

Roles Of Community Development Programmes In The Achievement Of Sustainable Development Goal One In Rivers State

¹E. F. Mbadiwe-Woko., ²A. U. Nnodim & ³H. L. Deekor (PhD)

^{1 & 3} Department of Adult Education & Community Development, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt

²Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt

Corresponding Author: Mbadiwe-Woko, E. F., *Department of Adult Education & Community Development, Rivers State University, Port-Harcourt.*

Citation: Mbadiwe-Woko, E. F., Nnodim, A. U. & Deekor, H. L. (2021). Roles Of Community Development Programmes In The Achievement Of Sustainable Development Goal One In Rivers State. *International Journal of Modern Innovation & Knowledge*, 2(2); 56 – 71.

Abstract

This study examined the roles of community development programmes in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal One in Rivers State. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The descriptive survey design was adopted in the study with a population size of 7463 consisting of 772 leaders and 6691 members of various community-based organisations in 23 local government areas of Rivers State. A sample size of 645 respondents consisting of 228 leaders and 417 members of Community Based Organizations was drawn using the multi-stage sampling technique. Data for the study were collected with the use of a structured questionnaire titled “Roles of Community Development Programmes in the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals One Questionnaire”. The instrument was validated by two experts in Community Development. The internal consistency of the instrument was tested using Cronbach Alpha statistics. The Mean statistics and standard deviation were used in analysing the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using the z-test statistics at 0.05 level of Significance. The findings of the study revealed among others that educational programmes increase people’s efficiency in doing business, discourage laziness, make people identify their inherent potentials, inculcate the habit of continuous learning, help people access job openings and establish their own businesses. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that Local Government authorities have the constitutional responsibility of establishing and maintaining adult literacy centres and other educational programmes. If they organize these programmes, they will build the capacities of beneficiaries and make them either self-employed or gained paid employment. This has the potential of reducing poverty.

Keywords: Community Development, Community Based Organizations, Millennium Development Goals, Sustainable Development Goal

INTRODUCTION

In late June 2018, the International Press cited World Poverty Clock data in several articles discussing the notion that Nigeria now has more people living in extreme poverty than any other country in the world (World Poverty Clock, 2018). The report indicated that the outlook of poverty reduction in Nigeria is very weak. The sustainable development Goals

(SDGs) is an agenda or plan that recognizes that, eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its 169 targets demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new universal agenda. They seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and complete what they did not achieve. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental. It is important to note that the MDGs provided an important framework for development with significant progress made in a number of areas.

However, the progress has been uneven, particularly in Africa. In its scope, the SDGs go far beyond the Millennium Development Goals. Alongside continuing development priorities such as poverty eradication, health, education, food security and nutrition, it sets out a wide range of economic, social and environmental objectives. It also promises more peaceful and inclusive societies with a crucially, defined means of implementation. The Millennium Development Goals were a set of measurable goals with associated targets that were adopted at the United Nations summit in 2000. Part of the fundamental reasons for setting up the above goals, was poverty reduction by the year 2015, which assumed the foremost position in the global development agenda (Barnes, 2010). The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) state the paramount tasks of development, such as improving the welfare of all people on earth, to help them realize their potentials, enable them reduce insecurity and to ensure that the benefits secured in the current generation are sustained and augmented in the next generation (World Bank, 2003). The MDGs as conceptualized by the United Nations (2000:19) were aimed at:

1. Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieving universal primary education
3. promoting gender equality and empower women
4. Reducing child mortality
5. Improving maternal health
6. Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other disease
7. Ensuring environmental sustainability
8. Developing global partnership for development.

