
Adult Education in Germany and Ethiopia: A Comparative Perspective

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to compare the systems of adult education in Germany and Ethiopia. A qualitative research design was employed and a critical review method was used. Data was based on the personal diary of the researcher, relevant research studies, policy documents and monographs. The critical analysis of the data indicated that in both Germany and Ethiopia, adult education was used mainly as a mechanism for enhancing employability skills and raising civic and intercultural competence of adults. In both nations the federal state structure created shared responsibilities among all tiers of government in the provision of adult education, and there were diverse providers of adult education in both nations. The major differences observed include: modern adult education had a longer tradition in Germany embedded in three great social processes - the processes of enlightenment, industrialization and democratization whereas in Ethiopia it was introduced in the first decade of the 20th century. In Germany, adult education focused more on updating the knowledge and skills of citizens in an information society. In Ethiopia, it focused more on alleviating poverty, empowering the socially and educationally disadvantaged sections of the society and as a tool for nurturing a democratic political culture in the multiethnic and multilingual society. Based on the findings, it could be safely concluded that adult education was less developed in Ethiopia despite its growing recognition. Based on the findings and the conclusion drawn, some implications were forwarded.

Keywords: integrated functional adult education, self-reliance, and intercultural competence

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Background of the Study

In this section, a brief societal contexts of Germany and Ethiopia so as to help readers have a bird's eye view of the historical development of adult education in both countries. The development of modern adult education in Germany goes back to three great social processes; namely, the processes of Enlightenment, Industrialization and Democratization. Except in the period of National Socialism (1933-1945), the German adult education system is characterized by plurality of providers and provisions. However, the developments after the Second World War led Germany to be divided into two separate states - the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany). Accordingly, a liberal oriented, pluralistic adult education developed in West Germany whereas a Marxist-Leninist oriented system of adult education was practiced in East Germany. After the re-unification of the German States in October 1991, the pluralistic structure of adult education has been put in place for the whole nation.

Ethiopia is a multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic nation. It has an estimated population of 95 million (MoE, 2015). Its geographical location in the Horn of Africa has played a significant role in the process of nation-building. With regard to this, one could mention the following three historical facts: first, Ethiopia developed early trade relations with the Greek and Roman world; second, Christianity and Islam were introduced to Ethiopia in the 4th and 7th centuries respectively; third, major European super powers strived to control the nation in the era of colonialism; nevertheless, Ethiopia has maintained its independence.

With the introduction of modern education in the first decade of the 20th century, Ethiopia began unstoppable but gradual political, economic and cultural changes. A few primary schools were established until the short-lived Italian occupation (1936-1941). Secondary schooling and tertiary education began to flourish after independence. Likewise, the first adult education institution was established and financed by

Emperor Haile Silassie I in the year 1948. In the mid of the 1950s, Ethiopian university students established a movement known as “Army of the Alphabet” (“Yefidel Serawit”) and taught thousands of adults basic literacy skills (Tilahun, 2011). . In the 1960s, the country implemented the Work-oriented Literacy Project of the United Nations (1968-1973). During the Military Dergue Regime (February 1974 - May 1991), Ethiopia implemented a National Literacy Campaign which received international recognition for its contribution to improvement of the literacy rate by using about fifteen mother tongues. However, the campaign was also criticized for teaching adults and out-of-school children in the same classroom. With the fall of the Dergue Regime, Ethiopia became a federal state. In 1994, it introduced a new Education and Training Policy which aimed at addressing the problems of educational access, equity, relevance and quality. However, literacy activities were usually designed “in response to external drives rather than local needs” (Ambissa, 2014:374).

In 2008, Ethiopia introduced its National Adult Education Strategy. Currently, it is implementing “Integrated Functional Adult Education” as a nationwide program, and about ten out of its nearly 40 public universities are offering adult education programs today.

Comparing the systems of adult education in Germany and Ethiopia is meaningful for two major reasons: First, Germany has a very well developed adult education system. This can be seen from the existence of more than one thousand adult education centers (Volkshochschulen). Second, Germany has an umbrella association of adult education institutions known as DvV International which is promoting the development of adult education in many countries of the world. It is a professional partner of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education in the area of adult education and it has been providing support to the development of adult education in Ethiopia since 1995. Moreover, it has supported the Ministry of Education in organizing national conferences, symposia and several forums focusing on adult education on the one hand, and it has promoted the development of publications

on adult education through its adult education journals and newsletters on the other.

