

To cite this article: Samwel P. Lunyelele (2025). EVALUATING THE EXTENT OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE ON ADULT EDUCATION IN TEMEKE AND KIGAMBONI DISTRICTS, DAR ES SALAAM REGION, TANZANIA, International Journal of Education and Social Science Research (IJESSR) 8 (6): 229-245 Article No. 1170, Sub Id 1812

EVALUATING THE EXTENT OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE ON ADULT EDUCATION IN TEMEKE AND KIGAMBONI DISTRICTS, DAR ES SALAAM REGION, TANZANIA

Samwel P. Lunyelele

Department of Leadership, Ethics and Governance Studies, Faculty of Leadership and Management Science. The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy-Kivukoni Campus, P.O.Box 9193, Dar es Salaam.

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.37500/IJESSR.2025.8610>

ABSTRACT

The study investigated public knowledge on adult education in Kigamboni and Temeke Municipalities within the Dar es Salaam Region. A cross-sectional research design was employed to collect data from 383 participants using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Specifically, the study examined the participation of local communities in the study area in adult education programs for formal schooling, and their knowledge of the skills incorporated in adult education and the educational pathways pursued by respondents in Kigamboni and Temeke Districts. In addition, the study ascertained existing adult education programs in the study area. The study found that the majority of respondents associate adult education with basic literacy and numeracy issues, reflecting a narrow conception of adult education. The lack of comprehensive, targeted awareness campaigns impedes the dissemination of information about adult education programs. Limited resources and competing priorities often result in inadequate promotion and outreach efforts, leaving many adults uninformed about the opportunities available to them. Consequently, individuals may not recognize the value of adult education or understand how it can address their specific needs and aspirations. Furthermore, societal stigmas and misconceptions surrounding adult education exacerbate the lack of awareness. Many individuals perceive adult education as solely remedial or associated with underachievement, which creates a barrier to participation. Overcoming these stereotypes is crucial to reframing adult education as a positive and empowering endeavor that enables personal and professional growth, regardless of one's educational background or age. In conclusion, the lack of awareness regarding adult education represents a significant barrier to both individual and societal development. Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive and multifaceted approach. It is recommended that policymakers, educational institutions, and community organizations collaborate to develop targeted awareness campaigns that highlight the benefits of adult education, debunk misconceptions, and reach diverse populations. By recognizing the factors contributing to the lack of awareness and taking concerted action to address them, we can promote lifelong learning and empower individuals through access to adult education.

KEYWORDS: Knowledge, local communities, adult education

1. INTRODUCTION

Adult Education (AE) encompasses learning activities undertaken by adults beyond traditional schooling, covering everything from basic literacy to lifelong personal fulfillment. AE is vital in eliminating illiteracy, improving knowledge, and developing skills that help individuals adapt to a rapidly evolving world. It operates on the belief that adults are capable, motivated learners who are ready to take responsibility for their education. Moreover, AE should cater to the specific needs of adults (Kway, 2016). Knowles (1955), on the other hand, stated that adult education broadly encompasses all experiences that enable adults to gain new knowledge, skills, attitudes, interests, or values. In addition, it includes both informal activities, such as reading books or talking with others, and more structured, organized activities designed for learning.

For many years, adult education has been a policy focus in various countries. For instance, in Denmark, adult education initiatives were established before 1812, while in England, state involvement in adult education also began early on (Jarvis, 1993). In the United States, adult education first gained recognition in the 1920s. However, it wasn't until the 1960s that it became prevalent, marked by a significant increase in the number of adult education programs on U.S. college campuses during the 1960s and 1970s (Cross, 1981; Stubblefield & Keane, 1994). Globally, there has been a significant shift towards Adult Education, with many countries revisiting and adjusting their AE policies to align with the needs of the post-industrial era. These changes aim to expand educational opportunities, increase participation, and meet the evolving learning needs of adults (Mushi, 2009). In Tanzania, the need for the introduction of AE can be traced back to the colonial era, when formal education was limited to a select few, leaving the majority without access to it (Mhaiki, 1972). The few who received colonial education were privileged, while the illiterate majority were marginalized. This period marked the beginning of the decline in the long-standing tradition of education in Tanzanian societies.

