

**THE ROLE OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN
IMPROVING THE RURAL AREAS: A CASE STUDY OF EGOR LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE**

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**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

DECEMBER 2025

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FACULTY OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN BENIN CITY IN FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR DEGREE (B.ED.)
IN ADULT EDUCATION**

DECEMBER 2025

APPROVAL

I, the undersigned certify that this project work was carried out **by Ufuoma Favour AKPOR** with the Matriculation No. **EDU2106351** in the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City and approve it as adequate in scope and quality in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of education degree of the faculty of education, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.

Prof. (Mrs.) L. A. Okukpon
Project Supervisor

Date

CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that this research report was conducted by Ufuoma Favour **AKPOR** with Matriculation No. Edu2106351 in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Education (B.ED) in Adult Education, University of Benin, Benin City.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God Almighty for His grace, strength, wisdom, and guidance throughout the course of this academic journey. It is also dedicated to my parents Mr. Akpor Edu Abade and Mrs. Chineyere Abade and family members for their constant love, prayers, encouragement, and unwavering support, which made the successful completion of this work possible.

Furthermore, this project is dedicated to everyone who contributed in one way or another to my academic growth and personal development. Their support and motivation played a significant role in bringing this project to fruition.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to thank God for His grace, inspiration, and strength granted to me throughout the course of completing this project. I am deeply grateful for His guidance and unwavering support.

My heartfelt appreciation goes to my parents and siblings (Fejiro, Great, and Faith) for their constant encouragement, love, and belief in my academic journey. I am also sincerely thankful to Uncle Gabriel and Barrister Chima Williams for their support and positive influence.

I acknowledge my course adviser Mrs. Oransaye and all the dedicated lecturers Dr Mrs A. O. Oimage who is also the current HOD (Head of department) , Mrs Oviawe, Dr Mrs Abbey Fashe, whose teachings contributed immensely to my academic growth. My profound gratitude also goes to my project supervisor Prof. Mrs. Okukpon and Dr. Aghedo for the guidance, patience, and commitment shown throughout the process of completing this work.

A special appreciation goes to my dear friends Bro chidera, Grace, Emmanuel, Lummy, Samuel, Chidi, Ayomide, Henry, Promise, Precious, Ekene and Queen for their support, prayers, and motivation during this academic pursuit.

Finally, I am thankful to everyone who contributed in one way or another to the success of this project. Your support is truly appreciated.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of non-formal education programmes in improving rural areas, using Egor Local Government Area of Edo State as a case study. The study was carried out in response to persistent challenges facing rural communities, such as illiteracy, unemployment, poverty, and limited access to formal education. Four research questions guided the study, focusing on the types of non-formal education programmes available, their impact on rural development, their contribution to the socio-economic life of the people, and the challenges affecting their implementation.

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised adult learners, facilitators, beneficiaries of skills acquisition programmes, community leaders, and relevant agency representatives in Egor Local Government Area. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from one hundred (100) respondents selected through simple random sampling. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentages.

The findings revealed that non-formal education programmes such as adult literacy education, vocational and skills acquisition training, health education, women empowerment programmes, and civic education are available and functional in Egor Local Government Area. The study further revealed that these programmes have contributed positively to rural development by improving literacy levels, employment opportunities, community participation, and socio-economic well-being. However, challenges such as inadequate funding, shortage of facilitators, insufficient facilities, and inadequate government support were identified. The study therefore recommends increased funding, improved community sensitization, and stronger institutional support to enhance the effectiveness of non-formal education programmes in rural areas.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Education is the process of learning to live as a responsible member of given social community. It is also the process through which a people's culture and technology are transmitted from one generation to the other. Ndudi (2015) defined education as the total efforts of a community to raise its political, social and economic standard of living and an inevitable tool for surmounting ignorance, disease, poverty and to produce functional individuals who have positive attitudes towards the growth and development of the society. Given this, Okene (2019) argued that the development of any nation depends on the educational attainment of its citizenry and the quality of education of such a nation (Okene, 2019). In recognition of the importance of education, there are three main types of education, namely, Formal, Informal and Non-formal. For the purpose of this study our aim is on non-formal education.

Non-formal education is any organized educational activity organized outside the formal system. According to Livingstone (2011), non-formal education refers to structured learning activities that take place outside the formal education system, often with a focus on specific skills or knowledge. Similarly, Rogers

(2014), opined that non-formal education is characterized by its flexibility, adaptability, and responsiveness to the needs of learners. Non-formal education can take many forms, including workshops, training programs, and community-based initiatives, and can play an important role in promoting lifelong learning and skill development Werquin (2010). Rural areas often face unique challenges in accessing formal education, making non-formal education a vital component of learning in these communities.

A rural area is a geographic region located outside of urban centers, characterized by low population density, limited access to services, and a strong connection to natural resources (United Nations, 2020). According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2018), rural areas are often dominated by agricultural land, forests, or natural habitats, and are typically distinguished from urban areas by their lower population density and more limited access to services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure. As noted by the World Bank (2019), rural areas often face unique challenges, including limited economic opportunities, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to basic services, which can hinder development and limit opportunities for residents.

Rural areas face unique challenges that can hinder development and limit opportunities for residents. According to (Kafu, 2018), limited access to formal education, economic constraints, and geographical isolation are some of the key challenges that rural communities encounter. Furthermore, the United Nations Development Programme (2020) added that the challenges rural areas face, can make it difficult for individuals to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to improve their socio-economic status. The importance of non-formal education programs in addressing these challenges and promoting rural development (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2019). By providing flexible and adaptable learning opportunities, non-formal education programs can play a vital role in empowering rural communities and improving their socio-economic status.

Non-formal education programs can play a vital role in rural development by providing individuals with relevant skills and knowledge that can improve their socio-economic status. According to a report by the United Nations Development Programme (2020), non-formal education programs can empower individuals to take an active role in shaping their communities and promote community development. In Nigeria, the government has adopted various non-formal education programs to address the specific needs of rural communities. For example, the National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS) provides vocational

training to out-of-school youths and adults in rural areas, equipping them with skills in areas such as agriculture, craftsmanship, and entrepreneurship (Federal Ministry of Education, 2019).

Furthermore, The Nigerian government has also implemented other non-formal education programs, such as the National Functional Literacy Programme, which aims to provide functional literacy skills to adults and out-of-school youths in rural areas (National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education, 2020). Additionally, the government's Almajiri Education Programme provides education and skills training to Almajiri children and youths in rural areas, enabling them to acquire relevant skills and knowledge that can improve their socio-economic status (Federal Ministry of Education, 2020). By providing flexible and adaptable learning opportunities, these non-formal education programs can help address the specific needs of rural communities and promote rural development.

