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# ESSENTIAL FACTORS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY TEACHING AND ADULT LEARNING FOR EXCELLENCE IN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA

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***ABSTRACT***
*Adult education is a body of organized educational programmes offered for youth, men and women who had no opportunity of formal schooling at early years of their lives. Adult education which is usually referred to as 'second chance' education encompasses literacy, vocational, technical and other non-formal educational programmes offered to cater for various individual needs and dispositions for them to acquire requisite information, ideas, knowledge and skills which will enable them solve their problems in the society. Notwithstanding the importance of adult education towards human and national development, yet, this programme suffers a lot of neglect from all corners. This negligence, owing to some factors, has kept many adult education programmes in a devastating and distressful state; making it impossible for improving quality teaching and adult learning for excellence in these programmes. Upon this premise, this paper discussed the essential factors necessary for improving quality teaching and adult learning for excellence in adult education programmes in Nigeria. When quality is obtained in teaching and learning, then, it becomes possible to achieve a high degree of excellence in adult education programmes. Explanation of concepts such as quality teaching and adult learning including their attributes, excellence, adult education coupled with its objectives, programmes and importance, were provided in the paper. Further discussed were issues that bordered on quality problems affecting teaching and learning for excellence and essential factors required for improving quality teaching and learning for excellence in adult education. The paper was concluded with a few suggestions.*

**Keywords:** Essential, Factors, Improving, Quality, Teaching, Learning, Excellence, Adult, Education, Programmes

## Introduction

Recently in the Nigerian education sector, the issues such as poor academic achievements, teacher inefficiency, inadequate facilities, among others, bordering on improving quality for achievement of excellence in all educational programmes and adult education inclusive, has become a serious matter of discourse by all education stakeholders. The poor and devastating situation of adult education programmes which is becoming more alarming in the country is beginning to raise a lot of dust and doubts on the administration and management of adult education in the country. Regardless of the poor situation of adult education programmes, this programme has a lot of

benefits especially to national development and the adults in the society, both young and old, men and women and youth who had no opportunity of formal schooling during their childhood and youthful years. Adult education incorporates various formal, informal and non-formal educational programmes designed in all ramifications for all-round development of all individuals, no matter the age, sex, race, tribe or one's locality. Nzeneri (2010) observed that adult education is a consciously planned and systematically organized programme of activities which occurs outside the formal school system. It involves all aspects of education which embraces all types of life-long education, informal and non-formal education, environmental education, family life and health education, political and civic education, among many others, vital for man's liberation and adjustment in his immediate environment. Adult education, according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013), has been established with certain goals and objectives, and they been highlighted further in the chapter. This programme is important to both the development of youth and adult personality including national development in Nigeria. There are however some quality problems affecting the administration of adult education programmes in the country which needs to be resolved. Besides, quality as described within the context of this chapter entails the worth or worthiness of something towards achieving desirable results and positive outcomes. It emphasizes of the standard of something just like teaching and learning in adult education programmes to sufficiently achieve educational goals and objectives.

Observations showcase that many adult education programmes have gone into extinction or closure as a result of these quality problems. Many adult education programmes are challenged with such problems like poor enrolment and completion, high rate of dropout in the programmes, inadequate teaching resources leading to poor academic achievements, facilitators' (teachers) inefficiency, among others. All these aforementioned quality problems and challenges has created a lot of difficulties in various adult education programmes, making it impossible to improve quality in the teaching and learning processes for achievement of excellence. And when quality teaching coupled with quality adult learning cannot be sustained in the adult education programmes, therefore, it becomes difficult to achieve excellence in the programmes which has negative consequences on national development. The poor state of adult education programmes caused by the poor quality of teaching and learning provided for adult learners could have negative consequences on the kind of products been delivered in the society for the national economy. A country with weak human development index (HDI) suffers a lot setback in this information and technology age. It is only through quality education, that effective and sound individuals are empowered and inculcated with the capabilities to render active services for socio-economic development of the society. Hence, the need to resolve all the problems and challenges affecting adult education programmes by taking into considerations all essentials factors requisite for improving quality teaching and adult learning for excellence in adult education. This will go a long way not only in saving or sustaining the existence of many of the adult education programmes from decaying or going into extinction but enable the adult learners have access to quality education that will lead to national development. Discussions in this paper therefore centers of those essential factors for improving quality teaching and adult learning for excellence in adult education programmes. Detailed explanations have been done to give clear meaning on few concepts; while other discussions regarding the topic were made under different sections with subheadings in the paper.

## Explanation of Concepts

### Quality Teaching

Quality entails a distinctive attribute or characteristics possessed by something. When something is what you expect it to be then it is perceived as quality. Thus, quality is a fulfillment of expectation and the "fitness for use" which is believed is actually one of Dr. Juran's definitions. Spacey (2017) defined quality as the value of things relative to their purpose. The Quality Digest (2001) defined quality in several manners, which includes that, quality is the expression of human excellence. Quality is doing the right things right and is uniquely defined by each individual. Quality is the ability of a product or service to meet a customer's expectations

for that product or service. A product or process that is reliable, and that performs its intended function is said to be a quality product. Quality is the degree to which something meets or exceeds the expectations of its consumers. Continuously improving upon one's practices helps one to stay "in" with the competition. Quality also means conformance to valid requirements. Where to be valid, the requirements must be proven (in advance by management) to: 1) be achievable in operation; and 2) meet the needs of the intended user. Quality is the ability of a company to identify their customers' requirements, then meet or exceed their expectations to the mutual benefit and satisfaction of both organizations. Quality is doing right things right. It is customer orientation, innovation, teamwork, and everyone's responsibility. It is a "system" which produces a product, service, information or delivery, on target with minimal variance which meet or exceeds the customers' needs, now and in the future. Quality is the extent to which products, services, processes, and relationships are free from defects, constraints, and items which do not add value for customers. It is a Strategic, systems approach to continuous improvement.