The end of the 2015 deadline of the MDGs gave birth to the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which replaced the MDGs, and which will shape the international and national development priorities for all countries until at least 2030 (UN,

2015). On the basis of the MDGs, the SDGs will cover all contents within the framework of Post-2015 development agenda and take sustainable development as the core. Among the SDGs, the first core goal is still to end poverty in all its forms everywhere. This goal According to Kent (2000) includes five associated objectives;

1. Eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.
2. Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all
3. Achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.
4. Ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.
5. Build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters (UN, 2014). In signing Agenda 2030, governments around the world committed to ending poverty in all its manifestations, including its most extreme forms, over the next 15 years, resolved that all people, everywhere, should enjoy a basic standard of living. This includes social protection benefits for the poor and most vulnerable and ensuring that people harmed by conflict and natural hazards receive adequate support, including access to basic services. Poverty reduction in the context of the SDGs refers to generalized poverty reduction. In other words, poverty includes not only income poverty, but also multidimensional poverty covering education, public health, drinking water and sanitation facilities (Omoh, 2017).

Poverty is a condition that has no barrier. It can affect the psychological and physical wellbeing of an individual. The New World Encyclopaedia (2008) conceptualises poverty as a condition in which a person or community is deprived of, or lacks the essentials for a minimum standard of well-being and life. These essentials may be material resources such as food, safe drinking water, and shelter, or they may be social resources such as access to information, education, health care, social status, political power, or the opportunity to develop meaningful connections with other people in society.

Dike (2002) opines that poverty can limit an individual's physical and mental potential, thereby affecting his functionality in the community. This implies that poverty is a condition

that deprives humans of the basic needs of life. Sachs (2005) identified three levels of poverty as: relative, moderate, and absolute or extreme. He asserts that those in extreme poverty are 'chronically hungry, unable to access health care, lack the amenities of safe drinking water and sanitation, cannot afford education for some or all of their children, and perhaps lack rudimentary shelter. The moderately poor may lack basic amenities such as safe drinking water and ventilated latrines or clothing, while those in relative poverty have limited access to cultural activities, recreation, quality health care and education and whose household income level is below a proportion of the average national income.

Sen (2002) broadens our understanding of poverty in terms of social dynamics and as a social justice issue. Here poverty is seen in terms of absence of freedom or capability to participate in economic life. This includes deprivation in the range of things people can do, the knowledge and skills needed to act independently for productivity or personal welfare consumption, and poor education and knowledge about how to challenge inequitable systems. He further suggests that people can move in and out of poverty depending on their circumstances. Reece (2007) posits that poverty is closely related to development and change. For example, technological advances can create illiteracies among populations that were otherwise literate; similarly environmental disasters and national conflicts can reduce otherwise self-sufficient communities to a state of dependence and helplessness. These latter observations show that poverty can also be 'consequential' (the result of deliberate human and political interventions on the natural or social environment, such as war, conflict and large scale industrial accidents).

From the above interpretations, the causes of poverty can be material, economic, political and social. They include vulnerability such as, disability or immigration status; shocks, such as family crises, natural disaster, military or civil conflict; limited services such as health and education; and empowerment deprivation - for instance not having a political say or a sense of dignity. In a related view, Oyebamiji and Adekola (2008), suggest that poverty is a multi-dimensional and multi-faceted phenomenon which may be difficult to measure by just one index. Therefore, Social Scientists and Statisticians have agreed to measure poverty by combined indices or composite indicators. Such indices include level of per capital income, socio-economic development, illiteracy, unemployment, availability of physical infrastructure and standard of living among others.

This view suggests that the generally accepted indicators for measuring poverty borders around; healthy living, income generation and productivity, improved agricultural productivity, nutrition and improved standard of living. Eradicating poverty in all its forms

remains one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. While the number of people living in extreme poverty dropped by more than half between 1990 and 2015 - from 1.9 billion to 836 million - too many are still struggling for the most basic human needs. Globally, more than 800 million people are still living on less than US\$1.25 a day, many lacking access to adequate food, clean drinking water and sanitation (UNDP, 2018). It is rather unfortunate to note that even though Nigeria enjoys a prominent position in Africa, the country remains one of the poorest of the world (Omoh, 2017). This is indeed a saddening reality, that a country so blessed with natural resources, cannot boast of food; a basic need, on the table of majority of its citizens. The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS, 2015) report shows that 70 per cent of the Nigerian population living in rural areas are poor. In other words, 7 out of every 10 Nigerian live below the poverty line of 2.5US dollars per day. One cannot help but conclude that the idea of poverty in Nigeria is indeed a paradox.

