

The status of adult education programme in Yatta Sub-County of Machakos County Kenya

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Abstract:

This study sought to establish the status of adult education programme in Yatta Sub-County, Machakos County, Kenya. Despite the campaigns that have been carried out to eradicate illiteracy in addition to the government's support of the same through the Department of Adult Basic Education in the Ministry of Education in Kenya, the level of literacy in the country is still low standing at 61.5%. The purpose of this study was to establish the status of adult education programme in Yatta Sub-county. The study adopted descriptive research design. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 11 out of 22 Adult Education Programme (AEP) centres as the sample of the study. A proportional sample of 99 adult learners was selected from the selected AEP centres to act as the respondents of the study. Additionally, adult education teachers from the selected centres and the education officer were included in the sample as key informants. The study employed interviews for adult

IJARBAS

Accepted 21 December 2019
Published 26 December 2019
DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3593459

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**International Journal of Academic Research in Business, Arts and Science
(IJARBAS.COM)**

Email: editor@ijarbas.com editor.ijarbas@gmail.com Website: ijarbas.com

Published By



learners and questionnaires for the key informants. The data collected was cross-tabulated for qualitative and quantitative analysis based on themes generated from research objectives. The findings indicated that demographic characteristics such as gender, age, academic qualifications and educational level influenced the status of adult education in Yatta Sub-County. The major reasons for enrollment in AEP in Yatta Sub-County were to gain knowledge in literacy and numeracy skills followed by gaining skills to operate business among others. It was also noted that in Yatta Sub-County, there was an upward trend in KCPE and KCSE completion rates from 2012 to 2015.



Keywords: Status, adult, education, adult education programme,

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INTRODUCTION

Background Information

According to 1948 United Nations (UN) declaration of human rights, education was declared as a basic human right that nobody should be denied (UN, 2015). Having realized the importance of education to national development, every government throughout the world has made commitments to guarantee every citizen irrespective of their age access to education. This is because education helps in raising the level of enlightened population that helps in creating a successful nation. Aitchison and Alidou (2009), states that adult education is a tool that liberates people from poverty galloped situations.

The UNESCO's (2015) Goal number four (4) goes further to show that Education for All (EFA) is not limited to providing education to the young but includes the adults who might have lacked the opportunity to learn in their young age. According to UNESCO (2014), much progress has been made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All goals. However, these goals were not attained by the 2015 deadline which lead to introduction of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Kenya has consistently positioned adult education programme on its economic growth plan since independence as part of the nation's overall strategy of promoting enhanced and balanced development (UNESCO, 2007). The real turning point of the development and organization of adult education in Kenya took place in 1961 when UNESCO and Economic Commission for Africa held a symposium of African countries in Ethiopia Addis-Ababa. The conference was convened to discuss Africa's educational needs, interests and priorities. In 1964 the Labour and Social Services Ministry enlisted and forwarded to the parliament a draft law on the co-ordination of AE practices based on the endorsements projected by the Ominde commission on AE in 1966. The law was endorsed and the board in charge of adult education activities was fashioned to assume the following mandates: To guide the minister in matters relating to adult education, to identify and assess the need for development in adult education, and to give annual reports on the milestone made in the adult education programme (Ominde Commission Report, 1964).

At the time of its independence, Kenya was faced with the problem of illiteracy. National literacy campaign was launched in 1967 but did not realize much success (RoK, 2005b). The adult education unit continued to move from ministry to ministry and by 1976, it was taken to the Ministry of Housing and Social Services. The adult education teachers were mainly part-



time school teachers who were presumed to be knowledgeable on adult education matters. In 1976, it was further moved to the Ministry of Culture and Social Services. It was also upgraded to a full-fledged department and given its own director (RoK, 1988).

