

CONTINUING EDUCATION AS TOOL TO SOLVE PROBLEM FACED BY INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Continuing education programme is flexible and adaptable to meet specific needs and requirements; hence it is situational relevant and problem solving to internally displaced people in Nigeria. It is designed to solve problems that are society based and those that are personal. It is widely accepted that, Continuing Education is essential for completers and non-completers of all forms of education in order to correct their deficiencies, to improve their skills and techniques to meet up with challenges. Displacement often present substantial barriers to their education for Internally Displaced People (IDPS) to be adequately fulfilled continuing education therefore, essential to prepare the internally displaced persons socially and in all ramification when they finally return to their various communities. However, this paper shows the relevance of continuing education for internally displaced persons in order to equip them with the opportunity to tackle challenges against regaining their means of livelihoods, positive interpersonal relationship, improves their skills and financial stability and above all, adequately adjusted in their various societies. Implications for educators include opportunity that internally displace person will have to improve their standard of living. Recommendation for the study includes stronger legal

instruments for IDPs are required in the country to standardizing support and protection of human rights including the right to education.

Greater recognition by governments, funders, and NGOs should be given to the role of IDP education in peace - building and long - term sustainability for conflict - affected states.

Keywords: Continuing Education, Internally Displaced, Persons.

Introduction

Education is no doubt an instrument for national building and national development. According to the National policy on Education (2004) it is an instrument of 'par excellence' which equips an individual with the right skills, knowledge, abilities, competence, attitude, behavior and values in order to function effectively in the society. Education is equally a means to an end which assist citizens of a nation to develop their full potentials and capacity to function effectively in their society as well as attain sustainable livelihoods. The relevance of continuing education in particular, to any society cannot be overemphasized. This is because the development and growth of any country is the determined by the level of its human capacity building, continuing education whether formal or otherwise will continue to prepare people to face the trend of changes around the world and by so doing it will create or equip people with the skills, knowledge and techniques continually for the readiness to contribute positively to the economic development of Nigeria in all sectors of the country. Generally, continuing education must be realistic in order to meet the needs of the targeted audience, as realistic continuing education programme is been organized in a grand that it is beneficial to the targeted persons and the gap indentified will be filled and they will be fit to contribute effectively to the development of their society. Continuing education will refine, equip, and make internally displaced persons in Nigeria to have sense of direction when they return to their various communities and they will be socially included also contribute their quota to the development of Nigeria. Continuing education is basically defined as an education programme designed for people regarded as adults (Fadeyi & Folaranmi, 2002). It is designed for people who are mentally matured and socially responsible. Continuing education aims at developing individuals mentally as well as increasing their technical and vocational capacities.

According to Nzeneri (2008) Adult and Non Formal Education accommodates all the forms of formal, non - formal and informal aspects of education, which includes continuing education given to men and women (alone, in groups or institutional

settings) to improve them in their society by increasing their skills, their knowledge, understanding, attitudes and sensitiveness.

In Nigeria, continuing education refers to extra – mural education provided by universities to workers, schools drop-outs and those who missed an earlier opportunity provided in the formal school system, in order to get Post – Elementary Qualifications for the purpose of employment and educational advancement. The continual investigation of carrying out the need assessment of various categories of people in Nigeria and filling the indentified gaps with continuing education programmes will go a long in assisting our country in reducing unemployment and over dependent ratio.

Furthermore, the flexibility nature of Continuing Education make it unique to solve a specific needs and requirements of completers and non-completers of all forms of education, in which internally displaced persons falls under this categories of people. It is against this background that this paper focuses on continuing education as a tool for internally displaced persons in Nigeria.

Why Internal Displacement Act as a Barrier to Enrolment and Participation?

Internally Displaced Adults/Children are driven away from the schools of their original home communities through civil insurrection, ethnic conflict, insurgency, flood drought or other factors. When the parents or families are swept along with their children in mass migrations, they leave the place where they may have been able to access education, both primary, secondary and even post – secondary education, and usually settle temporarily in a place where there is no provision of education since education is not planned for the sudden refuge. Planning by ministries of education does not take into account unexpected and temporary populations therefore continuing/adult education will serve as remedy, as may be required by individuals/groups of internally displaced persons (IDPS).

Furthermore, continuing education has been seen to be influenced by cultural, political and social factors with vary from nation to nation. The meaning and diverse concept attributed to this field of study as practiced by various and practitioners confirm what Akinpelu (1994) describes as a best truly situational activity in the realm of education because as Linderman (1926), Muhammed, Abdullahi and Isha (2013) describes it curriculum is built around students' needs and interest, around situations of the adult learners and not around circular subject and disciplines. Fasokun (1999), Tairu (2000) in Muhammed, Abdullahi, Isah (2013) had outlined the basic purpose of Adult or Continuing Education to include the following:

- To facilitate change in a dynamic society
- To support and maintain the good social order
- To promote productivity and
- To enhance personal growth

Objectives of Continuing Education

Regardless of the form and the practice of Continuing Education, its primary goal is to fulfill the following objectives: -

- To provide educational opportunity for all categories of individuals irrespective of whatever failure was recorded earlier;
- To enable people to keep up with the new knowledge required to perform responsibilities in chosen career;
- To help individuals to master new conceptions of a stated career itself. In various occupations, these days, profound changes have occurred not understand this fact is in the danger of becoming obsolete;
- To help people keep up with changes in the relevant disciplines. Practical careers rest upon theoretical bodies of knowledge.

