

The Perceptions of the Beneficiaries of the Adult Education Programmes about Livelihood Improvement in Selected Informal Settlements of Windhoek

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Abstract

The implementation of adult education programmes has been evaluated and the findings show some successes. However, most beneficiaries of these programmes have ended up living in poverty-stricken shacks in the informal settlements of Windhoek. The aim of this article is to report on the perceptions of the beneficiaries of the adult education programmes about livelihood improvement in selected informal settlements of Windhoek. The study used a qualitative approach with a phenomenological focus. The sample of the study comprised 37 beneficiaries. Snowball, convenient, and purposive sampling procedures were used to select the participants. The study also found that the adult education programmes are successfully impacting on the improvement of living standards of people in various aspects of life. Although such programmes are in a way tools to combat social evils, they need boosting mechanisms to make them more meaningful in the everyday lives of the beneficiaries. It is recommended that further research be conducted to help develop programmes that address the sustainable educational needs of adults.

Keywords

Adult Education, Informal Settlements, Skills Development, Self-Employment

1. Introduction

Namibia underwent an extreme, protracted and differentiated experience in the decades under German and South African colonial control (Hunter, 2004). South African colonial rule culminated in systematic racial discrimination based on apartheid policies

(Hunter, 2004). One way of spreading the apartheid ideology was by making it a compulsory part of the organisation and curricula in schools and in adult education programmes (Hopfer, 1997). The Namibian curriculum policy prior to independence mirrored the South African Bantu Education curriculum which was premised on notions of white supremacy, racial and ethnic separation, centralized control of curriculum decision-making and the highly unequal provision of basic curriculum resources along racial lines (Jansen, 1992).

In Namibia racial segregation was abolished on 21 March 1990 and the country acquired a democratically elected government (Mushelenga, 2008). One of the tasks of the new government was the creation of educational opportunities aimed at empowering Namibians who had previously been disadvantaged through the Bantu Education system (Jansen, 1992). Thus, in addition to the creation of educational opportunities for the formal school system, the Ministry of Education also implemented adult education programmes which were aimed at improving the educational opportunities of adult Namibians. These programmes include a National Literacy Programme (NLPN), Adult Upper Primary Education (AUPE) and Adult Skills Development for Self-employment (ASDSE) (Ministry of Education, 2007). Analysis of these documents shows that the programmes address skills pertaining to reading and writing, enhancing literacy skills and provision of skills for the purpose of self-employment. All of these key skills areas promote better living conditions for people.

Despite the provision of educational opportunities to adult Namibians, the alumni ended up living in poverty-stricken shacks in the informal settlements of Windhoek (Kaereho, 2013). The aim of this article is to report on the perceptions of the beneficiaries of the adult education programmes livelihood improvement in informal settlements of Windhoek. To reach this aim, the article presents the statement of the problem. This is followed by the theoretical framework. The research design and methods are then described, followed by the presentation of data, and the discussion and conclusions in light of the results. Finally, recommendations suggest measures to enhance adult education programmes so as to improve livelihood conditions in informal settlements of Windhoek.

2. Statement of the Problem

The implementation of adult education programmes has been evaluated and the findings show some successes (Kaereho, 2013). However, most beneficiaries of these adult education programmes have ended up living in poverty-stricken shacks in the informal settlements of Katutura (Kaereho, 2013). This scenario raises an inquiry regarding the extent to which the implemented adult education programmes actually improved the quality of life of adult Namibians beneficiaries. Therefore, this study sought to determine the perceptions of NLPN, AUPE and ASDSE alumni about the effectiveness of the adult education programmes regarding the improvement of their livelihoods. The following research questions were posed to help address the research problem:

- What are the perceptions of beneficiaries about the contribution of adult education programmes to the improvement of their chances of social and economic participa-

tion?

- What are beneficiaries' views and suggestions to make adult education programmes effective in improving living standards?