Moreover, Dv International has supported Ethiopia in the implementation of a special program known as “Integrated Women Empowerment Program” which proves that literacy programs can be effective if they are integrated with livelihoods of adult learners. This program has been appreciated by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education and today the country has launched integrated functional adult education program that underscores the integration of basic literacy skills and livelihoods of adult learners. This nationwide program has been implemented since the Fourth Education Sector Development Program (2010/11 – 2015/16) of the country.

Finally, Dv International is still providing support to the Ethiopian Ministry of Education in the development of “Community Learning Centers” in Ethiopia so as to provide adults opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills relevant to their life situations.

In a nutshell, the researcher was interested in comparing the practice of adult education in both countries with the aim of exploring the use of what Wolfgang Hoerner (1993) calls the *melioristic* function of comparison - one can draw useful lessons for improving one’s own education system.

Objectives of the study

This study has both general and specific objectives. The overall objective of the study is to identify the similarities and differences between the systems of adult education in Germany and Ethiopia. The specific objectives are to (1) analyze the similarities and differences in the purpose of adult education systems of both countries; (2) identify similarities and differences in the providers of adult education, and (3) identify ways of funding adult education systems in both countries.

Statement of the Problem

Today, adult education plays an important role in the socio-economic development of a society, for it gives adults the opportunity to learn life skills and professional competencies to cope with everchanging demands of the society (Timus, 1996:10). A number of researches were conducted in the areas of adult education in Germany. The German adult education is characterized by the existence of a number of community adult education centers offering diversified programs such as politics, society and environment; culture and arts; health, languages, occupation and employment, and basic education – school leaving certificates for adults (Nuisl and Pehl, 2004:36). Moreover, adult education in Germany serves as a tool for promoting the intercultural competence of citizens (Friedenthal-Haase, 2002), for it enhances understanding among different social groups of the German population which is characterized by growing heterogeneity today.

Likewise, the practice of adult education in Ethiopia was investigated by a number of researchers. Agnita Lind (2008) indicated that Ethiopia had rich experience in the provision of different forms adult education. In addition, Ethiopian scholars such as Tilahun Workneh (2011) and Ambissa Kenea (2014) analyzed the practice of adult education in the country. The former described the practice of adult education in Ethiopia in a comprehensive manner, and the latter critically analyzed literacy initiatives in Ethiopia within diverse historical periods.

However, there is a missing link among the research work in the area in Ethiopia - a comparative analysis of the situations of adult education in Germany and Ethiopia. This study is intended to contribute to closing the existing research gap. The following basic research issues are set to be addressed: (1) major purposes of adult education in Germany and Ethiopia; (2) who the providers of adult education are in the two countries, and (3) how adult education is funded in the two countries.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this comparative analysis of adult education in Germany and Ethiopia would be useful in that they may:

- Help adult education implementing Ethiopian line ministries like the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture learn from the practices of Germany;
- Help Ethiopian higher education institutions running adult education programs reflect on adult education practices from the local and global perspective;
- Help local and international NGOs working in the diverse areas of adult education in Ethiopia reflect on their practices;
- Initiate other researchers from both Germany and Ethiopia to conduct more comprehensive research on similar issues.

Scope of the Study

In order to make it manageable, the scope of this study was delimited to (1) only two nations - Germany and Ethiopia; and (2) the purpose, provider and funding of adult education in both countries.

Theoretical Framework

This study is informed by the following two theories:

Critical theory of adult education: Even though there are various perspectives and levels of emphasis within critical theory, in this study, only the thoughts of Paulo Freire (1921-1997) and Julius Nyerere (1922-1999) are used, since they are strongly related to the goals of adult education in Ethiopia. The influence of thoughts of the Brazilian adult educator Paulo Freire is so immense specially in developing countries. He underscored that humanity is one and adult education should empower the learners; help the learners participate in dialogue;

and help them critically reflect on their own life situations (Freire, 1970). Likewise, the former president of the Republic of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, is considered as one of the most influential thinkers who have contributed to the development of adult education in Africa. He stressed the idea that adult education aims at helping adults to help themselves. In the Arusha Declaration (1997), Nyerere urged: *in order to maintain our independence and our people's freedom we ought to be self-reliant in every possible way and avoid depending upon other countries for assistance.*

