

Vol 2 (5) pp.37-42 September, 2016  
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<http://www.pyrexjournals.org/pjerr>  
ISSN: 2985- 8879

*Full Length Research Paper*

## **Factors Responsible for Improving Low Academic Performance on Adult Enrollees in Selected Literacy Centres in Ajeromi Ifelodun Local Government Area of Lagos State**

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Accepted 4<sup>th</sup> May, 2016

### ***Abstract***

This paper assessed factors responsible for improving low academic performance on adult enrollees in selected literacy centres in Ajeromi Ifelodun Local Government Area of Lagos State. The paper explores some factors that have contributed to the poor academic performance of adult enrollees as well as the major factors that are responsible for improving the low academic performance. Three null hypotheses were formulated for the study and the instrument that was used for the study was a questionnaire. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. One hundred adult learners were randomly selected from three continuing education centres in Ajeromi Ifelodun Local Government Area of Lagos State for data collection. Data was analyzed using frequency table, percentage and Chi-square. From the results of the investigation, it was recommended that there is a need for government to look into the issue of adult teachers' promotion as stagnation of teachers in one job group is a recipe for dissatisfaction among teachers leading to poor service delivery and subsequently, low academic performance of learners in literacy centres.

**Keywords:** Academic Performance, Instructional Practices, Low academic Performance.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is the primary agent of transformation towards sustainable development since it increases people's capacities to transform their visions into reality. Education not only provides scientific and technical skills, it also provides the motivation, justification, and social support for pursuing and applying them. The international community now strongly believes that we need to foster through education the values, behavior and lifestyles required for a sustainable future (Delors, 1998). Education for sustainable development has come to be seen as a process of learning how to make decisions that

consider the long term future of the economy, ecology and equity of all communities. It is a universal truth that education empowers individuals' cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains to deal with the multi faced local, regional and global challenges to pursue a truly invigorating livelihood. Building the capacity for such futures oriented thinking is a key task of education (UNESCO, 2005). Education provides desirable and worthwhile broad and in depth modes of thought, skills, attitudes and understanding needed for the full development of human thinking and actions. Students

academic gain and learning performance are affected by numerous factors, including gender, age, teaching faculty, students' schooling, father/guardian social economic status, residential area of students, medium of instructions in schools, tuition trend, daily study hour and accommodation as hostellers or day scholars. Many researchers have conducted detailed studies about the factors contributing to student performance at different study levels.

Heck (2009) suggested "A student's educational success is contingent heavily on the social status of the student's parents/guardians in the society. Considine and Zappala (2002) noticed the same that a parent's income or social status positively affects the student's test score in the examination. According to Chapman (2003) "higher education performance is dependent upon the academic performance of graduate students. Durden and Ellis quoted Staffolani and Bratti, (2002) observed that "the measurement of students' previous educational outcomes are the most important indicators of students' future achievement, this refers that as the higher the previous achievement, the better the student's academic performance in future endeavors.

Lot of studies have been conducted in the area of students' achievement and these studies identify and analyze the number of factors that affect the academic performance of the student at schools, their findings identify students' effort, previous schooling, parent's educational background, family income, self-motivation of students, age of student, learning preferences and entry qualification of students as important factors that have an effect on the student's academic performance in a different setting. The utility of these studies lies in the need to undertake corrective measures that improve the academic performance of students.

Thus, poor students' academic performance in the country has in the recent time been traced to lack of proficiency in English language. This has earlier separately been inferred to when they averred that English language proficiency influenced students' academic performance in vocational and science education, respectively. To this effect, Agharuwhe (2013) suggested that to improve students' performance generally, the teaching and learning of the English language must also be improved. That aside, though many viable factors have been identified to be cogent factors to improved students' academic performance in the country, yet, the main thrust of this paper will focus only on the factors responsible for improving low academic performance of adult enrollees' in literacy centres in Ajeromi Ifelodun of Lagos State with the roles of the instructors in improving students' academic performance.

Thus, Teachers have particularly not only been blamed for creating low levels of academic achievement, but they have been held responsible for sabotaging a multitude of reforms designed to reverse the situation. To this end, to improve students' academic performance in Nigeria, teachers' roles must be exemplified as a measure for the yearning

towards better academic performance in the nearest possible future.

