

**ANTECEDENT AND CURRENT FACTORS INHIBITING FUNCTIONAL  
LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG CRAFT WORKERS IN IJEBU ODE,  
OGUN STATE, SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*One of the most outstanding problems facing Nigeria is mass illiteracy and most importantly, the lack of meaningful ameliorative strategies in place. The aggravating rate of literacy among Nigeria workforce is one significant social cog in the wheel of her developmental progress. With particular focus on adult craftsmen and women, this study investigates the socio-cultural factors inhibiting functional literacy development among craft persons in Ijebu Ode, Southwestern Nigeria. A combination of judgmental and convenience sample methods was used in choosing seven participants for this study. The data were collected through a structured face-to-face in-depth interview. Thematic and content analysis of existing literature was carried out. The study reveals a plethora of socio-cultural factors undermining literacy development among artisans in Ijebu Ode. The study, therefore, raised practical and policy recommendations for parents, adult educators and government.*

**Keywords:** Craft workers, Functional Literacy, Human Resources Strategies, Manpower Development, Non-Formal Education.

## Introduction

Since the colonial era, Nigeria has been battling assiduously with illiteracy by launching series of campaigns and educational policy reforms. Such campaign and reforms specially gained momentum after independence when UNESCO supported the establishment of Adult Literacy Institute in Ibadan in 1965 (Fasokun, & Pwot, 2008). However, major weakness with the literacy campaigns is that they were not closely linked to adults' basic needs for socio-economic development and empowerment. Rather than provide for adults with functional literacy skills, which would have simulated positive work related future perspective, the programmes were reduced to basic literacy, which failed to provide knowledge of self-fulfillment and improved living standard. The approach was less attractive to adult learners and thus deterred some from participating in literacy training programmes (Aderionye, 2013). Whereas the principle underpinning advocacy of Education For All (EFA), according to Nwafor and Agi, (2013) imply that education is an all-inclusive and inviolable right (not a privilege) to be acquired and enjoyed by every citizen; male and female, old and young, irrespective of age, social status, race or creed.

As a signatory member to all international conventions and declarations towards EFA, it becomes imperative for Nigeria to further emphasize the importance of literacy education that is truly all-inclusive. It is against this backdrop that this study, with particular emphasis on

crafts workers, endeavour to identify factors undermining functional literacy development among adult craft workers in Ogun state. To achieve this purpose, six research questions are raised:

1. What craft profession are they in?
2. How many years have they been in these professions?
3. How old are they at present?
4. What factors led them to these professions?
5. What factors can prevent crafts persons from being lettered?
6. If these obstacles are removed, will they be willing to attend adult literacy class?

## Statement of the problem

More than six decades ago, precisely 1950, the UNESCO estimated illiteracy rate in Nigeria to be about 84.4 percent. Forty-four years after, the number did not improve. Illiteracy in Nigeria was 68.4 percent in the year 1994 (Wang, 1995). In late 1990s, UNESCO reported that the number of illiterates over the age of fifteen was 25 million (Wang, 1995) and 18 years after, precisely 2013, the figure of adult illiterates in the country has increased to 35 million (Wike, in Mohammed, 2013). With the total number of current labour force in Nigerian being 53.8 million (CIA, 2012), the percentage of non-literate workforce in Nigeria is thus 65.1. After a century of national existence and close-to-six decades of independence as a sovereign nation, these shocking figures of alarming rate of illiteracy indicates that the country has failed in meeting the 2015

deadline for achieving the goals of Education For All (EFA).

Worried over the rapidity with which illiteracy rate is increasing among Nigerian populace, former Minister of State for Education, Mr. Nyesom Wike, at a ministerial news briefing lamented that “If the level of illiteracy is allowed to continue to increase as *currently is*, it poses security problems, and when this happens, *government* cannot govern, the investors cannot come, and when the investors cannot come, there will be no employment” (quoted in Mohammed, 2013).

