



## Cooperative Learning Strategy Influence on Enhancement of Clientele's Academic Achievement in Adult Literacy Programme, Ondo State, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

The study was conducted on cooperative learning strategy influence on enhancement of clientele academic achievement in Adult Literacy Programme in Ondo State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was used. The population of the study comprised, clientele of Adult literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria. The sample size of the study was one hundred and thirty (130) respondents, ten (10) respondents were selected from thirteen (13) most viable centres in Ondo state, Nigeria. one research question and hypothesis were raised and formulated to guide the conduct of the study. Data was generated through a self-designed and structured questionnaire titled, "Questionnaire on cooperative learning strategy influence on enhancement of clientele academic achievement in Adult Literacy Programme in Ondo State, Nigeria". it was fashioned on four likert rating scale; Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The research instrument was validated by an expert in Test and measurement, while its reliability was determined through test-retest method, 0.69 coefficient reliability was obtained. Descriptive statistics (simple percentages, frequency counts and mean) was used to analyze research question, while inferential statistics (Analysis of Covariance ANOVA) was used to analyze data generated on research hypothesis. Based on the findings of the study, conclusion were made that cooperative learning strategy could not motivate clientele towards their studies, but could enhance better academic achievement. Based on the conclusions, recommendations were made that; facilitators should encourage students towards using cooperative learning strategy. Also, clientele should be splitted into different groups for effective use of cooperative learning strategy and so on.

**Keywords:** Cooperative, Learning, Strategy, Clientele, Adult Literacy, Academic achievement

### Background to the Study

Poor academic performance is very rampant among the learners in Nigeria in formal and non-formal education. Okoye (2000), maintains that poor academic is a situation whereby one fails to attain a set standard of performance in a given evaluation exercise. This means that the standard could be based on a number of stipulated school subjects and other school activities. A candidate who scores below a given standard of score is regarded as performing poor, academically. There are divergent scholars' views on the causes of learners' poor academic performance; Wilson (1992), stresses that family background is much more important than school's environment influencing adolescent aspiration for learning. Considine and Zappala (2002) opines that parental income or social status could positively or negatively affects students' performance, academically.

Douglas (2006) opines that the level of parents' education can also affect the low performance of a child. The more highly parents value education the more they will support their children educational endeavours. Families within large income group obviously can afford to provide supportive amenities to learning in their homes. They are capable of purchasing large number of books, not only for their children but also for their family and personal libraries, while those students with parent's low income will not be able to afford these.

Vikoo (2003) observes that the use of internet has made students to be lazy in their academic works. Hence, students are indulging in nefarious activities at the expense of their studies. Udeh (2008), opines that, "the environmental health problems in Nigeria schools' hence, identified some unhealthy practices in our schools. These include; citing of schools, inadequate facilities, poor ventilation e.t.c. Most of our schools have no light; insufficient facilities among others. Under these conditions, the adversely affected students' performance, academically.

Olesehinde (2002) maintains that divorce, separation and single parenthood affect the learners academic performance. There are common effects of divorce on children and they are psychological problems; poor intellectual development and poor parent-child relationship. Failure to maintain a stable family and give the children sound education will hamper their progress in life, growth and development and even the society in general. Dubey (1996)

observes that the level of intelligence of the students determine their performance academically. Student with low intelligent will perform poorly in his or her studies.

Various researchers that had been conducted on the effect of school's environment on academic performance attest to the fact, that school environment that is not conducive for learning may lead to under performance (Chimombe, 2011). Moreover, Juma (2011) notes that students from poor backgrounds perform poorly in the examinations because the poor are often in areas, where schools are seriously deprived of vital facilities, that can enhance students' performance academically.

Physical materials in terms of adequacy and quality have been noted to have a great impact on performance of students in the examination (Husen, Saha and Noonan, 2000). A school that has adequate instructional materials is likely to post better quality grades than a school which has poor quality physical resources. A school with inadequate classrooms will be forced to accommodate more students than recommended. The lack of basic facilities like laboratories, classrooms, libraries, playing fields, textbooks can also affect learning abilities of the students. Topics that are meant to be taught practically are taught theoretically as part of adaptive mechanism by teachers, due to inadequate resources to enable effective teaching of the same.