Quality is a perceived degree of excellence with a minimum usually set forth by the customer. The production of a commodity which conforms to standards applied to said commodity, be they mechanical standards, society's standards etc. Quality means providing customer with innovative products or services characteristics/attributes and defects free which provide fitness for use (Quality Digest, 2001). Teaching, on the other hand can be denoted as the transmission of knowledge or information, skills or ability and attitude or culture from the teacher to the students or from instructor to the learner. It encompasses sharing, guiding, counselling, evaluating, directing, inspiring and more. From the aspect of the subject matter, teaching is what is taught or as an occupation or profession (Nzeneri, 2010). Brookfield (2001:60) sees teaching of adults as "a means of assisting adults to become self-directed learners and working with groups of learners''. Teaching as further denoted by Nzeneri (2010) is both an art and science. As an art, it is stresses experimentation, creativity and individuality. As a science, it is the application of knowledge gained from scientific research in all areas of learning, including what is known about human beings and how to help them learn most efficiently and effectively. The primary objective of teaching is to facilitate learning which involves the process of interaction aimed at acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, among others. The best test of quality teaching is the amount of student learning. The teaching objectives should be centred on the adult learners' needs or goals. In order to promote quality teaching process, the adult instructor also known as the facilitator is expected to realize that adult learners are curious individuals who desires to be motivated and by so doing the learning senses are appealed to through various methods and techniques in order to encourage maximum learning. Quality teaching is however usually determined by the teaching-learning outcomes. This means the amount of learning the students have been able to achieve from the teaching-learning encounter. The more effective the teaching, the more probably greater amount of learning outcomes/performance (Nzeneri, 2010).

**Adult Learning**

Scholars have used different parameters such as the chronological, historical, social, psychological and physiological (biological) parameters, while describing who an adult is. But there has not been any substantive definition of who an adult is except for the society where one finds himself or herself. Invariably, an adult is defined by the society where one finds himself. An adult, by definition within the Nigerian context is one who has attained the official age of 18years. Such a person according to Nzeneri (2010) is socially, physically, emotionally and psychologically matured. However, individual referred to as adults are socio-economically independent. Having defined an adult, learning is simply the acquisition of information, ideas and knowledge. Nzeneri (2010) further described learning as acquisition of that which is worthwhile to those who are committed to it (learners) for positive changes and results. Adult learning is in essence associated with the adult learners' ability to acquire knowledge which results into changes. Rossum and Hamer (2010) viewed at adult learning from five different perspectives, which are that; learning is the increase of knowledge; and it is equally to memorize and

the ability to reproduce what was memorized. Learning is the acquisition of facts, procedures etcetera, which can be retained and/or utilized in practice. Learning is the abstraction of meaning; and it is an interpretative process aimed at the understanding of reality.

Adult Learning is seen as using a way of thinking (a skill) to arrive at an "informed view" (Rossum & Hamer, 2010). According to Nzeneri (2010), adult learning is relatively permanent change in behaviour. It can also be described as the process of getting to acquire subject matter, habit, attitude, perceptions, interest, preferences, social adjustment, skills and ideas. Since teaching and learning must be based on learner's experiences, the principles of learning demands the application of variety of methods and techniques in order to take care of individual differences and to facilitate learning. Immediate feedback on the extent of learning achievement is a guide to further learning. The availability and improvisation of learning resources (human and non-human) are then, necessary conditions for effective learning. In citing an instance, excellence of adult facilitator's presentation of the subject and the quality of available reading and computing materials do influence the amount of learning (Nzeneri, 2010). Teaching and learning in adult education programmes therefore, involves a two-way communication process between the facilitators (known as teachers in formal setting) and adult learners. Nzeneri (2010, p.85) gave five descriptive criteria of teaching and learning in adult education to involve:

a. A situation whereby somebody is consciously and deliberately doing the teaching;
b. Somebody is being taught;
c. Some content or material, information, knowledge and so on is being imparted;
d. The person performing the art intends that recipient should learn; and
e. The process of bringing about learning is morally acceptable and pedagogically sound.

Adult learning as described in this chapter is however, a given situation where an adult engages himself in any educational programme designed to assist the adult learner to acquire specific information, knowledge and ideologies about a particular subject matter so as to bring about positive changes in the individual's life. Hence, teaching and learning, described as the process of facilitating learning in adult education is very demanding and should constitute the adoption of andragogical principles and practices warranting it to be of best or utmost quality. Thus, the attributes of quality teaching and learning for excellence have been identified.

**Attributes of Quality Teaching and Learning for Excellence in Adult Education Programmes**

The attributes of quality teaching as coined out from the principles of teaching effectiveness by Nzeneri (2010) includes knowing learners' educational needs, their strengths and weaknesses, socio-cultural and economic background, home factors and social roles. Quality teaching and learning should centre on the adult learners' experiences because they have rich reservoir of experiences which must be properly utilized to energize or motivate learning. Quality teaching and learning in adult education should combine theory with practice which involves use of practicals, field experiences and experimentation. Quality and learning teaching should provide varieties of methodologies and techniques that appeal to many sense organs used in learning – seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and feeling; which leads to effective teaching. Quality teaching and learning also provides immediate feedback which enables the adult learners determine the extent they have achieved in the learning task. Quality teaching and learning demands that the facilitators be resourceful to denote learners' individual differences, improve learners' participation through adequate motivation, and provide conducive environment with adequate teaching resources.

