

AN APPRAISAL OF THE POLITICAL AND AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION EDUCATION NEEDS OF THE INDIGENOUS KAMBARI ADULTS IN KEBBI STATE.

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Abstract

The main purpose of this paper was to make an appraisal of the political and agricultural extension education needs of the indigenous Kambari in their own perspectives. The fundamental method that was employed for this study was the field research, which lends itself to the use of participant observation, ethnographic interviewing, as well as focus groups discussion. The paper assessed the political and agricultural extension needs of the Kambari adults. Kayiwo and Masamale, which are Kambari villages were used for the study. Data collected for the paper was analyzed using the detailed of themes and events. One of the major findings of the study was that the indigenous Kambari adults need political and agricultural extension education. They study among other things recommended that the Kambari should be provided with functional education in the area of political and agricultural education so as to enable them participate in the socio-economic and political development process of their area and the nation at large.

Introduction

The towns of Kambari (eg. Libata, Kwanga, Yadi, Wara etc) have today become more integrated into society. They are living together with the sedentary groups in society. Thus, they are living in more permanent settlements and in modern houses. While on the other hand, the indigenous Kambari who are the main concern of this paper, live in villages, in very less permanent houses, clay built, grass roofing, and cornstalks fencing of houses. This pattern settlement of the indigenous Kambari consist of

houses concentrated together with their farmlands outlying their clustered dwellings.

Two indigenous Kambari villages were used for this study. These villages are Kayiwo and Masamale. There are a total of 57 households at Kayiwo and 40 households at Masamale making a total of 97 households in the two villages. The indigenous household is essentially characterized by cooperation and co-existence by the members of the family. The concept of an ideal household in the indigenous Kambari context conforms with the description of ideal household postulated by Junaid (1987) that the ideal household consists of a man, his wife or wives and their children. In more advanced usage of the household it may also include the wives of married sons and their children., However, it is interesting to note that most of the household in the two villages under study fall under nuclear families, which were not more than two generations of adults in a family.

The major occupation of the indigenous Kambari is farming. To the Kambari, farming is a way of life. Thus, it is a family occupation. It was observed that there is a hardly barren land not cultivated within settlement. The Kambari grow both the food and the cash crops side by side. The most popular crops being grown are guinea corn, rice and millet. They grow cash crops, such as groundnuts, beans, garden, eggs, cassava and sweet potato etc. for economic purposes while the food crops are mainly for consumption.

Adamu (1968) maintained that the Kambari are by far the best farmers in Yawuri area and thousands of people including nearly the whole of the Hausa population and large proportion of Gungawa depend annually on the food the Kambari grow, especially the guinea corn. It has been observed from the ethnographic data for this study, that farming has remained the pride of the indigenous Kambari up to today. Men and women participate in farming including children.

Adamu (1968) observed that next to farming, hunting is another important occupation of the Kambari. To the Kambari living on the mainland, hunting is an important supplementary occupation and it is carried on throughout the year. In the rainy season when the Kambari are busy on their farms, hunting is done by means of large traps. But in the dry season when they are less busy and when the countryside is more open,

bows and arrows are the equipment commonly used. The use of guns in hunting is a very recent development among the indigenous Kambari.

Furthermore, Adamu (1968) observed that the indigenous Kambari during the dry season on the mainland roam about from one river to another, catching fish in the isolated pools of water in the tributaries of the river Niger. This supplementary occupation is up-till today found among the indigenous Kambari living in the main lands. This may not be unconnected with the fact that Kambari are living mostly along the river Niger. The fishing by the Kambari is not for commercial purposes, but rather for personal consumption.

It is important to point out here despite the fact that, farming is the major occupation of the indigenous Kambari yet, the use of modern techniques of farming has not been observed among the Kambari. This trend may not be unconnected with the conservative attitude of the Kambari. It may not be out of place therefore, to assert that, this attitude play a major role in their refusal to accept change from traditional methods of farming to modern methods in agriculture.

