



Community System Factors and Effectiveness of Adult Literacy Programmes among Rural Communities in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of community system factors on the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes in rural communities within the Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria, using a survey research design. The population comprised adult learners enrolled in community-based literacy centres in rural communities within the district. The sample of the study consisted of 425 adult learners selected through multistage sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire tagged "Community System Factors and Adult Literacy Programme Effectiveness Questionnaire" containing 30 items measured on a 4-point Likert scale. Specialists in adult education and educational measurement validated the instrument. Reliability was determined through pilot testing using Cronbach's alpha, with coefficients ranging from .72 to .81. Permission was obtained from administrators of selected literacy centres before questionnaire administration. Retrieved copies were screened, coded, and entered into statistical software for analysis. Multiple regression was used to examine the influence of community system factors on programme effectiveness, while hierarchical regression was used to examine the sequential contribution of the dimensions. Findings from the hypothesis tests indicate that community system factors significantly influenced the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes. Community leadership support and local economic conditions exerted stronger influence than social norms and learning infrastructure. The study concluded that programme effectiveness in rural communities is closely linked to surrounding community conditions. The study recommended stronger collaboration with community leadership structures and closer alignment of literacy programmes with local livelihood patterns.

Keywords: Adult Literacy, Community, Leadership Support, Social Norms, Community Learning Infrastructure

Introduction

Adult literacy continues to occupy a central place in development discussions because literacy competence often shapes individuals' capacity to participate in social, economic, and political processes. In many developing societies, adult literacy programmes remain important pathways for people who did not complete formal schooling. Nigeria represents a particularly relevant case because large rural populations still experience limited access to educational opportunities beyond primary school. National development policies emphasise that adult literacy is an instrument for improving livelihoods, strengthening democratic participation and reducing poverty across rural communities (Ozoemena, 2013). Evidence from empirical studies indicates that literacy education may influence economic behaviour, health awareness and participation in community governance (Mbah, 2015; Okojie & Ladeji, 2014). Mbah (2015) examined adult literacy programme outcomes among rural women in Ebonyi State and reported that literacy training improved income management practices, household decision participation and engagement in community activities. Such findings indicate that literacy acquisition extends beyond reading and writing skills because it also

supports broader forms of social inclusion. These observations highlight the continuing relevance of adult literacy programmes within rural development strategies.

Despite recognition of literacy education as a development priority, adult literacy rates in many rural Nigerian communities remain uneven. Educational statistics show persistent gaps between urban and rural populations in literacy attainment (Olojede, 2012). Programmes introduced to reduce these gaps often encounter implementation setbacks that limit their long-term effectiveness. Government initiatives through the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education have established community learning centres across many states (Edeh, 2018). These centres typically provide instruction in basic literacy, numeracy and sometimes vocational skills. Edeh's (2018) evaluation study observed that literacy programmes aim to support lifelong learning and community development through locally organised learning centres. However, programme implementation varied widely across rural communities. Infrastructure shortages, irregular funding, and inconsistent programme monitoring were observed to influence delivery patterns. Fejoh and Ajibade (2025) examined government involvement in adult literacy programmes and found that policy intentions alone rarely guarantee effective literacy delivery when structural conditions remain unstable. Research examining participation patterns among adult learners illustrates the complexity of rural literacy initiatives. Adult learners often balanced educational participation with economic responsibilities and household obligations (Olojede, 2012). These competing demands shape attendance patterns and learning continuity in rural communities. Aroge and Olaniyi (2020) investigated motivational factors affecting participation in functional literacy programmes in Ondo State. Their findings show that adult learners demonstrate stronger engagement when programme content relates to everyday economic activities and community needs. In contrast, programmes perceived as detached from local realities tend to experience declining participation. Evidence from this study suggests that literacy programmes are more successful when learning activities connect with livelihood practices, such as agriculture, small-scale trade, or local cooperative enterprises. These patterns indicate that programme effectiveness depends partly on how educational interventions are aligned with social and economic structures within rural communities.