Following independence in 1961, the level of illiteracy in Tanzania was alarmingly high, with over 70% of adults being illiterate (Mwaikokesya & Mushi, 2017; Mbunda, 1970). This situation highlighted the need for alternative forms of education that could address the existing demand for literacy. In response, the Government introduced adult education to teach literacy and address critical social issues, such as hunger, illiteracy, disease, and soil erosion. To achieve these goals, some adult education innovations were introduced in the 1960s and early 1970s. These included mass education programs, functional literacy, correspondence education, workers' education, focal development colleges (FDCs), and post-literacy programs. The mentioned reforms went hand in hand with initiatives like rural libraries, radio education programs, rural newspapers, and mobile cinemas. Other related campaigns, such as "Man is Health" (1973) and "Agriculture for Life" (1974), focused on literacy and life skills. These initiatives aimed to raise awareness of societal constraints, encourage participation in rural development, and improve agricultural and industrial production. During that period, adult education in Tanzania was vigorously promoted by the First President of the United Republic of Tanzania. He established Swahili as the national language and integrated literacy with

the expansion of vocational training. These skills, including crop cultivation and animal husbandry, were essential for the rural population (Owiny, 2017).

By the mid-1980s, Tanzania had established a significant learning infrastructure, including 3,167 rural libraries across the mainland (Mpogolo, 1984). Later, around the 2000s, the Government introduced another programme, termed "Mpango kwa Elimu Maalum kwa Watoto waliokosa" (MEMKWA). The programme was designed to allow adults to complete formal education content more quickly (Massawe, 2019). It is apparent from those mentioned earlier that the need to invest in education, particularly adult education, has remained a concern for individuals, families, communities, and national governments alike (Kanukisya, 2008). Despite government initiatives to promote education, a significant portion of Tanzania's population remains illiterate and faces persistent poverty. This illiteracy may affect how communities in Kigamboni and Temeke Municipalities are aware of adult education as a capacity-building initiative.

Nevertheless, research on the current state of adult education in Tanzania remains limited. Existing studies, such as those by Mbunda (1970), Mhaiki & Hall (1972), Mlekwa (1994), Mushi (1981), and Kweka (1987), are outdated and may not address current needs in adult education. While adult education is recognized as a vital tool for addressing illiteracy and improving livelihoods, there is limited data on how healthy communities acknowledge its importance. Many rural and urban areas still face challenges in accessing information about available AE programs. This gap makes it difficult to gauge the general understanding of AE and the extent to which the local communities are engaging with AE opportunities. This lack of awareness is further compounded by cultural attitudes towards education, which often prioritize formal schooling over lifelong learning opportunities. Without updated information, it becomes challenging to develop targeted interventions that can effectively raise awareness and increase participation in adult education programs. Lack of comprehensive research on community awareness of AE thus hinders efforts to improve the accessibility and relevance of adult education in addressing the socioeconomic challenges facing Tanzanians today. Understanding adult education is crucial for tackling the challenges faced by local communities. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate the level of awareness of adult education in the Temeke and Kigamboni districts of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Specifically, the study examined the participation of local communities in the study area in adult education programs for formal schooling, the perceived knowledge of the skills incorporated in adult education and the educational pathways pursued by respondents in Kigamboni and Temeke Districts. In addition, the study ascertained existing adult education programs in the study area.

This study underscores the need for policymakers to create an inclusive and comprehensive education policy framework that recognizes and promotes lifelong learning. By emphasizing lifelong learning as a crucial component of education, policies should be developed to increase awareness of AE, integrate lifelong learning opportunities into the existing systems, and create supportive infrastructure. The study is vital among researchers as it has highlighted the need for further research

into cultural attitudes towards education and their impact on lifelong learning. These key areas for future research delve into cultural influences, barriers to lifelong education, and practical strategies to address AE.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 The study area

Temeke and Kigamboni Districts are among the administrative districts of Dar es Salaam Region in Tanzania. The two districts were selected for two reasons: Firstly, the combination of Temeke and Kigamboni Districts forms the most significant part of Dar es Salaam Region. Despite that, economically it ranks. Also, compared to the other districts, the chosen districts cover a large part of peri-urban areas (Mamboleo, 2012). Third, coupled with poverty levels, the area features a high school dropout rate: most people do not complete their studies due to social, cultural, and economic factors (UNICEF, 2012). Hence, the need for Adult Education is paramount to emancipate this group and other disadvantaged groups. This might be associated with a high level of adult illiteracy in the area, as there is an association between parents' education and their children's education. Temeke and Kigamboni Districts cover an area of 656km² with a coastal line of 70km length and lie between 39°12' – 39°33' east and 6°48' -7°33' south.

2.2 Research design and sampling procedures

This study adopted a cross-sectional design, as it allowed data to be collected at a single point in time. The design was also considered necessary because it is effective in terms of time and resources (Babbie, 1990; Bailey, 1998). Further, the design was appropriate due to its flexibility and accuracy in data collection and analysis. Regarding sampling procedures, the choice of Temeke and Kigamboni Districts was purposive. In the next sampling stage, random sampling was employed to select wards, and thereafter households for interviews were selected from street registers. The selection of adults was based on whether the household head was male or female. In addition to surveys, four (4) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted: two in each district.

