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Moses S. Jayeola-Omoyeni****Museum – Center for adult literacy education delivery in Nigeria, 2000-2010: Evaluation******Muzej kot center za opismenjevanje odraslih v Nigeriji, 2000–2010: evalvacija******Izvleček***

Glavna težava, ki vpliva na učinkovito spodbujanje opismenjevanja odraslih v Nigeriji, je izpis udeležencev iz centrov za opismenjevanje po prvotnem vpisu. Na podlagi raziskave, ki je bila opravljena in je predstavljena v pričujočem prispevku, so posamezni muzeji v zveznih državah Ekiti, Ondo in Osun prevzeli vlogo centra za opismenjevanje, da bi dopolnili državne in druge tovrstne centre.

Abstract

The main problem affecting the effective promotion of adult literacy education in Nigeria, is that of the withdrawal of participants from the literacy centers after the initial enrolment. From the research conducted and being reported in this paper, some community museums in Ekiti, Ondo and Osun states of Nigeria, were used as literacy centers to complement the conventional literacy centers of the government and other agencies.

Ključne besede: Nigerija, opismenjevanje, izobraževanje odraslih**Keywords:** Nigeria, literacy education, adult education15th Symposium on School Life, part 33. Visit us / obiščite nas – Sistory:<http://hdl.handle.net/11686/37683>**Introduction**

This article reports an adult literacy education project embarked upon in three states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, between 2000 and 2010 to show the place and importance of museums in promoting adult literacy education. The article concludes that people should not see the museums only as the house of or for antiquities, but as valuable literacy centers. It recommends the use and integration as effective sources for promoting adult literacy education in Nigeria.

The primary purpose of teaching and learning any where in the world according to UNESCO (1992) is to provide the learners to programming objectives

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that would broaden the horizon of the learners, acquaint them with the local, national and international issues and familiarize them with the cultural and technological environment. For the services to be acceptable and meaningful, its contents must be relevant to the society. It must be related to the lives of the learner and must show a considerable understanding of the history, hopes, living-conditions, political, social and cultural activities.

The British colonial masters discovered that Nigeria had a high rate of adult illiteracy and thus launched the first Mass Literacy Campaign in 1946. Efforts at combating the scourge of high rate of adult illiteracy, by government, non-governmental and voluntary organizations, UNESCO and other bodies to promote adult literacy education in Nigeria, did not yield any appreciable results. Schools, open fields, market places, churches etc were used as literacy centres to reach and teach the illiterates how to read and write in the printed words. The main problem affecting the effective promotion of adult literacy education in Nigeria is that of the withdrawal of participants from the literacy centres after the initial enrolments. The purpose of this article is to:

- report how museums were used as adult literacy education centres where participants were sustained to acquire literacy skills;
- show that most of the artifacts in the museums are items found in the local environment and could be used as literacy teaching material aids in learning;
- compare the result of a ten-year informal teaching and learning at the museums with governments' conventional formal type.

Consequent upon these the project would: stimulate the interest of people in museum collections; facilitate more illiterate people to become literates without any significant drop-out; generate the interest of the literate people in reducing adult illiteracy by using the method to complement government efforts.

Nigerian literacy education background

The examination of literacy education background in Nigeria from 1842, when the first formal system of education was established, showed a very poor school attendance as a result of inadequate establishment of schools in what was then known as the Northern and Southern protectorates. Nigeria was basically influenced by the Christian Missionary form of "western education". The Christian missionaries introduced the roman alphabets in teaching, reading and writing in the established schools.

A person who is unable to read, write or communicate in the roman scripts is considered as an illiterate. There was thus, an army of illiterates in Nigeria as a result of education conflicts and inadequate schooling facilities for both the children and adults.



Education in Nigeria - Age of Awareness – Medium (<https://medium.com/age-of-awareness/education-in-nigeria-5cac3967857f>, accessed 10. 10. 2019)