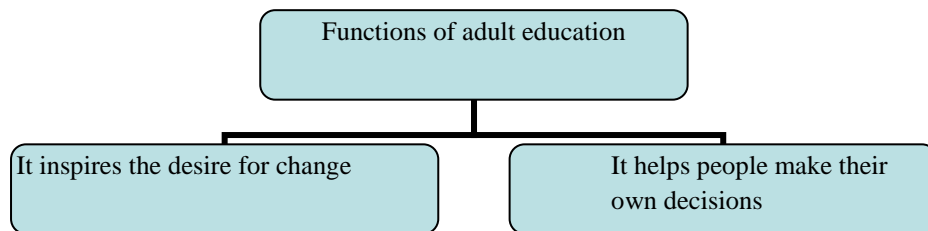


Figure 1: After Nyerere: Functions of Adult Education

Nyerere (1967:4) expressed his aspiration to bring about change in the following way:

We have been oppressed a great deal, we have been exploited a great deal and we have been disregarded a great deal. It is our weakness that has led to our being oppressed, exploited and disregarded. Now we want a revolution – a revolution which brings an end to our weakness, so that we are never again exploited, oppressed, or humiliated.

His idea that colonialism has led to humiliation of the colonized nations of the world is a fact that is also reflected today in the works of scholars like Smith (2006). Hence, Nyerere's adult educational thoughts have also emancipatory function in that it aims at raising the consciousness

of adults on the need to become self-reliant citizens. Nevertheless, it doesn't mean that Nyerere was not interested in world cooperation. In the Arusha Declaration, he emphasized the need to work with African nations towards African Unity as well as the need to uphold the values of the United Nations for ensuring world peace and security.

Martha Friedenthal-Haase is a prominent German adult educator who argues that adult education can serve as a tool for re-orientation and reeducation of adults particularly in the time of political upheavals and crises. Furthermore, she underscores the importance of intercultural communication in enlightening people concerning misunderstandings among diverse cultures and to learn from their histories (Friedenthal-Haase, 1992).

The significance of this theoretical perspective in relation to this study lies in the fact that adult education can be used as a mechanism for clarifying misunderstandings embedded in historical, socio-cultural and economic interactions among Ethiopian adult learners coming from diverse cultural (ethno-linguistic and religious) backgrounds.

Friedenthal-Haase (2002) also argues that adult education has played a critical role in Germany in two ways. First, it has promoted the process of the democratization of the German society after Second World War by reconnecting to the splendid democratic and pluralistic tradition of the Weimar Republic that existed between the end of the First World War and the coming of the National Socialist Party to power. Second, adult education has contributed to the process of Europeanization in that it has been serving as a social and political forum where peoples from different cultures enter into constructive dialogue to create a unified and peaceful Europe. Finally, her thoughts on interculturality go beyond European boundaries because she underscores the importance of intercultural adult learning for world peace. As a Hall of Fame in Adult Education, she has repeatedly emphasized the significance of intercultural adult learning in an interconnected world.

Definitions of key terms

- *Integrated functional adult education*: a two-year program for 15-60 year olds that provides literacy skills development integrated with practical knowledge and skills (MoE, 2015: 17).
- *Intercultural competence*: knowledge about the sorts of issues arising when members of different cultures interact and having the skills required to draw upon both knowledge and attitudes when interacting with others from different cultures (UNESCO, 2013:17).
- *Self-reliance*: gaining self-independence, responsibility and democratic involvement (Nyerere, 1967)

Review of Related Literature

In this section, relevant policy documents, research findings and related literature were critically reviewed so as to compare adult education in both countries. Hence, this section presents the concept of adult education, the functions of comparison, and the historical development of adult education in both countries.

The concept of adult education

Adult education was defined differently by a number of scholars at different times. The first widely accepted definition of adult education was the one which was formulated during the international conference on adult education that took place in Nairobi, Kenya, in the year 1976. It defined adult education as:

the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level, method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as an apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop the abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or

professional qualifications or turn a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behavior... (UNESCO, 1976:2).

The above definition is comprehensive in that it covers the formal, non-formal and informal forms of adult education. However, with ongoing process of specialization and professionalization, issues like apprenticeship training, were subsumed under technical and vocational education rather than strictly being seen as adult education.

Another definition that has recently got more significance is a definition of adult education which was developed during the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education that was conducted in Hamburg, Germany in the year 1997. It states that adult education:

... is a powerful concept for fostering ecologically sustainable development, for promoting democracy, justice, gender equity, and scientific, social and economic development, and for building a world in which violent conflict is replaced by dialogue and a culture based on justice (UNESCO, 1997a:1).

This definition is widely used today because it underlines the importance of adult education for improving the human conditions. Today, the world has faced tremendous environmental crisis, the crisis of development in light of increased poverty in many parts of the world and the growing global insecurity (Kirkby, 1995). The need for fostering the culture of peace, tolerance and dialogue has become clear and evident today more than ever. Plurality, diversity and heterogeneity have changed the political, social and cultural landscape of every nation. Hence, adult education can undoubtedly serve as a tool for enhancing intercultural as well as multicultural competence of individuals and social groups.

