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Non-Formal Education as a Tool to Human Resource Development: An Assessment

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Abstract

This study investigated the contributions of non-formal education to human resource development in Rivers State of Nigeria. There is a belief currently gaining ground among scholars, for example, Amirize (2001, p. 2) is of the believe that non-formal education represents a solution to the deficiencies of formal education as a panacea to the developmental needs of third world countries. Therefore, this exploration is a survey research, questionnaire was used for data gathering with a reliability coefficient of 0.91, and multiple statistical procedures were employed in the analysis. 944 participants of the Rivers State's non-formal education programs were sampled. This study was guided by four (4) research questions and hypotheses to obtain information on the extent to which the programs provided life skills and employment opportunities to the graduates of these programs. The study showed that the skills taught in the programs were more practically oriented and thus enhanced opportunities for employment. Recommendations were made on the basis of the findings that more of these programs be established throughout the state and indeed the country.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION TO THE STUDY

Education is one of the social institutions that contributes significantly towards the construction and maintenance of social order (Ifeanacho in Anikpo & Atemie 2006, p. 82). Education has been defined as a process by which a young adult develop the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behavior which are of a positive value to the society in which he lives (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 17). The concept education has further earned an important posture in the society. This claim is obvious as education has been identified in Nigeria as a tool 'par excellence' for effecting national development (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004, p. 4;

Okoh, 2005, p. 3). Excellence in this paradigm is a generally accepted best ways of doing things in education in search of distinction in teaching and learning situations. It is an essential component of best practice that creates quality teaching strategies that produces improved scholarship (Ololube & Ubogu, 2008).

There are four types of education namely— indigenous (traditional) education, formal education, informal education and non-formal and adult education. Indigenous education also referred to as traditional education practiced within the African context is the oral transmission of the people's statement of beliefs, rules and customs from one generation to another. Formal education is a consciously planned instructional process based on a prescribed syllabus

and carried on in the school. Informal education is educational set-up not based on fixed or prescribed rules, it is determined by the prevailing nature and content of what is to be learned. And non-formal and adult education is a remedial literacy program carried out to impart the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic to adults. Adult education is particularly geared towards functional literacy, where the beneficiaries are expected to use the skills acquired to improve their daily living standards. Examples of non-formal education include skills acquisition programs, remedial programs, agricultural extension programs etc.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004, p. 4) identified education in Nigeria as "an instrument 'par excellence' for effecting national development"; to understand this development, economic growth must be considered. The indices for measuring national development in terms of liberal approach include Gross National Product (GNP), Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Per Capita Income (PCI). Of course this national development stems from the degree of resourcefulness of the citizenry both at individual level and collectively. Having identified education as a vehicle for manpower (resourcefulness) development; it is axiomatic that formal education is capital intensive in terms of infrastructural demands etc hence most families in Rivers State are unable to meet the demands of the formal school system. This gives rise to massive cases of school drop out, who in the absence of formal school engagement turn to such socially abhorable acts of cultism and so called youth restiveness as well as other social vices including teenage pregnancy, hostage taking etc. Other consequences of non engagement in formal school include unemployment as a result of lack of knowledge and skills needed for employment in industries and public establishments.

The experience of massive unemployment of Rivers State indigenes invariably results from the above scenario. It is however alleged that Rivers State indigenes are ill equipped for wage employment/self-employment as a result of lack of technical skills needed in various industries as well as lack of entrepreneurial initiatives and the enhancing ethical aspect. Moreso, since Non-formal education is regarded as an alternative to formal schooling, it is expected that the said Non-formal education should train people on these skills. Besides, it is the view of Amirize (2001, p. 2) that Non-formal education could make the difference.

Purpose of the Study

The study has the overall purpose of ascertaining whether non-formal education can make people to be resourceful. Specifically, the study is designed to determine whether non-formal education provides life planning educational skills. Ascertain whether non-formal education provides participants with practical skills. Find out whether the skills acquired in Non-Formal Education are related to the basic skills in formal technical schools and ascertain whether non-formal education prepares and equips people for wage employment or self-employment.

Research Questions

In order to give direction and focus to the study, the following research questions were raised:

- To what extent has non-formal education provided life planning educational skills?
- To what extent has non-formal education provided the participants with practical skills?
- To what extent are non-formal educational skills related to the basic skills in formal technical schools?
- To what extent do skills acquired in non-formal education programs enhance securing employment?