2.3 Sample size determination

Sample size selection was guided by Cochran's (1977) formula, which is presented as follows:

$$n = \frac{n_o}{1 + \frac{n_o}{N}} \dots\dots\dots (i)$$

Where:

n = the required (adjusted) sample size,

N is the population size,

n_o = the sample size

$$n_o = \left(\frac{t^2 \times pq}{S.E^2} \right) = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.25}{0.05^2} = 384 \dots\dots\dots (ii)$$

Where:

$t = 1.96$ at 95% confidence level,

p = the proportion of respondents confirming information is 0.5,

q = the proportion of respondents not giving information of interest = 0.5 and,

$S. E = p*q$ is the estimate of variance, which is maximum when $p = 0.50$ and $q = 0.50$ (Estimate of variance = 0.25).

$$n = \left(\frac{384}{1 + \frac{384}{N}} \right) \dots \dots \dots (iii)$$

When $N = 1,368,881$ and $n = 383$

The sample was drawn from Temeke (N_1), Chamazi (N_2), Kibada (N_3), Kisarawe II (N_4), Keko(N_5), Kurasini (N_6), Charambe(N_7), Tandika(N_8), Makangarawe(N_9), Vijibweni(N_{10}), Kigamboni (N_{11}) and Mji mwema (N_{12}) respectively. Further, the sample size for each ward was determined using Bailey (1998). It suggested that, regardless of population size, a minimum sample size of 30 cases is sufficient for meaningful statistical analysis. This method allowed equal opportunities for every ward to be analyzed independently (Kothari, 2004).

Therefore:

Table 1: Selected respondents for survey in each ward ($n = 383$)

Wards	Selected respondents
Temeke	32
Chamazi	32
Kibada	32
KisaraweII	32
Keko	32
Kurasini	32
Charambe	32
Tandika	32
Vijibweni	32
Kigamboni	32
Mji Mwema	31
Total	383

2.4 Methods of Data Collection

Primary data collection was conducted through surveys targeting selected adults in Kigamboni and Temeke Districts. A semi-structured questionnaire guide was used to select 383 respondents. This questionnaire was pre- and pilot-tested among 30 randomly selected respondents from Kigamboni

Ward before the actual study. Respondents who participated in the pilot study were excluded from the main study. The purpose of this exercise was to ensure the tool's validity. In addition, key informant interviews were conducted with 32 informants selected for their expertise in the subject matter. Key informants included members of the adult education department, District Education Officers, Ward education coordinators, facilitators, learners, Ward and Mtaa Executive Officers, and ten cell leaders (Table 2). These interviews were conducted using an interview checklist.

Table 2: Nominated key informants

Key informants	Institution	No. of Informants
Ten cell leaders	In each ward	6
District Education Officers	Temeke and Kigamboni	2
adult education department	Two Offices	2
Ward's education coordinators	In selected centres	6
Mtaa Executive Officers	From twelve wards	6
Facilitators	In selected centres	6
Learners	In selected centres	6
Total		32

Furthermore, in each district, two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with women and two with men. Each FGD aimed to evaluate issues in adult education, focusing particularly on local communities' knowledge and awareness. This method facilitated the triangulation of information gathered from surveys and key informant interviews. VEOs guided the recruitment of FGD participants from the respective wards, who were familiar with community members. Additionally, an extensive literature review was conducted to establish existing information on pertinent issues regarding adult education. This review encompassed policies, programs, and peer-reviewed journal articles on the subject.

2.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted according to the nature of the data. Qualitative data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions were analysed. This technique involved summarizing data that aligned with the study objectives into themes and sub-themes. Meanwhile, quantitative data collected through questionnaire surveys were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16, where descriptive analysis was performed, producing frequencies and percentages. The application of descriptive statistics was appropriate for the quantitative data because it allowed

