PARTICIPANTS’ ASSESSMENT OF CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract
This study was aimed at assessing continuing education programmes in Edo State. One hundred and fifty (150) respondents constituted the sample used for the study. A questionnaire was development by the researchers and used for the collection of data. The content validity of the questionnaire was determined by three experts from the Faculty of Education and the test-retest method was used for the reliability of the study. The analysis was done using frequency count and simple percentage. The results revealed that the level of participation in continuing education programmes is highly encouraging and that participants perceived the worth of the programme to be very good. It was also discovered that the facilities for teaching and learning is grossly inadequate while the human resources available at the centres were adequate. It was recommended among other things that adequate facilities should be provided to aid teaching and learning in these centres. Also, the fees charged by privately owned centres should be regulated by the government so as to give every citizen the right to participate in continuing education programmes.

Key Words: Participant, Assessment, Continuing education, programme.

Introduction

Education is a key element in the development of any nation whether politically, socially, economically, culturally and technologically. This development can only take place when citizens are equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes. Moreover, continuing education provides the avenue through which these skills can be acquired. Continuing education according to Oyinloye (1990) is the education that adds to or prolongs the education already received. It is the education received in order to be able to continue the education one had earlier received. (Egunyomi, 2001).

Akinkugbe (1994) also asserted that continuing education is meant for those who had left early the formal school system. The education is aimed at helping this set of people to continue their education in a less rigid formation than what formal school system provides. Continuing education therefore helps individuals to go ahead with their abandoned education and probably go further. It also makes educational opportunities easily available to individuals who, though might not have dropped out of the formal school system, but are never the less unable to continue their learning after their initial education on a full time basis especially those who wants to combine work with study.
Over the ages, the purpose it serves ranges from providing opportunities for persons who have completed, withdrawn from or been denied formal school and have assumed school and principal roles other than that of a student to the demand of work, or the requirement of institutions, public, private, voluntary, or commercial which have a stake in the performance of the person. Thus, continuing education has been described as providing “further development of human abilities after entrance into employment for voluntary activities. It includes in-service, upgrading and updating one’s skills or training with further careers or personal development (Apps cited in Kazeem, 1998).

The idea behind continuing education is premised on the fact that regardless of one’s work or the extent of schooling, learning has not and cannot stop with the end of schooling, because new concept, new skills, new tools and new knowledge keeps growing and emerging. However, education based on knowledge of yesterday will be inadequate to cope with the challenges and changes of tomorrow. Hence, Akinpelu (2002) believes that one cannot do today’s job with yesterday’s tool and hope to be in business tomorrow. The price of human continual survival as Darwin’s evolution theory has clearly indicated continuing adaptable intelligence which can only be the product of continuing learning. This is why Aitchison in Ingwu and Ad (2008) said continuing education is a response to the constantly changing conditions of modern life, it must lead to the systematic acquisition, renewal, upgrading and completion of knowledge, skills and attitudes required by changes.

The world today is becoming a “global village” and education is required for man to function effectively in an ever changing world (Falase, 2003). Education serves as an instrument for creation of new values, knowledge, attitude and behavior modification and acquisition of skills. Many of the continuing education centres found in Edo State are owned by both private and public agencies which aimed at providing continuing education for interested members of the public who wish to avail themselves with the privilege of furthering their education. These continuing education centres cater for different categories of clientele ranging from dropouts from formal school system, workers and adults who intend to improve on their qualification and upgrade their skills in order to be abreast with changes in the world of work and society in general. There is the indication that most of those who patronize these centres are workers who needed to upgrade their skills to perform effectively and efficiently in their place of work. To this end the study sought to find out participants’ assessment of continuing education programmes in Edo State.

**Purpose of the Study**
The purpose of the study therefore is to:
- Determine the level of participants’ involvement in continuing education programmes.
- Ascertained participants’ perception on the worth of the programme.
- Determine the adequacy of learning facilities and
- Find out the adequacy of human resources at the centres.
Research Questions

- What is the level of participants’ involvement in continuing education programme in Edo State?
- How do participants perceive the worth of the programme?
- How adequate are the facilities used in the centres?
- How adequate are the human resources in the centres?

Methodology

The study employed the descriptive survey research design method to gather information on participants’ assessment of continuing education programmes in Edo State. The population for the study consists of the participants in continuing education centres in the sampled local government areas. Three local government areas used for the study was purposively selected and these include Oredo, Ikpoba-Okha and Egor. There are about twelve (12) major continuing education centres in Egor, ten (10) in Oredo and eight (8) in Ikpoba – Okha. The centres used include the University of Benin, Institute of Continuing Education and Mikon Institute of Technology. These centres were selected because majority of participants patronized these centres and are properly organized. A total of 150 participants were randomly selected for the study. Sixty (60) participants from University of Benin, sixty (60) from Institute of Continuing Education and thirty (30) from Mikon Institute of Technology. A structured questionnaire served as the main instrument for data collection. Three experts from the Faculty of Education, University of Benin determined the content validity. The reliability was determined through a test-retest method. A small size of 30 participants was used in the test. They were tested with the research instrument, that is the questionnaire and their responses were rated and scored. After a period of two weeks, the sample was re-tested. Subsequently, the scores of both tests were used as a means of computing the reliability co-efficient and 0.75 co-efficient was obtained. The data collected was analyzed using frequency count and simple percentage.

