

## Assessment of Counselling Interventions for Enhancing Effective Participation of Young Adults in Adult Literacy Programmes

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### Abstract

Low engagement of young adults in adult literacy initiatives continues to hinder efforts to improve foundational skills and promote sustainable human development in Nigeria. Despite the presence of literacy centres across communities, many young adults exhibit irregular attendance, low involvement, and high dropout rates, largely due to socio-economic constraints, psychological challenges, and limited structured learner support. This study examined how motivational, psychosocial, and career-focused counselling interventions influence the participation of young adults in adult literacy programmes within the Amuwo-Odofin Local Government Area. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and a structured questionnaire was administered to 300 young adults, with 285 completing it satisfactorily. The instrument demonstrated strong internal reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.78 to 0.86. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, and multiple regression analysis. Findings revealed high levels of counselling support associated with increased learner participation. Motivational counselling showed the strongest positive correlation with participation ( $r = 0.62$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), followed by psychosocial counselling ( $r = 0.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and career counselling ( $r = 0.55$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Multiple regression results indicated that the three counselling components jointly explained 53% of the variance in participation ( $R = 0.73$ ,  $R^2 = 0.53$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Each counselling dimension

made significant independent contributions, indicating that counselling interventions enhance attendance, engagement, and retention among young adult learners. The study concludes that counselling interventions are vital for strengthening participation in adult literacy programmes. It recommends the integration of structured counselling services, training of facilitators in counselling skills, and the provision of psychosocial and career support to address learners' holistic needs and improve programme outcomes.

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**Keywords:** Adult literacy programmes; Young adult participation; Counselling interventions; Motivational counselling; Psychosocial and career support

## Introduction

Persistent low participation of young adults in adult literacy programmes remains a significant issue in many developing countries, despite ongoing national and international initiatives to enhance literacy acquisition. While these programmes are crucial for alleviating poverty, improving job prospects, and fostering social inclusion, many young adults face challenges enrolling, attending classes consistently, or maintaining commitment throughout the programme. This trend of low participation diminishes the anticipated benefits of literacy interventions. It poses a considerable risk to achieving lifelong learning objectives as outlined in global initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 4. This issue is particularly concerning because young adults represent a vital segment of the workforce, and their literacy levels have a direct impact on national development outcomes.

Several factors contribute to the limited participation rates. These include economic challenges such as fluctuating incomes, extended work hours, and familial obligations, which often compel young adults to focus on immediate survival rather than pursuing educational opportunities (Adefila & Adedokun, 2022). Furthermore, many young individuals face psychological and emotional obstacles stemming from negative experiences in education, feelings of inadequacy, or shame associated with enrolling in literacy programmes. According to Mwangi and Wanjiru (2021), the social stigma prevalent in some communities, where struggles with literacy are severely criticised, further deters individuals from attending. Additionally, literacy centres sometimes do not offer programmes that resonate with the career goals of young adults, leading to diminished motivation and a lack of perceived relevance of the curriculum to their everyday lives (Ogunlade & Ajayi, 2023). These collectively contribute to decreased attendance, reduced engagement, and higher dropout rates.

In response to these persistent barriers limiting young adults' participation in literacy programmes, counselling interventions have emerged as an effective strategy for providing emotional, psychological, and social support to learners. This guidance aids young adults in developing self-confidence, mitigating internalised stigma, and forming achievable academic and career aspirations. Previous studies have established strong links between counselling interventions and adult learners' participation in educational programmes. Motivational counselling has been shown to enhance persistence, self-efficacy, and goal attainment by strengthening learners' intrinsic motivation and engagement (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2015; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Similarly, psychosocial counselling plays a crucial role in reducing learning-related anxiety and improving emotional well-being, thereby helping adult learners overcome affective and social barriers to sustained participation (Bandura, 1997; Merriam & Bierema, 2014). In addition, career counselling has been found to improve learner retention and commitment by clarifying the relevance of literacy skills to employment and livelihood opportunities, which enhances the perceived utility of learning (Super, 1990; Watts, 2013). Collectively, these studies demonstrate that counselling interventions are critical determinants of engagement and persistence in adult education programmes.

While these variables have been examined independently in prior studies, few studies have integrated motivational, psychosocial, and career counselling as joint predictors of participation in adult literacy programmes, particularly among young adults in developing-country contexts. This study, therefore, builds on existing literature while extending it through contextualization and empirical integration.

