

**UTILIZING RADICAL APPROACHES FOR ACTUALIZING SELF-
RELIANCE AMONG THE YOUTH IN NSUKKA LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA OF ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA**

**Egwuekwe, Chiamaka V.; Ugwu, Oliver O.; Anenechi, Chioma A.; Okorie, Martha;
Ihejirika, Charles; Obetta, K. Chukwuemeka & Koledoye, Uzoamaka**
Department of Continuing Education and Development Studies
Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract - This study assessed utilization of radical approaches for actualizing self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria. The study explored the extent to which digital literacy training, participatory, and conscientization approaches are utilized for actualizing self-reliance among the youth. Three research questions guided the study, focusing on the impact of these approaches on youth empowerment. Adopting a descriptive survey research design, the researchers administered the instrument to 280 registered youth organization executives in Nsukka Local Government Area, after the validation and reliability of the instrument were ensured. The statistical tool for analysis of data was the weighted mean. The findings revealed a low utilization of digital literacy training in enabling young people to access information, develop essential digital skills, and manage finances effectively. Similarly, the participatory approach was under-utilized in fostering youth autonomy, accountability, and project ownership. The conscientization approach also had limited impact in raising awareness of social and economic issues, encouraging critical thinking, and developing leadership skills. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the government, private sectors, and community leaders should collaborate to provide the necessary infrastructure, resources, and continuous evaluation mechanisms to ensure the success of these programmes; and that educational institutions should incorporate courses and workshops on critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership development, to enable young people to understand the root causes of issues they face and devise strategies for addressing them.

Keywords: Self-reliance, youth empowerment, conscientization, participatory approach

Introduction

In a rapidly changing global landscape, the need for self-reliance has become urgent for young people in developing countries like Nigeria. These youth face challenges that threaten their autonomy, dignity, and well-being. Traditional methods of empowerment often fall short of addressing their evolving needs, necessitating innovative strategies that challenge conventional paradigms and foster independence, creativity, and entrepreneurship. Empowerment, according to Kabeer (2005), involves enabling individuals to gain control over their lives, make choices, and reach their potential. It provides people with the

resources, skills, and opportunities to overcome barriers and meaningfully participate in society. Similarly, Bank (2008) describes empowerment as enhancing the capacity of individuals to make decisions and transform them into desired outcomes. Empowerment often involves community members identifying issues, prioritizing needs, and implementing strategies through the skills and leadership of development workers (Obetta, 2009).

Economic empowerment is central to the empowerment process, focusing on policies and programs to increase productivity and income for marginalized individuals, both men and women. Obetta (2009) further emphasizes that empowerment enables people to take charge of their own development, plan their goals, and foster self-reliance. This process allows individuals to value themselves, increase their self-esteem, and overcome feelings of powerlessness. Youth empowerment is particularly important, as it provides young people with the education, training, and skills needed to achieve economic independence (Mbah et al., 2022). It involves giving youth the freedom to access economic opportunities and enhance their positions in society (Awan & Iqbal, 2015). According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2014), this process helps young people rebuild their decision-making capabilities and support themselves and their families.

Access to education, economic security, political awareness, decision-making authority, and participation in social activities are crucial aspects of youth empowerment (Malhotra, 2012; Zulfiqar, 2017). Youth empowerment enables young people to realize they have choices, make informed decisions, and take responsibility for their actions. Continuous improvement in youth development structures and programs is necessary to protect their rights, enhance their welfare, and ensure their self-actualization (Bulus et al., 2020). According to Shahzad et al. (2020), youth empowerment creates conditions under which young people can act independently rather than at the direction of others. This involves providing an economic and social base, political will, access to knowledge, and a stable environment of equality and democracy (Government of Punjab, 2012; Zuwaira et al., 2020). From the fore-going, youth empowerment is a process of enhancing abilities, ensuring access to resources, and promoting autonomy, which is essential for both individual development and societal progress. Empowering youth to participate in decision-making and exercise control over their lives is crucial for fostering self-reliance and sustainable community growth.

