

**PLANNING STRATEGY AS A CATALYST FOR PROMOTING
QUALITY ASSURANCE IN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES
IN SOUTH-SOUTH - NIGERIA**

Bessong, Napoleon Osang Ph.D

Department of Continuing Education and Development Studies,
University of Calabar, Calabar

&

Bessong, Columbus Deku Ph.D

Department of Continuing Education and Development Studies,
University of Calabar, Calabar
Email:bessongnapoleon88@gmail.com



Abstract

This study examined the effect of planning strategy for promoting quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria. One research question and one hypothesis were formulated for the study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 1926 respondents (36 directors; 360 supervisors; and 1530 facilitators of State Agencies for Mass Education (SAMEs) in South-South, Nigeria. A sample of 702 respondents (36 directors, 360 supervisors and 306 facilitators) was drawn for the study using proportionate stratified sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled “Planning Strategy as a Catalyst for Promoting Quality Assurance in Adult Education Programmes Questionnaire” (PSCPQAAEPQ). Three experts validated the instruments, two from the Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies and one from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation Unit), all in the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. A reliability coefficient of 0.79 was established as a measure of internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha statistics. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation in answering research questions while ANOVA was used in testing the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed among others that planning strategy has been used to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria to a low extent. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government and all other relevant authorities should ensure that adequate planning strategy is put in place in order to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria.

Keywords: *Planning Strategy, Catalyst, Quality Assurance, Adult Education Programmes*



Introduction

One central indicator of the overall development of any nation is education. It is undoubtedly an indispensable instrument and catalyst for individual, social and national development. This, therefore, implies that all levels of education (primary, secondary and tertiary) need to respond to these changes globally. The dynamic nature of education, adult education inclusive helps in meeting the rapid changes in the society Ibiang, et al. (2014). Adult education is flexibly designed to break the barriers posed by the formal school system in providing education for all categories of citizens. Adult education is an educative process

with flexible curricular and methodologies that adapt to the needs and work pace of the adult learners (Melnic & Botez, 2014). Adult education is the development of self-reliant, autonomous adults, building and rebuilding their lives in complex and rapidly changing cultures, societies and economies at work, in the family, community and social life (UNESCO, 2015). Adult education literally means in this study as a systematic body of knowledge and educational processes provided by facilitators for adults and youths of formal school age, in and out of formal school setting; formally, non-formally and informally for self-actualization and national development. Unlike the conventional schools that educate younger people for mainly future purposes, adult education programmes are very focused in solving immediate problems that beset a nation (Ibok, et. al 2025).

More so, adult education programmes are multifaceted and all embracing. Adult education programmes are educational activities designed to enlighten/sensitize, empower/enhance, update/promote the development of the adults and their society in general (Onwuadi, 2018). In other words, adult education programmes have been viewed as a collective name for all forms of educational activities and learning programmes through which youths and adults acquired (Bessong, et al. (2018). This implies that all these forms of programmes are beneficial to the target groups. According to Agboeze, et al. (2021), these types of programmes include: literacy education, continuing education, vocational education, workers' education, peace education, community education, community development, environmental education, consumer education, prison education, women education, distance education, agricultural education, professional education, cultural, aesthetic and recreational education among others.

All these educational programmes listed earlier are targeted at realizing the laudable goals of adult education as stipulated by Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) in her National Policy on Education which include, to:

- 1) Provide functional literacy and continuing education for adults and youths who have never had the advantage of formal education or who left school too early but are willing to come back and continue schooling;
- 2) Provide functional and remedial education for those young people who did not complete secondary education;
- 3) Provide further education for different categories of workers in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills;
- 4) Provide in-service, on-the-job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills; and
- 5) Give the adult citizens of the country the necessary aesthetic, civic and cultural education for public enlightenment.

Thus, actualizing the Nigeria's adult education goals require the adoption and promotion of quality assurance practices by adult education administrators. Quality assurance is an interdisciplinary and a multidisciplinary concept. Quality assurance in adult education denotes the administration, plans, designs, curriculums and programmes from the input stage, through processes, to the output stage of productivity aimed at abolishing quality obstacles and to ensure that only products that meet the set standard get to the adult learners (Anyadike, et al. 2024). Quality assurance is carried out through a systematic monitoring and evaluation of programmes/projects. Quality assurance is also defined as the total quality management which will ensure that every progress and activity is implemented right in time and appropriately in adult education programmes. It encompasses how learning of adult education programmes is organized and managed, what the content of learning is, what level of learning is achieved, what it leads to in terms of outcomes and what goes on in the teaching and learning environment (Oboqua, et al. 2017). Quality assurance in this context, stresses

excellence in adult education programmes for the purpose of meeting or conforming to generally accepted standards as defined by the relevant authority or adult education administrators.

