Is Adult Basic Education the Answer to Rural Women's Poverty?

Christabelle Moyo

*University of South Africa, Department of Development Studies, School of Human Sciences
P.O. Box 329, UNISA 0003, South Africa
E-mail: christabellem6@gmail.com or Moyocs@unisa.ac.za*

KEYWORDS Community Platforms. Needs Analysis. Partnerships. Poverty Alleviation. South Africa

ABSTRACT Access to basic education has been viewed by policy makers, scholars and development practitioners as a critical strategy for alleviating poverty. However, research has shown that a large number of rural women in South Africa continue to live in poverty despite the introduction of Adult Basic Education and Training and Literacy Programmes. The questions that this review paper seeks to interrogate are: Why is it that, so far, the basic education and training and literacy intervention programmes have seemingly not fully yielded the desired results? Is the basic education that rural women are receiving not relevant to their needs? The document analysis approach was used to obtain information from policy documents, journal papers and government reports regarding the issue. The findings demonstrated the need for a needs analysis to be carried out in order to determine the specific needs of women in their respective communities. The establishment of community platforms and formation of partnerships with various stakeholders were seen as approaches that were likely to ease the plight of rural women.

INTRODUCTION

Research has undeniably shown that basic education is the fundamental pillar in the development process. It arms individuals with basic knowledge, reading and writing skills and use of numbers which are all critical in the fight against poverty and inequality (Nhamo and Nhamo 2006; Gardiner 2008; George and Onyekachi 2013). The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO 1997) asserts that "basic education opens up communication channels, expands personal choice and control over one's environment, gives them access to information, allows them to cope with work and family responsibilities and also changes the image they have of themselves." Agbalajobi (2008) corroborates the preceding views and avers that "education equips an individual with the skills needed for survival, social interactions, as well as contribution to societal growth."

Despite the centrality of basic education in the field of development, on its own, it is unlikely to effectively deal with the numerous and somewhat complex challenges that disadvantaged people, particularly rural women, are confronted with in their daily lives. Rural women face numerous challenges some of which are social, educational, economic and human related (Mathaulula 2008; Moagi 2008; Moyo et al. 2012; George and Onyekachi 2013; Ukwoma and Njoku 2013). These challenges demand more than just basic education. There is need to focus on the provision of knowledge and skills that will help rural women address the challenges they face in their daily lives. In support of this viewpoint, Gardiner (2008) raises the argument that, since adults are involved in a lot of family and community issues, they need education that goes beyond survival; education that also caters for human and social development. Gardiner makes it quite clear that adults need an education that is all encompassing; education that equips them with knowledge and skills relevant to their needs.

Researchers, policy-makers and development organisations have been supporting the incorporation of the 'life skills training' component of adult education so as to assist the less privileged members of society to deal with the challenges that life might throw at them, be it economic, social, human or political (Asmal and James 2001; Ngugi and Nyariki 2005; United Nations Secretary-General Report 2005; Gardiner 2008).

Whilst basic education and training skills are crucial pieces in the development puzzle, the absence of community platforms makes both basic education and the skills development aspects to be of little significance to poor communities if they do not take into account specific needs of specific groups of people in a specific environment. Poor people have their own needs and goals and these differ from one community to another, depending on community members' age, gender and race to name just a few variables (Mathaulula 2008; Moyo et al. 2012). These

variables ought to be factored in when designing or implementing intervention strategies for disadvantaged people, particularly rural women. Doing so is likely to assist in coming up with programmes that directly address rural people's social, human and economic needs.

There is, therefore, a need for the establishment of community platforms in order to give the affected people time to articulate their concerns, how they want them addressed and to come up with sources likely to render the required assistance. Kehler (2001) concurs and posits that in order to have a deeper understanding of poverty issues, it is critical that the poor are allowed to determine their own indicators through participatory approaches. Moyo and Francis (2010) take the debate further and postulate that solutions to life's problems are better conceived through interacting with the people affected by a problem. Failure to utilise such processes defeats the purpose of intervention strategies to free rural women from the menacing poverty.