Research Hypotheses

In order to test the research questions, the following hypothesis were put forward to guide the researchers achieve their objectives:

- There is no significant difference between life planning skills provided by non-formal education and formal education.
- There is no significant difference between the practical skills acquired by those who participate in non-formal education and those who did not attend non-formal education programs.
- There is no significant difference between the skills provided by non-formal education and formal technical schools.
- There is no relationship between skills acquired in non-Formal Education program and opportunity for securing employment.

Scope of the Study

The study was limited to selected non-formal education centers in Rivers State, they include: The Adolescent

LITERATURE REVIEW

Education

According to Freire (1970, p. 25), education is a form of power—namely the ability of an individual to be critical of his context, which by implication enhances people's empowerment through increased awareness. Adult education in developing countries plays three basic roles, namely, tradition, economic and political (Curle, 1969). The traditional role has to do with maintaining and emphasizing traditional values; the economic role with technical education, and the political role with implementing ideology. There is what Onuoha (1984) describes as the banking concept matter which is the most important dimension of the learning process. According to the banking concept, the individual's role is one of a passive receiver of a store of information given by a teacher. The teacher is the banker who disseminates information according to the needs of the individuals as determined by the teacher in collaboration with the political, social and cultural system-without the involvement of the individual learner. However, in terms of real development, the banking concept of education is an ideological state apparatus, serving the purpose of those who control power and resources. Power in developing economies is usually misconceived as the means to coerce and manipulate, and the purpose of education under such power structure is not to liberate or empower the masses or transform society but to perpetuate the imbalances in society.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004, p. 12) classified special education into three major categories namely the disabled, the disadvantaged and the gifted/talented. The disadvantaged are children of the nomadic pastorals, migrant fisher folks, migrant farmers, hunters etc. One of the aims of special education is to provide adequate education for all people with special needs in order that they may fully contribute their own quota to the development of the nation. Consequence to the above, Ikpaya in (Efanga, 2007), stated "improvement in the education of the special needs people requires a certain level of commitment and consistency on the part of government (at all

Project (TAP) at Elelenwo, Port Harcourt; Nigeria Prisons Service Port Harcourt; Rivers State Skills Acquisition Centre, Port Harcourt; and National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Port Harcourt.

levels) and the major stakeholders in the field. We may regard it as a good insurance for sustainable development from which all stakeholders stand to benefit". Worried over the importance of empowering the future women in her home, community, society and the nation at large, Tahir (1998) said "the participation of the nomadic girl in the existing formal and non-formal basic education program is abysmally low, with literacy rates ranging between 0.2% and 2%".

Development

The self-concept development of the individual should be the primary purpose of education, which should involve the enablement and liberation of the individual from all forms of oppressions and inhibitions. Article 2 of the International Bill of Human Rights states that "Education shall be directed to the full development of the human rights and fundamental freedoms…" The aim of liberal education is to enable man to be himself, to become himself. It is said that development has a purpose; that purpose is the liberation of man. But man can only liberate or develop himself. As an instrument of liberation, people's empowerment and social transformation, education means the ability to resolve contradictions. It should be a countervailing force applied for the purpose of checking the abuses of power by those who use it to oppress and hold the masses in bondage. By emphasizing independent and critical thinking, reflective analysis of events and openness to change, education can become a means of peoples' empowerment. It is not the dull, maintenance learning that can bring about the empowerment of people, but innovative learning which is person-centered and equips the individual to make sound judgments and analysis of issues. The individual should develop the skill necessary to test contradictory values and situations, which exist in the society. Since these contradictions evolve within the context of values, a sound education is not only one that recognizes what is right or wrong in a given context, but that which makes an individual to take the appropriate action when action is called for. Genuine development and education involve the moral strength to expose and speak against oppressive forces and

falsehood. Misuse and the conceit of power are pro-bably the greatest threat to the survival and dignity of man in developing societies today (Williams, 1981).

Duru (1998) opined that "development is a process of socio-economic and political transformation of problems generating structure in such a way that it leads to improvement in the level of living of the people including income, education, health and nutrition and other related social services; decreasing inequality in the distribution of income, urban-rural imbalances and political and economic opportunities." According to Nndozie (in Duru, 1998), development is the capacity of members of the society to actualize themselves by participating actively in the social engineering of their lives and destiny. In fact, they must draw their strengths and aspirations from their socio-economic milieu. The people must be free and confident to set their goals and be involved in their realization.