Summarizing the attributes of quality teaching and learning, just as those from Nzeneri (2010), the Eberly Centre (2013) outlined the following;

i. Quality teaching and learning involves acquiring relevant knowledge about students and using that knowledge to inform the course design and classroom teaching.

ii. Quality teaching and learning involves aligning the three major components of instruction: learning objectives, assessments, and instructional activities. Teaching is more effective and student learning is enhanced when (a) instructors articulate a clear set of

learning objectives (i.e., the knowledge and skills that we expect students to demonstrate by the end of a course); (b) the instructional activities (e.g., case studies, labs, discussions, readings) support these learning objectives by providing goal-oriented practice; and (c) the assessments (e.g., tests, papers, problem sets, performances) provide opportunities for students to demonstrate and practice the knowledge and skills articulated in the objectives, and for instructors to offer targeted feedback that can guide further learning.

iii. Quality teaching and learning involves articulating explicit expectations regarding learning outcomes and policies which leads to a more productive learning environment for all students. Again, being clear about the expectations and communicating them explicitly helps students learn more and perform better.

iv. Quality teaching and learning involves prioritizing the knowledge and skills focused on. This involves (a) recognizing the parameters of the course (e.g., class size, students' backgrounds and experiences, course position in the curriculum sequence, number of course units), (b) setting our priorities for student learning, and (c) determining a set of objectives that can be reasonably accomplished.

v. Quality teaching and learning involves recognizing and overcoming the expert blind spots. Facilitators need to identify and explicitly communicate to students the knowledge and skills taken for granted, so that students can see expert thinking in action and practice in order to apply it themselves.

vi. Quality teaching and learning involves adopting appropriate teaching roles to support the learning goals. These roles should be chosen in service of the learning objectives and in support of the instructional activities. For example, if the objective is for students to be able to analyze arguments from a case or written text, the most productive instructor role might be to frame, guide and moderate a discussion.

vii. Quality teaching and learning involves progressively refining the subjects based on reflection and feedback. Teaching requires adapting. Facilitators need to continually reflect on their teaching and be ready to make changes when appropriate (e.g. something is not working, we want to try something new, the student population has changed, or there are emerging issues in our fields). Knowing what and how to change requires facilitators to examine relevant information of their own teaching effectiveness.

**Excellence**

Excellence is a word which simply showcases perfection of something. It has to do with an outstanding feature. Excellence is the highest level of performance or exceptional performance. Describing excellence, Chemuturi (n.d) says is a continuously moving target that can be pursued through actions of integrity, being frontrunner in terms of products/services provided that are reliable and safe for the intended users, meeting all obligations and continuously learning and improving in all spheres to pursue the moving target. The key words in Chemuturi's definition of excellence are that; excellence changes with time; what is excellent today might not be excellent after a while, so one must give on striving. Excellence is attainable, but as the target moves, one needs to continuously pursue to remain excellent. The path to excellence is through the specified actions/deeds and not through empty words. Rhetoric does not achieve excellence; actions achieve excellence. Excellence is integrity which involves keeping far away from anything that can even remotely be called "dishonest". One needs to continuously upgrade to remain excellent; and excellence entails a continuous process; as it is not enough to attain excellence, not enough to continuously learn, but to improve continuously, to remain excellent. In adult education programmes, excellence in teaching and learning means a lot of things which includes the measuring standard of performance in practices through certain indicators. It also showcases outstanding fitness for purpose of adult education programmes in achieving learners' outcomes.

**Adult Education**

There are a lot of definitions of adult education given by various scholars and authorities. Besides, education according to Nzeneri (2010) is involves a process of transmission of knowledge and understanding and some kind of cognitive perspective which is not inert. Education also embraces all experiences through which an individual

acquires knowledge or ideas, develops his intellect and strengthens his will. Experiences, to Nzeneri, implies all the information acquired by the individual through the senses. By this definition, it shows that adult learning which have been previously defined in the chapter involves a process. Onyishi (2004) defined adult education as all efforts at improving the provision and implementation of development programmes which have basic education or training component. The programmes usually takes place outside formal education setting whose process is without the rigid forms of traditional schooling such as regimented curricula, classroom arrangements and set syllabus strictly maintained. It is a process aimed at empowering poor people both the disadvantaged group and those who had been kept out of decision-making structures in the society. Adult education is indisputably lifelong education which includes formal, informal and non-formal learning extended throughout the life span of an individual to attain the fullest possible development in personal, social and professional life. The informal aspect is experienced by all and influenced by parental, social, economic, political and socio-cultural and educational background. The non-formal aspect covers training and instruction outside the formal education system and ranges from apprenticeship to national mass literacy. Hassan (2009) defined adult education as any organized, systematic education activities outside the framework of formal school system designed to provide selective types of learning to particular sub-groups in the population, adults as well as children. It includes lifelong learning which is learning activity undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence within a personal, civic, social and/or employment related perspective. Adult education is continuing education and training interested exclusively in efficiency and employability, adding both subjective and objective educational concerns. UNESCO as cited in Adebola (2014, p.109) gave a broader and universal definition of adult education by highlighting that:

> "it is the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level or method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools or colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications, or turn them into a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced, independent, social, economic and cultural development".

Adult education is however, considered virtually as any activity for adults designed to bring about learning which encompasses a full continuum from basic literacy, post literacy, vocational and work-related education, distance learning, human resource development and continuing professional development; and whose major responsibility is to help the adults adapt to change and live productively in the world of change (Obidiegwu, 2013). Okafor (1987 as cited in Nzeneri, 2010) perceived adult education as that form of planned education programme that is properly planned and methodologically applied, for the provision of remedial, continuing and/or other aspects or forms of education to adults or adolescents outside the formal education system. From all these definitions, the objectives of adult education have been enlisted in the National Policy on Education (NPE) by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013).

**Objectives of Adult Education**

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) outlined the objectives of adult education under section 4, p.30 of the NPE as follows:

i. to provide functional basic education for adults and youths who have never had advantage of any formal education or who left school too early and did not complete their primary education, which includes the nomads, migrant families, the disable and other categories or groups, especially the disadvantaged gender;
ii. to provide remedial and life-long education for those youths and adults who prematurely dropped out of the formal school system or people who did not complete secondary education;

iii. to provide in-service and on-the-job vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills;
iv. to provide further education for different categories of completers of the formal education system in order to improve basic knowledge and skills; and
v. to give the adult citizens of the country necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment.

