



---

## CHAPTER 37

### ADULT EDUCATION OF BEYOND SCHOOL AGE NOMADS

**Kuye, Idowu Hammed Ph.D**

*Department of Educational Foundations,  
University of Jos*

#### **Introduction**

A nomad is someone who lives by travelling from place to place. Nomadic society roams from place to place in search of pasture and water for their animals, fish, other aquatic animals, and food for themselves. As a result, they have no permanent place of settlement thereby lacking access to quality formal and non-formal education. However, it is not to say they lack all forms of education as they are still exposed to tradition education which teaches and exposes them to ways of making a living and which contains the cultural and societal values of society. This is why nomads in provision of education are classified among the special needs group in adult education. Nigerian nomads fall into three groups: cattle-herders, fishermen and farmers. While nomadic pastoralism is the practice of rearing livestock by moving with the animals from place to place in search of water and pasture, the basic economic activity of the migrant fishermen is fishing which is done by migrating to conducive places as guaranteed by the season in search of fish and other aquatic animals.

School age is the age at which a child is old enough to go to school. However, even within the compulsory school age, inequalities have remained ([www.idoceonline.com](http://www.idoceonline.com)). Based on the 1991 census, educational profile of nomads in Nigeria reveals that out of the estimated 10.4 million nomads 3.6 million are children of school age of which only 519,018 are enrolled in schools and participation of the nomads in existing education programme very low with literacy rate ranging between 0.02% to 2.0% at the early stage of implementing the nomadic education programme (National Commission for Nomadic Education Brochure (NCNE), 2017).

Beyond school age is the age at which an individual has outgrown the school age stipulated by the laws of the state. For example, education in Nigeria is free and compulsory between the ages of 6 and 15, generally from primary one to Junior secondary three (JSS 3), that is, primary and junior secondary education. Primary school has a duration of six years, while junior /lower secondary education lasts three years. Therefore, beyond school age nomads refers to the nomads who are outside the legally compulsory school age of 15 years but could still benefit from adult education for lifelong learning opportunities in Nigeria.

Adult education, is any form of learning undertaken by or provided for mature men and women. Omolewa & Kumar (1988), cited in Adeyemo, Folajin &



---

Kuye (2014), defined adult education as a process by which adult seek to improve themselves or their societies by increasing their knowledge, skills and sensitivities. In a 1970 report, the National Institute of Adult Education (England and Wales) defined adult education as “any kind of education for people who are old enough to work, vote, fight and marry and who have completed the cycle of continuous education, (if any) commenced in childhood” (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/adult-education>).

Uzoegwu & Iloanusi (2010), posited that the philosophy behind adult and lifelong learning is that it is never too soon or too late for learning. Lifelong learning is attitudinal, that is acquiring a mindset that one can and should be open to new ideas, decisions and skills. According to the duo, lifelong learning provides learning opportunities for people of all ages and in different contexts such as work place, at home and through leisure activities which are not formal like school and higher education. Mbagwu (2013), posited that efforts being made to accelerate the economic growth of Nigeria definitely cannot be achieved without the development of the educationally disadvantaged adult population since they are also part of the potential workforce needed for economic and national development.

The thesis statement of this chapter is hinged on the fact that Nigeria needs to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all irrespective of the socio-cultural and economic background, and what they do for living or where they live. The beyond school age nomads as a special need group are educationally disadvantaged because of their nomadic culture and how adult education could be used as veritable tools to provide education for vocational, technical, and professional competence for them is the focus of this chapter. This is because nomads should be assisted to improve on their low-level appreciation of modern education, their output, productivity and incomes. The chapter will begin by looking at nomads and efforts of government at providing education for them, barriers to education of nomads; adult extension education (vocational, technical and professional education) of beyond school age nomads, advantages of education of nomads; implications of provision of adult education for beyond school age nomads; conclusion and suggestions will end the discussion.

