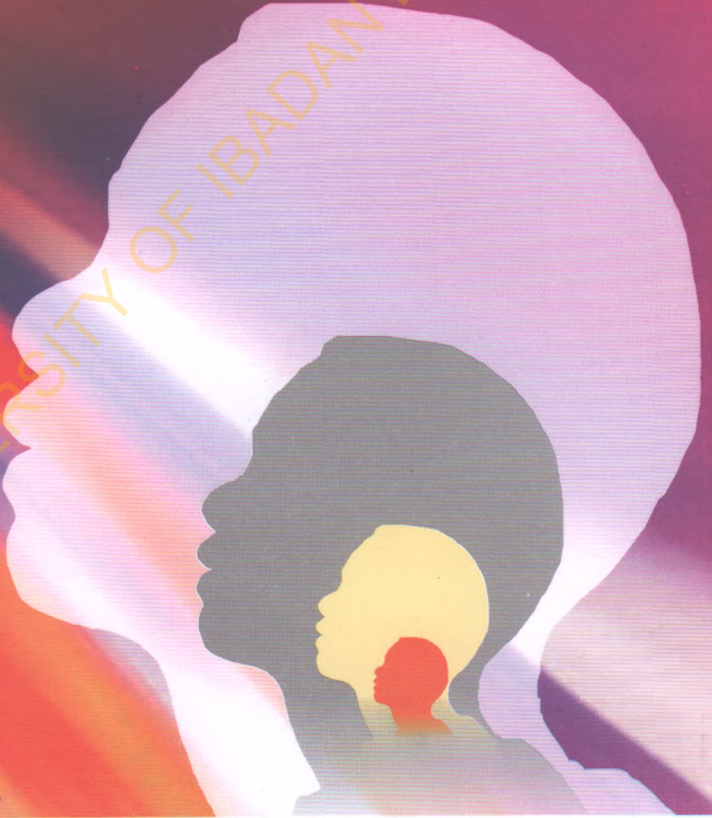


SOME PHILOSOPHIES OF ADULT EDUCATION

Mary Okenwa-Ojo & Christopher O. Omoregie

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ADULT

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**MARY OKENWA-OJO
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CHRISTOPHER O. OMOREGIE**

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**IBADAN UNIVERSITY PRESS
2020**

Ibadan University Press,
Publishing House,
University of Ibadan,
Ibadan, Nigeria

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First Published 2020

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ISBN: 978 – 978 – 8550 – 04 – 4

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God and to our late mentors and supervisors: Emeritus Professor J.A. Akinpelu, Professor C.N. Anyanwu and Professor Emma Osuji.

Preface

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FOREWORD

I consider it a great honour to write the foreword to this book on *Some Philosophies of Adult Education*, authored by Drs Mary Okenwa-Ojo and Christopher O. Omoregie, Dr Okenwa a senior principal lecturer at Alayande College of Education and adjunct lecturer at Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, outreach programme, and Dr Christopher O. Omoregie, a lecturer and an expert in Philosophy of Education in the Department of Adult Education, University of Ibadan.

This book, *Some Philosophies in Adult Education* is coming at the right time when the country is faced with shortages of books from foreign countries as a result of high cost of publishing, economic down turn, high exchange rate and when some erudite scholars in Philosophy of Adult Education have either retired or passed on. Hence I congratulate the authors of the book for a job well done.

Drs Mary Okenwa-Ojo and Christopher O. Omoregie are eminently qualified to write this type of book given their experience as lecturers in tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria, the exposure of the two authors to the world of teaching and learning at tertiary institutional level coupled with their interest in their students and their personal efforts in research areas of interest—some philosophies in adult education. The authors exhibit high intellectual ability coupled with persistence and imaginative thought per excellence in all the ten chapters of this book.

It is hoped that the opinions expressed and the conclusions drawn from the book on some philosophies of adult education will inform stakeholders in the educational industry, adult learners, administrators and research students in adult and non-formal education.

There is the need to emphasize that this book cannot cover all the areas of philosophy of adult education but the authors have successfully presented the ten chapters on some philosophies of adult education. Before going into the core areas of the discipline, the authors explain the Discipline of Adult Education, Forms and Scope of Adult Education, Philosophizing in Adult Education and Philosophical Areas in Adult Education. They took the pains in highlighting some philosophies that are absent in other existing books which

includes: Knowles Andragogy, Freirian Conscientization, The Deschooling Movement and Adult Education, Nyerere's Philosophy of Development, Awolowo's Educational Philosophy and Akinpelu's Existentialism.

The authors presented these ten chapters with simple and clear language which is learner friendly with good examples which will be of immense benefits to all stakeholders in adult education industry who would read this book.