Self-reliance is an expression of resilience, as young people facing adversity demonstrate their capacity to adapt and cope in difficult circumstances (Ishikawa et al., 2023). Bulus et al. (2020) stated that self-reliance is the ability to think and act independently, making decisions without external influence. It encourages people to improve their living conditions using local resources, relying on internal rather than external assets. Self-reliance involves the personal initiative to manage local resources effectively for improving one's standard of living. It is closely linked to youth empowerment by equipping young people with the skills and mindset necessary for integration into society. Self-reliance, which is a belief in one's ability to handle issues independently, is often linked to resilience (Ortega & Alegría, 2002; Jennings et al., 2015; Leipold et al., 2019). This belief in one's strengths and accomplishments fosters innovative thinking, self-emancipation, and self-realization (Ungar, 2008; Ogundowole, 2010). Understanding this connection can help young people seek assistance without compromising autonomy (Wilson et al., 2005).

Self-reliance can also refer to a nation's ability to harness its natural and human resources for progress. Various Nigerian governments have initiated policies to promote youth empowerment and self-reliance. These initiatives include the National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP), the Nigerian Agricultural Bank (NAB) and Agricultural Development Projects (ADP) were all introduced by Gen. Yakubu Gowon between 1973 and 1975. Olusegun Obasanjo introduced Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) in 1976, National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) between 1999 and 2007, and National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), the State Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (SEEDS) and Local Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (LEEDS) in 2004 (Obetta & Okide, 2011). Other programmes include the Green Revolution (GR) initiated by Alhaji Shehu Shagari in 1980, Directorate of Food, Road, and Rural Infrastructure (DIFRRI) and National Directorate of Employment (NDE) introduced by Gen. Ibrahim Babangida in 1985 and 1986, respectively, and the Better Life Programme (BLP) introduced by Chief Maryam Babangida in 1987 and Family Support Programme (FSP) initiated by Mrs. Mariam Sani Abacha in 1994 (Obetta & Okide, 2011).

In a related development, Bulus et al. (2020) stated that Nigerian Agricultural Bank (NAB) which was incorporated by Gen. Yakubu Gowon (1793) was renamed Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank (NACB) in

1987. In 2000, it was merged with the People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN). It took over the risk assets of Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) to become Nigerian Agricultural Cooperative and Rural Development Bank Limited, (NACRDB) and it was later shortened to Bank of Agriculture (BOA). Other empowerment programmes introduced by successive governments include: Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) and Youth Enterprises with Innovation in Nigeria (YOUWIN) initiated by Goodluck Jonathan (2012-2014), N-Power Empowerment Programme was initiated by President Mohammedu Buhari on the 9 of June 2016, Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in Nigeria (YISA), Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS), Africa Youth Empowerment Nigeria (AYEN), Youth Entrepreneur Support Programme (YES-P), Agricultural Credit Scheme (ACS), Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP), Credit Delivery Programme (CDP), Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), and Youth Employment in Agriculture Programme (YEAP). Others are: Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP), Youth Empowerment and Development Initiative (YEDI), Niger-Delta Development Commission's (NDDC), North East Development Commission (NEDC), National Social Investment Programme (NSIP), and University Entrepreneurship Development Programme (UNEDEP) (Anyebe, 2016; Okoro & Bassey, 2018; Bulus et al., 2020; Zuwaira et al., 2020; Mbah et al., 2022; Musa et al., 2022).

Despite these efforts, challenges still persist in creating sufficient job opportunities for Nigeria's unemployed youth. Programmes like the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), introduced in 2004 to reduce poverty and promote economic growth, had limited success. Poverty rates remained high, especially in rural areas (Anyanwu, 2016; Oyebanji & Olubusoye, 2017). Additionally, the unemployment rate increased from 4.2% to 5%, while the jobless rate among youth aged 15–24 rose from 7.2% to 8.6% in the third quarter of 2023 (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2024a). The youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET) rate was 13.8% during the same period (NBS, 2024b). Nigeria's failure to address youth unemployment has increased dependency and limited opportunities in both public and private sectors. As Aja and Adali (2013) and Omeje et al. (2020) highlighted, Nigerian youth need to be innovative, well-educated, and entrepreneurial to meet the challenges they face. Radical approaches are needed to foster resilience, autonomy, and sustainable development among Nigerian youth, including digital

literacy training, participatory, and conscientization approaches (Liu, 2017; Suzina & Tufte, 2020; Khandekar, 2021; Saleem et al., 2021; Choundhary & Bansal, 2022; Norhasni et al., 2022; Wagaman et al., 2023; Williams, 2024).

