UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT

THE RIGHT TO LEARN: RELEVANCE OF ADULT EDUCATION

An Inaugural Lecture Delivered At the University of Port Harcourt On September 24, 1998

By

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I. Introduction

Traditionally, inaugural lectures are expected to fulfill two basic functions. First, to provide the Lecture, usually a newly appointed Professor, with the opportunity to present an address in his area of specialization at a ceremony that has the hues of an initiation. Second, to give the initiate, so to say, the privilege of relating his area of specialization and his contributions therein to the betterment of society.

In utilizing the said opportunity and privilege, the inaugural Lecture is expected, on his part, to eschew esoterism and pedantry by reducing what might otherwise be the 'professional language' of his discipline to a level that promotes comprehension of his presentation among his audience. The dilemma here, though, is that the lecturer (if he is not careful) may end up being dubbed 'a gentleman though not a scholar' or one whose learning is not very great or whose mind is not very powerful (Trevor-Roper, 1957).

Another problem that usually confronts Professors about to present their Inaugural Lectures is that associated with what should be the appropriate length or duration of an inaugural Lecture. Surely, an Inaugural Lecture would not want to bore his audience with an unnecessarily long discourse. To some people also, an Inaugural Lecture should be like a television advertisement: The shorter the better! Yet, if the lecture is too terse, it may miss some salient ingredients or even the ultimate target.

I believe that a via media has to be struck in order to hit the target of an inaugural Lecture as well as sustain the interest of the audience. This I have tried to do here.

At the beginning of this introductory part of the Lecture, I might have unwittingly left the impression that an Inaugural Lecture is invariably a newly appointed professor. This is surely a wrong impression to be left in anyone, and lest it sticks in the psyche and thus becomes and 'original sin' on my part, I wish to quickly add that the initiation which is associated with an Inaugural Lecture may inadvertently be delayed (as in the present case), especially where there are many Professors in the waiting due to 'operational arrangement' that do not foster presentation of Inaugural Lectures in quick succession or as and when due. This is why it is heart-warming that present arrangements in the University of Port Harcourt, as announced recently by our Vice-Chancellor, have been designed to accelerate presentation of Inaugural Lectures with greater frequency than had been the case before.

We salute the Vice-Chancellor for this recent effort to make Inaugural Lectures in this citadel of learning assume their true essence of inaugurating new Professors "to mark a fresh beginning of a inaugurating new Professors "to mark a fresh beginning of a Profoundly deep and mature scholarship and productivity rather than a termination of same" (Akinpeku, 1987:1). It is on record, for instance, that after Lord Acton of the University of Cambridge was appointed to the Chair of Regius Professor of Modern History in February, 1895, the new Professor Acton delivered his Inaugural Lecture four months later (Figgis and Laurence, 1960).

Vice-Chancellor, I feel compelled at this point to express my joy for the honor of presenting the 20th Lecture in the series of the University of Port Harcourt Inaugural Lectures. This Lecture also is the fourth form my Faculty, Education; the first three having been delivered by three former Deans of the Faculty:

Professors Otonti Nduka (1986), B. Onyerisara Ukeje (1988) and Edward Ewele Ezewu (1991) in the disciplines of Philosophy of Education, Educational Administration and sociology of Education respectively. Accordingly, mine is the first Inaugural Lecture my Faculty, and indeed the University of Port Harcourt has had in the area of Adult Education. This lecture is equally fulfilling to me coming, as it were, in the eleventh year since the creation in 1987 of my parent Unit, Adult & Non-Formal Education which is currently a Division in the Educational institute of the Faculty of Education. Eleven years, Vice-Chancellor might seem long enough to produce more than one Inaugural Lecture in an academic unit, but not when the Unit is about the youngest Department of the Faculty and has also had to produce its own Professors from the ranks!

I have chosen the topic, The Right to Learn: Relevance of Adult Education for three main reasons:

Firstly, the topic gives an indication of my academic roots and the practical concern in have shown through research over the years regarding the disparity between official/legislative declaration of egalitarian principles, especially as they affect education, and the reality of lopsided arrangements which are discriminatory and therefore incapable of bringing about hypocritically desired or ostensibly envisioned outcomes.

Secondly, the topic provides me with the opportunity to highlight a significant aspect of what I profess, namely, the strong and desirable role Adult Education can and does play in redressing injustices, deprivations, and repressions suffered by victims of pseudo-egalitarianism and insincerity of purpose in provisions made for the general good in education, training and functional learning.

Thirdly, the topic of this lecture offers me the opportunity to practicalize Adult Education, even if the only thing I could achieve with my audience here is to

get them to understand the concept and purpose of Adult Education. I am aware that many people need Adult Education Unit came to the Senate of this University for the first time in 1986, it caused a stir!

Someone, a senior academic, in a field outside Education, could not help academic, in field outside Education, could not help soliloquizing: “Night School in this University?” That of course, gave me an opportunity to explain the fundamental principles and desirability of Adult Education in Senate. Adult Education does not mean ‘Night School’. Thus, conscious of such misunderstanding, I have tried the best I can to explain in this lecture the various concepts that are associated with my topic.

II. The Origins and Meaning of the Concept of Right.

Egalitarianism, the principle of equal rights for all to participate in and benefit from prevailing social, economic and other structural arrangements in society, has apparently fired the imagination of man since he began to organize his life around the community setting. The concept of ‘right’ which forms the bedrock of egalitarianism, refers to individual or group possession of a just and legal claim to something. Schwelb (1968) has documented that the most ancient codification of the idea of right was done by the Babylonian King, Hammurabi, about 2130 BC.

However, egalitarianism in modern times is said to have had its roots in the seventeenth century Calvinist doctrine which drew a marked distinction between the saved and the condemned, but simultaneously harped on the equality of the elect, by the clergies or laymen (Benn, 1967).

Somehow, the Calvinist doctrine found its way into the seventeenth century England which was engulfed in political battles against what they referred to as the ‘non-observance of ancient rights of Englishmen.’ From the battles emerged two important documents; namely, the Petition of Rights of 1628 and

the Bill of Right of 1689. These two documents in turn influenced the American Declaration of rights and Liberties in 1765 and the French Declaration of Rights of man for the Citizen in 1789.

Following the effect of the American and French Declarations, it gradually becomes the general view that it was the responsibility of the State and its law code to preserve the right of its citizens and protect them from unwarranted infringement. Okoh (1986:12) sums up the nuances of this view in the following word:

> The précis of these asserted 'rights' is
> that citizenship of a nation-state conveys
> on the individuals certain inalienable rights
> affirmed by the rule of law which is itself
> the expression of (and by) the
> general will. Among the inalienable
> rights claimed the right to life,
> liberty, property, security, freedom of
> thought, expression, movement,
> association and religion.
> More generally, it is asserted that all men are
> born and remain free and equal under the law,
> that sovereignty resides in the
> people, and that all public officers
> exercise delegated authority on behalf
> of the community to which they are
> accountable.

III. The Right To Education: Implications For Equalization Of Educational Opportunities:

In 1945, what appeared to be the ideals of individual citizen's rights enunciated by various nation-states as shown were galvanized in the San Francisco Charter of the United Nations (UN) in which member nations affirmed their belief in fundamental human rights. Later, in 1948, the United Nations redefined the Charter and proclaimed it as "The Universal Declaration guarantees and specifies the right of everyone to education in the following words (United Nations, 1949:5)

> Everyone has the right to education.
> Education shall be free, at least in the
> elementary and fundamental stages.
> Elementary education shall be compulsory.
> Technical and professional education shall
> be made generally available and higher
> education shall be equally accessible to all
> on the basis of merit…

Following this Declaration by the UN, many nations (especially the less developed one) and World Assembles have, over the years, sought to guarantee equal educational opportunities for all citizens. Nigeria, for instance, has enshrined equality of educational opportunities in her National Policy on Education as a basis for her philosophy of education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1981).