In 1979, another national literacy campaign was launched. This had initial success but enrolment of learners and teachers began to drop year after year (GoK, 2005a). In 1979 the enrolment was 415,074, while in 2001 the enrolment was even lower at 92,052 (GoK, 2005a). According to the board in charge of adult education, the main cause for the decline in adult learners' enrollment was owed to various aspects namely lack of adequate trained teachers, lack of teaching materials and low motivation of learners (UNESCO, 2002). Additionally, Chege and Sifuna (2006) noted that much effort was not put in place to eradicate illiteracy in Kenya. Chege and Sifuna (2006) further noted that several Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) were running parallel adult education schemes in diverse parts of Kenya. For example, the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) played a major part in training adult educators and preparing course information for adult learners (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). The Development and State of Art of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) was an AEP policy guideline which was aimed at streamlining the provision of adult education in Kenya. In 2012 the Government of Kenya formulated another policy on the Framework for Education which aimed at aligning education and training to the Constitution of Kenya (2010) and Kenya Vision 2030 and beyond stipulates the key objectives of adult and education learning (ROK, 2012).

Kenya development plans of 1979-1983 stated that literacy education of adults would be given top priority. By the end of the planned period, the majority should have learnt how to read and write. The plan outlined government's plan for literacy programme. The University of Nairobi (UoN) Institute of Adult Studies was to provide the necessary training and the Ministry of Education would make available for the programme, its school facilities and teachers (Republic of Kenya, 1979). Further, the National Development Plan of 2002-2008 noted that the target population for adult and continuing education consist of about 4.3 million adults, of which 1.6 million are men while 2.7 million are women (RoK, 2002). The National Conference Report on equity and growth (2006) recommended that the country's educational curricular should be reviewed to incorporate nationalist and cultural values.

According to the 2014 Machakos County Adult Education office quarterly reports, Machakos County has 7104 adult learners spread across 424 Centres who are served by 73 full -time teachers, 75 Part-time teachers and 33 Self-help teachers. Even though all the centres are fully



operational, according to the Machakos County Adult Education quarterly reports (2014), adult education faces a number of challenges in the County. Therefore, there is need for this study to find out the impediments of AEP in Yatta Sub- County in Machakos County, Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of Education for All (EFA) is to enhance all aspects of education that lead to literacy, numeracy and the basic essential life skills. However, most countries in general and Kenya in particular do accord adult education programme a peripheral treatment compared to other education programmes. Decades of continuous efforts and campaign to eliminate illiteracy in Kenya have not borne significant results as portrayed by high rates of adult illiteracy. This is in spite the fact that adult education is considered an important tool towards Kenya's achievement of Vision 2030 whose intention is to transform the country into a middle level economy. The concern in this study is the status of adult education programme in Kenya and specifically in Yatta Sub County in Machakos County, Kenya.

Objectives of the study

The study focused on following objectives:

- i. To establish the demographic characteristics of adult learners in Yatta Sub-county, Machakos County.
- ii. To establish the enrollment trend of adult learners in adult education programmes in Yatta Sub-county, Machakos County.
- iii. To establish the completion rates of adult learners in adult education programmes in Yatta Sub-county, Machakos County.
- iv. To identify the reasons for enrollment of adult learners in adult education programme in Yatta Sub-county, Machakos County.

Theoretical framework

This study is guided by Andragogy Theory (AT) by Knowles Malcolm in 1967 (Knowles, 1989). The andragogy theory is seen as a theory that emphasizes that an adult is self-directing and is expected to take responsibilities for their decisions especially on those decisions touching on their education matters. It is founded on the assumptions that old people need to recognize why it is important to study; adults prefer to learn experientially. Adults' learning is preferentially problem solving in approach. Adults learn best when the topic at hand is of immediate social and economic value (Knowles, 1984). Knowles observes that if adult

education does not meet the identified assumptions then adult learners will not be motivated to enroll, leave alone to learn.