Democratic South Africa, like other young democracies plagued by the scourge of poverty, has singled out the provision of basic education, including adult education, as one of her priority areas (Ministerial Committee on Literacy 2007; Hosking 2012; Zuma 2013). Adult education and literacy programmes have been put in place to enable the disadvantaged members of society to have a better understanding of themselves, the world around them and to deal with their social challenges, of which poverty is one of them (Gardiner 2008; Zuma 2010).

The government's determination towards such an endeavour is affirmed in all the State of the Nation Addresses by the former and current presidents of democratic South Africa (Mandela 1994; Mbeki 2005; Zuma 2012). Also, the Bill of Rights, Section 29 (a) of the South African Constitution (Act 108 1996) which provides that "everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education" bears testimony to the government's commitment towards this cause. In addition, the post 1994 South African government signed the Dakar Framework for Action in which it committed itself to reducing illiteracy to 50 % in 2015 (Rule 2006). Basic education has therefore been identified by democratic South Africa as a crucial vehicle that has the potential of eradicating rural people's poverty and also reducing their educational inadequacies (Mandela 1994; Mbeki 1999; Zuma 2013).

Despite this commendable initiative, most rural women continue to live in poverty (Kehler 2001; Sender 2002; Moyo and Francis 2010; Moyo et al. 2012). The questions that the paper seeks to interrogate, therefore, are: why is it that, up to now, the basic education and training and literacy intervention programmes have seemingly not fully yielded the desired results? Could it be that the education that rural women are receiving is not appropriate to their needs? How much consultation is there between policy makers and rural women with regards to their needs vis-a-vis their social situations/challenges? Finding answers to the above questions will satisfy the requirements of a 'needs analysis undertaking', which might unearth what might be the cause of the quandary that rural women find themselves in. Such a need analysis might also assist in finding practical solutions to rural women's problems.

In this particular paper, poverty refers to lack of knowledge and relevant skills to engage in meaningful business ventures. The phrase "rural women" refers but is not limited to those groups of rural women residing in communities within South Africa's former "homelands" which comprise the Northern Province (Limpopo), Ciskei and Transkei (Eastern Cape), Bophuthatswana (North-West) and KwaZulu (KZN). The education that the paper is advocating for, is the one informed by detailed needs analysis geared towards imparting relevant knowledge and skills for use in a rural set up. Community platforms as advocated for in this paper refer to organised groups within communities whereby women, girls and various community leaders gather together to deliberate on issues that are of concern to them. Traditional leaders with the assistance of other community leaders can facilitate the establishment of such platforms within their respective communities.

The following sections are an attempt to interrogate some of the issues highlighted earlier on in the paper. The first part of the paper explores the literacy and adult education initiatives that have been put in place by the successive post 1994 South African governments. Further, the challenges that rural women in post-apartheid South Africa still face are addressed. Lastly, the importance of the establishment of community platforms and stakeholder collaboration is highlighted.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are:
1. To identify the initiatives that democratic South Africa has undertaken to empower rural women with literacy and numeracy skills.
2. To assess the successes and challenges of the initiatives in achieving the goal of equipping rural women with literacy and numeracy skills
3. To identify an approach that is likely to improve the implementation of the initiated programmes.

METHODOLOGY

The review paper employed the document analysis approach. The documents analysed included policy documents, journal papers and government reports.