Again, more recently (1990), world representatives gathered in Jomtien, Thailand for a conference on 'Education for All'. The Conference which took place from 5 to 9 March, 1990 ended with a Declaration on Education for All which has provided a framework for action to meet basic education needs in

the 1990s; that is by the year 2000. The Jomtien Declaration, among other things, called for an expanded vision of basic education which would ensure access for all and which would reduce the disparities between population groups (UNESCO, 1990).

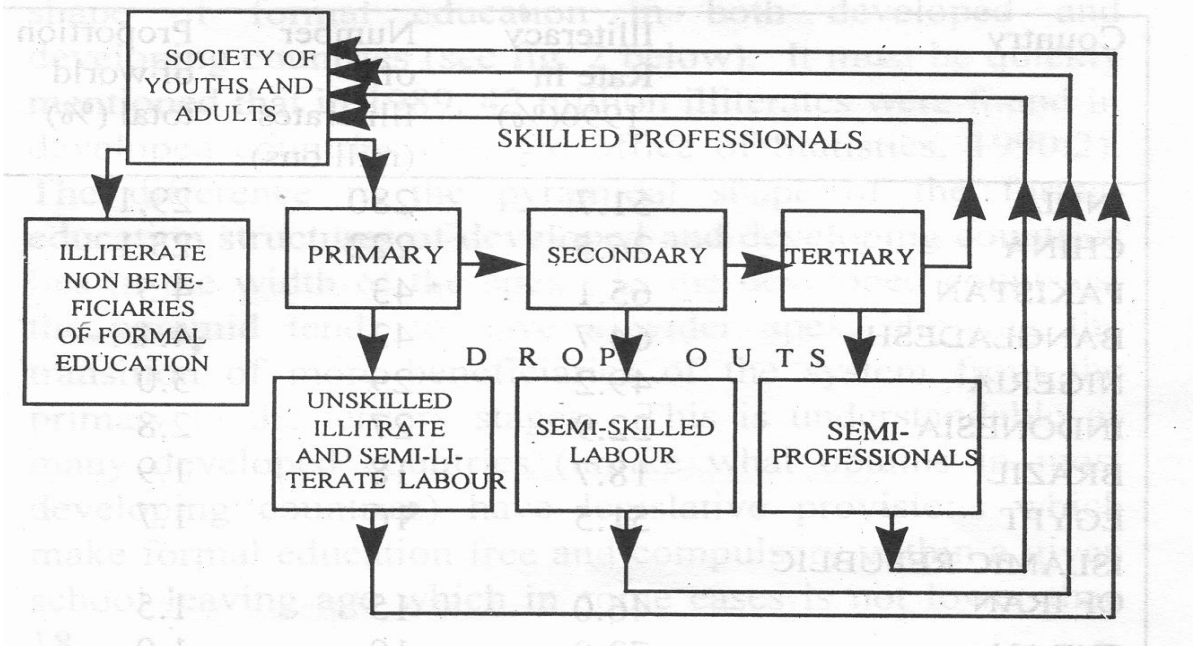
Without prejudice to these efforts, the concept of equality of opportunity in the educational context should simply be understood to mean that everyone should have equal access to formal (primary, secondary and tertiary) education and equal treatment system. The question, however, is whether such a provision is feasible given differences that exist among members of society in:

i. Genetic endowments which affect mental capabilities and disposition to various levels of formal education;
ii. Ethnological conditions (occupational tendencies, religious and customary beliefs about formal education, employment opportunities) all of which may affect individual motivation for embracing certain types or levels of formal education.
iii. Social class which could generate disparities in the capabilities of families to provide for and ensure their children's education. In this regard, our researches over the years (Eheazu, 1987) have shown that in Nigeria and many other developing countries, inability of parents to settle the cost their children's education (transportation, fees, books and so on) has robbed many able to willing potential students of the opportunity of access to desired types of institutions and levels of education. Furthermore, the same studies have also established in the particular case of Nigeria that political power and social positions of parents, the introduction or a quota system in Federal Government institutions, as well as general discriminatory admission policies in

favour of the elite go a long way in determining access to the different levels of the educational system.

The impacts of the above natural and socio-economic inhibitions on formal education and schooling in any affected society are illustrated in fig.1 below:

FIGURE 1
THE INPUT-OUTPUT PROCESS IN FORMAL EDUCATION



As could be observed from fig. 1, the inhibitions to equal access to formal education severally and jointly lead to the existence of the following somber situations in many countries:

i. A high percentage of adults in society who did not benefit from any level of formal education or dropped out too early from same and are therefore illiterate. In 1990, Nigeria, for instance, had 29 million illiterates (i.e 49.2%) of its population of about 59 million. The same year, india, Pakistan, Egypt and Sudan had more than 50% of their national populations illiterate.

These countries ranked among the ten that produced 73% of world illiterates in 1990 as shown in table 1.

Table 1

TEN COUNTRIES MAKING UP 73% OF WORLD ILLITERATES (1990)

Country	Illiteracy Rate in 1990(%)	number of illiterates (Millions)	proportion of world total (%)
INDIA	51.7	280	29.1
CHINA	26.5	222	23.1
PAKISTAN	65.1	43	4.5
BANGLADESH	64.7	42	4.4
NIGERIA	49.2	29	3.0
INDONESIA	22.9	27	2.8
BRAZIL	18.7	18	1.9
EGYPT	51.5	16	1.7
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN	46.0	15	1.5
SUDAN	72.8	10	1.0
SUB-TOTAL (10 COUNTRIES)		702	73.0
OTHER COUNTRIES		261	27.0
WORLD TOTAL		963	100
SOURCE: UNESCO OFFICE OF STATISTICS (1990)			

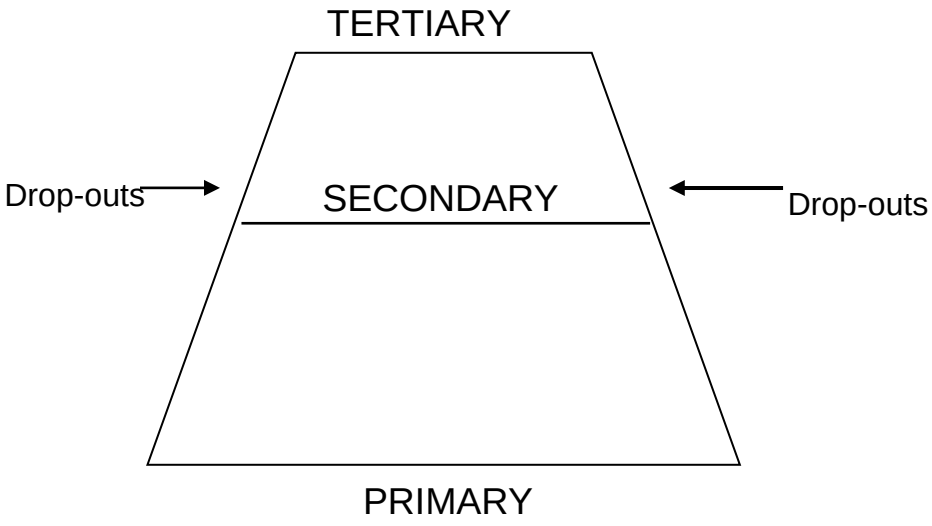
ii. The second somber situation arising from the impacts of the inhibitions is the incidence of high percentage of dropouts from the various levels of the three-tier system who constitute the unskilled, illiterate, semi-literate, semi skilled or semi professional labour force, depending on the stage of dropout. All these get back into the society untouched or half-baked, as it were, by the formal school/education system.