Life-Long Education

United Nations Organization (1975) defined adult education as a component of life-long education which begins in the cradle and ends in the grave. The concept arises out of the awareness of rapid changes in technology and institutions which in turn require human beings to up-date their skills and knowledge in order to catch up with modern events of individual at childhood, youth and adulthood. Part of the goal of life-long education is therefore to reinforce and improve the education of the young as well as offer adults broad opportunities for self-renewal and social advancement. The French call it "education perma-nent", reinforcing, the idea of its continuity and functionality. In developed countries of Europe and North America, it is designed as recurrent education. Recurrent education involves re-organization of the whole educational system so that learners may come back to or come into at will throughout life (Ihejirika, 2000, pp. 53-54).

Meaning of Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education according to Coombs and Ahmed in (Ihejirika, 2000, p. 56) is any organized systematic educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal school system to provide selected type of learning to particular sub-group in the population, adults as well as children. Non-formal education includes many types of learning experiences.

It is a life-long process of learning which include adult education, apprenticeship system, continuing educa-tion, in-service programs, on-the-job training pro-grams, personnel and professional development, refresher courses, staff development programs; workers and students' industrial training. Extension education as an aspect of non-formal education include co-operative extension programs, extramural classes, external and extension degree program, out-reach and off-campus educational programs such as weekend sandwich courses. It also includes community development education such as rural development training, manpower resource training, youth camps, holiday programs, mass mobilization campaigns and community health education are aspects of non-formal education. Similarly, short-term learning activities such as conferences, evening classes, seminars, workshops, as well as specialized purpose programs like functional and literacy programs, volunteer youth programs, skill-acquisition and liberal education classes constitute non-formal education which can be called "living-room" or leisure education. It also include corres-pondence study, home study, self-study programs, mass communication education and open media courses, research service programs, television or radio school, open university and other independent study activities (Amirize, 2001, p. 1).

Non-formal education is designed to encourage all forms of functional education given to youths and adults outside the formal school systems such as functional literacy, remedial and vocational education. (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004, p. 25). In the light of the preceding, Ihejirika (2000, p. 56) posits that non-formal education connotes: "alternative to schooling" and known in some quarters as "out of school education". Explaining non-formal education further, Ihejirika opines that it covers training and instruction outside the formal education system and ranges from apprenticeship to national mass literacy. It may be vocational, such as the craft centers in Nigeria or the girls' vocational centers established in many developed and developing countries which train girls in vocational skills like sewing and preparation of young women for marriage and small businesses. For him, it could be political and social education such as that carried on in Citizenship Training Centre at Aluu in Rivers State. In French speaking African countries, there are large-scale programs of rural animation aimed at developing rural communities from within. Animation or rural animation above has been explained by Bown (in Kosemani, 1995, p. 173) as a similar

concept for liberal education and is used as a common phrase in French speaking West African countries. For Brown it implies enlivening, arousing to greater consciousness or stirring up of rural population.

Non-formal education is given in form of training. Learners are not involved in intensive and rigorous mental activity. They learn particular skills or trades. The various skills acquisition and apprenticeeship programs are examples of non-formal education. Because of the differences in skills to be acquired, the assessment process will also differ. Tailoring-sewing, hairdressing, welding, radio mechanics, carpentry, motor mechanics, are some non-formal education programs that are in operation (Asuka 2002, p. 122).

Goals or Objectives of Non-Formal Education

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004, p. 25) outlined the goals of mass literacy, adult and non-formal education as that which shall be to:

1. Provide functional literacy and continuing education for adults and youths who have never had the advantage of formal education or who did not complete their primary education. These include the nomads, migrant families, the disabled and other categories or groups, especially the disadvantaged gender.
2. Provide functional and remedial education for those young people who did not complete secondary education.
3. Provide education for different categories of completers of the formal education system in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills.
4. Provide in-service on the job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills, and
5. Give the adult citizens of the country necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment.

Gbamanja (1997, p. 93) writing on nomadic education opined that the aims include the following:

1. To take education to the door steps of children of nomads and migrant fishermen who have been denied their right to education because of their geographical location.

2. The program is aimed at enabling the nomads to acquire functional literacy for general information, enlightenment as well as basic numeracy for accounting and improved management of their stock, and
3. The purpose of bringing education to all classes of people.