Quality assurance functions of State Agencies for Mass Education (SAMEs) include the following: embark on periodic visitations to mass literacy, adult and non-formal education as well as the women centres under the SAMEs with the aim of ensuring that quality is built in the implementation of adult education programmes; complete the necessary forms in respect of the centre during the visit; interact with the officials and facilitators working in the centre and discuss the problems of the centre and proffer solutions to the problems; submit the completed forms and report of their visitation to the Executive Secretary through the State Director, Quality Assurance of the Commission; supervise guidance services offered to participants; conduct follow up visits to ensure that implementation of the suggestions and other remedial measures have been appropriately done; and keep records of quality assurance forms arising from the visitations (NMEC, 2017; Adie et. al, 2026; Agbor et. al 2026). All these functions are meant to enhance planning strategy in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria.

The success of quality assurance practices is hinged on adequate planning strategy. Planning strategy is anchored on the capability of envisioning actualizing goals or avoiding emotional, physical, socio-economic impediment in adult education programmes (Bessong, et. al 2025). It involves scheduling, analyzing, data gathering, goals setting and meeting goals. This strategy is anchored on the descriptions of the vision, mission, and values of the institutions; strategic objectives and management of the educational institutions; programme design, as well as services (resources and personnel) (NMEC, 2017). Operationally, planning strategy is a process of forecasting or thinking about the practices required to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes. Planning strategy is the thinking ability that helps an individual develop skills to accomplish goals.

Planning strategy is a vital process and pre-requisite for promoting quality assurance in adult education programmes. Planning strategy as an intellectual process, conscious determination of course of action, the basing of decision on purpose and facts used to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes (Oroka, et al. 2024). Planning strategy will enable facilitators to harness adult education programmes that will meet the needs of adult learners. The cardinal mandate of a planning strategy is to forecast and predict future events (Bessong, et al. (2023). This shows that facilitators in South-South, Nigeria needs to forecast into the future in the cause of carrying out their functions as a good planning technique is a pre-requisite for better results. Hence, there are no doubts that inadequate planning strategy by adult education personnel will undermine the achievement of quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria. Acquiring planning strategy by adult education practitioners will increase their efficiency thereby promoting quality assurance in adult education programmes.

Planning strategy, therefore, helps adult education experts to achieve programme targets and objectives. It is often said that “if you fail to plan, you plan to fail”. The need for adequate planning for promoting quality assurance in adult education programmes cannot be overemphasized. It is believed that a solid foundation for quality adult education programmes is rooted in adequate planning strategy. Ibok, et. al (2025) submitted that planning strategy helps cultivate feelings of clarity with action plans and timetables. This implies that planning strategy helps an individual to develop skills with which to actualize goals of quality assurance in adult education programmes. Bessong, et al. (2025) posited that planning strategy is a basic administrative function of adult education programmes involving formulation of one or more detailed plans to achieve optimum balance of needs or demands with available resources. The steps of planning adult education programmes are as follows:

identifying goals and objectives; formulating strategies to achieve them; creating the means required, monitoring, directing and controlling all aspects in their proper sequence (Acha et al. 2024). Nonetheless, in order to ensure high quality level performance or achievement in adult education programmes, it is essential that appropriate planning is carried out before the implementation.

Planning enables the government to strategize for the basic needs and problems of the people by or providing infrastructural facilities and amenities such as transportation, health care delivery, agriculture and food production, education, road, water and electricity among others. People are often heard making casual comments on planning as “I didn’t plan for it”. “It was not in my plan”. “We have to plan for it”. “I wonder if there were good plans for this.” The thing among others reflects poor planning” and “The planners did a good job”. Every aforesaid above demonstrates the planning tactics that people generally recognize the need and importance of planning for the attainment of set goals and objectives Bessong, et al. (2023). Therefore, adult educators will be unable to administer adult education programmes without adequate planning strategy.

Planning strategy makes provision to safeguard the shortcomings or unforeseen circumstances at the long run. Oboqua et al. (2017) noted that planning strategy helps an individual to prepare for quality action. Similarly, planning strategy involves needs assessment/project selection, formulation of programme objectives, identification of required available human and material resources as well as delineating strategies and procedures to follow in implementing the programmes/projects of quality adult education (Olofu, et al. 2024). The author further stated that this is because resources for adult and non-formal education programmes in Nigeria (South-South, inclusive) are normally in short supply and inadequate for implementation. More so, Akin-Fakorede (2025) submitted that there are inefficient uses of resources, poor established goals, managing risk and uncertainty, inadequate team building and creating competitive disadvantages in adult education programmes to mention but a few.