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical frameworks which were appropriate for this study were Colonial, Anti-Colonial, Critical and Freirean theories, which take us back to Neo-Colonial Theory (Figure 1). Most problems in Namibia, such as poverty, lack of education, diseases, civil wars and corruption are rooted in colonial practices of the past (Kaereho, 2013). The Freirean theory emerges from the struggle to alleviate political legacy and oppose colonial practices. Dei and Kempf (2006) stressed that colonialism, read as imposition and domination did not end with the return of political independence to colonized people or nation states. Colonialism has not departed. Indeed, colonialism and re-colonizing missions today manifest themselves in variegated or multi-coloured ways. Despite the claim that African states are independent, local and national legislations and policies are continuously influenced by colonial power, control, systems and mechanisms. Caplan (2008) added that the extensive and deep links between the West and Africa make changes or development in African countries complex and erratic. All

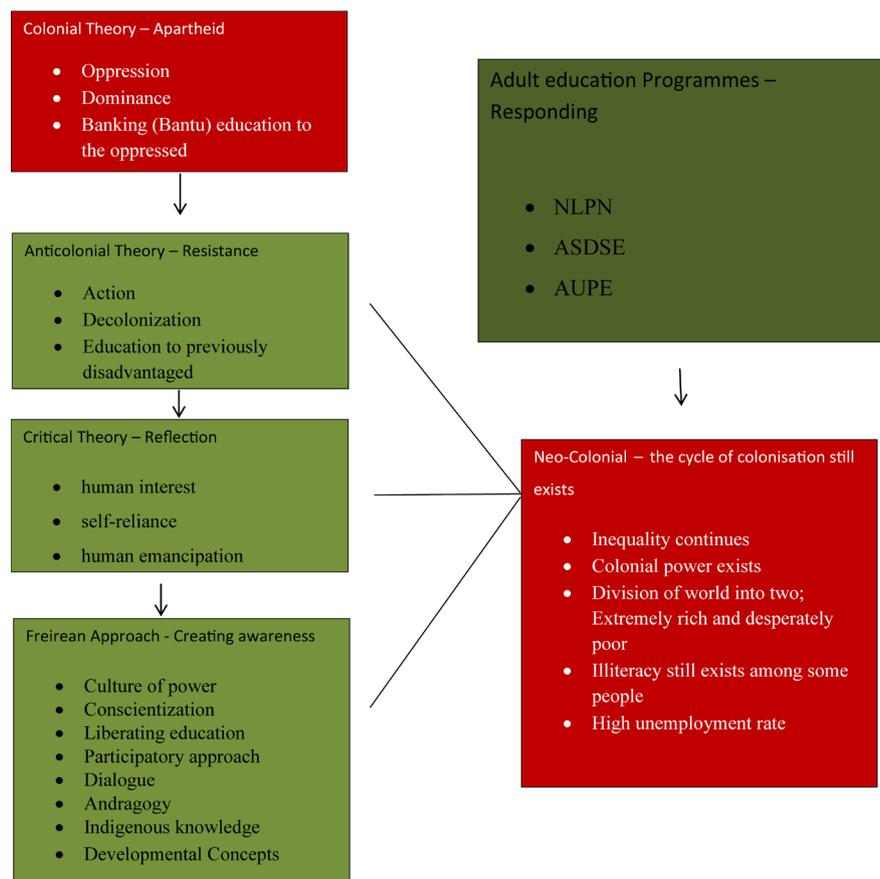


Figure 1. Theoretical frameworks and conceptual frameworks.

neo-colonial societies are still subject in one way or another to overt or subtle forms of neo-colonial domination, and independence has not solved many problems. The salient fact about Africa remains: “Africa was colonized in the past; while its so-called self-governed states are trying to improve whatever was destroyed in the past, it is undergoing similar experiences through other methods that come forth as assistance to development, and hence it is other forms of colonization—albeit more sophisticated” (Manyimo, 2005). Besides, there has always been resistance and there are new prominent methods of resistance gaining ground each day.