Group counselling fosters social connections and peer support networks that encourage learner commitment, particularly in contexts where dropouts are prevalent (Kassahun & Mohammed, 2023). Consequently, counselling is increasingly recognised as a vital element of successful adult literacy initiatives.

However, despite the theoretical and practical benefits, empirical studies that specifically investigate the impact of counselling interventions on young adult participation remain limited. Much of the existing literature tends to examine counselling in a broad context without differentiating results by age category or focuses primarily on formal education systems rather than adult learning environments (Ndlovu & Moyo, 2022). Young adults exhibit distinct developmental characteristics such as increased independence, heightened identity exploration, and greater sensitivity to social comparisons that influence their reactions to educational programmes. These traits indicate that they may necessitate customised counselling strategies that are different from those appropriate for older adults or

adolescents. The absence of concentrated evidence, according to Adeyemi and Yusuf (2023), restricts literacy practitioners from effectively modifying counselling practices to meet the specific needs of this demographic, thus highlighting a significant gap in programme development and implementation.

Furthermore, there is an increasing acknowledgement that effective adult literacy programmes require more than just teaching skills; they must also integrate psychosocial support systems that consider the comprehensive realities of learners. Programmes that overlook this aspect may misinterpret issues related to attendance as solely academic, neglecting behavioural or psychological factors. There is a growing demand among policymakers and educational stakeholders for evidence-based approaches that blend behavioural insights, motivation research, and learner assistance in the delivery of adult literacy. Consequently, counselling interventions emerge as a vital yet underexplored area with considerable potential to enhance participation outcomes (Tadesse & Kebede, 2023).

In addition, Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2020) and in adult education highlight that effective engagement is shaped not only by the motivation of learners but also by the surrounding learning environment. Counselling can thus play a vital role in cultivating a supportive educational atmosphere by enhancing relationships between facilitators and learners, building trust, and encouraging open communication (Okoro & Mensah, 2023). When learners view the classroom as a secure and accepting environment, they are more inclined to attend consistently and participate actively. Facilitators trained in counselling are also more adept at recognising subtle indicators of withdrawal or frustration, allowing them to address issues before learners disengage entirely. However, numerous adult literacy centres lack trained counsellors or organised support systems, which exacerbates the disparity between learner needs and available resources (Sharma & Patel, 2022).

This study, therefore, aims to evaluate the impact of counselling interventions on young adults' involvement in adult literacy programmes. By examining how specific counselling techniques affect motivation, attendance, persistence, and engagement, the research provides essential empirical insights into a relatively neglected field within adult education scholarship. The anticipated results are intended to inform policy decisions, guide programme development, and assist facilitators in creating learner-centred approaches that incorporate psychological and emotional support within literacy teaching. Ultimately, the study aspires to enhance understanding of how counselling can serve as an effective tool for boosting participation and improving literacy outcomes among young adults.

## Statement of the Problem

Participation rates among young adults in adult literacy programmes remain consistently low, with a significant number not enrolling, attending regularly, or completing the courses. This situation hampers their ability to acquire vital literacy skills necessary for employment, socio-economic advancement, and active participation in society, thereby impeding progress toward both national and international educational objectives.

The ongoing issue arises from a combination of socio-economic, psychological, and programmatic challenges that young adults encounter, such as inconsistent income, demanding job commitments, low self-esteem, societal stigma, and negative past educational experiences. Furthermore, many literacy centres do not provide adequate counselling support and offer curricula that fail to resonate with the aspirations of young adults. This misalignment leads to diminished motivation and increased dropout rates.

As a result, this study aims to investigate how counselling interventions can potentially improve young adults' involvement in adult literacy programs. It will specifically evaluate the impact of various types of counselling, including motivational support, psychosocial assistance, and career guidance, on enhancing learners' motivation, attendance rates, persistence levels, and overall engagement in these programs.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of counselling interventions in enhancing the participation of young adults in adult literacy programmes. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. determine the extent to which counselling interventions improve young adults' participation in adult literacy programmes.
- ii. ii.examine the influence of motivational counselling on young adults' enrolment and sustained attendance.
- iii. assess the effect of psychosocial counselling on learners' confidence, emotional readiness, and persistence.
- iv. investigate how career-oriented counselling shapes young adults' perception of the relevance of literacy programmes.
- v. identify the counselling strategies most effective in enhancing learner engagement and reducing dropout rates.

