

**INCLUSIVE LIFE-LONG EDUCATION IN SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND
LABOUR-FORCE PERFORMANCE AT MICHAEL IMOUDU NATIONAL
INSTITUTE FOR LABOUR STUDIES**

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Abstract

This study examined inclusive life-long education in skill development and labour force performance with reference to the Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour Studies (MINILS). Descriptive survey research design was adopted. The paper had one research question and three hypotheses to guide the study. The population for the study comprised the participants enrolled for advanced studies of the Institute. A purposive sampling technique was adopted and one hundred and ten (110) respondents were selected. A self-developed questionnaire tagged “Lifelong Education and Skill Development Questionnaire (LLETSDQ)” was used as an instrument for data collection. It was validated by an expert in the field of measurement and evaluation. The reliability co-efficient of the instrument was carried out using test re-test technique, an index of 0.83 was obtained. Responses to these items were taken on a four (4) point Likert scale type rating. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). All the decisions were taken at 0.05 level of significance. One of the findings of the study revealed that labourers were not encouraged to partake in the Institute’s programme. The study recommended that the government should place emphasis on continuing education of personnel in both the private and the public sectors of the economy. Besides, trade unions should encourage their members across the country, through the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), to participate in programmes of the Institute for the benefit of updating their skills.

Keywords: Inclusive, Lifelong Education, Skill Development, Labour Force and Performance

Introduction

The world has become a global village due to advancement in technology. This innovation has increased access to knowledge and enabled greater exchange of ideas in all the areas of human endeavour. Fajonyomi (2008) observed that every country in the world depends heavily on the quality and quantity of its human resources for development. For this reason, concerted efforts should be made to sustain and improve human resources development. In this regard, education, especially lifelong education, is considered as a prerequisite for the sustainable development of the

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citizenry of a nation. Abiona (2012) defines lifelong education as a process whereby people continue in their education throughout life. It is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes and general human development. Muhammed (2009, p.1) opined that lifelong education can be defined as a process of both deliberate and unintentional opportunities influencing learning throughout one's life span. It can be provided through various modes like distance learning, e-learning, continuing education or correspondence courses. One is provided with learning opportunities at all ages, all levels in various contexts. Akintayo (1992) postulated that lifelong education is a process of educating the individual at each stage of life leading to the fullness of development.

The European Commission (2001) found that lifelong learning has “four broad and mutually supporting objectives: personal fulfillment, active citizenship, social inclusion and employability/adaptability”. In this regard, lifelong learning has life wide dimensions that transcend narrow economic and vocational aspects. That is, lifelong education is a circular form of education received either from the formal or non-formal setting or contacts within the environment (informal) for acquiring knowledge, cultural transmission and development of skills and understanding to make the recipient function throughout his/her lifetime as reflected in the lifelong education/learning model designed in Figure 1.

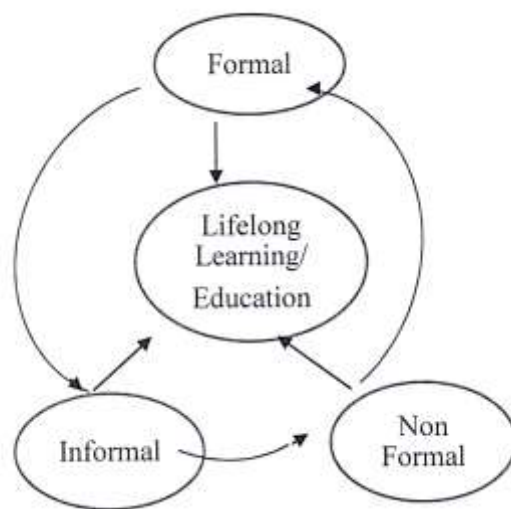


Figure:1 The Lifelong Learning /Education Model

In another dimension, lifelong education has been integrated into labour or workers' education for knowledge and professional competency. Imhabekhai (2009, p.24) observed that workers' education provides workers with the opportunities to acquire new skills relevant to their day-to-day operations and also to renew obsolete and irrelevant skills that are no longer needed by the enterprise. According to Abu (2000, p.52-59), workers' education is aimed at educating workers on the contract between employers and employees, particularly in the various laws that establish the relationship of work. Kester and Adeyeye (2006, p. 241-248) opined that workers' education has a unique opportunity of providing lifelong learning experiences addressed to the crucial issues and problems confronting working class citizens. This position is equally acknowledged in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004, Sec. 6 and p.19) with the following statements:

- ❖ *Provision of further education for different categories of completers of the formal education system in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills and;*
- ❖ *Provision of in-service, on-the-job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills.*

The above assertion underscores the importance of the principles of lifelong education as the most significant in training and skills development of workers' education, which include: Life is long (LL); Life is wide (LW) and Life is Deep (LD). Hence, education should aim at equipping an individual with learning on-the-job until after retirement ("from the cradle to the grave")

In 1986, the Federal Government of Nigeria established Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour Studies (MINILS) through Act Cap 261 of the Law of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to provide qualitative and responsive workers' or labour education with a view to strengthening tripartite relationships and social dialogue in the workplace (MINILS, 2014 ARP). Clement (2015) affirmed that no nation can be self-reliant and competitive in the international market without productivity and the improvement of workers in all sectors of the economy. In line with this position, the Institute has trained over 5000 workers from both private and public sectors of the economy (MINILS, 2014 ARP)

Statement of the Problem

Every organization searches for competent and employable personnel. This equally suggests that workers should update their knowledge and skills regularly. This is more so as the production or service provided largely depends upon the quality of the education one acquires. Perhaps it was against this backdrop that the government chooses to establish the Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour Studies (MINILS) with the aim of providing workers education in order to enhance skills development, productivity and labour efficiency for the socio-economic development of the country. The question is to what extent has the Institute been able

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to carry out its mandate of lifelong education and training? This is the focus of this paper.

Research question

What are the impacts of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance?

Research Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant difference in the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance based on respondents' gender.

HO₂: There is no significant difference in the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance based on respondents' sponsorship.

HO₃: There is no significant difference in the impact of lifelong education in skill development and labour force performance based on respondents' working experience.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. The design is relevant because it sought to obtain the opinions of the respondents on how inclusive the training offered by the Institute is in the light of lifelong education. The population for the study comprises of participants enrolled in advanced studies at Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour Studies (MINILS) Ilorin, Nigeria. A purposive sampling technique was adopted and one hundred and ten (110) respondents were selected. A self-developed questionnaire tagged "Lifelong Education and Skill Development Questionnaire (LLETSDQ)" was used as an instrument for data collection in the study. It consisted of two (2) sections: Section A contained items on the demographic data of the respondents. Section B had ten (10) items on inclusive life-long education in skill development and the job performance of the labour force. A reliability co-efficient, using test re-test method of 0.87 was obtained through the Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient method. The co-efficient revealed that the instrument was reliable enough to carry out the study. Responses to these items were taken on a four (4) point Likert scale type rating. The administration of the instrument was done by the researcher and two trained research assistants who were trained by the researcher on how to administer the questionnaire. The researcher identified participants who completed the course through their records submitted to the Institute within and outside Kwara State. The data collected were analyzed using frequency and percentage and mean rating, t-test and One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). All decisions were taken at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

This section deals with the collation, analysis and interpretation of data collected as illustrated below:

Answering of Research Question

What are the impacts of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance?