The observation incidence of dropout at different levels of the formal education system as well as the preponderance of illiterate non-beneficiaries of formal education (especially in situations were primary education is not free and compulsory), have led to the pyramidal shape of formal education in both

developed and developing countries (see fig. 2 below).It must be quickly mentioned that in 1989. 42 million illiterates were found in developed countries (UNESCO office of Statistics, 1990:2). The difference in the pyramidal shape of the formal education structures of developed and developing countries lies in the width of the apex. In the developed countries, the pyramid tends to have a wider apex, showing the transition of more beneficiaries of the system from the transition of more beneficiaries of the system from the primary to the tertiary stages. This is understandable as many developed countries (unlike what obtains in most developing countries) have legislative which make formal education free and compulsory within a given school leaving age which in some cases is not lower than 18.

FIGURE 2

THE PYRAMIDAL STRUCTURE OF FORMAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS



IV. Formal Education Provisions and Proposals for Alternative Education

The inevitability of leaving large percentages of national populations out of various levels of formal education has led to increasing dissatisfaction with the system especially since the 1970s. Along with the dissatisfaction has

come the proposal of Alternative education may be defined as an ideological label for characterizing any form of education that promotes deviation from what is usually referred to as “traditional” or ‘conventional’ formal education (Rowntree, 1981).

Proponents of alternative education concern themselves, predominantly, with the content of the curriculum and the nature of pedagogy rather than the basic institutional structure of schooling.

According, sponsors of the alternative education ideology that have been referred to by Hargreaves (1974) as New Romantics, differ fundamentally with their earlier counterparts represented by IIIich (1971) and Reimer (1971) both of whom held the more extreme view of deschooling society. Illich and Reimer had criticized contemporary schooling as having nothing to do functionally with education, but more to do with indoctrination into what they regarded as essentially myths and false values.

The deschoolers argue further that schooling has not succeeded in equalizing opportunities, but rather has perpetuated under privilege among individuals and nations because of its cost. In effect, deschooler set educational crises as being central to a world crisis that faces man and threatens his very existence. The solution, they say, lies in the radical alternative of setting up a deschooling society.

Thus, alternative education, as an ideological proposition, is basically a milder approach than deschooling as it is not emphatic on the abolition of schools and schooling per se. it spectrum of concern ranges from the establishment of free schools or non-institutional, community-based, non-formal rural development learning associated with deschooling to the

provision of education with very strong progressive components in regular schools.

As it were, alternative education is relatively recent phenomenon of education thought – having its origin in the radical Marxist ideology that permeated education during the late 1960s. However, even before the progressive perspectives of alternative education became widely acknowledge in the early 1970s, many renowned educationists and educational thinkers in Nigeria and, indeed, Africa, had proposed various reforms in the process of formal education in Nigeria and various countries of the African Continent. To substantiate, one would only need to refer her to the works of Kenyatta (1938), Ukeje (1966), Kaunda (1966), Nkrumah (1967). Each of these authors addressed in one form or another the need for reform in the ongoing education programme to cater for the prevailing social, economic and developmental needs of the masses in his country of origin in particular and Africa in general. More recently too, this lecturer has added his voice to highlight the need to adopt a socio-cultural approach to Alternative Education in Nigeria/Africa (see Eheazu. 1997).

V. The Concept Of The Right To Learn

Vice-Chancellor, we have used the past few minutes to familiarize ourselves with the direction of this lecture. I have also attempted to highlight the basis of our inalienable rights as citizens including our rights to education. In all, we have so far seen that individual rights to education as provided for in article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Right approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948, is inhibited by some natural and socio-economic factors which have led to a great percentage of the citizenry of many countries not benefiting all from formal education or dropping out of same at various levels and thus fail to actualize their ambitions and

potentials. It is obvious that most of the people affected in society are adults who have passed the age of basic (primary) or general (secondary) schooling. Apparently too many of them cannot proceed to University (tertiary) Education from their present point of illiteracy or semi literacy. They therefore require some form of Non-Formal or Further Education to remedy their deficiencies.

Occupationally also, these adults who now constitute the illiterate, unskilled, semi-skilled or semi-professional labour force(see fig.1) require some specific functional training/vocational programmes to remedy not only their educational deficiencies but also meet the needs of their various occupations whether as farmers, artisans or employees of corporate/ private organization.
In effect, they need a form of alternative education that would reorientate them and modify their attitudes in order that they embrace new and progressive ways and actions that would improve their income, living standards and contributions to societal advancement. Since their right to education could not be sustained in the formal system, their right to learning which would bring about in them desired changes in behavior must be guaranteed. Behavior here is a generic term which refers to actions, preferences, attitudes, mode of functioning and so on.
Indeed, that an individual has a legal claim to education presupposes that there should be adequate provisions at least for basic education (including literacy education) for all. In other words, while one would recognize that there are factors that limit equal access to formal education at all levels, one should equally acknowledge that basic (including primary) education should be accessible to and even compulsory for all because of it fundamental importance to meaningful life. The implication here is that where an individual, for whatever reason, has failed to benefit from basic formal education, arrangements should be made to provide him with appropriate

remedial learning programmes which could include both formal and non-

Herein lies the basis of the Right to Learn which UNESCO (1985) at its 4th International Conference on Adult Education Declared as meaning:

- The right to read and write;
- The right to question an analyse;
- The right to imagine and create;
- The right to read one's world and to write history;
- The right to have access to educational resources;
- The right to develop individual and collective skills.

In this Declaration, UNESCO (1985) further affirms:

> The right to learn is an indispensable tool for the survival of humanity.
>
> If we want the people of the world to be self-sufficient in food production and other essential needs, they must have the right to learn.
>
> If women and men are to enjoy better health, they must have the right to learn.
>
> If we are to avoid war, we must learn to live in peace, and learn to understand one another……
>
> In short, the right to learn is one of the best
> contributions we can make to solving the crucial
> problems of humanity today. But the right to learn
> is not only an instrument of economic development;
> it must be recognized as one of the fundamental
> rights. The act of learning, lying as it does at the
> Heart of all educational activity, changes human
> beings from objects at the mercy of events to
> subjects who create their own history.
>
> It is fundamental human right whose
> Legitimacy is universal: the right to learn
> Cannot to confined to one section of
> Humanity: it must not be the exclusive

> Privilege of the wealthy classes, of those young people fortunate enough to receive schooling.

By extension, the Right to learn is consistent with the United Nations Declaration of equal right of citizens to education (Article 26) and to participate in the cultural life of the community, enjoys the arts and share in scientific advancement and its benefits (Article 27). The right to learn is for the illiterate in need of basic functional education; it is for the deprived masses that are disadvantaged educationally by socio-economic backwardness; it is a right for the handicapped who through accidents and birth circumstances cannot practically enjoy their right to formal education. It is also a right for those who wish to actualize themselves, no matter their present status in life.

Vi. Adult Education And The Right To Learn.

We had said earlier in this lecture that majority of those who are disadvantaged by inequality of access to formal education are adults who require at their various stages of experience, specific learning programmes to remedy their educational deficiencies for their personal and social improvement. But who is an adult?