Further more, closely related to this was the negative attitude of the indigenous Kambari towards the application of fertilizer on their farms. The fieldwork for this study was partly conducted during the rainy season (the year 2000). This gave the writer the opportunity to witness the sales of fertilizer for the season. Throughout the sales, it was observed that no indigenous Kambari came to buy the commodity. The officer in charge of fertilizer in Ngaski area maintained that the indigenous Kambari do not usually come to buy fertilizer. The researcher sought to know why? It was confirmed that Kambari are not fond of keeping themselves far from the town. According to him the level of participation of the Kambari in activities and programmes going on in the town is very low. The officer further indicated that, it is usually after the sales of the fertilizer that the Kambari (very few of them) would later purchase the commodity from the dominant groups in the area in "mudus" (measures). This time they will be exploited by buying it at a higher cost. The officer in charge of fertilizer in the area indicated that majority of the indigenous Kambari use manure for their crops.

The practice of farming amongst the indigenous Kambari involves both male and female. It is however, important to note at this juncture that

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according to key informants, while the male engage in large scale farming (for both food and cash crops), the women on the other hand engage in small-scale farming. Whatever a woman cultivates is to be sold to earn money, which is to be used for her personal use and to buy ingredients for making soup (kayan miya). In the indigenous Kambari culture, it is the wife that takes care of the ingredients for making soup.

Furthermore, farming among the Kambari is taken seriously so much so that children especially the male are taught to go to farm as early as the age of six, the age when a child is expected to be enrolled in school as enshrined in the NPE (1981). It is the pride of Kambari to have many children; essentially because of the belief that the number of children (male) he has the more food he is expected to produce at the end of the rainy season. It was observed that the indigenous Kambari parents prefer to have male children than female children. The reason is for productivity on the farm.

Methodology

The principal method used for this study was the ethnographic method. This method lends itself to the use of participant observation and ethnographic interviewing. Two indigenous Kambari villages were used for the study namely Kayiwo and Masamale. The ethnographic data gathered were interpreted using detailed descriptions of themes and events to determine the political and agricultural extension needs of the indigenous Kambari in Kebbi state.

Findings and Discussions.

This section is divided into two sub-headings, namely; the Political and Agricultural extension education needs of the indigenous Kambari adults.

Political education Needs of Kambari Adults

The indigenous Kambari require political education, which is capable of preparing them more efficient and meaningful participation in the development of their communities. Programmes about government, community development, voting and political affairs, are all relevant to the

life of the indigenous Kambari, if they are to function effectively in the modern society.

At the time of collecting data for this study, the ethnographic data showed that there was no political awareness amongst the indigenous Kambari in the two encampments that constituted the study group for this study. Key informants revealed that the indigenous Kambari were very passive during the voters' registration exercise, voting exercise, and party membership. They were generally ignorant of the political life of their existence. This trend is likely to pose problem in the attainment of integration of the indigenous Kambari. By implication, the indigenous Kambari need to be sensitized, mobilized and educated with a view to making them conscious of their political/or civic rights and responsibilities, otherwise it will be difficult for the indigenous Kambari to be integrated into the mainstream society. The provision of political education or socialization is capable of helping greatly towards this direction.

It is important to indicate that as at the time of collecting data for this study there was no indigenous Kambari representative in the Local Government Council although there were some representatives who are of Kambari stock from Wara, Libata, Kwanga and Yadi etc. In a nutshell, there is no indigenous Kambari participating in the political activities and programmes of the area. According to key informants in Masamale and Kayiwo areas of the indigenous Kambari, some of them used to participate in the voting exercise, but without knowing the importance of voting, because they are living in very difficult conditions of life. However, for the indigenous Kambari to participate in politics as well as the various government programmes, they need to be educated, so as to enhance their political awareness and socialization. This will help in no small measure to allow the indigenous Kambari to be able to compete with their sedentary counterparts. It was observed that the sedentary people have dominated all political activities and programmes in the area.

