

The Contribution of Integrated Functional Adult Education for Socio-Economic Empower of Rural Women, the Case of Haramya Worade, East Hararaghe, Ethiopia

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Abstract: This study was undertaken to examine the impacts of integrated functional adult education programme implementation to empower women in Haramaya woreda. The study employed quasi Experimental Design /longitudinal. Purposive sampling technique was used in this research. All the registered 45 women learners of the center were taken as subjects of the study and for almost one year interventions were done followed by serious follow-ups. Checklists were prepared to collect status of the adult learners in three aspects- numeracy skills, health issues and economic and saving issues of women before and after the intervention. Observations and focus group discussions were also employed to collect data. The results of the 10-month intervention made shows promise for the women who participated in the intervention program: Nearly all women now write their names (97%) - an improvement from the 12 % who could write their names at the start of the program. Nearly 87% adults now write using complete sentences-no adult wrote in complete sentences at the beginning of the literacy training. 70% of the respondent did have the idea how they can maintain their personal and family hygiene as compared to the only 13% at the start of the program. While only 26% of the respondents have the knowledge with regard to effect of poor hygiene on personal health and their family, the value at the end of the intervention had grown to 79%. In conclusion, these people can learn to read and write and change their lives if given an opportunity. We have learned from the intervention that functional literacy is a basic in bringing about changes. It is recommended therefore that adequately funding the programs and appropriate follow ups are important.

Keywords: Women, Adult, Empowerment, Integrated Functional Adult Education/Literacy.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a strong device that can be used to empower human beings, to advance ecological sustainable development, to promote democracy, justices, gender equality, social and economic developments, and to build a society in which violence and conflict are replaced by dialogue and a culture of peace [1]. By making people acquire knowledge, ability, skills and attitudes, education allows them to make all rounded participation in the development process. It also strengthens the individuals and society problem solving capacity ability and culture starting from basic education. Education also enables human beings to identify harmful traditional practices and replace them by useful ones [2].

Many literatures emphasize that education is the back bone of development, either formal or non-formal education. It has crucial role to play if development programs are to live up to their potential [4], and adult education is, specially, underlined as a plan of action [4, 5].

Among the programs of the Adult and Non formal education there is a new emerging program, Integrated Functional Adult education. IFAE is not solely the acquisition of the 3Rs; rather IFAE is an approach , process, and activity whereby adults begin discussing their individual or community needs, problems, and difficulties; read words, numbers, phrases and/or sentences reflecting these; and finally begin to write, read, and calculate around them. Theoretically and at its best expression and operation this process is bidirectional; the participants learn from the facilitators who in turn learn from the participants; or everybody learns from everybody else. Collective and mutual learning is used for the solution of common problems: private knowledge, skill, experiences are pooled and coordinated towards the resolution of common problems. This approach to adult literacy focuses on helping adult to use in practical terms reading and writing and computational skills to advance their life, customs, traditions, experiences, strengths, envions, productivity, etc.

In line with this, everybody has the right to literacy [3] and literacy learning can start and grow at any age and in many contexts, for multiple purposes, and practice [6]. All age groups and all sex categories, the rich or the poor, the intellectuals and non-intellectuals, the black and the white, every class workers, urban and rural dwellers can attend either from of literacy programs what so ever the situation in which they are and for any purpose, they need. This is the lifelong nature of literacy [7].

Moreover, Nyerere [4] states, we must educate our adult society than children because the adults have immediate influence on development than children who will be active after longer and very longer year. Thus, adult education /literacy is an answer to questions and dreams of development universally. Development, a multiphase term, involves the economic social empowerment dimension.

It is a widely agreed fact that, the contribution of both sexes of the society is essential for the development of a country. It is impossible to expect the country to realize the desired all- rounded development by the effort of its population while one essential part of the society is incapacitated. Thus, among the hot issues we have these day women's empowerment and enhancing their participation in the different spheres of development endeavors is highly prioritized.

Even if, women make up half of the world population, their participation in various activities is not the same as men's even today. Without the participation of women in the development process, society as a whole cannot be said to develop sufficiently. Nevertheless, due to gender discrimination, women tend to be granted an inferior status in nearly every aspect of life. The discrimination that they face is greater and more in developing countries than in developed countries.