## Research Questions

- i. To what extent do counselling interventions improve young adults' participation in adult literacy programmes?
- ii. How does motivational counselling influence young adults' enrolment and continued attendance?

- iii. In what ways does psychosocial counselling affect learners' confidence, emotional adjustment, and persistence?
- iv. How does career-oriented counselling influence young adults' perception of the relevance of adult literacy programmes?
- v. Which counselling strategies are most effective in strengthening engagement and reducing dropout among young adult learners?

### Research Hypotheses

- H<sub>01</sub>: Counselling interventions have no significant effect on young adults' participation in adult literacy programmes.
- H<sub>02</sub>: Counselling strategies collectively do not significantly enhance learner engagement or reduce dropout rates among young adults.

### Literature Review

Adult literacy programmes are vital for enhancing employability, social inclusion, and lifelong learning among young adults, yet participation remains low in many developing countries due to socio-economic pressures, psychological barriers, social stigma, and limited programme relevance (Adefila & Adedokun, 2022; Mwangi & Wanjiru, 2021; Ogunlade & Ajayi, 2023). Low attendance, poor engagement, and high dropout rates undermine literacy initiatives and hinder national development goals.

Counselling interventions have emerged as critical mechanisms for improving adult learner participation by addressing motivational, psychosocial, and career-related needs (Merriam & Bierema, 2014; Sharma & Patel, 2022). Motivational counselling enhances persistence, self-efficacy, and goal attainment by fostering autonomy, competence, and engagement, thereby increasing enrolment and sustained attendance (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2015; Kassahun & Mohammed, 2023). Psychosocial counselling reduces anxiety, builds confidence, and supports emotional readiness, helping learners overcome stigma and psychological barriers to engagement (Bandura, 1997; Rice et al., 2024; Okoro & Mensah, 2023). Career counselling strengthens learners' perception of programme relevance by linking literacy skills to employment, entrepreneurship, and livelihood opportunities, enhancing retention and motivation (Super, 1990; Watts, 2013; Adeyemi & Yusuf, 2023).

Furthermore, the learning environment plays a critical role in participation. Supportive, inclusive, and responsive educational settings foster engagement, particularly when facilitators are trained in counselling and can address early signs of withdrawal (Broek, 2024; OECD, 2025). However, empirical studies integrating motivational, psychosocial, and career counselling as joint predictors of young adult participation, especially in Nigerian contexts, remain limited. This study addresses this gap by

examining how these counselling interventions collectively influence attendance, persistence, and engagement in adult literacy programmes within Amuwo-Odofin Local Government Area.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design is appropriate because it allows the researcher to collect quantitative data from a defined population regarding their experiences, perceptions, and behavioural responses to counselling interventions. The design also enabled the examination of relationships between variables such as counselling types (motivational, psychosocial, career-oriented) and participation indicators (motivation, attendance, persistence, engagement). The descriptive survey method is suitable for educational and behavioural studies where large samples are required to generalise findings to a wider population.

### **Population of the Study**

The population consisted of all young adults enrolled in adult literacy programmes within Amuwo-Odofin Local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria. This included learners between the ages of 18 and 35 years, consistent with the commonly accepted definition of “young adults” in adult education research (UNESCO, 2019). The total population of young adults enrolled in the selected 10 adult literacy centres in Amuwo-Odofin LGA was 1,500.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

Using Yamane’s formula at a 5% margin of error, a sample size of 300 respondents was derived. To ensure fair representation, the sample was proportionally allocated across the literacy centres based on their individual enrolments. Within each centre, a complete list of eligible young adult learners (18–35 years) was obtained, and simple random sampling was used to select the required number of participants. Each learner was assigned a number, and the predetermined quota from each centre was selected through random number generation or balloting. Where a selected respondent was unavailable or declined participation, a randomly selected replacement was used.

This approach ensured that all centres were proportionately represented and that the final sample of 300 respondents accurately reflected the population structure.



