The Impact of Adult Capacity-Building Programmes on Conflict Resolution and Community Development among Adult Learners at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of adult capacity-building programmes on conflict resolution and community development among adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 161 adult learners participating in capacity-building programmes in the Institute of Education of the university, enumerative (census) approach was employed, whereby all members of the population were included in the study. A total of 161 questionnaires were administered, of which 149 were duly completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 92.55%. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean scores and standard deviation. Findings revealed that adult capacity-building programmes are generally available, particularly in areas such as continuing education, professional certification and vocational training. Participation in these programmes was found to be moderately high. The study further showed that the programmes significantly enhance learners' knowledge and skills in conflict resolution, especially in communication, mediation, problem-solving and emotional intelligence. However, participation in leadership development, financial literacy, volunteerism and entrepreneurial activities was relatively low. The study also identified several challenges affecting participation, including lack of motivation, time constraints, financial difficulties, poor internet connectivity and inadequate institutional support. The study concluded that adult capacity-building programmes have a positive impact on both conflict resolution and community development among adult learners, although their effectiveness is limited by several structural and personal barriers. The study recommended improved programme diversity, flexible scheduling, enhanced funding support and strengthened institutional frameworks to maximize the benefits of adult capacity-building programmes.

INTRODUCTION

Adult capacity-building programmes play a vital role in equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required to function effectively within society and to contribute meaningfully to community development. However, in contemporary societies globally, adult capacity-building programmes are increasingly recognized as essential tools for promoting conflict resolution, peacebuilding, social inclusion, and sustainable community development. Recent studies have shown that adult education equips learners with communication, leadership, negotiation, and problem-solving skills necessary for peaceful coexistence and community transformation. According to Biney (2024), adult education creates awareness among community members, promotes participation in development projects, and strengthens social networks that sustain community growth and cooperation.

In Africa, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria, adult education has continued to gain attention as a strategy for addressing poverty, insecurity, unemployment and social instability. Udegbulem, Samuel-Ihemejeh, and Hanachor (2026) noted that adult education programmes such as peace education, vocational training,

environmental literacy, financial literacy, and digital literacy significantly contribute to sustainable community development in Nigeria. The authors stressed that these programmes empower adults with practical skills needed to overcome social and economic challenges within communities. Adult education is therefore no longer viewed merely as literacy acquisition but as a lifelong learning process that strengthens human capital, promotes social cohesion and enhances sustainable development (Obiozor, 2019).

Also, in Nigeria, communal conflicts, ethnic tensions, religious misunderstandings, land disputes and youth restiveness have continued to undermine social stability and developmental efforts. These conflicts often stem from poor communication, limited civic awareness, low educational attainment, and weak conflict management skills among community members. Scholars have emphasized that adult learning provides an effective platform for addressing these challenges by fostering critical thinking, dialogue, tolerance, and problem-solving skills among adults (Abubakar, Musyoka-Kamere & Nyambura, 2022). Through structured capacity-building programmes, adult learners are exposed to democratic values, negotiation techniques, civic responsibilities, and peaceful coexistence strategies that enable them to resolve disputes constructively and prevent the escalation of conflicts in their communities.

However, capacity-building programmes in adult education typically include training in leadership, communication, vocational skills, entrepreneurship, civic education, and peace and conflict resolution. These programmes are designed to empower adults not only economically but also socially and politically. According to Uzoagu (2023), adult education contributes significantly to community sustainability by improving individuals' ability to collaborate, mobilize resources, and participate in collective development initiatives. When adults acquire practical skills and social awareness through training, they are better positioned to contribute to poverty reduction, social inclusion, and community problem-solving.

Furthermore, adult capacity-building programmes enhance community development by promoting active citizenship and social responsibility. Therefore, community development thrives when individuals are able to engage in participatory decision-making, volunteerism and collective action. According to Obiozor (2019) who notes that adult education empowers community members to understand their rights and responsibilities, communicate effectively with others and contribute to peace-building and development initiatives. This is particularly important in multicultural and pluralistic societies like Nigeria, where diverse groups must learn to coexist and cooperate for shared progress.

Particularly, within the university environment, adult learners, many of whom are working professionals, community leaders, parents and mature students, constitute a strategic group for social transformation. Universities such as Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, offer various adult and continuing education programmes aimed at enhancing professional competence, leadership capacity and social awareness. These programmes provide adult learners with opportunities to interact, share experiences and develop skills that extend beyond academic achievement to include conflict management and community engagement. Abubakar et al. (2022) argue that when peace and conflict resolution education is integrated into adult learning, participants become more effective mediators, negotiators and advocates of peaceful coexistence in their communities.