In the 21st century, women enjoy more freedom and power than ever before. However, they are still marginalized when compared to men in virtually all aspects of life. Women are deprived of equal access to education, health care, capital, and decision making powers in the political, social, and business sectors. Whereas men are credited with performing three quarters of all economic activities in developing countries, women actually perform 53 percent of the work, according to the United Nations. The 1995 UN Human Development Report, states that "an estimated \$16 trillion in global output is currently 'invisible,' of which \$11 trillion is estimated to be produced by women."

The world has recognized the vital importance of education as a main aspect of human security and as a means to empower women. According to the

UNDP[16] Human Development Report, women in Africa represent 52 per cent of the total population, contribute approximately 75 percent of the agricultural work, and produce 60 to 80 percent of the food. Yet they earn only 10 percent of African incomes and own just 1 per cent of the continent's assets. These numbers indicate the tremendous challenges women face on their road to gender equality. Despite repeated efforts made by governments, NGOs, and multilateral development agencies, the majority of women in the developing world are still relegated to micro enterprises and informal tasks.

In addition, women still make-up the majority of part-time and temporary workers in developed countries. Consequently, these women working in informal economies are likely to have less access to basic health care services, education, financial capital, political appointments, employee rights, and land ownership.

One of the articles of universal declaration of human right states that everyone has the right to learn, particularly the elementary and primary stages must be compulsory UNICEF, [8]. In addition to this obligatory article, educating women would provide different benefits like educating the whole society, since, many evidences describe that educating women has much more social return. As a result increasing equal access to education has been a major policy and goal for most developing countries in the past three and four decades. However, women's participation in education and development still lags behind in many countries [9].

According to ESDP V report Ethiopian adult illiteracy rate is close to 13.2 million out of this 9.2 are women, it is clear that the country can reach neither the sustainable development goals nor its own development targets unless the situation of those who are 15 years old or older (this is the official definition of an adult in Ethiopia) can be addressed and improved the participation of in IFAE as well in post-IFAE programs. Moreover, addressed and solved the challenges those where mentioned at ESDPIV. The overall target group to be reached by interventions of integrated functional adult education (IFAE) is estimated to be 13.2 million persons, a majority of them being female. In order to drive the country to middle income country by 2025 and in order to reach the ambitious targets set there, Ethiopia is undergoing a structural reform of almost all components of its educational system including a TVET sector reform and the massive expansion of higher education. Driven by its new Growth and Transformation Plan, which integrates the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) IV, the Government of Ethiopia has declared adult education, ("Integrated Functional Adult Education") a priority. A strategic framework is created with a National Adult Education Strategy [10] and a Master plan for Adult Education, which is part of ESDP IV [11], The practical

approach is functional and geared to the specific needs observed in the respective constituencies of the adult learners. It can combine the provision of; Literacy and numeracy skills, Life skills, awareness on issues related to health, family planning, environmental protection, Elements of civic education for the development of the constituencies of the learners, Vocational skills geared towards improved livelihoods and adding value to local resources, Business skills to handle gainful occupations, micro credits and participate in economic life.

Ethiopian women are actively involved in all aspects of their society's life. Women are both producers and procreators and they are also active participants in the social, political, and cultural activities of their communities. However the varied and important roles they play have not always been recognized. The discriminatory political, economic and social rules and regulations prevailing in Ethiopia have barred women from enjoying the fruits of their labour. Without equal opportunities, they have lagged behind men in all fields of self-advancement [7].

Economic development is unthinkable without the participation of women. In some economic sectors women even constitute a proportionally larger group of the labour force than men. However, because their participation in the economy has not been valued, Ethiopian women have not received their fair share of the nation's wealth.

Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines for the Education and Training sector confirmed that education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving development. Empowering women through education is a key to improve health, nutrition, and education for her children and the development of the whole society [12].

Hence, the purpose of this research will be to investigate the contribution of Integrated Functional Adult Education to social and economic empowerment of rural women in Ethiopia

Statement of the problem

The Ethiopian experience in promoting basic education for women and girls is rooted in the country's Constitution [2], which states in its Article 35:

“The historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in Ethiopia taken into account, women, in order to remedy this legacy, are entitled to affirmative measures. The purpose of these measures shall be to provide special attention to women so as to enable them compete and participate on the basis of equality with men in political, social and economic life, as well as in public and private institutions [Article 35.3].”

“Women have the right to full consultation in the formulation of national policies, the designing and execution of projects, and particularly in the case of

projects affecting the interests of women [Article 35.6].”