According to Akpama (2011), poverty in Nigeria can be attributed to a number of factors, some of which are mismanagement of human and material resources, indiscipline, the lack of political will by the government of the country, beginning from the post-independence and present-day Nigeria. Rather than tackle development and poverty alleviation in the society, our policy makers and politicians alike have appeared to have converted leadership positions and public offices into avenues of embezzlement, corruption, money laundering abroad, to the neglect of the suffering populace. As a result of these underdevelopment and poverty in the land, the country has woken up to witness such anti-social activities and vices like armed robbery, kidnapping, cultism, drug trafficking, prostitution, child labour and trafficking, ritual killings, political thuggery and assassinations and illegal migration for greener pastures among others.

This phenomenon has left the country highly underdeveloped socially, economically and technologically. This has created a situation of mass graduate unemployment and other social vices articulated from the foregoing. Highly skilled trained manpower and infrastructure facilities are either under-utilised or non-existent. The various government programmes aimed at eradicating or alleviating poverty have not stood the test of time, as they have not actually impacted positively on the people (Uzor, 2012). When General Abacha took power from Shonekan led interim government in 1993, he introduced other poverty alleviating measures like Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP). However, upon coming to power in the new democratic order in 1999, the Obasanjo administration in an effort to alleviate the suffering and poverty in the land, introduced the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP).

However well intentioned, these programmes were hijacked by the politicians as the philosophy behind the setting up of these programmes were politicised, thereby undermining the objective of setting up these programmes. For instance, beneficiaries of these programmes are usually party faithful, loyalists and family members instead of genuine needy members of the society. The distribution of aids by these agencies was also characterized by victimization, political instability, corruption, lack of acceptability, lack of commitment and the political-will. No doubt, this situation and other maladies led the United Nations Assembly to come up with eight point development agenda, tagged – Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Development experts have often seen community development as a major tool for combating poverty. According to Yusuf (2011), community development involves a set of values and practices which play a special role in overcoming poverty and disadvantage, knitting society together at the grassroots and deepening democracy. This implies that community development seeks to empower individuals and groups of people by providing these groups with skills they need to effect change in their own community. Adekola and Oyebamiji (2008) assert that through community development, citizens acquire necessary skills that empower them to participate productively in the national economy thereby helping to reduce poverty levels. According to Brennan (2012), what separates community development from more narrowly focused development initiatives are the intentions to create something more substantive that transcends individual social fields. This argument recognizes that community development will necessitate action across geographic levels.

Carl (2016), conceptualises community development to be a continuous process, through which community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to their common problems. It involves small initiatives within a small group to large initiatives that involve the broader community producing self-reliant and self-sustaining communities that mobilize resources for the benefit of their members. According to Taylor (2013), community development is a method by which people in villages are involved in helping to improve their own economic and social conditions and thereby became effective working groups in the programme of their national development. In line with this view, major stakeholders have often come up with community development programmes aimed at reducing poverty in Nigeria. Community development programmes on the other hand are planned or deliberate programmes of activities which can provide support base to complement efforts of individuals to enhance their well-being and solve their peculiar problems. Such planned programs would be of different kinds according to the needs and

problems which they are meant to address, as well as the peculiar nature of the people that they are intended for (Amirize, 2004).

Rivers State as part of the Nigerian federation has enjoyed a handful of such programmes, such as; Rural electrification programme, microcredit schemes, community health care, RSSDA vocational training programme, agricultural development programme, the Rivers State Community Development Programmes, European Union's Micro Project Programmes (MPP9), the Niger Delta Support Programme, and Empowerment Support Initiative (ESI) among others. According to Ogwo (2017:22), the major focuses of these programmes were:

1. To help community people acquire vocational skill for income generation
2. Introduce agricultural extension programmes for increased food production
3. Improve socio economic life by promoting mass literacy
4. Promote healthy living through community health extension programmes etc.