The precise definition of adulthood is quite intriguing because of the legal, social and cultural considerations that have come to be associated with adulthood. In some Western societies an adult is one who has attained the age of 21 or more (Okedara, 1981a). In other societies where the emphasis is on physiological maturity the capacity for marriage and parenthood, the potential for earning a living and contributing in one way or another, and ability to exercise civic duties, the age of the adult may rather drop as low as fifteen. In the latter group of societies, one would observe the employment of such

concept as ‘young adults’ and ‘senior citizens’; hence Bown and Tomori (1980: 15) point out that a simple practical definition of an adult would imply:

> A person (man or woman) who has
> achieved full physical development
> and expects to have the right to
> participate as a responsible home maker,
> worker and member of society.

Thus, an adult may be 18 or 81 years old or even more or less. He may be an illiterate, a school drop-out or someone who has scaled through the different levels of the educational system. Some may have physiological needs, while others may be experiencing their own needs at the higher level (Maslow, 1943). All these categories or adults have a desire or need to undergo the process of formal, non-formal or informal learning at one stage or another.

Given the above characteristics of adult learners and their various educational needs, one would understand why it is said that definition of what constitutes adult education is no less complex than the definition of an adult. For the avoidance of doubts, UNESCO (1979:28) has clearly marked the precincts of adult education in relation to formal schooling when it stated that ‘higher and post-school education undertaken as part of the unbroken sequence begun in childhood is not considered to be an adult education” as it “does not cover activities engaged in adults”.

Be that as it may, it must be acknowledged that definitions of adult education are culture-referenced and experimental. Thus, in developed countries where the society is virtually literate, adult education is defined as “the kind of learning that is expected to be undertaken by those who need to catch up on their formal education or who need to use their leisure purposefully or who need to upgrade their skills and knowledge in the face of changing technology” (Okedara, 1981a:12). Developing countries, on the order hand,

define adult education from a broader perspective spanning from literacy to life-long education for the purpose of human and national development.

Understandably therefore, Julius Nyerere (1971:30) is one of his famous addresses as the then President of Tanzania express the following view on the scope of adult education:

> Adult Education… cover(s) many of
> the subjects learned at school for those
> who never had the opportunity. It
> Applies to everyone of us, without
> exception. We can all learn more:
> Those who have never been to school,
> those who have just attended primary
> school, and those who have attended
> Secondary school or university – there
> is much more that everyone can learn
> about work and about areas of
> knowledge that they were not taught
> when they were at school…

Yet the First International Congress on Comparative Study of Adult Educaiton(comprising members from both Developed and Developing Countries) defined Adult Education(Liveright and Haygood, 1968:8) as:

> a process whereby persons who no longer
> attend school on a regular and full-time basis
> (unless full-time programmes are especially
> designed for adults) undertake sequential
> and organized activities with the conscious
> intention of bringing about changes in

> information, knowledge, undertakings or skills, appreciation and attitudes or for the purpose of identifying and solving personal or community problems.

Much later however, and with longer experience, UNESCO at the 19th of its General Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya from 26th October to 30th November, 1976 defined adult education (Bown and Tomori, 1974: 269-270) as:

> The entire body of organization educational processes, whatever the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the twofold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development.

This definition has since propelled the philosophy and practice of adult education in many countries, including Nigeria.

As a discipline or professional field of study, Adult Education is classified into various divisions or areas of concern. Liveright and Haywood (in Townsend Coles,1978) have proposed the following five divisions for adult education:

(i) Remedial, that is making good the deficiencies many people experience through non-acquisition of certain levels of formal schooling.

(ii) Vocational, technical and professional. This division is concerned with either preparation for work or the recurrent need for up-dating and refreshing.

(iii) Health, Welfare and family life, including guidance about physical and mental health, family problems, parenthood, social security and consumer education.

(iv) Civic, political and community education, including instruction about national and international matters.

(v) Self-fulfilment, embracing all aspects of education undertaken solely for the enjoyment of the individual.

Other classification which appear to involve different combinations of the above divisions as well as the use of different nomenclatures have been proposed by Prosser (1969:9-15) and Townsend Coles (1978:27-46). These classifications, however, merely indicate areas of activity and in no way determine content which has to be structured with due regard to be needs and motivations or individuals or groups of adult learners. For instance, the adult education discipline could also be classified into Formal, Non-formal and Informal Components within which one could identify elements of the five divisions above.

Formal Adult Education refers to systematically arranged adult education programmes in which students are enrolled or registered to follow established courses, either on a full-time or a part time basis. The programmes are normally provided within the walls of institutions, and follow established norms set by the school-type learning (Bergevin, 1967).

As Bown & Okedara (1981: 17-18) have rightly pointed out, the essential distinguishing characteristics of formal work in adult education is that it involves a combination of registered enrolment and work and has a syllabus which leads to award of some certificate. Formal adult education programmes are therefore usually parallel to (or even part of) the regular school, college or university work.

Conversely, non-formal adult education connotes 'alternative to schooling.' Hence it is sometimes referred to as 'out-of-school education'. It covers training and instruction outside the formal education system and ranges from individualized apprenticeships to nationwide literacy. It may be vocational, as provided in the craft training centres in Nigeria, design to provide employment opportunities for young school leavers and for other unemployed persons or the girls' vocational centres established in many African countries, which train girls in vocational skills and prepare young women for marriage and business. Non-formal Education may be political and social education, such as that carried on in citizenship and leadership centres (e.g. the Nigerian centres in Rivers, Plateau and Lagos States). It may be the large-scale programmes of rural animation in many French-speaking African countries which constitute an attempt at developing rural communities from within.

In informal Adult Education, learning tends to come unintentionally and accidentally as adults engage in their daily routines, such as moving about to meet people, solving problems,, listening to radio broadcasts, watching television, reading newspapers, listening to music or engaging in other forms of recreation. The characteristics of this type of adult learning include:

(i) Absence of any form of planning:
(ii) Absence of stated goals, purpose or objectives;
(iii) The learning programme is accidental in nature;
(iv) It is a life-long experience;

(v) There is lack of awareness of what is to be learnt on the part of the learner.

The recipients of this type of education need to take cognizance of the experiences that they have gone through, reflect on these experiences and seek out those that are beneficial to their lives. Then, they can bring rich experience to bear in solving life problems.

By their nature, non-formal and informal forms of Adult Education cannot be classified by level, but formal Adult Basic Education (ABE) which includes Adult Literacy Education, often thought of as education in the 3 Rs (Reading, Writing & Arithmetic).

Following the ABE, there may be programmes of Post-Literacy Education designed to enable learner to make up for deficiencies in their schooling or inability to have entered school at all. Such remedial post-literacy adult education programmes may cover the spectrum of the primary and secondary school curriculum and thus provide a basis for Continuing Education.