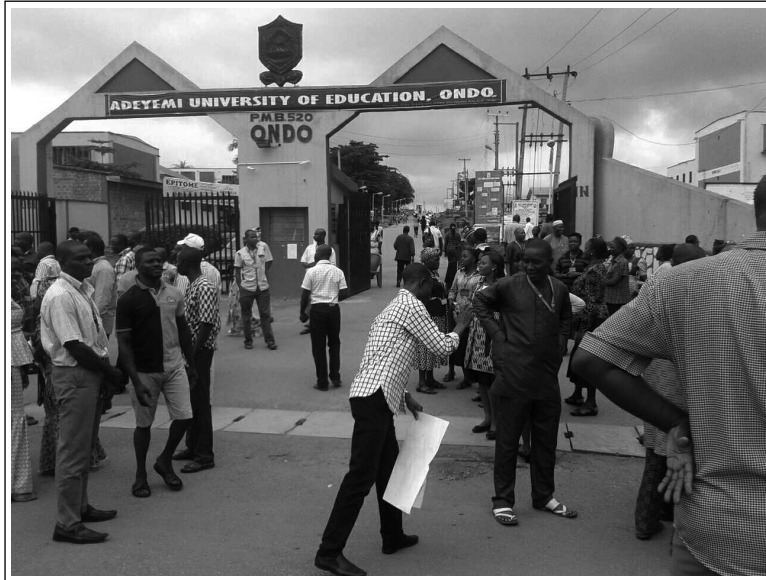
The colonial government launched the first Mass Literacy Campaign in 1946 in the regional capitals of Lagos, Ibadan, Enugu and Kaduna. This according to Jayeola-Omoyeni and Ajayi (2012), was designed to sensitize the provincial and the district governments, to launch adult literacy programme to enable the out-of-school adult illiterates have access to literacy education. Several efforts were made to reduce adult illiteracy in Nigeria. One of such efforts was for government to establish literacy centres in market places, plantation farms and so on, to enable more illiterate traders and farmers to become literates. In addition, mass literacy campaigns were launched and relaunched severally in Nigeria under the military and civilian administrations.

The problem of adult literacy in Nigeria is that of enrolment and withdrawal. Illiterate adults always enrol at the literacy centres, but the majority withdrew after a few weeks into the programme. Various strategies were used to ensure that adult learners were sustained to learn at the various learning centres – Jayeola-Omoyeni (1998 and 2003).

Table I: Statistical information on literacy in Nigeria

Year	Nigeria population	Literacy in Roman script	Illiteracy in Roman script	% Literate adults	% Illiterate adults
1991	88,992,220	33,817,044	55,175,176	38	61.62
2006	140,003,452	61,601,468	78,401,984	44	56

Source: The Nigeria Population Census, % calculation is that of the author.



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(<https://schoolings.org/>, accessed 10. 10. 2019)*

As shown in Table 1, there is a high rate of illiteracy in Nigeria. Literacy according to Eldred (2010) is a significant bench-mark for a country to develop. Okonjo-Iwealla (2013) indicates that about 10.6 million children never being to school presently in Nigeria. It is expected that this population would further increase the high rate of adult illiteracy in the country. This confirms the projection of Callaway (1985), Aminu (1988), Fafunwa (1992), Tugbiyele (1993) and Jayeola-Omoyeni (2003) among others that concurred and indicated a rise in adult illiteracy despite the UNESCO, religious bodies and voluntary organizations' adult literacy interventions, if drastic and realistic actions are not taken to address the issue. There is thus the need to research into the poor level of literacy to find what could be done to reduce illiteracy.

Museums in Nigeria

In Nigeria when we mention the word museum, there are various interpretations and opinions given to it by both the literate and illiterate Nigerians, who are ignorant of the asking roles of a museum. Many Nigerians see the museum as a “no-go-area where government properties are kept”. Before colonialism in Nigeria, what could be regarded as museums was the traditional shrine – family, community and ancestral shrines – set aside for the “calling” of the deities when there were problems. Such shrines were exclusively preserved, and only

the elders in that community had the absolute power to “invoke” the spirit of the deities. Such was the traditional and early form of museums we had in Nigeria. However, the modern “civilization” has changed all that. Museums now house the shrine exhibits, pictures, diagrams, maps, various articles of trade, art-works of the related neighborhood, cultural attributes of the communities, sculpturing, types of cloth associated with a particular area, previous writings, portraits of heroes and heroines. All these are housed in the modern museums and exhibited to researchers.

The first known museum in Nigeria was established in 1930 at Esie, in the present - day Kwara State. However, there are about 60 National Museums in the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. There are palace museums, monumental buildings, first storey building in a town, local government areas and so on. All these are preserved and people come to the premises on daily basis to relax like the **National Parks** in the advanced countries of the world.

Since 1930, Museum development in Nigeria has been consolidated and expanded. The following museums were opened in the year against each of them: Jos – 1945, Ile-Ife – 1954, Lagos – 1957, Oron – 1958, Benin – 1960, Kano – 1960, Owo – 1968. It is noted that the citing of the early museums tended to be informed by the sources of the collections in them. The Jos Museum, for example, houses many Nok terracottas while Ife, Oron and Benin museums house most of the iferine heads and figures, Ikom monoliths and Benin bronzes.