The study to explore perceptions of the beneficiaries of the adult education programmes about livelihood improvement in selected informal settlements of Windhoek was guided by critical theory and Freirean theory. The adoption of critical theory takes into account the cognitive areas of human interest in generating knowledge. Habermas (1990) in McCarthy outlined three primary common cognitive areas in which human interest generates knowledge: *work knowledge* which refers to the way one controls and impacts one’s environment. This knowledge is based on concrete analysis and governed by technical rules. Next is *practical knowledge* which is about the identification of human social interaction. This is rooted in social knowledge and is governed by required norms, culture and values that define common expectations about behaviour between human beings. Finally, *emancipatory knowledge* is about the identification of self-knowledge and self-reflection, leading to a transformed consciousness or standpoint transformation. The Freirean theory brings about conscientization for those who are educationally disadvantaged. According to Freire, people should be aware of their own lives before they will understand any change occurring within their society. This simply means that people should be literate in order to understand the world around them. In this study the Freirean approach deals with issues of the poor and the planning, implementing, monitoring and assessing of developmental programmes aimed at improving the lives of the targeted beneficiaries.

4. Research Design, Strategies and Methods

The study employed a qualitative approach to examine the perceptions of alumni and beneficiaries regarding the effectiveness of adult education programmes. The qualitative approach is “a defined category of research models, which elicit verbal or visual data in the form of descriptive records” (Johnson, 2002: p. 16). These may include field notes, recordings, videotapes, and other written records and pictures or films.

The study used a qualitative research method with a phenomenological focus (Kaereho, 2013). The phenomenological design describes a lived experience of a phenomenon. Phenomenologists use human thinking, perception and other mental and physiological acts as well as spirituality to describe and understand human experiences. Phenomenological design relies on discussions with learners, tutors and more formal approaches through in-depth interviews, (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998: p. 96).

4.1. Population and Sampling

There are seven Adult Education districts in the Khomas Region. The targeted popula-

tion for this study came from the Hakahana, Okuryangava and Greenwell Matongo districts of Katutura. These three Adult Education districts were selected because they make out a great part of the informal settlements in the city.

The sampling procedure used was a combination of convenient and snowball techniques. The convenient sampling technique assisted in the identification of facilitators of the NLPN and AUPE programmes. The snowball technique was then used because the facilitators of the NLPN and AUPE assisted in the identification of alumni programmes. Furthermore, the alumni of NLPN and AUPE acted as referrals because they assisted in the identification of more participants for the study. This method was repeated until the desired number of participants competent to provide adequate data was reached. A sample size of five learners from the NLPN and AUPE programmes per district was selected. ASDSE beneficiaries were difficult to locate. Instead of identifying 15 respondents, only seven respondents were available. In the end, a total of 37 adult learners from NLPN, AUPE and ASDSE in the Okuryangava, Greenwell Matongo and Hakahana districts of Windhoek were reached.

4.2. Data Collection Process and Analysis

Data were collected in the above-mentioned districts from 19 to 30 November 2010. The researchers visited each district for two days to collect data from the NLPN and AUPE alumni. The data from ASDSE alumni were collected through house visits, appointments and meeting at places such as parks, schools and in researchers' cars. Each interview lasted for approximately 30 minutes. Permission was obtained from the participants to audio record the interviews.

The data collected were transcribed into a word processing document and analysed using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (Kaereho, 2013). The data analytical approach is about "understanding experiences an individual has in life, how they made sense of them and what meanings those experiences hold" (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998: p. 96). The researchers grouped the same questions and their responses. From these groups of responses patterns, categories and themes were formed. The researchers ensured that the patterns, categories and themes communicated the reality of human experiences as obtained from the interviewees.

5. Presentation of Results

The collected data reflect the perceptions of beneficiaries on the contribution of adult education programme to the improvement of their chances of social and economic participation. It also reflects the views and suggestions to make adult education programmes more effective in improving living standards.

5.1. The Perceptions of Beneficiaries about the Contribution of Adult Education Programmes to the Improvement of Their Chances of Social and Economic Participation

With regard to the programme improvement of their chances of social and economic

participation, 60% of the beneficiaries from the NPLN programme said that they were happy with the way the programme had somehow contributed to how they interact with different people in society. They feel they have a chance to apply for certain job openings, a chance to further their studies and to advance their children's education level. Participants were of the opinion that access to basic services such as education could lead to improvement in their living standards and could enhance their quality of life. In the same vein, they indicated that access to services needs involvement and participation in the socio-economic and political domain. Respondents further indicated that they lack political capabilities, including their rights as Namibian citizens and as human beings in general, without the power of speech to influence public policies and programmes and schemes. Participants further criticized that they were excluded from the decision-making process of issues that affect their socio-economic wellbeing in the areas where they stay.