### **Nomads and efforts of government at their education in Nigeria**

A nomad is someone who lives by travelling from place to place and Nigerian nomads fall into three groups: cattle-herders, fishermen and farmers. According to Akinpelu (1993), cited in Aderinoye, Ojokheta& Olojede (2007), the contemporary definition of ‘nomadism’ refers to any type of existence characterized by the absence of a fixed domicile of which three categories of nomadic groups are identified as: hunter/ food gatherers, itinerant fishermen, and pastoralists (a.k.a., herdsman).



---

In Nigeria, there are six nomadic groups according to Aderinoye et al (2007), they are:

1. fulani (with population of 5.3 million)
2. shuwa (with population of 1.0 million)
3. buduman (with population of 35,001)
4. kwayam (with population of 20,000)
5. badawi (with population yet to be established)
6. fishermen (with population of 2.8 million)

The last group, the Fishermen, is concentrated in the atlantic coastline, the riverine areas and river basins of the country such as Rivers, Ondo, Edo, Delta, Cross River, and Akwa-Ibom States. The first five nomadic groups listed are considered pastoralist nomads.

Based on 1991 census, the estimated population of nomads in Nigeria stands at 10.4 million with the distribution as follows:

- i. pastoral nomads: 6.3 million
- ii. migrant fisherfolks: 2.8 million
- iii. migrant farmers: 1.3 million (Hunter-gatherer nomads)

However, the educational profile of nomads in Nigeria reveals that 3.6 million are children of school age of which only 519,018 were enrolled in schools and the participation of the nomads in existing education programme very low with literacy rate ranging between 0.02% to 2.0% at the early stage of implementing the nomadic education programme (NCNE Brochure, 2017).

The Federal Government of Nigeria, because of the educationally disadvantaged nature of nomads due to their nomadic culture introduced the nomadic education programme in 1986. According to NCNE Brochure (2017), National Commission for Nomadic Education was later established in 1989 to cater for the educational needs of the socially excluded, educationally disadvantaged and migrant groups in Nigeria. This according to the author is because these segments of the population have serious limitations to equitable access to basic education through the conventional education system as a result of certain occupational and socio-cultural peculiarities and unless a special education provision is made for the nomads, they will have no access to formal and non-formal education.

Nomadic education is the qualitative functional inclusive basic education for children of pastoral nomads, migrant fisherfolk and migrant farmers outside the regular formal education systems (NCNE Brochure, 2017).

### **Barriers to education of nomads**

Some identified barriers to education of nomads' world over are attributable to their peculiar nomadic culture. Some of these according to Tahir, Mohammed & Muhammed (2005) are:

- the constant movements / migration of nomads in search of water and pasture for their livestock, in the case of the pastoralists, and for fish and



- 
- other aquatic animals, in the case of the migrant fishing groups, and fertile cultivable land in the case migrant farmers.
- the critical role of children in their production systems makes parents and guardians reluctant to release them to participate in formal schooling.
  - their physical isolation and minimal social interaction with the larger society, as they live and operate in mostly inaccessible terrains.
  - their low-level appreciation of modern / formal / western education.
  - the unsuitability of the formal school curriculum, time schedules and calendar, which are tailored to meet the needs of the mainstream sedentary groups and ignore the special educational needs of nomadic peoples.

### **Adult extension education for beyond school age nomads (vocational, technical and professional education of nomads)**

Extension education is all about educating people by helping them have access to information that they can use to make decisions in their lives. It involves helping people to help themselves through the development of individuals in their day to day living. Adults (especially beyond school age nomads) are specialized audience of learners whose peculiarities should be considered in any educational programmes organized for them. In the case of nomads, this is coupled with their economic activities and social-cultural background. Some of the questions that should come to mind are; what happens at adulthood to nomads who at school age cannot benefit or drop out from the formal or non-formal education systems because parents/guardians are reluctant to release them to participate in formal schooling because of their role in the production systems? What also happens to the education of their children when the uneducated nomads' get married and begin to have them (children)? How can this set of beyond school age nomads be inclusively captured educationally without adversely affecting their economic activities and socio-cultural beliefs for the betterment of themselves, family, community, state, and nation at large. Tahir, Muhammad and Mohammed (2005), observed that progress in equipping the nomadic communities with relevant skills and competencies to enhance their well-being remained unsatisfactory.