Furthermore, The International Encyclopedia of Education (1985, pp. 35-37) identifies four major goals of non-formal education which include the following:

1. Alternative Route to Upward Mobility: The emphasis on academic competence in the formal system means that only learners who are able to achieve the required level of competence are the only few that will eventually gain upward mobility at the expense of low achievers. Non-formal educations afford alternative routes to cope with the required level of competence in the school education.
2. Training for the Modernizing Workforce: The planned labor needs of the economy are often not met by the formal school; the result is structural unemployment, while there are over production of manpower that cannot be filled in the economy. Non-formal education recognizes the need for adjusting the learning program to change conditions in the society.
3. Rural Development**:** The education system should cater for the whole population not just school age who because of the necessity of schooling immigrate to the urban centers; thereby totally neglecting those in the rural areas where great measure of resources for development resides.
4. Political Incorporation**:** Non-formal education has its main area, the political facilitation of the individual to be conscious of himself as a citizen or as belonging to a political comm.-unity. Developing nations are in daring need to develop national consciousness among the citizens over and above ethnic sentiment which has been one of the major obstacles towards national development and integration.

The above not withstanding, Amirize (2001, p. 6) posits that the purpose of non-formal education include to prepare and equip people for wage employment or for self-employment; upgrade the knowledge and skills of those already in employments; improvement of

people's political, cultural, social and spiritual awareness through conscientization; and stimulate industrial output; provide citizenship and leadership training opportunities for people. It also promotes healthy and responsible uses of leisure through joyful activities, fosters entrepreneurship and personal enablement by continual engagements, and generates employment opportunities for youths in rural communities.

Characteristics of Non-Formal Education

According to Fordham (1983, p. 2) there are four major characteristics of non-formal education which underlines its significance in contemporary education quest. They are outlined thus:

1. That non-formal education is very relevant to the needs of disadvantaged groups in their society which are often not well catered for by the school.
2. It is concerned with specific categories of persons.
3. It is focused on clearly defined purposes such as learning through distance education and HIV/AIDS as well as family education.
4. It is flexible in organization and method.

Commissions and Agencies of Non-Formal Education in Nigeria

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004, pp. 26-28) the following bodies are established to enhance the attainment of its goals which include:

1. The national commission for mass literacy and non-formal education shall coordinate the program nation-wide.
2. State agencies for mass education shall implement the National Policy on Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education in the states
3. Local government councils shall be responsible for ensuring that the literacy net-work committees at the local government, district, village, ward and centre levels are operating efficiently and effectively etc.

Modes of Non-Formal Education

Development without conscience and concern for human values and without the enablement of the individual would not be genuine or lasting, since technology alone does not constitute development. Freire (1970) posits that for non-formal education to be effective and meaningful, it should be all-round embracing the followings:

1. Technical aspect or technology facilitation mode, involving acquisition of useful skills in an industrializing and technology-oriented world.
2. Aesthetic or ethical aspect, with the cultivation of humane values which manifests in a deep inner feeling or conscientization.
3. Social aspect or the ability of an individual to get along with other people without behaving like a beast or assuming the position of a god., this would enhance harmony in society, respect for the feeling of others, tolerance of divergent views and peaceful coexistence.
4. Biological aspect, which includes the proper care, respect for and maintenance of the human body so that there are no excesses, abuses or deficiencies arising from overindulgences, negligence or addiction. This requires giving the body the right and balance diet and drink, which will promote good health, avoidance of activities that, would harm or endanger any part of the body and the need for adequate rest and sleep. Personal hygiene and health education are also included in this aspect of non-formal education.

Non-formal education is pragmatic and functionally related to needs of individual and society, whether short-term or long-term. It is also change oriented because it seeks to identify and recognize areas of felt-needs which it seeks to address.

Options or Models of Non-Formal Education

Various options of non-formal education usually indicate and arise from the purpose and needs which they are intended to serve according to prevailing situations and priorities of a society and program sponsors Amirize (2001, p. 28) outlined the following models:

1. Agriculture Extension Model: This is about the commonest and earliest model of non-formal education practiced in Nigeria, whose purpose was geared towards increased food production through improved farming methods. Facili-

tators of this model were agricultural extension officers and the target audiences were rural farmers and cooperative societies. Extension officers played the role of agents of change who identified agricultural needs in various communities and devised strategies to solve them by working in collaboration and partnership with farmers and cooperatives.

2. Apprenticeship Model: As the oldest and universal approach to skill acquisition, various governments and employers of labor have used the apprenticeship system as a reliable and effective model of non-formal occupational education. Such programs in Nigeria included the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Skill Acquisition Program, School-To-Land and other vocational training and job-improvement programs. This system is less expensive, practical, functional and pragmatic.

3. Age-Group Model: This is traditional African model of non-formal education whereby peer groups and youths of the same age range interact and engage in various community activities. This model promotes the under-standding of social obligations and rules as well as the acquisition of basic skills, which would enable youths to function as responsible members of society.