Furthermore, human resources in school includes; teachers, support staff and students. According to behavioural scientists, effective worker performance requires motivation ability and reward that encourages quality work (Irancerich, Irancerich, Document and Bayes, 2004). Performance of teachers as reflected by level of training and teaching experience will determine the quality of grades attained in an examination. A trained teacher will have necessary pedagogical skills which will promote student's understanding motivating a student to learn, thereby promoting academic performance. Oyekan (2001), submits that teachers are essential players in promoting quality education in schools because they are catalysts of change. The techniques used by some teachers in teaching, the students also affect the poor academic performance of students. Poor academic performance is not restricted to found system of education alone. It also manifests in non-formal system of education such as in literacy programme.

Merriam, Sharan, Brockett and Ralph (2007) define adult literacy education as a practice in which adults engage in systematic and sustained self-educating activities in order to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes or values. Baumgartner, Sharan & Cafarella (2007) opine that adult literacy program is a community-based volunteer organization which provides a variety of services to enable adults to achieve personal goals through literacy. It also assist learners to utilize the public literary as a resource for lifelong learning.

Knowles and Makolm (1984) assert that adult literacy programme is a system for providing literacy and English Language services for adults and out of school youth over the age of 16. Merani and Osuala (1999:99), say adult education is a process by which men and women seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skill and their sensitivities. Houle (2005), notes that adult literacy education is a process by which men and women either alone or in group who attempt to improve themselves by bringing about changes in their understanding, skill or sensitivities.

The poor learning outcomes among the learners particularly in literacy programme necessitated in recent times necessitated the use of various teaching and learning strategies of which cooperative learning strategy is one. Slavin (2000) opines that, cooperative learning is a set of instructional methods in which students are encouraged or required to work together on academic tasks. Karban (2015), notes that learning is the act of acquiring new or modifying and reinforcing, existing knowledge, behaviours, skills, values or preferences and may involve synthesizing different types of information.

Totten, Sills, Digby and Russ (2001), define learning as a process of sharing that gives students an opportunity in discussion that takes responsibility for their own impact in other for them to become a critical thinking. Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subjects.

Webb (2004), defines cooperative learning as a type of active learning that involves group of three or more students working together on a task. Thus, Cooperative learning is a technique that allows students to learn from one another and gain important interpersonal skills. Thus, cooperative learning is an organized and structured way to use small groups to enhance student learning and interdependence. It was against this backdrop that this study was carried out on cooperative learning strategy influence on enhancement of clientele academic achievement in Adult literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

Adult literacy programme implementation is an interventional strategy to halt the high rage of illiteracy in Nigeria. However, learners academic performance is not encouraging. This ugly trend has been attributed to several factors, such as, poor teacher teaching method, poor parental background and so on. Thus, necessitated the use of cooperative learning strategy. Some fundamental questions, which keep on lingering on in minds are:

- i. Will cooperative learning strategy brings about a better academic performance?
- ii. Will cooperative learning strategy enhances learning style among the learners for an improved academic performance e.t.c.?

It is against this background that this study was carried out on cooperative learning strategy influence on clientele academic achievement in Adult Literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria.

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## Objectives of the Study

The general objectives of this study was on cooperating learning strategy influence on enhancement of academic achievement in adult literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study objectives are as follows:

- i. determine the effect of cooperative learning strategy on learners' academic achievement in adult literacy programme, Ondo State, Nigeria;
- ii. ascertain the impact of cooperative learning strategy on positive academic interaction among the clientele in adult literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria;
- iii. determine whether cooperative learning style will motivate clientele in adult literacy programme of Ondo State, Nigeria towards their studies
- iv. determine whether through cooperative learning strategy enhanced cooperation or unity for a positive academic achievement among learners in Adult literacy programme of Ondo State, Nigeria could be achieved

## Research Question

1. Can cooperative learning strategy motivate clientele for higher academic achievement in adult literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria.