Digital literacy training is a vital life-skill that enables individuals to utilize technology, think critically, creatively, and inspirationally (Choundhary & Bansal, 2022). It involves not only operating technologies but also using digital media responsibly (Nurhayati & Falah, 2020). Digital literacy is closely related to information literacy and digital media literacy, with essential components including information processing skills, sources of information, assessment criteria, and presentations (Mbandje et al., 2023). As a form of education, digital literacy training is classified into three levels: digital competence (knowing how), digital usage (applying digital competence), and digital transformation (building new insights) (Majid & Nurhayati, 2020; Detlor et al., 2022). The benefits of digital literacy training include saving time, money, and staying connected, as well as developing critical and active participation, making informed decisions, and empowering young people as media producers and consumers (Nisa & Setiyawati, 2019; Ince, 2022; Eyal & Te'eni-Harari, 2023; Marín & Castañeda, 2023).

Digital literacy training enables young people to access information, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, communicate effectively through digital channels, and equip them with essential digital skills for self-employment and entrepreneurship (Norhasni et al., 2022; Choundhary & Bansal, 2022). Training at a young age is essential for developing financial literacy, accessing online educational resources, increasing employability, and building essential soft skills like time management and adaptability (Wendt et al., 2023). The participatory approach is a radical strategy in youth empowerment programmes aimed at fostering self-reliance. It includes young people in problem-solving and decision-making processes, allowing them to take ownership of their projects, develop skills, build confidence, and take calculated risks. It also promotes leadership and entrepreneurial skills such as innovation, creativity, and risk-taking, and encourages participation in civic activities like voting, advocacy, and community engagement to build a sense of responsibility (Aja & Adali, 2013; Bulus et al., 2020; Wagaman et al., 2023). Youth participation in decisions that affect them is a core principle in professional youth and community work (Batsleer & Davies, 2010; Sapin, 2013). This principle is

informed by global frameworks such as the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights (UNDHR) of 1948 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) of 1989, which promote youth rights and participation in governance (Quennerstedt et al., 2018). It is further reinforced by the ratification of the UNCRC and legislation specific to local governments or jurisdictions (Lansdown, 2010).

The benefits of youth participation are multifaceted. It helps develop competencies at individual, social, and systemic levels, making young people more productive and contributing to members of society (Ersing, 2009; Alicea et al. 2012). Additionally, it fosters awareness of personal potential, community responsibility, and broader social justice, encouraging youth to engage in activities that challenge oppressive conditions (Cammarota, 2011; Ross et al., 2011; Gharabaghi & Anderson-Nathe, 2012). Conscientization is another radical approach aimed at raising awareness to help individuals understand their environment and stimulate sustainable societal change. It emphasizes using knowledge and skills acquired through education for liberation, transforming both individuals and communities (Nwizu & Obetta, 2011). This process helps people become critically aware of their problems, leading to the identification and solution of local challenges to improve living conditions (Nzeneri, 2002). Conscientization is vital for individuals to comprehend their predicaments, encouraging them to address issues in their communities. This approach helps young people develop critical thinking by encouraging them to question assumptions, analyze experiences, and make informed decisions. It empowers them to recognize their strengths and potential, thus enabling them to take control of their lives and act independently (Liu, 2017). Raising awareness of social and economic issues allows youth to understand the root causes of problems and devise strategies to address them. Conscientization fosters self-awareness, enabling individuals to better understand challenges and how to handle them. By raising consciousness, people become more aware of their rights and responsibilities, helping them identify problems and propose solutions for sustainable societal change. Conscientization is rewarding as it boosts confidence, promotes decision-making, and encourages leadership in young people, thereby enhancing their autonomy and leadership skills (Khandekar, 2021). It motivates individuals to take ownership of projects, prioritize well-being, appreciate different cultures, and develop a sense of purpose, all of which

drive self-reliance (Nwizu & Obetta, 2011; Suzina & Tufte, 2020; Saleem et al., 2021). The knowledge, skills, and experiences gained through conscientization encourage people to collaborate, improving the living conditions of their communities through collective action.

The proper utilization of radical approaches in empowerment programs is essential for fostering self-reliance among youth. These approaches represent long-term efforts by the government and non-governmental organizations to empower youth through indigenous organizations, enabling them to take control of community development programs via digital literacy, conscientization, and participatory approaches (Iwasaki, 2015). In Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, numerous indigenous youth organizations have adopted radical approaches to help young people and their communities grow (Obetta & Oreh, 2017). Radical approaches are crucial in empowerment programmes, as they equip youth with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to achieve self-reliance. These approaches foster environments that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and entrepreneurship, and provide access to resources, networks, and mentorship to help youth pursue their passions. However, the youth in Nsukka face challenges such as limited access to quality education, scarce job opportunities, and poverty. These challenges often lead to crime, violence, and economic stagnation, trapping youth in cycles of dependency. Many young people are forced to migrate in search of better opportunities, while those who remain experience social isolation, poor mental health outcomes, and a lack of social cohesion. Additionally, limited economic resources leave them reliant on their families and communities for support. Current approaches have proven ineffective in promoting self-reliance, resulting in frustration and hopelessness. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the utilization of radical approaches to achieve self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to assess the extent of utilization of radical approaches for actualizing self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to ascertain the extent to which the utilization of:

5. digital literacy training actualizes self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area.