However, research evidence in South-South, Nigeria, shows that the extent to which providers of adult education programmes adopt planning strategy in promoting quality assurance is not encouraging. For instance, Akpama, et al (2017) revealed that adult education planning strategy is compounded by inadequate funding and administrative bottlenecks by the agencies’ administrators who are implementers of the plan, and premature termination of existing plan by the government in power. Other challenges include; poor planning and records keeping hindering the promotion of quality assurance. More so, Bessong, et al. (2024) avowed that details are sometimes skipped during the planning stage and the issue of feasibility studies before the invention of the programmes has become increasingly difficult as such programmes fail before a projected time frame in Cross River State. This means that adult education agencies in South-South, Nigeria, need planning strategy to enable them design curriculum content which will and in the process assure quality in adult education programmes.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine how planning strategy serves as a catalyst for promoting quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, the study ascertained the extent;

1. planning strategy promotes quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Question

One research question guided the study.

1. To what extent does planning strategy promote quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

One null hypothesis guided the study and was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀1: There are no significant differences among the mean ratings of directors, supervisors and facilitators on extent planning strategy promotes quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria.

Methods

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population for this study consisted of 1926 respondents comprising 36 directors, 360 supervisors and 1530 facilitators of SAMEs in South-South, Nigeria. The sample for this study was 702 respondents comprising all the directors and supervisors in the six South-South states of Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers as well as 306 (20%) population of the facilitators. In selecting the sample, the entire population of directors (36) and supervisors (360) was used due to their manageable size while 20%, (306) of the facilitators was selected. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to draw out the facilitators (20% or 306) from 1530 population for the study. In selecting this sample, 20% of the facilitators of adult education in the 31 Local Government Areas of Akwa-Ibom state was 66 facilitators. For the 8 LGAs in Bayelsa State, was 27 facilitators. Cross River State with 18 LGAs, was 29 facilitators. Delta State with 25 LGAs, was 70 facilitators. Edo state with 15 LGAs, was 77 facilitators as well as Rivers state with 23 LGAs, was 37 facilitators of adult education programmes. Therefore, the total sampled facilitators were 66, 27, 29, 70, 77, and 37 =306. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire developed by the researchers and the questionnaire was titled "Planning Strategy as a Catalyst for Promoting Quality Assurance in Adult Education Programmes Questionnaire" (PSCPQAAEPQ). The questionnaire was grouped into two sections; A and B. Section "A" elicited information on respondents' demographic characteristics on an eight (8)-item research questions. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Adult Education and Extra-mural Studies and one from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation Unit), all in the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. A reliability coefficient of 0.79 was established as measure of internal consistency using Crombach Alpha procedure. The instruments were personally administered by the researchers with three research assistants trained for the purpose. The data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation to answer research questions and descriptive statistics to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does planning strategy promote quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of the Respondents on Extent Planning Strategy Promotes Quality Assurance in Adult Education Programmes in South-South, Nigeria (n = 702)

S/No.	Item Statements	Directors (n = 36)		Supervisors (n = 360)		Facilitators (n = 306)		Overall (702)		Decision
		Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.	
1.	Ensuring that adult education personnel responsibilities are clearly spelt out for the actualization of teaching/learning objectives.	2.13	.99	1.83	.92	1.74	.88	1.81	.91	LE
2.	Mapping out the strategic objectives for the delivery of adult education programmes by agency for adult and non-formal education.	2.52	.69	2.22	.69	2.18	.69	2.22	.69	LE
3.	Ensuring that the agency's goals towards promotion of quality are realistic.	2.33	.71	2.12	.69	2.07	.67	2.11	.69	LE
4.	Imputing measurable yardsticks for ascertaining the extent to which teaching/learning objectives are to be achieved in adult education programmes.	2.08	.84	1.92	.70	2.05	.86	1.99	.79	LE
5.	Using learning process that enables identification of programme target groups.	1.94	.79	1.85	.67	1.92	.65	1.88	.67	LE
6.	Stating programme characteristics to suit the needs of the target groups.	1.41	.73	1.50	.70	1.64	.76	1.56	.73	LE
7.	Learning outcomes to be achieved by the adult learners are in line with the strategic objectives of the agency.	2.08	.96	1.95	.73	2.07	.67	2.01	.72	LE
8.	Setting up favourable policies that will promote job satisfaction among adult education personnel.	2.22	.86	2.22	.68	2.24	.65	2.23	.68	LE
Cluster Mean		2.09	.23	1.95	.27	1.99	.28	1.98	.27	LE

Note: n= number of respondents, Interpretation; Mean values ranging from 1.00-1.49 = very low extent (VLE), 1.50-2.49 = low extent (LE), 2.50-3.49 = high extent (HE), 3.50-4.00 = very high extent (VHE).