I strongly recommend this book, some philosophies of adult education to all stake holders in adult and non-formal education like National Mass Education Commission, state agency for adult and non-formal education (AANFE), departments of adult education in universities and colleges of education in Nigeria and practitioners of adult education and researchers. The book will go a long way in helping us to accomplish sustainable educational system in Nigeria.

Once again, I congratulate Drs Mary Okenwa-Ojo and Christopher O. Omoregie on taking the initiative of writing this scholarly work.

Professor Mathew Oladepo Akintayo
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University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

PREFACE

The motivation for writing came mostly from our students who want a book on Philosophy of Adult Education that would be presented in simpler and clearer language. Although indigenous authors have written on this subject, the students could not easily relate with the text of those authors. Most of these authors studied philosophy and adult education at their post graduate years so their texts did not give illustrations and analogies that our younger students could relate easily with.

However, among the indigenous authors whose works assisted us in the writing of this book are Professor J.A. Akinpelu, Professor C.N. Anyanwu, Professor Remi Bamisaiye, Professor M. Omolewa and Professor S.H.O. Tomori, to name a few. We also sincerely acknowledge all other authors whose materials and books were consulted. We are very grateful.

Our modest contribution to the pool of knowledge in philosophy of education, and philosophy of adult education in particular, is that we have appropriated the ideas of Nigerians such as Obafemi Awolowo and Jones Akinpelu into the body of knowledge in Adult Education. Our claim is that it is high time these ideas were part of our educational policies formulation and implementation. Again, we have included the idea of UNESCO which is the highest body promoting Adult Education research and practice in the world. We have done all these and divided the work into ten chapters whereby the discipline of Adult Education serves as an introduction and the Akinpelu's existentialism serves as a conclusion.

The book takes the two related disciplines of philosophy and adult education from scratch to higher-level thinking. It gives examples and illustrations that students can relate with. Since there are those who are practitioners in adult education without professional training, this book would fill the gap in their knowledge arising from a lack of rigid academic training in the discipline.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, we are very grateful to the Almighty God for making this book a reality. We are indebted to many people whose names are too numerous to mention here. We are grateful to Professor Depo Akintayo for writing the foreword to the book, and we appreciate the call by our undergraduate and graduate students to write the book.

The thoughts that went into writing this book, as well as the actual write-up and completion thereof, are the outcome of many forms of assistance received from different sources. We thank our friends who read through the manuscripts. The authors and scholarly works that we used and were mentioned under the references section deserve our appreciation. We thank you all most sincerely.

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Origin of Adu

Adu Education
traced back to 1844 in Europe when Rudolf Coudenhove-Kalergi and peasants and common folk to improve the way of life and themselves as civilized people. Later male peasants began regular and popular education. This form of education which exists all over the world in the traditional African society, rural and indigenous systems.

THE DISCIPLINE OF ADULT EDUCATION

Subject Areas and Adult Education

Categorization of knowledge to different areas is dated back to the times of Aristotle. Prior to his categorization, in the pre-Socratic, and even the platonic eras, the world was conceived as an indivisible entity where the physical is only an appearance of the reality. Aristotle contended with this claim and built a Porphyrian tree—the division of beings.

Knowledge became polarized from Philosophy to others such as physics, chemistry, politics, and sociology. Other disciplines came up as human society developed. Compared to these disciplines, Adult Education can be seen as a relatively new area of study dated back to the nineteenth century. As a practice, Adult Educators have said that it is as old as human beings in the creation story. When the first man, Adam was sent out of the garden, he was faced with the challenge of survival with food, shelter and clothing. Hence, he had to learn many skills to make himself survive in his new world. The skills he learnt as an adult, though he was created an Adult, to eke out living outside the garden, were vocational skills which is an integral part of Adult Education. Outside the experience of Adam, the life history of every individual is an engagement with learning, re-learning and unlearning for individual and group survival in the society. The distinct subject area of adult education is the provision of learning for everyone regardless of any barrier. Adult education promotes inclusion of learning.

Origin of Adult Education

Adult Education as an organized system and discipline, can be traced back to 1844 in Europe when Bishop Grundtvig gathered peasants and common folks for training on how to conduct themselves as civilized people. Later these gatherings became regular and popular. It became Danish folk high school which exists till date. In the traditional African society, there were indigenous system of inculcating morals and cultural beliefs to

the younger generation through folktales and moonlight stories. If not that the indigenous society suffered from lack of documentation, the system would have developed into a more organized system of education.

In Nigeria, education started with the targets on adult population who had to be convinced of its importance before the children started benefiting from it. The missionaries educated the adults as believers, interpreters, and office clerks before they established schools and hospitals for the communities. So, Adult education started in Nigeria as a practice before it became a discipline that has its professionals.

Degrees in Africa were first taken through Adult Education model of correspondence education now called distance education. It is interesting to note that one of the courses that was taken through correspondence was Philosophy. The discipline and nature of Philosophy have always been compliant with Adult Education.