Women constitute approximately half of the population of Ethiopia, and a concerted effort has been made to give vent to the equality provisions of the constitution in the form of a ‘ National Policy on Ethiopian Constitution women’, which targets the following twelve priority Women’ areas: Women and poverty, Education and training for women, Women and health, Violence against women, Women and armed conflict ,Women and the economy, Women in power and decision-making, Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, Human rights of women, Women and the media, Women and the environment and the girl child.

The objectives of the policy are to: Guarantee women equal rights with men, Amend laws which adversely affect women’s social, cultural and economic conditions, eliminate prejudices and customary harmful practices, improve employment opportunities for women, identify ways and means of lightening women’s workload and facilitate women’s access to basic services, such as health care and education.

Despite the various efforts made the status of majority of Ethiopian women and girl’s still reaming low and gender disparity and inequality persist in every aspect of life. According to Meron[3] the vast majority of Ethiopian women lives in rural areas and work in the informal jobs of the agricultural sector, they have less access to and control over productive resources such as land and credit and they make the major responsibility of household maintenance, women still have a low status in the society, in particular because their work in the house hold and in the informal sector goes unrecognized. In addition, the lack of equity in the participation of women in the different decision making levels is also persist in Ethiopia. The level participation of women in their family, community and national assembly’s remain very minimal. It is believed that the existing gender gap and low status of women in Ethiopia is attributed to a wide range of cultural and socio-economic factors. Among these factors women’s limited access to education and productive resources such as land and credit particularly in rural areas are considered to be the cause and effect for the existing low status of women. Because women, particularly in rural areas, have very limited access to education and income generating skill training programs, they could not have equal chances to paid employment or able to conduct their own independent jobs. As a result their economic dependence to other family members (to their husband). Thus, their control over income and their role to make decisions in the house hold is negligible. This low economic and social status of women in turn resulted in very low participation of women in either the formal or non-formal education programs. A kind of vicious circle, thus, could explain the cause and effect

of the low educational status of women and their low economic and social status vice versa.

According to the MoE[5], women accounts only for 33.8% the country's adult literacy rate; . The situation has been aggravated by women's lack of access to education due to high household burden, little or no access to formal education particular in rural areas. Lack of relevant curriculum and NFAE programs and other social and cultural factors. Moreover, a rural women literacy program has given a low priority in terms of institutional and financial support.

Recognizing the a above mentioned facts, the need for women empowerment has been an important agenda of Ethiopia government and other local and international development agencies for this, programs activities particularly laughed by government and NGOs collation have their part to play to facilitate the action of women empowerment. One of these kinds of programs activities meant for promoting women's empowerment is education and skill development training program initiatives are often locally based, may be short-lived not truly integrated with livelihood skills development, they fail to meet the real learning or training needs of targeted women and are not part of comprehensive national strategies. Moreover, the existing programs are also suffered from ineffective implementation and failed to realize the intended effect in the life of beneficiaries.

Thus, it is needless to say that the provision of integrated functional adult education programs. Particularly for the majority of those marginalized rural women is essential if the issue of women empowerment and progress in all spheres of development as a whole is to be realized. Similarly, challenges in the implementation and effectiveness of such kind of programme are also prevalent. Hence, this research holds a mission to access the overall implementation, and effect of the integrated functional Adult education to the empowering of social and economic situation of Ethiopian rural women at Haramayaworeda.

With this in mind, the researcher is inspired to undertake this research for some important reasons. First, to assess the contribution of integrated functional adult literacy to social and economic empowerment of rural women. Hence, a research that focuses on the contribution of integrated functional adult literacy to social and economic empowerment of rural women can have its own impact in highlighting the reality in this regard. Secondly, to the researcher's knowledge some related research has already conducted; a qualitative study by Ammayo [3], on the role of literacy in economic empowerment of women, qualitative and quantitative study by Yosef [13], on empowering women through literacy and qualitative study by Temesgan [11], on the practice of functional adult literacy in building the capacity of adult women.

Though these and other related researches were useful contribution to the analysis of factors that affect empowerment of women, they had not given due much attention to the newly emerged integrated functional adult education contribution especially to the marginalized rural women in Eastern part of Ethiopia. For example; are the rural women benefiting more from the integrated functional adult education programs? What are the challenges being encountered in offering integrated functional adult education? What attempts are being made to overcome the challenges if any? Such and other similar issues perceptibly help to understand more about the contribution of integrated functional adult education rural women. The purpose of this study is, therefore, to assess the contribution of integrated functional adult education to social and economic empowerment of rural women in eastern part of Ethiopia.