All of these efforts suggest that the contributions of community development as a major strategy in achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal One (Poverty Reduction) cannot be over emphasized. No wonder, most political advocacies towards reduction of poverty in recent times have been characterized by emphasis on community development projects and programmes. Given this paradigm, community development is now considered a participatory training programme for the generality of the citizens, most especially the rural people. It therefore, becomes pertinent to state categorically that the integration of community development programmes into the national development agenda is inevitable. Furthermore, such integration should be designed to achieve a stable, responsible and self-reliant citizenry capable of mobilizing national resources for the attainment of the socio-economic development goals of the country at community levels. The roles of community development programmes in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) One in the reduction of poverty in Rivers State remains the focus of this study.

Statement of the Problem

Rivers state is referred to as the "treasure base of the nation" because of the abundance of natural resources in this state, especially crude oil which is the mainstay of Nigeria's economy. One would expect that with how blessed the state is, the level of socio-economic development will be high and there would be improved standard of living among people both in urban and rural areas in the State. Unfortunately, the state like most other states in Nigeria are still grappling with development issues like poverty, high unemployment rate and so on. The level of poverty in Rivers State and Nigeria at large is clearly evident in the fact that

citizens still face the problems of unemployment, high cost of agricultural products, poor health, and non-availability of physical infrastructure especially in rural communities (Adeyemi, 2011). Most people are barely able to afford one or two square meals a day. An impoverished citizenry translates to an impoverished economy, which is the foundation for poverty in Rivers State and Nigeria at large.

It is for this reason that the United Nations had poverty reduction as the first among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved by member countries including Nigeria. Interestingly, nations all over the world have made frantic efforts and headways in achieving these goals including the reduction of poverty. In Nigeria, both the Federal and State governments as well as other development stakeholders have at different times launched poverty reduction programmes such as; agricultural development programmes, educational programmes, vocational training programmes among others. The question now is, has the provision/introduction of these development programmes result to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal One (Poverty reduction) in Rivers State? Answer to this makes a study of this nature necessary.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the roles of community development programmes on the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal One (reduction of poverty) in Rivers State. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine the roles of educational programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State.
2. Find out the roles of agricultural development programmes in poverty reduction in River State.

Research Questions

1. What are the roles of educational programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State?
2. What are the roles of agricultural development programmes in poverty reduction in River State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean response of leaders and members of community based organizations on the roles of educational programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State.

H02: There is no significant difference in the mean response of leaders and members of community based organizations on the roles of Agricultural development programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the analytical descriptive survey design with a target population of 772 leaders and 6691 members (total of 7463) of various community-based organisations in all twenty-three local government areas in the three senatorial districts of Rivers State. The sample size of this study was 645 respondents consisting of 228 leaders and 417 members of various community-based organisations in the study area. The multi stage sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample for this study. Firstly, the cluster sampling technique was used to cluster the state into three senatorial districts which are Rivers East, Rivers South East and Rivers West. Secondly, the simple random sampling technique was used in selecting four local government areas from each senatorial district in Rivers State making a total of twelve local government areas. These include: Ikwerre, Okrika, Obio-Akpor and Ogu-Bolo in Rivers East, Gokana, Khana, Andoni and Opobo-Nkoro Rivers South East and Ogba-Egbema-Ndoni, Ahoada East, Asari-toru and Akuku-Toru Local Government Areas in Rivers West. Thirdly, the simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting five community-based organizations in each of the twelve local government areas selected for the study. Fourthly, the proportionate sampling technique was adopted in selecting 20% of the population of members of the various community-based organisations selected for the study making a total of 417 while the entire 228 leaders of the selected CBOs of each local government area were taken as census.