Despite the acknowledged importance of adult capacity-building programmes, there is limited empirical evidence on how these programmes specifically influence conflict resolution and community development outcomes among adult learners in Nigerian universities. Most existing studies focus broadly on adult education and development, with little attention given to the combined effects of capacity-building on social harmony and grassroots development. This gap is particularly evident in institutional contexts such as Obafemi Awolowo University, where adult learners play active roles both within and outside the university environment.

Therefore, this study seeks to examine the impact of adult capacity-building programmes on conflict resolution and community development among adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. By exploring how participation in these programmes influences learners' abilities to manage conflicts, promote peace and contribute to community development, the study aims to generate empirical evidence that will inform educational policy, programme design and community-based interventions. Hence, understanding these relationships will help strengthen the role of adult education as a catalyst for peaceful coexistence and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

Despite the increasing availability of adult capacity-building programmes in Nigerian universities and community education centres, many communities continue to experience persistent conflicts, social fragmentation and slow development. Issues such as communal disputes, leadership struggles, youth restiveness, ethnic and religious intolerance and poor civic participation remain widespread across many parts of Nigeria, including Osun State. These challenges undermine social cohesion, disrupt community life and weaken collective efforts toward sustainable development. Although adult education is widely regarded as a tool for empowering individuals with the skills and attitudes necessary for peaceful coexistence and community engagement, the actual impact of these programmes on conflict resolution and community development remains uncertain in many institutional contexts.

At Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, adult and continuing education programmes are designed to enhance the knowledge, leadership skills, and social awareness of adult learners who often play important roles as community leaders, parents, professionals, and grassroots mobilizers. However, there is limited empirical evidence to demonstrate whether participation in these capacity-building programmes has translated into improved abilities to manage conflicts, promote peace, and contribute meaningfully to community development initiatives within and outside the university environment. Without such evidence, it is difficult to determine whether these programmes are effectively addressing the real social challenges faced by adult learners and their communities. Furthermore, while previous studies have examined adult education in relation to literacy, employment, and general empowerment, few have specifically focused on the combined influence of capacity-building programmes on conflict resolution and community development. This gap in the literature means that policy makers, programme planners, and university administrators lack adequate data to guide the design, implementation, and evaluation of adult education programmes that are aimed at promoting social harmony and sustainable community growth. As a result, programmes may be implemented without a clear understanding of their strengths, weaknesses, or long-term societal impact.

Therefore, the problem this study seeks to address is the lack of empirical evidence on the extent to which adult capacity-building programmes at Obafemi Awolowo University influence adult learners' ability to resolve conflicts and contribute to community development. Addressing this problem is essential for improving the effectiveness of adult education programmes and for strengthening their role as instruments for peace building and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are to:

i. assess the types of adult capacity-building programmes available to adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University;
ii. determine the level of participation in capacity-building programmes of adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University;
iii. examine the extent to which adult capacity-building programmes enhancing adult learners' knowledge and skills in conflict resolution at Obafemi Awolowo University;
iv. evaluate the influence of adult capacity-building programmes on adult learners' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and tolerance at Obafemi Awolowo University;
v. investigate the contribution of adult capacity-building programmes to community development among adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University; and
vi. identify challenges faced by adult learners in participating in capacity-building programmes for conflict resolution and community development at Obafemi Awolowo University.

Research questions

1. What are the types of adult capacity-building programmes available to adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University?
2. What is the level of participation in capacity-building programmes of adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University?

3. To what extent is adult capacity-building programmes enhancing adult learners' knowledge and skills in conflict resolution at Obafemi Awolowo University?
4. What influence are the adult capacity-building programmes on adult learners' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and tolerance at Obafemi Awolowo University?
5. What is the contribution of adult capacity-building programmes to community development among adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University?
6. What are the challenges faced by adult learners in participating in capacity-building programmes for conflict resolution and community development at Obafemi Awolowo University?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adult education refers to structured learning activities designed for individuals beyond the typical age of formal schooling, aimed at improving their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies to function effectively in their communities and broader society (Uzoagu, 2023). Adult capacity-building programmes are a subset of adult education that focus on empowering learners with practical, social, and cognitive skills to respond to real-world challenges such as conflict, poverty, and under-development. Conflict resolution involves the processes through which individuals or groups address disagreements, misunderstandings, and disputes constructively, prioritizing peaceful outcomes. Community development is a participatory process that enhances the social, economic, and political capacities of community members to improve their quality of life and achieve sustainable progress. Adult capacity-building programmes contribute to both conflict resolution and community development by equipping learners with relevant knowledge, attitudes, and skill sets.