### **Statement of Problem**

Literacy centres in the County have been performing poorly with the majority of the adult learners scoring below C+ grade in most of their external examinations. This is the minimum entry grade to universities in Nigeria.

Poor performance of literacy centres in the County undermines adult learners' chances of joining institutions of higher learning and jeopardizes the opportunity for job placement, and in most cases reduces an individual's active participation in national development. Considering that teachers play a major role in the teaching and learning process, there is need to examine teacher-related factors that influence academic achievement. This study, therefore, sought to analyze the factors responsible for improving low academic performance on adult enrollees in the State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to identify the factors that are responsible for improving low academic performance of adult enrollees. Identifying the factors can help educators address not only the performance issues, but lower the number of adult learners needing alternative schools for credit deficiency as well as lowering the number of dropouts. Also, maintaining or changing the operations of the school in order to directly influence the attainment of the major instructional goals of the school.

### **Research Questions**

This research was carried out to provide answers to the following research questions:

- 1). In what way can adult literacy teachers' administration of learners' assignments improve the academic performance in various literacy centres;
- 2). To what extent has the adult literacy teachers' evaluation of adult learners improved the academic performance in literacy centres;
- 3). Do the time adult teachers complete the syllabus improve the academic performance of adult learners?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The hypotheses for this study are as follows:

- H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between adult teachers' administration of learners' assignments and academic performance;
- H<sub>02</sub>:** Frequency of adult teachers' evaluation of learners' Continuous Assessment Tests (CATs)

**Table 1.** Frequency distribution of the respondents by Marital Status

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Single	37	37
Married	63	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

results does not have a significant effect on academic performance;

**H<sub>03</sub>:** The time when adult teachers complete the syllabus does not have a significant effect on academic performance of learners.

### Significance of the Study

The investigation of the major factors improving the low academic performance of adult enrollees in education management remains an area of considerable interest. Furthermore, such knowledge will help academics in designing strategies that can improve learners' academic achievements.

### Scope of the Study

The study is limited to the geographical area of Lagos State. It covers specifically adult enrollees in selected literacy centres of the Ojo Local Government Area of the State.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The researcher therefore considered this design appropriate since the study involves determination of the factors responsible for improving low academic performance on adult enrollees in selected literacy centres in Ajeromi Ifelodun Local Government of Lagos State.

### Area of Study

The study was conducted in Ajeromi Ifelodun Local Government Area of Lagos State. Geographically, this Local Government Area is in Badagry Division of the State with 57, 276.3 inhabitants per square kilometer.

### Population of the Study

The population for the study was 100 adult teachers and enrollees selected from three selected literacy centres in Ajeromi Ifelodun Local Government Area.

### Sample and Sampling Technique

A simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents.

### Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used for data collection is the questionnaire. It is designed and constructed by the researcher. The instrument is titled Factors Responsible for Improving Low Academic Performance of Adult Enrollees in Literacy.

### Reliability of Instrument

The validity of the research instrument was established by giving the instrument to experts in the field of adult education. Their criticisms and corrections led to the modification of the instrument before it was finally distributed to the respondents.

Reliability of the instrument was done by administering the questionnaire to 20 adult learners and enrollees in one selected literacy centre in Isolo Local Council Development Area of Lagos State. The co-efficient of internal consistency of the instrument was determined using a Cronbach Alpha method. It gave the following reliability co-efficient: 0.93, 0.72, 0.82 and 0.93 for clusters 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. The grand reliability co-efficient is 0.76 which shows that the instrument is very reliable.

### Method of Data Analysis

The study employed both the descriptive and the inferential statistical methods. In this, the simple percentages and frequency table were used for descriptive inferences.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

According to table 1, the analyses revealed that the majority of the respondents was married. From table 2, majority of the respondents were within the age of 41-50 years. Also table 3, shows that the majority of the respondents were government employers.