The instrument for data collection in this study was a self-designed questionnaire titled “Roles of Community Development Programmes in Achievement of Sustainable Development Goal One Questionnaire” (RCDPASDGOQ). The validity of the instrument was determined by two specialists in Community Development in Rivers State University. The internal consistency of the instrument was tested using Cronbach Alpha statistics. Reliability coefficients of 0.72 and 0.83 were obtained from the various research questions in the instrument. The researchers administered and retrieved completed copies of the instrument to the respondents themselves. Out of the 645 copies of the instrument administered, 630 (223 for leaders and 407 for members) copies were successfully retrieved and valid. This represented 98% of the total copies administered. The data collected were analyzed with mean statistics and standard deviation. Any mean score above 2.50 was tagged “Agree” while mean scores below 2.50 were tagged “disagree”. The hypotheses were also

tested using z-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypotheses were rejected and the alternative hypotheses accepted if the computed value is greater than the critical table value at the significance level of 0.05. While the null hypotheses were accepted and the alternative hypotheses rejected if the computed value is less than the critical table value.

RESULTS

The results from the study were presented as follows.

Research Question 1: What are the roles of educational programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean Response on the Roles of Educational Programmes Impact on Poverty Reduction in Rivers State.

S/N	Items	Leaders N = 223			Members N = 407		
		X	SD	Decision	X	SD	Decision
1.	Functional literacy programmes increase the efficiency of individuals in carrying out their daily business transactions.	3.27	0.74	Agree	3.05	0.63	Agree
2.	Basic Literacy education programmes liberates people from the shackle of laziness and make them more productive	3.04	0.62	Agree	2.79	0.53	Agree
3.	Through community education programmes, community people are able to identify their inherent skills from which they can earn a living.	2.83	0.54	Agree	3.23	0.78	Agree
4.	Lifelong education inculcates the habit of continuous learning in individuals which is needed to survive in today's business world.	2.53	0.50	Agree	3.29	0.75	Agree
5.	Digital education programmes create new job opportunities for people and also help them establish personal businesses.	3.11	0.65	Agree	2.57	0.52	Agree
6.	Through workers education individuals are able to access information on job openings and opportunities to improve their businesses.	2.59	0.50	Agree	3.26	0.74	Agree
Grand Mean		2.89	0.59	Agree	3.03	0.65	Agree

Table 1 above on research question one shows that majority of the respondents (leaders and members) agreed with all the items on the roles of educational programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State. This is seen in the mean scores of all the items which are above the criterion mean of 2.50. Item 1 has mean scores of 3.27 and 3.05, standard deviation of 0.74

and 0.63. Item 2 have mean scores of 3.04 and 2.79, standard deviation of 0.62 and Item 3 has mean scores of 2.83 and 3.23, standard deviation of 0.54 and 0.72. Item 4 has mean scores of 2.53 and 3.29, standard deviation of 0.50 and 0.75. Item 5 has mean scores of 3.11 and 2.57, standard deviation of 0.65 and 0.52. Item 6 has mean scores of 2.59 and 3.26, standard deviation of 0.50 and 0.74. With a grand mean of 2.89 and 3.03 for leaders and members of community based organizations, the answer to research question one is that the roles of educational programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State are increasing people's efficiency in doing business, discouraging laziness, making people identify their inherent potentials, inculcating the habit of continuous learning, help people access job openings and establish their own businesses.

Research Question 2: What are the roles of Agricultural development programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean Response on the Roles of Agricultural Development Programmes in Poverty Reduction in Rivers State

S/N	Items	Leaders N =223			Members N = 407		
		X	SD	Decision	X	SD	Decision
7.	Increased food production.	3.13	0.65	Agree	3.00	0.60	Agree
8.	Improved processing of farm produce by exposing farmers to improved farming methods.	2.85	0.56	Agree	3.23	0.72	Agree
9.	Build capacity of farmers to engage in more commercial farming.	3.37	0.80	Agree	3.59	0.97	Agree
10.	Provide means of livelihood for unemployed people.	3.08	0.64	Agree	2.79	0.53	Agree
11.	Increases foreign exchange earnings for the state through export of agriculture products.	2.84	0.55	Agree	3.37	0.75	Agree
12.	Reduction of unemployment by encouraging more people to go into farming.	3.13	0.65	Agree	3.43	0.82	Agree
13.	Increased income generation by providing market access to farmers.	3.44	0.83	Agree	3.39	0.79	Agree
14.	Enhance farmers' productivity through cultivation of improved varieties.	2.68	0.55	Agree	3.65	1.03	Agree
15.	Enhance food security through continuous and increased agricultural production in the state.	3.01	0.77	Agree	3.45	0.82	Agree
16.	Increases the nation's Gross Domestic Products (GDP) which further reduces poverty.	2.66	0.58	Agree	2.60	0.56	Agree