In order to answer this research question, the responses of the respondents to items that addressed the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance in Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour Studies (MINILS) Ilorin, were collated and subjected to mean calculation. The result is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Mean and ranking of impact of lifelong education in skill development and the labour force performance

S/N	Statements	Mean	Rank	Decision
1	The training I acquired through continuing education made me relevant on-the-job.	3.76	2 nd	Accepted
2	The knowledge I acquired assisted me in analytical and critical reasoning related to decision making process.	3.90	1 st	Accepted
3	Improvement on my skills has led to work efficiency in my day-to-day activities.	3.52	3 rd	Accepted
4	The knowledge I acquired in leadership system course assisted me to partake in management functions.	3.36	4 th	Accepted
5	The ICT training has equipped me with the computer manipulative skill.	3.37	5 th	Accepted
6	I earn promotion through the additional training I acquired.	2.60	10 th	Accepted
7	I facilitate enabling environment for formulating new policies and research leading to the achievement of the organizational goal.	2.84	8 th	Accepted
8	I am impressed with the immediate feedback of my superior on timely performed task delegated to me.	2.69	9 th	Accepted
9	The training I acquired has improved my effective communication skill.	2.96	7 th	Accepted
10	The training enables me to use democratic way in solving industrial disputes and conflict resolution in my organization.	3.10	6 th	Accepted

Grand mean =3.195

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Table 1 shows that out of ten (10) items that addressed the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance in Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour Studies, it was found that the respondents perceived that “the knowledge I acquired assisted me in analytical and critical reasoning related to decision making process,” had a mean score of 3.90 which ranked first. “The training I acquired through continuing education made me relevant on-the-job” attracted mean score of 3.76 which ranked second. “Improvement on my skills has led to working efficiency in my day-to-day activities” attracted mean score of 3.52 which ranked third. All other items followed with the least as “I earn promotion through the additional training I acquired” having the mean score of 2.60. All calculated means were above mid-point of 2.5 with a grand mean 3.195 indicating that lifelong education and training had impacted on skill development of labour force.

Hypotheses testing

Three (3) research hypotheses were postulated in the course of this study. Hypothesis 1 was tested using the independent t-test while hypotheses two and three were tested using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), at 0.05 level of significance. The results are shown in Tables 2, 3 and 4.

HO₁: *There is no significant difference in the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance based on respondents’ gender.*

In order to test hypothesis 1, responses of the respondents to items that addressed the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance of respondents based on gender were computed using the independent t-test and the result is given in Table 2.

Table 2: The t-test of difference in the impact lifelong education and in skill the development and labour force performance based on respondents gender.

Variables	N0	Mean	Std.	df	Cal.t-value	Sig.	Remarks
Male	74	44.57	3.05	108	3.164	0.011	Significant
Female	36	46.39	2.24				
P < 0.05							

Table 2 reveals that the calculated t-value of 3.164 is significant at 0.05 alpha level (0.011). This implies that there is significant difference in the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance based on respondents’ gender.

HO₂: *There is no significant difference in the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance based on respondents' sponsorship.*

In order to test hypothesis 2, responses of the respondents to items that addressed the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance based on respondents' sponsorship were computed using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The result is given in Table 3.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance of the impact of lifelong education in skill development and the labour force performance based on respondents sponsorship

Sources of Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	Cal f-Value	Sig	Remarks
Between groups	35.115	3				
Within groups	911.939	106	11.705	1.361	0.259	Not Significant
Total	947.055	109				

P < 0.05

Table 3 shows that the calculated F-value is 1.361 which is not significant at 0.05 alpha level (0.259). This implies that there is no significant difference on the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance based on respondents' sponsorship.

HO₃: *There is no significant difference in the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance based on respondents' working experiences.*

In order to test research hypothesis 3, responses of the respondents to items that addressed impact of impact lifelong education on skill development and job performance based on respondents' working experiences were computed using a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and the result is given in Table 4.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance of the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance based on respondents' working experiences

Sources of Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	Cal f-Value	Sig	Remarks
Between groups	228.181	2				
Within groups	718.873	107	114.091	16.982	0.000	Significant
Total	947.055	109				

P < 0.05

Table 5 reveals that the calculated F-value of 16.982 and a p-value of 0.000 was obtained at 0.05 alpha level, the null hypothesis is significant. Hence, there is significant difference in the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance based on respondents' working experiences.