Functions of Comparison in Education

The development of comparative adult education cannot be adequately explained without looking at the contributions of both Comparative Education and the field of Education.

The Contribution of Comparative Education

Different comparatives have tried to describe the functions of comparison in education. Even though the pioneers in the field of comparative education include the French educator Marc A. Jullien de Paris (1817), the American educator Isaac L. Kandel (1881-1965) and the British educator Nicholas Hans (1888-1969), in this study, the following ideas of the German comparative educator Wolfgang Hoerner (1993: 6-10) on the functions of comparative education are used, for it is believed that they are more appropriate to depict the relevance of comparing adult education in Germany and Ethiopia:

- (a) Ideographic function: This entails the need to understand the historical and socio-cultural contexts of the countries to be compared;
- (b) Melioristic function: It asserts that the purpose of comparison is to learn from the best practice of others so as to improve one's own education system;
- (c) Evolutionary function: It states that the function of comparison is to find out global trends in education.
- (d) Experimental function: It posits that comparison helps nations to try out experiences of others whereby there is a possibility to scale up the experimented educational innovations and models or to stop it if it doesn't work for the benefits one's educational system.

Likewise, Alan Robert Trethewey (1976:9) acknowledges that comparative education would contribute to improvement of education

systems of the world by bringing in new insights and knowledge which could also positively impact educational policy making.

The Contribution of Adult Education

The contribution of international conferences on adult education right after the end of the Second World War emphasized the significance of adult education for world peace in light of the disastrous effects of the war on human conditions on the one hand, and the hope that the world can recover from the catastrophe of the war through educating and re-educating the society. Adult education has been seen as one of the strategies to foster world peace. Furthermore, adult education is indispensable for solving economic challenges of a society . This is possible if the programs are structured around 'learners needs and abilities' (Brookfield, 1986: 233-260 as cited in Fasokun, Katahoire and Oduaran, 2005: 91).

Hence, international conferences have been organized by the UN special agency UNESCO in different parts of the world as indicated below:

Table: After Joachim H. Knoll (2007): Series of International Conferences on Adult Education

Type of the conference	Held in	Country
International Conference on Adult Education	1949	Elsinore, Denmark
International Conference on Adult Education	1960	Montreal, Canada
International Conference on Adult Education	1972	Tokyo, Japan
International Conference on Adult Education	1985	Paris, France
International Conference on Adult Education	1997	Hamburg, Germany
International Conference on Adult Education	2009	Belem, Brazil

Adult education in the Third World, which initially focused on basic literacy, has been given much more attention today than before in many countries. Today, the need to provide diverse forms of adult

literacy is widely accepted. At the same time, prominent adult educators like H.S. Bohla (2006) emphasize the importance of developing in-built monitoring and evaluation scheme to ensure the quality of the forms of adult literacy. Here, one sees the importance of comparative adult education, for the comparison helps countries/institutions learn from the best practices of each other. According to Remi Bamisaiye and Mantina Mohasi (1994: 4-6), comparative adult education is a young discipline within the umbrella of adult education and it can be viewed as:

- cross-cultural studies of adult education;
- a study of patterns of adult education provisions;
- a study of different organizational strategies in adult education;
- a study of adult educational practices in time perspectives; and
- a study of different institutional provisions for adult education.

The diverse international conferences on comparative studies of adult education have contributed to the development of new insights, models and innovative approaches. Some of these international conferences on comparative adult education include the ones took place in Exter, USA (1966), in Nordborg, Denmark (1972), in Oxford, UK (1987), in Frascati, Italy (1988), and in Ibadan, Nigeria (1991).

In addition to the influence of the international conferences, which have created opportunities for many scholars from different parts of the world to exchange ideas on ways of improving the theoretical knowledge base and the practices of adult education, it was the introduction of the first university course in comparative adult education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in education in Canada through the influence of the great comparative adult educator Robby Kid (1915-1982) that Comparative Adult Education has got more and more

recognition. Kidd (1975) described the progress made in the development of comparative adult education as a discipline.

Historical Development of Adult Education in Germany and Ethiopia

Adult education reflects the socio-economic, political, cultural and environmental contexts of the society. Hence, these contexts of Germany and Ethiopia are briefly discussed hereunder:

The historical development of adult education in Germany indicates the fact that it was highly influenced by three great social processes - Enlightenment, Industrialization and Democratization.

