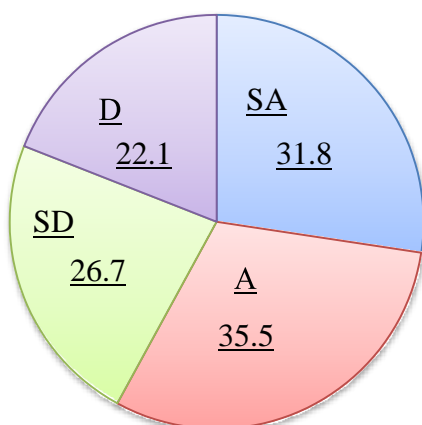| S/N	ITEM	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
1	Adult Education programmeyou attended added value to your life	146	46.2	64	20.3	64	20.3	42	13.2
2	Did the knowledge and skill you acquired help you in yourfamily life	79	25.0	111	35.1	64	20.3	62	19.6
3	Did it enhance your finance/ economic status	94	13.9	50	15.8	110	34.8	112	35.4
4	Did it enhance your career/job	93	29.4	122	38.6	13	4.1	88	27.8

Source: Field work (2022)

Fig. 3: Chart showing the responses on the level of impact of Adult Education programmes

Research Question 4: How has ICT devices helped in the awareness and participation inthe Adult Education programmes?

Table 5: Responses on the medium/media through which they got the awareness and training

S/N	ITEM	YES	%
1	Handset/ipad/laptop	105	32.4
2	Cyber café	63	19.9
3	Radio	101	31.9
4	Television	65	18.5
5	Film show in centre	190	60.1
6	Internet/online	110	35.5
7	Face to face contact	271	85.8
	TOTAL	**905**	**284.1**

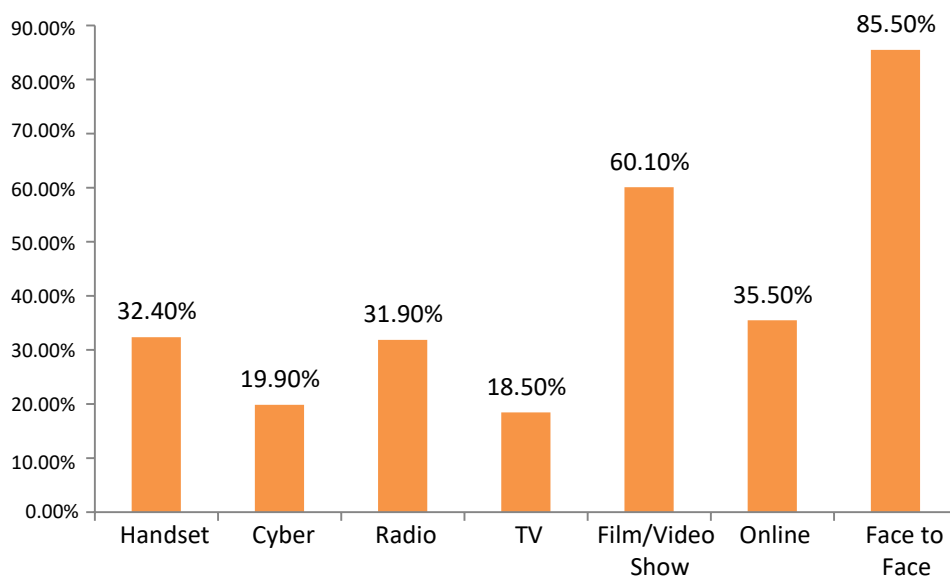**Source:** Field survey (2022)

Fig. 4: Chart showing the responses on ICT media used for the Adult Education programmes

Hypotheses

Ho$_1$: There is no significant difference between those that are aware of Adult Education programmes in Port Harcourt metropolis and those that are not.

Table 6: Responses on the medium/media through which they got the awareness and training

S/N	ITEM	YES	NO	RAW TOTAL
1	Observed frequency	827	783	1610
2	Expected frequency	158	158	316
	TOTAL	985	941	1926

X^2 calculated = 1.10

This showed that ICT did not play significant role in the awareness and training in AdultEducation programmes.