In view of the foregoing, Egor Local Government Area, like many other rural communities in Nigeria, faces numerous challenges that hinder its development, including limited access to formal education, high rate of illiteracy, poverty, and unemployment. Okoroafor (2018) in his research found that these challenges can limit the capacity of individuals to participate fully in the

development of their communities. However, non-formal education can play a vital role in addressing these challenges by providing individuals with relevant skills and knowledge that can improve their socio-economic status. Non-formal education programs can equip individuals with skills in areas such as agriculture, craftsmanship, and entrepreneurship, enabling them to start and manage their own businesses, thereby reducing poverty and unemployment. Additionally, non-formal education can promote literacy and numeracy skills, empowering individuals to participate more effectively in their communities and make informed decisions about their lives (Anyanwu, 2019). It is against this backdrop this study seeks to investigate The Role of Non-Formal Education Programs in Improving the Rural Areas. By providing flexible and adaptable learning opportunities, non-formal education can help address the specific needs of Egor Local Government Area and promote community development.

Statement of the Problem

Although non-formal education programmes exist across Nigeria, evidence suggests that many of them operate below optimal capacity. Challenges such as inadequate funding, irregular attendance, shortage of trained facilitators, poor community participation, and lack of relevant instructional materials persist . Owede (2022). Moreover, many non-formal education programmes are poorly

integrated into local development plans, leading to minimal impact on beneficiaries' livelihoods.

In Edo State, and particularly in Egor Local Government Area, there is limited empirical research on how effectively non-formal education has improved literacy levels, enhanced vocational skills, or contributed to local economic growth. The National Commission for Mass Literacy periodically reports enrolment figures, but few studies have explored the life experiences of participants or the socio-economic outcomes of non formal education initiatives at the grassroots level.

Research Questions

The following questions were put forward for this study:

1. What are the non-formal education programmes in Egor Local Government Area?
2. What is the impact of non-formal education programmes on rural development in Egor Local Government Area?
3. How does non-formal education programmes improve the socio-economic life of people in Egor Local Government Area?
4. What are the challenges faced by non-formal education programmes in Egor Local Government Area?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the role of non-formal education programmes in improving the socio-economic and cultural development of rural areas, using Egor Local Government Area as a case study.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

- Identify the existing non-formal education programmes available in Egor Local Government Area.
- Assess the impact of these non-formal education programmes on rural development within the area.
- Determine how non-formal education programmes contribute to improving the socio-economic well-being of the people in Egor Local Government Area.
- Investigate the major challenges confronting the implementation and effectiveness of non-formal education programmes in the area.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study when published and kept in the library will be of enormous benefit to rural settlers, educational institutions, government and future researchers.

Rural settlers will benefit from the study's findings by gaining a better understanding of the opportunities available to them through non-formal education

programs. This knowledge will empower them to make informed decisions about their participation in these programs and to take advantage of the benefits they offer. Ultimately, the study's findings will contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of rural settlers, enabling them to lead more fulfilling and productive lives.

The study's findings will also be of significant benefit to educational institutions. By examining the role of non-formal education programs in rural development, the study will provide insights into the effectiveness of these programs and identify areas for improvement. Educational institutions will benefit from the study's findings by gaining a better understanding of the needs of rural communities and the ways in which non-formal education programs can be tailored to meet those needs. This knowledge will enable educational institutions to develop more effective non-formal education programs that are responsive to the needs of rural communities. Ultimately, the study's findings will contribute to the improvement of the quality of education provided by educational institutions, enabling them to better serve the needs of rural communities.

Government will also benefit from the study's findings. By highlighting the impact of non-formal education programs on rural development, the study will provide policymakers with valuable insights into the effectiveness of these

programs. The study's findings will inform policy decisions, enabling governments to develop targeted interventions and allocate resources effectively. Governments will be able to use the study's findings to develop policies and programs that promote the development of rural areas and improve the socio-economic status of rural communities. Ultimately, the study's findings will contribute to the achievement of national development goals, including the reduction of poverty and inequality.

Finally, the study's findings will be of great benefit to future researchers. By providing a comprehensive examination of the role of non-formal education programs in rural development, the study will serve as a valuable resource for future researchers. The study's findings will provide a foundation for further research and exploration, enabling future researchers to build on the study's findings and explore new areas of inquiry. Future researchers will be able to use the study's findings to inform their own research, avoiding duplication of effort and ensuring that their research is relevant and meaningful. Ultimately, the study's findings will contribute to the advancement of knowledge and understanding in the field of non-formal education and rural development.

Scope of the Study

The focus of this study is on investigating the role of non-formal education programs in improving rural areas, with a specific case study of Egor Local Government Area. The study will examine the current state, impact, challenges, and potential of non-formal education programs in this local government area, providing insights into their effectiveness and potential for improving the quality of life of rural residents. The study's scope is limited to Egor Local Government Area, allowing for an in-depth examination of the specific context and needs of this rural community.

Definition of Terms

For clarity, the following key terms are defined as used in this study:

Education: A process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary for the development of an individual and society.

Non-Formal Education: Any organized educational activity outside the established formal school system that is designed to meet the learning needs of particular groups of people, such as adults, youth, and out-of-school individuals.

Formal Education: Structured education that takes place in schools and institutions following a prescribed curriculum and leads to the attainment of recognized certificates or degrees.

Rural Area: A community or settlement located outside urban centers, characterized by low population density, limited infrastructure, and agriculture-based livelihoods.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is based on review of related literature on the role of Non-formal education programmes in improving the rural areas using Egor Local Government Area of Edo state as a case study. The review is organized under the following sub-headings:

- Concept of Non-formal Education
- Characteristics of Non-formal Education
- Objectives of Non-formal Education
- Types of Non-formal Education Programmes
- Concept of Rural Development
- The Role of Non-formal Education in Improving Rural Areas
- Socio-economic Impact of Non-formal Education
- Challenges of Non-formal Education Programmes
- Summary of literature reviewed

Concept of Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education refers to any organized and structured learning activity that occurs outside the traditional formal school system. Unlike formal education which follows a rigid curriculum, age-based progression, and

certification standards non-formal education is flexible, learner-centred, and designed to address the diverse needs of individuals and communities. It operates in various settings such as community centres, workplaces, religious institutions, Non-governmental organisations, farms, and even in open public spaces, making it accessible to people of different ages, backgrounds, and socio-economic statuses (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2016).