6. participatory approach actualizes self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area.
7. conscientization approach actualizes self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does the utilization of digital literacy training actualize self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area?
2. To what extent does the utilization of participatory approach actualize self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area?
3. To what extent does the utilization of conscientization approach actualize self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area?

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which aims to collect and describe data systematically on the characteristics of a given population (Nworgu, 2015). This design was suitable as it allowed the researchers to gather information from executives of registered youth organizations in Nsukka Local Government Area to assess the extent to which radical approaches actualize self-reliance among the youth. The study population comprised 290 respondents, including 10 executives from 29 registered youth organizations in Nsukka. Due to the manageable population size, no sampling was done. Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire titled “Utilizing Radical Approaches for Actualizing Self-reliance among the Youth Questionnaire (URAASYQ),” consisting of 21 items divided into three clusters based on the research questions. A 4-point rating scale was used to measure respondents’ opinions. The instrument was face-validated by three experts from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Two were from the community development unit of the Department of Continuing Education and Development Studies, and one was from measurement and evaluation unit of the Department of Science Education. Their input refined the questionnaire’s phrasing, language, and relevance. A pilot test was conducted with 20 executives from two registered youth organizations in Igbo-Eze South Local Government Area, and a reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained using Cronbach alpha, indicating high reliability.

The researchers administered 290 copies of the questionnaire through an on-the-spot delivery and retrieval method during the respondents’ monthly

meetings, with the assistance of three research assistants. A total of 280 questionnaires were completed and returned, yielding 96.6% response rate. Data were analyzed using weighted mean for the three research questions.

Results

Research Question One: To what extent does the utilization of digital literacy training actualize self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area?

Table 1: Mean Responses of the youth organization executives on the extent of the utilization of digital literacy training for actualizing self-reliance among the youth.

N=280				
S/No.	Utilizing digital literacy training for actualizing self-reliance among the youth	Total Score	Mean Score	Decision
1.	Enabling young people to access a vast amount of information, which empowers them to make informed decisions and take control of their lives.	714	2.55	HE
2.	Helping young people develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are essential for navigating the digital world and making decisions independently.	797	2.85	HE
3.	Enabling young people to communicate effectively through various digital channels, such as email, social media, and online messaging platforms, which fosters independence and self-expression.	852	3.04	HE
4.	Equipping young people with essential digital skills, such as coding, data analysis, and content creation, which opens up opportunities for self-employment and entrepreneurship.	776	2.77	HE
5.	Helping young people understand how to manage their finances digitally, by making informed financial decisions, and accessing financial services online.	788	2.81	HE
6.	Enabling young people to access online educational resources, which can help them develop new skills and pursue their interests	868	3.10	HE

independently.

7.	Helping young people develop essential soft skills, such as time management, organization, and adaptability, which are valuable in both personal and professional settings.	832	2.97	HE
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Grand Mean		2.86	HE
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*HE = High Extent

Table 1 showed the mean responses of youth organization executives on the extent of the utilization of digital literacy training for actualizing self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. The table above showed that seven items (item 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7) had their mean values as 2.55, 2.85, 3.04, 2.77, 2.81, 3.10 and 2.97 respectively. The data showed that the mean values of the items ranged from 2.55-3.04. Each of these values was within the real limit of 2.50-3.49; indicating that utilization of digital literacy training for actualizing self-reliance among the youth was to a high extent on the seven items.

On the whole, the grand mean of 2.86 indicated that to a high extent, digital literacy training was utilized for actualizing self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area.

Research Question Two: To what extent does the utilization of participatory approach actualize self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area?

Table 2: Mean Responses of the youth organization executives on the extent of the utilization of participatory approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth.

