INVOLVING ADULT EDUCATION IN THE STRUGGLE TOWARD ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study focused on the interventions of adult education programmes in the struggle towards achieving sustainable community development in present-day society. Man's attempt to achieve sustainable development has been thwarted by existing difficulties in the environment. The study identified illiteracy, health challenge, food insecurity, biased cultural practices, inadequate research, political instability, economic meltdown, climate change, poor electricity and internet accessibility as the difficulties thwarting the attainment of sustainable community development practices in Nigeria. These difficulties gave rise to the struggle of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which translated to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to enhance man's environs. The reasons for the struggle, the challenges encountered in the cause of the struggle and the active interventions of adult education programmes (environmental literacy, health literacy, financial literacy, consumer education, nutrition education, climate education, vocational education and training, digital literacy, and peace education) in helping man to attain his goals was conversed in this study. The study suggested that pragmatic policies aimed towards eradicating the identified difficulties and unsustainable practices should be effectively designed and implemented for the promotion of sustainable development. Furthermore, leaders at all sectors should be mandated to enroll in sustainable development training programmes for effective service delivery in their various fields and for the promotion of sustainable development goals.

***Keywords:** Adult Education Programmes, Struggle, Sustainability, Sustainable Community Development, and Nigeria*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Historically, man has been in the struggle to achieve development, starting from the old stone age (paleolithic age), new stone age (neolithic age) to the mental age. We are not sure when the early

man first appeared but we can tell how he lived. He was almost the same as the wild animals around him; he had no weapons, no houses, and few means of getting food. He lived for many thousands of years in this way and learned the simplest things very slowly (Adetoro, 1976). Succinctly, this period examined the attempt man-made seeking for solutions to his basic needs of food, shelter and clothing, discovering and learning new means of adapting to his environment and migrating from his zone to another zone which characterized the emergence of trade, urbanization and civilization. Onyenwenyi in Uzoagba (2007) stated that:

> the wonder of man's being will never cease to remain a point of discussion in every era. Thrown into a universe of natural things, man is the only being that is capable of recognising his exclusive position through self-knowledge he has known and recognised his worth. Not contented with mere self-knowledge, he has taken steps forward to improve his conditions and welfare. Yesterday, a man was in deep reflection over what today would be and he invented things to suit the needs of today. Today again, he finds faults with his inventions of yesterday, which were intended for a better today. In fact, man manifests dynamism beyond the natural universe. (p.79).

Some of the outcomes of man struggle towards development have directly or indirectly affected the adult citizens not excluding the entire human population in general. Whichever one, the concept of adult education becomes germane in re-examining, repositioning and reconditioning the challenges and obstacles endangering the efforts of adult citizens struggling towards sustainable development in their various communities. Ugwu and Mbalisi (2016) maintained that in a globalized world and knowledge-based economy, the need for adult education upsurges in order for people to keep up with the pace of technological changes as the initial education could not address the changes sufficiently.

Who is an Adult?

Adulthood varies from one country to another. Mostly, people use physical or biological perspectives in defining and determining who an adult is. A look at the 1991 population census supported by the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria perceived an adult as anybody who has attained the age of 18years. This definition agreed with the age maturity used in determining who is an adult in Nigeria. A typical example is seen across other countries where age automatically and legally qualifies one as a responsible adult. Below is the maturity age of some selected countries around the world.

Table 1.1: Age of Maturity

S/N	Age	Countries
1	15 years	Iran, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, etc.
2	16 years	Cuba, Vietnam, Palestine, Kyrgyzstan, etc.
3	17 years	North Korea, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste
4	18 years	Nigeria, Angola, Brazil, Afghanistan, All Countries of the European Union
5	19 years	Algeria, Canada, South Korea, United of Alabama, etc.
6	20 years	Japan, Paraguay, New Zealand, Taiwan, Thailand, etc.
8	21 years	Bahrain, Cameroon, Kuwait, Honduras, Lesotho, etc.

Source: Wikipedia, 2018.