Literacy and Adult Education Initiatives in Post-Apartheid South Africa

In a bid to address the problem of illiteracy and innumeracy among her disadvantaged citizenry, democratic South Africa embarked on Adult Basic Education and Training and literacy programmes (McKay 2007; Gardiner 2008). Focus was mainly on equipping rural women and disabled people with literacy, numeracy and occupational skills to enable them to cope with the numerous challenges they encounter in their daily lives (McKay 2007; Gardiner 2008). The Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programme launched in 2000 under the Ministry of Basic Education and named as a Presidential lead project within the Reconstruction and Development Programme was meant to achieve the objectives highlighted above (Prinsloo 1999; Aitchison 2003). According to McKay (2007), the ABE component in ABET is meant to deal with acquisition of elementary or foundation education whilst the 'T' is mainly concerned with obtaining job related skills, of which dressmaking, craft work, plumbing, beadwork and use of technology are some of them.

In addition, participants to the ABET programmes were to be awarded a nationally recognised certificate at the end of Grade 9 (Gardiner 2008). To augment the services of ABET, various literacy campaigns such as the South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI) of 2000, Masifundisane of 2006 in KwaZulu-Natal and Kha Ri Gude of 2008 were initiated (McKay 2007; Ministerial Committee on Literacy 2007; Gardiner 2008; South African National Report 2008). According to McKay (2007), SANLI's proposal was that it would provide basic skills that were directly linked to the needs of the intended beneficiaries.

Despite the fact that SANLI and ABET's intentions on paper are quite sound, results on the ground tell a different story (Dlodlo 2009; Maliwichi et al. 2008; Mathaulula 2008). Although both men and women have benefitted from the South African government's initiatives, albeit to varying levels, research has shown that ABET initiatives have been fraught with numerous challenges such as lack of funding, poor implementation of programmes and use of unqualified personnel to name just a few challenges (Castle and Kiggundu 2007). This state of affairs has impacted negatively on rural women's desire to free themselves from poverty (Willenberg 2005; Castle and Kiggundu 2007). Evidence from research has also shown that rural women still encounter various challenges some of which are highlighted in the sections that follow.

Challenges Faced by Rural Women in Democratic South Africa

Jiyane and Mostert (2010) carried out a study to determine the role of ICT in business communications among rural women entrepreneurs in South Africa. They established that women were unable to use computer technology to search for business-related information. Yet the use of such technology is very critical, especially in the modern and competitive global village that the world has become. The above authorities are of the view that rural people's poverty is accentuated by the fact that they have no access to knowledge opportunities, communication/interaction. Support services in the form of enabling policies, financial support and human capital to help teach rural people how to use computers are some of the crucial services that community members are likely to utilise in order to bring change to their livelihoods. It is therefore imperative that access to such fundamental tools is expedited to enable women to compete with other women across the globe.

Findings from the study by Maliwichi et al. (2008) in the Limpopo Province of South Africa on the identification of types of small-scale businesses used by households to improve their income revealed that the participants encountered numerous hurdles in conducting their businesses. Among the challenges were lack of technical, business management and marketing skills, funds to operate their business initiatives and lack of access to raw materials. Although there was stakeholders' involvement in the training and funding of the participants' projects, the authorities were of the view that lack of specialists in the various fields such as food preparation and preservation, clothing and household designing and art and crafts contributed to the participants' woes.

The study by Dlodlo (2009) in Moutse village in Mpumalanga on the impact of socio-economic factors on girls and women's access to information communication technologies (ICTs) highlighted that high levels of illiteracy prevented women from accessing ICT and training. Added to that, women found it difficult to comprehend what was written on the learning materials as the documents were written in English. Lack of financial resources might have prevented women from engaging qualified personnel to help in the translation of the learning material for easier understanding. Failure by women to catalyze the information put across to them impacted negatively on their desire to improve their quality of life.

Results of the study conducted in the Vhembe District in Limpopo Province by Mathaulula (2008) revealed that women experienced numerous hurdles some of which were lack of skills and knowledge about starting and managing businesses. Yet, skills and knowledge are vital resources in any business venture. This viewpoint is supported by Ukwoma and Njoku (2013) who posit that information is crucial in every human activity and without information people grope in the dark and make numerous mistakes. Failure to acquire relevant knowledge and skills is detrimental to the advancement of women.