One hundred percent of the ASDSE beneficiaries revealed that they have acquired better and improved methods of generating income generally. The skills learnt are helping them to be more competitive in their respective fields. Beneficiaries from the AUPE programme recorded a 60% satisfaction and 40% dissatisfaction level. The satisfied group stated that the programme enabled them to give some valid opinions during societal or group meetings. Many could however not handle their finances independently and successfully. Their participation in financial issues was limited and required assistance from external members. Those who were dissatisfied indicated that they did not link the acquired skills and knowledge to any issues of improving their social and economic participation.

When asked about the improvement of living standards, the beneficiaries of the NPLN programme indicated that the programme might have improved their living standards indirectly. Six out of the 15 beneficiaries chose this response. Five respondents indicated that learning to read and write had a direct impact on their lives and the other four did not find any improvement in their lives. It was clear to the researcher that some respondents understood what improvement of livelihood means. For those who understood that the term meant better living conditions, the researcher explained what the term means in this study.

All of the ASDSE respondents reported that the programme had a direct positive effect on their lives. They indicated that by the end of the programme they could obtain loans to start their own businesses. They stated that they had better incomes than before and were also rich in knowledge, not only materialistically. Internal satisfaction was also observed among these respondents. One of the beneficiaries of ASDSE testified that she gained employment after being involved in the programme. Furthermore, she indicated that the change in employment status not only enabled her to be self-reliant but also improved her quality (standard) of life. One of the programme beneficiaries testified thus: "I feel as if I was picked by my Heavenly Father, when I was so deprived to the extent that poverty could be seen from my appearance. But now, I am so happy because I am self-supporting and advantageous to my entire family" (ASDSE Partici-

pants, personal communication, 29-30 November 2010). Furthermore, the programme has enabled beneficiaries to establish their own income-generating enterprises, thereby also creating more employment opportunities for other community members. Nevertheless, with new enterprises, the lack of equipment and resources was one of the challenges. For example, the grant from First National Bank of Namibia did not cover the costs for the procurement of needed materials/equipment. The female participants revealed that it is hard for them to run their business effectively due to some gender issues involved. Their partners do not give them enough support in running the business, but at the end of the day the profit needs to be shared equally. Sometimes it is also seen or valued as useless money, especially if they want to have a say. On the other hand, with the male participants, none of them stated any gender issues in regard to running their businesses.

Common work issues regarding gender include the following:

- Clear segregation of the sexes within companies in a functional, physical and hierarchical way.
- Gender-labeling of work, competencies, capabilities, experiences, intellectualities places and things.
- Stereotypical ideas of gender-specific attributes and stereotypical myths and conceptions of male and female.
- Myths of women's work (capabilities) and men's work (capabilities).
- Taboo, silence on these questions and the labeling of phenomena as personal problems or individual choices.

Most female respondents stated that they cannot run their business throughout the day as needed for them to make a profit that would help feed the family. The profit is also needed for the loan repayments process.

Most of the respondents in AUPE saw living standards in monetary or economics terms. The researcher clearly explained to them what livelihood improvement entails in this particular study. The AUPE respondents stated that the programme improved their standard of living indirectly as the content teaches extensively about knowing yourself (your body and soul), hygiene, environmental preservation, entrepreneurship and mathematics. Hundred per cent (of the respondents said that the programme changed their way of life for the better, and they expected to get a job or contrive better ways of finding more money. Again, this goes with the myth that being educated and literate creates jobs. As for the improvement in living standards, they admitted that the few improvements are a motivation for better things to come.

Respondents from all programmes indicated that they had a chance to have access to needs and services in various areas such as financial services, credit employment, nutrition and health.