Scholars conceptualize adult education as a powerful instrument for *human capacity building*, social transformation, and sustainable development. Uzoagu (2023) highlights that adult education equips individuals with knowledge and competencies that enable them to address social and economic challenges effectively, thereby enhancing community sustainability. Specifically, access to adult learning enhances self-reliance, employability, civic participation, and social inclusion, which are critical for development outcomes in Nigerian communities. Similarly, Teslim (2024) emphasizes that adult learning fosters *community empowerment* by promoting civic engagement, economic participation, and social cohesion. This body of literature underscores the transformative potential of adult education, particularly when programmes intentionally target community needs and learners' aspirations. Extensive research has examined the role of adult education in enhancing conflict management and peace building. Obiozor's study in rural Abia State, Nigeria, finds that adult education contributes to conflict resolution by equipping participants with skills and attitudes that mitigate violent tendencies and promote peace, which subsequently supports rural development.

Moreover, Abubakar, Musyoka-Kamere and Nyambura (2022) demonstrate that *incorporating peace and conflict resolution studies* into adult basic literacy curricula can significantly reduce insecurity and foster non-violent dispute management among adult learners in Nigeria. Their findings show that learners exposed to peace education are more likely to adopt conflict-mitigating behaviours and embrace inter-ethnic tolerance, which has implications for social cohesion and security. Community-based peace education research further corroborates this position, where structured adult learning initiatives have been shown to function as *peace building tools*, capable of reducing tensions and fostering mutual understanding among diverse groups. Abba and Haruna's work argues that such programmes are crucial in multi-ethnic societies like Nigeria to counteract insecurity and cultivate inclusive dialogue.

The literature indicates a strong link between adult education and community development outcomes. Olasehinde's (2024) research on adult education in Nigeria finds that adult learners empowered through structured educational programmes exhibit higher levels of *active citizenship, social inclusion, and economic participation*. These traits positively influence community development initiatives, such as local entrepreneurship, civic activism, and collective problem-solving. Similarly, Yusuf and Shehu (2024) argue that adult literacy and education programmes are essential levers for *leveraging community development*, especially in rural areas where adult learners often act as change agents who facilitate community transformation. Their review highlights how adult literacy extends beyond basic skills to encompass functional capacities that contribute to collective community advancement.

Adult education is also integral to broader community empowerment strategies. For example, Igwe and Ezechinnah (2023) demonstrate that adult education initiatives, when coupled with community development programmes, help mitigate socio-economic challenges by enabling individuals to adapt to changing environments and participate more actively in social processes. Several studies highlight the *synergistic effects* of integrating conflict resolution components with community development objectives in adult capacity-building programmes. For instance, research in Rivers State shows that adult education programmes that include elements of peace education, literacy, and empowerment contribute significantly to sustainable peace and community development, particularly by sensitizing participants on the dangers of violence and the importance of active citizenship

Furthermore, studies on targeted conflict resolution training programmes demonstrate positive influences on community leadership capacity and development activities. For example, research in Bayelsa State indicates that peace/conflict resolution education enhances leaders' capacities to foster cultural values and peaceful coexistence, reinforcing the link between capacity building, conflict management, and development outcomes in community settings. Despite a rich body of research linking adult education to peacebuilding and community development, gaps remain. Many existing studies focus broadly on adult literacy and general empowerment without explicitly exploring the combined impact of capacity-building programmes on conflict resolution and community development outcomes within university contexts. In particular, there is limited empirical evidence examining how structured adult programmes influence *conflict-related competencies* and *community engagement behaviours* among adult learners in higher education settings such as Obafemi Awolowo University.

Further studies have explored how adult education and capacity-building initiatives contribute to individual and community competencies. Uzoagu (2023) investigated the role of adult education as a tool for human capacity building in Nigeria and found that programmes tailored to adults' socio-economic realities significantly enhanced learners' problem-solving skills, decision-making abilities, and community involvement. The study concluded that adult education fosters empowerment, which is critical for sustainable community development. Similarly, Teslim (2024) noted that adult learning programmes help participants develop critical thinking, civic engagement, and social responsibility, key ingredients for community resilience and cooperative action in local development efforts. These studies demonstrate that adult education extends beyond literacy and vocational training to include cognitive and social empowerment that enhances individuals' ability to navigate complex community issues. Despite these findings, there is limited research linking these general capacity-building outcomes to specific societal functions such as conflict management and peace building, especially in university educational contexts.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design**.** The population of the study will consisted of all adult learners enrolled in adult and continuing education programmes at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. These include adult learners in part-time degree programmes, diploma programmes, professional development courses, and continuing education units. A sample of adult learners will be selected using a **multi-stage sampling technique.** First, adult education programmes at OAU will be grouped into relevant categories (e.g., continuing education, professional programmes, and part-time degree programmes).

