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# ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS TO ADULT EDUCATION AS A COURSE OF STUDY: A CASE STUDY OF THE EKITI STATE UNIVERSITY, ADO EKITI

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## **Abstract:**

The paper examined the attitudes of Students to Adult Education as a course of Study. The population consisted of students from the Faculty of Arts and Education out of which 366 samples were chosen for the study. One hypothesis was generated for the study which sought to examine the difference in attitude of students to adult education at entry point and their attitude after exposure to adult education as a course of study. A self designed questionnaire was used to elicit responses from the respondents (one at entry point and another after exposure to adult education as a course of study. The mean scores and standard deviation of the responses were determined and later subjected to t-test statistical tool. The findings reveal that because students were ignorant of what adult education is all about, students are lethargic to it as a course of study. The study among others recommended that adult education should be made a prerequisite course for students as adult education is a course for all time personal as well as national development.

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**Keywords:** attitude, lifelong, education, self-fulfillment

## **Introduction:**

People differ in attitudes. The way each person sees a situation is the attitude that will be displayed on the particular situation. This means attitude of people to things and situations is based on a proper understanding of the situation. Hence, people may either display negative or positive attitude to a particular thing or situation.

An attitude is a hypothetical construct that represents an individual's degree of like or dislike for an item. Attitudes therefore are generally positive or negative views of a person,

place, thing or event and this is often referred to as the attitude object (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attitude>). Attitudes can therefore be said to be judgemental.

In another way, attitudes to Vadium Kotelnikor (2011) are the established ways of responding to people and situations based on the beliefs, values and assumptions which one holds. These attitudes become manifest in how one behaves towards a person or thing or even a course of study as in adult education. The general attitudes of most students to adult education are negative. This is based on the fact that they do not have a good knowledge of what adult education is all about. The mere mention of the name adult education has made it to be tagged education of the adult to most people student inclusive.

It should be borne in mind that no matter the level of formal education attained, everyone needs adult education of one type or the other. Adult education is aimed at the development of individual's mental equipment and communicative powers as well as their technical and vocational capacities. Adult education offers education functions to broad sectors of the society, and enables the socio-political and economic activities of any nation (Osuji, 2006).

Adult education through its broad programmes is a means of integrating individuals into the global events bringing about not only the attainment of self-fulfillment but national development. The conscientization policy of Freire (Freire 1974) emphasizes the extent to which adult education would enable adults to grapple with their existential problems.

Education which is a necessity for the survival of man is important for all and sundry for through education; valuable knowledge and skills needed for individuals within the society are acquired. This view is in line with the view of O'Connor (1957) who sees the educational system of any society as an elaborate social mechanism designed to bring about in the persons submitted to it certain skills and attitudes that are adjudged to be useful and desirable in the society. This is the ultimate aim of adult education. Adult education is that education that will raise the consciousness in adult so that they are able to perceive their existential realities and take action towards remedying the situations. Adult education, therefore, is instruments which will help individuals within the society develop a coping skill and therefore being able to grapple with the problems of existence and recreating the situations through actions (Freire, 1992).

Adult education is therefore a lifelong education; one which nobody must miss as it is that education that puts one in the mainstream of the global event. Adult education becomes very important in the sense that it leads to systematic acquisition renewal, upgrading and completion of knowledge, skills and attitudes made necessary by the constantly changing

conditions in which people live (Crophly, 1974). The emphasis of adult education is renewal of knowledge in such a way as to be able to cope with any emerging problems.

There are so many sides to adult education which people are not aware of and this is why, they feel adult education is all about the education of the adult members of the society; had it been that people are aware of what adult education is all about, they would all have positive attitude to it and students would always want to opt for it as a course of study. Adult education in the widest sense is any form of learning adults engage in beyond traditional schooling. For example, going for computer training, attending sewing institute, for the sake of being a tailor or seamstress, attending various training programmes and conferences come under the umbrella of adult education in its widest sense. Lifelong learning [http://adulthoodeducation.about.com/od/whatisadult\\_education/p/whatisadulteducation.htm](http://adulthoodeducation.about.com/od/whatisadult_education/p/whatisadulteducation.htm) 6-1-11

Quare Adama, the Director of UNESCO institute of lifelong learning states that “only through Adult Education can we address the real problems of society like power sharing, wealth creation, gender and health issues”. (<http://adulthoodeducation.about.com/od/whatisadulteducation.htm> 6-1-11).

There are many reasons why adult education is important and these reason may help people change their attitudes to the study of adult education in our universities. Some of these reasons are listed below.

1. An individual may want a certificate to back him up in his place of work because they are involved in a profession which requires a professional certificate.
2. Some may engage in adult education classes for personal enrichment.
3. In a down economy, adult education plays a prominent role. Laid off workers may seek job and so may need a retraining programme which will provide them with skills that other employers may need in their respective industries. This type of education which comes up under adult education may make them marketable to other employers. (What is Adult Education in [http://www.wisageek.com/what\\_is\\_adult\\_education.htm](http://www.wisageek.com/what_is_adult_education.htm)).

It should be noted that adult education does not only apply to traditional settings, the concept is far more extensive than what people think and this is why there is a need for change of attitude towards adult education as a course of study.