In line with the above objectives, Adegbija (2000) as cited in Ezugoh (2017) stated that adult education is becoming more and more inevitable in Nigeria educational system because of the increase in illiteracy. As a result of poverty caused by the poor economic situations, it offers a wide range of programmes that covers a wider populace and target groups such as: the illiterate youths and adults, who have never had the opportunity of formal education. Children of school age, who dropped out from formal school, the rural dwellers and nomads. These categories of people are either fully illiterates, semi-literates, basically literate or post-literate. Adegbija further classified the following as target groups: unschooled children, who are children of school age that are unfortunate because they cannot be enlisted in a formal educational system due to poverty, ignorance, inability to cope with formal education as a result of drop-out. Illiterate youths and adults, who are people that have never had the opportunity of formal education or its equivalent. Rural dwellers, involving majority of the Nigerian populace who live far away from urban areas or locations where formal education is accessible. Nomads, who are people that have to move from place to place, in search of "greener pastures" either for their herds or farmlands. However, the achievement of the objectives of mass literacy, adult and non-formal education as stated in the National Policy on Education will be better enhanced through the effective utilization of educators and adequate instructional media as it is done in the formal educational system (Adegbija, 2000, as cited in Ezugoh, 2017). Given the objectives of adult education, the FRN (2013) asserted further that adult education programmes will be designed and established in the Nigerian society to eradicate illiteracy within shortest possible time. Adult programmes therefore, covers a wide scope as enlisted in several scholarly works which has been discussed further below.

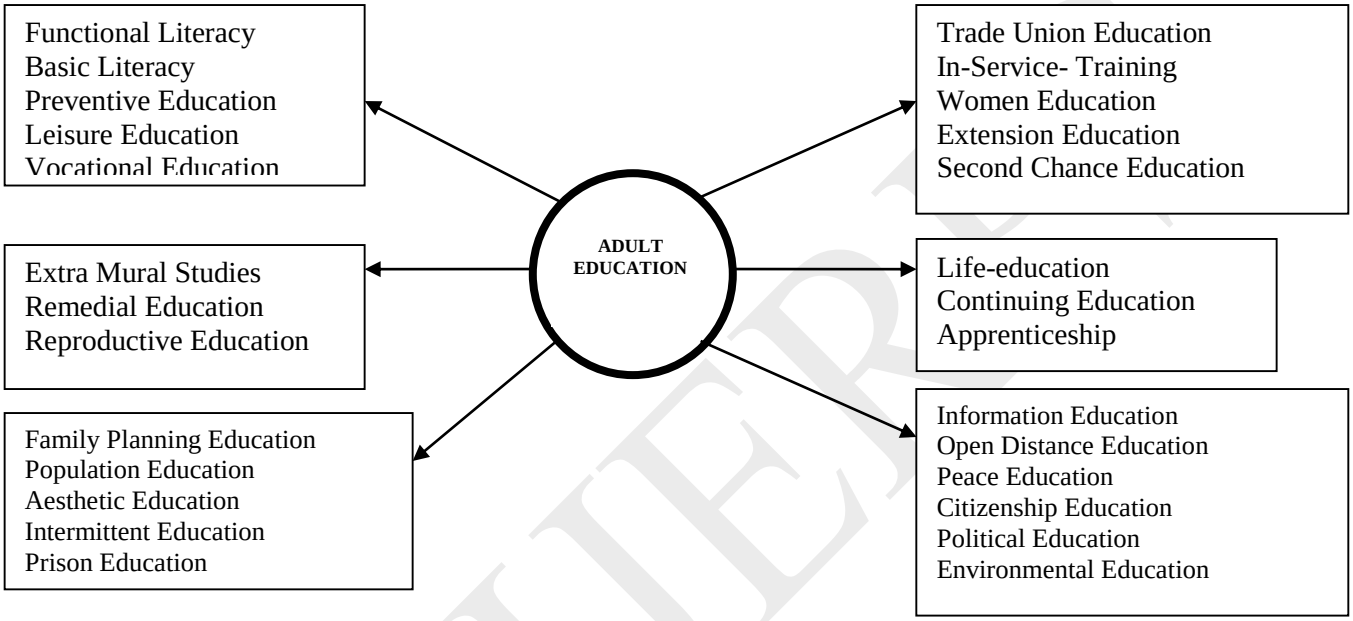
**Programmes of Adult Education**

Nzeneri (2010) opined that adult education embraces all experiences and information acquired by the individual through the senses in order to gain knowledge or ideas, develop his intellect and strengthen his will. The programmes include basic and post literacy, continuing education, extra-mural studies, university extension services, civic and political education, aesthetic, moral and cultural education, environmental education, liberal education, life-long education, extension and mass education, prison education, remedial education, among others. The scope of adult education according to Ezema (2008), Egbezor and Okanezi (2008) and Onajite, Chukwuma-Ezugoh and Olaye (2017), embraces functional literacy education and life skill training provided for illiterates, neo-illiterates and drop-outs designed to empower and impart ability to function in daily life, alongside with literacy and numeracy, social awareness and functionality components. Adult education covers education for out-of-school children to provide skill training to empower those who are not enrolled in schools like the street kids and al'majiri education. It embraces extension education for farmers and fishermen among others, designed to make positive changes and turn around their occupations for income generation. Women and girl child education is provided for those especially in the rural areas to help them acquire knowledge, upgrade their technical and vocational skills, and develop their abilities for participation in economic activities. Adult education embraces citizenship and political education which provides leadership training and creates awareness of the cultural and political environments designed to enlighten people concerning the state of affairs in the society. Life-long education is designed to give all categories of learners that continues and prolongs what an individual had already learnt (Egbezor & Okanezi, 2008). Workers education is designed for workers in industries, schools or other institutions to enable them improve their skills, creativity or upgrade their knowledge and competence. Rural and community development education as part of adult education programmes offers programmes that equip the

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community members with the necessary knowledge and skills for self-improvement and empowerment (Ezema, 2008; Onajite, Chukwuma-Ezugoh & Olaye, 2017). In describing the programmes of adult education, Aderinoye (2004) used a diagram to list them as: remedial education, extra-mural studies, adult literacy programmes, functional literacy education, open/distance learning, continuing education, preventive education, workers' education, extension programmes, etc.

**Figure 1.** Scope and Forms of Adult Education Programmes in Nigeria




**Source**: (Adapted from Aderinoye, R. (2004). *Adult and non-formal education and the global challenges, issues and perspectives.* Ibadan: Gabesther Educational Publisher).