Developments of Adult Education as an Academic Discipline

Adult education, as an academic discipline, can be traced to a book written by Eduard Lindeman titled: *The Meaning of Adult Education* in 1926. This book has become a masterpiece on Adult Education. Lindeman submitted that:

From many quarters came the call to a new kind of education with its initial assumption affirming that education is life—not mere preparation for an unknown kind of living, consequently, all static concepts of education which relegate the learning process to the period of youth are abandoned. The whole of life is leaning; therefore education can have no endings. This new venture is called adult education not because it is confined to adults but because *adulthood, maturity defines its limits*.

Yeaxlee's 1929 publication entitled: *Lifelong Education* was described by Angela Cross-Durrant (1987) as the "first formal attempt in the 20th century to combine the whole of the educational enterprise under a set of guiding principles with each phase of agency (formal, informal and non-formal) enjoying equal esteem".

Adult Education, as an academic discipline, has also developed through series of international conferences, seminars, symposia and workshops. Some of the conferences include Cambridge conference of 1929, Exeter conference of 1969. At the Exeter conference of 1969, according to Liveright and Haygood (1969):

Adult Education was defined as a process whereby persons who no longer attend school on a regular full time basis undertake sequential and organized activities with the conscious intention of bringing about changes in information, knowledge, understanding, or skill and attitudes; or for the purpose of identifying or solving personal or community problem of Adult Educations.

The clause 'persons who no longer attend school on a regular basis', restricts this definition to selected people as if the discipline does not cover those who never attended school. Adult Basic literacy affords those who never attended school the opportunity to read, write and count. Exeter conference definition sees Adult education as further or continuing education. This suggests that Adult Education only adds to knowledge that is already acquired. Then the question is, when do we really start learning? Definitely, not in school because learning starts at home and even in the womb. From this fundamental stand, then, every education is continuing? That will be too far from the reality of continuing education because what is learnt in the womb is not intentional and known, then what is it that is being added to it?

Adult education seems to be synonymous to continuing education and lifelong education because it is believed that education never ends. Efforts shall be made in the second chapter to provide explanation for the different names that Adult Education has been called, or better still, what some scholars see as the components of Adult Education. At this stage, what we need to emphasize is the practice of Adult education in Nigeria. The practice in Nigeria from when it was established in 1949 as Extra Mural Studies was that, continuing education and lifelong learning are units or elements of its practice.

What is Adult Education?

Any definition of Adult Education should be broad and clear, stating what is required and what is not required. This is the reason one ought not to define adult education in a single term. According to Anyanwu (1987), the various definitions of adult education portray it as a response to the educational needs of men and women. It tends to emphasize the whole range of part-time educational provisions for persons whose social and economic responsibilities give them adult status within a community. Adult Education is seen as part of the wider process of lifelong learning and it includes fundamental or remedial, general, vocational, professional, civic, social, cultural and recreation education for adults of all ages. It should be noted that lifelong learning is not restricted to adults alone. It is only a concept that states that adult education is a continuous process which starts from when one is born until when one dies.

Faure (1972) stated that there are many possible definitions of Adult Education. For a very large number of adults in the world today, Adult Education can make up for the basic education they missed. For the many individuals who received incomplete education, it is to complement learning from elementary stage. It can also be professional education for those whom it helps to respond to new demands of their profession or for the furtherance of their education. It offers further education to those who have already received high-level training or a means of individual development for everybody. One or other of these aspects may be more important in one country than in another; but they all have their validity. Adult education can no longer be limited to rudimentary levels or confined to cultural education for a minority in a community. If education is not the contention then 'adult' is. Again Chapter Two will give a detailed explanation of who an Adult can be. However, the definition of Adult Education modified by General conference of United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1976, gives insight into who an Adult can be:

The term "adult education" denotes the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial

education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the two fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent, social, economic and cultural development

From this definition, an adult is determined by the society to which an individual belongs. In most African societies, an adult is someone who is employed or has economic means, married, and given responsibility in the community. This could be beyond the biological age of the person because there are mentally retarded aged people who as a matter of fact have become children again. There is no doubt that age is a factor of adulthood in Africa. It is a common saying among the Yoruba that 'I am not your mate'. It is funny that someone that is a day older than you can treat you as if you do not belong to the same age grade. What we can then say at this stage given the practices of Adult Education is that the discipline is for everyone especially those who have become adults by their age, social roles, self-perception and the society. An adult can be characterized by maturity and maturation process, independence and struggle for personal determination. That takes us to Eduard Lindeman again when he said that adulthood does define not the limits of the discipline.