Attention to community contexts becomes particularly important because adult literacy programmes operate in social environments shaped by shared norms, leadership structures and local institutional arrangements. Rural communities often maintain strong social networks that influence educational decisions. Participation in literacy classes may depend on encouragement from community leaders, support from family members, and availability of communal learning spaces. Ozoemena (2013) found that community involvement strengthens programme sustainability by fostering local ownership of literacy initiatives. Community participation can manifest through the provision of learning venues, the mobilisation of learners, and the monitoring of programme activities. Such involvement may reduce operational costs and enhance trust between facilitators and learners. Research findings therefore suggest that literacy programmes cannot be fully understood without examining social relationships that shape educational engagement at the community level. Evidence linking literacy education with community empowerment reinforced the importance of social context. Studies investigating socio-economic outcomes of adult literacy frequently showed that literacy acquisition influenced participation in local governance and collective decision-making (Okojie & Ladeji, 2014). Okojie and Ladeji (2014) examined the influence of adult literacy education on socio-economic empowerment among rural women in Oyo State. Their results indicated that literacy training increased participants' involvement in community meetings, cooperative societies, and local political activities. Literacy competence enabled participants to interpret written information, manage financial records, and communicate more confidently in public settings. These findings suggest that adult literacy programmes may contribute to social transformation when learning experiences connect with community life. Yet outcomes remain uneven across rural locations, indicating that contextual conditions may shape the extent to which literacy skills translate into community participation.

Scholarly discussion has therefore increasingly acknowledged structural conditions surrounding adult learners. Many rural adults face economic pressures that restrict time available for educational participation. Seasonal agricultural work, informal employment, and household labour frequently compete with scheduled learning activities. Olojede (2012) assessed utilisation of basic literacy education among rural adult learners in southwestern Nigeria and observed that economic constraints often reduce sustained programme attendance. Learners may withdraw from classes during periods of intensive farming or market activity. Such patterns illustrate interaction between livelihood structures and educational participation. Literacy programmes designed without sensitivity to these economic rhythms may

experience high dropout rates even when initial enrolment appears promising. Another dimension of debate concerns institutional capacity within adult education systems. Scholars frequently point to limited funding, insufficient teaching materials, and inadequate facilitator training as barriers to effective programme delivery (Edeh, 2018; Ozoemena, 2013). Government literacy centres in rural communities most times operate with minimal infrastructure and irregular supervision. Programme facilitators may lack the professional development opportunities necessary to maintain instructional quality. Studies on adult education delivery, therefore, highlighted institutional weaknesses affecting programme outcomes. Nevertheless, exclusive focus on institutional limitations may overlook broader social processes that shape programme participation. Community attitudes toward adult learning, cultural perceptions of literacy, and local leadership support also influence programme sustainability.

Cross-national research provides additional perspective on these dynamics. Studies examining adult education programmes in rural African communities suggest that literacy initiatives often succeed when embedded within community development activities. In Botswana, Kolawole and Pusoetsile (2022) reported that institutional factors and community engagement jointly influenced adult literacy programme outcomes. Learners showed stronger commitment when literacy programmes addressed local challenges such as agricultural productivity and health awareness. Such findings support the argument that adult education programmes operate within complex community systems rather than isolated instructional environments. Although existing studies identify several factors affecting adult literacy programmes, much of the literature examines these elements separately. Some investigations concentrate on learner motivation and demographic characteristics. Others focus on institutional resources or curriculum design. Community participation appears in several studies but is often only weakly integrated into analyses of economic and institutional conditions. This fragmented approach makes it difficult to understand how different community elements interact to shape literacy programme outcomes. Social norms, leadership structures, economic activities, and institutional support may function together within rural communities. Yet empirical research rarely examines these relationships as an interconnected system influencing programme effectiveness. The present study positions community system factors as a set of interacting local conditions that structure adult learning opportunities. Within this study, community system factors refer specifically to community leadership support, social norms toward adult learning, availability of communal learning infrastructure, and local economic patterns that influence participation in literacy programmes. Treating these elements as interconnected conditions allows an examination of how the community environment collectively shapes programme effectiveness, rather than treating each factor in isolation.

Therefore, there is a need for research that examines adult literacy programmes through a broader community systems perspective. Rural communities represent environments where educational initiatives intersect with cultural expectations, livelihood practices, and local governance structures. Programme effectiveness may depend on relationships among these factors rather than isolated influences. Investigating community system factors will therefore clarify how local leadership, community participation structures, and livelihood conditions shape literacy programme outcomes. Such analytical focus helps address an important gap in the existing Nigerian adult education literature, which tends to analyse institutional- or learner-level variables without systematically examining how community environments structure programme implementation. This study therefore investigates the influence of community system factors on the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes in rural communities within the Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to examine the extent to which community leadership support, social participation structures, and local economic conditions influence the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes. From this perspective, the study tests the hypothesis that community system factors are significantly associated with the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes in rural communities.