The professional does not need to become expert in all underlying bodies of knowledge but he does need to learn about their advances;

- It makes people become useful to the society and minimizes the economic wastage that is usually made by drop-outs;
- It helps an individual to prepare people for the changes in the personal career line. An individual may move in one of many directions, such as, from generalist to specialist, from a lesser to a more responsible job of the same sort, or into completely new career
- To enable people to help to continue to grow as well-rounded person. In this regard, the mind should never be fully engaged in the practice of life & work but, needs to withdraw from that practice occasionally to be stimulated by contemplating theory or seeking understanding and skill in different aspects of life. Otherwise, the remainder of life is treated superficially with the impact categories of thought derived from one profession; and
- To discharge effectively the social role imposed as membership in a profession, a role which always exist either or not is licensed by the state? The professional must learn how to take collective responsibility, on issues to improve upon and extract the delivery of services, to collaborate with allied professions,

The Achievements of Continuing Education in Nigeria

Given the high expectations from continuing education, the results have not been encouraging. It has not been more successful in achieving a more equal distribution of resources than has formal schooling. In fact, it has maintained or even increased the difference between the poor and the more advantaged.

Osuji (2001) in Muhammad, Abdullahi & Isah (2013) opines that continuing education is strictly, an adult education concept which stresses the provision of educational opportunities for adults after cessation of formal schooling. He adds that

it means education and re-education, training and re-training opportunities made available to people out-of-school such as young school leavers, the employed and the unemployed in order to cope with new situations of life. It also implies that the learners have some contact with the school system and are striving to build into knowledge, skills and ideas already acquired. Thus with this information continuing education has achieved some measures success in training people for the lower levels of modernizing labour market (Tahir, 2000, in Muhammad, Abdullahi & Isah (2013). It appears that vocational training courses are best utilized by those who already possess some formal schooling. Similarly, evidence shows that continuing education has positive effects on agricultural productivity. It has had the greatest impact on farmers who already have some economic resources and several years of schooling since they understand information on disseminated through continuing education. They are better financially and able to experiment with new techniques. By helping the marginal farmers, to increase their yields, some continuing education programmes may alleviate poverty to some degrees, though it is doubtful whether these programmes can totally remove the conditions of marginality in the society. Development projects aimed primarily at the rural poor have often attracted a large number of villages.

However, they may not reach a large proportion of the very poor and uneducated people of the village for whom these programmes have been designed. Instead, they are consumed and more effectively utilized by those who already have some years of schooling with more resources available to invest in the new skills learned. For instance, continuing education programmes have attracted a great number of women of all socio-economic groups to classes teaching domestic and family related skills. However, very poor women lack the funds to acquire this knowledge and there is little being offered to help them to supplement their income. Attempts to help peasant gain greater decision making power over their lives or to introduce some structural changes in agricultural practices have been largely unsuccessful (Colleta and Todd 1982,) Moulton (1982). Continuing education programmes have not been able to bring about major institutional changes in the power and control of village affairs. Nevertheless, such programmes may in some cases have served to raise the consciousness of the rural participants making them more aware of new options. In the process, they may become more discriminating consumers of the variety of government and privately sponsored continuing education programmes.

Realities of IDPs Camps in Nigeria

Displacement leaves negative social economic situation for the people in the camp. When violent conflicts or natural disaster occurred, properties are destroyed, looted or burnt down as such; IDPs are usually force to leave (Ladan, 2012). It leaves the displaced people with the quest for shelter and survival. However with the

incapacity of IDPs these quests is usually militated against. Meanwhile, the IDPs are either catered for by relatives, government and Non-Governmental Organization. The primary needs of IDPs remain shelter, food and opportunities to reduce depending on people. Olukolajo (2014) revealed that most IDPs has reportedly prefer to seek shelter with relatives rather than living in camps that are created for large number of displaced persons in Nigeria for this reportedly seek refuge with family, friends or host communities in areas where their ethnics or religious group are in majority. This is the believe of their assurance of freedom, care and provision which comparatively better provided by relatives than in IDPs camps. Thus seeking refuge with people will be easy if displacement is not at large scale such that relatives are also not displaced but in the situation of the contrary, living in camps is usually resulted to. The importance of camping in management of internal displacement cannot be underestimated. Camps that are well managed and of good setting can strengthen physical, legal, material protection and security. In Nigeria the recent magnitude of displacement and the distance of such displacement to relatives of victims have usually aided the living in camps of IDPs. Also, since majority of those displaced in Nigeria are women and children with little affinity with relatives, their living in camps is inevitable. IDP Camps were located in Nigeria and various states where there are banditry or problem of flood.

For example IDP camp in Lagos State was situated at Ibeju Lekki area. It was established in 2016 as a federal shelter for such persons.