the researchers to systematically summarize, visualize, and interpret the data, making it easier to communicate the findings and support the study's objectives.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study analyzed a range of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics to better understand the profile of the respondents involved. These characteristics are essential for determining respondents' socioeconomic status and for gaining deeper insight into their perspectives on adult education. The findings are summarized in Table 3. One of the key demographic variables explored in this study was age. The respondents were categorized into different age groups, starting from 18 years, which is generally considered the onset of adulthood. The results revealed that the majority of respondents were concentrated in the following age groups: 38 to 42 years (20.5%), 43 years and above (20.1%), and 28 to 32 years (18.5%). These findings suggest that the respondents were predominantly middle-aged adults, with a substantial proportion aged 38-43. The age distribution of the respondents is significant for several reasons, particularly in the context of adult education. Age is often closely linked to an individual's level of knowledge, awareness, and engagement with educational opportunities, especially adult education programs. Older individuals, such as those in the 38 to 42 age group, may have had more life experience and exposure to various educational systems, making them more likely to be aware of and value adult education initiatives. In contrast, younger adults may still be in the early stages of their careers or personal development and may have different educational needs or less experience with adult learning programs. In the context of this study, the relationship between age and awareness of adult education is particularly relevant. Older respondents likely have a higher level of awareness of adult education programs. This could be due to increased life experience, exposure to a range of educational initiatives, or a greater need for skill development later in life. Conversely, younger respondents may have less awareness of adult education options, as they may still be focused on formal schooling or have less experience with adult education opportunities. Overall, age plays a crucial role in shaping the respondents' awareness and engagement with adult education programs. As individuals age, they may become more aware of the need for continuous learning and the benefits of adult education, which can enhance their skills, improve employability, and contribute to personal and societal development. The age distribution in this study suggests that adult education initiatives should be tailored to the specific needs of different age groups, recognizing that older adults may have different motivations, challenges, and learning preferences than younger adults. Further, the distribution of respondents by sex showed that males comprised 55.2% of the sample, while females made up 44.8%. This indicates a relatively balanced representation of both men and women in the study, with only a slight difference in the proportion of each gender. Such a distribution suggests that the findings reflect a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, ensuring that both genders were equally considered in assessing awareness and perceptions of adult education programs. Importantly, these results highlight that adult education is significant for all members of the community, irrespective of gender. The fair representation of both men and women underscores the need for inclusive

educational initiatives that cater to the entire population, promoting equal opportunities for lifelong learning and skill development.

In addition to age, the respondents' educational levels were analyzed to provide an overview of their academic backgrounds. Education is a key socioeconomic factor that significantly influences individuals' awareness and engagement with adult education programs. According to the findings, 56% of respondents had completed primary education, 27% had completed ordinary-level secondary education, and 5.6% held a bachelor's degree. These findings suggest that the majority of respondents had attained primary education or a lower level of formal education, positioning them as semi-illiterate or with limited educational qualifications. The prevalence of respondents with primary or secondary level education underscores the critical importance of adult education programs in the study area. Given that more than half of the respondents are semi-illiterate, adult education initiatives are vital for addressing literacy gaps and providing opportunities for skill development. These findings highlight a clear need for targeted educational interventions that can help adults improve their literacy skills, gain vocational training, and ultimately enhance their socioeconomic mobility. Overall, these findings not only point to the need for adult education programs but also suggest that such programs should be tailored to the specific educational backgrounds and needs of the community. Given the high proportion of respondents with limited formal education, there is a clear opportunity for adult education to address significant knowledge and skills gaps, thereby contributing to the broader goal of enhancing individual well-being and fostering community development.

Table 3. Socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the respondents (n=383)

Characteristics	Percent
Age Group	
18-22	12
23-27	16.5
28-32	18.5
33-37	12
38-42	20.5
43 and Above	20.1
Total	100
Sex	
Men	55.2
Women	44.8
Total	100
Marital Status	
Single	30.2
Married	59.6
Separated	2
Divorced	4.9
Widowed	3.3
Total	100
Education Level	
No schooling	8.8
Primary School Education	56
Form Four	26.8
Form six	1.2
Degree Level	5.6
Diploma	1.2
Certificate	0.4
Total	100

3.2 Participation in the Local Communities in Adult Education Classes for Formal Schooling

The study explored the extent to which respondents had participated in adult education classes to assess the impact of these programs on eradicating illiteracy in the study area. The findings revealed that over 85% of the respondents had never attended adult education programs, indicating that they pursued their education through alternative channels, primarily within the formal schooling system. Only 15% of respondents reported attending adult education classes. This suggests that formal education through established schools remains the primary route to education for many individuals. One possible explanation for this disparity is the greater availability of schools in urban areas compared to rural areas. It is not surprising that larger towns and cities offer more opportunities for formal education,

which has been more accessible over the years. However, this does not negate the fact that a significant portion of the urban population remains illiterate or semi-illiterate. This indicates that while formal schooling may be more readily available in urban settings, adult education programs remain essential for addressing literacy and educational gaps, even there. The primary objective of this study was to determine the level of participation in adult education programs, as this could offer insights into their effectiveness in combating illiteracy within the study area. The findings revealed a significant disparity in participation rates. Over 85% of respondents reported never attending adult education classes, suggesting that a large majority pursued their educational journey through other means, primarily the formal education system. In contrast, only 15% of respondents reported participating in adult education programs. This finding suggests that formal education channels, such as primary and secondary schools, remain the preferred mode of education for the majority of people in the area. The dominance of formal schooling could be attributed to several factors, including greater access to educational institutions, particularly in urban areas. Larger cities and towns typically have a higher concentration of schools and academic infrastructure, making it easier for residents to enroll and pursue traditional educational paths. As a result, individuals living in urban settings may have more opportunities to attend school from a young age, thereby reducing the necessity for adult education programs.