Results

The findings which emanated from the data analyzed are presented in the tables below.

Research Question 1

What is the level of participants’ involvement in continuing education programme in Edo State?

Table I: Participants’ level of involvement in continuing education programme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>88.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discouraging</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result in table 1 shows that 133 out of 150 respondents indicated that the level of participant’s involvement is encouraging. This represents 88.7% of those Sampled while 17 respondents representing 11.3% were of the opinion that the level of involvement is discouraging. This means that participants’ involvement in continuing education programme is highly encouraging in the three centres sampled.
Research Question 2
How do participants perceive the worth of the programme?

Table 2: Perception of participants’ on the worth of the programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 2 above, analysis shows that a total of 62 representing 41.3 percent of respondents perceived the programmes to be very good in terms of its worth, 57 respondents representing 38 percent said it is good and 18 respondents representing 12 percent perceived the programmes to be fair while 13 or 8.7 percent of the respondents perceived it to be poor. From the analysis, it is obvious that participants perceived the programmes to be very good and worthwhile.

Research Question 3
How adequate are the facilities used in the centres?

Table 3: Adequacy of teaching facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>90.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis in table 3 revealed that a total of 14 respondents representing 9.3 percent of the 150 participants used for the study were of the opinion that the facilities used for teaching and learning are not adequate. On the other hand, 136 respondents representing 90.7 percent said the facilities are inadequate. This goes to show that facilities and equipment used for teaching and learning are grossly inadequate.

Research Question 4
How adequate are the human resources in the centres?

Table 4: Adequacy of human resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 above revealed that a total of 120 respondents representing 80 percent out of the 150 participants used for the study agreed that the human resources in the centres were adequate while 30 or 20 percent state that the human resources are inadequate. This statistics show that human resources at the centres are adequate.

Discussion
The analysis revealed that the level of participation in continuing education programmes in Edo State is highly encouraging. This may be due to the fact that participants are eager to develop themselves in order to be able to cope with the changes of life. Hence,
Osuji (2002) believes that human beings need education at every point in their existence in order to be able to cope with the ever changing demands of his environment – social, cultural, economic, political and occupational. The findings corroborates the views of Omoruyi and Osunde (2004) who believe that people participate in any programme in order to acquire skills that would make them self reliant as well as become more productive and useful citizens in the country. The findings of Ingwu and Ad (2008) also revealed that workers’ participation in continuing education was relatively high.

Furthermore, participants perceived the programme to be very good and worthwhile because their needs and aspirations were met and also it caters for different categories of people. Continuing education means education and re-education, training or re-training opportunities made available to people out of school, young school leavers, the employed and the unemployed in order to cope with new situation in life. The findings confirmed the views of Finger and Asun (2001) that programmes designed for adults must be learner centred to elicit or attract participation needed for success.

The analysis also revealed that facilities used for teaching and learning are inadequate in most of the centres and this has been one of the major problems of continuing education in the country as alluded by various scholars in the field (Egunyomi, 2001, Osuji 2001, and Akinpelu 2002). In line with the findings, Egunyomi (2001) alluded to the fact that finance and inadequate facilities are some of the major problems of continuing education in Nigeria. She is of the opinion that good teachers cannot be recruited where there is not enough money and those recruited cannot perform where there are no facilities to enhance their teaching effectiveness. In addition, the findings of Omoruyi and Omiunu (2008) revealed that inadequate funding, poor supervision and poor facilities and materials are the major problems of continuing education programmes.

The findings also revealed that human resources available at the centres are adequate. This may have been the reason why the participants rated the worth of the programme to be very good.

Conclusion

The study focused on participants’ assessment of continuing education programmes in Edo State. The data derived from the study revealed that the level of participants’ involvement in continuing education is very high and rated the worth of the programme to be very good. This had led many people into participating in the programme because it affords the adult the opportunity to acquire skills and become useful and relevant to the society. There is therefore the need to educate the adults in order to move with time and cope successfully with rapid technological changes in the world. However, the facilities used in the various centres are inadequate while the human resources were adequate.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are hereby suggested.

➢ The government should play a prominent role in regulating the activities of these continuing education institutions especially the privately owned institutions. Their programmes should be structured to meet the ever changing needs of participants.
➢ To sustain the interest of participants in the programme the curriculum should constantly be reviewed to reflect current trends in the society.
➢ The providers of continuing education programmes should provide adequate facilities and equipment to facilitate teaching and learning.
Lastly, adequate reward and incentives should be given to teachers to further motivate them for better performance and efficiency on their job.
References


Ingwu, E. U and Ad, M. J. (2008). The implication of learning opportunities for all in the provision of continuing education programmes for workers in an emerging university; Nigerian National Council for adult educations (NNCAE) 16; 227 – 242