Makulu (1971) stated that an American definition of Adult Education embraces training that is undertaken voluntarily by people in their mature years. Thus, its major purposes are, first, to make adults in the community become aware of individual and community needs, and second, to give such education as will enable them to cope with current problems. Further, Adult Education is an effort to make individuals, groups and communities attain adulthood which is inarguably a desirable state of life. According to Courtney (1989) it is an intervention into the ordinary business of life ... an intervention whose immediate goal is change in knowledge or in competence.

Omolewa (1986) inferred that adult education is sometimes defined as the education provided for all men and women who are aged 21 and above. He further stated that this is a biological definition based on the assumption that an adult is one who is aged 21 years and above and that this definition ignores the fact that in some countries, men and women aged 18 are considered as adults. Besides, it fails to take into recognition that adolescents aged 16, could be as physically mature as men aged 35 and even 40.

UNESCO did not adopt the age criterion but gives a sociological criterion of Adulthood when it states that “the term adult education covers all organized educational activities provided for people who are not in the regular school and universities.” The Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (1971) shares this view when it insists that the adult who is biologically mature must not be attending “a full-time educational institution of the kind normally catering for juveniles”.

There is probably no “best definition” of adult education because definitions must vary with educators of adults and with specific cultural settings. An approach is to look at the two words “adult” and “education”. The word “adult” may be defined by reference to various criteria, for instance:

- (i) Chronological age;
- (ii) Legal age;
- (iii) Induction into mature society;
- (iv) The accomplishment of rites;
- (v) Physical, psychological, or emotional maturity, completion of a specified level of education;
- (vi) Degree of autonomy in relation to family or social milieu;
- (vii) Degree of personal responsibility.

UNESCO (2000), defined education “as the total process of developing human ability and behaviours”. It is an organized and sustained instruction designed to communicate a combination of knowledge, skills and understanding value for all activities of life. As for education, one can say that, it comprises of any supporting plan which assists individuals to

learn and hence, achieve selected goals, usually according to a design. In developing a definition of adult education, it is useful to consider the following related notions.

- (i) Learning is an individual matter and therefore all goals and plans should be geared to facilitating learning by individuals;
- (ii) It is through interaction between the learner and the environment that learning takes place;
- (iii) An individual philosophy of adult education should be consistent with the overall philosophy of education prevailing in the actual cultural context and, in turn, that philosophy of education should be consistent with a philosophy of life;
- (iv) Goals and objectives should be based on the needs of society, agency, sponsor, as well as the individual;
- (v) The individual should consciously pursue the goals or objectives which have been selected;
- (vi) Education is learning by design, and not by accident or chance;
- (vii) Education implies a lifelong process and should be set in that context; and
- (viii) Learning leads to changes in behaviour that are lasting and not episodic.

Moreover, when defining or describing adult education the following elements should be considered;

- (i) It should be within the total context of lifelong education;
- (ii) It should be need-oriented or determined;
- (iii) It should be self-directed;
- (iv) It should be a conscious process pursued by the learner;
- (v) It should be an integral, not an incidental part of life, woven into the total pattern which includes professional and family life along with the responsibilities of citizenship;

- (vi) It should be a part-time activity or full-time for only short periods of time; and
- (vii) It should be a voluntary effort as distinct from compulsory form of education, even though there may be compelling reasons for participation.

Nyerere (1979) stated that adult education embraces anything that elongates men's knowledge, activates them, helps them to make their own decisions, and helps them to implement those decisions for themselves. Adult education also incorporates training, agitation, organization and mobilization; it also goes beyond them to make them purposeful.

Goals of Adult Education

The goals of Adult Education can be drawn from definitions of Adult Education that have been provided in this chapter. It is also derivable from government policies on education. For example the Nigerian National Policy on Education (2014):

- (i) Provide functional literacy and continuing education for adults and youths who have never had the advantage of formal education or who did not complete their primary education. These include the nomads, migrant families, the disabled and other categories or groups, especially the disadvantaged group;
- (ii) Provide functional and remedial education for those young people who did not complete secondary education;
- (iii) Provide education for different categories of completers of the formal education system in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills;
- (iv) Provide in-service, on-the-job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills; and
- (v) Give the adult citizens of the country necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for enlightenment.

To attain these goals, the federal government of Nigeria established a National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal education. The commission shall monitor and evaluate the mass literacy programme and facilitate communication between the commission and state and local agencies.

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The Book

This book relates two broad disciplines of Philosophy and Adult Education and explains them in easy ways for all learners to understand. Away from misconceptions that are associated with Philosophy and Adult Education, the authors put them in the right perspectives for everyday living.

The Authors

Mary Okenwa-Ojo and Christopher Omoregie are lecturers in Nigerian higher institutions of learning. Okenwa-Ojo teaches at Alayande College of Education and Omoregie at University of Ibadan. They have brought their years of teaching experiences into presenting Philosophy and Adult Education in simple language that everyone can understand.



IBADAN UNIVERSITY PRESS
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

ISBN:978-978-8550-04-4