However, it is essential to note that, despite the availability of formal education, the relatively high illiteracy rates in urban areas indicate that significant barriers remain to full educational attainment. A considerable proportion of the urban population remains illiterate or semi-illiterate, underscoring the limitations of formal education systems in addressing the specific needs of adults who may have missed educational opportunities earlier in life. This highlights the critical role that adult education programs could play in helping to bridge these gaps, even in urban centers where educational access is higher. Factors such as poverty, time constraints, and other socioeconomic challenges often prevent individuals from fully engaging in formal education, and adult education programs can offer flexible, targeted solutions to address these challenges. Ultimately, while formal education has made strides in urban areas, the need for adult education remains vital to addressing the residual literacy gaps. The findings from this study point to the need for a more integrated approach that considers both formal and adult education to ensure that all individuals, regardless of age or background, have the opportunity to become fully literate and acquire the skills necessary for personal and community development.

3.3 Respondents' Awareness of Adult Education

Awareness plays a crucial role as an entry point for intervention measures aimed at improving literacy and educational opportunities. Understanding the level of awareness of adult education in a community is essential for developing effective strategies to enhance participation in these programs. This study aimed to assess the extent to which the local communities in the study area are aware of adult education and its benefits. The findings revealed that 88.5% of the respondents reported having heard of adult education, suggesting a relatively high level of awareness of the concept. In contrast, only 11.5% of respondents reported never having heard of adult education. This disparity indicates that the majority of individuals in the study area are familiar with the concept of adult education, suggesting that efforts

to promote adult learning have reached some of the population. However, while a large proportion of respondents appear to have an idea of adult education, this does not necessarily equate to a comprehensive understanding of the available programs or their potential benefits. Awareness in this context simply refers to whether individuals have heard of adult education, but it does not indicate how well they understand the scope of these programs or how they can access them. For example, individuals may know that adult education exists but may not be aware of the specific opportunities, such as literacy classes, vocational training, or other programs tailored to adult learners. Furthermore, the awareness level does not account for respondents' attitudes and perceptions towards adult education, whether they view it as a valuable resource or face barriers to accessing these opportunities.

The relatively high level of awareness among respondents is a positive indicator of foundational knowledge of adult education. However, this also presents an opportunity to further investigate the depth of this awareness. Future studies could examine whether existing awareness translates into actual participation in adult education programs and, if not, identify potential barriers, such as limited access, insufficient resources, or cultural attitudes. Generally, while the findings suggest that the majority of respondents are aware of adult education, a more nuanced understanding of this awareness is necessary. Efforts to raise awareness should not only focus on informing the community about the existence of adult education but also on deepening their understanding of its purpose, the available programs, and how they can benefit from them. This can serve as the foundation for creating more targeted interventions that encourage broader participation and utilization of adult education programs.

3.4 Knowledge of the Respondents Regarding the Skills Incorporated in Adult Education

The study assessed the level of knowledge among the local communities in Temeke and Kigamboni Districts regarding the key skills associated with adult education. Specifically, it sought to determine whether respondents could identify the skills that are central to adult education beyond basic literacy. The findings, as summarized in Table 4, revealed that 56.5% of the respondents identified three primary literacy skills of reading, writing, and basic arithmetic (counting) as key attributes of adult education. These skills were viewed as fundamental elements of adult learning programs, aligning with the conventional understanding of adult education as a means to address illiteracy. However, a smaller proportion of respondents, nearly 17% recognized that adult education extends beyond basic literacy and includes practical, hands-on skills that can facilitate self-employment and economic empowerment. These respondents identified entrepreneurship, craftsmanship, and carpentry as key skills embedded in adult education. This highlights awareness of some of the functional aspects of adult education, which go beyond traditional academic skills and focus on practical knowledge that helps adults improve their livelihoods and contribute to their communities. The findings suggest that the respondents' general understanding of adult education is limited to basic literacy. Most individuals associate adult education with basic literacy skills such as reading, writing, and arithmetic rather than recognizing it as a comprehensive approach that also includes vocational training, life skills, and self-reliance. This narrow conception of adult education may stem from a lack of exposure to the full range of opportunities available through adult learning programs. In many cases, individuals may not be

aware of the broader benefits and practical skills that adult education can offer, including vocational training in fields such as entrepreneurship, health, and agriculture.