Results from the studies above all point to a skills and knowledge deficiency on the part of rural women. The question to be asked is: Are the ABET initiatives failing to adequately address the needs of these rural women? There is no doubt that ABET initiatives have improved the literacy, numeracy and life skills of rural wom-

en. Some success stories of ABET initiatives have been mentioned in KwaZulu-Natal and in some parts of Limpopo Province (Shilubane 2007; KwaZulu Natal Adult Education and Training and FET College Report 2012). The Adult Education and Training and FET College Report (2012) makes mention of the fact that the majority of the ABET participants are now functionally literate in their mother tongue and also blind learners are able to write using the Braille system. Also, women in some of the rural areas of Limpopo Province are now able to engage in collective economic strategies such as sewing, agricultural production and pottery-making (Oberhauser and Pratt 2004).

Although rural women have benefitted from ABET initiatives, evidence from the studies highlighted in the earlier sections show that some rural women are still 'skills and knowledge' poor. The question that arises is: Why are these rural women still lagging behind in knowledge and skills despite the adult basic education initiatives put in place by the South African government? Part of the answer to the preceding question might be contained in the South African Report on Adult Education (2008) which asserts that "challenges facing adult learning in South Africa are not policy related but have to do with policy implementation." Various scholars have decried government's handling of participatory methods in dealing with societal issues (Penzhorn 2005; Williams 2006; Moyo and Francis 2010). Williams (2006) is of the view that participation in South Africa has lost its meaning. The preceding author alludes to the fact that participation in South Africa is more like a ritual where community members attend meetings to endorse what has been pre-planned by policy makers.

The study by McEwan (2003) in some of the municipalities in South Africa is a good example in highlighting government's poor handling of participatory processes in the communities. One of the participant's discontent is expressed through the following remarks: *"we can't wait for the government to give us the things that they decide we need. We have to get involved and tell them what we need and how things should progress"* (McEwan 2003:14).

Another participant had this to say: *"we are never asked for our opinion on what should be done. If anything happens, it comes from the council and we are not asked for the things that we think are important. No, we are not*

consulted about what we need" (McEwan 2003:20).

The above quotations demonstrate governments' lack of involvement and consultation of the people who matter most in development, that is, the affected people. The top down approach is detrimental to development. Intended beneficiaries should be meaningfully engaged in processes pertaining to their development in order to directly address their needs. Consultations are a highway to providing relevant knowledge and skills to the people affected by a problem.

The current paper further argues that even policy making should not be left entirely to government. On the contrary, it should be a collective effort from different stakeholders of which community members are part of them. This might be one of the reasons why rural women are still entrenched in poverty. Their poverty might be accentuated by their failure to get platforms where they can contribute to policy formulation and implementation processes to enable them to clearly articulate what they need. Since rural women have their own understanding of poverty, it is critical that women hold such meetings in order to get to the bottom of their problems so that proper assistance can be sought (Kehler 2001; Meliko and Oni 2011; Moyo 2013). If after their deliberations rural women find out that their challenges are knowledge or skills related, they will then be in a better position to approach the right people for assistance. Such assistance can be rendered through such avenues as workshops/seminars, guest speakers, pamphlets, conferences to mention just a few avenues.

This systematic approach to development is likely to assist women to have a clear vision of the enemy they are fighting, what weaponry they need to use, how they need to use it, the reinforcements they need to call and where to get them from. Such information is vital if the war against poverty is to be won. Added to that, women are likely to receive assistance that is tailor made to suit their needs as opposed to government's 'one size fit all strategies'. Ngugi and Nyakiri (2005) advance a similar viewpoint and posit that there is need for a curriculum that puts emphasis on knowledge and skills relevant to living and working in rural areas. Chombo (2013) adds weight to the debate and posit that, "there is need to identify knowledge and skills gap in industry and commerce and also in communities in order to come up with relevant development-oriented programmes appropriate in addressing the challenges we face today." Relevancy appears to be one of democratic South Africa's biggest challenges. Provision of relevant knowledge and skills can only be as a result of interacting with the people affected by a problem.