Discussion of Results

The results from the analysis revealed that inclusive lifelong education had great premium in skill development of the labour force who enrolled in Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour Studies (MINILS). This finding agrees with that of Anyaele (2003, p.91) which revealed that education and training in form of in-service training help workers to acquire the necessary skills and make them to be more efficient in their daily activities. This is also in accordance with the assertion by Bloom and Campbell's finding (2002) who stated that the technology and telecommunications sectors have been experiencing a significant boost in recent years at the same time as the nature of the jobs in the sector has been changing rapidly. This has created a major demand for training that can prepare workers for new or changed jobs in their companies and which can also prepare them for finding new employment outside those companies when necessary .Therefore, the respondents' responses showed a degree of improvement in the skills acquired through the use of computer assisted learning in the course of their study. This was ranked third and fifth with mean scores of 3.52 and 3.37 respectively.

Over the years, governmental and non-governmental organizations have encouraged the training and retraining of their staff through a series of education and training. Hence, "the training I acquired through continuing education keeps me relevant on-the-job" had a mean score of 3.76 and ranked second. This finding supports the work of Muhammed et al in Tahir (2000). In other words, the training provided by the Institute is positively linked to the needs and aspirations of individuals. Furthermore, it has been able to adapt workers training to technological changes with resultant increase in the minimum knowledge acquired. In addition, "the knowledge I acquired assisted me in analytical and critical reasoning in decision

making process”, attracted a mean score of 3.90 and revealed that the programme achieved all round development of the workers. This reflects the suggestion by Ambali and Ebireri (2014, pp.64-75) that productive skills, encapsulating skills that have to do with being leadership, analytical, the management of multiple priorities, being multicultural, sensitive and other skills, that have to do with problem-solving and reasoning should be incorporated into the training programmes of workers. These skills are seen to be important in the workplace, as well as having spill-over benefits to the community and for Nigeria. This possibly explains why the “knowledge I acquired assisted me in analytical and critical reasoning in decision making process” came first. The findings, that there is significant difference in the views of the respondents as to the positive impact of lifelong education on improving professional skills and efficiency of labour irrespective of their gender. Kester and Adeyeye’s (2006, p.241-248) findings tend to lend credence to this position. The authors remarked that workers’ education should not train individual workers in Africa for specific roles but to help them to gain some understanding of the meaning of their lives and to become more sensitive to the general problems of the African societies and the other people around them.

Based on the research hypotheses tested, it was revealed that there is significant difference in the perspective level of the participants. It indicated that the programme has been meeting the learning needs of the participants irrespective of their gender and working experiences. Thus, the null hypothesis is not retained. The calculated t-value is 3.164 with a p-value of 0.011. Since the critical-value of 0.011 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. However, working experience had f-value of 16.982 with a p-value of 0.000. However, hypothesis 2 shows that, there is no significant difference in the impact of lifelong education on skill development and labour force performance of respondents based on sponsorship.

Furthermore, most of the responses of the respondents (participants) on mode of sponsorship shows that their enrolment was based on self sponsorship as there was little support or no motivation by their employers. This finding is in accordance with Ogunlade (2002) who found out that extrinsic motivations are externally stimulated and influenced factors that induce an individual to develop a felt need to participate in specific activities that would satisfy such derived needs. The government, private employers and labour unions should encourage or motivate their members for further studies by giving them scholarship or study grants so as to promote and ensure labour efficiency.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper examined the impact of lifelong education in Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour Studies (MINILS) on efficiency of labour. The findings of this study invariably indicated that lifelong education remains the pivot on which the training and retraining of workers in the Institute rest. From the report made available, the institute had trained several workers in the areas of teaching, research,

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education, publication and consultancy and its programmes were run through continuing education. Thus, the MINILS training programme could be considered relevant as a means of improving labour efficiency as the programme has impacted on the lives of participants positively. It is against this backdrop that the government should place emphasis on the continuing education of personnel in both the private and the public sectors of the economy. Besides, and more specifically, trade unions should encourage their members across the country to participate effectively in the Institute's training programme and similar ones.

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