The general objective of this study was to examine the contribution of integrated functional adult literacy programme implementation in empowering rural women at Haramayaworeda. The guiding questions to attain the objective were: 1. what is educational background of women who are benefiting from the integrated functional adult education program? 2. What is the contribution of integrated functional adult literacy programmer in empowering women? 3. What are the major problems that encounter while implementing the integrated functional adult literacy programs? What strategies have to done to overcome the challenges in empowering women and the whole society in the woreda in general?

METHODS

In this study quasi experimental/longitudinal design employed. Because there is only one group and all of them are in experimental condition. i.e. no control groups. To see the contribution of integrated functional adult literacy program in women empowerment in Haramayaworeda the one Group pre-test- post-test was implemented. This mean the participants were studied before and after the intervention. There was a continuous observation and follow-up over a period of time was conducted. To triangulate the information the study used both primary and secondary sources. Moreover, based on the characteristic of the population and the objectives of the study the researcher applied a non-probability sampling techniques. Thus, all registered 45 adult women learners of the center were taken as subjects of the study and for almost one year interventions were done followed by serious follow-ups. Regarding data gathering tools; checklists, extensive observations, interviews and focus group discussions were employed. The quantitative data collected from the adult learners was analyzed using percentages, frequency tables. The data from interviews were arranged into identified patterns and grouped according to the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The three traditional R’s (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) should be woven into practical everyday environment for literacy programs to be empowering. Literacy trainings also sought to help learners raise questions about everyday life and find solutions. A traditional or a casual literacy activity simply aimed at training adults to read and write, therefore, would not be sufficient in this context. Therefore, learning to value the health of their family and themselves is central too. Learning how best to deal with the aspects of saving their income and diversification were also important. In addition to this, learning how to grow a certain crop should be accompanied with learning about nutrition and/or the existence of a market for the crop.

The intervention on integrated functional Adult Education Program was conducted for one year. On course of that, the researcher successfully mobilized women learners in their new literacy classroom structure learning and recruited 2 adult literacy facilitators (1 female and 1 male teachers, one health extension worker, one saving and credit issues facilitator.

Monitoring and record-keeping the activities of the centers are monitored in different ways and approaches. Teachers maintain monthly progress records of each learner, which become the basis for further planning. They also do collective reviews using participatory approaches.

Discussions with learners occurred regularly, the facilitators and the health extension and the entrepreneurship (woreda saving and credit bureau) worker also made discussion on the progress of the learners and the programs in the center collectively. Facilitators do a weekly and monthly compilation of each learner’s progress and keep an attendance record for each learner.

The facilitators in the center maintains a file in which learners can write about anything that they want to; put their signatures of course most in thumb fingers and those sheets are kept as records. Educators hold a monthly meeting with supervisors and discuss any issues that arise.

Impacts of the program on Numeracy Skills /Reading, Writing and Arithmetic

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights [14] recognizes the right to education, as do other binding international conventions. Where literacy as a right derives from the right to education, it is seen more as a set of skills that constitute fundamental or basic education. From the founding of UNESCO, the term ‘fundamental education’ has signified the skills of reading, writing and calculating, with a heavy emphasis on reading and writing [6]. While numeracy is usually mentioned alongside literacy in legal instruments, the word ‘literacy’ itself is generally limited to reading and writing skills.

Table-1: Major issues raised and addressed related to adults numeracy skills

Major Numeracy skills tested and addressed	Base line values (in percentages)- pre test	Values at the end of the intervention- post test
Adult learners who can write their name	12%	97%
who can write the name of their village	10%	93%
who could not read one letter	81%	13%
who could read one letter or more	22. %	91.7%
who can read complex words	0%	33.5%
who cannot read sentences	87.7%	11%
who can write sentences	0%	53.7%
who can add orally	11%	87%
who can subtract orally	10%	85%
who can multiply orally	4%	57.3%
who can divide orally	0%	71%
who can dial numbers on a mobile phone	8.9%	83.3%
Adults who can sign properly	14%	83%

Table 1 above shows the literacy progress of adult women learners who attended at the centers. Nearly all (97%) can now write their names, compared to the 12 percent who could write their names at the start of the courses. Nearly all (97%) can now write their names, compared to the 12 percent who could write their names at the start of the courses. In addition, the vast majority, 85.3% percent can add and subtract

orally and 83.3 percent can dial numbers on their mobile phones.