The programmes in the diagram have played important roles nation-building, human empowerment, upgrading and raising human competence, creativity and skills improvement for personal and national development and peaceful co-existence in the society (Onajite, Chukwuma-Ezugoh & Olaye, 2017). Therefore, the importance of adult education programmes to the adults and national development have been discussed further in the next section.

**Importance of Adult Education Programmes to the Adults and National Development**

Adult education programmes has a lot of benefits for both the adults and national development. This is so because adult learners' interest, needs and aspirations are covered in these programmes which equips them with the necessary competences for national development. It is only adult who are seen as independent that can effectively participate in the national economy, therefore, adult education programmes are designed for immediate application in various sectors. Hence, their importance towards the development of the Nigerian society and national development. Development according to Ekundayo (2015) is the direction of capacity building towards self-sustenance growth and self-fulfillment as it affects individuals or institutions in a society. National development on the other hand entails the overall development or a collective socioeconomic, political and technological advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through development planning which can be described as the country's collection of strategies, policies, plans, programmes and projects and others, mapped out by

the government (Ekundayo, 2015). This further implies that all adult education programmes are designed to enable adult to make solid and firm contributions towards national development. National development therefore incorporates all the socio-economic, political, cultural, religious and environmental spheres, activities or aspects of the society. According to Onajite, Chukwuma-Ezugoh and Olaye (2017) adult education programmes lays solid foundations for social and economic progress including political stability in the society where awareness is stressed out about people's civic responsibilities and rights. A truly educated citizenry is one of the deterrents to dictatorship and oligarchy. Adult education programmes liberates people mentally to appreciate life, take interest and pride in one's own culture, and recognize the importance of economic recovery in this hard times which the society is facing corona virus pandemic (COVID-19). Adult education creates employment for individuals to become self-employed, especially that residence in the rural areas (Onajite, Chukwuma-Ezugoh & Olaye, 2017). Nzeneri (2010) stating the importance of adult education programmes indicated that they are very useful in: keeping up with new knowledge as second chance education; filling the educational gaps for dropouts; serving as basis for social change; and for the mobilization of the people for development. Adult education programmes serves as important tool for man's liberation from poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, diseases and hunger, among others. They develop individual personality for ideal service to their community. Adult education programmes foster a vision of social responsibility; liberates the sympathies, develops intelligence and unfold in individuals the natural capacity of the individual so as to make them fit and make their contributions to the life of the society (Nzeneri, 2010). Townsend Coles cited in Nzeneri (2010) posited that adult education helps people to develop critical understanding of major contemporary problems and social changes. It enables people to develop the attitude for acquiring new knowledge, qualifications, attitudes for forms of behaviour. The programmes assures that individual's consciousness and effective incorporation into the world of work. These programmes increase awareness of the relationship between people and their physical and cultural environment, likewise create understanding of and respect for the diversity of customs and cultures, among others. From all the above discussions, the role and importance of adult education programmes cannot be overemphasized. Also, given the importance of adult education programmes in the country, yet, these problems suffer a lot of quality problems. Attainment of quality education and excellence seems to be difficult to realize. The situation of poor quality of adult education programmes especially in the areas of teaching and learning has cost them so many problems such as inefficiency and lack of productivity from the facilitators, poor outcomes and results, poor academic performances and achievements, negligence by those in authorities and stakeholders, many programmes have short down or closed because poor enrolment and increased dropout rate of adult learners without completion, among others. Hence, quality problems affecting teaching and learning for excellence have further been discussed below in the paper.

**Quality Problems affecting Teaching and Learning for Excellence in Adult Education Programmes**

Adult education just like any other educational programme remains the key to human development. It is seen as the driving force for meaningful developments in every human society. The goal of any educational system is to provide or develop a balanced individual capable of surviving in his environment and contributing meaningfully towards the survival of that society to which he belongs. Notwithstanding the importance and benefits of adult education programmes to the adults and national development, still, teaching and learning suffers a lot of quality problems creating difficulties for excellence in the programmes. Most of the quality problems found in teaching and learning in adult education programmes as highlighted by Wanyama (2014) include: unconducive learning environment which continues to affect teaching and learning, problem of curricular content, de-motivated facilitators who cannot make significant impact in teaching and learning, attendance related problems, lack of availability of teaching resources, machines and equipment for effective teaching and learning, poor performance of adult learners in the literacy programmes, use of wrong teaching methodologies and techniques, poor

and inefficient feedback system, problem of ineffective policy implementation which continues to affect teaching and learning in adult education programmes, inconsistency in programme monitoring, supervision and evaluation, bad governance, shortage of qualified teachers or facilitators, among others. In brief, teaching and learning in adult education programmes suffers a lot of problems. A trip to many literacy centres in the country shows that many centres are in poor and deplorable state lacking many of the necessary teaching facilitators. Most centres lack adequate facilitators and even where they found, majority of them lack the basic qualifications to teach in the adult education programmes. All these problems necessitate the need for quality improvement in the teaching and learning activities for excellence in adult education programmes. To this end, adult education programmes which has been universally recognized globally by governments of various nations throughout the world is a response in order to eradicate illiteracy within the shortest possible time. Essentially, modern educational techniques, frameworks and strategies shall be increasingly utilized and improved upon at all levels of the education system including adult education programmes for effectiveness in the teaching and learning processes. One of such framework is the provision of essential factors required for improving quality teaching and adult learning for excellence in adult education programmes and they have equally been identified and discussed below.

**Essential Factors required for Improving Quality Teaching and Adult Learning for Excellence in Adult Education Programmes**

Many countries globally, including African countries like Nigeria have come to the realization that adult education can play a significant role in national development and this has ultimately culminated in the improvement of quality teaching and learning for excellence which aimed at making adult learners have opportunities and access to quality education for their citizens who missed the opportunity for formal education. Certain essentials factors are required for improving quality teaching and adult learning for excellence in adult education programmes and they include the conducive learning environment, use of adequate professional facilitators, availability of facilities and teaching resources, adoption of new teaching methodologies and techniques, provision of effective feedback system, use of effective assessment and evaluation procedures, effective policy implementation on adult education, constant programme supervision, monitoring and evaluation and so on.