This study aimed to examine the influence of community system factors on the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes in rural communities within the Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria. The study specifically sought to:

1. determine the extent to which community system factors (community leadership support, social norms toward adult learning, availability of community learning infrastructure, and local economic conditions) influence the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes among rural communities in Cross River South Senatorial District.
2. examine how different dimensions of community system factors contribute sequentially to the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes among rural communities in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do community system factors (community leadership support, social norms toward adult learning, availability of community learning infrastructure, and local economic conditions) predict the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes among rural communities in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria?
2. How do different dimensions of community system factors contribute sequentially to the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes among rural communities in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

1. Community system factors (community leadership support, social norms toward adult learning, availability of community learning infrastructure, and local economic conditions) do not significantly predict the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes among rural communities in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria.
2. The dimensions of community system factors do not contribute significantly in a hierarchical sequence to the prediction of the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes among rural communities in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Methodology

A survey design was adopted in this study. The design was appropriate because the study examined the influence of community system factors on the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes without manipulation of variables. Survey design permits examination of relationships among naturally occurring variables and allows prediction of programme effectiveness from community leadership support, social norms toward adult learning, community learning infrastructure, and local economic conditions. The study was conducted in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria. The district comprises local government areas such as Akpabuyo, Bakassi, Calabar South, Odukpani, Akamkpa, and Biase. Many communities in the district are rural and depend largely on agriculture, fishing, and small-scale trading. Adult literacy programmes operate through community learning centres established under adult and non-formal education initiatives. The study population comprised adult learners enrolled in community-based adult literacy programmes in rural communities within the Cross River South Senatorial District. The study sample comprised 425 adult learners selected from literacy centres in rural communities within the district. A multistage sampling technique was adopted. First, rural communities with functional literacy centres were identified. Second, selected literacy centres were chosen purposively based on programme availability. Third, adult learners within the centres were selected using a simple random sampling technique.

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Community System Factors and Adult Literacy Programme Effectiveness Questionnaire (CSFALPEQ). The instrument consisted of two sections. Section A collected demographic information from respondents, such as age, gender, occupation, and duration of participation in literacy programmes. Section B contained 30 items measuring the study's variables across five subscales. The community leadership support subscale measured the extent to which community leaders support literacy programmes through mobilisation and encouragement of participation. The social norms toward adult learning subscale measured community attitudes and acceptance of adult education. The community learning infrastructure subscale measured availability and adequacy of literacy centres, learning facilities, and instructional materials. The local economic conditions subscale measured the influence of livelihood demands and economic activities on participation in literacy programmes. Effectiveness of Adult Literacy Programmes subscale measured indicators such as participation consistency, literacy skill acquisition, and functional use of literacy skills in daily activities. Items were rated on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Validity of the instrument was established through expert review by specialists in adult education and educational measurement who examined the clarity and relevance of the items. Reliability of the instrument was determined through pilot testing with adult learners outside the study area using Cronbach's alpha. Reliability coefficients obtained for the subscales ranges from .72 to .81. Permission was obtained from administrators of selected literacy centres before administration of the questionnaire. Copies of the instrument were administered directly to respondents during literacy class sessions and retrieved immediately after completion. Data preparation involved coding responses, screening questionnaires for

completeness, and entering data into statistical software. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine extent to which community system factors predict effectiveness of adult literacy programmes, while hierarchical regression analysis was used to examine sequential contribution of the predictors. Participation was voluntary and confidentiality of respondents was maintained throughout the study.

Results

Table 1: Multiple Regression Analysis of Community System Factors Predicting Effectiveness of Adult Literacy Programmes among Rural Communities in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria

Model	R	R ²	R ² _{adj}	S _{y.e}	Change Statistics				
					ΔR ²	ΔF	df1	df2	Sig. Δ F
1	.326 ^a	.106	.098	6.332	.106	12.511	4	420	.000
Model			Sum of Squares		df	Mean Square		F	Sig.
1	Regression		2006.51		4	501.63		12.51	.00 ^b
	Residual		16839.49		420	40.09			
	Total		18845.99		424				
Model					B	SE	β	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)				6.297	1.823		3.46	.00
	Community Leadership Support				.347	.059	.27	5.87	.00
	Social norms toward adult learning				.113	.058	.09	1.94	.05
	Availability of community learning infrastructure				.111	.060	.09	1.86	.06
	Local economic conditions				.210	.070	.14	3.02	.00
							Collinearity		
							Tol	VIF	