**Table 1:** Proportional Allocation of Sample Size Across Adult Literacy Centres

Literacy Centre	Total Enrolment	Proportion of Total Population	Allocated Sample Size
Centre A	180	0.12	36
Centre B	150	0.10	30
Centre C	120	0.08	24
Centre D	200	0.13	40
Centre E	170	0.11	34
Centre F	160	0.11	32
Centre G	140	0.09	28
Centre H	130	0.09	26
Centre I	110	0.07	22
Centre J	140	0.09	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>300</b>

Source: Researcher Field Survey, 2025

### Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument comprised three sections:

- **Section A:** Demographic information (age, gender, occupation, duration in programme, etc.).
- **Section B:** Counselling Interventions Scale (motivational, psychosocial, and career-oriented counselling).
- **Section C:** Participation Scale (motivation, attendance, engagement, and persistence).

The questionnaire utilised a 4-point Likert scale (e.g., Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) to measure respondents' perceptions and behaviours. The instrument was developed from existing literature, theoretical frameworks, and context-specific issues identified in the background and problem statement.

### Validity of the Instrument

To ensure content and face validity, the draft questionnaire was reviewed by experts in adult education, counselling psychology, and educational measurement and evaluation. Their input was used to refine wording, improve clarity, assess item relevance, and strengthen the overall structure.

Construct validity was assured by aligning each item with the research objectives, research questions, and variables of the study.

### Reliability of the Instrument

A pilot study was conducted using a few samples of young adult learners from Surulere Local Government, which is a separate adult literacy centre not included in the final study. The reliability of the instrument was



tested using Cronbach's Alpha to measure internal consistency, and the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.70 or above, indicating acceptable reliability.

### **Method of Data Collection**

Data was collected in person to maximise response rates.

1. Permission was obtained from the relevant authorities overseeing adult literacy programmes in Amuwo-Odofin LGA.
2. Questionnaires were administered directly to learners during class sessions or scheduled programme hours.
3. Respondents were given adequate time to complete the questionnaires, and all returned instruments were reviewed for completeness before analysis.

Where needed, trained research assistants assisted with questionnaire distribution and retrieval.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Quantitative data collected from the field was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics such as Frequencies, Percentages, Means and Standard deviations were used to summarise demographic characteristics and respondents' general perceptions of counselling interventions and participation levels.

### **Inferential Statistics**

The research hypotheses were tested using the following statistical techniques:

- **Regression Analysis**, to determine the predictive effect of counselling interventions on participation outcomes.
- **Independent Samples t-test or ANOVA**, where comparisons between groups or centres were required.
- **Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC)**, to examine the strength and direction of relationships between counselling components and participation variables.

All analyses were conducted using **SPSS**, **R**, or other appropriate statistical software packages.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical procedures guided every stage of the research:

- **Informed Consent:** Participants were fully informed about the purpose and procedures of the study before completing the questionnaire.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Respondents participated willingly and were free to withdraw at any stage without consequences.
- **Confidentiality:** Personal data were treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for research purposes.
- **Anonymity:** Names and identifying details of participants were not included in the data or final report.
- **Respect for Participants:** The data collection process was conducted with minimal disruption to class activities, and participants' comfort and dignity were prioritised throughout.

## Data Analysis and Results

### Response Rate

Out of the 300 questionnaires administered, 285 were correctly completed and returned, giving a usable response rate of 95.0%. This high response rate enhanced the reliability and generalisability of the findings.

### 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 2 presents the demographic profile of the 285 young adults who participated in the study.

**Table 2:** Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 285)

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	132	46.3
	Female	153	53.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Age Group (years)</b>	18–22	88	30.9
	23–27	114	40.0
	28–35	83	29.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Duration in Programme</b>	< 6 months	102	35.8
	6–12 months	117	41.1
	> 12 months	66	23.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

The table shows that male respondents constituted 46.3%. Most were aged 23–27 years (40.0%), and the majority had been in the programme between 6 and 12 months (41.1%).

### Research Question 1: To what extent do counselling interventions influence young adults' participation in adult literacy programmes?

To answer this, a multiple regression model was used to examine the combined effect of motivational, psychosocial, and career counselling on participation.

**Table 3:** Regression Summary of Counselling Interventions on Participation (N = 285)

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error
1	0.73	0.53	0.52	0.33

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

#### Interpretation

The results show an **R = 0.73**, indicating a strong relationship between counselling interventions and participation. An **R<sup>2</sup> of 0.53** means that 53% of the variance in participation was explained by counselling interventions. This is a large effect, showing that counselling greatly enhances attendance, engagement, and persistence.