Apart from the biological age of determining an adult, Nzeneri (2013) described an adult as a person who is physically and psychologically ripened and is socially, economically and politically accountable. He went further to affirm that an adult can be defined or classified from other standpoints. It could be from the political position, as one who has the skill to hold a position of authority, power and responsibility. For instance, the Obi of Agbor became the supreme potentate of the Agbor kingdom at the age of three. An adult could also be considered from the security point of view, as one who is competent to defend oneself and those around. For example, the young soldier in Liberia and Sierra Leone. An adult could also be classified from the social and economic outlooks, as one who

has relevant abilities that could be transferred into economic power and self-sufficiency. An adult could also be observed from the historical perception, as one ready and competent to convey important past events and identify a cultural object. Adulthood can also be seen from the cultural viewpoints as an initiation into an adult club or cult. These are the different ways by which society can determine who an adult is.

Sustainable Development

Development is the outcome of man's action on nature or man's effort to transmute nature to advance his condition (Cisse in Ezimah, 2009). It could also be seen as the process of behavioural change over time. There are different definitions attached to development starting from the views of historians, economists, psychologists, political scientists, educationists and so forth. Development alludes to a process that results in progression, growth, positive change, or the accumulation of economic, social, environmental, physical, and demographic components to an obtainable environment or system (Khan & Abir, 2022). Todaro highlights development as a comprehensive procedure encompassing reorganization and reorientation of the whole socio-economic system, while optimizing three significant abilities and features of human lives (Sakalasooriya, 2020). These features according to Sakalasooriya are;

rising citizen's living levels (earnings and consumption, levels of food, medical services, education through pertinent advance procedures).

fashioning conditions beneficial to the progression of citizen's self-confidence through the

formation of social, political, and economic systems and organizations which promote human dignity and respect.

expanding citizen's freedom to select by amplifying the variety of their ideal variables.

This enlightenment avers that there is no universal definition or declaration of what development entails.

The focus of attention here is on sustainable development which entails the ability of an adult to utilize his or her endowed and acquired resources and potentials in providing humanitarian services to his/her community without imperiling the resources of the next generation. When we talk of sustainability, we mean aptitude to be manufactured or sustained for an unlimited period without hurting the environment. According to Ugwu and Ijah (2011:51) the knowledge of sustainability was conveyed into action by the World Commission on Environment and Development in her 1987 report titled "Our Common Future: From One Earth to One World". The Brundtland Report of 1987 defined sustainable development as the development that meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the capacity and capability of the future generation in meeting their necessities. The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) as cited in Onyenemezu and Okanezi (2013:180) depicted sustainable development to mean "environment, economic and social well-being for today and tomorrow ". The three scopes of sustainable development include economic growth, social equality and environmental sustainability and these

are placed within a structure of lifelong learning and discourse in terms of new knowledge, information, skills and values required by people (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), 2014:12).

Reasons behind Adult Struggle Toward Sustainable Development

In providing answers to the above, we shall look into the societal needs of man. Abraham Maslow's motivational theory of needs described the hierarchy of man's needs. He classified the needs of man into two. The higher-order needs and the lower order needs. According to Ezimah, (2009) the lower-order needs focused on:

Physiological Needs: drive to satisfy the basic human needs: food, shelter, clothing, etc.

Safety Needs: strive for conditions that guarantee security, physical and emotional.

Affection Needs: drive to have a sense of belonging. While the higher-order needs focused on:

Self-esteem needs: drive to achieve competence and recognition

Self-actualization: drive to self-fulfillment and
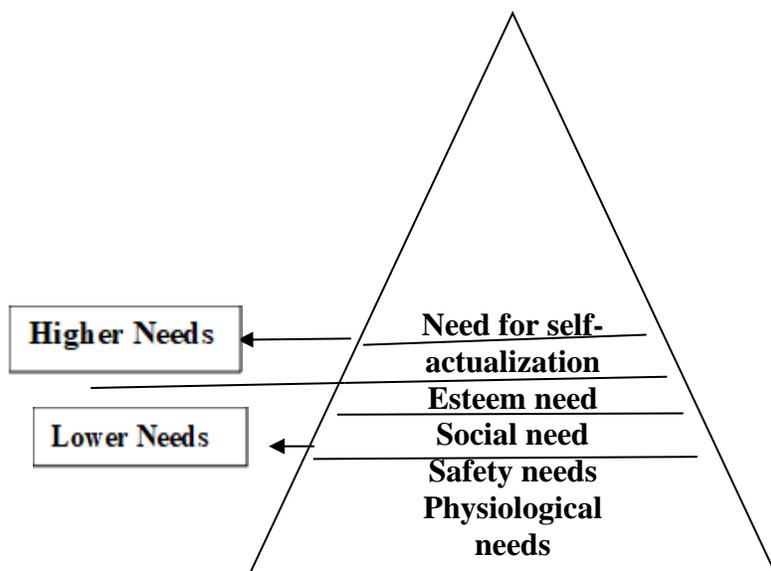
Figure 1: Abraham Maslow Motivational Theory of Needs, adapted from Ezimah (2009).