X^2 cal = 1.10
X^2 (.05, 1) = 3.841
1.10 < 3.841
Therefore, hypothesis is accepted

Ho$_2$: There is no significant difference between the responses of residents on the impact of Adult Education and those that had no impact.

Table 7: Responses on the impact of Adult Education on the respondents

S/N	ITEM	YES	NO	RAW TOTAL
1	Observed frequency	1402	522	1924
2	Expected frequency	158	158	316
	TOTAL	1560	680	2240

X^2 calculated = 0.08

This showed that the Adult Education programmes did not have any significant impact onthe respondents.

X^2 cal = 0.08
X^2 (.05, 1) = 3.841
0.08 < 3.841
Therefore, hypothesis is accepted

Ho$_3$: There is no significant difference between those that use ICT facilities for AdultEducation programmes and those that do not.

Table 8: Responses on the use of ICT facilities for Adult Education programmes

S/N	ITEM	YES	NO	RAW TOTAL
1	Observed frequency	852	252	1104
2	Expected frequency	158	158	316
	TOTAL	1010	410	1420

X^2 calculated = 0.04

This showed that the number of the respondents who used ICT for the Adult Education programmes was not significant.

X^2 cal = 0.04

X^2 (.05, 1) = 3.841

0.04 < 3.841

Therefore, hypothesis is accepted

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study showed that;

- Port Harcourt residents are aware of some Adult Education programmes in Port Harcourt metropolis and have attended some by sponsoring themselves through the programme.
- The residents accepted that Adult Education programmes are relevant to them and to the society but some respondents said that the Adult Education programmes they attended had no impact on them.
- Many of them got the awareness and training through face to face contact mainly and so Information and Communication Technology devices did not play key role in these trainings and awareness.

Discussion of Findings

From the analysis of the data, the results showed that some residents of Port Harcourt metropolis were aware of some Adult Education programmes around them. 65.8% said they were aware of some programmes while 34.2 said they are not. 80.7% said they got the awareness through face to face contacts while 19.3 said it was through ICT channels. 63.9% said they have attended such programmes before while 36.1% said they have not. Despite the enormous role ICT play in the effective implementation of Adult Education programmes as seen in literature (Igwe et al, 2016 and Wikipedia, n.d.), its usage is still at a very low level. This could be due to the fact that many persons are still not willing to change to the realities of ICT. ICT is still seen as a means to only make calls, receive messages and for financial transaction. Its role in e-learning and skill acquisition is yet to be realized in the Nigerian system. Another possible reason could be due to poor power supply and the cost of ICT facilities and services (Igwe et al, 2016). The ley way therefore is to resort to the usual face-to-face system. This trend has to be checked if Adult Education programmes can fulfill its mandate of giving equal access to education, skill acquisition, financial empowerment and enhancement of individual's life and career.

On the relevance of the programme as shown on figure 2; 41.9% said it was Very Relevant, 43.2% said it was Relevant, 12.5% said Irrelevant while 2.6% said Very Irrelevant. This response shows how important Adult Education programme is to the individual and the society as noted by (Ewuzie, 2012). Studies has shown that Adult Education programme is a programme that carters for every individual in the society. It cuts across every rank and file ranging from formal school dropouts, unemployed, employed, home wives and self- employed amongst others. Adult Education programme provides different opportunities for the individual to have access to education at your convenience and pace both formal and informal forms, opportunities for multiple streams of income, acquiring life skills and career opportunities and much more. So, if Nigeria as a nation must come out of being the poverty

capital of the world, effective implementation of Adult Education using ICT channels is a must. This is owing to the fact that the use of ICT facilities is a household issue today. There is hardly any adult in the society that does not have a phone for communication. Specifically in Nigeria, Nigeria Communication Commission (NCC) (2019) stated that about 259m mobiles lines are connected in Nigeria. It is a worthwhile tool therefore to aid their participation in Adult Education programmes if properly informed.