For the above identified special group of nomads, andragogy which is “the art and science of helping adults learn” with its principles as identified by Knowles (1980) will be most appropriate to achieve the following 3 objectives in adult or beyond school age nomads, change in:

- i. knowledge or things already known.
- ii. attitude; and
- iii. skills / competences or how to do things.

Knowles (1980), identified six andragogical principles (principles of adult learning) which are adults:

1. are internally motivated and self-directed.
2. bring life experiences and knowledge to learning experiences.
3. are goal oriented.



- 
4. are relevancy oriented.
  5. are practical.
  6. learners like to be respected.

The following types of adult education as identified by Britannica (2011), may be given through adult extension education or services to beyond school age nomads to help them have access to information that will make them improve on their standard of living. This may be achieved by moving along with the nomads whenever they do by using face-to-face interactions / meetings or distance education techniques such as education on radio where necessary.

1. Education for vocational, technical, and professional competence which may aim at preparing beyond school age nomads for a first job or for a new job, or it may aim at keeping him up to date on new developments in animal husbandry, fish farming, and mechanized farming.

2. Education for health, welfare, and family living. Such education includes all kinds of education in health, family relations, consumer buying, planned parenthood, hygiene, child care, and the like.

3. Education for civic, political, and community competence. Such education includes all kinds of education relating to government, community development, public and international affairs, voting and political participation, and so on.

4. Education for “self-fulfillment”. Such education embraces all kinds of liberal education programmes: education in music, the arts, dance, theatre, literature, arts and crafts, whether brief or long-term. These programmes aim primarily at learning for the sake of learning rather than at achieving the aims included in the other categories.

5. Remedial education: fundamental and literacy education. This education is obviously a prerequisite for all other kinds of adult education and thus, as a category, stands somewhat apart from the other types of adult education.

The above types of adult education may be given using the individual, group or mass method of extension to meet the nomads at their points of needs in societies changing rapidly from a subsistence to an industrial economy for immediate application of knowledge or skills. Whichever method is adopted should still afford the recipients or clientele the opportunity to carry on with their daily economic activities and at the same time benefit from the education programme thereby ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities. Extension education which is non-formal in nature may take place on the nomads’ farms, homes, community centre, workshop, on phone, face-to-face, through the mass media, and so on. However, use of mother tongue or the language of immediate environment of learners as the language of instruction should be given utmost importance and priority especially with the illiterate nomads.



---

### **Advantages of provision of adult education for beyond school age nomads**

Some of the benefits derivable from adult education provision for beyond school age nomads include that adult education:

1. promotes voluntary lifelong learning in the nomads.
2. ensures “ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated” pursuit of knowledge for either personal or occupational reasons.
3. boosts and improve the economic lives of the nomads through information on modern methods of livestock and cattle production, fish farming, etc.
4. facilitates better child bearing and rearing thereby improving the standard of living and quality if lives of the nomads.
5. ensures active participation in government and policy making.
6. enables adult nomads appreciate the importance of quality modern education thereby encouraging and motivating their children to also partake and benefit from educational programmes specially organized for them.
7. takes and gives adult and non-formal education to nomads wherever they are, gives a sense of belongingness to them. This is so because they can attend to their various economic activities and still acquire skills and knowledge at the same time.
8. improves the agricultural practices of the nomads.
9. promotes the delivery of relevant and functional skills to the various nomadic communities across Nigeria.

### **Implications of provision of adult education for beyond school age nomads**

The provision of adult education for beyond school age nomads will have both short and long terms implications. The short-term implications include:

- improved living standard of individuals and family members.
- improved child bearing and rearing practices.
- increased enrolment of children of nomads in formal and non-formal education programmes as a result of the exposure and appreciation of western formal and non-formal education by the parents.
- enhanced income generation activities resulting from exposure to modern ways of animal husbandry and production, modern and mechanized farming, as well as modern ways of fish farming and production.