In line with the above table one women participant (36 years old with three children) said the following idea in demonstrating multiple issues regarding the integrated functional adult literacy programs

I can read now, but I cannot write well. I write my name. My life has changed a lot. I can read the letters, and I try to read whatever I find. Once I went to the nearby hospital. One health worker asked me to go to another ward. I managed to find my way. I managed to read all the written things on the doors and I did not have to ask anybody.

She continued to explain

I don't ask my husband and my daughter to help me in dialing my mobile because I could these all now. I don't let my daughter (15 years old) help me with household tasks. She needs time to study. I don't give her any household responsibilities. I want her to go to university. If she goes to university, she earns a lot of money; she pays other people to do household responsibilities. I want her to have a computer. A girl should have education. I got married very young.

Reading and understanding simple sentences with many paragraphs was somewhat unthinkable for adult learners before the intervention. Table 1 shows that before the intervention, all of the IFAE participants were unable to read and understand simple sentences at the end of the intervention, some 33% were able to read and understand simple sentences. The majority of IFAE participants whose reading and writing skills were tested for this study (87%; n = 45), cannot write or read a short sentence before the start of the intervention. But now, only few individuals (11.8%) are unable to do this. Many IFAE participants still want to improve their reading and writing skills, as well as numeracy skills for some. Issues of sustainability and development of literacy skills were raised, as IFAE participants mostly did not have concrete collective plans for continuing learning together and for using other materials than IFAL books to practice after IFAE ends.

An issue raised during the FGD, was about the concern of participants about the education of their children; especially sending girls to school is considered as sending them to hell because the society in this part of Ethiopia are followers of Islam and believes girls only borne to make mirage and give a next generation, this perception also hold by the girls and always they make themselves ready for mirage. After they join the IFAE program the participants give a great value for education and they changed their attitude toward education and nearly all the IFAE participants reported that they were/will be sending their male and female children respectively to school. However, sometimes especially female children they used to ask them to be absent and help them in household tasks instead of going to school.

Discussants of the FGD also reported that they also have an increased interest in following up their children's education but have limited capacities to do so. They can now read whether their children have a passing grade or not and most of them can help with

learning the alphabet and numbers. Children with literate parents stay in school longer and each extra year of education for mothers is also associated with a significant decline in infant mortality and improved child health [15].

With regard to signing using their names before the start of the intervention nearly 83 % of the adults couldn't sign properly they rather were using their thumb to sign. At the start of the intervention participants were filling some kind of shame while they were asked to put signatures on papers they simply show you their finger while. The participants added that where ever they go now, particularly to banks, they in full confidences use a pen to put their signature.

Impacts of the IFAL program on Health and Family Planning issues

Through the content and discussions raised in IFAL, participants gain new knowledge about the causes of diseases, how to prevent them and how to treat them. This encourages IFAL participants to change their health and hygiene behaviors, showing that they apply their new knowledge and understanding of health issues. As a result, most of the IFAE participants and their household members report less sickness caused by several diseases in comparison to before enrolling in IFAL programs.

Additionally, a few participants have shown that IFAL can also enhance the effects of health talks and oral advice given in health centers and sometimes on the radio, as people start to take them more seriously. However, apart from this, IFAL does not appear to largely help people to access health information outside the IFAL circles. This was an expected indirect impact of their newly acquired literacy skills. However, IFAL participants mainly use them in relation to practical matters of health consultations.

The current health status of the learners showed that, 70% of the respondent did have the idea how they can maintain their personal and family hygiene as compared to the only 13% at the start of the program. While only 26% of the respondents have the knowledge with regard to effect of poor hygiene on personal health and their family, the value at the end of the intervention had grown to 79%.

This impact should not be ignored as it may encourage women to go to the hospital, acquiring literacy skills has a higher potential for helping women to improve their health conditions. Indeed, it can increase women's access to health knowledge such as reading prescription/ physician tablet order, or posters in health centers and hospitals in recognizing the Exp. (which stand for expire date) just looking to the numbers. It could also help people to know their rights concerning health and encourage them to demand these

rights. The fact that the expected outcomes of an adult literacy program do not happen may be due to the low literacy levels of IFAL participants and a lack of awareness of their literacy environment where health posters might actually be part of their learning process,

and a lack of concrete action planning sessions during the IFAL programs. Health conditions of neighbors and friends also seem to improve, as they observe new behaviors of the IFAL participants and/or IFAL participants try to advise them.