These two theories focus on the learning process for adult learners. Transformative theory focuses on the learner while andragogy theory explains the learning process for the adult learners. The transformational learning theory relates to a point of reference which holds true that the way adult learners construe and reinterpret their sense experience is integral in creating meaning and hence learning. The andragogy theory on the other hand looks at the adult learner as the most important aspect in adult education. It argues that people who have gone to school have made a huge step towards seeing themselves as self-directing. Therefore, transformative learning theory will help in analyzing the adult learners based on their learning needs and environmental factors that affect their learning while andragogy theory will play a very important role in guiding the study in understanding the adult education process and the importance of adult education to self and the society.

The theory focuses on the adult learner as an independent minded person who can make the right judgement when it comes to the adult education programme. The theory helps in understanding the learning processes that are involved in AEP and thus assist in establishing the status of AEP in Yatta Sub-County.

Conceptual framework

The figure 1.1 below illustrates the status of adult education programme which is discussed in form of demographic factors of adult learners, the enrollment retention and completion rates of the adult learners and finally the reasons why adult learners enroll in AEP in Yatta Sub County Kenya. On the other hand, to enhance the effectiveness of AEP the stakeholders need to come up with appropriate strategies. Where the strategies are focused and realistic, the status of adult education programme is improved, eventually increasing the enrollment, retention and completion rates thus reducing the number of illiterate adults.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This study is a descriptive survey focusing on status of adult education programme in Yatta Sub-County. The study was conducted in Yatta Sub-County in Kenya. It was chosen as the location of the study due the fact that it is one of the Sub-Counties in Kenya that are geographically located in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALS). The study targeted adult education learners from Yatta Sub-County. In Yatta Sub-County, there are fourteen (14)



fulltime governments adult education centres, four (4) part-time government adult education centres and four (4) part-time self-sponsored adult education centres (UNICEF, 2013). Each adult education centre had approximately 30 adult learners making a total of 660 adult learners. Additionally, the study targeted the adult education teachers; each centre had at least one adult education teacher making a total of 22 adult education teachers. The study also targeted the education officer in charge of adult education in Yatta Sub-County as a key informant. The study used stratified random sampling to sample seven (7) out of fourteen (14) fulltime government adult education centres, two (2) out of four (4) part-time government adult education centres and two (2) out of four (4) part-time self-sponsored adult education centres in Yatta Sub County. Each adult education centre has one adult education teacher while Yatta Sub-County is headed by one adult education officer.

From each category, simple random sampling technique was used to select a proportional sample of 30% of the total number of adult learners from each of the selected adult education centres as respondents of the study. From the three categories of adult education centres, a sample size of ninety-nine (99) adult learners was proportionately sampled across the three categories of AEP centres as follows: sixty-three (63) from fulltime government sponsored AEP centres, eighteen (18) from part time government sponsored AEP centres and eighteen (18) from self-sponsored AEP centres. The sample size chosen adequately represented the adult education program in Yatta Sub-County since they bear similar characteristics. Care was taken to ensure both men and women were included in the sample.

The study collected primary through the use of the use of questionnaires for the key informants, interview schedules for the adult learners and observation checklist for guiding the observation of some features in adult education and confirming information on the status, teaching and learning environment and challenges facing AEP in Yatta Sub-County while the secondary data involves searching for information from the existing documents and records related to the study problem. Before proceeding to collect the data, an introductory letter was obtained from the university's graduate school. This is meant to facilitate the issuance of research authorization permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Afterwards, the researcher booked an appointment with the education officer in charge of adult education program in Yatta Sub-County, the teachers and adult learners

The data analysis of the study was based on the study objectives which focused on establishing the impediments of adult education program in Yatta Sub- County. This study gathered both qualitative and quantitative data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The presentation of the findings is on the basis of the study objectives which were to establish the demographic characteristics of the adult learners, the enrollment trend of adult learners in adult education programmes, the completion rates of adult learners in adult education programmes, the reasons for enrollment of adult learners in adult education programme in Yatta Sub-county, Machakos County.

The Demographic Characteristics of Respondents from the Selected AEP Centres

The demographic information described in this section is based on the gender, age and academic qualifications of the respondents.