It is, therefore, not an exaggeration that almost all the challenges threatening to disintegrate the Nigerian nation are not unconnected with lack of ‘functional literacy’ among a large majority of her populace (Oludeyi, 2013). Today, corruption has become a national problem affecting almost every institution that Nigeria national integration and development seem like impossible mission. Leadership failure, mediocrity, ineptitude, and selfishness as well as ethno-religious intolerance generating terrorists’ insurgencies are all impediments against national peace and stability, security, socio-economic, political and technological development of the nation. These social problems are not without connections with the level of literacy among the citizenry because literacy is a key lever of change and a practical tool of empowerment on each of the three main pillars of sustainable development: economic development,

social development and environmental protection (UNESCO, 2014).

### **Literature Review**

Literatures on conceptual framework of craft workers are very scanty. Craft persons are, however, specialized manual workers, who acquired special training and expertise, especially, through apprenticeship, and become practically skillful in assembling materials to make, construct or design valuable things or objects by hand with or without the use of tools. Examples of such craft workers or traders are those in the art of weaving, woodcarving (known as furniture work), fashion designing, pottery, automobile electrical and wiring works, road side vulcanizing, and the likes. Such educationally disadvantaged group of craft workers need to be included in literacy development programmes since they form significant part of the nations’ workforce.

Studies abound on the concept of literacy and its connection to all developmental projects of life. Literacy is defined in its simple sense as the ability to read, write, do simple arithmetic and understand simple computer operations. While functional literacy is construed as the ability to

- (i) continuously utilize the basic literacy skills in widening the scope of choices for personal development and fulfillment;
- (ii) developing a set of behavioural attitude and orientation considered fine and acceptable for peaceful coexistence with co-inhabitants and colleagues; and

(iii) applying all these in expediting the developmental pace of the community and the larger society as well as in advancing humanity.

Literacy, in its functional stands, goes beyond activities which are designed to teach adults how to read and write simple sentences. The emphasis on functional literacy (which is in contrast to mere literacy) campaign focuses on the achievement of a level of reading, writing and numeracy adequate for effective participation in the life of one's community (Ayodele, & Adedokun 2012). This means that when literacy is functional, it encompasses not only acquisition but also application of skills and competencies. It aids improved positive socio-cultural, economic, and political participation to the development of the community of beneficiaries and subsequently the entire nation. Differentiating literacy from functional literacy, UNESCO (1978) contends that a literate is any person who can, with understanding, read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life whereas an individual who is functionally literate is able to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community, as well as enabling him to continue to use literacy skills (reading, writing and calculation) for his own and the community's development (cited in Ayodele, & Adedokun 2012).

Virtually all behavioral attitude and orientation which are inimical to the nation's ideals are reflections of lack of

functional literacy among the citizenry. This is corroborated by Olojede, (2013) who submits that the more the functional literate people in a country, the much better the chances for rapid political, social, economic, technology and cultural development. Though, while literacy alone is not sufficient to inspire development, it is a major factor in the ultimate effectiveness of a country's investments. It is in recognition of the importance of functional literacy that governments of nations across the globe now place emphasis on 'education for all' the citizens. This is corroborated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1996) that 'everyone has a right to education' (Oludeyi, 2013; Nwafor, & Agi, 2013) while other international human rights instruments, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (1981) also recognize and emphasize that education is fundamentally a human right.

### **Research Design and Method**

The study adopts a combination of judgmental and convenience sample method in choosing the seven participants in this study. Data were collected through a structured face-to-face in-depth interview. The pre-designed questions were basically six in number. These cover ages of the participants, craft profession, years of experience in the profession, factors that led the participants into the profession, inhibiting factors for functional literacy development, and willingness to

attend literacy class. The interviews were conducted between the 19<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> days of September, 2014. Responses were recorded in audio tapes. The data were analyzed using thematic approach supplemented with content analyses of existing literature. With thematic analysis, certain sentences, ideas or notions are grouped into categories and deeper enquiries were made on each thematic category until meaningful categorizations of inhibiting factors were derived.

While the first three research questions elicited demographic information of the participants (as shown in table 1), the fourth and fifth research questions were raised in an attempt to find out factors that prevent or can prevent craft workers from being lettered. These factors may be categorized into two: antecedent factors<sup>1</sup> and current factors. While the fourth research question was to elicit antecedent factors, the fifth research question aims at investigating current factors undermining literacy development among adult craft workers in Nigeria. The sixth question examines artisan's readiness for enrolling in adult literacy class, if given the opportunity.