Non-formal education generally targets populations who, for various reasons, are unable to participate fully in formal schooling. These include school dropouts, adults who missed early educational opportunities, rural dwellers, women, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups. Its focus is on delivering practical knowledge, functional literacy, and life-enhancing skills that directly improve people's ability to earn a living, make informed decisions, and contribute positively to society (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2015)Organisation Economic Co-operation Development (OECD), 2019).

The scope of non-formal education is broad and encompasses a wide range of programmes such as adult literacy classes, vocational and entrepreneurial training, agricultural extension services, health and environmental education,

community development initiatives, civic and political awareness campaigns, and skills acquisition workshops. These programmes are typically short-term, need-based, and often facilitated by government agencies, non-governmental organizations, community groups, and international bodies like UNESCO and UNICEF (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO 2020)).

One distinctive feature of non-formal education is its flexibility in terms of time, location, teaching methods, and content. Learning sessions can be adjusted to suit participants daily schedules, cultural contexts, and learning capacities. Methods such as group discussions, demonstrations, peer learning, role-play, and hands-on activities are commonly employed to make the learning process interactive and practical. This flexibility makes non-formal education particularly effective in rural areas where rigid, conventional learning structures may not be suitable (Organisation Economic Co-operation Development (OECD) (2018)).

Non-formal education also plays a critical role in socio-economic development. It empowers people with skills for employment and self-reliance, enhances agricultural productivity through training, promotes better health practices, strengthens civic consciousness, and fosters community participation in development initiatives. Additionally, it supports national development goals by

reducing illiteracy, promoting gender equality, empowering youth, and building human capital necessary for sustainable development (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2017) Organisation Economic Co-operation Development (OECD) (2021).

Furthermore, non-formal education complements formal education by filling learning gaps, offering second-chance opportunities, and providing lifelong learning pathways for individuals seeking personal or professional improvement. It helps promote inclusiveness by reaching people who have been left behind by the conventional school system, thereby contributing to social equity and national cohesion (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2018).

In summary, non-formal education is a dynamic, inclusive, and transformative approach to learning that equips individuals and communities with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for improved livelihood, active citizenship, and overall development. Its practical orientation and adaptability make it a vital component of the broader educational system and an essential tool for empowering populations, especially in developing contexts United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2016) Organisation Economic Co-operation Development (OECD) (2019).

Characteristics of Non-formal Education

Non-formal education is usually:

Flexible in time, age, and entry requirements

Non-formal education programs typically operate with flexible schedules that accommodate the daily routines of learners, especially rural populations engaged in farming or informal work. They do not strictly require age-based enrollment, formal qualifications, or rigid attendance, making them accessible to youths, adults, and elderly learners.

This flexibility is widely recognized as essential for expanding learning opportunities in underserved areas United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund(UNICEF), (2022).

Community-based and need-oriented

Non-formal education is designed around the immediate needs of communities such as agricultural improvement, health awareness, income generation, or literacy. It is often organized at the grassroots level through community learning centers, farmer groups, cooperatives, and local institutions.

Practical and problem-solving in nature

Non-formal learning emphasizes hands-on, experiential approaches that solve real-life problems such as improving crop yields, managing finances, adopting healthy practices, or acquiring trades. UNESCO's lifelong learning framework underscores that non-formal learning must be directly applicable to daily living and community development (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2022).

Less formal in curriculum and assessment

Non-formal education does not depend on standardized curricula or formal examinations. Content is often adapted to local contexts, delivered in simple language, and assessed through observation, participation, or demonstration rather than written tests. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (2021) states that non-formal programs allow curriculum adaptation based on learner context and local realities.

Open to youths, adults, and women who missed formal schooling

Non-formal education targets marginalized groups, including rural adults, out-of-school youth, and women who may have been denied access to formal education due to cultural, economic, or geographical barriers. United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (2022) highlights that women and girls in rural communities especially benefit from accessible learning spaces

that support gender equality. Similarly, Organisation Economic Co-operation Development (OECD) (2021). acknowledges that adult learning and re-skilling programs are critical for rural economies facing labor shortages.

Delivered through workshops, training centres, seminars, or extension programmes

Delivery methods for non-formal education are diverse and include vocational centers, community learning centers, agricultural extension programs, mobile training units, radio learning, and NGO-led workshops. emphasizes the central role of extension services and farmer field schools in transmitting agricultural knowledge Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2021). Organisation Economic Co-operation Development (OECD) (2022). also recognizes workplace-based and community training as critical pathways for skills development.

Objectives of Non-formal Education

Non-formal education is designed to meet the learning needs of individuals and communities, especially in rural and underserved settings. Its major goals include:

To eradicate illiteracy among youths and adults

A core objective of non-formal education is to provide literacy and numeracy skills to youths and adults who missed formal schooling. Research shows that literacy programs improve individual confidence, employment prospects, and community participation Akintola & Adeyemi (2022). Chowdhury & Rahman (2021) emphasize that community learning centers offering non-formal literacy programs strengthen rural development by empowering households with basic reading, writing, and problem-solving abilities. Osei (2023) adds that improved literacy fosters community cohesion and increases civic engagements.

. To equip individuals with vocational and occupational skills

Non-formal education often focuses on vocational training in agriculture, carpentry, tailoring, Information communication technology (ICT), crafts, and technical trades. Muriithi (2022) notes that skills training programs significantly improve youth employability in rural regions.

Kumar & Patel (2023) also emphasize that vocational and skill-based non-formal programs are central to lifelong learning and rural workforce preparation.

To promote self-reliance and income generation

Non-formal education plays a major role in supporting livelihoods and reducing dependency by empowering individuals to start small businesses, adopt improved farming methods, or diversify income sources.

According to Akintola & Adeyemi (2022) skill acquisition through non-formal channels enhances self-reliance and economic independence among rural households. Nasir & Hassan (2023) observe that when women gain access to entrepreneurial training, they increase household income and support community development.

. To improve health awareness and family welfare

Many non-formal education initiatives include health education, nutrition training, family planning, sanitation, and childcare awareness. Osei (2023) also notes that improved health literacy through non-formal learning contributes to reductions in preventable diseases and strengthens rural family welfare systems.

.To foster social integration and civic responsibility

Non-formal education encourages social cooperation, peaceful coexistence, and active citizenship.

Akintola & Adeyemi (2022) highlight that adult learning programs enhance social cohesion by bridging educational gaps between community members.

Kumar & Patel (2023) argue that civic education delivered through non-formal structures improves participation in community decision-making and local governance.