Results presented in Table 1 indicate that community system factors jointly influenced the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes. The model summary shows a correlation coefficient of .326, indicating a moderate association between community system factors and programme effectiveness. Coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .106$) indicates that community system factors explain 10.6 per cent of the variance in the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes among rural communities in Cross River South Senatorial District. Adjusted R^2 value of .098 indicates that the model's strength remains stable after adjusting for all predictors included in the regression model. Analysis of variance further confirmed statistical significance of the model. The regression model produced an $F(4,420)$ value of 12.51 ($P < .05$), indicating that community system factors collectively influenced the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes. This result implies that variation in programme effectiveness is associated with differences in community leadership support, social norms toward adult learning, availability of community learning infrastructure, and local economic conditions across rural communities.

Examination of regression coefficients shows that community leadership support makes the strongest contribution to programme effectiveness ($\beta = .27$, $t = 5.87$, $p = .000$). This indicates that higher levels of leadership support within communities are associated with increased effectiveness of adult literacy programmes. Local economic conditions also show a statistically significant contribution to programme effectiveness ($\beta = .14$, $t = 3.02$, $p = .000$). This suggests that favourable local livelihood conditions may enhance participation and functional application of literacy skills. Social norms toward adult learning show a weaker contribution to programme effectiveness ($\beta = .09$, $t = 1.94$, $p = .05$). Availability of community learning infrastructure also shows a modest contribution ($\beta = .09$, $t = 1.86$, $p = .06$). Although these dimensions contribute positively to programme effectiveness, their influence appears less pronounced within the regression model. Collinearity statistics indicate absence of multicollinearity among predictors. Tolerance values of approximately .99 and variance inflation factors close to 1.00 suggest that predictors operate independently within the model. Based on these results, the null hypothesis stating that community system factors do not significantly predict effectiveness of adult literacy programmes among rural communities in Cross River South Senatorial District

was rejected. Findings indicate that community system conditions contribute to variation in effectiveness of adult literacy programmes within rural communities.

Table 2: Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Sequential Influence of Community System Factors on Effectiveness of Adult Literacy Programmes among Rural Communities in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria

					Change Statistics						
Model	R	R ²	R ² _{adj}	S _{y.e}	ΔR ²	ΔF	df1	df2	Sig. Δ F		
1	.268 ^a	.072	.070	6.430	.072	32.841	1	423	.000		
2	.281 ^b	.079	.075	6.413	.007	3.266	1	422	.071		
3	.295 ^c	.087	.081	6.393	.008	3.654	1	421	.057		
4	.326 ^d	.106	.098	6.332	.019	9.106	1	420	.003		
Model	Sum of Squares				df	Mean Square		F	Sig.		
1	Regression		1357.752		1	1357.752		32.841	.000 ^b		
	Residual		17488.239		423	41.343					
	Total		18845.991		424						
2	Regression		1492.064		2	746.032		18.141	.000 ^c		
	Residual		17353.927		422	41.123					
	Total		18845.991		424						
3	Regression		1641.394		3	547.131		13.388	.000 ^d		
	Residual		17204.597		421	40.866					
	Total		18845.991		424						
4	Regression		2006.505		4	501.626		12.511	.000 ^e		
	Residual		16839.486		420	40.094					
	Total		18845.991		424						
Model					B	β		t	Sig.	Collinearity	
					B	SE Beta				Tol	VIF
1	(Constant)				12.34		.95	13.02	.00		
	Community Leadership Support				.34	.06	.27	5.73	.00	1.00	1.00
2	(Constant)				10.62	1.34		7.90	.00		
	Community Leadership Support				.35	.06	.28	5.87	.00	.99	1.01
	Social norms toward adult learning				.11	.06	.09	1.81	.07	.99	1.01
3	(Constant)				8.83	1.63		5.41	.00		
	Community Leadership Support				.35	.06	.27	5.87	.00	.99	1.01
	Social norms toward adult learning				.11	.06	.09	1.90	.05	.99	1.01
	Availability of community learning infrastructure				.11	.06	.09	1.91	.05	.99	1.00
4	(Constant)				6.29	1.82		3.46	.00		
	Community Leadership Support				.35	.06	.27	5.87	.00	.99	1.01
	Social norms toward adult learning				.11	.06	.09	1.94	.05	.99	1.01
	Availability of community learning infrastructure				.11	.06	.09	1.86	.06	.99	1.00
	Local economic conditions				.21	.07	.14	3.02	.00	.99	1.00