Furthermore, it would not be out of place to mention that the indigenous Kambari require an adult education programme aimed at educating them on the concepts of their local, state and national governments, in order that they may become an enlightened electorate, able to understand the tenets of government, and of course to take their place successfully in the local politics and administration. Political education

will help to provide the indigenous Kambari with an appreciation of political institutions, their evolution and progress. In another development, political education can help to provide the indigenous Kambari citizens wider access to news and information about the activities of government as well as their rights and responsibilities.

Political education for political awareness is important for successful participation in the modern society. The provision of Adult Education in this category is quite relevant for the achievement of political socialization, thereby making the indigenous Kambari more aware and acquainted with their rights and obligations as citizens of their society. It should also aim at having a literate indigenous Kambari society that is fully integrated into the mainstream.

The provision of political education is one of the current educational needs identified amongst the indigenous Kambari adults for successful life in the modern world. The indigenous Kambari are illiterates and conservative. They are isolated in the rural areas. Thus, they lack political socialization and indeed education. The relevance of political education or socialization to the lives of the indigenous Kambari has been demonstrated in this paper. However in order to succeed in any attempt to provide political education to the Kambari, various strategies are relevant.

One strategy to be used is to expose the indigenous Kambari adults to the use of Radio. Junaid (1987) contended that the local radio offers the prospects of both providing literacy and other vocational programmes to the Fulani on the one hand, and allowing them to maintain their way of life and preserve their cultural integrity on the other. In addition, Ezeomah (1998) has shown how the radio helps in facilitating distance education among the nomads in the following way:

investigations have shown that most nomadic families own transistor radios. This is one of the evidence of attitude change among the nomads towards modern ways of life and a means of helping them break their isolation with the outside world. A good number of them are usually seen with portable transistor radio hung over their shoulders. While herding they listen to programmes, especially those that affect them with their neighbors(p.7).

This view about the local radio in relation to the Fulani is quite relevant to the indigenous Kambari because, they seem to have the same educational problems. The Kebbi State Radio station should introduce programmes aimed at educating the rural Kambari that are geared towards the provision of political socialization and education.

The importance of radio as an important source of information for political socialization and of course education cannot be overemphasized. The radio will help to expose the indigenous Kambari adults to different knowledge and skills about political socialization. To successfully achieve this noble objective, the indigenous Kambari adults require some form of literacy to be able to conceptualize the aims of political socialization and education.

In order to realize the goal of political education, the indigenous Kambari adults should be encouraged to listen to the radio programmes regularly. During the period of the fieldwork, it was observed that some of the Kambari adults own transistor radio, which they listen to at home and on the farms. It is necessary to establish Radio rooms in the indigenous Kambari encampments for their listening.

Another strategy that can be used is the Television. The Kebbi State Television should introduce programmes, which are geared towards mass mobilization and enlightenment of the indigenous Kambari on political education. It is interesting to note that the radio Niger, Kontagora, and Radio Kainji have various educative programmes for the Kambari.

In addition, the local musicians are another strategy. The indigenous Kambari singers and drummers from Ngaski local government area and neighbouring Niger State are doing well in sensitizing and mobilizing the indigenous Kambari in the area of political socialization and social integration. For example, one of the major Kambari singers, which the researcher saw during the fieldwork, was "Kilisa". It was observed that he used to go round the indigenous Kambari encampments as well as villages and towns to educate and entertain the Kambari and non-Kambari through his songs and drums.

Agricultural Extension Education Needs of Kambari Adults.

The Indigenous Kambari who principally constituted the target group for this study are generally farmers. This therefore underscores the need for them to be provided with an adult education programme geared towards improving their occupational competence and productivity. The ethnographic data collected has clearly demonstrated the use of traditional methods of farming by the indigenous Kambari men and women. Work on the farms is usually done manually with the traditional farming methods and implements.