House Visits

Learners stated these views:

- "Let a lot of people know about NLPN and join the programme. Encourage them by visiting them at their homes, or by carrying out an awareness campaign where pos-

sible. We as adults need people to often talk to us about education or also through the different media. This makes us to always focus and enjoy school.”

- “To help the people to stay in class not to drop” (NLPN Participants, personal communication, 19-21 November 2010).

5.2. The Beneficiaries’ Views and Suggestions to Make Adult Education Programmes Effective in Improving Living Standards

English Language

The following are views that the participants expressed:

- “More practise in English to improve, if you attend AUPE.”
- “English language lessons should be strengthened for us to be able to communicate with the world.”
- “Need strong English and more reading and writing tests in class.”
- “Regular oral test, in order to improve our speaking in English. To be able to look for jobs and be better during interviews” (NLPN Participants, personal communication, 19-21 November 2010).

Computer Literacy

There is a high demand for computer literacy from the NLPN beneficiaries. They mentioned that this skill would enable them to become cashiers and also run their own businesses, with the use of till machines. They will also train their own employees to use the till machine. They made the following suggestions:

- “Bring in computer training and also a little bit of high level English, not so much of mother language.”
- “Bring computer and typing for us to study.”
- “Bring in computer for us to know a little bit. The NBC is always talking about to be developed and technology.”
- “*Huuu*” Oh Yes!! I want to know computer. They wanted to give me computer work, but I didn’t know. So bring in computer and teach us please. So that we cannot miss the chance” (NLPN Participants, personal communication, 19-21 November 2010).
- “Mam!! I want to study typing, maybe I will be promoted in the office and get a better job. Also give us Grade 10 in AUPE.”
- “I want to know computer well. Please bring that machine.”
- “Want to study computer, one day I might have a job that needs computer skills.”
- “Put information technology in AUPE please, even with few computers to us, to assist the GRN in solving some of their problems. The problems are that they are not linked to other countries. There is also a lack of clever Namibians who can run businesses internationally, that can take Namibia to the top” (AUPE Participants, personal communication, 25-27 November 2010).

Upgrading the Programmes to Include Grade 10

In regard to upgrading the programmes, the respondents raised the following points:

- “NLPN last stage should be more deep or difficult like AUPE, so that AUPE can be

our small grade 10 before we go to NAMCOL.”

- “NLPN should be a bit difficult, because AUPE is too high and we get problems to understand AUPE well. Let’s start in January with classes not March to have extra classes and enough time” (NLPN Participants, personal communication, 19-21 November 2010).

Provision of Alternative Prescribed Books (English Reading and Activities) to Make It More Practical

One of the learners suggested:

- “There is a book I bought, author Collins John Mannion, title ‘School Grammar’, this book is very helpful. ‘Atatata’ this book will help many to practise English (reading, grammar, comprehension and understanding) very well. Please provide us with such books or try the one proposed to make it compulsory to all. Bring more reading books, and books with activities to help the learners do AUPE. AUPE is very difficult if the Stage 3 English foundation was not laid strong enough. English language is the medium of instruction in Namibia. If you cannot communicate in English, there is a gap in your stages of developing yourself (socially) or even fulfilling all your needs as a disadvantaged citizen” (NLPN Participants, personal communication, 19-21 November 2010).

Young Promoters

Some respondents stated that they have problems with young promoters’ ways of teaching and responding to learners’ questions. The respondents expressed their views on this issue as follows:

- “*Hmmmm*, these young promoters have short temper (‘*oshil!*’); they did not have or go through what we have experienced. Also look at employing older people, for example old teachers who are retired but still have the will to teach.”
- “They are so defensive, sometimes if they make mistakes in some lessons; it is hard for them to accept our help as if we are stupid or as if we don’t know anything” (NLPN Participants, personal communication, 19-21 November 2010).

Programme Time Frame

The respondents stated that the scheduled timeframe is too short for them to grasp all the necessary knowledge. In this matter they expressed the following:

- “We want to start in January to December.”
- “NLPN should be a bit difficult, because AUPE is too high and we get problems to understand AUPE well. Let’s start in January with classes not March, so that we can have extra classes and enough time to do our programme.”
- “All was available, just a little bit of more activities, reading and writing English, to cope with AUPE. Time is short; maybe we should start in January and finish in December” (NLPN Participants, personal communication, 19-21 November 2010).