**Table 2.** Frequency distribution of the respondents by Age

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
30-40 years	32	32
41-50 years	50	50
50 years and above	18	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3.** Frequency distribution of the respondents by occupation

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Self- employed	18	18
Government employed	44	44
Private sectors	38	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4.** Analysis showing the relationship between adult teachers' administration of learners' assignments and academic performance

Groups	A	D	U	Total	df	P	Cal $X^2$	Table $X^2$	Decision
<b>Adult Teachers</b>	40	10	-	50	2	0.05	6.10	5.99	Reject
<b>Adult Enrollees</b>	29	20	1	50					
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>					

**Table 5.** Analysis showing the relationship between adult teachers' evaluation of learners' CATs results and academic performance

Groups	A	D	U	Total	df	P	Cal $X^2$	Table $X^2$	Decision
<b>Adult Teachers</b>	41	6	3	50	2	0.05	7.28	5.99	Reject
<b>Adult Enrollees</b>	35	15	-	50					
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>					

## Testing of Research Hypotheses

### Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant relationship between adult teachers' administration of learners' assignments and academic performance; Table 4 shows that calculated value is greater than the table value, thus null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between adult teachers' administration of learners' assignments and academic performance.

### Hypothesis 2:

Frequency of adult teachers' evaluation of learners' Continuous Assessment Tests (CATs) results does not have a significant effect on academic performance; Table 5. Since the calculated value 7.28 is greater than the

tabulated value 5.59, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between adult teachers' evaluation of learners' Continuous Assessment Tests results and academic performance.

### Hypothesis 3:

The time when adult teachers complete the syllabus does not have a significant effect on academic performance of learners. Table 6.

Since the calculated value 11.08 is greater than the tabulated value 5.59, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that time adult teachers' complete syllabus has a significant relationship with academic performance of learners.

**Table 6.** Analysis showing the relationship between time adult teachers' complete syllabus and academic performance of learners

Groups	A	D	U	Total	df	P	Cal $X^2$	Table $X^2$	Decision
Male Adult Learners	42	8	-	50	2	0.05	11.08	5.99	Reject
Female Adult Learners	27	21	2	50					
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100</b>					

## DISCUSSIONS

The findings point to the negative impact of increased workload for adult teachers on the teaching – learning process. Assignments have been cited as a critical ingredient in the teaching and learning process as they serve as a diagnostic tool for teaching and learning process (Oredein and Oloyede, 2007). The study found that the number of assignments that an adult teacher gave adult learners, ensuring that learners completed the assignments and timely marking of the assignments significantly affected academic performance. The findings therefore suggest on the need for adult teachers to regularly give learners assignments and be firm on them to complete the assignments.

Adult teachers' evaluation of CATs for students was also statistically significant in academic performance. The finding concurs with Black and Williams cited in Kapambwe (2010) who concluded that use of formative assessment had a powerful impact on students' academic achievement. Continuous Assessment Tests (CATs) are a powerful diagnostic tool that enables students to understand the areas in which they are having difficulty and to concentrate their efforts in those areas. CATs also allow teachers to monitor the impact of their lessons on learners' understanding. Using the results of CATs, teachers can modify their pedagogical strategies to include the construction of remedial activities for students who are not working at the expected grade level and the creation of enrichment activities for students who are working at or above the expected grade level.

Timely completion of syllabus significantly affected academic achievement. Literacy centres where teachers completed the syllabus three months before the examinations had higher grades compared to literacy centres where teachers completed the syllabus in time for or a month to examination. The finding concurs with Etsy (2005) who found that teacher's inability to complete the syllabi significantly contributed to low academic achievement among students.

The finding concurs with Alderman (2008) who contended that setting performance goals has a positive impact on teacher motivation and performance. The set targets provide a tool for teachers to evaluate where their students are and where they want them to go in terms of

academic achievement.

## CONCLUSION

The study concluded that the frequency of giving assignments, adult teachers, ensuring that learners completed assignments and timely marking of the assignments significantly affected academic performance. Further, teachers evaluating students' CATs results and providing individualized learner attention to weak learners have an impact on academic performance. Timely completion of the syllabus and setting performance targets for learners' examination performance were also statistically significant in predicting academic performance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that there is a need for government to look into the issue of adult teachers' promotion as stagnation of teachers in one job group is a recipe for dissatisfaction among teachers leading to poor service delivery and subsequently, low academic performance of learners in literacy centres.

The government, through the Ministry of Education, should urgently employ more teachers in order to ease teachers' weekly workload.

Literacy centres administrators should develop and implement explicit learners' CATs policy. Specifically, emphasis should be laid on monthly CATs, with time allocated for revision;

Routine spot checks of learners' assignment books by supervisors would ensure that teachers issued marked and returned learners' assignments.

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