**Conclusion:** Counselling interventions have a **strong and meaningful influence** on young adults' participation.

### Research Question 2: How does motivational counselling influence young adults' enrolment and sustained attendance?

**Table 4:** Mean and Correlation between Motivational Counselling and Participation

Variable	Mean	SD	r-value	p-value
Motivational Counselling	3.21	0.49	0.62**	< 0.01
Participation	3.15	0.47		

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

Note: p < 0.01 (significant)

#### Interpretation

The mean score for motivational counselling (M = 3.21) indicates high levels of motivational support. The correlation coefficient (r = 0.62, p < 0.01) shows a strong positive relationship with participation. This means that when learners receive encouragement, goal-setting support, and motivational guidance, they attend more consistently and remain committed to learning.

**Conclusion:** Motivational counselling is a powerful enhancer of enrolment, attendance, and persistence.

### Research Question 3: In what ways does psychosocial counselling affect learners' confidence, emotional adjustment, and persistence?

**Table 5:** Mean and Correlation between Psychosocial Counselling and Participation

Variable	Mean	SD	r-value	p-value
Psychosocial Counselling	3.08	0.52	0.58**	< 0.01
Participation	3.15	0.47		

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

#### Interpretation

Psychosocial counselling had a mean score of **3.08**, indicating a high level of emotional and psychological support. The correlation ( $r = 0.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) demonstrates a strong positive relationship with participation. This indicates that when learners receive emotional support, confidence-building interventions, and stress-management assistance, they feel more secure, less anxious, and more willing to continue learning.

**Conclusion:** Psychosocial counselling significantly improves confidence, emotional stability, and persistence.

### Research Question 4: How does career-oriented counselling influence young adults' perception of the relevance of adult literacy programmes?

**Table 6:** Mean and Correlation between Career Counselling and Participation

Variable	Mean	SD	r-value	p-value
Career Counselling	2.97	0.56	0.55**	< 0.01
Participation	3.15	0.47		

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

#### Interpretation

The mean score for career counselling ( $M = 2.97$ ) indicates **moderately high** levels of vocational guidance. The correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.55$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) shows a **significant moderate-to-strong relationship** with participation. This suggests that when learners understand how literacy skills enhance job opportunities or entrepreneurial potential, they value the programme more and participate actively.

**Conclusion:** Career-oriented counselling positively shapes learners' perception of relevance and boosts participation.

### Summary of Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question	Key Finding	Interpretation
RQ1: Overall counselling → Participation	$R^2 = 0.53$	Counselling explains 53% of participation variance.
RQ2: Motivational counselling	$r = 0.62$	Strong influence on enrolment, attendance, and persistence.
RQ3: Psychosocial counselling	$r = 0.58$	Strong effect on confidence, emotional readiness, and persistence.
RQ4: Career counselling	$r = 0.55$	Enhances perceived relevance and motivates participation.

### General Interpretation

Across all research questions, findings consistently show that counselling interventions motivational, psychosocial, and career-oriented have a significant positive effect on young adults' participation in adult literacy programmes.

### Hypotheses Testing Using Multiple Regression

**Hypothesis 1:** Counselling interventions have no significant effect on young adults' participation in adult literacy programmes.

**Evidence:** Multiple regression showed that counselling interventions jointly explained 53% of the variance in participation ( $R^2 = 0.53$ ,  $F(3, 281) = 74.00$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Decision: Reject  $H_{01}$ .**

**Conclusion:** Counselling interventions have a significant effect on young adults' participation in adult literacy programmes.

**Hypothesis 2:** Counselling strategies collectively do not significantly enhance learner engagement or reduce dropout rates among young adults.

**Evidence:** Counselling strategies collectively correlated strongly in enhancing learner engagement, thus reducing dropout rates ( $r = 0.62$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and had a significant regression coefficient ( $\beta = 0.39$ ,  $t = 6.33$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Decision: Reject  $H_{02}$ .**

**Conclusion:** Counselling strategy collectively significantly correlated with enhancing learner engagement in reducing dropout rates among young adults' participation.

### Discussion of Findings

The results of this study provide strong evidence that counselling interventions significantly enhance young adults' engagement in adult literacy programs. The descriptive data indicated generally elevated levels of

motivational, psychosocial, and career-focused counselling, alongside high participation rates. This aligns with prior research suggesting that young adults thrive in supportive learning environments that cater to their emotional, psychological, and academic needs.