Additionally, access to educational institutions may be limited, particularly in rural or remote areas, where such programs may be less available or not widely promoted. The findings are somewhat at odds with the vision articulated by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the founder of adult education in Tanzania, who viewed it as a key tool for fostering national development through self-reliance. Nyerere's philosophy emphasized that adult education should not only address literacy but also equip adults with the skills necessary to achieve economic independence and contribute to the nation's development. This broader perspective, which links adult education with functional skills and self-reliance, appears to be less understood or emphasized in the study area. While the respondents show a relatively high level of awareness of adult education, they tend to overlook or undervalue its role in promoting economic self-sufficiency and national progress. This finding suggests that, despite the recognition of adult education programs, many individuals in the study area have a limited understanding of the full scope of what adult education can offer. Most respondents associate adult education primarily with basic literacy rather than its broader goals of empowering individuals with practical skills to escape poverty and contribute to national development. It seems that many people in the community might not see AE as a way to gain empowerment. This points to a need for further education and outreach to inform communities about the diverse benefits of adult education, particularly its role in fostering self-reliance, entrepreneurship, and overall socioeconomic development. Generally, while some of the interviewed respondents demonstrated awareness of the skills involved in adult education, there is a significant gap in understanding its broader potential. To fully realize the benefits of adult education, there is a need for greater emphasis on the functional aspects of these programs, including vocational skills and self-reliance, which were central to Nyerere's vision for national development. Expanding the public's understanding of adult education as a tool for personal empowerment and societal progress will be crucial to increasing participation and ensuring that it fulfills its intended transformative potential.

Table 4. Distribution of the respondents in terms of the skills incorporated in adult education (n=383)

Skills incorporated in AE	Percent
Reading, writing, and counting	56.5
Reading Only	13.0
Hands-on Skills for Self-Employment	17.4
Cross-cutting Life Skills	13
Total	100

3.5 The Educational Pathway Pursued by Respondents in Kigamboni and Temeke Districts

The educational pathway that respondents have taken is a critical aspect of this study, as it provides valuable insights into the extent to which adult education (AE) is integrated into the community. Understanding the routes individuals have taken to pursue their education helps gauge the prevalence and impact of AE in the study area. To capture this, respondents were asked to identify the educational channels they pursued, which served as a means of assessing the role and reach of AE programs. The findings revealed that 86.2% of respondents reported attending formal schools, indicating that the majority of individuals in the study area acquired their education through the traditional, structured schooling system. A small percentage, 3.3%, mentioned being taught by their parents at home, reflecting an informal approach to education, while a few respondents reported having participated in the MEMKWA program, a government initiative aimed at providing accelerated education for children and adults who missed out on formal schooling. These findings suggest that despite the existing levels of illiteracy in the study area, the formal education system has played a dominant role in providing educational opportunities to a significant portion of the population. The relatively high rate of formal school attendance can likely be attributed to the greater availability and accessibility of formal education institutions in the area, particularly in urban and semi-urban regions. Compared to rural areas, where access to education may be more constrained by factors such as distance, infrastructure, and resources, the urban centers of Temeke and Kigamboni offer more and easily accessible opportunities for individuals to attend schools and pursue formal education from a young age. Variation in access to education between rural and urban settings was also reflected by Ndijuye and Beatus (2024). Their study found that children from rural areas had more constrained home learning environments and received even less support than their peers in impoverished urban areas. However, despite the dominance of formal education in the study area, the findings also underscore that adult education programs, particularly those designed to address literacy and skill development, remain underutilized. This is especially significant given the critical role that adult education plays in addressing illiteracy, providing vocational training, and empowering individuals to improve their socioeconomic status. Although formal education may be widely accessible, it is not always sufficient to meet the specific needs of adults who may have missed out on education earlier in life. The underutilization of adult education programs in the study area highlights a gap in educational provision that needs to be addressed. While formal schooling remains the primary route for education, there is a clear need for greater awareness, promotion, and expansion of adult education initiatives. These programs are essential for reaching adults who have not had the opportunity to complete their education through the formal system and are key to breaking the cycle of illiteracy and poverty in the community. In conclusion, the findings indicate that while formal education is the primary route pursued by most respondents, adult education programs remain underexplored and underutilized. To fully leverage the potential of adult education in promoting literacy and empowerment, it is necessary to increase access, raise awareness, and encourage participation in these programs. This will not only help to address gaps in educational attainment but also contribute to broader social and economic development in the region.