Second, simple random sampling will be used to select a proportionate number of participants from each category to ensure fair representation. A sample size of approximately 161 adult learners was considered adequate for the study, depending on the total population. Questionnare was used as an instrument for data collection. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire titled "*Adult Capacity-Building, Conflict Resolution and Community Development Questionnaire (ACBCCDQ)".* The questionnaire was divided into five sections: **Section A:** Demographic information (age, gender, educational level, programme type, years of participation); **Section B:** Types and level of participation in capacity-building programmes; **Section C:** Conflict resolution knowledge, skills, and attitudes; **Section D:** Community development participation and impact; and **Section E:** Challenges in participation. Questionnaire was personally administering the questionnaires to the selected respondents. Data collected was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)**.** Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation will be used to answer the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 1: Population of the Study and Questionnaire Response Rate

Table1 shows the total population of 161 students under the Institute of Education, Faculty of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife to ensure the inclusive representation and normal distribution of questionnaire, the number of questionnaires administered and the number of questionnaires received with the response rate of 149 (92.55%).

S/N	Category of Respondents according to Year	Population (Estimated)	Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Received	Response Rate (%)
1	Part 2 Year 1	31	31	28	90.32%
2	Part 3 Year 2	33	33	29	87.88%
3	Part 4 Year 3	48	48	45	93.75%
4	Part 5 Year 4	49	49	47	95.92%
Total	**ΣX = Total Population**	**161**	**161**	**149**	**92.55%**

Institute of Education Records (February, 2026)

Research question one: What are the types of adult capacity-building programmes available to adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria?

Table 2: Types of Adult Capacity-Building Programmes Available at Obafemi Awolowo University.

S/N	Adult Capacity-Building Programmes	Very Available	Available	Less Available	Not Available	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Professional certification programmes (e.g., ICT, management, education) management, education)	67	51	17	14	**3.15**	**0.96**
2	Digital literacy and computer skills training	53	56	22	18	**2.97**	**0.99**
3	Entrepreneurship and small business development training	59	51	19	20	**3.00**	**0.98**
4	Continuing education and part-time degree programmes	66	57	18	8	**3.21**	**0.88**
5	Vocational and technical skills training	61	52	19	17	**3.05**	**0.95**
6	Leadership and management development programmes	51	43	35	20	**2.84**	**1.05**
7	Research and academic skills workshops	58	47	21	23	**2.94**	**1.01**
8	Financial literacy and personal development programmes	39	47	50	13	**2.75**	**1.03**
9	Health, wellness and social development programmes	51	57	31	10	**3.00**	**0.92**
10	Library-based capacity-building programmes (information literacy, research support, digital resources training)	59	41	31	18	**2.95**	**1.02**
Total Aggregate Mean = 2.99							

Table 2 presents the respondents' perceptions of the availability of adult capacity-building programmes at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. The results show a total aggregate mean of 2.99 on a 4-point Likert scale, indicating that adult capacity-building programmes are generally available in the university. Specifically, continuing education and part-time degree programmes recorded the highest mean score (3.21), suggesting that these programmes are highly available and widely accessible to adult learners. This is followed by professional

certification programmes (3.15) and vocational and technical skills training (3.05), which also indicate a high level of availability. These findings reflect the university's strong commitment to providing opportunities for academic advancement and skill acquisition. Furthermore, entrepreneurship and small business development training and health, wellness, and social development programmes both recorded a mean of 3.00 (0.98), indicating that they are also available to a considerable extent. Similarly, digital literacy and computer skills training (2.97), library-based capacity-building programmes (2.95), and research and academic skills workshops (2.94) are available, although at a slightly lower level. However, leadership and management development programmes (2.84) and financial literacy and personal development programmes (2.75) recorded the lowest mean scores, indicating relatively lower availability compared to other programmes. The standard deviation values, ranging from 0.88 to 1.05, suggest a moderate level of dispersion in respondents' opinions, implying some variability but overall agreement in their responses. Generally, the findings indicate that adult capacity-building programmes are generally available at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, with greater emphasis on continuing education, professional certification and vocational training, while programmes related to financial literacy and leadership development require further improvement. This finding agrees with the work by UNESCO (2022) emphasized that universities across developing countries are increasingly expanding lifelong learning and continuing education programmes to improve employability, professional competence and social inclusion among adult learners. The report noted that continuing education and professional development programmes remain the most common forms of adult learning initiatives in tertiary institutions, which supports the high mean scores recorded for continuing education and professional certification programmes in this study. Similarly, National Universities Commission (2023) reported that Nigerian universities have intensified efforts toward expanding part-time degree programmes, entrepreneurship education, and vocational skills acquisition in response to labour market demands and the need for lifelong learning opportunities. This aligns with the findings that continuing education, vocational training and entrepreneurship programmes are widely available at Obafemi Awolowo University.

