REPOSITIONING RESEARCH IN ADULT EDUCATION IN NIGERIA FOR NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

Okorie Christiana Uzoaru (Ph.D)
Department Of Adult and Non-Formal Education
University Of Port Harcourt
christiana.okorie@uniport.edu.ng and christokorie2008@yahoo.com
+234 8037762692

Mba, Chinasa (Ph.D)
Department of Adult and Non-Formal Education
University of Port Harcourt

ABSTRACT: *The study aimed at determining how research in adult education can be repositioned to promote national citizenship for sustainable community communities in Rivers State. The study was guided by four research objectives and three research questions and a workshop. The research design for this study is a case study. The population of this study consist of 300 community members of 3 communities Rivers State. Out of which 120 community members were randomly sampled. The instrument for this study was an interview schedule for interacting with focus groups. Findings show that respondent perceived citizenship as someone being a member of a particular country by origin; that they are no longer comfortable with what is happening in different parts of the state and Nigeria at large and this gives them a serious concern of not to be proud of the word 'I am a Nigerian citizen'. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended among others that National oriental agency, adult educator, educators of adult and the general public should intensify efforts toward the promotion of national citizenship and workshops for community members mental development should be continual and the approach should be based on participatory research approach is sustainable communities is to be achieved.*

KEYWORDS: citizenship, national citizenship research in adult education, sustainable community

INTRODUCTION

Adult education as a field of study is geared toward supporting adults' to learn and utilise the learning to solve practical problems but due to increasing societal demands and the global adult needs, there is presently shift in the roles of adult education to encompasses social problems and ways of creating a better and just society. Most of the social problems faced by different societies in the world today emanate from citizenship problems. Recently South Africans carried out xenophobic attacks on foreigners, mostly Nigerians living and doing business in their countries, many lost their lives and properties due to 'citizenship problem'. Larjanko (2015:1) in her observation of the need for adult research on global citizen asked: "what meaning can the world citizenship have if it is not connected to a physical place and a specific nation?". She went further

to explain that as human we need something to connect to. We need to feel safe. We need to eat. How do we best fulfil these needs? Is it through everyone (or every nation) fending for themselves, or is it possible to work together? and how we answer these questions will decide what our societies will look like in future. And this is why global citizenship is important, Larjanko (2015:1).
Social problems in societies both at the local, state, national and international setting are adult problems that contemporary adult educators need to diversify research areas if we must attain sustainable community.

In Nigeria, the issue of resource control which goes beyond oil to farmlands has resulted in different social problems inherent in our Nigerian society. Different parts of the country today experience insecurity which emanates from agitations form different groups claiming ownership of land and resources in their various localities. The agitations have led Kidnapping, wanton killing and hostages are the aftermaths of the absence of citizenship spirit among Nigerians which also contribute to incessant destructions of lives and property, thereby creating unsustainability in the communities. Sustainability of communities in Nigeria requires continual adjustment to meet the social and economic needs of residents while preserving the environment's ability to support it. To sustain our communities, and address the social needs (social problems), and various internal and external social forces, research in adult education need to shift from conventional research in which knowledge generated is not been utilised. The unutilised state of conventional research contributed to non-improvement of economic, political and social sectors of our economy. There is need for a redirection in our research in adult education not focusing only on individual growth and development but to a broader context of economic, social and political perspective which will promote national citizen that will stand for a sustainable community.

Statement of the Problem

In most rural communities in Rivers state insecurity which emanates from agitations form different groups claiming ownership of resources in their various localities have metamorphosed from militancy and hostage-taking to kidnapping and killing of fellow Nigerians. Wanton killing and hostages are the aftermaths of the absence of citizenship spirit among Nigerians which also contribute to incessant destructions of lives and property, thereby creating unsustainability in the communities. Despite federal and state government efforts of deployment of security personnel to the different endangered areas of within the Portharcourt metropolis, kidnapping and killing continue to be a trade among the perpetrators. In traditional Nigerian society, the spirit of brotherhood guide ways people relates to one another and protect one another from danger and this contributes to the love and care for others despite ethnicity difference. Communities are no longer sustainable due to infiltration of identified social ills that have made man enemy to fellow man, national consciousness is far from the reality due to the same plague. This plague that has cost our communities sustainability prompt the researcher carrying out this study to explore ways in which participatory research can be utilised to foster national citizenship for sustainable communities in Rivers State