**Conducive Learning Environment:** the learning environment is the first and foremost thing to consider while setting up any educational programme. How conducive the learning environment is, determines learners' outcomes. A well-conducive learning environment will always promote excellence in teaching and learning. The success of adult education programmes in terms of achieving its goals as stated in the National Policy on Education by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) cannot be possible without a conducive learning environment. Brookfied (2001) opined that the creation of a good atmosphere for learning will motivate adult learners to learn because they will be learning with understanding which stands to promote excellent teaching and learning. Nzeneri (2010) opined that a favourable and conducive teaching and learning environment energizes and motivates interest of the adult learners; the contrary is the case with unfavourable environment which causes learners to drop out of the system because of frustration.

**Use of adequate Professional Facilitators in the Teaching and Learning:** facilitators still remains an important hub for executing the teaching and learning task. All the teaching and learning experiences rest on the facilitator who should apply various techniques and styles in order to promote effective teaching and learning. Heimlich and Norland (2004) expressed that in the learning experience, participants are influenced by many things: the facilitator, the physical environment, the books and other learners. The learning that the facilitator believes is the purpose of the exchange and is compounded by other lessons that occur simultaneously. These complex lessons are often integrated by the individual as part of the learning experiences. Thus, it remains the major responsibility of the educators in the literacy centres to ensure that adult learners are motivated to participate actively in literacy

programmes by facilitating learning. This will enable them to learn and develop the technical skills and knowledge needed for them to cope in life experiences. Brookfied (2001:134) further stated that the facilitators should appear confident, open to different approaches, present an authentic personality in the class, exhibit willingness to go beyond class objectives, and be able to create a good atmosphere for learning. Adult learning can be maintained if the learner is motivated to learn. This is possible and occurs only when facilitators are likewise motivated on the job as well as to give in their best. In this regards, effective learning depends on the effectiveness of facilitation methods that are used by the facilitator during the facilitation process.

Wanyama (2014) in a study confirmed that full time teachers, studies have shown, stabilize any education programme and contribute heavily in the mobilization and participation of learners. However, findings revealed a 40% decline in adult teacher recruitment as well as a high turnover of teachers thus hindering access to the adult education programmes. Those who left service either on early retirement, new opportunities, retrenchment or even death have not been replaced. Karan (1996 as cited in Wanyama, 2014) for instance attributed the declining enrolment in Adult Education to the inability to recruit adequate and qualified teachers or facilitators. Majority of the facilitators currently serving are either self-help or part-time who are paid a token for volunteering to teach adults. They are poorly remunerated, lack essential skills and mostly come from the rank of retired teachers or O-level Form four school leavers. Even the foreign funded Education services, (Singh, 1999 as cited in Wanyama, 2014) observed, are sometimes also delivered by unpaid volunteers such as students and activists who may or may not have the professional training required for the job. A UNESCO Report on Adult Education of 2005 sums up these in its observation that Adult Educators are inappropriately trained, hold minimal qualifications, are underpaid and work in educationally unfavourable conditions. This has prompted outbursts from many education activists, for instance, (Mulama, 2011 also cited in Wanyama, 2014) asserts that it is a mockery of justice to have only a handful of teachers to cater for the millions of adults, as with no teachers, learners may not see the reason for attending classes. Additionally, Nzeneri (2010) further highlighted that facilitating teaching and learning effectiveness is usually determined by the outcomes. This means the amount of learning students have been able to achieve from the teaching-learning encounter. The more effective facilitation is, the more probably greater the amount of learning outcomes and performance. To ensure learning effectiveness through facilitation, therefore educators are expected to observe certain principles such as; identifying the learners and their needs, use learners' experiences, combine theory with practice, provide conducive environment, provide variety of methods and techniques, provide immediate feedback and become resourceful through the use of varieties of teaching resources and methodologies. Educators can achieve all these in the adult literacy programmes only when they are highly motivated to boost their morale and competence towards high productivity and efficiency. Of course facilitators cannot be effective in teaching without adequate motivation. Ezugoh (2017) opined that adequate motivation leads to job satisfaction which propels employees to put in their best in their work. Such motivational strategies like adequate incentives, use of effective reward systems, participatory decision making process, adequate in-service training and retraining, provision of conducive physical learning environment and teaching resources enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning for excellence in the adult education programmes.

**Availability of Teaching Resources and Facilities:** teaching resources, facilities and equipment are very important when it comes to achievement of excellence in adult education programmes. Without adequate teaching and learning resources and facilities, it will be difficult to achieve positive outcomes in the environment. Wanyama (2014) observed that teaching and learning materials and resources have long been established as great facilitators of learning at all levels of education, adult education programmes included. According to (Wanyama, 2014), the quality of education process at all levels is enhanced by the availability of teaching and learning materials and resources such as instructional materials, textbooks, teachers' guides as well as physical facilities. Moja (2000) study as cited in Wanyama (2014) also pointed out that

poor conditions of buildings due to lack of maintenance and repair may cause brain drain of teaching and administrative personnel out of the education sector or even worse, contribute to high adult learner drop-outs from school. Most previous studies indicate a lack of seriousness in adult education provision especially in equipping the centers with the necessary materials to enhance a conducive learning environment.

Kebathi (2008) study also cited in Wanyama (2014) pointed out that adult learning centers lack adequate and relevant teaching and learning materials and that most of the learning venues are community owned places such as public schools, churches, mosques and halls. The furniture in these centers is also inappropriate. This may de-motivate the facilitators and learners and result in absenteeism or even drop-outs. The lack of, or inadequacy of physical and instructional facilities in government owned adult education training enters (Nnazov, 2005) observed, is indicative of neglect or the marginal status of adult education. This mainly is due to the low amounts of budgetary resources devoted to adult education programmes that are insufficient to cater for all the needs. The UNESCO report on the quality of education of 2006 pointed out that there is a noticeable tendency to under-invest in adult education programmes across many nations of the world. For instance, Wanyama (2014) asserted further that if public subsidies to individual learners are restricted to formal education or vocational training, then, there is a danger that general adult education will be considerably weakened. Onyenemezu (2012) opined that policy makers and the planners of adult education programmes in Nigeria need to incorporate into adult education those innovations which have made the 21st century unique. A fundamental requirement which adult education programme planners need to incorporate into its teaching and learning schedule is the knowledge and practice of information and communication technology (ICT). The 21st century is characterized with exposition of knowledge and hi-technology which has aided development in different sectors. A century where communication and infrastructural facilities such as telephones, fax and computer networking are tools that are turning the world into a global village. Adult education programmes should not lag behind in this era of information and communication technology and knowledge exposition. A foundation value which adult education should incorporate and integrate in the 21st century programme is adult education which is capable of educating the adult members of the Nigerian community a culture of peace and harmony (Onyenemezu, 2012).