Vii. Adult Needs and Adult Education: Our Contributions So Far

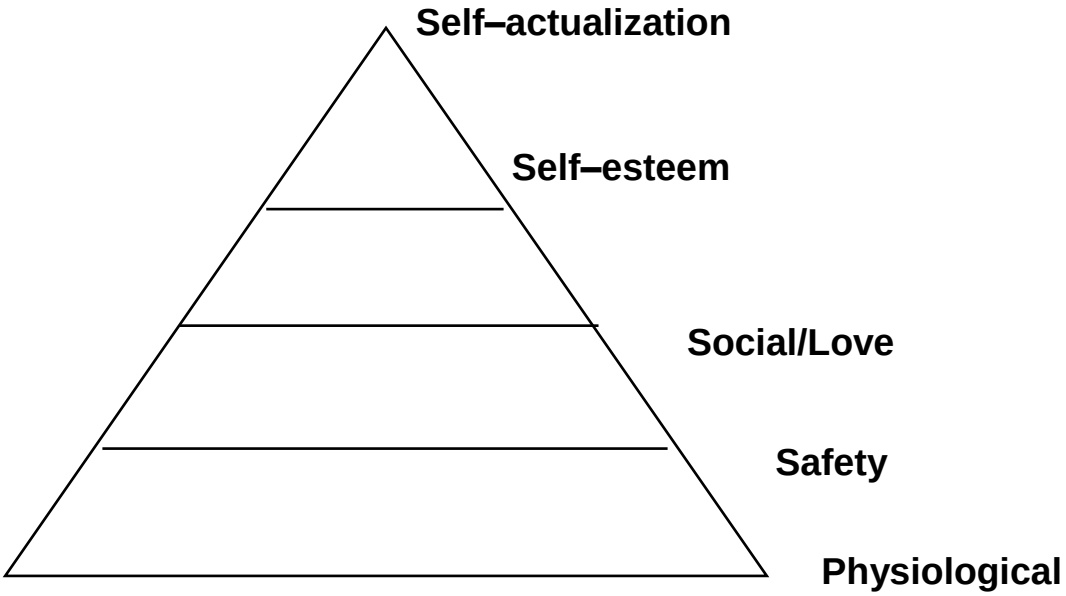
Vice-Chancellor, with the much said about the scope and nature of the process of adult education it should be evidently clear that Adult Education is not only relevant to but also guarantees the right to learn of individuals and groups disadvantaged by lack of equal access to formal education. In this wise too, adult education tends to lend credence to the universally declared inalienable right of everyone to education.

Since, as I have shown above, adult education, as a process, in need-oriented, it now remains for me to also show how adults at various levels of human needs (including learning) could assist through adult education. In doing so, I shall highlight some of our humble contributions in this direction.

Over the years, it has been my pre-occupation to among other things; develop functional process of catering for the right to learn of adults experiencing various forms of needs. In my endeavours, I have found useful Abraham Maslow's (1943) five genres of basic human needs which he has hierarchically identified in a prepotent order as physiological, safety, love/social, self-esteem and self-actualization needs (see fig 3.) and which Maslow considered to be basic in the motivation of human beings to all forms of action (including learning). Besides, as UNESCO further declared during it 4th international Conference on Adult Education referred to above, the Right to learn "is not the next step to be taken once basic needs have been satisfied." It should indeed be part of the satisfaction of the basic need

FIGURE 3

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF BASIC HUMAN NEEDS



Abraham Maslow believed that as a perpetually wanting animal, the human being is faced, for most of his period of existence and at varying stages of his life, with one or the other of the five basic needs, the satisfaction of which is hardly ever achieved. My adoption of Maslow's theory could further be justified by the fact that the desire by various categories of adults to undergo the process of formal, non-formal or informal learning at one stage or another is

understandable in the context that the cognitive capacities (perceptual, intellectual, learning) are themselves adjustments tools which have, among other functions, that of gratification of human basic needs (Eheazu, 1989).

Although it would be difficult to identify specially all the various elements or manifestations of these basic needs because of the theoretical and practical problems of the levels of specificity or generalization of the motives involved (Maslow, 1943) it would be necessary, for purposes of illustrations and clarity, to isolate a few of the more familiar and more general components.

Among the basic physiological needs of a man are water, shelter, sex, muscular activity and bodily comfort. Safety needs, on the other hand, include protection against physical hazard, threats or job insecurity. In the case of social/love needs, one would identify, inter alia, the desire for acceptance by the group, for friendship, for love and for helping or being helped by others in cases of emergency. Status, prestige, recognition and a sense of worth are part and parcel of self-esteem need; while accomplishments, self-fulfillment, opportunity for continued growth and self-expression exemplify the elements of the self-actualization need.

The hierarchical arrangement of these basic human needs is not done randomly, but is ordered on the basis of the relative prepotency of the need themselves. That is to say that the arrangement is based on the belief that the appearance of the need usually depends on the prior satisfaction of another, more prepotent needs. For instance, a person who lacks food, safety, love and esteem would most probably clamour for food more cravingly than for any of the other needs. He would indeed define his satisfied; other higher-level needs begin to emerge. In other words, any set of prepotent needs and the consumatory behavior involved with them would serve as channels for the emergence and expression of other needs.

This, however, is not to say that a need must be satisfied one hundred percent before the next need emerges. To illustrate, most adult members of developed, industrialized societies, as Maslow has also observed, are partially satisfied in all their basic needs. In developed, industrialized societies, the basic physiological and safety needs are less pressing (because of the generally high level of social welfare), and thus, the higher-level needs become very important. The usual experience in industrial organizations in such societies is that better educated employees tend to express their wants in terms of more money. They see more physical cash as lubrication for their underrated ego or frustrated needs, or even as a way to purchase high-level satisfactions outside the company through, for example, joining expensive clubs, riding big flashy cars and so on.

Preconditions for Satisfying Basic Human Needs.

Abraham Maslow identified certain conditions which he regarded as prerequisites for the satisfaction of basic human needs, irrespective of whatever form the ‘satisfiers’ may assume. Such conditions include freedom of speech and of engaging in any activities one may wish, so long as no harm is done to other; freedom to investigate and seek information as well as to defend one’s actions. Happily, these conditions have been guaranteed by article 19 of the Universal Declaration of human Rights (United Nations, 1949).

Adult Learner Motivations: The Need for Clientele Analysis

An adult, form our previous references (UNESCO, 1979); Bown and Tomori, 1979; and Okedara, 1981a), could be seen as a person who attained physical and intellectual maturity. Whether he is illiterate or learned, rich or poor, he has through the process of growing up in society, acquired some experience –

social, economic and cultural – which may constitute the basis for organizing his concept of the world, of himself and of life in general. His needs may be peculiar to him, based on his socio-economic cultural and educational background.

In terms of self-assessment for learning, adults, as Msimuko (1982) has noted, tend generally to have a low concept of themselves. Many of them believe that they are too old to learn. In the Nigerian culture, for instance, many adult apply the term 'adult education' derogatively to themselves, more or less to indicate their unpreparedness to compete with younger elements in the course(s) of study undertaken even at the university level (Eheazu, 1988). Apart from revealing the adults' realization of certain impairments they suffer (as a result of age) in visual, auditory and verbal acuity, such low self-concept also crystallizes the fact that the adult has to undertake a given course of study (under what may rightly be described as compulsion) to satisfy a need. The diagnosis of what that need is and its position in Maslow's hierarchy becomes important in order to sufficiently motivate the adult learner. This, implicitly, introduces the need for ascertaining the motivations of the adult learner himself.

We have established (Ejeazu, 1986) that one way of ascertaining adult learner needs is through clientele analysis. Defined in the context of the present topic, clientele analysis is a systematic study of actual and potential adult participants in any learning programme. The objective of such a study is to obtain salient facts about adult learners. Especially with reference to the needs which have motivated them to wish to join or actually participate in particular programmes. In effect, clientele analysis approximates what UNESCO (1973) has referred to as a "radiographic study" which leads to the identification of participant training or educational needs and the determination of appropriate programme elements.

The Problem of Needs Analysis.

An analysis of clientele needs, as described above, would, no doubt, lead to the identification of discrete and often divergent group and individual need profiles (intellectual, psychological, social and so on). Thus, the problem of clientele needs analysis centres on how to marry or integrate the different individual and group need profiles and thereby obtain a situation-specific agenda for the particular group of adult learners at a particular time and place. In a nutshell, the problem is that of 'needs integration.'