### **Ethical consideration and participants**

The participants of this study are adult artisans who have spent above ten years in the craft profession and whose main workshops are located within the

metropolis of Ijebu Ode. In a bid to adhere to the ethics of research of this kind, the participants were fully informed of the purpose and process of the study and their participation was voluntary. Throughout the field work, and especially the interview session, participants were given the options of whether or not to discontinue participating at any point. They were well assured of their anonymity/confidentiality as participants. Their opinions were also treated with adequate respect. The profile of the participants is presented in table 1 below:

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<sup>1</sup>It is not to conclude that all antecedent factors that led the participants to their various professions are factors that prevent them from being literate. We are only interested in factors that led them to craft works as a results of inability to attend formal school system.

**Table 1: Participants Profile**

| Participants | Specialization          | Gender | Age | Years of Experience | Date Interviewed |
|--------------|-------------------------|--------|-----|---------------------|------------------|
| P1           | Auto Mobile Engineering | Male   | 39  | 29                  | 20-09-14         |
| P2           | Barbering               | Male   | 37  | 10                  | 21-09-14         |
| P3           | Plumbing                | Male   | 29  | 10                  | 23-09-14         |
| P4           | Hair Dressing           | Female | 28  | 11                  | 24-09-14         |
| P5           | Goldsmith               | Female | 25  | 12                  | 25-09-14         |
| P6           | Wood and Furniture Work | Male   | 41  | 17                  | 22-09-14         |
| P7           | Fashion Designing       | Female | 37  | 18                  | 22-09-14         |

*Note: P stands for 'participants', and P1 for example stands for 'First Participants'*

Table 1 covers the first, second and third research questions

### Discussion of findings

The findings of this study reveal factors which are supported with the review of existing body of literature. These factors are classified into two (antecedent and current factors), categorized into various thematic structure and discussed within the purview of the literature.

Pertinent to say, it is very intriguing and overwhelming when these crops of craft professionals are given opportunity to tap

back into where they come from and give account on how they find themselves in artisanship. They are passionately narrative, detail and analytic in discourse. The detailed they provide, during interview sessions, is inexhaustible and cumbersome to report. Hence, their responses are presented in abridge form below.

**Table 2: Antecedent factors undermining literacy development among craft persons**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| Research question four: <i>What factors led you to this profession?</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | like those mechanics. So I opted for barbering because it was the kind of craft you could do without getting too dirty'.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>P1:</b> 'Personal interest. In fact I decided to quit school so as to learn the craft. I was always impressed seeing master craftsmen in their uniform and giving orders to their apprentices'.                                                                                                     | <b>P3:</b> 'My parents majorly influenced it though. They encouraged me to go learn plumbing work whenever I return from school then. So I combined studying with learning craft work during my primary and secondary schooling. When I was through with secondary education I decided to concentrate on my craft work. It was not lack of financial capacity, at least I wrote JAMB like twice but not with much interest. I just choose to face my |
| <b>P2:</b> 'After my primary school education, my parent tried hard so that I can further my studies but they lacked the financial capacity. So I thought of what I could do to be someone in life. I am a person who cannot do any dirty job or engage in any business where I'll be dressing unclean |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

handicraft work since then’.

**P4:** ‘Well, in my family, we take entrepreneur very seriously as my parents had one or two handicraft they do aside their office work. We were brought up with the mentality that schooling and learning craft guarantees self-sustenance in the future, especially in the country where there is no certainty of getting lucrative job after schooling. Learning craft work was like a ‘plan B’ for us; it is about preparing for the rainy days’.

**P5:** ‘Broken home; when my parents were separated, things went bad. Since this is my mother’s business, I have been exposed to it and learnt it very well. Although this is not the only business I do but it is the one I focus on because it was an inherited trade and I love it.

**P6:** ‘I choose this profession back in my days in technical school. I loved the subject ‘Intro Tech’ in secondary school then and I always come out the best. Although I did not plan to go to technical school, but when I wrote *JAMB* for three years and I could not gain admission in to the university. My father had a female

friend who advised that since the cost of university education was rising, it was better to enroll in the technical school where she was teaching back then. I wrote the entrance exam and my name came the 5<sup>th</sup> on the list of the admission. I now specialize in wood carving, upholstery, and furniture work’.