**Adoption of New Teaching Methodologies and Techniques**: the world is becoming a global village where the use of technological devices is flourishing. Facilitators should be able to adopt new techniques in order to promote excellence in teaching and learning in adult education programmes. Addae (2016) discovered in a study that facilitators in adult education programmes still make use of the teacher-centred method of teaching neglecting the learner-centred with other strategies. Addae (2016) opined that one of the pillars for successful adult education implementation is qualified educators or facilitators. That is, if adult education programmes can be successful in achieving their goals of imparting knowledge, skills, and attitudes to learners, facilitators must be equipped with the various strategies, methods, and techniques for teaching adults. This implies that facilitators must have formal training in the art of teaching adults. It is, however, unfortunate to note that in some cases some of the facilitators for both adult education programmes are not professionally trained. Quan-Baffour (2000:8) contended that since most facilitators of Adult Basic Education and Training programmes were formally trained to teach children, they might lack the knowledge and skills for handling adult learners or classes, as such, they need to adopt new teaching methodologies and techniques. And by implementing new teaching styles, techniques, behaviours, methods and strategies which are not suitable for adult teaching/learning situations, educators might cause many of these "volunteers" of learning to abandon their studies altogether, resulting in non-achievement of teaching and learning goals (Quan-Baffour, 2000).

In line with Quan-Baffour's reasoning, Addae (2016) observed that the methods employed by educators in teaching adult learners can either promote or impede effective learning among such learners. This is because an educator's choice of teaching methods and techniques can facilitate or inhibit the achievement of learning goals

coupled with attaining excellence in teaching and learning. This has warranted the need for adoption of new methods and techniques of teaching in adult education programmes in Nigeria for achievement of excellence. Addae (2016) pointed out some of the methods useful in teaching the adult learners as discussion method, demonstration, field experiences, experimentation, inquiry methods, role-play, counselling, project method, in some cases, lecture method, among others to be effective in teaching and learning. Nzeneri (2010) observed that the teaching methods suitable for teaching and learning in adult education includes the use lecture techniques, discussion, problem-solving, role-play, simulation and games, community development method, counselling and other individual techniques. In all the facilitator should ensure that teaching and learning is guided by the andragogical method which is a principle for teaching adults. The problem of wrong use of new teaching methods can be attributed to facilitators poor participation in in-service training and retraining programmes. Wanyama (2014) stressed that there is also a lack of professional development that can enhance adult teachers' efficiency and help them gain new knowledge and adopt new practices and methodologies in the adult education programmes. Therefore, there is need for adult education teachers to adapt to the present needs and influence of the Adult learners. This is so because it is likely that the educators may find that they are younger and less "world wise" than some of their students or as (Wanyama, 2014) observes, some of the adult learners may have been out of school for a long time or may never have attended school in the first place, they will therefore need help from the educators to acquire study skills and techniques to recall information learnt and to apply it to their day to day experiences. Their thinking process may also be slow with age hence need more time to grasp new concepts or demonstrate the knowledge learnt (Wanyama, 2014).

**Provision of Effective Feedback System**: there should be effective feedback system in adult education programmes so as to promote excellence in teaching and learning. Addae (2016) opined that feedback like assessment is a very important element in the teaching and learning encounter. The importance of feedback in effective teaching and learning is discussed by Hattie and Timperley cited in Addae (2016, p.220) as follows:

> "Feedback has no effect in a vacuum; to be powerful in its effect, there must be a learning context to which feedback is addressed. It is but part of the teaching process and is that which happens second – after a student has responded to initial instruction –when information is provided regarding some aspect(s) of the student's task performance. It is most powerful when it addresses faulty interpretations, not a total lack of understanding. Under the latter circumstance, it may even be threatening to a student".

Addae (2016) further commented that the roles attributed to feedback fall broadly into five, but not entirely delineated discrete, categories: correction, reinforcement, forensic diagnosis, benchmarking and longitudinal development (feed-forward), the latter being differentiated by a temporal dimension of being forward-looking rather than concerned with work already carried out. Educators or facilitators are therefore, urged to provide prompt feedback to the learners after assessment. Again, Addae (2016) found out in a study that feedbacks while provided verbally and in written form, they were positive and encouraging. Feedback should be prompt, encouraging, give clear reasons for success or failure and constructive, practical guidance about how to improve. It should mostly be given privately, at least at first. Feedback should offer facts and descriptions of the performance, not opinions about it. Teachers should not simply give qualitative comments, even if they are positive, and they should resist the temptation to correct the work themselves. Akkuzu's (2014:38) commented that the role of feedback in promoting effective learning amongst student teachers is very crucial. In Akkuzu's view "feedback serves as a door for student teachers to open in order to obtain a variety of data about themselves through their own eyes and through the eyes of others. In essence, feedback involves making the experiences and actions of student teachers visible and comprehensible".

**Use of Effective Assessment and Evaluation Procedures:** Addae (2016) posited that assessment and evaluation is a crucial part of any effective teaching and learning encounter. Assessment or evaluation in education refers to any or activity that is employed to collect information about the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a learner or group of learners. Caffrey (2009:1) adds that educational assessment is a complex undertaking involving collecting and analyzing data to support decision-making about students and the evaluation of academic programmes and educational policies. In this study cited by Addae (2016), the researcher sought to find out the methods employed in judging learners' progress and their effectiveness thereof. The study found that assessment in both programmes was formative and summative in nature. The summative assessment was employed prior to learners' completion of the programme in the form of portfolio. There the use of assessment and evaluation in teaching and learning serves as a means to provide feedback to the adult learners; and the use of portfolio, classwork, and homework can be employed at different stages to assess adult learners' progress which invariably would lead to achievement of excellence in teaching and learning.