Be that as it may, however, we adopted Bhola's (1979) proposal that this problem could be solved through a process of "needs negotiation". This is a process which starts by identifying the more generative needs (and, in the present context, the more fundamental propotent needs), which have the power to produce or originate in the individual or group of adult learners more desirable needs in the context of individual and group preferences. Networks of such generative needs are then developed; indicating what needs must be fulfilled first for other needs to be articulated and to have opportunity of being actualized later. Such a needs network helps in generating consensus and in the resolution of needs conflict by demonstrating how some needs might be irreconcilable (if you have one, you cannot have the other), and how some others which could not be satisfied immediately would be in due course. Put succinctly then, we have discovered that the problem of needs integration which may arise from clientele needs analysis is not insurmountable. Our strategies for solution of the problem are clarified below in our comprehensive analysis of the learning needs of the adult (with particular reference to the Nigerian adult learner) at the various levels of Maslow's hierarchy of basic human needs.

Physiological Needs and Adult Learning.

As earlier indicated, physiological needs are the most prepotent of the basic needs in Maslow's hierarchy. However, the desire for food, drink and comfort, as we have also pointed out, does not appear to be characteristic of the more educated and affluent urban adult who has attained a certain comfortable level of regular income. In the Nigeria context, specifically, we have found this desire to be more typical of the rural illiterate or semi-literate adult who probably is engaged in a less lucrative, less life-supporting occupation. For this latter group, the most elementary expectancy from adult education would be an assurance of a minimum level of income for individuals and family units which would assuage the prepotent physiological "hunger and thirst" drives. Adult education programmes for such a group would then have to be viewed and conceived from a much different perspective than that of providing literacy teaching or just delivering knowledge, information or skills. What would be required to meet the learning needs of adults at his level is the provision of concrete action projects involving the participation of the adult clientele to solve problems of health, water supply, nutrition and low income.

Regarding the process of fulfilling the expectancies of adult learners who are experiencing prepotent physiological needs, we agree with Ahmed (1982) in his proposal that local, national and sub-national adult education bodies should develop their own capabilities for analyzing the economic opportunities, maintaining dialogue with economic development agencies and assessing and preparing income-generating projects with educational components. Apart from floating new economic projects, there is equally the need to develop programmes which would integrate the present occupations of clients with education. This could be operated at both the literacy and post-literacy levels. It is in this sense that extension services like those for agriculture (the mainstay of the rural economy in many developing countries) and health could be put to very effective use. We have also discovered

(Eheazu,1984) that functional literacy programmes too would be tremendously useful to provide the illiterate adult learner with the opportunity to improve this production potentials through the acquisition of new and more efficient occupational skills side by side with the skills of writing and reading. However, the specific subject-matter of each programme should be determined by the needs to be met at this level.

Safety Needs and Adult Learning.

As already highlighted, safety needs, according to Maslow, are those which border on human craving from protection against hazards or threats of any kind. Emergency situations (for instance, war, disease, national catastrophes, increase crime waves and social societal disorganization) and neurotic conditions are obvious situation which escalate the need for safety in most affected human beings. For the purpose of this lecture, however, it is necessary to isolate the peculiar case of social and economic underdogs who virtually live a life of perpetual desire for such security as permanence of jobs, generation of a personal savings account and insurance against the thrones and woes of various hazards (medical, disability, unemployment, industrial accidents and other work-related dangers). An adult who is dominated or overwhelmed by such safety needs would certainly require a special learning programme which would be tailored to provide some gratification for these needs. Perhaps, it may be useful to attempt to visualize at this point the profile of an adult learner at the second (safety) level of Maslow's basic needs hierarchy.

A typical adult learner experiencing "peculiar" safety needs, as described above, might have scaled the prior prepotent level of need (the physiological level) through the acquisition of enough basic literacy, knowledge, skills and expertise to provide him with the opportunity for some low-level job as a watchman, a storekeeper, a cleaners, and so on. These types of jobs are

usually offered on a temporary or casual basis, with little or no security of pension, gratuity or any other statutory retirement benefit. There is therefore the general desire among workers at this level for more pay to enable them to build up personal saving for a rainy day.

In many developing countries (Nigeria inclusive), a considerable segment of adults who are dominated by safety needs are not literate and do not possess saleable skills. Some have been employed as unskilled labour, while others engage in subsistence agriculture. Satisfaction of the safety needs of these categories of adult learners would thus require the establishment of adult education programmes that would specifically cater for the progress of the learners.

Here again, functionality of the programmes would have to be emphasized to improve productivity and thereby enhance the learner's chances of satisfying his safety needs through promotion to higher levels of pay or increased income from personal employment. The actual contents or levels of the requisite functional adult education programmes would be determined through an analysis of the peculiar motivating existential situations or the beneficiaries as well as with due regard to their present levels of literacy. The case of an employed illiterate carpenter whose motivation to join an adult literacy class was to satisfy a safety need might be useful illustration here. The carpenter expressed his motivation in the following words (Okedara, 1981b:36):

> For many years I could neither take proper measurements nor produced well-finished goods, and I could not be promoted because I failed to produce Primary School Leaving Certificate demanded by the authority. I felt

> ashamed and inferior to those who were employed after me for they had gained two or three promotions since they possessed the required certificates. Many times I failed to communicate to my boss and colleagues at work who were non-Yoruba speakers, I felt that I might not last long on the job unless I could write, read and enumerate.
> Consequently, I stared to attend the adult literacy classes organized by the department of adult education university of Ibadan.
> I must be literate to survive at work.

There is a lot to learn from this excerpt regarding programme planning for adult learners fettered by safety needs. For one thing, disregard for such a strong need as documented in the excerpt could, understandably, lead to adult learner's dissatisfaction with, or even hostility to, a planned adult education programme.

Social Needs and Adult Learning.

Abraham Maslow, as earlier indicated here, has described social needs as desires for love, affection and a sense of belonging. According to him, the desire to love or be loved would naturally emerge after one has had one's physiological and safety needs gratified or nearly so. Maslow further explained that love is not synonymous with sex. The latter, he says could be seen as a purely physiological need which is 'multi-determined'; that is, determined not only by sexual but also by other needs, with love and affection as the prime motivators.

The emergence of social needs usually manifests itself in the individual under the guise of a keen feeling, as never before, of the absence of a friend, a

sweetheart, a wife or child. The individual thirsts for affectionate relations with people in general, precisely for a place in his group and thus strives with greater intensity to achieve this goal. He would, as Maslow put it, want to attain such a place more than anything else in the world and may even forget that once, when he was hungry or needed security, he sneered at love!

In many traditional societies, love and affection as well as their possible expression in sexuality tend to be looked at, generally, with equivocation and may even be encompassed with taboos and other forms of inhabitations. This, in many cases, results in maladjustment and psychopathological behaviour.

Adults at this level of need should be generally seen as people who have attained some measure of social and/ or economic independence. In this group may be found workers at various level as well as school leavers and school drop-outs who constitute a considerable percentage of the horde of young adult population of job-seekers in large cities. Considering the immensity of the adult population involved, it is important that a programme to guide their attitude and actions towards desirable avenues for the fulfillment of their social needs be made available. Here we have found out that an informal approach is the most adaptable, since a majority of the category of adults concerned is usually not involved in any form of formal or non-formal learning because of the exigencies of their social and economic conditions. Such informal programmes should take advantages of the mass media- magazines, newspapers, the radio, and television – which most of the young job-seeking adults, in particular, tend to patronize. The objective and content of the items of the informal social education programme should reflect a conscious effort to provide information and guidelines on healthy affectionate relations through anecdotes, illustrations, and other forms of useful ‘propaganda’.