**P7:** ‘Hmm... It was a sorry case. I started this work since I was a girl back in the village. Then, my parent wanted me to be in school but they believed I was too dull among the girls in our yard. I believe I was not dull, what I wanted to do was anything on fashion, or theater. We fought this battle till I got admitted to Form 1 in [school name withheld] when I got pregnant for my boyfriend who always come from Lagos. With this pregnancy I could not continue schooling. It was after my first child that I moved to Lagos with my husband that he took me to where I learnt sewing, fashion, and design both for males and females’.

Inferable from box 1 are antecedent factors detailed in the following:

**Parental influence or failure:** As attested by P1, P3, P4 and P5, studies have also identified the place of parents in career development or occupational choice of youngsters. Families, parents and guardians in particular, play significant roles in the occupational aspirations and career goal development of their children. Without parental approval or support, students and young adults are often reluctant to pursue, or even explore, diverse career possibilities (see Taylor, Harris, & Taylor, 2004; Osiruemu,

2007;Jungen, 2008; Jones, 2010; Igbinedion. 2011;Olamide, & Olawaiye, 2013; Adebayo, 2014). The present study revealed further that family or parents, as an antecedent factor, play a critical role in a child’s choice of craft profession and particularly which eventually impact on their literacy development.

**Financial constraint:** In the study of Igbuzor (2006); Osiruemu (2007); Olamide, and Olawaiye (2013); as well as Oludeyi (2013), there is evidence that the introduction of user fee on education the

lack money to pay for it have been one major factor affecting the occupational career path of most workers. This factor (lack of financial capacity) is also evident in P1 and P2's explanation of what led them to learning Engineering and Barbering respectively; an indication that financial constraints not only serve as antecedent but also current factor influencing literacy development among craft workers in Nigeria.

**Other Factors:** as evident in table 2, other antecedent factors undermining literacy development of craft workers in the study area include, ignorance, freewill or personal interest, children intellectual

incompetence, and peer influence. In P1's explanation of what he referred to as *personal interest*, it later came to his knowledge that such decision came out of ignorance. Ignorance, in his words means the lack of awareness on the importance of literacy knowledge to businesses'. He also mentioned intellectual incompetence as another antecedent factor (see table 3). P6 also stated that he chose the profession out of freewill. Peer influence also features prominently in P7's discussion. Her involvement with male friend led to unwanted early pregnancy which prevented her from schooling.

**Table 3: Current factors undermining literacy development among craft persons**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <p>Research question five: <i>What factors do you think can prevent crafts persons like you from being lettered?</i></p> <p><b>P1:</b> 'Well, the issue is about <i>ignorance</i>. In my own case, it later came to my understanding that what I called personal interest was as a result of lack of awareness of the importance of literacy knowledge in my business. I would have combined the two if I knew. But for others, factors that may hinder literacy development include <i>parental failure</i> (whether in terms of finance or otherwise) or <i>children intellectual incompetence</i>'.</p> <p><b>P2:</b> '<i>Finance</i> is the major problem and when there is <i>no one to sponsor</i> you, what can you do? My case is even fair; I was not that brilliant as my younger sister. She always came first in her class but she now engages in trading and she is doing fine'.</p> <p><b>P3:</b> 'At least among the guys I know who</p> | <p>are into craftwork and other self-own business, money problem is usually the major factor. At times, it may be <i>lack of interest</i> and <i>the slim chances of getting a better job after graduation</i> is another point. Another thing is <i>the cost of schooling</i>; if you calculate the total amount of tuition fee you pay from year one to final year in school, you are likely to get a good business career with that if the money is available'.</p> <p><b>P4:</b> Although for most people, it is lack of money. For me I believe that whether you are schooling or learning trade, you are both looking for means of survival and self-sustainability. And it is easier, faster and cheaper to get what you want when you learn craft than going to school and start looking for job after graduation.</p> <p><b>P5:</b> 'Like I said, if parent are not united, it can tell much on the future of their</p> |
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children or if one loses his or her father or mother from early days in life. It can cause it. As for me, the only factor is if I do not want to. Whatever I want to do is in me. Although some people cannot read and right so what are they going to do in school? Apart from that, what is in many people's head that they are thinking about is too much for them to read and memorize'.