4. Self-Help Model: This method does not only rely on local skills and materials, but it also promotes self-reliance and industry. Comm-unity leaders and chairmen of Community Development Committees (CDC) are usually facilitators in this model and their roles include helping and motivating the community through the youths, first to identify their needs and then mobilize and organize them to work in the project.

5. Sunday school Model: The goal of this model of non-formal education goes beyond religion and moral instructions. Sometimes instructions given and skills taught in Sunday school can include cookery and home management for girls and the theory of music and other trades for boys. Some churches train youths as organists, choirmasters and youth-leaders through the Sunday school.

6. Training Institute Model: This model of non-formal education is a kind of on-the-job train-ing within places of work, meant to improve the occupational competence of the partici-pants. They include farm training centers, management training and job orientation centres organized by industries, organizations or governments.

7. Village Craft Centre Model: Sometimes initiated by local government authorities or community development agencies, this mode has two purposes namely: to impact some skills to youths in rural areas thus creating self-employment, and discourages rural-urban migration among youths of both sexes. It encourages hard work, creativity and the dignity of labor by challenging villagers to shun idleness. Skills taught include masonry, sewing, weaving, dying, shoemaking, carpen-try, painting, plumbing, etc. Facilitators play the role of teachers and entrepreneurs.

8. Basic Literacy Education Model: This can also be organized by local government authorities or other voluntary agencies. The intention here is to teach basic literacy—Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3 R's) in the form of adult education classes or night school. Migrant Fishermen's and Nomadic Education programs aimed at adopting this model.

9. Community Mobilization Model: This model can be described as a system of liberal education and counseling, aimed at rural communities, helping to transform the people by working in close relationship with them. The idea is not to impart literacy or skill but to liberate the minds of the people from debilitating conditions; a system of conscien-tization so as to enable the individuals and the community generally. Facilitators are com-munity development experts.

10. Enrichment-of-Skill Model: This is a process of enablement of the individual through responsible and creative use of leisure, devoted to enriching the mind through creative and constructive engagements.

So far, the above review of literature has created a deeper understanding to the meaning of non-formal education. Its life-long process of learning is quite characteristic. The technical aspect and aesthetic aspect of the modes of non-formal education show that it cuts across the four domains-cognitive, affective, psycho-motor and psycho-productive. The models or options of non-formal education indicate and arise from the purposes and needs which they are intended to serve

according to prevailing situations and priorities of a society and program sponsors. Thus there is the Sunday School model, agriculture extension model, apprenticeship model etc; this means that non-formal education reaches the "grassroots".

Extension education as a non-formal education aims at bringing about positive change development, self-determination, mutual cooperation, skills acqui-sition, continuous urge to learn and effective and responsible use of leisure. This no doubt is compre-hensive. Freire (1970, pp. 35-45) summarily reveals the importance of the non-formal education saying that for it to be effective and meaningful, it should be all round embracing the following:

1. Technology facilitation mode involving acquisition of useful skills in an industrializing and technology-oriented world.
2. Social aspect or the ability of an individual to get along with others. This would enhance harmony in society, respect for the feelings of others tolerance of divergent views and peaceful coexistence.
3. Ethical aspect involving the cultivation of humane values, which manifest in a deep inner feeling or conscientization.
4. Biological aspect, which includes the proper care, respect for maintenance of the human body so that there are no excesses, abuses or

deficiencies arising from over indulgences, negligence or addition.

This shows that non formal education is pragmatic and functionally related to the needs of individual and society. It is also change oriented in the sense that it seeks to identify and recognize areas of felt-needs which it seeks to address.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A survey research design was used for this study to unravel the contributions of Non-formal education to the educational development in Rivers State. The population of this study consists of all the participants undergoing training in the under-listed Non-formal education centers in 2006. They include Nigeria Prisons Service, Port Harcourt 2,182 persons; Rivers State Skills Acquisition Centre Port Harcourt 4,500 persons; National Directorate of Em-ployment Port Harcourt 1,000 persons; and The Adolescent Project Elelenwo 1,756 persons. The total population amounts to 9,438 persons or trainees. The sample for this study was made up of 944 respondents drawn from the four chosen Non-formal education centers in Rivers State. The sample represents ten percent (10%) of the entire population of the study. A breakdown is shown in the table 1 below:

Table 1: Sample size distributions

S/N	Non-formal education centres	Population	Sample size
1	The Adolescent Project (TAP), Elelenwo	1,756	176
2	Nigeria Prisons Service, Port Harcourt	2,182	218
3	Rivers State Skills Acquisition Centre Port Harcourt	4,500	450
4	National Directorate of Employment, Port Harcourt	1,000	100
	Total	9,438	944

In each of the centers, stratified random sampling was used. In such case the trainees were divided into strata (departments) and simple random sampling was used to draw the sample from each stratum by balloting to ensure that every participant has an equal chance of being selected. At the end all the samples drawn from each stratum were added together to arrive at the aforementioned total sample size.

