



AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF SERVICE LEARNING AMONG YOUTHS OF ODEDA LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AREA OF OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

Adediran, Adekunle Amos,; Adelegun, Kehinde Gabriel Oguntayo, Francisca Foluso

Social Studies Department

School of Arts and Social Sciences

Federal College of Education, Abeokuta

Ogun State

speaktoa3@yahoo.com, speaktoa3@gmail.com

Tel: +2348060932337

Abstract

Service learning is a teaching method that engages young people in solving problems within their schools and communities as part of their academic studies or other type of intentional learning activities. Service learning had impact on students' social development, civic responsibility, career interest and problem solving capabilities. The purpose of this study was to find out the awareness level of service learning among youths of Odeda Local Government Area. The population for the study was made up of all youths between the ages of 15-40 years in Odeda local government area. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 400 respondents from the population. A total of 400 self-developed instrument designed in line with likert four-point scale was used for data collection. The questionnaire has two sections: A and B. Section A focused on the demographic data while section B focused on the variables selected for the study. The instrument was validated and subjected to test retest method. Data collected through the test retest method were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.73. Copies of the instrument were administered to respondents with the help of four research assistants. Data collected were analysed using the frequency counts and simple percentage for demographic data while the inferential statistics of chi-square was used to test the three hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. Based on the findings from the study, it was concluded that youths in Odeda Local Government had the knowledge of service learning. It could also be concluded that education and socio-cultural background of youths will enhance their awareness on service learning. Based on the conclusion of the study, it was recommended that government should make effort to increase awareness on service learning empowerment among youths. The government should also provide facilities and equipment in the society to encourage youths for service learning in their communities.

Key words: Service learning, Empowerment, Awareness, Knowledge, Youths.

Introduction

Service learning is a teaching method that engages young people in solving problems within their schools and communities as a part of their academic studies or other type of intentional learning activity. Billings, Root and Jesse (2005) as well as Billings (2000) reported that service learning had impact on students' social development civic responsibility, career interest and solving environmental problems. More specifically according to Ahmed (2009), it integrates meaningful community service with

instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, encourage lifelong civic engagement and strengthen communities for the common good (Melaville, Berg and Bank, 2006). Service learning is a method under which students participate thoughtfully in an organised service, that is conducted to meet the need of a community, primary school, secondary school, and institution of higher learning through community service programme with the aim of fostering civic responsibility and to enhances the



academic curriculum of the students or participant in order to reflect on the service experience (Adediran, Sobola and Lijadu, 2018).

Gordon (2007) stated that service learning is a teaching method that combines service to the community with classroom curriculum. It is more than merely a community service; it is an approach to mastering subject matter, while fostering civic responsibility. Service learning provides content for talking about learning in term of not only what students know but what they are able to do (Jalingo, 2008). Critically, this type of learning is building a time for students to reflect on their service experience. Reflection time helps students make the connection between classroom and community learning and ensures their understanding as well as the extent to which they can impact positive change (Gordon, 2007). Firstly, service learning builds stronger academic skills, which makes students take an active role in determining how the projects are identified and accomplished thus creating interest and excitement for learning. Secondly, service learning accommodates many different styles, by teaching students early about the role they can play in their community (Adesoji, 2008). Also, service learning encourages life-long civic participation by relating academic activities to real life experiences and improves workshop skills and enhances personal development among youths (Billings, 2000).

Ajitomi and Gbadamosi (2011) examined the effect of service learning and educational trip in social studies on primary school pupil's environmental knowledge for sustainable development in four local government areas of Oyo metropolitan in Oyo state. The study established that educational trip and service learning instructional strategies are approaches to teaching and learning that promote civil responsibility of students. Anderson (2006) examined the assessment of health profession service leaning courses. The study recalled that, those facilities were the main individual responsible for the assessment of learning outcomes in service learning courses and that the outcome identified on course syllabi were mainly cognitive. The study of Banersee (2015) on the motivation for service learning among the family and consumer science colleges/family influence on teaching perception, indicated that both service learning and non-service learning faculty in general had high teaching efficacy levels. Service learning, in the opinion of Cavaye, (2010), gives students a sense of competency. They see themselves as active contributor to their

community and learning experience rather than passive recipients of adults' decisions. It is a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students work with others through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems and at the same time reflecting upon their experience as they seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves. It is against the background that this study is examined the awareness and knowledge of service learning among youths in Odeda area of Ogun State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine whether the youths of Odeda local government have the knowledge of the service learning.
2. Determine whether education will create awareness in service learning among youth of Odeda Local Government Area.
3. Ascertain whether socio-cultural background will enhance awareness on service learning among youths of Odeda Local Government Area

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated in the study:

1. Youths of Odeda local government area will not have the knowledge of service learning.
2. Education will not create awareness in service learning among youths of Odeda local government area.
3. Socio-cultural background will not enhance awareness on service learning among youths of Odeda local government area.