3.6 Existing Adult Education Programs in the Study Area

To better understand the level of awareness and the accessibility of adult education, the study aimed to capture respondents' perceptions regarding the availability of adult education programs in the study area. The findings revealed a stark contrast in perceptions: nearly 85% of respondents indicated that adult education programs do not exist or are not readily available in the area, while the remaining respondents reported that such programs are indeed available. This significant discrepancy suggests that, despite the high levels of illiteracy, poverty, and unemployment in the community, adult education, an essential tool that could potentially address these challenges, has not been adequately prioritized or promoted. The widespread perception that adult education programs are unavailable highlights a critical gap in their provision and signals that, in practice, adult education has not received sufficient attention or resources in the study area. The limited availability of adult education programs, despite the clear need for such initiatives, underscores missed opportunities to empower adults through literacy and vocational training. Adult education could play a vital role in addressing many of the socioeconomic challenges facing the community, such as high illiteracy rates, limited job opportunities, and poverty. However, the lack of awareness and perceived inaccessibility of these programs suggest that the community may not be receiving the support and encouragement necessary to engage in adult education. This finding also indicates that the existing adult education infrastructure may be insufficient or poorly communicated to the public. Even in areas where adult education programs may technically exist, issues such as limited outreach, lack of promotion, or inadequate facilities appear to prevent local communities from participating. Additionally, barriers such as the perception that adult education is irrelevant or unnecessary for adults who did not pursue formal education in their youth could further deter engagement. An interview with an official overseeing education in Kigamboni Municipality revealed that there are very few adult education centers, and they are underperforming. Instead, primary school classrooms have predominantly been used for adult education classes. Additionally, the interview revealed that in the study area, there are no teachers dedicated explicitly to adult education. Instead, primary school teachers facilitate adult education programs. Conclusively, the findings highlight a critical gap in the availability and visibility of adult education programs in the study area. With all the pressing need for adult education to address illiteracy and socioeconomic challenges, these programs appear to be underemphasized and underutilized. This reinforces a clear need for greater investment in adult education, including improved access, greater community awareness, and stronger program promotion, to ensure these programs can fulfill their potential in alleviating context-based socioeconomic challenges facing local communities.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study revealed that a significant portion of respondents conceptualize adult education solely in terms of basic literacy and numeracy skills. This narrow understanding indicates limited awareness of the broader scope and potential benefits of adult education. The focus on fundamental skills, while important, overlooks the broader aspects of adult education, including skill development, vocational training, and personal empowerment. This gap in awareness poses a significant barrier to the full utilization of adult education programs, which are essential for personal, community, and societal development. The lack of awareness surrounding adult education is a significant issue that undermines

the potential for transformative change at both the individual and societal levels. Adult education is a powerful tool for fostering lifelong learning, improving employability, and driving economic growth. It offers individuals opportunities to acquire new skills, pursue higher education, and earn certifications that can enhance their quality of life and financial prospects. However, despite these potential benefits, many people remain uninformed about the diverse opportunities available through adult education programs. One of the primary reasons for this lack of awareness is the insufficient promotion and inadequate dissemination of information regarding adult education programs. In many communities, potential learners are unaware of the range of courses, certifications, and vocational training opportunities that exist. This is particularly concerning when considering the broad spectrum of skills that adult education encompasses, from technical and vocational training to health education, entrepreneurship, and personal development. However, due to ineffective marketing, outreach, and awareness campaigns, these opportunities remain hidden from many who could benefit from them. Educational institutions and government agencies often fail to adequately promote adult education programs, whether due to limited resources, insufficient strategic planning, or ineffective communication. This lack of visibility and promotion means that adults who may want to further their education or improve their skills are unaware of the available programs. Furthermore, the lack of clear, accessible information on how to access these programs can create additional barriers to participation. In conclusion, the limited awareness of adult education programs hampers their potential to make a meaningful impact on individuals and communities. To address this issue, there is a critical need for more robust marketing and outreach to raise awareness of the value of adult education and the wide range of opportunities it offers. Effective communication strategies, such as community engagement, digital campaigns, and collaboration with local organizations, can help ensure that adults are better informed about the benefits of adult education and encouraged to take advantage of the programs available to them. By expanding awareness and access, adult education can play a pivotal role in fostering personal empowerment, community development, and socioeconomic progress.