In the case of illiterates, semi-literates and school drop-outs who may be experiencing the impulse of social/love needs, and who may be keen on

becoming literate or continuing their education, we have proposed the incorporation of sex education in literacy and continuing education programmes for the proper guidance of the clientele at their various levels of social experience. Apart from providing some reasonable guidance and counseling, the sex education component would serve to motivate the adult learner to develop favourable attitudes towards the educative material provided, since he would see such material as worthwhile, touching as it does on issues concerning the gratification of the most potent need he is experiencing at that stage.

Esteem Needs and Adult Learning

In discussing esteem needs as the fourth in the hierarchy of basic human needs. Abraham Maslow has contended that at the appropriate stage in their social life, all human beings (with a few pathological expectation) tend to experience a need for a stable, firm based (usually) high evaluation of themselves for self-respect or self-esteem, and for esteem from others. These needs, Maslow explains, may be classified into two subsets. First are the desires for strength, achievement, adequacy, and confidence in the face of the world and for independence and freedom. Second is the desire for reputation or prestige, recognition, attention and personal importance or appreciation. Satisfaction of these needs, conjures up feelings of self-confidence, worth, capability and of being useful and important in the community and the world at large. Non-satisfaction of the esteem needs, on the other hand, leads to feelings of inferiority, weakness and dejection. Since, according to Maslow, most people experience esteem needs. It would appear that that the satisfaction of such need might be crucial in general human social conduct, personal comportment and preferences at different levels of social interaction. This underlines the importance of identifying ways and means of ensuring that people adopt desirable modes of responding to these needs.

For the adult learner, who may be a peasant illiterate farmer, an unskilled employee or a professional registered in a continuing education programme, an important component of the learning environment is an atmosphere of mutual respect and personal recognition between the learners and the instructor among the learners themselves. In specific case of adult learners who have been able to satisfy the first three basic needs and for whom the need for esteem is strong, there is reason to adopt appropriate programmes and strategies for the satisfaction of the fourth need. For instance, a company executive or a principal of a school or college who opts to register for a higher degree or certificate a few years before his retirement is probably motivated by the enhanced social esteem and respect which such degree or certificate would earn him rather than by and foreseeable increases in his personal income arising from success in the educational endeavour. Such a learner would not be as concerned about the grades he makes in the relevant course of study (so long as he ultimately passes) as a younger person for whom, perhaps, high grades might be necessary for favourable assessment for a job or higher education later. This, once again, makes knowledge of participants' characteristics and motivations necessary, especially in a continuing education programme. If for nothing else, such knowledge would predispose the instructor to adopt appropriate strategies for the selection of learning experience and for evaluating and commenting on educational outcomes which may infer need-related responses.

Finally, there may be affluent and well-read adults experiencing esteem needs, but who are not registered in any formal, non-formal or continuing education programme. Among such adults may be found those who might wish to join expensive clubs, ride expensive cars or participate in socially esteemable games and sports (golf, polo, hockey, billiards, horse race, automobile race and so on)which usually attract commentaries in the dailies, the weeklies, the radio and television. Such adults may be unaware of the

available social clubs and associations which organize the said recreational activities. They may even be ignorant of the hazards associated with some of the sports as well as restrictions which personal health and limited financial resources may place on membership of relevant organizations and/or participation in some of the sports or games. We have suggested that the requisite strands of information or learning experiences could be provided informally via the mass media by the Health, Social Welfare. Sport ministries and the social clubs themselves. Preferably in association with existing adult education and enlightenment agencies which would provide the necessary strategies for selecting and disseminating the appropriate learning experiences.

Self Actualization and Adult Learning

The desire for self-fulfilment, that is, for one to become actualized in what one is potentially, a tendency to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming, is what Maslow(1943) has referred to as self-actualization need. This need, Maslow contends, should be common feature of adults rather than children.

In Nigeria today, a considerable percentage of the adult population, especially in the rural areas, lament their lack of self-fulfilment in formal education. Again, some educated individuals who may be enjoying relatively comfortable levels of income may suddenly develop an interest in acquiring more knowledge of their fields of endeavour, or even of other fields outside their present occupations. For these various groups of potential adult learners, we have proposed avenues for adult education to provide their self-fulfilment through its many course provisions (basic literacy, post-literacy, remedial, continuing or further professional education programmes) and constant mindfulness and accommodation of the motivations of the various clientele.

The above proposal by this lecturer on the functional/practical for promoting the right to learn among adults at various levels of human needs have since been published (see Eheazu, 1989).

Vice-Chancellor, I must point out at this juncture that our humble contributions so far towards ensuring the preservation of the right to learn through adult education has transcended mere theory.

In my practical operations, Nigeria, our dear country, has been the main theatre. It would be useful then to look at Adult Education in Nigeria, especially since independence (1960), howbeit briefly, in the context of the Right to learn and how our modest contributions have been helped to steer the course of advancement over the years.

VIII. Adult Education in Nigeria and The Right to Learn

The history of adult education in Nigeria during the colonial era (1840s-1950s) has very little to be appreciated. In actual fact, it was not until the early 1920s that the British colonial government development what might be called a policy for Education and general in its colonies (including Nigeria).

This British laisser-faire attitude to education in Africa led to the famous visit of the Continent by a Commission of an American Philanthropic organization (the Phelps-Stokes Commission) in 1920 top, among other aims, “investigate the educational needs of the (African) people with especial reference to the religious, social, hygienic and economic conditions….. And the extent to which these needs were being met” (Fafunwa, 1977:120).

Among the findings of the Phelps-Stokes Commission, as contained in its 1922 Report (Lewis, 1962: 1-2) is the fact that “the education of the masses and of native leadership had been neglected.” In further collaboration, the Commission stressed that education in Africa during the period under reference was not being adapted to the needs of the individual African and

those of his community. It thus condemned the wholesale transfer of the educational practices in Europe and America to the peoples of Africa as most unwise however justly it might be defended as a proof of genuine interest in the Africa people.

The British colonial government was jolted by this Report and it sought to do something to demonstrate its apparent interest in the education of the African.

Thus, in 1925, the British government came up with a Memorandum on Education in British Colonial territories. The twelve-point memorandum specified among other principles that (Fafunwa, 1977:124):

> Systems should be established which, although varying with local conditions, will provide elementary education for boys and girls, secondary education of several types, technical and vocational education, institutions of higher education which might eventually develop into universities, and some form of adult education which will ensure identity of outlook between the newly educated generation and their parents.

Accordingly, by 1940, the British colonial administration in Nigeria introduced some form of adult literacy education linked with community development and recorded some isolated successes.

However, the endorsement in November, 1951 of a national policy on adult education by the Central Board of Education led to the emergence of adult

education/literacy classes in many part of the then three Regions of Nigeria, especially between 1951 and 1956.

After independence (1960) the pace of adult education in Nigeria was accelerated, especially with the inauguration in 1971 of the Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (NNCAE) which, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, this Inaugural lecturer currently superintends as the National President.

The general aim of the NNCAE has been to strengthen Adult Education in all its aspects so that it can better serve the needs of the people of Nigeria as well as play a positive role in the development of the country.

Over the years, the NNCAE has played an advocacy role which has culminated in the inclusion of Adult and Non-Formal education as Section 7 of the National Policy of Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1981).

Apart from this positive role, the NNCAE has also, through further advocacy approaches to government stimulated the establishment of the following structures.