Sarkar (2022) also adds that community learning initiatives help build solidarity and empower marginalized groups in rural regions.

. To enhance sustainable rural development

A major goal of non-formal education is to promote agricultural improvement, environmental conservation, community leadership, and sustainable livelihoods in rural areas. Mwangi & Abdi's (2021) work shows that farmer training programs boost crop yields and encourage environmentally responsible farming. Sarkar (2022) highlights that non-formal community learning centers act as hubs for innovation, sustainable agriculture, and rural transformation.

Types of Non-formal Education Programmes

Non-formal education in rural communities takes various forms designed to meet local needs, promote livelihood skills, and strengthen community development. Key programme types include the following:

. Adult Literacy and Continuing Education

Adult literacy programmes help rural youths and adults acquire reading, writing and numeracy skills essential for daily living, farming productivity,

business management, and civic participation. These programmes often integrate functional literacy with livelihood training to increase relevance. International development agencies emphasize adult literacy as a foundation for rural empowerment and poverty reduction .Global Education Monitoring Report, (2023). Recent rural development reviews show that adult literacy improves income opportunities and enhances women’s participation in decision-making

. Vocational and Technical Skills Training

Vocational programmes in areas such as fashion design, welding, carpentry, catering, and hairdressing equip rural populations with employable and entrepreneurial skills. These programmes are often short-term, practical, and market-driven. Research shows that such training improves youth employment, reduces rural urban migration, and enhances household improvement . International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (2023). Global labour skills agencies also highlight technical training as essential for addressing skills shortages in rural labour markets.

. Agricultural Extension Programmes

Agricultural extension forms one of the most widespread non-formal learning systems in rural communities. Farmers are trained on improved crop production, livestock management, climate-smart agriculture, pest control,

agribusiness practices, and post-harvest technologies. Extension enhances food security and farm resilience, especially in climate-vulnerable regions (FAO, State of Food and Agriculture, 2023; IFAD, Rural Development Report, 2022). Studies also show that participation in agricultural extension significantly increases farm yields and adoption of improved technologies World Bank (2024) (OECD Agriculture Directorate, 2023).

. Health and Environmental Sanitation Education

Health education teaches rural families about hygiene, nutrition, maternal and child care, disease prevention, reproductive health, clean water practices, and environmental sanitation. These programmes reduce morbidity, improve community wellbeing, and support sustainable environmental practices. UNICEF reports that community-based health education remains one of the most effective ways to reduce preventable diseases in rural populations (UNICEF, Health and Hygiene Report, 2023).

. Women and Youth Empowerment Schemes

Non-formal education programmes targeting women and youth focus on leadership skills, financial literacy, reproductive health, rights education, business skills, and cooperative development. These programmes increase women's agency, reduce gender inequalities, and promote youth innovation in rural areas.

Empowerment interventions are shown to directly improve family welfare and community development outcomes (UNESCO, 2023) Development agencies highlight women-focused non-formal learning as vital for achieving rural economic resilience (World Bank, Gender and Development Report, 2024 ,Inclusive Growth Report).

. Civic and Political Awareness Programmes

These programmes train rural citizens on their civic rights and responsibilities, community participation, conflict resolution, leadership, and local governance processes. Civic education promotes democratic participation, social inclusion, and peaceful coexistence. UNESCO reports that community-based civic learning strengthens accountability and enhances local development planning (UNESCO, Civic Education Report, 2023). International agencies also note the importance of civic programming for rural governance and community solidarity (World Bank, 2024)OECD Governance Unit, 2023).

Concept of Rural Development

Rural development refers to the comprehensive and sustained efforts aimed at improving the overall quality of life, economic well-being, and social welfare of people living in rural communities. It encompasses a wide range of planned interventions that seek to reduce poverty, enhance livelihoods, strengthen

community participation, and promote equitable access to essential services and opportunities. The concept recognizes that rural areas often experience challenges such as low incomes, limited infrastructure, inadequate social amenities, and restricted access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. As such, rural development seeks to address these multidimensional issues in a holistic and sustainable manner World Bank (2023).

At its core, rural development involves expanding access to basic social services such as clean water, healthcare, electricity, schools, and transportation networks. These services provide the foundation upon which individuals and communities can thrive. Improved infrastructure—rural roads, irrigation systems, storage facilities, communication networks, and marketplaces—plays a critical role in connecting rural dwellers to markets, employment, information, and essential services. These infrastructural improvements directly influence agricultural productivity, economic growth, and livelihood diversification (World Bank, Rural Development Report, 2024).

Agricultural development remains a central pillar of rural progress because farming and agro-related activities constitute the primary livelihood source for a majority of rural populations. Enhancing agricultural productivity through improved seeds, modern technologies, extension services, mechanization, and

climate-smart farming practices is essential for food security and income generation. Research emphasizes that increased agricultural productivity leads to higher household earnings, job creation, and rural economic stability Akintola & Adeyemi (2022). The modern monetization of agriculture also reduces post-harvest losses, promotes value addition, and improves access to local and international markets.

Rural development also prioritizes poverty reduction through targeted interventions such as skills training, microfinance schemes, women's empowerment programmes, youth development initiatives, and rural entrepreneurship support. These programs help individuals diversify their income sources, reduce vulnerability to shocks, and build long-term economic resilience. According to Adeyemi (2023), community-based skill acquisition and micro-enterprise investments significantly contribute to rural income growth and employment generation.

Another key dimension of rural development is human capital improvement through literacy development, healthcare education, and vocational training. Improved literacy and education levels help rural residents participate more effectively in economic activities, adopt new technologies, and engage in civic and political processes. Strengthening human capital fosters self-reliance, enhances

productivity, and empowers individuals to make informed decisions that benefit themselves and their communities Akintola (2022).

Furthermore, rural development involves strengthening local governance, community participation, and social cohesion. When local people are involved in planning, decision-making, and project implementation, interventions tend to be more effective, equitable, and sustainable. Community-driven development models help ensure that programmes reflect the specific needs and aspirations of rural residents, increasing ownership and long-term impact World Bank (2024).

Modern rural development frameworks also emphasize sustainability and resilience. Climate change, environmental degradation, and resource depletion pose significant risks to rural livelihoods. Therefore, contemporary strategies promote environmentally responsible farming, renewable energy adoption, improved water management, and resilient rural infrastructure. These approaches help communities withstand environmental shocks while preserving natural resources for future generations.