The Process of Enlightenment emphasized the critical role of education in freeing people from the shackles of illiteracy which is often metaphorically described as "living in darkness". Philosophers of Enlightenment encourages people to use their own minds instead of being lazy and fearful (Kant, 1784). Study circles were established and this created opportunity for adults who of course belonged to different social classes of their time to come together and discuss on various socio-cultural and other related issues of the society. Likewise, there was direct relationship between the ideas enlightenment and popular education (Tippelt, 2000: 67). In addition, the need to expand educational opportunity for citizens was emphasized in the writings of scholars of the period of Enlightenment.

The Process of Industrialization: The process of industrialization led to the expansion of manufactories, modern railways, shipping, etc. which promoted trade activities within the state territory and/or between different states. Growing process of industrialization since the 1840s in Germany resulted in the formation of workers' associations and their quest for education and training. Hence, this increased demand for learning contributed much to the development of adult education in Germany. Furthermore, organizations/associations were established which asserted their commitment to the expansion of education. One

good example in Germany was the Society for the Expansion of Popular Education (“Gesellschaft fuer die Verbreitung von Volksbildung”).

The Process of Democratization: Until 1918, Germany was under the system of absolute monarchy. However, there were political parties who actively engaged in the political discourses of the country. The German Progress Party was for instance established in 1861; the German Social Democratic Party was established in the year 1875. The process of democratization required educated and self-aware citizens who could actively participate in the political life of the society. Hence, it contributed to the development of adult education and training.

Germany developed a system of adult education which was characterized by plurality and subsidiarity. A number of organizations and institutions provided different forms of adult education. It is worth mentioning the fact that the plural forms of adult education were especially indicating a democratic structure during the Weimarer Republic (1919-1932). With the coming of National Socialists under the leadership of Adolph Hitler, the democratic structure of adult education was dismantled. After the Second World War, Germany began to use adult education as a tool for denazification, demilitarization, decentralization and democratization.

Later, with the formation of separate German States, namely West Germany (The Federal Republic of Germany) and East Germany (German Democratic Republic), two different systems of adult education developed. In the West, adult education was used as a mechanism for orienting and re-orienting the German society right after the Second World War (Friedenthal-Haase, 1992) and hence the pluralistic and liberal tradition continued to flourish there whereas in the East a kind of adult education that was solely based on the Marxist-Leninist Ideology emerged. Ralf Arnold (1996) classified the historical

development of the German adult education in seven stages starting from the 2nd half of the 19th century to the 1980s.

However, the 1990s came up with the re-unification of both German States and reunified Germany opted for the pluralistic, liberal and democratic education system as it was previously the case in former West Germany. Today, the German adult education is highly influenced by the processes of globalization, Europeanization and internationalization (Friedenthal-Haaase, 2002).

In general, adult education in Germany is recognized as the fourth pillar of its education system and as a crucial tool in the more and more interconnected world of today (Gartenschlaeger and Hirsch, 2015). The importance given to adult education can be observed from the fact that about 46 German Universities run academic adult education programs today and that there are currently more than 1000 Community Adult Education Centers (Volkshochschulen) in Germany.

In Ethiopia, modern education was introduced in the year 1908 with the establishment of Menelik II School in Addis Ababa. However, strictly seen, the beginning of modern adult education in Ethiopia goes back to the year 1948 when the Imperial Government of Ethiopia established the first adult education institution – Berhaneh Zare New Institute – (“Your Light is Today Institute”). The name of the institute captures the central idea of the Period of Enlightenment, which emphasized the idea that education helps people come out from darkness to light.

Broadly seen, the development of adult education in Ethiopia can be classified into three different phases – the Imperial Period (1900 – February 1974), the Military Dergue Regime (1974 – May 1991), and since end of May 1991

During the Imperial period, the ideas of adult education were gradually disseminated in Ethiopian society. Evening education for adults started; literacy education through radio broadcasting services, literacy

movement of students. Furthermore, Ethiopia implemented the Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP), which was “conducted in connection with the United Nations’ first Development Decade, for which literacy was valued as a technical solution to socio-economic problems” (UNESCO, 2004: 9). However, the purpose of literacy education at that time was neither to empower the socially disadvantaged sections of the society nor to nurture the democratization of the society; hence, it remained by and large unsuccessful.