17	It promotes development of industries that depend on agricultural products for their operations.	3.00	0.76	Agree	3.03	0.78	Agree
Grand Mean		3.32	0.73	Agree	3.55	0.84	Agree

Table 2 above on research question two shows the mean response of leaders and members on the roles of agricultural development programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State. The table showed that all the items in the table have mean scores that are above the criterion mean of 2.50 which showed majority of the respondents agreed with the items. With grand mean scores of 3.32 and 3.55, therefore, the answer to research question two is that the roles of agricultural development programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State are increasing of food production, improved farming and cultivation of improved varieties, promoting commercial farming and reducing unemployment.

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean response of leaders and members of community based organizations on the roles of educational programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State.

Table 3: Z-Test Analyses of Significant Difference in the Mean Response of Leaders and Members of Community Based Organizations on the Roles of Educational Programmes in Poverty Reduction in Rivers State.

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	Z-cal	Z-crit	SL	Decision
Leaders	223	2.89	0.59	-3.44	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Members	407	3.03	0.65				

Table 3 above shows that Z-calculated value of -3.44 is less than the Z-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 significant level indicating that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of leaders and members of community-based organizations on the role of educational programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State. This means that the null hypothesis was accepted.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean response of leaders and members of community-based organizations on the roles of Agricultural development programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-Test Analyses of Significant Difference in the Mean Response of Leaders and Members of Community Based Organizations on the Roles of Agricultural Development Programmes in Poverty Reduction in Rivers State.

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	Z-cal	Z-crit	SL	Decision
Leaders	223	3.32	0.73	-3.64	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Members	407	3.55	0.84				

Table 4 above shows that Z-calculated value of -3.64 is less than the Z-critical value of ± 1.96 at 0.05 significant level indicating that there no significant difference in the mean ratings of leaders and members on the role of agricultural development programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State. This means that the null hypothesis was accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the findings in research question two revealed that the roles of educational programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State are increasing people's efficiency in doing business, discouraging laziness, making people identify their inherent potentials, inculcating the habit of continuous learning, help people access job openings and establish their own businesses. The corresponding hypothesis one revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of leaders and members on the roles of educational programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State. This finding is supported by the findings of Ayodele and Adedokun (2012) which revealed that being literate will help people tackle any problem they are faced with and provides positive change in individuals which transcends to change in communities, societies and nations at large.

The result of the findings in research question two showed that the roles of agricultural development programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State are increasing food production, improved farming and cultivation of improved varieties, promoting commercial farming and reducing unemployment. Hypothesis two also revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of leaders and members on the role of agricultural development programmes in poverty reduction in Rivers State. This finding is supported by the findings of Nnodim and Johnwest (2016) which revealed that majority of rural women who benefitted from agricultural training in Rivers State earned increased average monthly income of between N50, 000 to N60, 000 as against non-beneficiaries who earned N20, 000 to N30,000. Similarly, Nwanyanwu, Nyekachi and Amadi (2014) in their study revealed that farmers who participated in the School-to-Land Agricultural Programme (STLAP) in Rivers state performed better in their production level than those who didn't participate.

Furthermore, the findings of this research question agrees with the findings of a study by Oludayo and Uche (2014) which revealed that Agricultural Development Programme significantly increased food production in the locality through increased provision of pesticides and improved seeds for farmers, establishment of new infrastructure and provision of fertilizers.

Conclusion

Educational programmes such as functional literacy, basic literacy, workers education and digital education among others build people's potentials, make them efficient at their job and enable them set up or manage personal businesses which ultimately improve their socioeconomic well-being. In the same vein, agricultural development programmes help in poverty reduction in Rivers State by increasing food production, improved farming, cultivation of improved varieties, promoting commercial farming and reducing unemployment.