IDP camp in Edo State was at two local government areas, Etsako Central Local Government, situated at (1) Obe Primary School (OPS), Fugar and (2) Ekperi Grammer School (EGS), Fugar and Itsako East Local Government. (1) Omoaze Primary School, Aghenebode and (2) Skills Acquisition Centre (SAC), Agbehenebode.

In Kogi States IDPs was created at Lokoja Local Government Area at St Luke" s Primary School (Adankolo). Futhermore IDP at Ajaokuta Local Government is at Model Primary School, Gadumo and that of Idah Local Government was at (1) UEC Primary School, Idah and (2) Pilot Primary School, Idah.

In Niger State, IDP Camps exist in Kuta Shiroro Local Government Area (1) Central Primary School Kuta; (2) Central Primary School Gwada. Also in Kotagoral Local Government IDP Camp was at Maidubu Primary School.

In Benue State IDPS was sighted at (1) Makurdi Local Government located at St Catherine Primary School, Markurdi; and Agatu Local Government it was located at LGA Primary School. These are the list of IDP Camps visited in Three States affected by flood in Nigeria.

(www.researchgate.net) (2021).

In Borno State the biggest are IDP Camps near Maiduguri. There are four (4) biggest IDP Camps near Maiduguri (1) Arabic Teachers College (2) Teachers Village (3) National Youth Service Scheme Camp and (4) Gubio, each of the camp housed; 9,880 IDPS; 6,500 IDPS; 6,611 IDPS and 4,500 IDPS respectively (www.legit.ng 2021). There are fifteen (15) IDP Camps officially recognized by Borno state Government. The camps are located in Maiduguri Municipal Council and Jere Local Government Areas. (displaced- people 2021).

IDPS have different reasons for leaving their homes, in most cases it is because of communal clashes, natural disasters or attacks by extremists.

Problems Faced by IDPs include:

- (1) Lack of Federal help since government cannot solve all problems of those people.
- (2) Lack of financial support because they are many.
- (3) Internally Displaced people also face intolerance.
- (4) Lack of enough medical support.
- (5) Internally Displace people are sometime violence.

To solve the problem mentioned above a huge contribution to the solution of this problem is made by volunteers. People from all over the country collect clothes, food, medicine, and take them to the camp.

Relevance of Continuing Education for Internally Displaced Persons

Displaced persons experience a range of emotions from confusion and anger to fear and despair. Women and young people are particularly susceptible to psychological trauma. The introduction of continuing education in an IDP's life can serve to alleviate the long-term impact of such trauma. Continuing education can also assist in indentifying IDPs who are suffering from severe shock or trauma. Once indentified additional services can be provided to these IDPs to address their psychological needs. In his 2008 report focusing on displaced persons, the special Raporteur on the Right to Education asserts,

"Education provides physical, psychological and social and cognitive protection that can be both life saving and life sustaining. Education offers safe spaces for learning, as well as the ability to identify and provide support for affected individuals, particularly children and adolescents. Education mitigates the psychological impact of conflict and disaster by giving a sense of normality, stability, structure and hope during a time of crisis, and provides essential building blocks for social reconstruction and future economic stability."

In addition, education can also play a vital role in the life of individual IDPs and in the community as a whole. The breakdown of social networks toll on local leadership, and loss of social services are all by products of displacement, resulting in damage to community viability. To this end, continuing education programmes can offer a venue to engage and empower displaced persons and the entire community. It can serve as a catalyst for community dialogue and healing.

Additionally, it can plant the seeds for future civil society development, be it during displacement or following resettlement of IDPs. Continuing education which is synonymous with non-formal education will play a unique role by developing all categories of people in the IDPs camp adults – men and women, old and young, poor or rich in terms of acquisition of knowledge, skills and basic training.

Donald and Dorothy (1985), have this to say. "By learning now, that is, during displacement period, updated knowledge, value, skills and strategies, some IDPs become more competent and worthy". This statement applaud credence to the unique role of continuing education most especially for internally displaced persons in Nigeria in helping to tackle challenges such as regaining their means of livelihoods, correct their deficiencies, improve their skills and full adjustment in their various communities when they fully resettled.

Conclusion

The above discussions has shown that, for internally displaced persons (IDPs) to receive complete rehabilitation, continuing education programmes must also be included in their rehabilitation programme in order to cater for their individual and group needs in terms of education and vocational opportunities. The importance of education to IDPs extends beyond the fulfillment of human right, but other numerous benefits accrue to it.

Recommendations

The following under listed are the recommendations provided.

1. Stronger legal instruments for IDPs are required in the country to standardizing support and protection of human rights and it should include their right to education.
2. Greater recognition should be given to IDPs by governments, funders, and NGOs in order to be at peace in the camp and the environment.
3. IDPs education should be sustained in all affected states.
4. Tangible proactive steps like sitting Primary and Secondary Schools in IDP camps should be taken seriously to ensure that education is accessible to internally displaced populations.
5. Resources from the budget should be directed toward the implementation of youth such as adult education and vocational training for IDPs.

6. Flexible and non-formal education options like continuing education centers should be made available for the IDPs to accommodate the needs of different groups.

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