To Maslow, human needs are to be achieved or acquired starting from satisfying the lower needs, before meeting the higher man. Apart from the identified needs of humans from Maslow, human or societal needs could be adequate security for insecurity and crime mitigation, it could be environmental friendly practices needed against unfriendly practices, it could be funds to solve some or major problems arising in the society, it could be the abolishment of some cultural norms and values for peace and progress in the community, it could be the promotion of social welfare against the low quality living, life expectancy and standard of living, etc.

Observantly, a lot of development has been carried out by the adult citizens in different areas of life and this remains undoubted. Remarkably, some of the development has led to "man's inhumanity to man". The conflicting effects of technology are not delimited to environmental degradation and moral dissolution only but likewise extend to human degradation (Ezeonwuka, 2008). In the struggle where adult citizens try to explore and exploit the resources within their environment, many problems emerged resulting in conflict (energy crisis, violent, communal clashes and leadership tussles) and environmental hazards (pollution, climate change, improper waste disposal, flooding, deforestation, etc). Man's unceasing struggle for development and survival manifested clearly in the lives of developed and developing countries (rich and poor), where the poor nations solemnly depend on the rich and

developed nations in the area of technology, health assistance, security aids and so forth. Technological innovations and inventions of man such as artificial intelligence (AI), internet of things (IoTs), and genetically modified organic (GMO) crops, at their usage contaminated man's ecology (atmosphere) leading to increased hunger, diseases, food insecurity, and other unfriendly health practices. A lot of efforts have been put in place to address these difficulties in Nigeria. Some of the efforts were evidenced in environmental, health, economic, and political laws, policies, and programmes formulated by the government and development partners. Despite the efforts of government, non-governmental, and other development stakeholders toward attaining better living, adults still found themselves in abject poverty, have little or no food for sustenance, have little or nothing to put on and no place to rest their bodies. Therefore, we have to answer the question of what is needed or can be done in this struggle.

Challenges Affecting Sustainable Development

In our present world, man is seriously being confronted by continuous changes in technology and quick increases in new knowledge (Nzeneri, 2013:1). The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2017) in her implementation of sustainable development goals (SDGs) identified three main challenges affecting sustainable development:

(a) Over-dependence on the oil and gas sector; dwindling agricultural production and productivity and also, limited value addition in the agricultural sector

(b) Infrastructural deficit and technological gaps

(c) Economic recession and the humanitarian crisis

Outside the above reasons, other challenges include the following:

Illiteracy: according to Asiedu and Oyedeji in Ezimah (2009) the illiterate person may have the knowledge and innate intelligence as well as a wealth of experiences, but he has not been exposed to training in how to organise this thought in a way that leads to generalization out of which concepts developed. Illiteracy which is primarily seen as the inability to read and write also involves the inability to interpret, identify, communicate, create and analyse with the use of written, unwritten, printed and unprinted materials. Roughly 757 million adults, including 114 million young people aged between 15 and 24, still can't read and write a simple sentence; only 39 countries met the target of achieving 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016). Report of the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education (NMEC) in 2019 as cited in (Chukwutobe, Nnadi, & Omeriyang, 2021), indicated that 35% of the adult populace in Nigeria are illiterates. The literacy level of Nigerians adult stands at 62% (Olusola, 2025), with 18.3 million children out of school as reported by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (Agwam, 2024). This tells us that most countries fail to attain the Education for All targets. Illiteracy shares a common identity with blindness. This is one of the problems that must be addressed among adult citizens for sustainable development.