Research Question 2: What is the level of participation in capacity-building programmes of adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria?

Table 3: Level of Adult Learners' Participation in Capacity-Building Programmes

S/N	Participation Indicator	Very High Participation	High Participation	Low Participation	Very Low Participation	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Attendance at digital literacy and ICT training programmes	51	49	29	20	**2.88**	**1.03**
2	Participation in entrepreneurship and skills acquisition programmes	59	47	30	13	**3.02**	**0.96**
3	Involvement in professional certification and continuing education programmes	57	49	33	10	**3.03**	**0.93**
4	Participation in library-organised information literacy and research skills workshops	47	53	39	10	**2.92**	**0.94**
5	Engagement in leadership and management development programmes	39	33	47	30	**2.54**	**1.07**
6	Participation in vocational and technical skills training	47	49	43	10	**2.89**	**0.93**

7	Attendance at personal development and financial literacy programmes	39	31	59	20	**2.60**	**1.02**
8	Participation in online or blended learning capacity-building programmes	49	46	32	22	**2.82**	**1.05**
9	Regularity of participation in capacity-building activities	51	43	32	23	**2.82**	**1.08**
10	Overall involvement in adult capacity-building programmes at the university	55	47	33	14	**2.96**	**0.97**
Total Aggregate Mean = 2.85							

Table 3 presents the level of adult learners' participation in capacity-building programmes at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. The total aggregate mean of 2.85 on a 4-point Likert scale indicates that participation is moderately high, suggesting that adult learners are fairly involved in the available programmes, though not at an optimal level. A closer examination of the data shows that involvement in professional certification and continuing education programmes recorded the highest mean (3.03), closely followed by participation in entrepreneurship and skills acquisition programmes (3.02). This implies that adult learners are more actively engaged in programmes that directly enhance their academic qualifications and economic opportunities. Similarly, overall involvement in capacity-building programmes (2.96) and participation in library-organised information literacy and research skills workshops (2.92) indicate a relatively high level of engagement. Participation in vocational and technical skills training (2.89) and attendance at digital literacy and ICT training programmes (2.88) also reflect moderate participation levels. However, lower levels of participation were observed in certain areas. Participation in online or blended learning programmes and regularity of participation in capacity-building activities both recorded a mean of 2.82, indicating only moderate engagement. More notably, attendance at personal development and financial literacy programmes (2.60) and engagement in leadership and management development programmes (2.54) recorded the lowest mean scores, suggesting relatively low participation in these areas. The standard deviation values, ranging from 0.93 to 1.08, indicate a moderate spread in responses, implying some variation in participation levels among respondents, but with a reasonable degree of consistency. Generally, the findings suggest that while adult learners participate fairly in capacity-building programmes, their involvement is stronger in academically and economically oriented programmes, whereas participation in leadership and personal development programmes remains comparatively low and may require increased encouragement and institutional support. This aligns with the position of Chukwu, Okengwu and Ezepue (2024) found that adult learners in Nigerian universities actively participate in continuing education and professional development programmes because such programmes improve employability, career advancement, and access to higher qualifications. Their study revealed that learners are more motivated to participate in programmes that have visible economic and academic rewards, which supports the high participation observed in professional certification and continuing education programmes in this study. Similarly, Ugwu and Umezuruike (2023) reported that adult learners increasingly participate in digital literacy and ICT-related training programmes because digital competencies have become essential for employment, communication, and academic activities. Their findings support the moderate participation recorded in digital literacy and computer skills programmes.

Research Question three: To what extent do adult capacity-building programmes enhance adult learners' knowledge and skills in conflict resolution at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria?

Table 4: Extent to Which Capacity-Building Programmes Enhance Adult Learners' Knowledge and Skills in Conflict Resolution

S/N	Conflict Resolution Skill Indicators	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Low Extent	No Extent	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Improves ability to communicate effectively during conflicts	57	53	23	16	**3.01**	**0.99**
2	Enhances skills in negotiation and compromise	49	45	29	26	**2.79**	**1.07**
3	Develops problem-solving skills for resolving disputes	51	43	33	22	**2.82**	**1.05**
4	Increases understanding of causes of conflict	50	41	35	23	**2.79**	**1.06**
5	Promotes emotional intelligence and self-control	49	47	30	23	**2.82**	**1.04**
6	Improves ability to manage interpersonal conflicts	47	49	31	22	**2.81**	**1.03**
7	Enhances teamwork and collaboration among adult learners	51	40	35	23	**2.80**	**1.06**
8	Builds confidence in handling disagreements constructively	57	41	28	23	**2.89**	**1.06**
9	Improves mediation and conflict-management skills	59	43	24	23	**2.93**	**1.04**
10	Overall improvement in conflict resolution competence	51	49	31	18	**2.89**	**0.99**
Total Aggregate Mean = 2.86							