Table-2: Major issues raised and addressed related to the changes of the health of adults

Major health issues	Base line values/before the intervention	Values at the end of the intervention
Adults who can maintain their personal and family hygiene	23%	70%
Knowledge in relation to the effect of poor hygiene on personal health and their family	26%	79%
Behaviour cleaning their homes regularly	43%	73%
Behaviour use toilets	78%	99%
Adults who keep the hygiene of their children	12%	81%
Adults who value small-family sizes	10%	83%
Adults who regularly clean their compound	14%	89%
participants who know about the causes of major communicable diseases,	9%	82%
participants who know about how to prevent them and how to treat them	7%	78%

IFALP participation is also associated with changes regarding orientation to having children. In particular, there is much less stress put on the overall value of children or on the specific economic/utilitarian, social, or psychological value of children as reasons for wanting to have more children. As it can be seen from table 6 above, clearly, participants have developed small-family values as a result of the adult education program. At the beginning, only 10% of the adult learners were valuing small family sizes as compared to 73% at the end of the intervention. This is an important value change with implications for positive orientation toward family planning. Even if they able to change their outlook to use contraceptive. Still they have doubt about those drugs and instrument because they associate it with ignoring Allah role and regulation and fighting with religious practices.

Regarding the issues related to the personal and environmental hygiene, one of the participants in the Literacy program explained:

Before I joined this program, our environment was covered by rubbish and I did not care about that. However, after having this program, I have got great awareness about my personal and environmental hygiene. Therefore, I cleaned my field and planted different vegetables in side my compound.

Impacts of IFAL on Women Economic and Saving Issues empowerment

The economic returns to education have been extensively studied, especially in terms of increased individual income and economic growth. Education has been consistently shown to be a major determinant of individual income, alongside professional experience.

While the number of years of schooling remains the most frequently used variable, recent studies tend also to use assessments of cognitive skills, typically literacy and numeracy test scores. These studies show that literacy has a positive impact on earnings and appropriate use and saving of assets.

Women learners’ access to financial assets has improved, especially in terms of credit and loans in the worda micro finance office. The majority of participants interviewed also participate in a saving and credit associations and most of them joined after starting IFAL. This is related to the content of IFAL. Although not focused on financial literacy, it develops people’s knowledge of money management practices, emphasizing the importance of saving and credit management, as well as budgeting. IFAL helped women to understand how nearby microfinance institutions functions and how to calculate their capital and interests if any, which increases their trust in the worda financial institutions. As a result, a majority of the IFAL participants interviewed now have loans; most of them were not doing so before IFAL. This has also helped the IFAL participants who already had loans, as they are now able to identify numbers and make mental calculations. IFAL participants learned about managing their income and saving objectives, for example growing a business as to improve their livelihoods.

According to the information obtained from the IFAL facilitator of the saving and microfinance services though there was initially a resistance to start saving in banks, at the end of the intervention more than half of the participants begun saving in the nearby commercial banks and they appreciated the whole thing about the learning teaching program.

Table-3: Major Issues Tested In Relation To women's Economic and Saving Issues

Major issues raised Women's Economic and Saving Issues	Base line values/before the intervention (in percentages)	Values at the end of the intervention
Knowledge of saving their money/income	65%	93%
Trust in saving their money in either nearby banks or micro finance institutions	7%	55%
Knowledge /way how they can manage their income and expandichur	23%	75%
Those who use loans from the microfinance institutions	12%	19%
Those who can calculate their incomes	13%	78%
Those who participate in income generating activities	22%	65%

As can be seen from table 3 above some six issues were there as areas of intervention with regard to the economic and saving issues. One such an issue that was raised related to saving was the knowledge of participants on saving their income before and ; 65% of them had the knowledge about saving even these group of people were complaining that they were unable to start saving simply because of their limited incomes. After the intervention however, large number of them (93%) had the knowledge of saving some amount of their incomes and even some practically started the educators saving due to continuous efforts made by the intervention.