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study is to determine how research in adult education can be repositioned to promote national citizenship for sustainable community communities in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:
1.   examine the ways community members within Port Harcourt metropolis perceived the concept of citizenship
2.   find out how the community members view themselves as Nigerian citizens
3.   find out if community members look at fellow Nigerians from other parts of the country as their brother that they should protect their life and property.
4.   educate community members on the need for national citizenship and the implications for sustainable communities

Research Questions
1.   In what ways do community members within Port Harcourt metropolis perceive the concept of citizenship?
2.   In what ways does the community members view themselves as Nigerian citizens?
3.   How does a community member look at fellow Nigerians from other parts of the country as their brother that they should protect their life and property?

Concept of Citizenship
Citizenship can be defined as the relationship that an individual or group of persons has/have with the state he/she finds themselves, it can also be defined as being a member of a polity or having legal rights to be recognised as a member of society. Citizenship does not make one nationality, you can be a citizen of a country but not a national. According to Mathiason (2012:2), citizenship is: "the state of being vested with the rights, privileges and duties of a citizen," and "the character of an individual viewed as a member of society; behaviour in terms of the duties, obligations, and functions of a citizen." This definition pointed out that citizenship implies individual or group of people having rights, responsibilities and authority in a given society.

Mathiason (2012:2-3) further explained that the right aspect of citizenship implies that a citizen assumes the position of citizenship by the virtue of him/her by the constitution of the polity granted the rights to what to do or not to do, and also what the state may or may not do; citizenship responsibilities include citizen is expected to vote, pay tax, obey the law and perform voluntary public services; while citizenship authority implies citizen has the authority to over their government. A citizen can change government and also determine what constitute the common good in the society they belong to. Sassen (2002) described citizenship as the legal relationship between the individual and the polity which include the legal status of an individual in terms of state membership, which is confined to national dimension while Bosniak (2000) defined citizenship as citizen possession of legal status, rights, political activity and a form of collective identity and sentiment.

Concept of citizenship as defined and explained by different authors implies that citizenship is an individual or group of people within a particular environment or nation. This identification relates the citizen to a particular polity as defined by the constitution. A Nigerian citizen has the right to

participate in politics, the right to be represented in politics, the responsibilities to obey the law as stipulated in the Nigerian constitution, and also the authority to choose their government through voting. These citizens as contained in the Nigeria constitution deserve peaceful coexistence among themselves irrespective of their cultural affiliation. To attain this, there is need for research in adult education to move from areas of information transmission and knowledge to a more realistic area that addresses citizenship which includes values, knowledge and skills about peace, human rights and democracy. Diverting research in adult education to these areas will promote sustainable communities in our Nigeria society.

Concept of Sustainable Community
A sustainable community is a community that balances the relationship that exists between her economic (economic activities), social (human capital and infrastructure and actors) and environmental (presence of a natural or physical environment) components. The balance between the three components of sustainable development is paramount for the survival and development of the society. A sustainable community provides the opportunity for viable economic activities within the community, the economic activities will be practised in the natural or physical environment. The practice of economic activities is expected within the bearable limit of the societies, not degrading or destruction of the environment and its components. The social aspect is concerned with human capital development, infrastructural availability and usability. Sustainable communities will not happen without suitable skilled and knowledgeable people. Okorie and Dokubo (2016) observed that sustainable community is one in which utility (for consumption) is non-declining through time; resources are managed to maintain production opportunities for the future; natural capital stock is non-declining through time; resources are managed to maintain a sustainable yield of resource services; minimum conditions for maintaining the ecosystem are satisfied; there are stability and resilience through time. Thus, a sustainable community recognises that economic, environmental, and social issues are interdependent and integrated**.**

In Institute for sustainable communities (2019), described a sustainable community as a community which takes into account, and addresses, multiple human needs inclusively. It is a place where people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives feel welcome and safe, where every group has a seat at the decision-making table, and where prosperity is shared.
A sustainable community is one that:
1.   Sustain communities as good places to live, and that offer economic and other opportunities to their inhabitants.
2.   Sustain the values of our society things like individual liberty and democracy.
3.   Sustain the biodiversity of the natural environment, both for the contribution that it makes to the quality of human life and for its inherent value.
4.   Sustain the ability of natural systems to provide the life-supporting "services" that are rarely counted by economists, but which have recently been estimated to be worth nearly as much as a total gross human economic product.
5.   Sustainable Communities Network links citizens to resources and to one another to create healthy, vital sustainable communities.
Egan (2004) defined 'sustainable communities' as communities that:

1.   meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents,
2.   their children and other users,
3.   contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice.