N=280				
S/No.	Utilizing participatory approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth	Total Score	Mean Score	Decision
8.	Involving young people in decision-making processes, by giving them a sense of ownership and control over their lives.	972	3.47	HE
9.	Allowing young people to take ownership of their projects and initiatives, thereby making them more autonomous.	930	3.32	HE

10.	Involving young people in problem-solving, which helps develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.	959	3.42	HE
11.	Encouraging young people to take responsibility for their actions and decisions, which can lead to increased accountability.	939	3.35	HE
Grand Mean			3.39	HE

Table 2 showed the mean responses of youth organization executives on the extent of the utilization of participatory approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. The data in the table showed that four items (item 8, 9, 10 and 11) had their mean values as 3.47, 3.32, 3.42 and 3.35 respectively. The mean values of the items ranged from 3.32-3.47. Each of these values was within the real limit of 2.50-3.49; indicating that the utilization of participatory approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth was to a high extent on the four items.

On the whole, the grand mean of 3.39; indicated that to a high extent, the participatory approach was utilized for actualizing self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area.

Research Question Three: To what extent does the utilization of conscientization approach actualize self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area?

Table 3: Mean Responses of the youth organization executives on the extent of the utilization of conscientization approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth.

N=280				
S/No.	Utilizing conscientization approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth	Total Score	Mean Score	Decision
12.	Encouraging young people to question their assumptions, analyze their experiences, and develop critical thinking skills, which can help them make informed decisions.	872	3.11	HE

13.	Raising awareness about social and economic issues that affect young people’s lives, thereby enabling them to understand the root causes of problems and develop strategies to address them.	682	2.44	LE
14.	Helping young people to develop confidence in their abilities, which can lead to increased sense of autonomy.	795	2.84	HE
15.	Encouraging young people to make informed decisions based on their analysis of situations and understanding of the context, which can help them develop decision-making skills.	716	2.56	HE
16.	Encouraging young people to take leadership roles and assume responsibilities, which can help them develop leadership skills.	780	2.79	HE
17.	Helping young people to take ownership of their projects and initiatives, which can increase their sense of responsibility.	796	2.84	HE
18.	Helping young people to develop self-awareness, which is essential for making informed decisions.	870	3.11	HE
19.	Encouraging young people to prioritize their own well-being and take care of themselves, which can increase their capacity for self-reliance.	830	2.96	HE
20.	Encouraging young people to understand and appreciate different cultures, which can increase their cultural competence and ability to navigate diverse environments.	924	3.30	HE
21.	Helping young people to develop a sense of purpose and direction, which can increase their motivation and drive towards self-reliance.	861	3.08	HE
Grand Mean			2.89	HE

*HE = High Extent; LE = Low Extent

Table 3 showed the mean responses of youth organization executives on the extent of utilization of conscientization approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. The data in the table showed that item 13 had the mean value of 2.44, which was within the real limit of 1.50-2.49. It indicates that the utilization of conscientization approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth was to a low extent on the item. However, the data showed that nine items (item 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21) had their mean values as 3.11, 2.84, 2.56, 2.79, 2.84, 3.11, 2.96, 3.30 and 3.08 respectively. The data showed that the mean values of the items ranged from 2.55-3.3, which were within the real limit of 2.50-3.49. It indicates that the utilization of conscientization approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth was to a high extent on the nine items.

On the whole, the grand mean of 2.89 indicated that to a high extent, the utilization of conscientization approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth was in Nsukka Local Government Area.

Discussion

The results of the study were discussed under the following sub-headings: Extent of the utilization of digital literacy training for actualizing self-reliance among the youth: The study's findings on the utilization of digital literacy training for actualizing self-reliance among youth revealed that digital literacy is to a high extent. It enables young people to access online educational resources, develop new skills, and pursue their interests independently. Digital literacy fosters communication through platforms such as email and social media, encouraging self-expression and independence. It also helps youth develop essential soft skills like time management, organization, and adaptability, which are valuable in both personal and professional settings. Furthermore, digital literacy training enhances critical thinking and problem-solving skills, necessary for navigating the digital world and making independent decisions. These findings align with Wendt et al. (2023), who asserted that digital literacy at a young age helps youth manage finances, access educational resources, and it increases employability by providing necessary skills for the modern job market. Norhasni et al. (2022) and Choundhary and Bansal (2022) also emphasized that digital literacy allows youth to access information, develop critical thinking, communicate through digital channels, and acquire digital skills like coding and

content creation, opening up opportunities for self-employment and entrepreneurship.