The result in Table 1 shows the respondents' mean ratings and standard deviations on extent planning strategy has been used to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria. Generally, the mean ratings for all the items (1-8) were within the range of 1.50-2.49, with exception to items 2 and 6 where the mean responses for directors were 2.52 (high extent) and 1.41 (very low extent) respectively, which signifies that planning strategy has been used to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria to a low extent. The standard deviation values for items (1-8) were within the range of .65-.99. The close nature of the standard deviation values implies that the responses of the respondents were similar to each other and close to the means. Moreover, the overall mean ratings for all the items (1-8) were also within the range (1.50-2.49) for low

extent. Likewise, the cluster mean ratings for directors, supervisors and facilitators were 2.06, 1.95 and 1.99 with associated standard deviation values of .23, .27 and .28 respectively, with overall cluster mean of 1.98 and standard deviation of .27, all of which also depict low extent. Therefore, the result can be interpreted to mean that planning strategy has been used to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria to a low extent.

HO₁: There are no significant differences among the mean ratings of directors, supervisors and facilitators on extent planning strategy promotes quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 2: ANOVA Ratings of Directors, Supervisors and Facilitators on Extent Planning Strategy Promotes Quality Assurance in Adult Education Programmes in South-South, Nigeria

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Dec.
Between Groups	.763	2	.381	4.946	.007	S
Within Groups	53.911	699	.077			
Total	54.674	701				

Key: df = degree of freedom, F = ANOVA test statistic, Sig. = Significant level/Exact probability value, Dec. = Decision, S = Significant

Result in Table 2 shows that the mean ratings of directors, supervisors and facilitators on extent planning strategy promotes quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria differs significantly ($F(2, 699) = 4.946, p = .007$). This is because the associated probability (Sig.) value of .007 was less than the 0.05 level of significance at which the result is being tested. Hence, the null hypothesis one (H_{01}) was rejected, and the conclusion drawn is that there is significant difference among the mean ratings of directors, supervisors and facilitators on extent planning strategy promotes quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria. This result is further buttressed by the result from a Post-Hoc test presented in table 3.

Table 3: Scheffe Post-Hoc Test on Extent Planning Strategy Promotes Quality Assurance in Adult Education Programmes in South-South, Nigeria

(I) persons	(J) persons	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Directors	Supervisors	.13819*	.04854	.018	.0191	.2573
	Facilitators	.09737	.04893	.139	-.0227	.2174
Supervisors	Directors	-.13819*	.04854	.018	-.2573	-.0191
	Facilitators	-.04083	.02159	.168	-.0938	.0121
Facilitators	Directors	-.09737	.04893	.139	-.2174	.0227
	Supervisors	.04083	.02159	.168	-.0121	.0938

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The result in Table 3 shows a significant mean difference between directors and supervisors on extent planning strategy promotes quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria. This is because the associated probability (Sig.) value of .018 is less than 0.05 level of significance at which the result is being tested. However, there is no significant mean difference between directors and facilitators on extent planning strategy promotes quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria. This is

because the associated probability (Sig.) value of .139 is greater than 0.05 level of significance at which the result is being tested. Furthermore, the results showed no significant mean difference between supervisors and facilitators on extent planning strategy promotes quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria. This is because the associated probability (Sig.) value of .168 is greater than 0.05 level of significance at which the result is being tested. Thus, inference drawn is that directors, supervisors and facilitators differ significantly in their mean responses on extent planning strategy has been used to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings are in order since they agree with previous studies by Oboqua, et al (2018) who revealed that planning strategy was poorly utilized by the adult education administrators for the beneficiaries of the programmes. However, it was also reported that the sponsors of the programmes inadequately utilized inputs of the members of the communities in planning adult education programmes. Likewise, the finding aligns with the findings of the study by Saheed, (2021) who revealed that programme resource projection and financial planning strategy did not predict goal achievement. It was further revealed that the poor planning strategy was always reflected on haphazard record keeping and that due process also was not always followed in the planning of adult education programmes. It was also reported that there was premature termination of existing plans by successive governments in the affairs of the programmes.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that planning strategy has been used to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria to a low extent. However, this low extent/decline experienced for promoting quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria was significant. It was concluded that the inadequacies of planning strategy are numerous and spanned across the planning strategy. It was further concluded that these inadequacies are cankerworms that need to be eradicated from the fabrics of the society in order to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes.

Recommendation

From the findings of this study, it was recommended that government and all other relevant authorities should ensure that adequate planning strategies are put in place in order to promote quality assurance in adult education programmes in South-South, Nigeria.

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