(i) The National Mass Education Commission (NMEC) established in 1990 and charged with the responsibility to develop strategies, coordinate programmes, monitor and promote literacy programmes nationwide.
(ii) The National Centre for Adult Education established in Kano in 1985. The centre has the responsibility to provide in-service training to staff of the Mass Literacy and Adult Education Agencies as well as develop materials for the agencies to use in fostering mass education.
(iii) State Agencies for adult & non-formal education which are responsible for the promotion of literacy and mass education in the states.

With these structures in place, and in keeping the nation's adoption of the UNESCO (1976) definition of Adult Education as indicated above, a number of adult and non-formal education programmes have been established in Nigeria, including basic literacy, post literacy, continuing education, the Each-

one-teach-one or fund the teaching of the one and skill acquisition programmes.

In the effort to execute these programmes in respect of the right of all shades of clientele to learn, a group of young people who have not attained adult status legally or socially are encountered. Having long passed the age of registering primary education and yet being below adulthood by any definition, members of such group which includes street traders and 'Area Boys' usually have no provision made for them within the formal system of education. They are therefore usually registered for adult functional literacy and skill acquisition programmes.

It must be mentioned, my Vice-Chancellor, that the first positive acknowledge of the right to learn close to the heels of UNESCO'S (1985) declaration already referred to, was made here in Rivers State under the auspices of the Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (NNCAE) and with humble efforts of the Inaugural Lecturer. One month after UNESCO's Declaration of the Right to Learn, a National Conference was held here in Port Harcourt from 21-23 April, 1985 to drive home the essence and practicalities of the Right to Learn. With the theme, "the right to learn: role of non-formal education in Nigeria," the Conference produced several papers from experts. The paper were later (1986) turned into a Book edited by this inaugural Lecturer and a colleague from the university of Ibadan (cf. Omolewa and Eheazu, 1986).

Again, as the Editor of NNCAE journal (Adult Education in Nigeria) and the Newsletter from 1985 to 1987, I tried as much as possible to include in the said publications articles that promoted the Right to Learn of Adults in the society.

The humble efforts were further carried on to the point of publication, in 1987, of another relevant book entitle, Issues in Nigeria Adult and Community Development Education. This is very work was also edited by this inaugural

lecturer with another colleague at the University of Benin (cf. Oduaran And Eheazu, 1987).

Beyond the practical contributions, our academic Unit (Adult & Non-Formal Education) established in this university of 1987 as Certificate programme in Adult & Non-Formal Education for the training of Adult Education organizers and supervisors. Furthermore, we have been involved in the formulation of policies that promote the right to learn as contained in the New Blue-Print for mass education in this country.

With above contributions and those of other Compatriots, one would obviously which to know how far Nigeria has succeeded in taking care of the education needs of our large hordes of illiterates and dropouts from the formal system of education.

As already pointed out here, Nigeria today has a good number of formal, non-formal and informal programmes which are meant to cater for the various needs of her teeming illiterate, semi-literate, semi-skilled and unskilled labour force. However, the country's concentration has been on the eradication of illiteracy. This concentration is understandable especially with the identified position of Nigeria as a country with large percentage of its population illiterate. Besides, the country has realized the somber aspects of illiteracy which Yianwei and Jiyuan (1990:3) have isolated in relation to their home country, china, in the following words:

> First, it (illiteracy) hinders the universalization and application of modern science and technology. Second, it blocks the development of a commercialized rural economy. Third, illiteracy impedes the implementation of national policies, such as those concerning family planning. Fourth, it hampers spiritual enlightenment; i.e.

> illiteracy slows the changing of outmoded habits and customs and the rejection of superstitious ideas. fifth, it delays the implementation of the legal system, as many illiterates are also ignorant of the law .

Further to these observations, Adiseshiah (1990:2-6) has also statistically demonstrated a close juxta-position of illiteracy and poverty at national and sub-national levels.

To emancipate herself from the shackles of illiteracy, Nigeria launched a nationwide literacy campaign in 1982.

This was relaunched in 1987 when signs of failure of the first campaign became apparent.

Unfortunately, by 1990, Nigeria was still grouped among countries with very high percentages of their populations being illiterate (See table 1). Again in July, 1995 renowned UNDP Consultant, Professor C. Okonjo, was reported as having, observed that Nigeria, as of that date, belong to “five largest illiterate nations of the world” (Daily Champion, July 5, 1995:6) with these negative reports many years after the launching and relaunching of our national mass literacy campaign, it is obvious that our efforts at the eradication of illiteracy could hardly be described as very effective.

A number of factors are identifiable for the slow march of Nigeria towards the eradication of illiteracy in particular and effective implementation of adult education programmes in general. Such factors include:

(i) Inadequate funding of the literacy programmes.
Here the current intervention by the UNDP must be acknowledge even though some states in the Nigerian Federation are reported to show

minimal enthusiasm in providing the necessary counterpart fund to enable the UNDP efforts to materialize.

(ii) Absence of a legislation to make primary education free and compulsory. Thus, while adult illiteracy is being taken care of through existing programmes, each passing year leaves behind cohorts of children of school age who are not in school and who would become new sets of adult illiterates or semi-literates later.

(iii) The apparent lull in the implementation of the Each-One-Teach-One (EOTO) or fund the teaching of One approach to the eradication of illiteracy, adopted since January, 1992

(iv) Adoption of conventional and orthodox approaches in adult education that do not necessary reflect the motivating needs of the clientele which the former Executive Secretary of the National Mass Education Commission (NMEC) has rightly noted “will not get us there” i.e. the envisaged eradication of illiteracy in Nigeria by the year 2000 (Ahmed, 1992:10).

IX. CONCLUSION

Vice-chancellor, distinguished guests, it is now time to pull together by way of summary, the various strands of our discourse in this lecture. From what we have said this far, the Right to Learn is obviously an acclaimed Declaration to redress the disadvantages suffered by those that could not benefit at all or fully from formal education and to provide for the needs of those who may which to continue from where they stopped in that system of education. The rate of level of our individual and national development depends very much on how well or how far we recognize that right and work towards its practicalization. It is in this respect that, as we cited in this lecture, UNESCO

(1985) has seen the right to learn as an indispensible tool for the survival of humanity.

Given the preponderance of adults among those whose rights to formal education have been inhibited by the natural, socio-cultural and economic factors already discussed in this lecture (especially in developing countries), adult education, as a process and as a discipline, has become not only relevant, but also a sine qua non to the preservation of the right of such people to learn. We note however with some discomfort that in spite of our efforts to develop theoretical framework and functional practical process to enable adults to play its indispensable role in promoting the realization of the advantages of the right to learn, there are still some loose end to be tied, especially with regard to the adoption of appropriate strategies to implement education programmes for adults experiencing various levels of human needs. Nonetheless, all hope is not lost, one could say with some good measure of confidence. The fact that we have for some time now established structures and programmes for raising a formidable army of adult education experts who are expected to apply their theoretical knowledge and practical experiences in the field is reassuring of the level of success ahead.

Be that as it may, and based on the negative indicators observed in this lecture, I have found it necessary to use this opportunity to call on Federal and State Government in Nigeria to commit more resources towards the successful implementation adult and basic (including free and compulsory primary) education programmes in the spirit of preserving the learning rights of the adults and disadvantaged children in our country. There is also the need to call on various national and international donor and philanthropic agencies to emulate the current gesture of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in helping to organized various forms of education and training programmes for adults in this country. It is my belief, ladies and gentlemen,

that if this clarion call is heeded, and with our continued humble contributions, much would be achieved, through adult education, towards the effective recognition of your right, my right and indeed everybody's right to learn in our society.

I thank you for your attention.

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