Instrumentation

The main instrument used is a questionnaire designed by the researcher. This formed the basis for the primary data. The questionnaire is divided into three sections meant to elicit information on various aspects of the research questions. Section A elicits information on the respondent's personal data; sections B to C sought to elicit the respondent's experiences in the program. Section C adopted a simple Yes and No response while sections B adopted a response on a three-point likert-type scale of Agree (A), Undecided (U), and Disagree (D).

Procedure for administration of questionnaire

The researcher went personally to the various non-formal education centers to administer the questionnaire. The questionnaires were retrieved after one week. A total of 944 questionnaires were administered to the various selected non-formal education centers in Rivers State. Meanwhile before the questionnaires were administered, the draft questionnaire was sent to two experts in Measurement and Evaluation for vetting. They were to study the items in terms of adequacy, structuring and sequencing of ideas. The researcher later repackaged the instrument based on the reactions by the two experts. To this end, the instrument is therefore adjudged ambiguity free, had face and content validities hence valid for the study. A pilot study was conducted to determine the reliability of the instrument. The researcher administered 50 copies of the questionnaire to randomly selected participants in the various non-formal education centers. The split-half method (odd-even) was used for computing the reliability coefficient using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha levels with chi-square (X^2).

Presentation of Empirical Result

The table below shows a breakdown of the respondents according to their institutions or centers.

Table 2 Analysis of responses according to their institutions or centers

Institutions	No of respondents
The Adolescent Project, Elelenwo	169
Nigeria Prisons Service, Port Harcourt	213
Rivers State Skills Acquisition Centre, Port Harcourt	441
National Directorate of Employment, Port Harcourt	98
Total	921

Research Question One

To what extent has non-formal education provided life planning educational skills? To answer this research question, percentages were used.

Table 3 Percentage of the extent to which non-formal education provide life planning educational skills

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	600	65
Disagree	250	27
Undecided	71	08
Total	921	100

Results in Table 3 shows that approximately 65% of the participants agreed that non formal education provided life planning educational skills while 27% disagreed and 8% were undecided. Based on this, one may accept that non-formal education contributes to provision of life planning educational skills. Furthermore, the hypothesis was also tested.

Hypothesis one

Hypothesis one states that there is no significant difference between life planning skills provided by non-formal education and formal education. To test this hypothesis, a chi-square test statistic at 0.05 level of significance was used. The summary of the result is shown in the table below.

Table 4: Summary of chi-square test on the difference between life planning skills provided by non-formal education and formal education

Responses	Observed freq. (fo)	Expected freq. (fe)	Fo-fe	$(fo-fe)^{2-}$	$(fo-fe)^2/fe$
Agree	600	307	293	85849	279.64
Undecided	71	307	-236	55696	181.42
Disagree	250	307	-57	3249	10.58
					X^2=471.64

At α level of 0.05 and degrees of freedom of 2, the critical value is 6. Since the calculated value of 471.64 is greater than the critical value of 6, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative. This means that there is a significant difference between life planning skills provided by non-formal education and formal education.

Research Question Two

To what extent has non-formal education provided the participants with practical skills?

Table 5 Percentage of the extent to which non-formal education provided participants with practical skills

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	700	76
No	221	24
Total	921	100

From the Table 5 above, approximately 76% of the respondents agreed that non-formal education provides the participants with practical skills, while 24% disagreed. From the figures, one can see that non-formal education provides participants with practical skills. This notwithstanding, the hypothesis was also tested.

Hypothesis two

It states that there is no significant difference between the skills acquired by those who participate in non-formal education and those who did not attend non-formal education programs. To test this hypothesis a chi-square test statistic at 0.05 level of significance was used. The summary of the result is shown in the table below.

Table 6: Summary of chi-square test for significant difference between the practical skills acquired by those who participate in non-formal education and those who did not attend non-formal education programs.