In essence, rural development is a dynamic, multidimensional, and long-term process that integrates economic growth, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and institutional strengthening. It aims to create vibrant rural communities with improved living standards, adequate opportunities, and the

capacity to participate fully in national development. Through comprehensive policies, investments, and community engagement, rural development contributes significantly to national stability, economic diversification, and overall human advancement World Bank (2023) Akintola & Adeyemi(2022–2023).

Role of Non-formal Education in Improving Rural Areas

Non-formal education plays a central, multi-dimensional role in rural development. By operating outside formal school systems, Non- formal education programmes reaches populations that formal systems often miss, delivering practical, context-sensitive learning that produces measurable improvements across literacy, livelihoods, health, governance and resilience. Below I expand each claimed contribution with research evidence and mechanisms.

. Reducing illiteracy and improving communication skills

Non-formal literacy programmes delivered through community learning centres, outreach classes, or integrated livelihood courses provide functional literacy and numeracy targeted to adults and out-of-school youth. These programmes commonly combine basic reading and numeracy with content tied to livelihood market skills, farming manuals, medical outreach;which both motivates attendance and accelerates practical application. Evaluations and empirical studies show that literacy obtained via Non-formal education programmes increases

participants' ability to access agricultural information, understand extension advice, keep basic records for small enterprises, and engage in local governance processes Fakhruddin (2019). In contexts where girls and women face barriers to school attendance, targeted Non-formal education programmes have been shown to close gaps in basic literacy and civic communication, enabling better household decision-making and participation.

. Enhancing employability through vocational training

Competency-based vocational and technical training delivered outside formal Technical vocational education training, some institutions also equips rural learners with marketable skills like tailoring, welding, carpentry, etc. Research shows that short, practical courses increase short-term employability and the likelihood of self-employment particularly when programmes include apprenticeships, employer engagement, and links to local markets. Studies also underscore limits: training without mentoring, finance, or market linkages often yields only transient gains. Reviews of Non-formal education vocational programmes therefore recommend integrated support mentorship, microcredit, product development to convert skills into sustainable incomes. Empirical evidence from program evaluations confirms improved employment outcomes where those supports exist

. Increasing agricultural productivity through extension education

Farmer Field Schools , farmer-to-farmer learning, on-farm demonstrations and season-long practical modules are among the best-documented Non-formal education models in agriculture. Food and Agriculture Organization recent framework and toolkit for monitoring, evaluation and learning in Farmer field schools details how participatory, experiential learning increases farmers analytical skills, adoption of improved and climate-smart practices, and resilience to shocks Phillips & Morales-Abubakar (2023). Field studies show that Non-formal education programmes promote local innovation and climate preparedness among isolated farmers, leading to higher adoption rates and improved outcomes when facilitation quality and follow-up supports are present. By using experiments, farmer groups learn to observe, test and adapt techniques such as pest control, soil management, crop rotation, water use, which fosters ownership and contextual adaptation.

. Promoting economic empowerment and income generation

Non-formal education programmes contribute to income generation through vocational training, entrepreneurship modules, value-chain training, and group-based micro enterprise support. Research indicates that combined packages such as skills training plus access to finance/markets and mentorship generate

stronger and more sustained income gains than training alone Fakhruddin (2019). Non-formal education programmes also enables diversification away from subsistence agriculture small-scale processing, crafts, services, which reduces vulnerability to agricultural shocks. Practical business skills such as bookkeeping, marketing, product development plus collective savings/credit mechanisms increase start-up and business survival rates. Programme evaluations stress that market diagnostics and post-training support are decisive for long-term income impacts.

. Strengthening community participation, leadership and decision-making

Non-formal education approaches emphasizing on participatory pedagogy ,build community capacity for collective action. Empirical studies (e.g., Namooog 2024) show that district-level non-formal education initiatives increase women's leadership and representation in local governance, and broader Non-formal education research documents improvements in civic engagement, community planning and conflict resolution. By creating inclusive learning spaces . Non-formal education programmes foster leadership skills, social networks, and local accountability that underpin sustainable community development Structured reflection, dialogue and locally driven action plans created in non-formal education settings translate individual learning into collective projects ,village

sanitation drives, savings clubs, which strengthens social capital and governance outcomes.

Socio-economic Impact of Non-formal Education in Rural Communities

Non-formal education (NFE) , defined as structured, organised learning that takes place outside the formal school system and is tailored to learners' needs, is a powerful instrument for socio-economic change in rural areas. Across contexts, Non-formal education programmes such as adult literacy classes, vocational and entrepreneurship training, agricultural extension/Farmer Field Schools, health and sanitation education, and civic learning, produce a constellation of effects that together improve household welfare, community resilience and local development trajectories . Alemayehu & Tesfaye(2022).

. Promotion of self-reliance and entrepreneurship

Non-formal education programmes builds practical skills and business know-how that enable learners to start and sustain micro/small enterprises. Vocational modules tailoring, carpentry, food preservation combined with basic business training such as bookkeeping, costing, market analysis, reduce entry barriers to entrepreneurship. Evaluations show that graduates of Non-formal education vocational tracks are more likely to form micro enterprise or take up paid work in local trades; when training is packaged with mentoring and linkages

to microfinance, impacts on business survival and incomes are markedly higher. Ifeoma (2020).

. Poverty reduction and income diversification

By equipping rural populations with income-earning skills and facilitating diversification away from single-crop subsistence farming, Non-formal education reduces vulnerability to crop failure and price shocks. Intsiful & Martins (2019) document cases in which adult learning and skills acquisition improved household earnings and assets; similarly, Ifeoma (2020) shows that non-formal programmes targeted at subsistence farmers and informal workers can increase monthly incomes and household food security. Recent systematic evidence further suggests that when Non-formal education programmes are integrated with extension services and market access, the effect on poverty reduction is stronger. Babu, Ghosh & Rai(2025).

. Improved standards of living and human capital accumulation

Non-formal education programmes enhance human capital not just through vocational skill formation but also via improved literacy, numeracy, financial capability and health knowledge. Increased literacy allows rural people to read product labels, follow extension recommendations, maintain business records, and interact more effectively with institutions. Studies show links

between adult education and better household decisions on nutrition, schooling for children, and preventive health behaviours all of which translate into improved living standards Alemayehu & Tesfaye(2022).

. Economic empowerment of women and marginalised groups

Non-formal education programmes frequently target women and other marginalized groups who were excluded from formal schooling. Tailored training, flexible scheduling, female trainers, childcare support, increases female participation and delivers outsized social returns: women's economic agency, household bargaining power, and investment in children's health and education rise after participation in non-formal education programmes.