Attention from Our Ministry

- “I have noticed that the Ministry of Education is giving more attention to the children’s education and very little to adult education.”
- “None of the Ministries takes good care of us; we want to see adult education events

on the television regularly. I am only seeing adult education during what they call, Adult Literacy week. There are no back to school advertisement, as this might boost our energy and motivation to go back to the programme” (NLPN Participants, personal communication, 19-21 November 2010).

Suggestions That Were Made to Improve the ASDSE Programme:

Accounting Skills and Customer Care Training

It seems that the programmes do not offer advance level accounting and business management skills for adults to be fully equipped to manage their business. ASDSE beneficiaries hope to continue learning, only if they are provided with more technical training in different careers. The views of the participants testify to this:

- “Bring in teller training or skills, give us accounting skills also and business management at a more advanced level. We have hope in life, if you help us then give us what we want, we will be best.”
- “Bring customer care and human resources training; bring a lot of career options so that we choose from them.”
- “Bring customer care, accounting or other school subjects and also computer please” (ASDSE Participants, personal communication, 2010).

Include Specific Grade 10 Business Management Subjects in ASDSE

The following are expressions of the participants:

- “Bring us our own Grade 10, not the formal one. Because we do not want the one we should follow. It does not fulfil our needs. For the business to grow and become stable, I want to do Entrepreneurship and Business Studies, but I am afraid to fail.”
- “We need to be separated from the kids, we do not have the same needs and we are working people, we cannot go to formal school like our children. Give us our own studies at the higher level also” (ASDSE Participants, personal communication, 29-30 November 2010).

Suggestions Made to Improve the AUPE Programme:

Upgrade AUPE for Flexibility

AUPE beneficiaries see the need for Grade 10 to be offered through DABE rather than the formal system. They stated that “Grade 10 is not meeting any of our needs. It is not related to what we do in AUPE, also not what we do in our work or at home”. Participants’ expressions on the issue of Grade 10 inclusion were noted as follows:

- “I need higher education, the school process is longer; please bring Grade 10 in AUPE, also with different subjects, but the subjects should be more related to our life programmes or projects.”
- “I see the need for Grade 10 to be offered through adult education forms rather than the formal system. Grade 10 is not meeting any of our needs, it is not related to what we do in AUPE also not what we do in our work or at home. It is another kid’s long story.”
- “AUPE should send us to higher education company not NAMCOL only, the road is too long.”
- “Why is AUPE not like school or grade 10? To cut the long process of schooling, we

cannot just be in school for the rest of our lives” (AUPE Participants, personal communication, 25-27 November 2010).

Promoters’ Responsibility in the Inclusion of Grade 10

Beneficiaries’ views were as follows:

- “Promoters should guide in subject choosing in Grade 10 (NAMCOL). And also tell us what the subjects include in reality. They have to tell us in detail for us to understand what the subject is all about” (AUPE Participants, personal communication, 25-27 November 2010).

Job Opportunities

The following is one of the views expressed:

- “Vacancies in newspapers seek younger people and we are getting old and pensioned, so it is demotivating for us to learn and also we remain educationally disadvantaged as independent Namibians.”

Typing and Computer Practice

On the issue of computer practice and typing, the following were noted:

- “Include computer, to be on track with Vision 2030. Why are they not specializing in all school subjects and make it equivalent to Grade 10? Adult education is different from formal schooling and we will not fit in their system.”
- “I want to know computer, I want to know English well, so make it strong.”
- “Make NLPN like upper-primary to make AUPE like high school for adults, we are tired to go 3 years of AUPE, then you have to go again to Grade 10 and 12 which will only be distance. It is hard for us, really. Just give us through AUPE or another programme after AUPE” (AUPE Participants, personal communication, 25-27 November 2010).

6. Discussion

6.1. The Perceptions of Beneficiaries about the Contribution of Adult Education Programmes to the Improvement of Their Chances of Social and Economic Participation

In reality, meeting challenges brought about by rapid social and economic change depends on equipping people with appropriate knowledge, skills and competencies.