Distribution of adult learners and teachers by gender

The analysis of adult learners and teachers by gender is tabulated on the basis of the three categories of AEP centres in Yatta Sub-County: fulltime government sponsored AEC; part time government sponsored AEC and self-sponsored AEC.

Table 4.1: Distribution of adult learners and teachers by gender

Types of AEP	Adult Learners					Teachers				
	M		F		Total Frequency	M		F		Total F
	F	%	F	%		F	%	F	%	
Full-time Government AEC	22	35	41	65	63	3	42.9	4	57.1	7
Part-time Government AEC	6	38.9	12	61.1	18	1	50	1	50	2
Self-sponsored AEC	4	22.2	14	77.8	18	0	0	2	100	2
Total	32	32.3	67	67.7	99	4	36.4	7	63.6	11

Source: Field work (2017)

As shown in Table 4.1, out of 11 teachers who participated in the study, 7 (63.6%) were female while 4 (36.4%) were male. Among the 99 adult learners, 67 (67.7%) were female while 32 (32.3%) were male. This shows that the proportion of female teachers and learners as compared to the male teachers and learners respectively was higher. This result concurred with the findings of a research conducted by Ragira (2012) who also established that there was a tendency in gender disparity in adult education in favor of female gender. Majority of adult learners were female and were more positive on adult education programme compared to their male counterpart. This disparity was supported by one male adult learner who claimed that the male learners were the household breadwinners and therefore had limited time to enroll in adult education programme.

This was supported by a male adult learner who had this to say:

“Women are strong willed when it comes to uptake of new ideas. Men are always skeptical and look for quick returns on their investment. Women are also more patient compared to men.” (Adult Learner 57)

This explains the huge gender disparity that exists between men and women in adult education programme.

Age of the adult learners and teachers in AEP centres

Table 4.2 shows that majority of adult learners who joined AEP in Yatta Sub county were above 50 years of age (41.4%), while the majority of the adult teachers were in the age range of between 41-50 years (54.5%) as displayed by the table. Further analysis revealed that most of adult learners were at 41 years and above at 77.8%

Table 4.2: Classification of adult learners and teachers by age

Age	Adult learners		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
31-40 years.	22	22.2	4	36.4
41-50 years.	36	36.4	6	54.5
Above 50 years.	41	41.4	1	9.1
Total	99	100	11	100

Source: Field work (2017)

The findings as presented in Table 4.2 illustrates that majority of the teachers (54.5%) were aged between 41 and 50 years while the majority of the adult learners (41.4%) were above 50 years of age. This shows that the adult teachers were relatively younger than the adult learners. This difference in age bracket between the teachers and adult learners may be an impediment that discouraged some elderly potential adult learners from enrolling or continuing with their participation in adult education programme in Yatta Sub-County. This was echoed by one of the male adult learners who remarked that:

"I feel uncomfortable being taught by someone the age of my youngest daughter. Sometimes I feel nervous when she corrects or ask me a question." (Adult Learner 22)

This observation concurs with the findings by Ndiku, Muthamia, Ipara & Obaki (2009) who noted that some adult learners drop out of the adult learning programmes after enrolling in adult education programme because of being taught by teachers younger than them. Obura and Rodgers (1993) similarly observed that the age difference between the adult learners and their educators negatively affected enrollment, retention and the completion rate of learners in adult education programme (as cited in ENESCO, 2002). This is because older learners, following the traditional belief in the African context do believe that they should not be taught by younger teachers. Nafukho, Amutabi & Otunga (2005) make this point clear that in the African traditions, younger people cannot give instructions to people who are of senior age bracket.

The age factor resonates with the Kamba traditions where elderly people are accorded respect by the junior members of the community. The teachers in this case may not have the audacity to offer instructions to learners older than them.