. Health, sanitation and welfare improvements

Non-formal health and WASH education delivered through community platforms translates into improved hygiene practices, higher immunisation uptake, better maternal and child care and reduced incidence of preventable illnesses. Alemayehu & Tesfaye's (2022) study of environmentally focused Non-formal education projects demonstrates the co-benefits between environmental education and household welfare: nutrition improved through home gardens and reduced exposure to environmental hazards. Non-formal education participatory methods

such as demonstrations, peer educators, role plays etc;are particularly effective for behaviour .

Challenges of Non-formal Education Programmes

Despite their important contributions, non-formal education programmes in rural areas face a cluster of persistent challenges that limit reach, quality and sustainability. These constraints are interlinked funding shortfalls that affect instructor availability and materials; cultural barriers depress participation; and poor learning environments reduce retention and learning outcomes.

. Inadequate funding and weak government support

Many Non-formal education initiatives are financed through small Non-governmental organization grants, donor projects, community contributions;rather than through recurrent, predictable budget lines. This makes programmes short-lived, forces compromises in quality. Where governments do not institutionalize Non-formal education programmes through policy frameworks, accreditation pathways, or staffing , programmes remain marginal and fragmented. Funding uncertainty leads to short training cycles that cannot deliver mastery, low pay for facilitators inability to procure up-to-date teaching aids, and no funds for monitoring and evaluation (M&E). It also discourages participants when programmes start and stop unpredictably.

. Shortage of trained instructors and inadequate facilities

Quality Non-formal education programmes depends on facilitators who can apply participatory measures, adapt curricula to local contexts and manage adult learning groups. Rural areas often lack such trainers; classrooms or community learning centres may be unavailable or poorly equipped. Ifeoma (2020) notes that where instructors are volunteers or poorly remunerated, attendance and learning outcomes suffer. Zikargae (2022) shows environmental education projects that used skilled local facilitators achieved better behaviour change and greater community ownership than those relying on short-term external trainers. Under-trained facilitators cannot use adult-centred methods problem-posing, participatory demonstrations, lowering learner engagement. Poor facilities limit experiential learning, and lack of basic infrastructure (lighting, seating) discourages attendance especially for women and older learners.

. Low public awareness and limited participation

Many eligible adults and youth are unaware of available Non- formal education opportunities or doubt their value relative to immediate survival activities. Misperceptions about the relevance of Non-formal education reduce enrolment. Social norms may also discourage certain groups (women, older learners) from participating.

Intsiful & Martins (2019) report low initial uptake in rural Ghana where community engagement and sensitisation were limited. Ifeoma (2020) notes that local trust and awareness campaigns were necessary precursors to successful roll-out in Nigerian communities.

. Cultural barriers and gender discrimination

Deeply entrenched gender norms and cultural practices restrict women's mobility, time, and participation in public learning spaces. Similarly, ethnic hierarchies or age-based expectations can exclude certain groups.

Akintola & Adeyemi (2022) and Ifeoma (2020) document that in some societies women face barriers to attending classes (lack of male permission, household duties, safety concerns). Sarkar (2022) notes that without gender-responsive scheduling and female facilitators, women are less likely to enrol or complete courses.

Cultural barriers create opportunity costs and social sanctions for participation; programmes perceived to contravene norms are resisted.

Cross-cutting and systemic issues

Several problems cut across the specific challenges above: lack of monitoring & evaluation (M&E) systems that limit learning about weak certification / recognition that reduces labour market value of Non-formal

education credentials, and poor linkages to markets and public services health, extension, finance that constrain the translation of learning into economic gains Foley & Martin (2020) Akintola & Adeyemi (2022).

Summary of Literature Reviewed

It can be seen from the various studies cited on the role of Non-formal education in improving the rural areas in Egor Local Government Area, it consistently demonstrates that non-formal education is a powerful driver of rural development, particularly through its contributions to literacy improvement, vocational skills acquisition, agricultural training, and community empowerment. Scholars agree that Non-formal education enhances the socio-economic well-being of individuals by promoting employability, income generation, and active civic participation Aderinoye & Odewale (2021) Ajani & Onwubuya, (2020) Studies also show that rural communities that actively engage in Non-formal education programmes tend to record higher productivity, greater self-reliance, and stronger community cohesion Anyanwu & Okeke (2019) Eze & Nwangwu (2020).

However, it equally stresses that the impact of Non-formal education programmes is not automatic. Its success depends on several enabling factors, including sufficient funding, availability of trained facilitators, supportive government policies, and strong community involvement Oluwaseun & Adebayo

(2020) Lawal & Usman (2021). Where these conditions are weak, Non-formal education programmes struggle to achieve their developmental objectives. Thus, while Non-formal education programmes remain an essential tool for rural transformation, its effectiveness is closely tied to the level of investment, planning, and collaboration among stakeholders Fakhruddin & Abubakar (2022).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the procedures and methods adopted to investigate the role of non-formal education programmes in improving rural areas, using Egor Local Government Area of Edo State as the case study. The methods are to be discussed under the following sub-headings.

- Design of the Study
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Techniques
- Instrument for Data Collection
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of the Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

Design of the Study

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design was considered suitable because it allows the researcher to collect, summarize and interpret data from a population in its natural setting without manipulating variables. It also provides the opportunity to gather information from a large

number of respondents about their views, experiences and perceptions regarding non-formal education programmes and their contributions to rural development in Egor Local Government Area. The descriptive design is appropriate for educational and social research where the aim is to understand existing conditions, opinions and relationships.

Population of the Study

The target population of the study comprised all individuals directly involved in non-formal education programmes in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

In order to get the needed information, a sample of hundred respondents were selected to represent the population. A combination of stratified sampling and simple random sampling techniques was used to select from each of the ten communities in Egor Local Government Area of Edo state.

Research Instrument

In order to get the needed information, a questionnaire was the instrument used. The questions were formulated from the research questions raised for the study with 25 items set utilizing the 4 point-likert scale of SA,A,D,SD.

Validity of the Instrument

To ensure validity, the questionnaire was given to the supervisor for approval and correction of the item. Adjustments were made based on the supervisor recommendations, confirming that the instrument adequately measured the intended variables.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was established using the test-retest method. The questionnaire was administered to a group of respondents outside the study area but similar in characteristics. After two weeks, it was re-administered to the same group. The scores from the two test were not significantly different after being statistically analyzed.