In regard to job opportunities, most adults are eager to learn with the idea of getting better full-time jobs. As they try to become educated, the years are also passing. Under the Namibian Labour Law, you are declared a pensioner when you turn 60. Thus, you are not supposed to work any longer, though it is different with most of the parastatals which allow workers to continue working until they are no longer able. In the actual sense, it might be somewhat risky and hard to employ someone aged 60 and above in a new position. Adult learners become more discouraged with some of the laws, though they do understand what the issues incorporate. In this sense, adults need to be made aware that it is not only through full-time jobs that they can make life worth living. Self-employment and owning businesses can be profitable.

Briefly, it can be stated that gender segregation and stereotypical gender-coding is a

huge obstacle and leads to enormous problems for both individual and community change. Change, however, is a necessary prerequisite for learning. Only persons who are willing and able to change their old views that are obstacles to development and learning can learn effectively. Echoing Mahatma Ghandi, “We must be the change that we wish to see in the world”. We should not always sit back and wait for others to initiate the change for us.

The goal of adult education is to promote social, political, cultural and economic development nationwide, in order to improve the quality of life for the participants. The perceptions of adult education participants in regard to English are that the language practice in class is poor; more activities should be introduced in the programme for them to become more experienced in the English language. They want to have extra readings that are more helpful. Oral to them is also very imperative in preparing for job interviews. This will improve their participation in everyday activities. Computer illiteracy is a main concern. Participants perceive these skills to be very important in contemporary Namibia. Generally, they are progressing well, though at a much slower pace than expected. Computer literacy would connect them to the outside world of business.

6.2. The Beneficiaries' Views and Suggestions to Make Adult Education Programmes Effective in Improving Living Standards

To keep the NLPN participants motivated to learn, there should be more house visits, regular open talks, talk shows and campaigns. The whole NLPN programme should be made tougher, as the more participants relax, the more they tend to become reluctant. In terms of promoters, retired teachers can be asked to assist where possible, as adult education promoters or facilitators should have some form of teaching qualifications to be able to carry out proper work with love, care and experience. Due to the young facilitators' lack of experience, it is of great importance to employ older teachers, lecturers and instructors who are retired and can still manage teaching other adults in the literacy programmes. In addition, retired teachers need to unlearn the pedagogy of teaching and adopt the andragogical concept of teaching. They need to apply proper adult education teaching, using proper teaching methodologies and learning techniques. Adult literacy programmes are also of high value and need to involve educationally qualified human resources in their deliveries and not just school leavers with Grade 12 or equivalent qualifications.

The main objectives of ASDSE are institutional capacity building, business management skills and informal sector promotion by exposing the potential and existing entrepreneurs to business ethics, banking procedures and creation of employment. The perceptions of ASDSE beneficiaries regarding the gender aspect are that the female beneficiaries still experience issues of gender discrimination and inequalities in the process of running the business of their choice. They need accounting and auditing skills that will help them do their own books rather than hiring experts to do this for them. This usually results in spending a lot of money while the profit made is not enough for loan repayments and home maintenance. ASDSE beneficiaries expect the

programme to use Business Management textbooks for Grade 8 and 9. The practice can be the basis of successful progression to Grade 10. Some businesses are progressing very well, but lack marketing strategies to the outside world or internationally. There is no knowledge or skills in this regard.

AUPE was designed to satisfy the needs of adult learners. The objectives of this programme are: sustaining and increasing literacy levels; providing greater access to continued education and vocational training; improving quality of life; and increasing participation in the political, social and economic development of communities. The perceptions of AUPE participants are that AUPE is not the gateway to Grade 10 at all. They feel that AUPE is more of an upgrade from NLPN and basic literacy. There is a big gap between AUPE and Grade 10. The programmes need to be revised to make them related and linked to one another. To address this issue, the Directorate is currently busy revising the AUPE curriculum for the narrowing of such gaps. The participants also need to acquire computer literacy skills. Participants have already predetermined that they will just try Grade 10 after AUPE and they will never progress. They drop out from Grade 10 and repeat AUPE just to keep on learning. This is a clear sign for the Directorate to believe that people really want to learn. To accommodate this need, proper learning paths should be made available as soon as possible.