The indigenous Kambari who are generally conservative and too much attached to their traditional culture, have not been patronizing the modern methods of farming. The Kambari have shown interest in the use of modern methods of farming but equally lamented that the sedentary people have done little or nothing to educate them in this direction.

However, the use of the traditional farming methods and practices poses a problems associated with productivity and therefore calls for the need to introduce modern system of farming, bearing in mind the scientific and technological development in the modern world today. This shows the relevance of literacy for the indigenous Kambari, by providing them the opportunity to have access to information concerning new methods and practices of farming. Illiteracy and ignorance is likely to hinder high productivity of farm produce, thus, the need for new ideas concerning modern practices and methods of farming.

In the light of the above, the indigenous Kambari adults require rural adult education through extension services. In order to provide the indigenous Kambari with agricultural education through extension methods, it is relevant to identify the extension process for rural farmers suggested by Matanmi (1987, p. 118).

- i. The extension worker, working through and discussing new ideas about farm work with local leaders, while few farmers may be persuaded at a meeting or demonstration to try it out;
- ii. Inviting other farmers to see the results obtained by those who have tried the new idea out already in order to create awareness;
- iii. Asking local leaders to publicize the new idea by local communication media e.g. possibly the "town crier" approach, and the local radio programmes in the vernacular. Subsequent to these

- public relations activities, further meetings/visits or demonstrations to gain and stimulate interest, are arranged, while preserving ready information and advice for curious farmers;
- iv. Helping farmers who wish to try out such new ideas by personally visiting them, and providing them practical support; and
 - v. Following up the experiences of the farmers through farm tours, and supporting practical improvements and performance excellence.

The above methods are relevant in the case of the Kambari who are predominantly farmers living in rural villages or bush encampments.

It is important to note that the Kebbi Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KARDA) is a relevant organization in the state that can help in providing adult/ literacy through Agricultural extension education for the indigenous Kambari adults. KARDA should help in increasing the agricultural production of the indigenous Kambari as well as improve their farming methods, agricultural inputs and seed variety. All these are meant to enable the indigenous Kambari communities to meet with the modern challenges of farming as an occupation.

The agricultural extension work for the rural Kambari will help to educate them on the use of modern farming methods and implements. According to Tahir, Kware and Dukku (1991), the subject matter with which agricultural extension agents deal with, include mediation of new improved technology, use of fertilizer, application of modern farming equipment, maintenance of crops and pest control.

However, the educational services provided through the agricultural extension work is capable of enabling the rural Kambari to make effective utilization of the rural, physical as well as rural-social facilities for improved and increased production.

In view of the fact that the indigenous Kambari population is made up of predominantly farmers, there is the need for adult literacy education in the area of Agricultural extension education. The use of mobilization campaigns, through the radio, posters, cartoons, and agricultural extension workers is quite relevant here.

Recommendations

Following an appraisal of the political and agricultural extension needs of the indigenous Kambari, the following recommendations are made:

1. Since Kambari are living in scattered and isolated bush encampments thus, in non-accessible areas; the government should endeavour to provide accessible roads leading to Kambari areas. This would help for easy integration of Kambari with the sedentary groups.
2. The indigenous Kambari should be provided with political education for enhanced political participation and provide them with knowledge of civic responsibilities. The National Orientation Agency (NOA) can do this through mass orientation, mobilization and sensitization etc.
3. The Kambari should be provided with agricultural education with a view to sensitizing them in the modern agricultural practices and innovations. The government can do this by way of mobilization in conjunction with the Kebbi State Ministry of Agriculture and Kebbi Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KARDA)
4. Illiteracy and isolation is one of the major problems of the indigenous Kambari. Thus, the need to educate and integrate them into the mainstream society
5. The indigenous Kambari should be provided with functional education in the area of political and agricultural education with a view to enable them participate in the socio-economic and political development process of their areas in particular and the nation at large..

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