However, the study revealed that enabling young people to make informed decisions through vast information access was rated low. This contrasts with Ince (2022) and Eyal and Te'eni-Harari (2023), who argued that digital literacy promotes critical participation and empowers youth to make informed interpretations and judgments, allowing them to become active participants in their communities.

Extent of the utilization of participatory approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth: The study revealed that the participatory approach to a high extent was utilized for actualizing self-reliance among youth by involving them in decision-making and problem-solving, which enhances their critical thinking skills. These findings align with Aja and Adali (2013), Bulus et al. (2020), and Wagaman et al. (2023), who emphasized the importance of including young people in decisions that affect them. Batsleer and Davies (2010) and Sapin (2013) also noted that youth participation is a core principle in professional youth and community work. However, the study showed that allowing youth to take full ownership of their projects, fostering autonomy, was rated low. This contrasts with Cammarota (2011), Ross et al. (2011), and Gharabaghi and Anderson-Nathe (2012), who stressed that participatory approaches raise awareness of personal potential, community responsibility, and engagement in social justice. Alicea et al. (2012) also argued that participation promotes developmental competencies necessary for young people to become productive, contributing members of society.

Extent of the utilization of conscientization approach for actualizing self-reliance among the youth: The study revealed that the conscientization approach to a high extent was utilized to actualize self-reliance among the youth. The approach encourages young people to understand and appreciate different cultures, question their assumptions, develop critical thinking skills, and develop self-awareness. This helps them make informed decisions, develop a sense of purpose and direction, and prioritize their own well-being. Additionally, it enables them to recognize their strengths, abilities, and potential, and raise awareness about social and economic issues that affect their lives (Liu, 2017). Other researchers have also corroborated these findings. Nwizu and Obetta (2011), Suzina and Tufte (2020) and Saleem et al. (2021) agreed that the

conscientization approach helps young people take ownership of their projects, develop self-awareness, prioritize their well-being, understand different cultures, and develop a sense of purpose and direction. However, raising awareness about social and economic issues was rated as low. Khandekar (2021) emphasized that the conscientization approach helps young people develop confidence in their abilities, make informed decisions, and take leadership roles. Nzeneri (2002) highlighted that the approach helps individuals develop themselves and become critically aware of their problems and environment.

Conclusion

The study focused on the assessment of the extent of utilizing radical approaches for actualizing self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. The study's findings have significant implications for education, particularly in the context of youth empowerment and self-reliance. The low utilization of digital literacy training, participatory, and conscientization approaches in Nsukka Local Government Area highlights the need for a more deliberate and robust integration of these strategies into educational programmes. The study suggests that educational institutions should prioritize practical digital skills, such as coding, data analysis, and content creation, to equip learners with real-life applications for self-employment and entrepreneurship. Additionally, financial literacy, particularly digital finance, should be included to help youth manage their resources effectively. The findings also imply that educators should adopt more learner-centered methodologies, encouraging youth to take ownership of their learning and projects. This would foster autonomy, decision-making, and accountability, leading to more invested learners. The limited impact of conscientization highlights the need for educational programs to focus on critical thinking and social awareness. By incorporating conscientization into the curriculum, learners would understand better the social and economic issues affecting their communities, analyze the root causes, and develop leadership and decision-making skills. The study concludes that the utilization of radical approaches has been insufficient in actualizing self-reliance among the youth in Nsukka Local Government Area. To address these gaps, educators, policymakers, and community leaders must enhance the integration of these approaches into youth training and educational programmes.

Recommendations

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

1. Educational institutions and community training centres should prioritize comprehensive digital literacy programmes that focus on advanced competencies like coding, data analysis, and content creation. On this note, Government agencies, NGOs, and private sector stakeholders should collaborate with educational institutions to provide practical support and resources needed to implement radical approaches effectively.
2. Enugu State Government should collaborate with private sectors to provide resources and infrastructure, such as internet access and modern digital tools, to support youth training programmes. Financial literacy should also be incorporated to empower youth with financial knowledge and skills.
3. Community development officers and adult education facilitators should adopt participatory methodologies that involve youth in decision-making processes and project planning. This can be achieved through group discussions, collaborative projects, and community-based learning initiatives. They should improve on the entrepreneurial initiatives, employment rates, and community leadership roles taken by young people who have participated in training programmes.
4. Educational institutions should incorporate courses and workshops on critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership development to enable youth to understand the root causes of issues and devise strategies for addressing them. As such, continuous monitoring and evaluation of implemented programmes should be conducted to assess their effectiveness in fostering self-reliance among youth.

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