On the positive impact of Adult Education programme on the respondents as shown on figure 3; the result showed that Adult Education programme had impact on 31.8% and 35.5% while 26.7 and 22.1 said otherwise. This goes to support the work of (Nzeneri, 2010 and Anyanwu, 2012) stating that Adult Education play very key role in the lives of individuals, impacting in the home, career or job, finance and enhance individual life and wellbeing. As pointed out earlier, Adult Education programme help in building up the individual in every aspect which at the long run brings about the development of the society.

On the aspect of the impact on individuals as shown on table 4; 46.2% and 20.3% said the knowledge from such programme enhanced their personal life, 29.4% and 38.6% said it had impact on their job/career while 13.9% and 15.8% said it did enhance their finances. 25.0% and 35.1% said it impacted on their family life while 20.3 and 19.6 said otherwise. Adult Education as a programme focuses on target to meet specific needs. There is therefore need for effective awareness campaigns to sensitize the residents on the importance of participating actively in Adult Education programmes.

On the media/medium through which the respondents got the training, the result on table 5 showed that 32.4% used their handset/laptops, 19.9% cyber café, 31.9% Radio, 18.5% Television, 60.1% film show/video, 35.5% internet/online forum/fora and 85.8% used face-to-face mode. The result showed that face-to-face is the most preferred mode for the respondents. This is not far-fetched as this collaborates the findings on research question 4 that face-to-face was the most used mode for getting awareness on Adult Education programme. This suggests that the potentials of ICT in e-learning are yet to be fully harnessed. Relevant stakeholders need to do the needful to encourage the use of ICT for effective Adult Education programmes.

On the hypothesis 1, there is a low level of significance as the score showed 1.10 < 3.841; showing that significant number of Port Harcourt residents are not aware of Adult Education programme through ICT. Same goes for hypothesis 2, showing that there is no significant impact of Adult Education programme on residents. For hypothesis 3 there is no significant difference on the use of ICT for Adult Education programme awareness and trainings. The number that used ICT is not significant and so calls for more enlightenment on the benefit of ICT to enhance Adult Education programme and its positive impact on the society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study posits that residents of Port Harcourt metropolis are aware of some Adult Education programmes around them. The awareness however is mainly through face to face contact. The utilization of ICT devices in the awareness and participation in Adult Education programmes is low. What this portents is that the potentials of ICT is not yet fully being utilized especially in the education process. As such the benefits of Adult Education

programmes are yet to be achieved, hence its impact and relevance to Port Harcourt metropolis residents is very low. Port Harcourt is a major city in Nigeria with high population density of different categories that should benefit from Adult Education programmes. If the residents do not take part in such programmes, it therefore means that these potentials that would have contributed to the growth and development of the nation's economy will be lost. Nigeria, coming out of the position of the world poverty capital will just be an issue of paying lip service.

Again, some of the residents said that Adult Education programmes is not relevant to them, as such would not see the need to pay attention to them. The role of ICT in enhancing education delivery cannot be overemphasized. It is therefore imperative that the use of ICT in Adult Education programme should be encouraged if Nigeria will come out of the present tag as the poverty capital of the world.

Recommendation
Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made;
1. Government should sponsor and encourage enlightment campaigns and programmes to sentisize Port Harcourt residents on the need and importance of engaging in Adult Education programmes.
2. Government to pay serious attention to Adult Education in policy formulation and monitoring as it is key to engaging every individual in the society hence enabling themto contribute meaningfully to national growth and development.
3. Government, Non-government Organisation (NGO), corporal bodies and other well-meaning individuals should sponsor Adult Education programmes, and organize them in the neigbour hoods so as to reach the residents.
4. They should also organize training on the use of ICT devices for e-learning and training.
5. The Government should subsidize the cost of ICT facilities so as to make it accessible to residents.
6. Government to improve on power supply and enhance network coverage so as to reach residents.

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