The Education level of adult learners in Adult Education Programme

The adult learners in AEP centres in Yatta Sub-county were categorized into three levels: level one were the beginners in AEP who have never been to school, the basic level comprised of the learners who had enrolled in a formal educational system but dropped before gaining any meaningful literacy and numeracy skills and the post literacy which comprised of learners who had been enrolled in a formal educational system but dropped before sitting either KCPE or KCSE examinations. Table 4.3 displays the educational levels of adult learners in AEP centres in Yatta Sub County. It shows that the majority of adult learners in Yatta Sub-County who were sampled were at the basic level of education (53.5%).

Table 4.3: Adult learner's education level in AEP centres

Level of AEP	Frequency	Percentage
Level one (Beginners)	19	19.2
Level Two (Basic level)	53	53.5
Level Three (Post literacy)	27	27.3
Total	99	100

Source: Field work (2017)

Out of the 99 adult learners who took part in the study, 53 (53.5%) were at basic level, 27(27.3%) were at post literacy level while 19 (19.2%) were at the beginners' level. Further analyses revealed that majority of the adult learners were at either basic level or post literacy (80.8%). One of the basic level adult learners had this to say:

"I dropped from school in 1984 when I was in class three when there was a severe drought and famine in our region. My aged parents could not afford to cater for my food and school fees for me and my eight siblings in school during that time." (Adult Learner 13)

Qualifications of adult teachers in AEP Centres

The majority of the adult teachers sampled (81.8%) had attained secondary school level of education while only 18.2% had acquired a diploma in Adult Education. This shows that the majority of the teachers in the adult education centres of Yatta Sub County were not professionally qualified. This finding is in agreement with the survey report from the Kenyan government in year 2012 which showed that adult education teachers then were either retired teachers or were secondary school leavers who hardly got any form of professional qualifications or training in adult education programme. The survey report also revealed that the teachers of adult learners were not only inadequately remunerated but were largely volunteers (Republic of Kenya, 2012). According to Imhabekhei (2009), a person who is not professionally trained as an adult educator may not have the capacity to function as a competent teacher of the adult learners.

The Enrolment Trend of Adult Learners in AEP from 2012-2015

The study sought to find out the enrollment trend of adult learners in adult education centres in Yatta Sub-county. Table 4.4 presents the results of this information as reported by the adult education teachers. The findings indicate that in all adult education centres in Yatta Sub-County, the enrollment rate increased with 58.8% from one hundred and twenty-one (121) in

2012 to one hundred and ninety-two (192) in 2015. This shows that adult learners in Yatta Sub County have a positive uptake of adult education programme and they were willing to enroll to acquire basic numeracy and literacy skills.

Table 4.4: Adult learner's enrollment trend from 2012 to 2015

Category	2012		2013		2014		2015		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Fulltime government sponsored AEP centres	85	20.2	100	23.9	115	27.4	120	28.6	420
Part-time government sponsored AEP centres	20	16.7	30	25	33	27.5	37	30.8	120
Self-sponsored AEP centres	16	13.3	23	19.2	36	30	35	29.2	120
Total	121		153		184		192		660

Source: Field work (2017)

Table 4.4 shows that the enrollment rate of adult learners in full time government sponsored AEP centres had increased by 8.6% from 2012 to 2015 while that of part time government sponsored AEP centres was 14.1% and that of self-sponsored AEP centres was 15.9%. This shows that the enrollment of adult learners increased every year and that more adult learners saw the need to enroll in AEP. There were 30.8% male learners compared to 69.2% female learners. In corroboration with these findings, the education officer in charge of adult education programme in Yatta Sub-county stated that the number of adult learners willing to join AEP had gone up due to the sensitization campaigns we are undertaking in churches and community barazas. This was supported by one of the adult teacher who indicated that due to

the increased campaigns on the importance of literacy and numeracy skills by the county government, they had recorded an increase in the enrollment of both men and women. This contradicts the finding by Kamau (2011) who found that approximately 5% of eligible adults have never enrolled in a literacy or upgrading program, of which very few complete the programme.

