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DEVELOPING A MANUAL TO IMPROVE THE TEACHING  
EFFECTIVENESS OF ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL  
TEACHERS OF GIDEON II BAPTIST  
ASSOCIATION CHURCHES, LAGOS

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## ABSTRACT

The basic intention of this study was to develop and teach a manual that can improve the teaching effectiveness of adult Sunday school teachers. The contents of the manual aimed at training adult Sunday school teachers on some basic principles of adult education which have effect on how adults learn. Emphasis was laid on such areas as the basic characteristics of adult learners and implications for teaching, Teachers' Spiritual and lesson preparation, and learner's involvement in the teaching/learning process. Two sets of questionnaires were used as instruments for data gathering while simple percentage format was used to analyze the data. The first set of questionnaire was the pre-test questionnaire which was administered to determine the entry behaviour or previous knowledge of the respondents on the teaching of adult Sunday school. The second set of questionnaire was the post-test questionnaire which on the other hand, was administered to assess the new understanding gained by the respondents after they were taken through the teachings presented in the manual. A total number of one hundred and fourteen (114) adult Sunday school teachers participated in the pre-test and the teaching exercise while a total number of one hundred and thirteen (113) participated in the post-test exercise. The reason for the difference was probably that one participant who had participated in the pre-test and the teaching did not wait till the end of the teaching when the post-test was administered. The project revealed that majority of those who teach in the adult Sunday school programme are non-professionals; they had no relevant training background in the field of education in general and adult education in particular. Virtually, all of them depend on the understanding of the scriptures and probably the Holy Spirit. This has gone a long way to affect the teaching effectiveness. After the teachings, however, the participants gained better and richer understanding on some basic principles that affect the teaching of adults and how they learn. As a result of the new knowledge gained, larger percentage of the respondents took decision to go back to their churches and apply those principles they had come in contact with during the teaching sessions. Generally, the result obtained from the analysis of both the pre-test and post-test questionnaires revealed that the objectives of the project were achieved. Based on the observations during the course of carrying out this project, findings from the review of related literatures, data analysis and discussion of findings, the following recommendations were given that; The recruitment of volunteers in the adult Sunday school ministry of the church should henceforth focus not only on spirituality or knowledge of the scriptures but also on training and experience. Budgetary allocations should be made available for adult Sunday school teachers, in each local church, to attend training programmes capable of improving their teaching effectiveness from time to time. Close attention be given to the teaching of adults as it is given to the children in the Nigerian Baptist Convention Churches. Local churches should invest in Education Buildings to create good and conducive learning

environment. Sitting arrangement in adult Sunday school classes should be in semi-circle format. Seminary trained Education Ministers should be called to serve in churches for the purpose of training and organizing. Adult Sunday school teachers should be motivated with token gifts. There should be periodic evaluation of the Sunday school programme or ministry in Nigerian Baptist Convention local churches. Further studies be carried out in other aspects of the Sunday school ministry of the church, that is youth and children. More associations or conference could be involved in further research.

## Conclusion

The investigation into the teaching of adult Sunday school ministry of Gideon II Baptist Association revealed that most of the teachers who teach in adult Sunday school programme do not have enough relevant training and experience to do so. They lack basic understandings about adults and how adults learn. The researcher was of the opinion that a manual that will improve their knowledge and equip them for drastic and notable improvement be put in place.

The implementation of the manual, however, brought an improvement to the understanding of the participants. The teachings opened their eyes to certain basic principles of teaching adults. These principles have been generally and widely tested to be pro-active when it comes to the teaching of adults. The result of the respondents' responses to the post-test questionnaires revealed a tremendous improvement upon the knowledge of the participants. It also revealed their readiness and desire to apply new insights gained from the teachings.

Through the teachings as contained in the manual, adult Sunday school teachers became more aware of the basic characteristics of adult learners and the implications it has for teaching. They learnt more on how to prepare themselves spiritually to meet the spiritual needs of the adult Sunday school class members. Apart from spiritual

preparation of the teachers, emphasis was laid on preparation for lessons. They were well instructed on how to prepare for their lessons as they read and study. Coupled with these was the fact that teachers gained more understanding on the value and significance of a unit lesson plan in the teaching of adult Sunday school. They were familiarized with the best type of teaching that will help adults, that is, interactive teaching method among others.

Generally, the results obtained from the analysis of both the pre-test and post-test showed that the objectives of the project were achieved.

### Recommendations

To improve teaching effectiveness in adult Sunday school ministry of the church, the following recommendations were made. These recommendations were made based on the observations during the course of carrying out this research work and the findings through the related literature review, data analysis and discussion of findings:

1. That the recruitment of volunteers in the Sunday school ministry of the church should not only be based on spirituality or knowledge of the Bible. Critical consideration should be given to training and experience. When training is added to knowledge, the result is enormous. A situation where the recruitment is solely based on the knowledge of the Bible, 'spirituality' or commitment, adult Sunday school ministry may not witness productivity in its endeavours to change lives.
2. That since training becomes so relevant, churches should expend money to train respective volunteers to perform brilliantly. Budgetary allocations should be made readily available for adult Sunday school teachers to attend training programmes capable of improving their understanding of the task. This will help them to be more effective. In most cases, only very

few individuals are sent to the annual Education Conference organized by the Education Department of the Nigerian Baptist Convention.

3. That close attention should be given to the teaching of adults Sunday school just as it is given to children in the Nigerian Baptist Convention churches. Adults form the major and large percentage of the working team of the church; they are found in the key offices in local churches. If we do not focus on them the church can collapse. They should be thoroughly and positively influenced.
4. One of the factors that help adults learn, as discovered from the literature review, is the conduciveness of the environment. Characteristically adult learners always expect physical comfort. Based on this, the researcher recommended that local churches should invest in Educational Buildings. The way the Sunday school is presently organized in terms of space will not encourage effective teaching.
5. In adult Sunday school classes, it is also recommended that the sitting arrangement encourage learners' participation and involvement in the teaching learning process. It makes learners feel more at home and at ease to learn than a teacher standing in the front of the class with all learners facing him.
6. It is further recommended that local churches should endeavour to call seminary trained education ministers to help build the education ministry of the church. The education minister should be saddled with the responsibility of training teachers with respect to their area of operation. In this sense, those who teach adult Sunday school classes will be re-oriented from time to time. This will help the adult ministry of the church to grow.