Table 4 presents the extent to which adult capacity-building programmes enhance learners' knowledge and skills in conflict resolution at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. The total aggregate mean of 2.86 on a 4-point Likert scale indicates that these programmes enhance conflict resolution skills to a great extent. From the table, improvement in the ability to communicate effectively during conflicts recorded the highest mean score (3.01), indicating that capacity-building programmes significantly strengthen communication skills among adult learners during conflict situations. Similarly, improvement in mediation and conflict-management skills (2.93) and overall improvement in conflict resolution competence (2.89) show that the programmes have a strong positive impact on learners' practical conflict resolution abilities. In addition, building confidence in handling disagreements constructively (2.89), promotion of emotional intelligence and self-control (2.82), and development of problem-solving skills for resolving disputes (2.82) indicate that the programmes contribute meaningfully to both cognitive and emotional aspects of conflict management. Improvement in the ability to manage interpersonal conflicts (2.81) and enhancement of teamwork and collaboration (2.80) further support this observation. However, relatively lower mean scores were recorded for enhancement of negotiation and compromise skills (2.79) and increase in understanding of causes of conflict (2.79), although these values still fall within the range of a great extent. The standard deviation values, ranging from 0.99 to 1.07, indicate a moderate level of variability in respondents' opinions, suggesting that while most respondents agree on the positive impact of the programmes, there are slight differences in their perceptions. Generally, the findings reveal that adult capacity-building programmes at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, enhance learners' knowledge and skills in conflict resolution to a great extent, particularly in areas related to communication, mediation, and overall competence, although aspects such as negotiation and understanding conflict causes may require further strengthening. This is supported by the study by Modeyin, Oisamoje and Asemah (2025) found that communication-based capacity-building programmes significantly improve mediation, dialogue, and peaceful conflict management skills among participants in Nigeria. Their study revealed that communication strategies such as dialogue facilitation, community relations, and peacebuilding communication contribute greatly to conflict de-escalation and peaceful coexistence. This supports the present finding that adult learners improved in communication and mediation skills through participation in capacity-building programmes. Similarly, Onyimyi (2025) reported a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management in Nigerian universities. The study showed that emotional intelligence components such as self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and social skills significantly enhance constructive conflict management strategies including collaboration, compromise, and peaceful interpersonal relationships. This corroborates the findings of the present study that capacity-building programmes promote emotional intelligence, self-control, and confidence in handling disagreements constructively.

Research question four: What is the contribution of adult capacity-building programmes to community development among adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria?

Table 5: Contribution of Adult Capacity-Building Programmes to Community Development

S/N	Community Development Indicators	Very High Contribution	High Contribution	Low Contribution	No Contribution	Mean	Std Dev
1	Enhances community leadership skills among adult learners	56	47	21	25	**2.90**	**1.08**
2	Promotes active participation in community development projects	51	43	34	21	**2.83**	**1.06**
3	Improves problem-solving skills for addressing community issues	57	45	27	20	**2.93**	**1.03**
4	Encourages volunteerism and civic responsibility	39	45	56	31	**2.62**	**1.02**
5	Builds capacity for initiating community-based projects	41	48	37	23	**2.72**	**1.04**
6	Strengthens collaboration between the university and host communities	51	45	27	26	**2.81**	**1.08**
7	Improves awareness of social and developmental issues in the community	59	47	33	10	**3.04**	**0.96**
8	Promotes peaceful coexistence within the community	51	49	37	12	**2.93**	**0.98**
9	Enhances entrepreneurial activities that benefit the community	41	40	47	21	**2.68**	**1.04**
10	Contributes to overall socio-economic development of the community	52	49	29	19	**2.90**	**1.00**
Total Aggregate Mean = 2.84							