Adult Learners' Completion Rates From 2012 To 2015

The analysis of the data generated from questionnaires filled by the adult education officer and teachers in Yatta Sub County revealed that from 2012 to 2015, a total of 25 and 33 adult learners had completed KCPE and KCSE examinations respectively.

KCPE completion rates

Table 4.6 shows the number of adult learners who sat for KCPE from 2012 to 2015. The findings revealed that twenty-five (25) adult learners sat for KCPE during that period. Further, the findings revealed that majority of the adult learners who sat for KCPE between 2012 and 2015 were male (56%) compared to 44% for female learners. The result of the analysis showed that the year 2015 had a large number of adult learners who sat for KCPE followed by the year 2014 and then the year 2012. The year 2013 had the least number of adult learners who sat for KCPE in Yatta sub-county as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Number of adult learners who sat for KCPE from year 2012 to 2015

Year	Male adult learners	Female adult learners	Total
2012	5	0	5
2013	2	1	3
2014	2	4	6
2015	5	6	11
Total	14 (56%)	11(44%)	25 (100%)

Source: Field work (2017)

Table 4.6 shows that all the 5 (100%) adult learners who sat for KCPE in the year 2012 were male learners. In the year 2013, out of the total adult learners who sat for KCPE examinations, 2 (66.7%) were male learners and 1 (33.3%) was a female adult learner. In 2014, 33.3% were male while 66.7% were female adult learners. The finding shows that there was a significant increase in the number of adult candidates who sat for KCPE in the year 2015 at 44% (11)

compared to all the other years. Further, the findings show a slight gender disparity between the candidates who sat for KCPE in the year 2015 (5 males and 6 females).

The findings revealed that there was a positive increase in terms of completion rates in the number of KCPE candidates over the years. The education officer had this to say:

"I have seen a positive trajectory in the number of candidates sitting KCPE examinations. In fact, the number has doubled within a span of four years"

KCSE completion rates from the year 2012 to 2015

Table 4.7 shows that the majority of adult learners who sat for KCSE from the year 2012 to 2015 were male at 54.5% compared to female at 45.5%.

Table 4.7: Number of adult learners who sat for KCSE from the year 2012 to 2015

Year	Male adult learners	Female adult learners	Total
2012	0	1	1
2013	3	1	4
2014	6	3	9
2015	9	10	19
Total	18 (54.6%)	15 (45.4%)	33 (100%)

Source: Field work (2017)

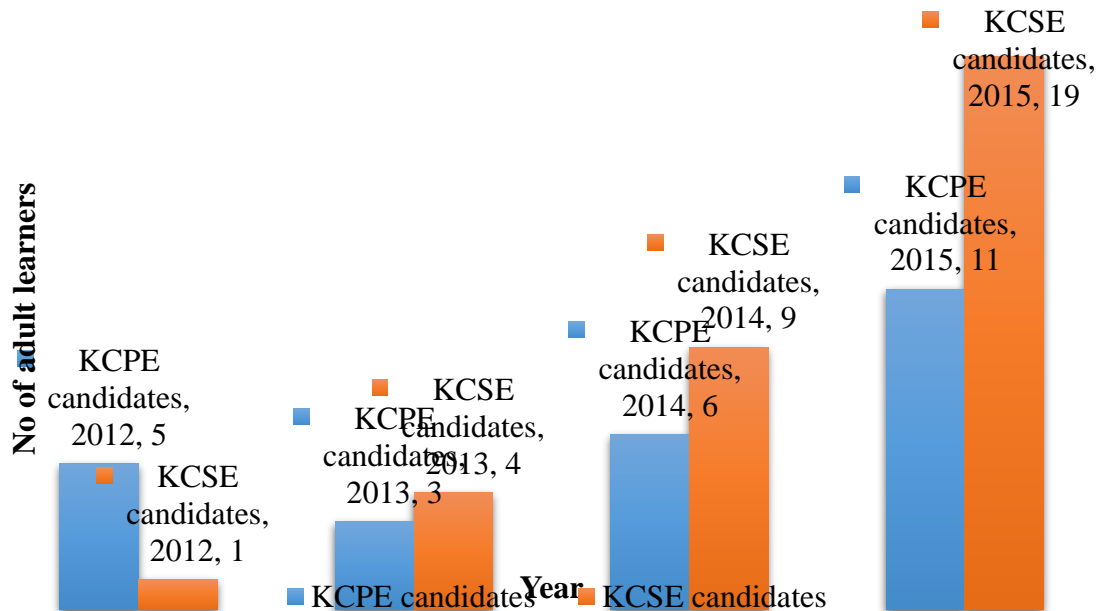
The findings in table 4.7 show that in the year 2012, only 1 female adult learner sat for KCSE. In 2013, 3 male learners and 1 female learner sat the KCSE examination while in 2014, 6 male learners and 3 female learners sat the examination. The findings revealed that the year 2015 had the largest number of learners (19) who sat for KCSE; among them 9 male adult learners and 10 female adult learners. The findings further show that there was a general improvement in the number of candidates sitting for KCSE from the year 2012 to 2015 as completion rates increased from one (1) in 2012 to nineteen (19) in 2015. This shows that there is high completion rate of adult learners in Yatta Sub-county. This can be attributed to the sensitization campaigns spearheaded by the County government to explain the importance of adult education programme.