Inadequate research: research is being carried out to carefully identify and examine the negative and positive causes of events and provide solutions. But in that research, a lot of things are left unchecked, unaddressed, untouched, etc. and they include: the ability of the people to adapt to the developmental change, the effects of this development on the environment, how long will this development last and many others, including the culture of the different societies at large. When some of these things are not put into consideration before carrying out developmental research that will solve one or two problems of the society, that development will turn out affecting if not the lives of the people that invented the development, it will be the lives of those copying the developmental change. This situation creates more problems for adult citizens.

Health challenges: numerous cases of health issues have affected the actualization of sustainable development. For instance, the outbreak of the Ebola virus, Zika virus, Lassa fever, etc seeks the attention of international bodies like the World Health Organization (WHO) and others for solutions. These diseases motivated adult citizens to struggle towards providing a stop to its effects on their human health as well as the community's health.

Food insecurity and poverty: starvation and absence of what to eat also led to other forms of sickness which demand adequate attention and eventually lead to the struggle against achieving zero hunger and poverty eradication as seen in the sustainable development goals 1 and 2. The World

Bank report of poverty rate in Nigeria among rural adult cap at 75% and 41.3% in the urban sector. The report further revealed the poverty rate among adults without any formal education to be 79.5%, those with primary education experience recorded 61.9%, 50% for those with secondary education and 25.4% for those with tertiary education (Tunji, 2025). World Food Programme (2025) country briefing in Nigeria indicated that 30.6 million are facing acute food crises while 37% nationwide live below the poverty line, with 2.3 million people displaced by violence and insecurity in the northeast of the country. In an attempt to remedy the situation, the United States government allocated $32.5 million to the World Food Programme (WFP) Nigeria, targeted at providing nutritional support and food assistance to internally displaced people in conflict-affected regions of the country (Mojeed, 2025). The breakdown of the assistance includes complimentary nutritional support to 41,569 pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, and 43,235 children.

Cultural practices: looking at some of the cultural practices of different societies in the race to achieve development, there exist different customs, norms, beliefs and values. Evidence among these practices includes the marginalization of female gender in the decision-making process, inequality, tribal sentiment, and discrimination. The 2023 Nigerian National Assembly Polls revealed the extent of women marginalization in politics where only 15 out of the 423 legislative seats declared by the electoral body are women representing 3.5% of the 423 seats (Raji, 2023). Findings of Brigevich

and Oritsejafor (2022) showed that overriding ethnic individuality decreases democratic satisfaction, with 58% of Nigerians reporting democratic disappointment. In Nigeria, less than 0.001% of the citizens have access to or own more than 90% of national wealth, typically accumulated through corruption (Okpan & Otega, 2019). Therefore, ethnicity is the leading obstacle to the general politico-economic development of the nation (Obire & Chiemeke, 2025).

Political instability: when there are political wars and power tussles in any society, development no longer exists. This has repeated itself in almost the whole countries of the world once upon a time in their history. Such occurrence continually results in conflict and insecurity, just like the case of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the south-east of Nigeria, Boko-Haram in the northern part of Nigeria, the militants and avengers in the south-south of Nigeria, the attack of the Fulani herdsmen across Nigeria federation and the threat of the Arewa youths in the northern part of the country. At this juncture, the struggle for development worsens more and even over than expected. When people don't know their rights and freedom, duties and obligations to the society; when governments implement policies that favour the ruling class; when bribery and corruption have eaten down into the system of the world, how then will this struggle of sustainable development achieve its goals and objectives?

Economic challenges: when the problem of how to produce, what to produce and who to produce continues to exist, adult citizens' struggle

towards sustainable development will remain high. Some of the economic challenges include inflation, unemployment, and financial illiteracy. Nigeria's inflation rate stands at 21.88% as of July 2025 according to the Central Bank of Nigeria (2025). Unemployment rate stands at 4.30% (Trading Economics, 2025), with 38% adults financially literate according to the Central Bank of Nigeria (Joel, 2024).