Communities, according to Egan (2014) will get to the point of sustainability when the communities make effective use of her natural resources; enhance the environment in a friendly environmental way, promote social cohesion and inclusion and strengthen economic prosperity. Consequently, Roseland (2005) stressed that quality of life is the central goal for sustainable communities. However, a sustainable community which, in his vision, should seek a better quality of life for all its residents while maintaining nature's ability to function over time by minimising waste, preventing pollution, promoting efficiency and developing local resources to revitalise the local economy.

Elements of a Sustainable Community

Elements of sustainable community developed by Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC, 1995) which were also adopted by Commission on Sustainable Development in (1997) include leadership, civic engagement and responsibility, ecological integrity, economic security and social well-being. The components of each element as outlined in the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC, 2019) are:

Leadership, Civic Engagement and Responsibility

1. Equal opportunity for all individuals to participate in and influence decisions that affect each of their lives.
1.   Adequate access to public information.
2.   A viable, nongovernmental sector.
3.   An atmosphere of respect and tolerance for diverse viewpoints, beliefs, and values.
4.   Encourages individuals of all ages, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religions, and physical ability to take responsibility based upon a shared vision.
5.   Political stability.
6.   Does not compromise the sustainability of other communities.

Ecological Integrity

1.   The satisfaction of basic human needs for clean air and water and nutritious, uncontaminated food.
2.   Protection and enhancement of local and regional ecosystems and biological diversity.
3.   Conservation of water, land, energy, and nonrenewable resources, including maximum feasible reduction, recovery, and reuse and recycling of waste.
4.   Utilization of prevention strategies and appropriate technology to minimize pollution emissions.
5.   Use of renewable resources no faster than their rate of renewal.

Economic Security

1.   A diverse and financially viable economic base.
2.   Reinvestment of resources in the local economy.

3.   Maximization of local ownership of businesses.
4.   Meaningful employment opportunities for all citizens.
5.   Provision of job training and education to help the workforce adjust to future needs.

Social Well-Being
1.   A reliable food supply that optimizes local production.
2.   Adequate health services, safe and healthy housing, and high-quality education for all members of the community.
3.   Maintains a place that is safe from crime and aggression.
4.   Fosters a community spirit that creates a sense of belonging, a sense of place, and a sense of self-worth.
5.   Stimulation of creative expression through the arts.
6.   Protection and enhancement of public spaces and historic resources.
7.   Provision for a healthy work environment.
8.   Adaptability to changing circumstances and conditions.

In view of the discussion, achieving sustainable communities in Nigeria require transforming communities in Nigeria into a living system in which human, natural and economic elements are interdependent. Transforming Nigeria societies into sustainable communities requires a fight against poverty and value orientation of the community member toward national citizenship consciousness through quality research approach. The World Bank (2019) established that the burden of disaster, conflict, crime, and violence falls disproportionately on the poor and that urban and rural communities around the world are continuously making effort to tackle these burdens and also increase their resilience to poverty because the elimination of poverty will promote sustainable communities.

Research in Adult Education
Research can be defined as a systematic way of inquiry that is based on scientific methods to discover, interpret, revised facts about a given problem or subject matter that may result to a new body of knowledge. Research in adult education is usually driven by changing social needs and various internal and external social forces inherent in our societies. Cotemporary Adult education has gone beyond supporting adult learning and solving practical problems to a wider context of social problems and creating a better and just society. Thus research in adult education needs a break from the conventional research approach to a more practical approach such as participatory research approach if we must achieve sustainable communities in Nigeria.

Research in adult education according to Fejes and Nylander (2015) covers interdisciplinary perspective by embracing diverse theories and perspectives He further explained that adult education research is dominantly based on three theoretical perspectives: socio-cultural perspectives, critical pedagogy, and post-cultural perspectives. Interestingly, the three theoretical perspectives are related to research methods, geographical affiliations of authors, and the history of adult education. Arnold et al. (2000) stressed that adult education research needs to be involved

in five research topical areas which include adult learning, knowledge structures and skill needs, professional action, institutionalisation, and system and policy.