## Research Question

One research hypothesis was formulated to guide the study

1. There will be no significant relationship between cooperative learning strategy and learners' academic achievement in adult literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria.

## Significance of the Study

The findings of the study will be significant to stakeholders in Non-formal Education in the following ways;

- i. The result of the study will assist to establish, whether cooperative learning strategy can positively or negatively contribute to clientele academic achievement in literacy programme in Nigeria.
- ii. The findings of the study will provide a base of line data for the shareholders in curriculum planning and implementation on the need to stress or emphasize on the use of the cooperative learning strategy in the teaching and learning setting in Adult literacy programme.
- iii. The results of the study will further contribute to the existing literature that are related to the topic under study
- iv. The research will be a source of reference point to researcher(s) in future

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## Literature Review

### Cooperative Learning Strategy

Gibbs (2001), noted that cooperation skill; nearly every job or social relationship involves cooperating with another individual to accomplish a shared goal. In cooperative learning, students are organized into groups. Each group is given a goal and the achievement of that goal often requires that group members support each other learn the subject-matter, but they also learn how to be a contributing member to the group. There is more to cooperative learning than just having students work in groups. Cooperative learning strategies differ based on group size and logistics, task specialization, inter-group competition, group rewards, method of student evaluation and appropriateness to a given learning objective or situation.

However, in many work and academic activities, teams of individuals must pull together to get tasks accomplished. Working together means cooperation. It also means taking the talents of individuals and pooling these together to get the job done. This is the basis for the theory behind cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is a teaching strategy where teams of two or more work together on learning tasks (James and John, 2004). This could include small group working together on a specific problem to get it solved, while the entire class (large group) may be asked to prepare a write up on a general or just introduced problem. Each members of the team brings special talents to the group, i.e concrete or analytical abilities or others. Also, other team members cooperate on the achievement of the tasks and learn from each other. Thus, students learn about both academic and social skills from a cooperative learning environment.

Johnson, Johnson and Smith (2000), worked on the effect of cooperative, competitive and individualistic efforts on students achievement and productivity and found that students in cooperative learning settings performed better than students in either competitive or individualistic settings. They also noted that cooperative learning resulted in more high level reasoning, more frequent generation for new ideas and solutions. Interaction in a cooperative learning group also brings high self-esteem, more communication and better understanding. From the cognitive perspective, small-group instruction allows students to cognitively rehearse and relate course material into existing schema or conceptual frameworks, thus producing a deeper, contextualized level

of understanding of contents (Kurfiss, 2001). This can better be achieved when learners had been guided to adhere to cooperative learning principles so that the academic and interpersonal problems associated with group work in traditional course can be averted (Felder, 2001)

A primary benefit of cooperative learning is that it enhances students' self-esteem which in turn motivates students to participate in the learning process (Johnson & Johnson, 2010). Cooperative efforts among students results to a higher degree of accomplishment by all participants (Slavin, 2007). Students help each other and in doing so, it builds a supportive community which raises the performance level of each member (Kagan, 2006). This in turn leads to higher self-esteem in all students (Webb, 2000).

Cooperation enhances student satisfaction with the learning experience by actively involving students in designing and completing class procedures and course content (Johnson and Johnson, 1990). Effective teams or groups assume ownership of a process and its results when individuals are encouraged to work together toward a common goal, often defined by the group. This aspect is especially helpful for individuals, who have a history or failure

Cooperative learning promotes mastery while passive acceptance of information from an outside expert often promotes a sense of helplessness and reliance upon others to attain concepts. In a typical college classroom emphasizing lecturing, there is little time for reflection and discussion of students' errors or misconceptions. With the cooperative learning paradigm students' are continuously discussing, debating and clarifying their understanding of the concepts.