The Military period was mainly characterized by the political instability in the 1970s because of the “Red Terror” of the 1970s. On the other hand, the country conducted a National Literacy Campaign (1979-1989) through the use of about 15 nationality languages. The Campaign received international recognition for its mass literacy achievements. Nevertheless, the later phase of its implementation was usually criticized as a means of the political propaganda of the regime against the multitude of liberation movements fighting to topple it from power. Moreover, instead of using separate methods and approaches to teaching children and adults, literacy teachers were teaching both in the same classroom and often without considering the needs and interests of the participants (Tilahun, 2011).

During this period, like many other countries of the South, there was also “lack of adequate theoretical models to address the historical and structural context” as well as the relationship between adult education and society (Youngman, 2000: 415).

The post-1991 practice of adult education in Ethiopia is marked by negligence of adult education until 2005. However, starting from the third Education Sector Development Program of the country, emphasis has been given to it. It has even received more concrete attention when the Ethiopian Government launched Integrated Functional Adult Education as one of its priority areas since the fourth Education Sector Development Program.

Today, the integrated functional adult education is aimed at,

- Empowering and emancipating the socially disadvantaged sections of the society, for it gives them the capacity to alleviate poverty (Sandhaas, 2003). In other words, it helps them improve their livelihoods provided that they receive the necessary structural and constructive support from the state as well as the society as a whole. It goes with the idea of Paulo Freire that literacy helps adult learners read the word and through it read the world (Freire and Macedo, 2000). Equipping adults with the necessary knowledge and skills and helps them think globally and act locally so that they could promote sustainable development that satisfies the needs of the present generation without compromising that of the future generation (Elliot, 1994).
- Empowering adults by enabling them alleviate poverty by using literacy and life skills for income generation (Sandhaas, 2003).
- Tackling what John Kirkby (1995) calls “the three global crises”, namely the crisis of development, environmental crisis and the crisis of global insecurity. This is because literate and educated adults are usually capable of understanding the dynamics in their society and in the world. It enables adults to reflect on the process and influence of globalization (Smith, 2006)..

The Research Method

In this study, qualitative research design was employed. This design helped the researcher to gather data by using qualitative methods. According to Patton (1990) as cited in Best and Kahn (1993: 184), qualitative methods consist of three kinds of data collection: (1) in-depth open-ended interviews; (2) direct observation; and (3) written documents. Hence, a critical review method which makes use of

written documents was employed in this study. Sources of data were relevant policy documents, research reports and monographs dealing with adult education in Germany and Ethiopia. The data were then critically analyzed through comparative perspective. Finally, the researcher added his critical reflections by using his personal diary, which was jotted down when he was a guest lecturer at Augsburg University, Germany during the second semester of 2016.

The reviewed documents were discussed thematically, and finally interpreted qualitatively through a comparative perspective.

Results and Discussions

The data obtained from written documents were critically analyzed and discussed by categorizing the issues into themes based on the guiding research questions.

Historical development

The historical emergence of modern adult education in Germany goes back to the 18th century whereas in Ethiopia it began to flourish in the 20th century alongside with the introduction and expansion of modern schooling.

Purpose of adult education

The purpose of adult education in Germany is equipping adults with the necessary knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required to live and work in a highly industrialized society whereas the purpose of integrated adult education in Ethiopia is to improve the livelihoods of adults by integrating basic literacy (the three Rs) with the life conditions of participants. Furthermore, adult education in Ethiopia is seen as a tool for promoting the emerging democratization process, the culture of dialogue and peace.

In Germany, adult education is also used as an instrument for social integration in light of growing number of immigrants. Besides, the process of Europeanization that has led to the fact that increasing number of citizens of other European nations are living and working in Germany. Hence, adult education serves as a tool for cultural literacy.

Finally, the purpose of adult education in Germany particularly since the 1990s is to help adults adapt themselves to the dramatic changes occurring in the workplace due to fast changing technologies of an information society whereas in Ethiopia the purpose of adult education is mainly to contribute to the country's aspiration of becoming a member of Lower Middle Income Countries by 2025 by eradicating poverty.

Providers of adult education

In both Germany and Ethiopia, there are many organizations/institutions which provide different forms of adult education.

Providers of adult education in Germany

In Germany, adult education is provided by governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations and the private sector. The most significant providers of adult education are Community Adult Education Centers (Volkshochschulen). Moreover, many universities provide adult education programs. Likewise, religious organizations like the Catholic and Evangelical Churches play an important role in providing adult education and training.

From the diary of the researcher during his stay as a guest lecturer at Augsburg University of Germany in 2016, it is clear that adult learners were treated with great respect. This lies mainly in the fact that (a) in Germany adult education is not equated with basic literacy; and (b)

Germany has had longer and well established tradition of adult education.