Comparative analysis of KCPE and KCSE adult learner's completion rates

Figure 4.2 shows that there were more adult learners sitting for KCSE examination (33) compared to KCPE (25) from the year 2012 to 2015. Figure 4.2 also shows that there was an upward trend in completion rates for both KCPE and KCSE candidates. This was reflected by a

relatively higher number of adult learners who sat for KCPE (11) and KCSE examinations (19) in the year 2015.

Figure 4.2: Candidates who sat for KCPE and KCSE from the year 2012-2015



Source: Field work (2017)

The results presented in Figure 4.2 illustrate the comparison in KCPE and KCSE completion rates for the past four years from the year 2012 to the year 2015. The year 2015 registered the highest number of candidates. The Education Officer had this to say:

“The academic advisory campaigns on opportunities and benefits of adult education programme have led to the increase in the numbers of adult learners sitting for the final examinations”.

This is true as depicted by the increase in completion rates of adult education learners in both secondary and primary level of studies. However, these learners were fewer when compared to the number of learners who had actually enrolled for the course. This clearly shows that there was a lower completion rate of the adult learners in adult education programme between the years and 2015. As such, the study sought to find out factors which negatively affect adult learners in their learning process. In response to this, the researcher asked the adult learners to give reasons which made some learners to drop out from the adult education programme.

The following were the reasons given: family commitments, health problems, high rate of absenteeism, migration from one place to another, family breakdown, discouragement from family members/ spouses, lack of basic reading and writing materials and lack of money to support children who are still in school. Other reasons given were lack of financial benefits associated with adult education programme and huge engagements in farming activities. To verify these findings, one adult learner reported that:

“Some adult learners drop out when their children enroll in primary, secondary or tertiary levels of education. The fee burden makes them to drop out in order to look for money to cater for fee payment for their children.” (Adult Learner 43)

As stated by the adult learner, the uptake of adult education is a huge sacrifice given the many obstacles and other responsibilities that adult learners go through in order to enroll, attend and complete the programme. This was also supported by Nzeneri (2010), who indicated that many adult learners have wide day time commitments ranging from family commitments, full-time job or other responsibilities making it difficult to attend classes for the period of regular school hours. This makes it challenging for learners to succeed at school, or even hesitant to return to school at all.

Reasons for Enrolment of Adult Learners in AEP

During the interviews, the adult learners were asked to give their reasons for enrolling in adult education programme. Table 4.5 shows some of the reasons given by adult learners for enrolling in AEP. Majority of the adult learners reported that the main reason for enrolling in AEP was to gain knowledge in literacy and numeracy skills at 91.91% followed by that of gaining skills to operate a business (87.88%) while the least mentioned reason is to be able to follow their children’s academic progress particularly in assisting them do their homework at 24.24%. This is because majority of adult learners (77.8%) were above the age of bearing children (41 years and above) as shown in table 4.2.