Climate change: climate change poses significant challenges for Nigeria due to its impact on various sectors, including water resources, health, agriculture, and overall economic stability (Arogundade, Hassan, & Mduduzi, 2024). Nigeria CO_2 emissions from fuel combustion in 2022 was 100.389, with oil emissions contributing to 67% of total CO_2 emission from fuel combustion (International Energy Agency (IEA), 2022). The Climate Action Tracker (2025) disclosed that methane emissions from oil and gas production accounted for about 13% of emissions in 2023 and estimates that Nigeria's greenhouse gas emissions would reach 62-70% above 2010 levels excluding LULUCF in 2030. In 2024 and 2025, Nigeria was ranked 17 and 26 in the climate change performance index (CCPI) (Germanwatch, 2025).

Poor electricity and internet accessibility: Nigeria's internet penetration stands at 55%, while electricity access remains at 60.5% nationally but drops to 27% in rural areas (Awojide, 2025). Awojide while citing the report of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) revealed that the average Nigerian household receives less than 7 hours of electricity daily.

Lack of Awareness: inadequate information, ideas, knowledge and skills among the adult citizens have affected their hard work towards the struggle for sustainable development.

When the above-mentioned challenges reside with the adult citizens, it increases the rate of their struggle; it affects their lifestyles and reduces the rate of achieving sustainable development in the society they find themselves in. According to Duongsaa (2002) oppression of women, hunger, aids, illiteracy, poverty, ruined government, illiteracy, and war, what have we adult educators achieved? Have we done enough and what more should we have done? On this note, the concept of adult education and its programmes becomes requisite for the achievement of sustainable development.

Interventions of Adult Education Programmes

The concept of adult education is so wide and has been defined by many authorities according to their perception and the society they found themselves in. Paulo Freire grokked adult education as conscientisation i.e. building of critical mindfulness for social action that will imperil economic and political change while Julius Nyerere perceives it as communalization, building self-sustaining and independent communities that take their fortunes and that of their progenies into their own hands by assisting themselves out of scarceness (Betiang, 2019). "Countries all over the world have long recognised that adult education and learning has an important role to play in promoting social inclusion, citizen's engagement, health and

sustainable economic growth" (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), 2016:16). The desires of man may require attaining new knowledge and skills for handling his life tests (Nzeneri, 2013). Adult education is a practice in which adults engage in systematic and sustained self-education activities in order to gain skills, knowledge, value or attitude expected to address the socio-economic, socio-cultural, socio-political environmental problems besieging humanity in the various societies (Ayantunji, 2023). Adult education is an answer to the educational needs of individuals or groups and such needs might differ greatly between individuals and communities, it consequently changes as situations change and as attitude and knowledge advance (Oyebamiji, 2009). Adult education has been portrayed as one of the conspicuous professions that is skilled in taking care of socio-economic, political, cultural and environmental difficulties of the adult citizens (Onyenemezu and Okanezi, 2013). Adult learning and education ambitions are to promote competencies that are associated with sustainable development, including critical thinking, imaging future situations and participatory teaching and learning (Mauch, 2014).

Succinctly, adult education denotes the entire body of organised learning processes, formal, informal and non-formal, whereby those looked upon and considered as adults by the society in which they reside develop, improve and fortify their abilities and capabilities for living and working both in their interests, benefits and those of their societies. The adult education programmes for this study are environmental literacy, health literacy,

financial literacy, consumer education, nutrition education, climate education, vocational education and training, digital literacy, and peace education.

Environmental Literacy: Oregon Environmental Literacy Programme (2014) defined environmental literacy as the desired outcome of environmental education which competes to provide individuals with vibrant scientific information, skills to think critically, inventive and strategic problem solving, and decision-making. The components of environmental literacy include attitude, knowledge, awareness, skills, sensitivity, and active participation (Nunez & Clores, 2017). Environmental literacy is demonstrated when people have the skills, knowledge and disposition to engage individually and collectively support sustainable natural and cultural systems (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2018). An environmentally literate person according to the National Environmental Education Foundation's Environmental Literacy Report is somebody ready to act on these decisions, to enhance the health, happiness and/or prosperity of other persons, groups, societies and the universal environment and participate in civil life (Manner, 2018). Environmental literacy plays a fundamental part in stimulating sustainable behaviour and amplifying public participation for environmental protection (Lin, Sah, & Hong, 2025). It describes human relations with the environment (Yildirim, Elkoca, Gokcay, Yilmaz & Yildiz, 2025).