The study found that the number of male participants in the adult education programmes has increased dramatically, which was never the case in the past. The study revealed that most of the adult learners are citizens under the age of 45. The study also disclosed that the adult education programmes are tools to combat many social evils in developing countries, especially Namibia. Most of the participants in NLPN and AUPE still feel that the programmes should help them get proper full-time jobs. Due to this the ASDSE participants lack ideas and the confidence to start up their own businesses or entrepreneurial projects with the skills acquired.

The study also found that the adult education programmes are effectively impacting on the improvement of living standards in various aspects of life. Six of the 15 NPLN beneficiaries indicated that the programme might have improved their living standards indirectly. Five respondents indicated that learning to read and write had a direct impact on their lives and the other four did not find any improvement in their lives. It was clear to the researcher that some of respondents understood what improvement of livelihood means. For those who understood the term to mean better living conditions, the researcher explained what the term means in this study.

7. Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- Adult education programmes, out-of-school-youth programmes and other non-formal education programmes should be granted a Ministry of their own, as the participants stated that the current Ministry of Education is much more focused on the education of children. It seems that formal education programmes are afforded the most attention. Another option is for the Ministry to find an effective way of

- involving the non-formal education sector as fully and equally as the formal sector.
- The NLPN, ASDSE, and AUPE programmes should be revised and be based on the daily lives of people, in particular areas or districts of the country. These revisions should involve people who have been schooled in the field of adult education and experts in other related fields of study, also taking into consideration their field of specialization in different areas.
 - Relate the revision process on how literacy programmes came into existence in Namibia and how they should be effectively implemented in relation to theories that will help initiate the change. Some non-formal education providers or adult education practitioners are not aware that they are engaged in adult education, because they believe it to be a prerogative or sanction of the Directorate of Adult Basic Education (DABE). This is due to the fact that many of those practitioners or providers are not schooled in the field of adult education. They are generally not trained in the concept, scope and nature of adult education (Shalyefu, 2012).
 - It is recommended that computer literacy be introduced across all the adult education programmes. It is also recommended that English be taught by using the different ways of learning the aspects of grammar in the English language.

These recommendations are supported by the fact that when adults complete their AUPE programme their next step is to enrol for Grade 10 at NAMCOL. As has been argued by many, the formal school curriculum prepares students or learners for the next grade; it is not necessarily life-oriented, need-oriented or problem-oriented. Adult education should be flexible, and yet we are reverting back to formal education when we send the adult learners to Grade 10, which is more suitable for the education of children. How are we fulfilling the adult learners' needs, the concept of lifelong learning and the attainment of Vision 2030 goals in this regard?

8. Conclusion

The issues involved in promoting lifelong learning nationwide are pervasive or persistent and systemic. Some implications of this are that Namibia is a developing country, so there is a need for it to bring about development in an effective way. There are a lot of problems that need to be reduced. It is imperative to first address the problems that will help the next problems to be addressed in an easy and effective way. This is simply to prioritize the problems accordingly, tackle each problem from its roots and establish the causes of such a problem. The challenges seem daunting and the solutions to problems are hardly simple. However, to propel Namibia into the group of developed nations and knowledge-based economies, these challenges must definitely be met.

In addition, these concerns are national, and would require a combined national response. As respondents have stated that they are excluded from decision-making in policy formulation, it is recommended that all stakeholders in the communities, the education enterprise, parents, guardians, village headmen, traditional authorities, church leaders, unions, the government, regional councillors, governors, all political leaders and law makers must have the vision and commitment to make the necessary

model shift to prepare for the future now, instead of waiting to react to it only when it arrives. Namibia should consider action-oriented recommendations and actions so as to be able to remain focused. Also, national development in Namibia can only be achieved if consideration is taken of the nation as a whole. Nevertheless, the adult population is the main target and has the influence in the sense of current national developments. The adults should be the main focus, but the children should not be forgotten totally as they are the future adults and leaders.

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