**P6:** 'I think it is always because of the economic situation in the country. Many people want to be educated but *there is no encouraging economic environment* that will give them everything they need to be successful. We technicians are brilliant people but we need sponsorship, bank loan and conducive environment. It is when we are doing well in business and able to cater for our family that we can think about furthering our studies'.

**P7:** 'Ok I think lack of money and time and the family responsibilities. And again the problem of computer literacy too. For example, my husband finished secondary school before he left our village to do business in Lagos. After we came down to Ogun state permanently, he has started this internet studies (referring to National Open University) and he always go around with laptop. He believes he will still get better job if he finished in the school and he wants me to do the same thing but me I cannot because I can't operate computer. It will be embarrassing for me since everything is about computer'.

Inferable from box 2 are current factors detailed in the following:

**Underfunding:** Nigerian government's lackadaisical attitude towards adequate educational funding at all level is a major factor. Annually, the government invests only an average of 7.27% of the nation's total budget on education. This is very small compared to the UNESCO recommendation of 26% annual budget for funding education so as to meet world educational standard. This is considerably the lowest contribution to education in the whole world (Adekalu, & Oludeyi, 2013; Onukwugha, 2013). This same problem also affects provision and funding of adult literacy education and programme. Literacy educators are resultantly paid little, lack job security, have few training opportunities and rarely give professional support to learners.

**Poverty and financial incapacity:** Resulting from poor funding by the government and other agencies, the introduction of user fee into education at most levels in Nigeria became inevitable. Whereas many handicrafts persons in Nigeria are generally low income earners whose perceptive orientation is, from the outset, configured into seeing education as less important; they would rather spend money on their business believing that such spending will yield immediate return unlike education whose return (if any) may relatively be longer. Although some of them recognize literacy as important in acquisition of skills in business and a factor to improve their personal and professional lives, according to Oluoch (2005), financial constraint is the most obvious disincentive in adult literacy development among crafts men and

women. Interview with P2, P3 and P7 also reveal that money is a major impediment to literacy development among craft workers in Nigeria (see box 2). This finding corroborated the findings of Igbuzor, (2006); Osiruemu, (2007); Olamide, and Olawaiye, (2013); and Oludeyi, (2013), among others.

**Poor policy implementation:** Although no participant mentioned this as a factor, educational policies are unfairly inconsistent in Nigeria's adult literacy education which adversely undermines the campaign for mass functional literacy. It was found by Oluoch, (2005) that most literacy programmes operate without any policy direction that puts literacy at the heart of education and economic development. This is well captured in Nnazor, (2005) who submits that there has hardly been a sustainable, virile, and coherently comprehensive set of programmes demonstrating government's commitment to adult education as a strategic priority in Nigeria's development. The adult education programmes that were organized since 1990s continue to operate mainly as disparate, piecemeal activities that are not integrated into a coherent, purposeful strategy in pursuit of a national development vision.

Many government sponsored adult education activities have been chronically anemic due to inadequate funding, and lackadaisically implemented policies owing largely to a historical lack of passion and vision for adult education. He laments further that adult education

curricula are hardly forward-looking or responsive to the strategic needs of the economy or to the personal, social and political development needs of the vast majority of Nigerian adults. Frameworks for organising and delivering programmes are hardly innovative. The lack of or inadequate physical and instructional facilities in government-owned adult education training centers is indicative of the neglect and marginal status of adult literacy education (Nnazor, 2005). The consequence of this is that there is little or no defined collaboration between the Adult Education departments and other agencies involved in literacy-related programmes. This represents a cogent impediment to functional literacy development among adult Nigerians, including the crafts persons.