Cooperative learning reduces classroom anxiety created by new and unfamiliar situations faced by students. In a traditional classroom, when a teacher calls upon a student, he/she becomes the focus of attention of the entire class. Any mistakes or incorrect answers become subject to scrutiny by the whole class. In contrast, in a cooperative learning situation, when students work in a group, the focus of attention is diffused among the group. In addition, the group produces a project which its members can review prior to presenting it to the whole class, thus diminishing prospect that mistakes will occur at all (Slavin, 2000). When a mistake is made it becomes a teaching tool instead of a public criticism of an individual student.

Test anxiety is significantly reduced (Johnson and Johnson, 2006). Cooperative learning provides opportunities for alternate forms of student assessment (Panitz and Panitz, 2001). This situation leads to a reduction in test anxiety because the students see that the teacher is able to evaluate how they think as well as what they know. Through the interactions with students during each class, the teacher gains a better understanding of each student's learning style and how he/she performs and an opportunity is created whereby the teacher may provide extra guidance and counseling for the students.

Cooperative learning increases students' persistence and the likelihood of successful completion of assignments (Felder, 1997). When individuals get stuck they are more likely to give up, but groups are much more likely to find ways to keep going. This concept is reinforced by the Johnson (2005; p. 121) who state, "In a learning situation, student goal achievements are positively correlated". Students perceive that they can reach learning goal, if and only if the other students in the learning group also reach their goals. Thus, students seek outcomes that are beneficial to all those with whom are cooperatively linked".

Cooperative learning establishes inclusion, creating a learning atmosphere in which learners feel respected and connected to one another. Cooperative learning created a strong social support system (Cohen and Willis, 2007). Cooperative learning techniques use students' social experiences such as warm-up exercises and group building activities to encourage their involvement in learning process.

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## Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The choice of this design was on the ground that not everybody in the population for the study could be covered. Hence, a sample of the population was selected and data generated from the sample was generalized on the entire population of the study. One research question was raised while one research hypothesis was formulated to guide the conduct of the study. The population of the study comprised all the clientele of Adult literacy programme, in Ondo State, Nigeria. The sample size of the study was one hundred and thirty (130) respondents. Ten (10) respondents were selected through a simple random sampling technique from thirteen most viable literacy centres in Ondo State, Nigeria. A self-designed and structured questionnaire by the researcher titled, "Questionnaire on Cooperative Learning Strategy Influence on Enhancement of Clientele Academic Achievement in Adult Literacy Programme in Ondo State, Nigeria", fashioned on four Likert rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The research instrument was validated by an expert in Test and measurement, while its reliability was determined through test retest method at two weeks interval. 0.69 coefficient reliability was obtained.

Descriptive statistics (simple percentage and frequency counts) were used to analyze data generated on research question, while inferential statistics (Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA)) was used for data generated on research hypothesis.

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## Presentation of Results and Discussion of Findings

### Presentation of Results

#### Research Question

**Research Question One:** Can cooperative learning strategy motivate clientele interest towards studies in literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria.

**Table 1: Showing Percentages and Frequency counts on can cooperative learning strategy motivate clientele interest towards studies in literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria.**

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	REMARKS
1	Cooperative learning strategy can enhance my self-esteem towards studying	76 58.46	26 20	13 10	15 11.53	3.25	Accepted
2	Cooperative learning strategy does not enhance my self-esteem towards studying	1 0.76	6 4.61	44 33.84	79 60.76	1.45	Rejected
3	Cooperative learning strategy improves my interactive with my academic colleagues	88 67.69	28 21.53	9 6.92	5 3.84	3.53	Accepted
4	Cooperative learning strategy does not improve my interaction with any academic colleagues, positively	10 7.69	9 6.92	12 9.23	99 76.15	1.46	Rejected
5	Cooperative learning strategy makes me to develop interest in academic activities	90 69.23	23 17.69	7 5.38	10 7.69	3.48	Accepted
6	Cooperative learning strategy does not develop my interest towards academic	4 3.07	12 9.23	30 23.07	84 64.61	1.50	Rejected
	<b>TOTAL</b>	269 34.48	104 13.33	115 14.74	292 37.43	2.44	Rejected

Table 1 above presents the findings on research question one. On item (1); 76 (58.46); 26(20); 13 (10) and 15 (11.53) responses were obtained for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. On item (2), responses gotten showed 1 (0.76); 6 (4.61); 44 (38.84) and 79 (60.76) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. On item (3), the following responses were gotten; 88 (67.69); 28 (21.53); 9 (6.92) and 5 (3.84) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed.