Responses	Observed freq. (fo)	Expected freq. (fe)	Fo-fe	$(fo-fe)^{2-}$	$(fo-fe)^2/fe$
Yes	700	460.5	239.5	57360.25	124.56
No	221	460.5	-239.5	57360.25	124.56
					X^2=249.12

At a degree of freedom of 1 and α level of 0.05, the critical value is 3.84. Since the calculated X^2 value of 249.12 is greater than the critical value of 3.84, we reject the null hypothesis and therefore conclude that non-formal education provides participants with practical skills. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the skills acquired by those who participate in non-formal education and those who did not attend non-formal education program.

Research Question Three

To what extent are non-formal educational skills related to the basic skills in formal technical schools?

Table 7: List of skills available in non-formal education programs and formal technical school

Skills available in non-formal education programs		Skills available in formal technical schools
1. Auto-electricity	2. Auto-mechanic	1. Wood work
3 Metal work	4. Textile	2. Auto-mechanic
5. Catering	6. Tailoring	3. Metal work
7. Computer training	8. Welding	4. Technical drawing
9. Building	10. Painting	5. Textile
11. Weaving	12. Tie-dye	6. Electronics
13. Needle work	14. Fine arts	7. Applied electricity
15. Chemical technology	16. Hat making	8. Building construction
17. Decoration	18. Music	
19. Hair dressing	20. Shoe making	

The above Table 7 above shows that the skills available in formal technical school are also available in non-formal education Skills Acquisition Centers apart from Technical Drawing.

Hypothesis three

Hypothesis three states that there is no significant difference between the skills provided by non-formal education and formal technical schools. To test this hypothesis, chi-square was used at α level of 0.05.

Table 8: Summary of chi-square test for significant difference between the skills provided by non-formal education and technical schools.

Responses	Observed freq. (fo)	Expected freq. (fe)	Fo-fe	$(fo-fe)^2$	$(fo-fe)^2/fe$
Non formal	20	14	6	36	2.57
Technical school	8	14	-6	36	2.57
					$X^2=5.14$

At a degree of freedom of 1 and α level of 0.05, the critical value is 3.84. Since the calculated X^2 value of 5.14 is greater than the critical value of 3.84, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant different between the skills provided by non-formal education and technical schools.

Research question four

To what extent do skills acquired in non-formal education enhance securing employment?

Table 9: Percentage of the extent to which skills acquired in non-formal education skills acquisition centers enhance securing employment

Responses	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Agree	651	70.7
Undecided	10	1.1
Disagree	260	28.2
Total	921	100.0

From the table above, approximately 71% agreed that skills acquired in non-formal education skills acquisition centers enhance securing employment while 28% agreed that it does not. The 1% for

undecided is negligible. However, in order to draw a reliable conclusion, the hypothesis was tested as shown below.

Hypothesis four

It states that there is no relationship between skills acquired in non-formal education programs and opportunity for securing employment. Chi-square was used to test this hypothesis.

Table 10: Summary of chi-square test for relationship between skills acquired and opportunity for securing employment

Responses	Observed freq. (fo)	Expected freq. (fe)	Fo-fe	$(fo-fe)^{2-}$	$(fo-fe)^2$/fe
Agree	651	307	344	118336	385.46
Undecided	10	307	-297	88516	288.33
Disagree	260	307	-47	2209	7.20
					X^2=680.99

At a degree of freedom of 2 and α level of 0.05, the critical value is 6. Since the calculated X^2 value of 680.99 is greater than the critical value of 6, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between skills acquired and opportunity for securing employment.

Discussion of Results

This paper investigated the impact of Non-Formal Education to educational/human resource development in Rivers State of Nigeria. Generally, the analysis of the result obtained showed that non-formal education is effective in the provision of life planning education. This has been exemplified in a handbook of The Adolescent Project (TAP) titled "The Achievements of TAP in Rivers State and Nationwide". The handbook informs that TAP has kept in-school adolescents busy by getting them committed to various skills of their choice for six weeks annually mainly during the long vacation period from the month of August. In the last five years, the adolescents that participated in this program are made to undergo the life planning education training as a prerequisite for participating. The topics treated in life planning education include: sexuality, teenage unwanted pregnancy, abortion, communication skills, HIV/AIDS, Right and responsibilities of adolescents, mediation and peer pressure, gender roles, cultism and examination malpractice. The children are taken through the life planning education for three days before they engage in the main skills. Furthermore, Assemblies of God (2006, p. 180) posits that "The inward reality of conversion must influence the outward life, including a person's character,

disposition, conversation and behavior". This means that Sunday school which is a model of non-formal education also teaches life planning skills. Also in the Nigerian prisons, the in-mates are often given advice on how to refrain from acts capable of indicting them again after serving their jail terms.