To address the issue of limited awareness of adult education, a coordinated effort is required from educational institutions, government bodies, community organizations, and other key stakeholders. These collective efforts should focus on raising awareness about the transformative benefits of adult education, promoting its accessibility, and challenging societal stigmas that may hinder participation. Educational institutions should take a proactive approach in marketing their adult education programs, ensuring that information about available courses reaches a broad audience. Collaborations with employers can help highlight the practical relevance of adult education in adapting to the evolving demands of the job market. By showcasing how adult education programs align with the skills employers require, these partnerships can demonstrate the tangible value of lifelong learning for career advancement and personal growth. Governments also play a critical role in addressing this issue. They can allocate funding to support public awareness campaigns, ensuring that adults are informed about the various educational opportunities available to them. Additionally, governments can provide financial assistance or subsidies to ease the financial burden on adult learners, making education more accessible to those who may face economic barriers. Policymakers should also develop and implement

policies that create an enabling environment for adult education, ensuring that it is not only accessible but also aligned with the needs of the workforce and society.

Ultimately, bridging the awareness gap in adult education is crucial to unlocking the untapped potential of countless individuals and fostering a more inclusive, knowledge-driven society. By recognizing and addressing this issue, we can build a culture that values lifelong learning for adults, empowering individuals to pursue personal fulfilment, increase their employability, and contribute to socioeconomic development. This will not only benefit the individuals who participate but also create a more skilled, resilient, and prosperous society as a whole.

REFERENCES

- Babbie, E. P. (1990). *Survey Research Methods*. Wordsworth Publication Company Inc., California. 395pp.
- Bailey, D. (1998). *Methods of Social Science Research*. The Press Collier Macmillan Publisher, London. 475pp.
- Bwatwa, Y. M. (1978). Practical evaluation of adult education programmes in Tanzania: a critical and constructive analysis. *Literacy Discussion* 8 (4):69-76.
- Cross, K. Patricia (1981). *Adults as Learners: Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Kreuger, R.A. (1988). *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*. London: Sage. 12pp.
- Massawe, C. M. (2019). *An Analysis of The Tanzanian Adult Education Policies: In a Context of Conceptualization, Purpose, and Influence*. Master's Degree Program, University of Eastern Finland.
- Millward, L. (1995). *Focus Groups*. In *Research Methods in Psychology* (Eds.), Sage Publications, London. 292pp.
- Jarvis, P. (1993). *Adult Education and the State: Towards a Politics of Adult Education* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203974704>
- Johnsson, A. J. (1983). *Adult education in Tanzania: a review* (No. 9).
- Kanukisya, B. (2008). *Contemporary adult education policies and practices in Tanzania: are they meeting national challenges?* (Master's thesis).
- Kweka, A. N. (1987). *Education in a Village in Tanzania*. Education Division Documents. No. 36.
- Knowles, M. S. (1955). Adult education in the United States. *Adult Education*, 5(2), 67-76. <https://doi.org/10.1177/074171365500500201>
- Manase, J., and Mlaki, E. (2012). *Limiting Factors to the Successful Implementation of Adult Education and Its Intended Outcomes in the Morogoro Community in Tanzania*. GRIN Verlag.
- Mhaiki, P. J., & Hall, B. L. (1972). *The Integration of Adult Education In Tanzania*. Mlekwa, V.M. (1994). Contribution of literacy training to development in the context of Tanzania: emerging issues and research implications. *Utafiti (New Series)* 1 (1): 1 – 19.

- Mpogolo, Z. (1984). Post-Literacy and Continuing Education in Tanzania. *International Review of Education / Internationale Zeitschrift Für Erziehungswissenschaft / Revue Internationale De L'Education*, 30(3), 351-358. Retrieved December 24, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3444134>.
- Mushi, P.A.K. Origins and development of adult education innovations in Tanzania. *Int Rev Educ* 37, 351–363 (1991). <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00619206>
- Mushi, P. A. K. (2009). *History and development of education in Tanzania*. African Books Collective.
- Ndijuye, L. G., & Beatus, J. (2024). The rural-urban divide in early literacy acquisition in Tanzania: The mediating roles of home and school contexts. *Education 3-13*, 52(8), 1267-1282.
- Nyerere, J. K. (1976). "Adult Education and Development" in Tanzania. *Educational Journal* 13.
- Owiny, S. A. (2017). *Adult Education as a Strategy to Engage People-Centered Social Development in Uganda and Tanzania*. The Pennsylvania State University.
- Stubblefield, H., & Keane, P. (1994). *Adult Education in the American Experience: From the Colonial Period to the Present*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Sundén, R. (2002). Adult education in Tanzania. *Folk Development Education and Democracy in a Development Perspective*, 65.