Furthermore, the private sector is so strong in Germany that it provides various forms of adult education and training for workers, unemployed youth, etc. In addition, the German Adult Education Association is the most widely recognized institution, which is committed to expanding and strengthening adult education in the country.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that more than 45 German universities are running academic adult education programs which is critical in availing adequate professional adult educators.

Providers of adult education in Ethiopia

A number of governmental, non-governmental and parastatal organizations or institutions are providing adult education in Ethiopia. Some of these providers include (Dessu, 2007:202-204):

- Line Ministries like the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health, etc.
- Local NGOs like Agri-Service Ethiopia, Pro-Pride, etc;
- Faith-based institutions like the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, The Ethiopian Evangelical Church, the Ethiopian Catholic Secretariat and the Ethiopian Moslems relief and Development Association;
- The Ethiopian Airlines, the Ethiopian Roads Authority and the Ethiopian Electric Power Authority;
- Embassy-based institutions like the British Council, the German Cultural Institute and the Italian Cultural Institute.
- Professional associations like the Adult and Non-formal Education Association in Ethiopia, etc.
- Community-based organizations like Women Associations, etc.

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- International NGOs like the Dv International (German Adult Education Association) and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA); and
 - UNESCO plays a crucial role in supporting adult education in Ethiopia in many ways.

Funding

Adult education in Germany is mainly the responsibility of States (Laender) whereas the Federal Government plays an important role in designing policies and regulatory frameworks. When it comes to funding, it relies on the following variety of sources (Nuisl and Pehl, 2000:26):

- Federation (Federal Government), the Laender (States) and the Communes;
- private economy;
- sponsoring bodies of adult education institutions
- private households; and
- Federal Labor Office.

In Ethiopia, the Federal Government formulates policies, guidelines and regulatory frameworks whereas the responsibility for the implementation of integrated functional adult education (IFAE) lies in the hands of regional states. In addition, the federal Government formulates the Curriculum Framework for IFAE which can be implemented by regional states based on the actual livelihoods of participants. The themes of integrated functional adult education help adults reflect on their own experiences (Kolb, 1984) so as to improve their own livelihoods. When it comes to funding, the Federal Government assigns a given amount of budget and indicates it in its Education sector development Programs; however, the regional states are expected to allocate budget for the implementation of IFAE. Of course, the role of Development Partners of the country in supporting the implementation of the program is of paramount importance. Generally, many public institutions, local and international NGOs, and

the private sector are indispensable actors in funding adult education programs in Ethiopia. In this regard, it is worth mentioning particularly the contribution of DvV International as a professional partner of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education when it comes to planning, implementation and evaluation of adult education program.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

In this section, the major findings, the conclusion drawn and recommendations forwarded are summarized.

Summary of the major findings

The purpose of the study was to identify the similarities and differences between Germany and Ethiopia with specific reference to adult education. The major findings are summarized hereunder:

Purpose of Adult Education

The study revealed that the major purposes of adult education in Germany were to:

- Equip adults with the knowledge and skills which are necessary to live as active and competent citizens in daily life as well as in workplaces of the highly industrialized German society;
- Help adults develop the socially desirable values like intercultural competence and attitudes to lead harmonious life in German society which has increasingly become multicultural and heterogeneous in its composition.
- Promote the development of a democratic political culture especially after the Second World War.

- Serve as one of the pillars of lifelong learning beside universities, schools and TVET institutions.

The major purposes of adult education in Ethiopia were to:

- Equip adults, mainly illiterate and semi-literate ones, with basic knowledge and life skills so that they improve their livelihoods by generating incomes;
- Promote the very young democratization process so as to enhance peaceful co-existence of peoples with diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds;
- Help adults engage themselves actively in the country's efforts to become a member of middle Income Countries by 2025;
- Help the country address the learning needs of adults as part of achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Generally, the idea of education for self-reliance is implicitly used in the purpose of adult education in Ethiopia. Nyerere (1967) asserted that before independence of Tanzania, his countrymen didn't critically reflect on purpose of education. Individuals and the society believed that the purpose of education was to produce trained manpower 'for high salaries in the modern sector of the economy'. Instead, Nyerere claimed that the purpose of education ought to be self-reliance.

Providers of adult education

The study indicated that in Germany, adult education was provided mainly by Community Adult Education Centers, religious institutions and political institutions. In addition, universities and the private sector also play a part in the provision of adult education.

The study showed that major providers of adult education in Ethiopia were line ministries, local and international NGOs, faith-based organizations and community-based organizations (CBOs).