**Effective Policy Implementation:** above all these discussions, effective policy implementation helps to improve quality teaching and learning for excellence in adult education programmes. A well implemented coherent adult education policy (Nnazov, 2005) observed enables co-ordination of adult education programmes and teaching and learning activities and sets the scope and guidelines. It acts as a reference point for the partners as well as providing a framework for co-ordination and setting standards for quality and service thus enabling countries to meet such challenges in adult education like sustaining participation rates and stimulating and motivating prospective learners. This is why national development or competitiveness, no matter how passionately desired, is not likely to occur to any meaningful extent if a county is not earnestly committed to a sustainable and coherent adult education policy, purposefully articulated within its development goals. Adult Education according (Ouane, 2009 as cited in Wanyama, 2014) is an inalienable human right thus suggests that it be enshrined constitutionally by all countries to ensure its effectiveness and practicability. Initiatives to restructure adult education therefore will only be meaningful if they are endorsed and articulated at political levels (Ekundayo, 2007). This will commit the governments to take Adult Education as serious as other Pillars in development. According to Wanyama (2014), an effectual policy should be backed up by legislation so as to ensure its full implementation and enable the concrete actions taken to bear fruit. Wanyama (2014) for instance, advocates that policies take place within a political framework of real participatory democracy and good governance of both national and local levels. Other researchers however argue that enshrining principles and regulations in law do not necessarily achieve the intended results, rather, sustained political will and effective partnership is needed to convert the intentions into practice. Nigeria like many other countries of the world for instance has adopted a devolved government that enhances management of essential services including education, by the local people. World Bank, (2008) points out that decentralization of the education system, requires strong political commitment and leadership in order to succeed as decentralization can substantially improve efficiency, transparency and accountability and responsiveness of service provision compared with the strong centralized system. The Government also needs to promote Literacy surveys and Curriculum development. For instance, (Ouane, 2009 as cited in Wanyama, 2014) observed that adult learning and education programmes are rarely responsive to indigenous people, rural populations and migrants. The diversity of learners in terms of age, gender, cultural background, Economic status and unique needs such as disabilities and language are not reflected in the programmes. Hinzen, (2007) therefore questions how possible it is to improve employability of the work force without providing good quality education in general and vocational training for the youth and adults continuously.

**Constant Programme Supervision, Monitoring and Evaluation:** constant effective supervision, monitoring and evaluation of adult education programmes has been a great challenge affecting teaching and learning in adult

education programmes. Supervision including monitoring and evaluation, are an important aspect of educational administration. Educational efficiency depends upon the effective functioning of instructional supervisors. It integrates all educational efforts to create and develop favourable settings for teaching and learning. Supervision together with monitoring and evaluation is a necessary and integral part of any educational programme in order to increase efficiency of the facilitators. Ismail and Omar (2018) observed that educational supervision is one of the most important supports for the educational system and educator's professional development. Consequently, to make sure the adult education programmes works efficiently, the educational supervisor is responsible for providing adequate support to the trainees/students for the development of their learning requirements and ensuring that appropriate training opportunities are made available to acquire the necessary competencies. However, such supervision or monitoring techniques such as full visit, follow up supervision, classroom observation, among others, can be effectively utilized for monitoring quality teaching and adult learning for excellence in adult education programmes (Nwaham, 2011).

**Partnership with the other Sectors:** to promote quality teaching and learning, there is need to create cordial partnership between adult education programmes and other sector like financial institutions, NGOs and other civil society groups that will support teaching and learning in adult education. Other essential factors which will aid the improvement of teaching and adult learning in adult education programmes will include provision of effective curriculum to reflect the needs of the society, effective leadership that will provide good governance in the adult education programmes, enriching pedagogical inputs, and co-ordination of in-service and pre-service teacher education programme.

## Conclusion

Improving quality teaching and adult learning for excellence in adult education programmes which has been recognized to be measurable for attainment of learning outcomes cannot be sustained without the presence of some essential factors. Essential factors like use of adequate professional facilitators, availability of facilities and teaching resources, adoption of new teaching methodologies and techniques, provision of effective feedback system, use of effective assessment and evaluation procedures, effective policy implementation on adult education, and constant programme supervision, monitoring and evaluation are very crucial for improving quality teaching and learning in the adult education programmes. But the effectiveness or sustainability of these essential factors cannot be possible without the support of other vital component such as adequate funding, provision of constant supervision, effective policy implementation, among others. Upon the premise of improving quality teaching and adult learning for excellence in adult education programmes a few suggestions have been made.

## Suggestions

Sustainability and capacity of the essential factors in adult education programmes discussed in this paper cannot be possible without giving due and adequate considerations to certain components which would make them realizable and they include that:

i. Adequate considerations and attention should be given to the funding of all adult education programmes in the country. The various governments at the different levels should enable that adequate budgetary allocation is made to support adult education programmes in Nigeria.
ii. Corruption is a problem which have eaten deep in Nigerian society and education sector. Stakeholders such as the coordinators, facilitators, policy makers and all a sundry should ensure that they fight corruption coupled with all corrupt practices which seem to affect the management of adult education programmes.
iii. Private sector should be involved in the general administration and entire management of adult education programmes for their financial support and encouragements and improvement in teaching and learning for excellence.
iv. Regulatory agencies in form of NMEC (National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education) and the State Agency for Mass

Education adult education should support and ensure quality recruitment of professional facilitators who will make significant impact and contributions towards improving quality teaching and learning for excellence in the adult education programmes. Likewise, they should encourage continuous in-service training for facilitators as well.

v. Government should ensure constant inspection and supervision of adult education programmes in order to achieve excellence in teaching and learning.

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