Table 4.5 Reasons for adult learner’s enrolment in AEP

Reasons	M		F		TF	%
	F	%	F	%		
Gaining knowledge in literacy and numeracy skills	30	93.75	61	91.04	91	91.91
Gaining skills to operate businesses	28	87.50	59	88.06	87	87.88

Reading the bible and hymn books	24	75.00	46	68.66	70	70.71
Securing a job opportunity	19	59.38	34	50.75	53	53.54
Understand children's academic progress	12	37.5.	20	29.85	32	32.32
Assisting children to write homework	9	28.13	15	22.39	24	24.24

Source: Field work (2017)

The findings as shown in Table 4.5 illustrate that men and women had different reasons for enrolling in AEP. It is clear that majority of men and women at 91.91% reported that gaining knowledge and numeracy skills was an important reason for joining AEP followed by gaining skills to operate businesses at 87.88%. This was supported by one adult learner in an interview who had this to say:

"I didn't get an opportunity to study when I was young. I enrolled in adult education to learn how to read and write. My parents didn't know the value of education and therefore they did not bother to enroll me in school." (Adult Learner 63)

The findings show that men and women joined AEP because of various reasons as articulated in the Table 4.5. This highlights the importance of adult education in the lives of adult learners thus explaining the importance of AEP in Yatta Sub-County. These sentiments support the findings by Kamau (2011) who reported that some adult learners enrolled in adult education to be able to read the bible, read and pay water and electricity bills and to be empowered to overcome challenges in their organizations. Others stated that they enrolled in the AEP to gain basic numerical skills, gain knowledge and techniques that can be utilized in modern farming, for prestige, to assist their children do homework and to be able to transact family businesses in particular, signing business documents such as cheques and payment vouchers.

CONCLUSION

In as far as status of adult education is concerned, the study found that there are three categories of AEP centres in Yatta Sub County: full time government sponsored AEP, part time government sponsored AEP and part time self- sponsored AEP centres. The study found that the proportion of female adult learners was higher compared to that of male adult learners in Yatta Sub County. The study also established that there was an upward trend in KCPE and KCSE examination completion trends in Yatta Sub-County from the year 2012 to the year 2015. Adult learners in Yatta Sub-County had various reasons for enrolling in adult education programme which included gaining basic knowledge, being able to read the bible and gaining skills to run a business among others.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My tremendous gratitude goes to many without whose input the study would not have been possible. Special appreciation to my supervisors, Dr. Jackton Ogeno and Dr. Peter Gathara who tirelessly dedicated their time offering incredible academic, moral and emotional support throughout the study period. Their appraisal, criticisms and expertise are appreciated. I would similarly wish to appreciate the lecturers in the Department of Educational Foundations at Kenyatta University for their academic support and encouragement. My appreciation also goes to all the adult learners, teachers and adult education officer in charge of adult education in Yatter Sub-County for providing invaluable data on the basis of which the findings of the study were drawn. Special gratitude goes to my research assistants Sheddy Mutisya, Daniel King'oo and Paul Nyamai for their commitment during the field work. Finally, and most importantly is the appreciation to the Most High God Almighty for His abundant grace, favor and steadfast safeguard throughout the study period.

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Cite this article:

Author(s), Michael M. Maina¹, Dr Jackton Ogeno² & Dr Peter Mugo Gathara³
(2019). "The status of adult education programme in Yatta Sub-County of Machakos County Kenya", Name of the Journal: International Journal of Academic Research in Business, Arts and Science, (IJARBAS.COM), P, 15- 35. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3593459, Issue: 4, Vol.: 1, Article: 2, Month: December, Year: 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.ijarbas.com/all-issues/current-articles/>

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