They also mention as they use traditional saving. As long as the way how can they manage their income it shown that only 23% did know the way how they can manage their money. When they put the reasons, as they did not get the awareness from the woreda enterprises bureau and there income is too small (their life is based on subsistence or from hand to mouth). However, the figure rose to 75%. The researchers have proved this in the continuous observations made during the intervention how they can manage their income.

Another intervention made was about the use of loans from the woreda microfinance offices. There were no significant differences in before and after the intervention. It is observed that the percentage of adults who used loans rose from 12% to only 19%. Basic reason given was because of lack of appropriate access to the service; however it was observed that there was the awareness and improvements in the attitudes of adults towards loans.

IFAL has helped women to improve their income generating activities, through knowing simple calculations so as to calculate change and not be cheated, knowing how to calculate profit, and to a lesser extent, increasing people's attractiveness of their business and enabling people to make their business more cost-effective. However, some people are still limited in improving their income generating activities. This is especially the case of the participants who do not have access to financial funds. In most cases, there were not opportunities offered to save and gain credit;

some of the adults are unable to save their money every week because their income is too low from the very beginning.

Apart from participating in income generating activities, women learners living in a market town and close to a road would favor adult literacy participants as they would have more economic opportunities to apply their new knowledge towards starting or improving their income generating activities. Some people also seem to lack numeracy skills in order to know which activity is most profitable, and thus to be able to diversify their income generating activities.

In line with this, during the focus group discussions participants were asked if they desire to have a livelihood skills training to diversify and increase their incomes, nearly all the respondents were eager to attend the training. This would enable them to apply their new knowledge to reach their goals. It would also increase retention and encourage people to participate in the IFAL circles. However, most of them have limited opportunities to access such training.

In general IFAL participants seem to lack marketing skills, negotiating skills and knowledge about market analysis. This could substantially limit their livelihood improvement if they were to start such a livelihood activity.

Impacts of the program on Self Respect and Confidence of women learners

IFAL increases people's self-respect and self-confidence, encouraging them to speak out in their household and/or in the community. This can benefit their household and the community development. IFAL participants' self-respect increases substantially once they have learned to write and read and sign their name instead of using their thumbprint. This is highly related to (their perception +) how other community members consider them. They also become more self-confident in the IFAL circles as they acquire new knowledge, speak up in front of others. As a result, IFAL participants feel able to speak out among friends, in small village meetings and/or in town meetings. This has enhanced their active participation in meetings as well as their

attendance to meetings and workshops (now being able to register themselves by writing their name).

Attendance to community meetings by other community dwellers also increases to some extent as IFAL participants can encourage them to come. Yet, in some cases, it is still hard for women to speak out. Moreover, IFAL might have negative side effects on illiterate people's attendance to meetings, who may feel even more isolated and ashamed of not being able to sign their name. Concerning women participants' empowerment at the household level, their household is still mainly financially dependent on their husbands' incomes, and the traditional role of women as housewives seems unbreakable. However they have a new role: deciding together with their husband on how to manage the household incomes, which helps household projects to be realized for the improvement of their lives. Husbands seem to consider this empowerment of their wives in a positive way. Finally, contrary to our expectations based on the literature, only a few IFAL participants have been able to access new positions in the community. IFAL also has limited impacts on people's knowledge of their rights and capacities to claim for them.

During the focus group discussions for the question about women adults' involvement in decision making, one of a female adult learner reported the following:

Before coming to this program, I used to admit decision making roles of my family was given to my husband in my stay here attending now "Alhamdulillah" I have come to realize that I have also the right at least to raise my concerns with my family issues.

Another issue raised during the focus group discussion conducted at the end of the intervention was also about how they manage and deal with the conflicts among households and communities. Majority of the discussants during the focus group discussion confirmed that the intervention substantially helps to reduce and/or solve conflicts in the households and the communities. Through IFAL, women acquire problem-solving skills; they now can look at issues, analyze and try to understand and solve them. This encourages change in household behaviors and in the community. Discussants also agreed that in households, there is increased understanding and listening which leads to fewer conflicts. In the community, IFAL participants handle issues with other community members differently and avoid aggression. IFAL participants also try to help solve issues with other community.

It was obvious from the in-depth interviews and the focus group discussions that women learners deeply value being self-sufficient in their daily activities. Program participation seems to contribute greatly to women's mobility in public. It seems reasonable to suggest that this new capacity combats at least one layer of social exclusion: spatial exclusion. Being able to function outside the boundaries of community is an important social gain because it may lead to other formal associations with positive outcomes.