Correlation analyses revealed robust and significant links between each dimension of counselling and participation. Notably, motivational counselling showed the highest correlation with participation ( $r = 0.62$ ), indicating that encouragement from counsellors, goal-setting efforts, and reinforcement are crucial for influencing learner attendance and persistence. This supports Kassahun and Mohammed's (2023) assertion that motivational support diminishes withdrawal tendencies and enhances learner determination.

Psychosocial counselling also demonstrated a noteworthy impact on participation ( $r = 0.58$ ), highlighting how addressing emotional challenges such as anxiety and self-esteem issues prepares learners to engage more fully with literacy tasks. This finding is consistent with Okoro and Mensah (2023), who argued that recognising learners' psychosocial needs within literacy centres increases their commitment.

While career-oriented counselling had a slightly lower effect size ( $r = 0.55$ ), it still exhibited a significant relationship with participation. This suggests that when learners grasp the connection between literacy skills and employability or income opportunities, they are more likely to stay engaged. Ogunlade and Ajayi (2023) reinforced this by emphasising the importance of aligning learning content with economic aspirations as a key motivator for youth.

Furthermore, multiple regression analysis indicated that these three components of counselling collectively accounted for 53% of the variance in participation, underscoring that counselling is not merely an auxiliary aspect but a fundamental element influencing participation outcomes. Each type of counselling provided statistically significant unique contributions, highlighting the value of a comprehensive counselling approach.

In summary, these findings suggest that low participation rates among young adults stem not only from academic challenges but are also significantly shaped by emotional, psychological, and socioeconomic factors. Consequently, counselling interventions prove to be effective mechanisms for overcoming barriers and enhancing learner engagement within adult literacy contexts.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that interventions including motivational, psychosocial, and career-oriented counselling substantially boost young adults' involvement in adult literacy programs. Counselling was found to

have a positive impact on learners' attendance, engagement levels, persistence rates, and perceptions of program relevance. With these interventions accounting for over half the variance in participation outcomes collectively, this research establishes the necessity of counselling as an integral aspect of enhancing adult literacy initiatives.

The findings reaffirm that young adults face various personal, emotional, and economic obstacles that disrupt consistent participation. However, structured counselling support alleviates these challenges while bolstering learner confidence and sustaining motivation. Literacy programmes incorporating such support systems are thus more likely to retain participants effectively while achieving their intended goals.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

#### **1. Incorporate Structured Counselling into Adult Literacy Programs**

Adult literacy centres ought to formally include counselling services such as motivational, psychosocial, and career-focused support within their program frameworks. This should be standard practice rather than an optional feature of learner assistance.

#### **2. Provide Facilitators with Training in Fundamental Counselling Skills**

Facilitators must be trained in essential counselling techniques, including active listening, empathy, goal-setting, and recognising early signs of disengagement. This training will enable them to foster supportive and responsive educational environments.

#### **3. Create a Specific Counsellor Position at Each Centre**

Where feasible, adult literacy centers should hire dedicated counsellors tasked with coordinating interventions, conducting follow-ups, and offering both individual and group counselling sessions.

#### **4. Integrate Career Guidance into the Literacy Curriculum**

Curriculum developers should embed straightforward modules covering entrepreneurship, vocational relevance, and employability skills to illustrate the practical benefits of literacy for young adults.

#### **5. Enhance Psychosocial Support for Learners**

Literacy centres should provide psychosocial support initiatives like peer-support groups, confidence-building workshops, and stress-management sessions to assist learners in managing personal challenges.

#### **6. Implement Early-Warning Systems for Monitoring Participation**

Systems for tracking attendance should be established to detect early indicators of learner disengagement. Counsellors should take prompt action before any withdrawal takes place.



### 7. **Engage Community Stakeholders Collaboratively**

Community leaders, NGOs, and local organisations should play a role in raising awareness and mobilising young adults while working to reduce stigma and promote the emotional well-being of learners.

### 8. **Conduct Ongoing Evaluations of Counselling Services**

Regular evaluations should be performed to assess the effectiveness of counselling interventions, ensuring that enhancements are guided by data-driven insights and evidence-based practices.

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**Data Availability:** All data are included in the content of the paper.

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