Health Literacy: health literacy covers the capability to comprehend, construe, and act upon medical information and instructions, and the ability

to source and scrutinize pertinent health information for precautionary measures and self-care (Olabanji, 2023). Safeguarding and encouraging hale and hearty lives for all and at all ages is reliant on upon citizens' health literacy and knowledge (Osiesi, Fajobi, Adekoya, Okocha, Babalola, Arogundade, Blignaut, & Nubia (2025). Health literacy determines an individual's health behaviour and healthcare utilization.

Financial Literacy: financial literacy discusses an individual's capability to comprehend trade and industry information and the use of such information to make productive financial decisions as regards financial planning, investments, wealth creation, savings, and debt management (Lusardi & Mitchell, cited in Imhanrenialena & Nwobodo-Anyadiegwu, 2025). Financial literacy is essential for efficiently handling trade and industry resources, and financial and social wellbeing (Nogueira, Almerda, & Tavares, 2025). G20 (2021) acknowledged financial literacy as one of the most important skills enabling the welfare and empowerment of people and the world. Financial literacy is the acquaintance and management of all financial transactions, and the proficiency of budgeting, saving, investing, and accountable expenditure targeted at realizing man's necessities for the progress and development of the nation and for the advancement of social welfare of the populace (Onyenemezu & Udegbulem, 2021).

Consumer Education: consumer education talks about enlightening consumers about their civil rights, and obligations in the marketplace (Bashir, Khan & Khan, 2023). Consumer education is frequently used in concurrence with or as alternative expression of consumer awareness (European Commission, 2023). The OECD categorized consumer education into formal education (piloted in an institution or workplace), lifelong education (constant learning that improves the knowledge and skills of consumers all through their lifespan), targeted education (designed for a definite group or specific population who are deemed defenseless (OECD, 2007).

Nutrition Education: nutrition education alludes to the amalgamation of educational supports, intended to stimulate and simplify voluntary adoption of food choices and other food and nutrition-related behaviours beneficial to health and wellbeing (U.S. National Institute of Food and Agriculture, 2025). Nutritional education programmes significantly improves adult's nutritional knowledge and attitudes about healthy eating (Collado-Soler, Alferez-Pastor, Torres, Trigueros, Aguilar-Parra, & Novarro, 2023; Yetkin & Baser, 2025). Through nutritional education adults learn to curtail the effect of malnutrition practices for increased life expectancy.

Climate Change Education: climate change education assists people to recognize and tackle the impacts of the climate crisis, empowering them with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to act as agent of change (UNESCO, n.d). The Office for Climate Education (OCF) (2025) maintained that quality climate education is an essential step toward a sustainable future. Climate education prepares individuals with the knowledge and skills to know the complexities of climate change and

inspires them to become active participants in confronting this global challenge (Cambridge University Press & Assessment, 2025).

Vocational Education and Training: Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) helps youth and adults develop the abilities, knowledge, values and attitudes they need to find decent work and contribute to building a peaceful, healthy, just and sustainable world (UNESCO, 2025). VET provision comprises occupational training for adults, upskilling and reskilling, and second chance programmes that are part of the formal education and training system (OECD, 2023). UNESCO (2022) identified the three priority areas for TVET as follows:

Develop skills for all individuals to learn, work and live.

Develop skills for inclusive and sustainable economies.

Develop skills for inclusive and peaceful societies.

Digital Literacy: digital literacy discusses the capability to access, manage, recognize, assimilate, converse, assess and create information safely and correctly through digital technologies for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship. It consists of skills such as computer literacy, ICT literacy, information literacy, and media literacy targeted at empowering individuals, and in particular youth, to take on a critical mindset when engaging with information and digital technologies, and to build their resilience in the face of disinformation, hate speech and violent extremism (UNESCO, 2025). Digital literacy allows societies

to curate and consume information conscientiously, empowers individuals to search for credible and reliable sources, create meaningful content, and foster communities by connecting like-minded people on various platforms (University of the Potomac, 2025).