#### **The long-term implications include:**

- reduced clashes between nomadic pastoralists and farmers which have been on the increase in Nigeria and environs.
- positive social, political and economic implications as a result of increased interest in social, political and economic affairs of the community, state and nation in general by nomads.
- reduction in rate of banditry and terrorism when nomads are able to go back to their traditional farming activities using modern methods which reduces open grazing and wandering especially for pastoralist nomads and



---

fishermen. This is partly because of the believe that a lot of pastoralist nomads abandoned their traditional occupation of animal husbandry and production to engage in banditry and other acts as they become easy recruits.

- peaceful co-existence among Nigerians.

### **Conclusion and suggestions**

This chapter concludes that no nation, Nigeria inclusive, can develop beyond the level of education of her citizens. As a result, every nation must ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This is because obtaining quality formal and non-formal education is the foundation to improving people's lives and sustainable development which are only achievable when all Nigerians are captured and carried along irrespective of what they do for living or where they live. Education of all categories of nomads will improve their productive skills and competences for modern farming techniques and reduce but promote peace among herders and farmers for national peace and unity. This will go a long way to also address some of the major challenges bedeviling Nigeria such as secession threats as a result of marginalization complaints, increasing rate of unemployment, insecurity, illiteracy and other education deficiencies, especially as they affect adult or beyond school age nomads.

### **Suggestions**

Based on conclusion above, the author gives the following suggestions on how adult education for beyond school age nomads can further be promoted in Nigeria for their lifelong learning, self, family, community and national development.

- Adequate provisions should be made for education of nomads especially beyond school age nomads for their better living, integration into national life, unity, sense of belongingness, equity, fairness and justice. The organization and administration of adult education for beyond school age nomads should be such that conflicts between their work schedules and participation in the programmes are reduced to the barest minimum.
- Adequate funding of adult education to be able to reach out to the disadvantaged and special needs groups and also to achieve the stated objectives as captured in the National Policy on Education.
- Adequate public sensitization and information dissemination on this type of education and benefits to participants/ target groups should be of topmost priority by the government and its agencies.
- Mechanism for proper monitoring, evaluation and feedback should be put in place to ensure proper policy implementation, review and quality improvement of nomadic education. Target groups and their leaders should be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the various



- 
- programmes meant for them for programme support, retention, completion and sense of belonging.
- Education of all categories of nomads should be given urgent attention to improve their productive skills and competences for modern farming techniques and reduce but promote peace among herders and farmers for national peace and unity. Community based non-formal education of beyond school age nomads should be encouraged to capture the peculiarities of the nomads, especially the women.

### References

- Aderinoye, R. A., Ojokheta, K.O.& Olojede, A. A. (2007). *Integrating Mobile Learning into Nomadic Education Programmes in Nigeria: Issues and perspectives*<https://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/347/919>
- Adeyemo, B., Folajin, T., & Kuye, I. (2014). *Essentials of adult Education*. Abeokuta: GOAD Educational Publishers.
- Britanica (2011). <https://www.britannica.com/topic/adult-education>
- Knowles, M. S. (1980). *The modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall/ Cambridge.
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. [www.idoconline.com](http://www.idoconline.com)
- Mbagwu, F.O. (2013). Promoting Lifelong Learning through Innovative Adult and Non-Formal Education. *International Journal of Research in Arts and social Sciences*. 5 (342-356). <https://www.academicexcellence.society.com>
- National Commission for Nomadic Education Brochure 2017. <https://www.ncne.gov.ng>
- Tahir G., Muhammad, N. D., & Mohammed, A. M. (2005). *Improving the Quality of Nomadic Education in Nigeria: Going Beyond Access and Equity*. Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).
- Uzoegwu, P. & Illoanusi, O. (2010). *Social and Economic Challenges to Lifelong Leadership in Nigeria*. <https://www.researchgate.net>