Table 5 presents the respondents' assessment of the contribution of adult capacity-building programmes to community development at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. The total aggregate mean of 2.84 on a 4-point Likert scale indicates that adult capacity-building programmes contribute to community development to a high extent. A closer examination of the results shows that improving awareness of social and developmental issues in the community recorded the highest mean score **(**3.04), suggesting that the programmes are particularly effective in increasing learners' understanding of community-related challenges. This is followed by improvement in problem-solving skills for addressing community issues (2.93) and promotion of peaceful coexistence within the community (2.93), indicating strong contributions in fostering social cohesion and

analytical abilities for community development. Similarly, enhancement of community leadership skills (2.90) and overall socio-economic development of the community (2.90) show that the programmes contribute meaningfully to both leadership development and broader community progress. Promotion of active participation in community development projects (2.83) and strengthening collaboration between the university and host communities (2.81) also reflect moderate but positive contributions. However, lower mean scores were observed for building capacity for initiating community-based projects (2.72), enhancing entrepreneurial activities that benefit the community (2.68) and encouraging volunteerism and civic responsibility (2.62). These findings suggest that although the programmes contribute positively in these areas, their impact is comparatively weaker and may require strengthening. The standard deviation values, ranging from 0.96 to 1.08, indicate a moderate level of dispersion in responses, implying that while respondents generally agree on the positive contribution of the programmes, there are slight variations in their opinions. Generally, the findings reveal that adult capacity-building programmes at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, contribute positively to community development, particularly in improving awareness, problem-solving skills, and peaceful coexistence, while areas such as volunteerism, entrepreneurship, and project initiation may require further enhancement. This is supported according to Lakan and Jiya (2023) that found that adult education programmes contribute greatly to community development by improving problem-solving abilities, vocational skills, and peacebuilding efforts within communities. Their study revealed that adult education promotes peaceful coexistence, reduces social conflicts, and strengthens community participation in development activities. This supports the present finding that adult capacity-building programmes improve awareness of developmental issues and promote peaceful coexistence within the community. Similarly, Okirika (2023) reported that peace education and literacy programmes significantly promote sustainable peace and community development in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study established that adult education programmes enhance social cohesion, community awareness, and leadership capacity among participants. This corroborates the present finding that the programmes contribute positively to leadership development and peaceful coexistence.

Research Question five: What are the challenges faced by adult learners in participating in capacity-building programmes for conflict resolution and community development at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria?

Table 6: Challenges Faced by Adult Learners in Participating in Capacity-Building Programmes.

S/N	Identified Challenges	Very Serious Challenge	Serious Challenge	Minor Challenge	Not a Challenge	Mean	Std Dev
1	Inadequate information about available capacity-building programmes	59	55	18	17	**3.05**	**0.99**
2	Time constraints due to work and family responsibilities	60	51	29	9	**3.09**	**0.91**
3	Limited access to training venues and facilities	57	53	27	10	**3.07**	**0.92**
4	Financial constraints and cost of participation	61	53	24	11	**3.10**	**0.93**
5	Inconvenient scheduling of programmes	63	59	15	12	**3.16**	**0.91**
6	Poor internet connectivity for online or blended programmes	62	57	15	15	**3.11**	**0.95**
7	Lack of motivation or interest among adult learners	67	59	13	10	**3.23**	**0.87**
8	Inadequate number of trained facilitators	61	55	20	13	**3.10**	**0.94**
9	Cultural or language barriers	59	61	18	11	**3.13**	**0.90**
10	Insufficient institutional support for adult education programmes	57	55	24	13	**3.05**	**0.94**
Total Aggregate Mean = 3.11							