Method of Data Collection

Data collection was carried out through face-to-face distribution of questionnaires to the selected respondents. The researcher visited non-formal education centres, community learning groups, and vocational training centres within Egor Local Government Area in Edo state. Respondents were given time to complete the questionnaire, and the researcher ensured that all instruments were retrieved. Assistance was provided where necessary, especially for respondents with limited literacy levels.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Frequency counts and simple percentages were used to analyze demographic information, while mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The results were presented in tables for clarity.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the result of responses of the respondents used in the study. The analyses of data collected and its interpretations is based on the questionnaire distributed to the respondents. However, it is important to note that the analysis carried out in this chapter is based on the results or data derived from the 100 questionnaires that were retrieved.

4.1 Section A — Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	46	46.0%
Female	54	54.0%

Source: Field study 2025

Table 4.1 shows the gender status of respondents. In this table 46% are male while 54% are female.

Table 4.2: Age

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
18–25	20	20.0%
26–35	35	35.0%
36–45	25	25.0%
46 and above	20	20.0%

Source: Field Survey,2025

Table 4.2 shows that 20% of the respondents were within the age range of 18-25yrs, 35% were within the age range of 26-35 years, 25% were within the age range of 36-45yrs, while 20% were of the ages from 46 yrs and above.

Table 4.3: Category of Respondent

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Adult learner	40	40.0%
Instructor/Facilitator	10	10.0%
Beneficiary of Skills Programme	30	30.0%
Community Leader	10	10.0%
NGO/Agency Representative	10	10.0%

Table 4.4: Educational Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
No formal education	8	8.0%
Primary	12	12.0%
Secondary	45	45.0%
Tertiary	35	35.0%

Interpretation (Demographics):

Respondents are reasonably diverse: both genders are represented, the largest age group is 26–35, and most respondents have secondary or tertiary education. A large share are adult learners and beneficiaries — appropriate for a study of non-formal education.

Research Question One:

What are the non-formal education programmes in Egor Local Government Area?

Table 4.1: Availability of Non-formal Education Programmes in Egor LGA

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Adult literacy programmes are actively available in Egor Local Government Area	42	38	12	8	3.14	Accepted
2	Vocational and skills acquisition centres operate in Egor Local Government Area	40	36	14	10	3.06	Accepted
3	Programmes include tailoring, carpentry, hairdressing, computer training	45	34	11	10	3.14	Accepted
4	Health education and community health campaigns are offered	39	37	15	9	3.06	Accepted
5	Women empowerment and income-generating programmes are conducted	44	35	12	9	3.14	Accepted

Criterion Mean=2.50

Grand mean=3.11

Interpretation:

Table 4.1 shows that all items recorded mean values above the criterion mean of 2.50, with a grand mean of 3.11. This indicates that non-formal education programmes such as adult literacy, vocational skills acquisition, health education and women empowerment programmes are available and functional in Egor Local Government Area. This finding aligns with UNESCO (2017) and Rogers (2014), who emphasized that non-formal education provides diverse learning opportunities tailored to community needs, particularly in rural areas.

Research Question Two: What is the impact of non-formal education programmes on rural development in Egor Local Government Area?

Table 4.2: Impact of Non-formal Education on Rural Development

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
6	Literacy levels have improved due to Non-Formal Education Programmes	46	33	12	9	3.16	Accepted
7	Skills acquisition increased employment opportunities	41	36	13	10	3.08	Accepted
8	Non-Formal Education Programmes contributed to poverty reduction	38	37	15	10	3.03	Accepted
9	Community participation increased due to training	44	34	12	10	3.12	Accepted
10	Non-Formal Education Programmes contributes to overall rural development	47	32	11	10	3.16	Accepted

Criterion Mean=2.50

Grand Mean= 3.11

Interpretation:

The results in Table 4.2 reveal that non-formal education programmes have positively impacted rural development in Egor Local Government Area, as all items exceeded the criterion mean. The grand mean of 3.11 confirms respondents' agreement that these programmes have improved literacy, employment, poverty reduction and community participation. This finding supports the views of the

World Bank (2023) and FAO (2021), who noted that non-formal education plays a significant role in enhancing rural livelihoods and community development.

Research Question Three: How does non-formal education improve the socio-economic life of people in Egor Local Government Area?

Table 4.3: Socio-economic Impact of Non-formal Education.

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
11	Beneficiaries have improved income levels	45	35	11	9	3.16	Accepted
12	Women participants now support household income	42	36	12	10	3.10	Accepted
13	Improved business and entrepreneurial skills	40	38	12	10	3.08	Accepted
14	Increased self-reliance and productivity	46	33	11	10	3.15	Accepted
15	Youths now possess employable skills	44	34	12	10	3.12	Accepted

Criterion Mean=2.50

Grand Mean=3.12

Table 4.3 indicates that non-formal education programmes have significantly improved the socio-economic well-being of beneficiaries in Egor LGA. The grand mean of 3.12 shows strong agreement that income levels, entrepreneurship, youth employability and self-reliance have improved. This corroborates findings by Akintola and Adeyemi (2022) and IFAD (2023), who

observed that non-formal education enhances income generation and economic empowerment in rural communities.

Research Question Four: What are the challenges facing non-formal education programmes in Egor Local Government Area?

Table 4.4: Challenges of Non-formal Education Programmes .

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
16	Inadequate funding affects programme effectiveness	48	32	10	10	3.18	Accepted
17	Shortage of qualified instructors	45	33	12	10	3.13	Accepted
18	Insufficient facilities and instructional materials	42	35	13	10	3.09	Accepted
19	Irregular attendance limits programme success	40	36	14	10	3.06	Accepted
20	Lack of government/community support affects sustainability	47	32	11	10	3.16	Accepted

Criterion Mean=2.50

Grand Mean=3.12

Interpretation:

Findings in Table 4.4 reveal that non-formal education programmes in Egor LGA face serious challenges, as indicated by the grand mean of 3.12. Inadequate funding, shortage of trained facilitators, poor facilities, irregular attendance and weak government support were identified as major constraints. This agrees with Owede (2022) and Fakhruddin and Abubakar (2022), who reported that funding

and institutional weaknesses limit the effectiveness of non-formal education programmes in Nigeria..

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that non-formal education programmes are available and functional in Egor Local Government Area, including adult literacy education, vocational and skills acquisition training, health education, and women empowerment programmes. This supports the assertion by UNESCO (2023) that non-formal education provides flexible learning opportunities that are responsive to the needs of rural populations and marginalized groups.

The positive impact of non-formal education on rural development observed in this study aligns with the findings of Chowdhury and Rahman (2021), who reported that adult literacy and skills training enhance community participation and improve livelihoods in rural communities. Improved literacy levels enable individuals to access information, make informed decisions, and participate actively in community development initiatives. Similarly, IFAD (2023) emphasized that vocational and skills acquisition programmes contribute significantly to employment creation and poverty reduction in rural areas.