The result in Table 5 and 6 also shows that non-formal education contributes in providing practical skills. This means that non-formal education is effective in the provision of practical skills. The above finding is supported by the large number of graduates of the Rivers State Skills Acquisition Centre, Port Harcourt. The August-December, 2005 batch were a total of 4, 500 successful candidates. The breakdown is: In agro-allied skills, 350 participants graduated; in spray painting 450 graduated; for welding and metal fabrication 1,750 graduated; in chalk making 500 persons; paint making 750 persons graduated, all totaling 4,500. The above practical training is from Rivers State Skills Acquisition Centre Port Harcourt alone. The National Directorate of Employment takes 1000 persons annually for training in various skills. According to the Director, National Directorate of Employment, the Directorate has established vocational skills development program. One of which is School-on-Wheels in which the skills acquisition activities of National Open Apprenticeship Scheme are taken to the grass roots through the use of well equipped mobile workshops (modules) and Waste-to-Wealth Scheme where interested unemployed youths are taught the techniques of converting hitherto neglected waste objects such as snail shells, horn, etc, into decorative items. There are several other non-

formal educational programs that train people constantly in Rivers State.

The result in Table 7 shows that apart from Technical Drawing, non-formal education teaches the rest skills available in formal technical schools. The results show that non-formal education have several other skills which the formal technical schools do not teach. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) has it that the Vocational Skills Development Program is designed primarily to impact vocational skills to school leavers and other unemployed youths who hitherto lacked productive and marketable skills. It is implemented through three schemes which include National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS) where unemployed school leavers are recruited by the NDE in the urban centers and attached them to Master Craftsmen to learn a vocation from the several trades available in the Scheme.

The result in Table 6 shows that the skills acquired in non-formal education centers enhance securing employment. This can be seen from the view of Ihejirika (2000, p. 58) as he opines that functional literacy education could be work oriented. For instance an industrial worker needs to improve his skills for greater efficiency and productivity through retraining and attendance of workshop and seminars. Also an apprentice who had completed his apprenticeship training could establish his own workshop (self employment). Besides, the certificates issued after the training could be used to seek employment in the oil company, civil service, manufacturing companies etc. depending on the sector that needs the trade or skill. Furthermore, Ranson (1994, p. 43) opined that the control and direction of education, because of its perceive function in preparing young people for their future roles in employment and society, becomes a central concern for the corporatist state.

The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) also operates Small Scale Enterprises Program designed to promote self-employment among job-seekers by inculcating in them the spirit of entrepreneurship, creativity and self-reliance as against the usual dependence on public and private sector establishments for wage employment. To achieve this objective, the NDE encourage the potential entrepreneur through provision of requisite training, otherwise called the Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP), credit assistance and other necessary support services, to set up small scale businesses thereby generating jobs for themselves and other Nigerians.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The research findings reveal that the utility of non-formal education is many and varied. Specifically, non-formal education serves the industrial sector by training its much needed manpower. According to the research, skills acquisition centers in Rivers State has been training participants in various skills and trades. Most of the skills provided by formal technical schools are also taught in non-formal education programs. The study reveals that the only exception is the Technical Drawing.

The skills/trades learnt enhance procurement of employment. The Trade Test Certificates issued to graduates of non-formal educational programs could be used to seek employment in either the private sector or public parastatal. Besides, such knowledge or skill acquired could be used for self-employment if the person so desires. Sometimes when wage employment is lacking, a graduate of non-formal education program could start up his/her own and even become an employer of labor.

Apart from the above, non-formal education improves efficiency and effectiveness of people already employed. The various in-service trainings of workers, the training and retraining of staff through workshops and seminars attest to the findings of this study.

Based on the significance of the result of the research, we wish to recommend that the Rivers State Government establish non-formal education centers in all her Local Government Areas since non-formal education teaches life planning educational skills. The proximity advantage would no doubt be optimally utilized by the grassroots. In the same vein, churches should make attendance of Sunday school compulsory since much of the life planning skills and the attendant moral ethics are taught in Sunday Schools.

The Rivers State Government and indeed the Federal Government of Nigeria should encourage the non-formal education program currently undertaken in prisons. Government should provide equipment to be given to any prisoner who completes his jail term so that he/she can engage in meaningful activity at home.

Also traditional birth attendants and bone setters should be encouraged to train others in lieu of

hoarding their knowledge and monopolizing the trade. Finally, vocational guidance counselors should be provided bearing in mind that decision for life work can take place at various ages and levels in an individual (Zuofa 2001:104).

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