Museum’s conventional activities

According to Kerri (1994), the modern museum in Nigeria is an institution that cares for and conserves a collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural or historical importance. Museum, especially the Natural history museum, encourages researching, teaching and collections covering botany, entomology, mineralogy, zoology, etc. Modern museum fuels creativity, ignites minds and provides inspiration for the people of the environment where such museum is located. Museum provides and generates according to Ambrose and Paine (1994), cultural and economic renaissance, in its area of location. This is probably one of the reasons that led the author to successfully use some of the community museums as learning centres for the delivery of adult literacy education in Nigeria.

Museums should be disturbed all the time. More activities should be going on within and outside the premises. In many African countries – Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, Ghana, Morocco etc., many of their museums are always bee of activities. In essence the Nigerian museums as opined by Agbontaen (2002) should not be seen as “no-go-area”. The Museum should be seen as a place for social activities where such museum is located.



15th Symposium in Ljubljana, 2013. Moses S. Jayeola-Omoyeni in the discussion. (photo M. Javoršek)

Project – literacy teaching and learning at the museum

The *author* with the assistance of Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) graduate was inspired and introduced a learning centre informally at the monumental museum in Ikere-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria. As an experiment, teaching and learning started with 8 participants in 1999 and having recorded a success story, the experiment metamorphosed to an exciting project to basically complement the conventional adult literacy delivery of the government and other agencies.

Between 2000 and 2010, the author as the chief facilitator worked with the 13 Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) graduates in Ekiti, Ondo and Osun States of Nigeria, to recruit and teach the illiterate participants. For ten years, the project was on-going and more people were enrolled each year. There was only an insignificant drop-out basically as a result of death and sickness. Success stories were recorded each year in each of the selected states. There was a steady increase of about 1.6% recorded altogether. At the end of ten years a total figure of 4,084 participants had enrolled from which 3,857 (94.4%) participated fully to becoming literates at the record time of nine months. The illiterates were usually inspired and galvanized to stay at the museum premises to learn.

The total enrolment in the conventional literacy program in the selected three states and for a ten-year period was 37,648 with only 8,467 (22.5%) sustained to a nine-month full participation. About 29,181 enrollees had withdrawn!

Methodology. The teaching methodology was exciting. The facilitators used many of the artifacts in the museums as instructional aids or materials. The

participants gained immensely in the program as about 163 participants showed interest in sculpturing, and 34 showed active interest in dyeing and tying as a vocation. The participants spent between six and seven months to acquire proficiency in reading and writing in Yoruba language – being the language of the environment.

The learners were sustained at the learning centres because of the ways the instructors facilitated teaching and learning as:

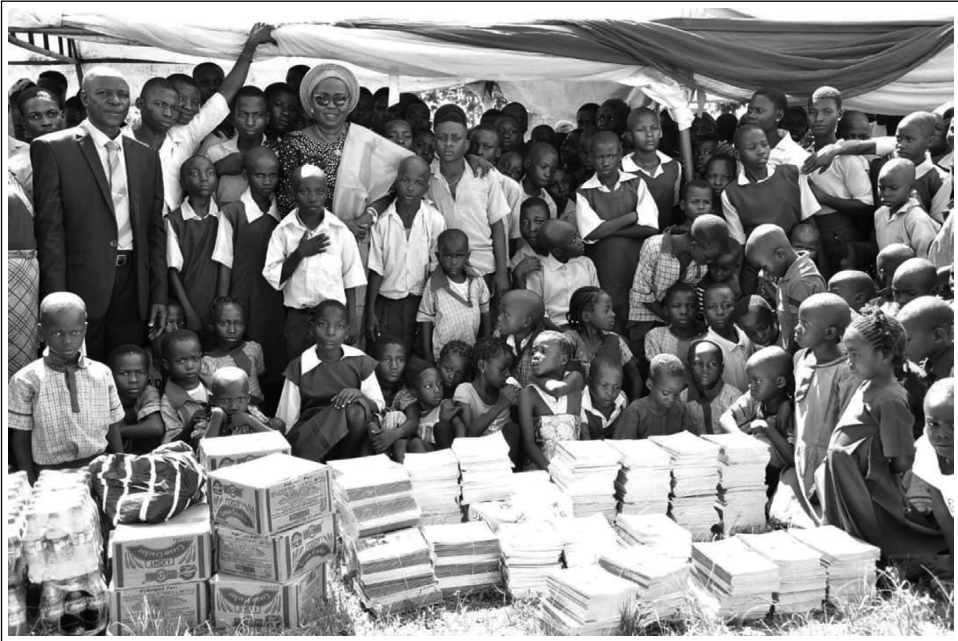
- Adequate motivation was provided for the learners – refreshments etc., were provided all the time while the project lasted. The participants willingly contributed money for refreshments at the museum centres.
- There was no examination to assess their proficiency. Proficiency was assessed by given them tasks to do.