Research in adult education in Nigeria has always been on the three theoretical perspectives as identified by Fejes and Nylander (2015). These theoretical perspective centred on the conception of adult education as literacy education. In today contemporary society, issues that relate to adult education have gone beyond literacy education component of adult education to issues that concern the socio-political, economic, cultural, technology and so on. These areas are where adult education research needs to be re-directed to for social transformation to be achieved in Nigeria society.

METHODOLOGY

This research was community-based research that involved a pre-field community outreach sensitisation programme title 'National Citizenship Awareness Campaign Programme'. Then after two weeks interval, the researcher with the help of my postgraduate students who served as research assistants carried out post field exercise to interview community members for the collection of data for the study. Feedback from the pre-filed and post-field served as a guide for two weeks workshop on 'Need for National Citizenship for Sustainable Communities in Rivers State'.

The research design for this study is a case study. This design was chosen for this study because national citizenship and sustainable communities are complex issues in a real-world setting, which are also part of issues that borders on social transformation and good governance.The population of this study consist of 300 community members of 3 communities Rivers State. The researcher adopted a simple random sampling technique to select 120 community members as the sample for the study. The instrument for this study was an interview schedule for interacting with focus groups that were selected to represent the communities used for the study. The questionnaire was subjected to validity and reliability to ascertain the appropriateness of the instrument for the study. The researcher carried out the focus group discussion of 15 sessions, each session consists of 8 members, a 4 trained literate research assistants who can speak the language of the community members assisted in the focus group discussion The research assistants were selected from literate community members in the areas of the study The data on research questions generated from the focused group discussions were transcribed into a text-based format and formed the basis for the workshop programme.

RESULTS

The text-based format transcription was interpreted based on the deductive approach of theme analysis, the researcher collected the responses from the focus group and sort them by their attributes into etic taxonomy (Etic analysis is the linking of concepts to behaviour and to outcomes). They were analysed under three distinct themes, which are:
1.   community members perception of the concept of citizenship
2.   community members as Nigerian citizens

3.   community perception of other ethnic individuals as fellow Nigerians to be protected
The results and findings are summarised as follows:

Community Members Perception of Concept of Citizenship
Members of the different focus group discussion were of the view that citizenship is when one is from a particular country. They are Nigerian citizen because their origin can be traced to a particular community in Nigeria.

Community Members as Nigerian Citizens
Respondents believed that they are no longer comfortable with what is happening in different parts of the state and Nigeria at large and this gives them the serious concern of not be proud of the word 'I am a Nigerian citizen'. One of the discussants said:
I am ashamed of what our boys are doing and this has made me to hide my face whenever I find myself amid other Nigerians or other nationals, mostly when I travelled outside Portharcourt.
Another discussant pointed out that:
based on what we hear on the radio, read on social media, and sometimes what on television daily, that he is not proud to be identified as Nigerian citizen but since he cannot change his identity, that he remains a Nigerian citizen.
The response above implies that community members are not happy with what is happening in their communities due to the handiwork of their fellow citizens and wish that their community image be redeemed

Community members Perception of other Ethnic Individual as Fellow Nigerians to be protected.
Respondents in the different focus group thought that the fear of the unknown has made them not to welcome strangers as fellow Nigerian that need protection. The discussant collectively pointed out that gone are the days in which you open your doors and hands of fellowship to fellow Nigerians due to what Nigerians are doing to fellow Nigerians both within and outside Nigeria. On the issue of insecurity and the need for the brotherhood to protect the lives and property of others, the discussants respondent that:
we don't have the spirit of love for one another again in Nigeria, that before now, members of the different ethnic group see themselves as one Nigeria and believe in the spirit of 'injury to one is an injury to others' and this help in regulating behaviours and interactions among citizens in Nigeria.
The responses above imply that protection and life of property of fellow citizen are far fetched in interactions among citizens in Nigerian society due to the insecurity inherent in Nigeria society.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

 Findings show that respondent perceived citizenship as someone being a member of a particular country by origin that they are Nigerian citizen because their origin can be traced to a particular community in Rivers state which is in Nigeria. This is in line with Iwuagwu (2015) definition of citizen from the identity perspective as a member of a particular state or country, this thus gives the individual a distinct source of identity. Citizenship can also be defined from other perspectives

such as political and legal perspective. Politically, a citizen is one who is permitted by constitution to actively participate in the political life of the state, and legally, citizenship, as asserted by Iwuagwu (2015), is "the legal rights or status of being a member of a particular state or country as well as one's response to the attendant duties or obligations to that state or country". From the various understandings of the concept of citizenship can be defined from different perspectives which are by identity, politically and legally. Whichever way one chose to define the concept of citizenship, it is traced to a particular socio-political environment.