Table 6 presents the distribution of responses on the challenges faced by adult learners in participating in capacity-building programmes. The results show that all the identified challenges have mean scores above the benchmark of 2.50, with a total aggregate mean of 3.11, indicating that respondents generally perceive these factors as serious challenges. The most prominent challenge identified is lack of motivation or interest among adult learners, which recorded the highest mean score of 3.23 with a standard deviation of 0.87. This suggests a high level of agreement among respondents that motivational issues significantly hinder participation. It implies that even when opportunities exist, learners' willingness and engagement remain critical concerns. Following this is inconvenient scheduling of programmes (3.16), indicating that poorly planned programme timing does not align with the busy schedules of adult learners. This is further reinforced by time constraints due to work and family responsibilities 3.09), highlighting the competing demands on adult learners' time. Cultural or language barriers (3.13) also rank highly, suggesting that diversity in language and cultural backgrounds may limit effective participation. In addition, poor internet connectivity (3.11) reflects infrastructural challenges, particularly affecting participation in online or blended learning environments. Economic and institutional factors were also identified as significant barriers. Financial constraints and cost of participation (3.10) indicate that affordability remains a key issue, while inadequate number of trained facilitators (3.10) points to human resource limitations in programme delivery. Similarly, limited access to training venues and facilities (3.07) suggests logistical challenges that restrict participation. The least ranked challenges, though still considered serious, are inadequate information about available programmes and insufficient institutional support, both with mean scores of 3.05. Despite their lower ranking, their mean values still exceed the acceptable threshold, indicating that gaps in awareness and institutional backing persist. The standard deviation values, ranging from 0.87 to 0.99, show a relatively low spread of responses, implying a moderate to high level of consensus among respondents regarding these challenges. This is corroborated with Oyetola (2022) that found that lack of motivation, inadequate awareness, and competing family and work responsibilities are major barriers to adult participation in educational and capacity-building programmes. The study emphasized that many adult learners prioritize income-generating activities over training opportunities unless strong incentives are present, which supports the present finding that lack of motivation is the most significant challenge. Similarly, Chukwu, Okengwu and Ezepue (2024) reported that time constraints due to work and family obligations significantly reduce adult learners' participation in continuing education programmes. Their findings align with the present study, which identified time pressure and inconvenient scheduling as key barriers.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the availability, participation, impact, contribution and challenges of adult capacity-building programmes among adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University. The study concludes that adult capacity-building programmes are generally available and fairly accessible within the university, particularly in areas related to continuing education, professional certification, and vocational training. This reflects the institution's commitment to lifelong learning and skill development. However, the availability of programmes is not equally distributed, as areas such as leadership development and financial literacy receive comparatively less attention. Furthermore, the study establishes that adult learners' participation in these programmes is moderately high but not optimal. Participation tends to be stronger in programmes that offer direct academic or economic benefits, while engagement in leadership and personal development programmes remains relatively low. In terms of impact, the study reveals that capacity-building programmes significantly enhance learners' knowledge and skills in conflict resolution, particularly in communication, mediation, and overall conflict management competence. This demonstrates the effectiveness of such programmes in developing essential interpersonal and social skills needed for peaceful coexistence. Additionally, the study concludes that these programmes contribute meaningfully to community development**,** especially by improving awareness of societal issues, strengthening problem-solving abilities, and promoting peaceful coexistence. However, their contribution to areas such as volunteerism, entrepreneurship and the initiation of community-based projects is relatively weaker, indicating the need for more targeted interventions in these domains. Despite these positive outcomes, the study identifies several critical challenges that hinder effective participation. These include time constraints due to work and family responsibilities, financial limitations, poor internet connectivity, lack of motivation, inadequate facilitators, and insufficient institutional support. These barriers highlight structural, personal, and systemic issues that must be addressed to maximize the benefits of capacity-building programmes. In a whole, the study concludes that while adult capacity-building programmes at the university are impactful and relevant**,** their full potential is constrained by participation gaps and operational challenges**.** Addressing these limitations through

improved programme design, better support systems and enhanced inclusivity will significantly strengthen their effectiveness in achieving sustainable learning outcomes and community development.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study provides valuable insights into the impact of adult capacity-building programmes on conflict resolution and community development among adult learners at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. However, certain limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the study relied solely on descriptive statistics, which limited the examination of statistical relationships among the study variables. Consequently, the findings are largely descriptive and do not provide evidence of predictive or associative relationships. Secondly, the use of questionnaires as the sole instrument for data collection restricted opportunities to gain deeper insights into participants' experiences, perceptions and motivations regarding participation in capacity-building programmes. Thirdly, the study was conducted within a single institution, thereby limiting the generalizability of the findings to other universities and adult education settings with different socio-cultural and institutional characteristics.

Future studies would adopt mixed-method approaches that combine quantitative surveys with qualitative techniques such as interviews and focus group discussions to provide a more comprehensive understanding of learners' experiences and motivations. Researchers should also extend similar investigations to multiple universities and adult education centres across different geographical regions to enhance the generalizability and comparative value of findings. Furthermore, the application of inferential statistical techniques such as correlation analysis, multiple regression and structural equation modelling may provide deeper insights into the relationships among participation in capacity-building programmes, conflict resolution competencies and community development outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. University should expand and balance the range of adult capacity-building programmes**.** Special attention should be given to underrepresented areas such as leadership development, financial literacy, and personal development programmes to ensure holistic adult learning opportunities.
2. The university should introduce flexible programme delivery methods, such as weekend classes, evening sessions, and blended/online learning options. This will help reduce the impact of time constraints and improve engagement in low-participation areas such as leadership and financial literacy programmes.
3. The university should strengthen training content in negotiation, conflict analysis, and interpersonal communication**.** More practical, simulation-based training and workshops should also be introduced to deepen learners' competencies in conflict management.
4. The university should strengthen entrepreneurship training, volunteerism, and community-based project initiatives**.** Collaboration between the university and host communities should also be improved to ensure greater real-life impact of training programmes.
5. The university should improve programme scheduling to suit adult learners' availability, provide financial support or subsidized fees to reduce cost barriers, strengthen internet and ICT infrastructure for online learning, increase awareness and information dissemination about available programmes, train and increase the number of qualified facilitators and provide stronger institutional support systems for adult learners

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