Results in Table 2 show that community leadership support, entered at the first stage, explained 7.2 per cent of the variation in the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes ($R = .268$, $R^2 = .072$). The regression model at this stage is statistically significant with $F_{(1,423)} = 32.84$, $P = <.05$. Regression coefficient indicates that community leadership support exerts positive influence on programme effectiveness ($\beta = .27$, $t = 5.73$, $p = .000$). This result indicates that stronger leadership support within communities corresponds with improved programme outcomes. At the second stage, social norms toward adult learning were introduced into the regression model. The inclusion of this variable

slightly increased the model's explanatory power from 7.2 per cent to 7.9 per cent ($\Delta R^2 = .007$). The change in the model produced a ΔF value of 3.27 with a probability value of .071. The regression coefficient indicates a modest positive influence of social norms on adult learning ($\beta = .09$, $t = 1.81$, $p = .07$). The contribution of this factor appears limited within the model at this stage. At the third stage, availability of community learning infrastructure was added to the regression model. This inclusion increased explanatory variance from 7.9 per cent to 8.7 per cent ($\Delta R^2 = .008$). The change in the model produced a ΔF value of 3.65 with a probability value of .057. The regression coefficient indicates a small positive effect of learning infrastructure on programme effectiveness ($\beta = .09$, $t = 1.91$, $p = .05$). This effect remains modest relative to other community system factors. At the fourth stage, local economic conditions variable was introduced. Addition of this variable increased variance explained from 8.7 percent to 10.6 percent ($\Delta R^2 = .019$). Change in the model produced ΔF value of 9.11 with probability value of .003, indicating statistically significant improvement in explanatory power of the model. Regression coefficient indicates that local economic conditions exert meaningful positive influence on programme effectiveness ($\beta = .14$, $t = 3.02$, $p = .000$). Regression model at the final stage remains statistically significant with $F_{(4,420)} = 12.51$, $P = .00$. Collinearity statistics indicate absence of multicollinearity among predictors, with tolerance values close to 1.00 and variance inflation factors approximately equal to 1.00. Results therefore indicate that community leadership support and local economic conditions contribute significantly to effectiveness of adult literacy programmes, while social norms and availability of learning infrastructure contribute more modestly. Based on these findings, null hypothesis stating that dimensions of community system factors do not contribute significantly in hierarchical sequence to effectiveness of adult literacy programmes among rural communities in Cross River South Senatorial District was rejected.

Discussion

Findings of the present study indicate that community system conditions play a meaningful role in shaping the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes within rural communities. Although the influence of these factors accounts for a modest proportion of programme outcomes, the results suggest that literacy initiatives do not operate independently of their surrounding social environment. Community leadership support emerged as most influential dimension of community system conditions. This finding suggests that the commitment of traditional leaders, community associations, and local decision-making structures may shape participation patterns, learner mobilisation, and sustained engagement in literacy activities. Contemporary research in adult education increasingly recognises leadership structures within rural communities as important mechanisms for sustaining participation in non-formal education initiatives. For instance, Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2020) observed that the active involvement of community leaders significantly strengthens the mobilisation of adult learners and enhances the continuity of literacy programmes in rural Nigerian settings. Similar conclusions were reported by Egunyomi and Adeyemo (2021), who noted that community leadership support facilitates trust, encourages participation, and legitimises adult learning initiatives within local social systems. The present findings therefore reinforce the growing evidence that leadership structures are a central component of community educational ecosystems.