Findings on community members' perception of themselves as Nigerian citizens, finding revealed that respondents are no longer comfortable with what is happening in different parts of the state and in Nigeria at large and this gives them the serious concern of not be proud of the word 'I am a Nigerian citizen. Community members are not happy with what is happening in their communities due to the handiwork of their fellow citizens and wish that their community image be redeemed. Redeeming community image will bring about social transformations and the adult citizens need adult education for value orientation if a significant transformation in our society is to be feasible in the nearest future.

Finding also revealed that respondent believed that gone are the days in which individuals' open their doors and hands of fellowship to fellow Nigerians due to what Nigerians are doing to fellow Nigerians both within and outside Nigeria, and that this has also affected relationship among Nigerians, that protection and life of property of fellow citizen are far fetched in interactions among citizens in Nigerian society due to the insecurity inherent in Nigeria society. Insecurity is the bane to social transformation and the absence of significant social transformation is also a bane to sustainable communities.

However, to achieve sustainable communities, research in adult education needs to address the findings discussed above. The findings thus formed the basis of the post field workshop on 'the need for national citizenship and the implications for sustainable communities. The objectives of the programme were:

1.   awareness creation on what constitutes the spirit of national citizenship
2.   ways in which spirit of national citizenship can facilitate curbing of insecurity in our locality
3.   what constitutes sustainable community and the relevance of spirit of national citizenship to the attainment of sustainable communities.
4.   how national citizenship serves as a driving force for social transformation which is part of the ingredients of sustainable communities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and the feedback from the workshops, the researcher concluded that achieving sustainable communities in Nigeria, social transformation should start from educationally empowering people with the spirit of citizenship which will serve as driving force and that researcher in adult education should shift from a theoretical understanding of research in adult education to practical case studies if we want to achieve social transformation in Nigerian society.

Recommendations

The researcher recommended that:

1. The national oriental agency, adult educator, educators of adult and the general public should intensify efforts toward the promotion of national citizenship.

2. community members should promote love for one another, that this will bring about their appreciating others and promote the spirit of one Nigeria between the community members and outsiders that are Nigerians

3. Protection of lives and property of fellow human being should not be an optional Nigerian rather it should be part and parcel of identity because social transformation cannot take place in a place of a threat to lives and properties of inhabitants and this is the bane to sustainable communities

4. workshops for community members mental development should be continual and the approach should be based on participatory research approach.

References

Bosniak, Linda S. (2000). The state of citizenship: citizenship denationalized', *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 7 (2): 447–510.

Da coasta, E.M, Fumpa, J and Luoro, A. (2013). Defining sustainable communities: The development of a toolkit for urban policy. *Journal of Urban Regeneration and Renewal*, 6 (3), 278–292.

Egan, J. (2004), 'The Egan review: Skills for sustainable communities', Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, London.

Institute for sustainable communities (2019). What is sustainable community?. Assessed online from https://sustain.org/about/what-is-a-sustainable-community/

Iwuagwu, E.K. (2015). The concept of citizenship: Its application and denial in the contemporary nigerian society. *International Journal of Research in Arts and Social Sciences,* 8(1), 165-177.

Mathiason, J.R. (2012).World citizenship: the individual and international governance. Cornell Institute for Public Affairs, Cornell University.

Okorie, C.U. and Ukwuegbu, F.U. (2018). Perception of choba youths towards corporate environmental responsibility of confectionary companies in choba community. Journal of good governance and sustainable development in Africa (JGGSD), 4(2), 158-173.

Roseland, M. (2005), 'Toward sustainable communities' revised edn, New Society Publishers, Gabriola Island, Canada

Sassen, S. (2002). Towards Post-National and Denationalized Citizenship. Assessed online from http://www.columbia.edu/~sjs2/PDFs/Towards_PostNational_and_Denationalized_Citizenship.pdf SISIN17.QXD 4/3/2002 6:4, 277-2991.

Sustainable communities online (2009). What does a Sustainable community mean?. assessed online from https://conserveswu.org/pdf/growth/resources/sustainable_community.pdf