On item (4) responses gotten revealed 10 (7.69); 9 (6.92); 12 (9.23) and 99 (76.15) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. On item (5) responses obtained showed 90 (69.23); 23 (17.69); 7 (5.38) and 10 (7.69) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. Finally, on item (6) the following responses were obtained; 4 (3.07); 12 (9.23); 30 (23.07) and 84 (64.61) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed.

Generally speaking, the mean of average rating scale ( $\bar{X} = 2.44$ ) is lesser than the cooperative learning strategy scale of ( $\bar{X} = 2.50$ ). This mean that cooperative learning strategy could not motivate the clientele towards their studies in Adult literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria.

### Research Hypothesis

**Ho1: There is no significant main effect of treatment on clientele academic achievement in Adult Literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria**

**Table 1:** Showing summary of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) on Academic Achievement of clientele in Adult Learners Programme in Ondo State

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected model	30455.533 <sup>a</sup>	8	3806.942	46.402	.000	.921
Intercept	7464.865	1	7464.865	90.988	.000	.740
Pretest	312.834	1	312.834	3.818	.060	.106
Treatment	20083.012	1	20083.012	244.789	.000	.884
Age	190.514	3	63.505	.774	.517	.068
Treatment* Age	521.439	3	173.813	2.119	.117	.166
Error	2625.345	32	82.042			
Total	187232.000	41				
Corrected Total	33080.878	40				

**Dependent Variable:** Academic Achievement in Adult Literacy Programme in Ondo State, Nigeria.

R Squared = .921 (Adjusted R Squared = .901)

Table 1 therefore revealed that there is significant main effect of treatment on learners' academic achievement in Adult Literacy programme in Ondo State ( $F_{(1, 32)} = 244.789$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ;  $\eta^2 = .884$ ). Hence, hypothesis 1 is not accepted. This result implies that the experiment significantly improved the learners' achievement in Adult Literacy programme.

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## Discussion of Findings

The result on the research question as shown on table 1 shows that cooperative learning strategy could not motivate clientele on Adult Literacy in Ondo State, Nigeria towards their studies. Thus, negates or contradict the position of several scholars such as Johnson and Johnson (2010) that cooperative learning strategy could enhance students; self-esteem, thus motivate them to be participating in learning process.

Also, findings on research hypothesis as shown in table 2 reveals that there is significant main effect of treatment on learners' academic achievement in Adult literacy programme in Ondo State ( $F_{(1, 32)} = 244$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ;  $\eta^2 = .884$ ). Hence, hypothesis 1 is not accepted. This result implies that the experiment significantly improved the learners' achievement in Adult Literacy Programme. This aligns with Solomon, R. T. Aden & Rista (2003) submission that cooperative learning has been proven to be effective for all types of students, including: academically gifted students and English Language Learners (ELLS), because it promotes learning and fosters respects and friendships among diverse groups of students. Infact, the more diversity in a team, the higher the benefits for each students. Peers learning depends on each other in a positive way for a variety of learning tasks.

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## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, conclusion were made that cooperative learning strategy could not motivate clientele of Adult literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria towards achieving higher academic achievement but could enhance clienteles' academic achievement.

## Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Facilities should be encouraging clientele to be working with themselves, academically.
2. Clientele should be made to understand the advantages of cooperative learning strategy to their academic achievement
3. Facilitators should split the clientele into different groups for effective use of cooperative learning strategy
4. All the necessary and supportive facilities for clientele to use during their interaction and learning must be provided at adult literacy programme in Ondo State, Nigeria and so on.

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