**Ego:** According to Oluoch, (2005) many adult learners, especially those respected in the society, feel stigmatized as illiterates; they feel shy and ashamed to be seen attending literacy classes for fear of being identified as illiterate. Some feel so disgraced that they may jettison attending classes with women, especially, when their performance is low compared to the female adult learners. At times when they noticed that they are not treated as adults by adult education facilitators, they sometimes stop attending literacy education classes. These are reflections of personal ego and represent a significant obstacle to literacy development among adult crafts workers. (Also see P6's response on his readiness to enroll for literacy class in table 4)

**Languages constraints:** Communication and language of instruction are determinant factors of human learning. It is important for effective transfer of learning and skill application. It is paradoxical to observe that in most developing nations like Nigeria, most educational programmes and schemes are often designed to pay more attention to structure and curriculum than to language policy (Ojokheta and Adelere, 2004). It becomes a major problem as we use languages that are foreign to adult learners to correct illiteracy. P7 was expressive on her inability to cope in places where means of communications are foreign to her (see table 4). Many Nigeria crafts persons will prefer indigenous language as means of communication in adult literacy classes. However, even where the facilitators use indigenous language as means of instruction, are the reading materials and practice books designed in the same language? How motivating is it to go through the hurdles of preparing reading materials in native language for people who show lackadaisical attitudes towards learning? Is there enabling environment and government political will to reduce the challenges? English language as an official means of communication in Nigeria, a language that must be learnt by all, cannot unfortunately be jettisoned.

**Technophobia:** This is a fear or dislike of technology. The society which we leave today is information-based empowered by technological spread into virtually every aspect of life. The role of technological gadgets in teaching and learning is resultantly prominent incrementally.

Unfortunately, average adult handicraft workers, by virtue of the non-formal nature of the vocational training they received, still find technological apparatus such as computers, internets and the like unsuitable for them in learning new tasks and in promoting their trade. Hardly can one find a craft worker who is a comfortable user of PCs or emails; that is if they even possess it. Those master handicraft persons who are well to do and who possess laptops do not likely use it for learning or business purpose. This is probably due to the fear that technologies, with their perceived numerous complicated buttons and operational instructions, are complex gadgets, not easily understandable for operation and utilisations. This is another impediment against literacy development among adult craft workers in Nigeria. (See P7's response in Table 3)

**Occupational orientation and upbringing:** Hypothetically, one obstacle to literacy development in Nigeria is not unconnected with the negative mentality of the craft workers which is often an outcome of their occupational upbringing. Many adult crafts persons became experts in their various trades or crafts through a period of apprenticeship which ultimately is non-formal, lacks meaningful curriculum and the master craftsmen, usually, are stark non-literates themselves, coupled with the fact that most of them are school leavers (unfairly termed drop-outs) who could not successfully make it in the more prestigious formal schools. It unfortunately configures most crafts men's mentality and makes them hold very low

opinion about literacy programmes. This further compounds the problems thereby

obstructing the pace of functional literacy development among crafts workers.

**Table 4: Willingness to enroll for literacy classes by craft persons**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Research question six: <i>If given the opportunity, will you enroll for adult literacy class?</i></p> <p><b>P1:</b> ‘Yes of course. Why not? Provided it will not disrupt my work schedule’</p> <p><b>P2:</b> ‘Yes, If the time for class will not clash with my business time’.</p> <p><b>P3:</b>‘Yes, I will’.</p> <p><b>P4:</b> ‘Definitely yes as long as it will not be too expensive’.</p> <p><b>P5:</b> ‘Yes I might enroll for it’</p> <p><b>P6:</b>‘I don’t think so but it depends. I might like to employ a Personal Assistant if my business expands beyond this. With two personal cars, two show rooms, a Van and one workshop and many apprenticeships, <i>I think I am beyond that now.</i> If I employ,</p> | <p>he or she will be doing the entire literacy job for me. All I want to do now is to train my children up to any height of education and that requires me to focus on my business’</p> <p><b>P7:</b> ‘Even if they teach me computer there, but the problem I have is that I can only speak and understand small aspect of Pidgin. This was the reason I left my previous church because there is no point of going there to worship if I can’t understand the Pastor’s preaching and prayer. I think I might face the same challenge if you want me to go to adult school’.</p> |
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On williness to enroll for adult literacy class if given the opportunity, there was an overwhelming display of readiness for furthering learning by 71% of the participants. P7’s lack of interest in enrolling for adult class was language barrier. This is something that can be removed if the language of instructions was indigenous.

concentrated on those factors that are peculiar to handicrafts men and women in Nigeria.