The practice of adult education is also often referred to as training and development. A working adult may not have time to quit work and go back to school full time but they can have education through evening school system which may be daily or on weekend basis. This

type of education which is referred to as “second chance” education is adult education (Adult Education:[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adult\\_education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adult_education)).

Going through what adult education is and its importance to self and the nation, it is important for parents and guardians to encourage their children/wards not to shun adult education as a course of study in universities. With exposure to what adult education is one expects attitudes of students to change towards adult education as a course of study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It was discovered by the researcher that students shun the study of adult education, the researcher therefore intended to examine what attitude students put up when they are admitted to study adult education and what their attitudes are after being exposed to adult education as a course of study.

### **Research Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference between students’ attitude to adult education at entry and after exposure to adult education.

### **Methodology**

The study employed a descriptive survey style.

### **Population**

The population consisted of all students in the University of Ado Ekiti.

### **Sample**

The sample consisted of three hundred and sixty-six (366) students drawn from the Faculty of Education and those who had interest in the course as an elective course from the faculty of Arts at the University of Ado Ekiti.

### **Instrumentation**

A self designed questionnaire titled “Attitude of Students to Adult Education” (ASAE) was put to use to elicit responses from the subjects.

### **Validity**

The drafted questionnaire was subjected to thorough scrutiny and suggestions by the experts in the field of Test and Measurement in the University.

### **Reliability**

The reliability was established by administering the questionnaire items at two weeks interval on the students of adult and non adult education in the University of Ibadan with a reliability coefficient of 0.78 which was deemed good for the study.

## Data Analysis

The data collected was subjected to mean, standard deviation and t-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance.

## Result and Discussion

The result is as presented.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference between students' attitude to adult education at entry and after exposure to adult education as a course of study.

**Table 1: Students' Mean Attitude at Entry and after Entry**

Research Hypothesis	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std. Error Meant
Attitude at entry	366	2.4563	1.30626	.06828
Attitude after entry	366	3.9699	.17097	.00894

Table 1 shows that students' mean attitude at entry point is 2.4563 while students mean attitude after entry is 3.9699, indicating a positive attitude to adult education after exposure to the programme.

**Table 2: T-test calculations on students' attitude to adult education at entry point and after entry**

	Levene's test for equality variances		t	df	Sig. (2tailed)	Mean Difference	Std Error diff	95% confidence interval of the difference	
	f	Sig						Lower	Upper
Obs. Equal variance assumed	2063.220	.000	-21.981	730	.000	-1.51366	.06886	-1.64885	-1.37
Equal variance not assumed			-21.981	377.502	.000	-1.51366	.06886	-1.64906	-1037826

Table 2 shows  $t_{cal}$  to be 21.981 which is greater than  $t_{tab}$  of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between students' attitude to adult education at entry and after entry is rejected while one accepts the alternative hypothesis that there is significant difference between students' attitude to adult education at entry and after entry.

### **Discussion**

The study revealed that at the point of entry students have no regard for adult education and this is because they have no exposure to what adult education is and so they do not know its value to the young people. The young adults therefore opined that adult education is only education for the adults. However, students should have an open heart to the issue of adult education as universal access to education has been the target for Nigeria in the last four decades.

To Aderinoye (2005) while stressing the efforts of the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); he stated that the focus of MDGs is the eradication of poverty in the entire world. This therefore means the provision of educational opportunities to all as stated in the JOMTIEN Education for All Summit (2000). Education therefore is a major tool for achieving harmonious society development and transformation.

Encouraging students to study adult education is therefore an important task that must be done. The researcher in her rapport with some non-adult education students (but who had to take one of adult education courses as an elective) asked for their views about adult education before the commencement of the course. Their answer was that they did not know the importance of adult education, but that with the explanation of the researcher on adult education and its various branches, they took to liking the course. There was a change in their attitudes to adult education before the end of the semester. This change is buttressed by Oladiran (1988) that attitude change devotes a shift in an existing attitude of an individual either from being positive to negative or vice versa. In this sense the change is from negative to positive. And this encouraged their successful performance in the course during examination. The study therefore corroborated the fact that attitudes of people to things-places, issues and situations are based on the proper understanding of such issues, places and situations.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations are made;

There should be a proper orientation to students at the secondary level on their choice of university course of study. School guidance counselors should perform their duties effectively in putting students through their choice of courses. This will be based on their wide exposure to courses offered in the university.

Parents and guardians should have an open mind to all courses of study; bearing in mind that all courses/subjects are means to an end; they help build individuals in a bid to develop self, their communities and the nation at large.

Lectures of adult education should display a sense of commitment to the teaching of the course; making their teaching as practicable as possible so that students will be motivated to study Adult Education.

The university authorities should create awareness about the importance of education in this fast developing world and should make introductory course on adult education a course of study for all students since it is through adult education with its myriad programmes that solutions are sought to problems besetting nation.

Policy makers at the government level should emphasize the importance of adult education and fund it well in such a way that adult education becomes an interesting subject to everybody not only to those in the formal institutions but also those outside of it and especially workers who hold high positions of authority.

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