Funding of Adult Education

The study revealed that adult education was relatively well funded in Germany owing to the fact that Germany is one of the strongest world economies. It was found out that in Germany the Federal Government, the States and Communities had shares in the funding of adult education.

The study showed that in Ethiopia the Federal Government allocated some amount of budget for adult education in its successive education sector development programs; however, it was inadequate in light of the growing needs of the program. The study disclosed that local NGOs, international NGOs, faith-based organizations and community-based organizations played significant role in funding adult education programs in Ethiopia.

Lessons learned

The document analysis indicated the existence of similarities and differences between Germany and Ethiopia with regard to adult education from which the following lessons were learned:

Similarities

- In both nations, the responsibility of implementing adult education lies in the realm of states (in Germany “Laender”);
- In both nations, there are a number of providers of adult education (plurality).
- In both nations, higher education institutions produce qualified adult educators.
- In both nations, adult education is seen as a tool for promoting social integration, pluralism and the culture of peace.

- In both countries, adult education is seen as a tool for promoting the pillars of education for the 21st century as described by the Delors Commission (1996), namely enhancing learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be.

Differences

- Germany has a more complex and well developed system of adult education whose tradition goes back to the period of enlightenment, industrialization and democratization.
- Ethiopia has a unique innovative approach known as integrated functional adult education (IFAE), which underscores the planning, implementation and evaluation of functional adult education by diverse stakeholders of adult education and that emphasizes the integration of basic literacy skills and livelihoods of adult learners.
- Germany has around one thousand institutionalized adult education centers (Volkshochschulen) whereas Ethiopia is currently striving to develop “community learning centers”.
- In Germany, adult education is an integral part of lifelong learning supported by the policy of European area of lifelong learning. Ethiopia asserts basically that lifelong learning is a guiding principle of its education system; however, it lacks a concrete policy of lifelong learning.
- Germany is one of the well established democracies especially after the Second World War whereas Ethiopia is aspiring to use adult education for enhancing its emerging democratic political culture.

On the other hand, the Ethiopian context manifested that

- With increasing number of its population and its prevailing diversity, Ethiopia ought to strengthen its system of adult

education. The German adult education system offers ample lessons that Ethiopia can use. These include: organizing regional adult education association which could have an umbrella national adult education association.

- The funding scheme for adult education in Germany could be seen as the best practice that Ethiopia could use to overcome the problem of weak system of financing adult education activities.
- Ethiopia's innovative approach of integrated functional adult education could be used by Germany as the best practice to provide a training package for immigrants so that they could learn not only the German Language but also constitutional values and the German culture in an integrated manner.

Conclusion

The development of adult education in different countries is determined by their historical, political, sociological and economic contexts. This study revealed that there are wide ranges of similarities and differences between the systems of adult education in Germany and Ethiopia, as indicated in the summary of major findings above. From these, the researcher safely concluded that (1) Ethiopia's integrated functional adult education is an innovative model which is appropriate for the multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic country aspiring towards overcoming poverty by educating its adult citizens; (2) Germany has more complex system of adult education, but it is possible to learn from the German experience of funding adult education programs (sharing the financial burden among the federal, state and commune structures) due to the fact that both Germany and Ethiopia have federal state structure. Finally, Ethiopia as a country with estimated 95 million population of which 53% are adults aging between 15 and 65 years and with estimated illiteracy rate of 58.5% needs to strengthen its international cooperation with German adult education association - the DVV International- to improve its own system of adult education. Conversely, Germany can learn from Ethiopia's innovative approach to

educate thousands of immigrants coming to Germany about ways of learning the German culture, constitutional values and language by using an integrated approach to adult education.

Implications

Based on the major findings and conclusions drawn, the following implications were forwarded:

- The Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE) is advised to scale up the idea and practice of creating community adult education centers (CAECs) so as to meet the diverse educational needs adults.
- The Ethiopian MoE is advised to organize and provide short-term trainings on the purpose, management and activities of community adult education centers for education heads and experts of Regional Education Bureaus so that they would also cascade it to lowest administrative tier – the woredas.
- DvV International, which has been an important professional partner to the Ethiopian MoE in the areas of adult education over the last two decades, is advised to work more with the Ethiopian higher education institutions in order to support its wide range of activities with research evidences.
- The Adult and Non-formal Education Unit of the Ethiopian MoE is advised to organize periodic national conferences on adult education so as to create more opportunity for diverse stakeholders to engage in constructive dialogues and to exchange their research outputs and experiences.
- Adult education providing Ethiopian higher education institutions are also advised to bring the university to the local people by designing, among other things, need-based short-term trainings on issues of adult education.

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