Findings of this study reveal the most basic factors making crafts persons unable to function effectively as members of the working population in the country. These inhibiting factors are recapitulated and highlighted below:

**Conclusion**

Although certain factors are responsible for the growing number of non-literates in Nigeria which are general in outlook but less relevant to crafts persons, attention is

| <b>Antecedent factors</b>                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Current factors</b>                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Parental influence<br>2. Financial constraint<br>3. Ignorance<br>4. Freewill/Personal interest<br>5. Child intellectual incompetence<br>6. Peer influence<br>7. Spouse preference | 8. Poverty and financial incapacity<br>9. Underfunding<br>10. Poor policy implementation<br>11. Language barriers<br>12. Technophobia<br>13. Occupational orientation<br>14. Ego |

It is noteworthy that poverty and financial related constraints were found to be the most telling undermining factor on literacy development among craft workers in Ijebu-ode southwestern Nigeria. This major problem spans through the life-time of most craft persons in the study area.

Be that as it may, since this study is limited to a small section of southwestern area of the country, it is suggested that further studies should endeavour to expand the scope of the study such that it covers large number of participants in the major regional areas of the country. Further studies may also endeavor to quantify and weigh these factors so as to identify which factors exert more influence in literacy development among craft persons in the country, and rank them accordingly. Future studies will do well to also examine where how motivating it might be for facilitators or adult educators to go through the hurdles of preparing reading materials in native language for adult learners. The possibility of using indigenous language as an official means of instruction and assessment in Nigerian adult education classes should also be investigated.

### **Recommendations**

As grease that lubricates the whole of business operations through a proper development and sharpening of skills among the populace, continuing education has the capacity to build optimum output of the nation thereby contributing to the economic growth of the nation. As a fragment of Nigerian workforce, craft workers' continued skill acquisition and professional development becomes a pivot in the quest for national economic growth as well as in reducing the number of non-literate in the country. In a bid to reduce the impending factors undermining literacy development among craft workers in the country, this study suggests the following:

1. Parents should be more upright in training their wards: Charity they say begins from home. Parents should be more concerned about giving their wards a kind of upbringing with which the children's mind is configured (from the cradle) to know that education is worthwhile and continuously spans through one's life time. Where financial incapacity sets in and choice of schooling is not feasible, the children should be taught that learning menial or handicraft work combined with

education that is beyond average is better than learning handicraft work without functional education.

2. Government should adhere strictly to the principles of free-education as contained in the National Policy on Education (2004): The problem of user fee in education which has scared many not-well-to-do craft persons will be alleviated if this is done. Financial constraint is the most pervasive and serious problem facing the craft workers in their quest for literacy development and personal aggrandizement. Functional literacy development will improve if the school fees is removed or reduced to the minimum.
3. Sequel to the fore going, government should as a matter of urgency, inject huge amount of money into educational system for its safety and subsequently the safety of the nation in the future. The UNESCO's recommendation on educational funding should be adopted and implemented to the letter. Further, government should strive hard to ensure good job security, provide training opportunity to and remunerate the literacy educators/facilitators adequately.
4. Adequate and consistent educational policy direction: government needs to establish and sponsor adult literacy programmes that put functional literacy development at the heart of education and economic development. Such programme should be made virile, coherent and well-equipped with adequate physical and instructional facilities. Adult education training centres so established should be working in collaboration with adult education departments of various universities and other agencies involved in functional literacy development in the country.
5. Adoption of indigenous language policy in schools. Without much ado, indigenous language should be encouraged for delivering curricular instruction to adult learners just as it is done in most developed countries like Malaysia, Australia, China , and so forth, where learners have options to choose between foreign and local languages. This will serve as motivating factors for adult craft workers and subsequently improve literacy development among them.
6. A regional counseling section or department should be established. This will be responsible for organizing mass orientation programmes for craft workers in each region and give advice to them on why continue any education will help boost their personal and professional career. With this, such personal problems as ignorance, ego, technophobia, wrong peer or spouse influence will be tackled with counseling and mentoring. Since this study has shown that many adult craft workers would be willing to continue studying if given the opportunity and most importantly if barriers were removed, this department should be responsible for providing such platform for adult craft persons in the country.

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