All these and many more enhanced the enthusiasm of the participants. Such that the drop-outs recorded were those who were sick or dead.

Finance. Writing materials, stationery items and refreshments for the participants, cost about 20,000 Nigerian money (141 US dollars). Transportation and other allowances for the facilitators cost 50,000 Nigerian money (350 US dollars). A total amount of seventy thousand 70,000 Nigeria money (491 US dollars), was spent to make 3,857 participants become literates through the use of the community museums. Whereas, to become literate by the government sponsored adult literacy education program for the same period cost the government 6 million Nigeria money (40,000 US dollars)!

Comparison

- The result of the conventional literacy program organized by government and government agencies, had not been impressive because of yearly massive withdrawal of participants.
- There was no female participant throughout the ten-years of duration of the project. This was so because women did not come to the museums for relaxation like men.
- The number of drop-outs was higher in the government's literacy delivery centres of the Federal and state government under reference.
- There was no examination procedure for the museum's literacy education participants. Hence, the participants showed more enthusiasm to stay and learn and become literates.
- The most prominent handicap to the promotion of adult literacy i.e. the mass withdrawal of participants, was not significantly present during the ten years teaching and learning at the museums.
- The cost of promoting literacy, at the museums was significantly low.



The importance of education: distribution of educational materials in Ondo state to the students by authorities (<http://www.ondostate.gov.ng/Home/NewsItem/Mrs--Akeredolu-distributes-educational-materials-to-students>, accessed, 10. 10. 2019)

Achievement. The project achieved the following among others:

- helping illiterate adults to become literates, through the use of community museums as the literacy centres;
- helping the participants out of the superstitious beliefs attached to museums;
- empowering the participants to be functional, more creative in vocational education;
- supporting the Nigerian government in her efforts to drastically reduce adult illiteracy;
- adding values to adult literacy and sustaining the participants to becoming literates in their own rights.

Conclusion and recommendation

Innovation of any kind requires creativity, commitment and effort. As educators, we can choose to continue to be part of a system which is failing or we can choose to be innovative agents of change. The museums were seen before the project as an institution for the educated ones where the illiterate people cannot enter at will. Whereas, the museum is the place where people's art-works, cultural history and traditions are preserved from extinction.

Based on the outcomes of the project being reported in this article, the following recommendations are advanced.

- The Nigerian government should adopt the museums as a valuable source for promoting adult literacy education. Literacy education delivery using the museum as alternative should be included in the Educational Policy of government.
- Government should ensure that museums are adequately updated with new collections. The premises should be made more attractive to the people.
- Museums should be seen and appreciated as the peoples' house of "stored wisdom". People should have adequate access to them to acquire the history and cultural knowledge of the environment.
- Researchers must be encouraged to support government to drastically reduce the scourge of illiteracies in Nigeria.
- Museums should be seen as a centre of integration, places where what belongs together comes together, where people learn together, from and with one another, through discussion and dialogue on their arts and cultures.
- Adult literacy education should continually take place informally as formality of such education may breed rigidity which may always lead to withdrawal of participants.

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Summary

Museum – Center for adult literacy education delivery in Nigeria, 2000-2010: Evaluation

Moses S. Jayeola-Omoyeni

The European colonial masters discovered that Nigeria had a high rate of adult illiteracy and thus launched the first Mass Literacy Campaign in 1946. Efforts at combating the scourge of high rate of adult illiteracy by government, non-governmental and voluntary organizations, Unesco and other bodies to promote adult literacy education in Nigeria, did not yield any appreciable results. Open fields, market places etc., were used as literacy centers to reach and teach the illiterates how to read and write in the printed word. The main problem affecting the effective promotion of adult literacy education in Nigeria, is that of the withdrawal of participants from the literacy centers after the initial enrolment. From the research conducted and being reported in this paper, some community museums in Ekiti, Ondo and Osun states of Nigeria, were used as literacy centers to complement the conventional literacy centers of the government and other agencies. Between 2000 and 2010, a total enrolment in the conventional literacy programme in those three states in Nigeria, was 37,648 with only 8,467 (22.5%) sustained to a nine month annual literacy graduation. But at the museum literacy centers in the three states, a total enrolment of 4,084 from which 3,857 (94.4%) participants were sustained. It is therefore seen that the community museums could be a valuable literacy center and thus recommended its use and integration as effective sources for promoting adult literacy education in Nigeria.