Major Challenges Affecting the Practice of Integrated Adult Education Programs

The one year intervention of the integrated literacy program faced several challenges. The following table summarizes the major challenges. Table 8: Facilitators' views concerning the challenges encountered in the provision of IFAE in the woreda.

Table-4: Facilitators view regarding the factors affecting the practice of Integrated Adult literacy Programs

No	Item	yes		No	
		f	%	f	%
1	Do adults regularly attend classes	1	20%	4	80%
2	Is the community well aware of the importance of IFAE?	3	60%	2	40%
3	Is there adequate support from the stakeholders of IFAE?	1	20%	4	80%
4	Are there adequate instructional materials in the learning centres?	2	40%	3	60%
5	Do the IFAE learners show keen interest in attending the program?	2	40%	3	60%
6	Do adults Expect incentives to attend the classes regularly	1	20%	4	80%

As indicated in the table above (4), facilitators were asked about the challenges that they have encountered in the provision of IFAE program. Despite the adult's interest and high demand for the literacy training, for example, attendance for many adults was irregular and families of the learners often objected to their participation.

In item 1 of the table, facilitators were asked whether adults regularly attend classes 4 (80%) of them said that Regular attendance was a big issue, especially

during the planting and harvest of the locally available Kat. Those who go to work as daily laborers are also not able to attend classes regularly.

In item 2 of the same table, the respondents were asked whether the community is well aware of the importance of the IFAE program. Then, some 40 % of them replied —No. whereas, 60% of the respondents claimed the fact that the community lacked awareness about the importance of the IFAE program.

In item 3 of the same table, the respondents were asked whether there is adequate support from stakeholders. Then, only 20% of them replied —yes whereas 80% of them asserted that there was no adequate support from stakeholders from line ministries. It is however known that there are line ministries who signed Memorandum of understanding for the joint provision of IFAE program.

From this, it could be concluded that the provision of IFAE program in the woreda was almost left to the woreda education sector unlike what was stated in the National Adult Education Strategy of 2008. In item 4 of the same table, they were asked whether there are adequate instructional materials in the IFAE centers. Accordingly, only 40% of them replied -yes whereas 60% of them asserted -no. Concerning this issue, in all the focus group discussions held at the IFAE centers, FGD discussants claimed that there was lack of adequate instructional materials.

During the FGDs, the IFAE learners pointed out that some of the learners are housewives and they were forced to be absent from the IFAE center. Otherwise, everybody has interest to learn and to be free from the shackles of illiteracy.

One concern seen during the focus group discussion was that some of the adult learners were thinking that there can be a kind of incentives which is to be given to them in the assumption that they are killing their time. A half day workshop was given to them including the facilitators and workers to avoid such an attitude.

We were also able to understand during the FGD that facilitators were busy with their personal duties for the simple reason that they are government employees. There was of course money which we were paying for them and that to a certain extent solved the problem.

Particularly, most women participants find it hard to come regularly to the centers. Even when they do, learning is often interrupted by day-to-day activities: family members calling them back home, a crying child or cattle needing attention.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

According to ESDPV [15], in Ethiopia there are 13 millions of adults who have never gone to school especially women (9.2million). The majority of these people can learn to read and write if given an opportunity. The experience from the intervention done in this study shows that such an opportunity can be provided. Through the implementation of this activity, we have learned that functional Adult literacy is a basic element to empower women's. Integrated functional literacy should be the key component of any

coordinated effort to bring about long-lasting and dynamic change. Those involved with the learning centers are able to apply their literacy skills to the other local activities empowerment is a continuous state and become known overtime. As women learners move from invisibility to recognition and from isolation to organization, they become empowered and are able to build on their hopes, aspirations and expectations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The UNESCO recommends 26% budgetary allocation to education so that adequate funding is needed. Since women's empowerment is a prerequisite for sustainable development, Adult Education is central to the individual's survival and contribution to the progress of the State and nation; it should be adequately funded by the government. It is also found to be crucial that Follow-up and emphasis from the government and stake holders. Because acquired literacy skills will quickly erode, Post-literacy programs should be designed both to provide reading materials and to assist people with limited literacy skills and other related integrated issues to cope with real situations in which their skills can benefit them

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