The study also found that non-formal education programmes positively influence the socio-economic life of beneficiaries through increased income

generation, entrepreneurship development, and youth empowerment. This finding corroborates the work of FAO (2023), which noted that skills-based non-formal education enhances productivity and self-reliance among rural populations. Women empowerment programmes, in particular, were found to improve household income, supporting UNICEF's (2023) view that women-focused education initiatives strengthen family welfare and community resilience.

Despite these positive contributions, the study identified significant challenges such as inadequate funding, shortage of qualified facilitators, insufficient facilities, and weak government support. These challenges are consistent with the findings of Owede (2022), who observed that poor funding and lack of trained personnel limit the effectiveness of non-formal education programmes in Nigeria. UNESCO (2021) also noted that without sustained institutional support, non-formal education programmes struggle to achieve long-term impact.

Overall, the findings confirm that while non-formal education plays a crucial role in improving rural development and socio-economic well-being in Egor Local Government Area, addressing the identified challenges is essential for maximizing its effectiveness and sustainability.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of the study and the conclusion drawn from the analysis of data collected in the course of this study. The recommendations offered in relation to the findings were also enumerated.

Summary

This study investigated The Role of Non-formal Education Programmes in Improving Rural Areas: A Case Study of Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The major aim was to examine the nature, impact, and challenges of non-formal education (NFE) programmes operating within the local government area. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection, and 100 respondents participated. The results showed that several forms of Non-formal education programmes such as adult literacy classes, vocational skills training, women empowerment programmes, civic education, and health campaigns etc. are available and functional in Egor Local Government Area. Findings also revealed that these programmes contribute greatly to rural development by improving literacy levels, enhancing employability, reducing poverty, increasing community participation, and improving health and hygiene practices.

Furthermore, Non-formal education programmes were found to have a significant positive influence on the socio-economic life of residents. Many beneficiaries experienced improved income, increased self-reliance, better entrepreneurial capacity, and greater economic participation, especially among women and youths.

However, the study also identified key challenges that hinder the effectiveness of these programmes. These include inadequate funding, shortage of trained facilitators, poor community awareness, insufficient training facilities, irregular attendance among learners, and limited government support.

The Findings:

Based on the findings, the study concludes that

.Non-formal education programmes are a vital tool for rural development and socio-economic empowerment in Egor Local Government Area. The availability of diverse Non-formal initiatives ranging from literacy training to vocational and health education demonstrates an active attempt to bridge the educational gap among adults, youths, and other underserved groups.

.The positive outcomes recorded show that Non-formal education programmes has contributed significantly to improving literacy rates, reducing poverty, creating employment opportunities, empowering women, and enhancing the general quality

of life in the community. This supports national and international perspectives that view Non- formal education programmes as a practical mechanism for promoting lifelong learning and community development.

.However, the persistent challenges that we're identified particularly ; poor funding, lack of qualified personnel, and insufficient learning resources continue to weaken the overall impact of these programmes. Without stronger institutional support and community engagement, many aspects of Non-formal education may remain underutilized.

Conclusion

In conclusion, non-formal education has great potential to transform rural communities, but its full benefits can only be realized through improved support systems, effective management, and stronger government commitment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

- The Edo State Government and Egor Local Government should allocate more financial resources to non-formal education programmes. Adequate funding will support training materials, facility upgrades, and programme expansion.

- . There is a need for the recruitment of qualified instructors and facilitators. Existing staff should also receive regular training to improve their teaching skills and programme delivery.
- . Classrooms, training centres, and workshops should be equipped with modern tools, teaching aids, and vocational equipment to enhance the quality of learning.
- Collaboration with NGOs, private companies, and community-based organisations will broaden the impact and sustainability of Non- formal education programmes through joint sponsorship and resource sharing.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation will help track programme progress, identify gaps, and ensure that the objectives of Non-formal education programmes are being achieved.
- Since women and youths form a large proportion of Non-formal education beneficiaries, programmes tailored to their needs such as digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy should be prioritized.

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APPENDIX I

DEPARTMENT OF ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS

Dear Respondent,

The researcher is a full-time student of the above-mentioned institution conducting a research project on the topic: The Role of Non-formal Education Programmes in Improving Rural Areas: A Case Study of Egor Local Government Area of Edo state. Responses will be used only for academic purposes and all information will be treated confidentiality.

SECTION A: Personal data

Instruction: Kindly Tick ✓ the appropriate response in the space provided

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Age: ☐ 18–25 ☐ 26–35 ☐ 36–45 ☐ 46 and above

3. Category of respondent: ☐ Adult learner ☐ Instructor/Facilitator

☐ Beneficiary of Skills Programme ☐ Community Leader ☐ NGO/Agency

Representative

4. **Educational Qualification:** ☐ No formal education ☐ Primary ☐ Secondary

☐ Tertiary ☐ Others: _____

SECTION B: Non-formal Education Programmes in Egor Local Government

Area of Edo State

SA – Strongly Agree A – Agree D – Disagree SD – Strongly Disagree

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1	Adult literacy programmes are actively available in Egor LGA.				
2	Vocational and skills acquisition centres operate in Egor LGA.				
3	Non-formal education programmes include tailoring, carpentry, hairdressing, and computer training.				
4	Health education and community health campaigns are offered in the area.				
5	Women empowerment and income-generating programmes are conducted in Egor LGA.				

SECTION C: Impact of Non-formal Education on Rural Development

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
6	Non-formal education has improved general literacy levels in Egor LGA.				
7	Skills acquisition programmes have increased employment opportunities.				
8	Non-formal education programmes have contributed to poverty reduction in the area.				
9	Community members now participate more actively in development projects due to training.				
10	Non-formal education has contributed to overall rural development in Egor LGA.				

SECTION D: Non-formal Education and the Socio-economic Life of People.

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
11	Beneficiaries of non-formal education programmes have improved their income level.				
12	Women who participate in non-formal education programmes now support household income.				
13	Participants have improved their business and entrepreneurial skills through non-formal training.				
14	Non-formal education programmes have increased self-reliance and productivity.				
15	Youths now possess employable skills as a result of non-formal education programmes.				

SECTION E: Challenges Facing Non-formal Education in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
16	Inadequate funding affects the effectiveness of non-formal education programmes.				
17	There is a shortage of qualified instructors and facilitators.				
18	Learning facilities and instructional materials are insufficient.				
19	Irregular attendance of participants limits programme success.				
20	Lack of government and community support affects sustainability.				