Methodology

Descriptive research was used for this study. The population for this research study was made up of all youths between the ages of 15-40 years in Odeda local government area. The sample for this study was 400 respondents selected from the population using simple random sampling technique. A self-developed instrument was designed to elicit information from the respondents. The instrument consisted of two sections. Section A was demographic data of respondents while section B comprised of 23 items modified in line with likert four-point scale. The



instrument was validated by professional colleagues in the field of social science and subjected to test retest method. Data collected through the test retest method were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.73. 400 copies of the instrument were administered by the researcher personally with the help of the two trained research assistants. They were

administered to the youths, enough time was given for the completion of the questionnaire which were retrieved same day to forestall loss. Data collected were subjected to chi-square analysis to test the three stated hypotheses.

Results

Hypothesis 1: Youths of Odeda local government will not have the knowledge of service learning.

Table 1: Chi-square analysis on knowledge of service learning

	No of responses	Percentage	Chi-square Cal	Chi-square table value	Df	Sign.	Remarks
SA	219	54.75					
A	132	33	268.5	7.82	3	0.05	Sig.
SD	13	3.25					
D	36	9					
Total	400	100					

Cal= 268.5, table = 7.82= 3, at 0.05

From table 1, it could be observed that calculated chi-square of 268.5 was greater than the chi-square table value of 7.82, with df = 3 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the stated hypothesis is hereby rejected, indicating that youths of Odeda local government had knowledge of service learning.

Hypothesis 2: Education will not create awareness in service learning among youths of Odeda local government area.

Table 2: Chi-square analysis on awareness in service learning

	No of response	percentage	Chi-square calculated	Chi-square table value	Df	Sign.	Remarks
SA	171	42.75					
A	106	26.5					
SD	49	12.25	83.54	7.82	3	0.05	Sig
D	74	18.5					
Total	400	100					

Cal = 83.54, table =7.82, df = 3, at 0.05

The calculated chi-square of 83.54 was greater than the chi-square table value of 7.82 with df -3 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the stated hypothesis is hereby rejected. This implies that education will create awareness on service learning among youths of Odeda Local government area.

Hypothesis 3: Socio-cultural background will not enhance awareness on service learning among youths of Odeda local government area.

Table 3: Chi-square analysis on socio-cultural background

	No of responses	Percentage	Chi-square calculated	Chi-square table value	Df	Sign.	Remark
SA	190	47.5					
A	117	29.25					
SD	31	7.75	145.94	7.82	3	0.05	Sig
D	62	15.5					
Total	400	100					



From the table, it could be observed that the calculated chi-square of 145.94 was greater than the chi-square table value 7.82 with $df = 3$ at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the stated hypothesis is hereby rejected, indicating that socio-cultural background will enhance awareness on service learning among youths of Odeda local government area of Ogun State, Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

The study revealed that youths of Odeda local government had knowledge of service learning. This finding is in line with Adediran, Sobola and Lijadu (2018) when in their own opinion and views that many people in Nigeria are aware of service learning method of community service that orientate people of their service to their community and humanity which indicate that youths in Odeda Local Government Area are aware of service learning approach to the community service.

The findings revealed that education will create awareness on service learning among youths of Odeda local government area of Ogun state, Nigeria. This finding is in line with Gordon (2007) who stated that service learning is a teaching method that combines service learning with classroom curriculum. In the same vein, Ajitomi and Gbadamosi (2011) established that service learning is an approach to teaching and learning that promotes civic responsibility of students.

The study further revealed that socio-cultural background will enhance awareness on service learning among youths of Odeda local government area of Ogun state, Nigeria. This findings is in agreement in the study of Bennett (2006) who examines that service learning promote justice, it also indicate that service learning could change the culture of any society for better and could build relationship between people in a given society.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the result from the findings, it was concluded that youth of Odeda local government area of Ogun State, Nigeria had knowledge of service learning. It could also be concluded that education will enhance service learning practice in the community, while socio-cultural background of youths will enhance their awareness on service learning.

Based on the conclusion of the study, it was recommended that:

1. Local, state and federal governments should make efforts to improve the present level of awareness on service learning strategy in the society, especially in the various communities.
2. Youths should be educated especially on community service though service learning approach.
3. The federal government should provide necessary equipment and resources in all local government area community service through service learning approach in the locality.
4. Community leaders should find avenue of orientating the youths of their various communities of the importance of service learning in their various domains.

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