Influence of local economic conditions also emerged as a significant dimension shaping the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes. Rural livelihood also determined the availability of time, motivation, and the perceived relevance of literacy learning. Communities whose economic activities allow flexible participation are more likely to sustain engagement in literacy classes and facilitate practical application of acquired skills. Evidence from recent studies support this relationship between livelihood context and adult education outcomes. For example, Biao and Yoon (2019) reported that adult literacy participation in rural African communities improves when programmes are aligned with economic activities such as agriculture, cooperative trade, and microenterprise. Similarly, Ofoha and Fatoki (2020) found that economic security and livelihood stability encourage adults to invest time in literacy acquisition and enhance functional application of learning outcomes. Present findings therefore suggest that economic context within rural communities may strengthen or constrain the effectiveness of literacy initiatives depending on how programme schedules and content align with livelihood realities. Social norms toward adult learning had a relatively modest influence in the regression models. This pattern suggests that positive community attitudes toward adult education may support programme participation but may not, on its own, determine programme effectiveness when leadership structures and economic realities are considered simultaneously. Contemporary scholarship increasingly views social norms as an enabling condition that interacts with other structural factors rather than as a direct determinant of programme success. Nwabueze and Okeke (2021) noted that favourable attitude toward adult

education create supportive environment for learning. However, it does not automatically translate into sustained participation; when economic pressure or institutional limitations persist. Findings of this present study appeared consistent with this perspective. It indicates that cultural acceptance of adult learning may function primarily as supportive background condition within community education systems.

Availability of community learning infrastructure also showed limited independent influence on programme effectiveness within the hierarchical model. Although infrastructure remains necessary for programme implementation, its presence alone may not guarantee effective literacy outcomes when other contextual conditions remain weak. This observation aligns with emerging research which suggested that physical learning facilities represent only one component of a broader community education system. In a recent study examining adult literacy initiatives across rural African communities, Akinwale and Omotayo (2022) reported that learning centres and instructional materials contribute to programme accessibility. Nevertheless, it does not automatically translate into improved learning outcomes unless accompanied by community engagement and supportive socio-economic conditions. Present findings therefore highlight the importance of viewing infrastructure as an enabling resource rather than a primary determinant of programme effectiveness. The sequential pattern observed in the hierarchical analysis provides additional insight into how community system factors influence adult literacy programmes. Leadership support appears to establish an initial foundation for programme participation through mobilisation and social endorsement. Subsequent layers of influence emerge through social attitudes, infrastructure availability, and livelihood conditions that shape continuity of engagement and application of literacy skills. Such layered influence reflects the growing emphasis in adult education research on a community systems perspective, in which programme effectiveness is understood as a product of interacting social, institutional, and economic conditions. Recent studies emphasise that literacy interventions achieve greater sustainability when programme design recognises these interconnected community structures (Okoye, Onyenemezu & Chukwuemeka, 2022). These findings suggest that the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes in rural communities is shaped less by a single dominant factor and more by the configuration of community system conditions that support or constrain adult learning participation. These perspectives contribute to an expanding body of research that frames adult literacy programmes as embedded within community development processes, rather than isolated educational interventions. Findings from this study therefore highlight the importance of strengthening leadership engagement, aligning programme structures with local livelihood conditions, and sustaining supportive community environments for adult learning.

Conclusion

Evidence from this study indicates that the effectiveness of adult literacy programmes in rural communities is inseparable from the surrounding community conditions that shape participation, continuity of learning, and the practical use of acquired literacy skills. Literacy initiatives appear to function more effectively where community leadership structures demonstrate commitment to educational activities and where local economic conditions permit sustained engagement in learning processes. Community environments therefore represent important enabling contexts within which adult literacy programmes operate. Programme effectiveness in rural communities is likely associated with the degree to which community structures create supportive conditions that allow adults to participate consistently and apply literacy competencies in everyday social and economic life. This study therefore emphasised the importance of approaching adult literacy programmes from a broader community systems perspective rather than viewing them solely as instructional interventions delivered within learning centres. Sustainable improvement in adult literacy outcomes within rural communities may require stronger integration between literacy initiatives, local leadership structures and socio-economic realities that influence adult participation. Strengthening community engagement and aligning literacy programmes with livelihood contexts may therefore be important pathways to improving the effectiveness of adult literacy initiatives in rural communities.

Recommendations

1. Adult literacy programme administrators and adult education agencies should strengthen collaboration with community leadership structures in rural communities. Engagement of these leadership structures in programme planning, awareness campaigns, and monitoring activities may create a supportive environment that enhances the overall effectiveness of adult literacy programmes.
2. Adult literacy programmes should be designed and implemented in ways that reflect livelihood patterns and

economic realities of rural communities. Programme schedules, learning activities, and instructional content should align with dominant economic activities such as farming, fishing, and small-scale trading. Integrating functional literacy components that support income-generating activities may also strengthen motivation for participation and promote practical use of literacy skills in daily economic life.

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