Recommendations

1. Local Government authorities have the constitutional responsibility of establishing and maintaining adult literacy centres and other educational programmes. If they organize these programmes, they will build the capacities of beneficiaries and make them either self-employed or gained paid employment. This has the potential of reducing poverty.
2. Federal and State Ministries of Agriculture should engage in agricultural extension programmes where farmers in rural areas will be assisted with improved ways of farming and encourage commercial farming among rural farmers. This will lead to food security, increased Gross Domestic Products and improve the standard of living of rural farmers and their families.

References

- Adeyemi, Y. (2011) Poverty reduction strategies. *Journal of Educational Research*. 2 (3) 34-42
- Akpama, S. I. (2011). Non-formal Education Programmes and Poverty Reduction among young adults in Southern Senatorial District, Cross River State, Nigeria: *Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology*, 1(1), 154-161.
- Amirize, B. (2004). *Community development project management*. Port Harcourt: Olu-Alade Printing Press.
- Ayodele, J. B. & Adedokun, M. O. (2012). Towards achieving functional and adult literacy in Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal* 8(5) 209-218

- Barnes, A. (2011). Poverty Eradication, Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development in Nigeria: *Journal of Sustainable Development*. 3(4), 139-141.
- Brenam, A. (2012) Achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com//SDGs.
- Carl, B. (2016) Theories of Development. Retrieved from <https://www.osa.com/theories of development.h.00.28//>
- Dike, D. (2002). *Community development: The Nigerian perspective*. Ibadan: Department of Adult Education Publications.
- Nnodim, A. U. & Johnwest, E. K. (2016). Influence of Adult and Non-Formal Education on Poverty Reduction among Rural Women in Ogba-Egbema-Ndoni Local Government Area, Rivers State. *International Journal of Educational Benchmark (IJEb)*.4(3) 83-94.
- Nwanyanwu, D. H.; Nyekachi, A. & Amadi, C. (2014). Assessment of farm outputs and rural income generation of School-to-Land Agricultural Programme (STLAP) in Rivers State, Nigeria. *Journal of Biology, Agriculture and Healthcare*.4 (14)126. Retrieved from www.iiste.org. Accessed on June 12, 2018
- Ogwo, P. (2017). Contributions of community development programmes on poverty reduction in Rivers State. *Unpublished Dissertation. University of Port Harcourt*
- Oyebamiji, M. A. & Adekola, G. (2008). *Fundamentals of Community Development in Nigeria*. Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt press
- Omoh, A. G. (2017). *The poverty courting: Choices for the third world*. New York: Colombia University Press.
- Sachs, J. D. (2005). *Poverty and development into the 21st Century*. Oxford: University Press Oxford.
- Sen, A. (2002). *Poverty and famine: An essay in entitlement and deprivation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Taylor, D. (2013). Impact of Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency's programmes on community development in Khana and Tai Local Government Area of Rivers State. *Unpublished Masters Dissertation. University of Port Harcourt*.
- The New World Encyclopaedia (2008) Definition of Poverty retrieved from www.thenewencyclopaedia.org//definition_of_poverty009 on 20th September, 2017
- UNDP (2010). *Human Development Report*. New York: Oxford Press.
- UNDP (2018). Goal 1: No Poverty. Retrieved from <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goals-1-poverty.html> on the 12th of January, 2018.
- United Nations (2000) Poverty indices for Africa. www.sciencedirect.com.>articlepii on the 19th of December 2017.

- United Nations (2015). Poverty reduction within the frameworks of the SDGs and post 2015. Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com.>articlepii on the 19th of December 2017.
- Uzor, G. F. (2012). *Fundamentals of community development practice in Africa*. Port Harcourt: Wordtot Publishers.
- World Bank (2003). *The assault on world poverty*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- World Poverty Clock (2018). The percentage of Nigerians living in extreme poverty could increase by 2030. Retrieved from <https://worldpoverty.io/blog/index.php?r12> on 9th May, 2018.