Peace Education: peace education is a commanding instrument for communal and personal transformation (Askervo, 2010). Readon categorized peace education as covering two dimensions of practice namely: "education about peace'' and "education for peace" (Bermeo, 2022). "Education about peace" alludes to education principally focused on the knowledge acquisition about violence and peace. While "education for peace" alludes to education focused on learning the skills necessary for living peacefully and promoting action to create peaceful alternatives. Page (2010) identified three levels of understanding peace education and they are: preventing the sufferings and wastage associated with warfare; connecting with cognate social concerns; and dealing with self-understanding, self-fulfillment, and how we interact with each other and our environment at a personal level.

Sustainable Community Development

Community development as a term employed a multitude of meanings following its formalization at the Cambridge summer conference of 1948. Community development is a prerequisite for sustainable development; its importance is too numerous to discuss.

UN as cited in Hanachor (2013:184) gave an acceptable general definition of community

development as:

a process by which efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate those communities into the life of the nation and enable them to contribute fully to national progress.

The above definition focused on the people as the strength to effective development initiatives. Community development is the basis of sustainable growth and influences access to social, economic and basic human rights of individuals (Humana People to People India (HPPI), 2018). Community development is the process of assisting a community to strengthen itself and develop towards its potentials (SIL International, 2015). The objectives of community development were summarized to include: create interest; provide equality; motivate people; assist people to motivate themselves; promote social justice; change the thinking of the people; create awareness among members of the community; bring reform and encourage all-sided development (Farooq in Udegbulem, 2019). In today's fast embryonic world, sustainable community development (SCD) has turned out to be more essential than ever (Akbari, 2024). SCD strives to harmonize the needs of current and future generations by nurturing economic, environmental, and social sustainability (Marpaung, 2024). SCD is an embryonic concept that aims to create equitable advancement by incorporating economic growth, environmental stewardship and social equity (Bwambale &

Marpaug, 2024). Obstacles of SCD are resource limitations, political and institutional obstructions and technological adoption (Bwambale & Marpaug, 2024).

A sustainable community attends everybody's needs while securing and reducing environmental damage (World Renew Canada, 2025). According to the Institute for Sustainable Communities (2024), sustainable communities take into account and address multiple human needs, not just one at the exclusion of all others. It is a home where members of different backgrounds and perspectives feel welcome and safe, where every group has a seat at the decision-making table, and where prosperity is shared. Marpaung (2024) identified the strategies for achieving sustainable community development as:

Urban planning and design: encompasses smart growth, green infrastructure, and sustainable architecture.

Economic development: encompasses supporting local businesses, promoting green technologies and encouraging sustainable tourism.

Environmental conservation: encompasses protected areas, restoration projects and sustainable agriculture.

Community engagement and capacity building: encompasses participatory planning, capacity building programmes, and public awareness campaigns.

Therefore, to develop a more sustainable community, the following practical lifestyle modifications must be implemented. They are: conserve energy, reduce and recycle waste, promote

local food sources, pollution control, support local businesses, develop public spaces, and educate your communities (World Renew Canada, 2025). Interestingly, the key principles of community development for the sustainability of the development projects/programmes are felt needs, self-help and citizen participation. These principles and above objectives and actionable lifestyle are the target all responsible, represented and relevant stakeholders work toward achieving and actualising for sustainable development.

Conclusion

Man's unceasing endeavour to survive and restore his environment for the benefit of his progeny have raised a lot of debates and quarrels among nations and school of thoughts. Adult education as one of the prominent professions through its programmes have conversed so much on the need to assist man achieve sustainable development. The intervention of community development and environmental literacy on adult struggle towards sustainable development empowered the adult citizens to gain veracious knowledge, skills, approaches, information and also reorganize their thoughts on inimical practices affecting man and his environment.

Suggestions

Pragmatic socio-economic, socio-political, and sustainable environmental policies aimed towards eradicating socio-economic challenges, political instability, and unfriendly environmental practices should be effectively designed and implemented for the promotion of sustainable development

Cultural prejudices arising as a result of various

customs and beliefs should be eliminated in the cause of attaining sustainable development.

Conscientization and reorientation on social vices among the people should be adequately encouraged to enable the public gain resourceful information in their cause of attaining sustainable development

Leaders at all sectors should be mandated to enroll in sustainable development training programmes for effective service delivery in their various fields and for the promotion of sustainable development goals.

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