The study by Moyo et al. (2012) in Makhado Municipality in Limpopo Province highlighted the need to also involve men in women related issues. Furthermore, the preceding authorities assert that bringing men on board when deliberating on women issues is likely to bring in new ideas to the discussion, strengthen gender relations between men and women and ultimately result in improvements in social cohesion.

Establishment of development linkages with other stakeholders to help rural women with the services they might require, such as entrepreneurial skills, technological knowhow or knowledge pertaining to other social issues might also prove to be beneficial to rural women. A study carried out by Francis et al. (2010) in villages and Wards in Makhado Municipality in Limpopo Province showed how University-rural community partnerships could assist community members in getting the help that they need in their various localities. Such partnerships are essential in that people get first-hand information on what is happening in the communities through interacting with the affected people themselves.

It is in this spirit of collaboration that different stakeholders such as policy makers, NGOs, public and private sectors, traditional leaders, men, women and other interested parties can engage each other on how best to deal with issues of concern in their communities (Moyo 2013). Also, the process opens doors for the exchange of ideas, approaches and encourages networking. Furthermore, it is through such collaboration platforms that women can be encouraged to form their own partnerships as women with a view of starting their own business ventures (Moyo 2013). Women can also come together and write projects proposals in order to source funds from donor organisations. A collaborative approach is also crucial in that it helps women to be aware of the fact that they are part of the solution or the change process. Through collaborating with other stakeholders, rural women are likely to look at life differently. They are likely to appreciate that meaningful change can

only come about when they are also involved (Moyo 2013). It becomes clear to them that challenges can only be effectively addressed when they are part of the process.

The collective approach to development was also raised by Makhanya (2012) at the 2012 business round table of the Vice-Chancellor's African Intellectuals, Knowledge Systems and Africa's Future Prospects Programme held at the University of South Africa. At this meeting, Makhanya challenged all sectors of society to work together in addressing African challenges. Rural poverty, being one of Africa's greatest threats, requires that different stakeholders not only engage each other but also come up with practical solutions that can be utilised by rural women to extricate themselves from the jaws of poverty.

The views raised above are succinctly captured by the African National Congress of South Africa's slogan "working together we can do more" (ANC Manifesto 2009). The slogan underscores the importance of working as a collective to enhance individual, community and national growth. Collaboration also assists in inculcating the spirit of togetherness in solving societal problems, thereby strengthening social cohesion (Moyo 2011). It is therefore of paramount importance that community platforms and stakeholder collaboration are meaningfully utilised in order to bring real change to rural women's livelihoods.

CONCLUSION

The paper has interrogated some of the issues associated with rural women's poverty despite the introduction of adult education initiatives by the South African government. Studies carried out in the country show that rural women still encounter challenges regarding the acquisition of knowledge and skills that are relevant to their needs. Despite the fact that the adult education initiatives incorporate the skills training aspect, evidence shows that acquisition of knowledge and skills alone is not enough. It can be concluded that in the absence of community platforms, where rural women can deliberate on their concerns and how they want them addressed, the initiatives may be of little significance. Furthermore, forming linkages with other stakeholders to assist women overcome some

of their challenges is underscored. Through these various linkages, women are likely to learn new ideas, approaches, expand existing networks and also learn about the world around them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that a 'needs analysis' be carried out in order to come up with solutions that are relevant to the needs of women in their respective communities.

Establishment of linkages with other stakeholders in order to solve societal issues is of paramount importance if women are to get relevant help. Furthermore, there is need for women to form partnerships with other women for the purposes of sourcing funding from donor organisations in order to start their own business ventures.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

REFERENCES

African National Congress 2009 Manifesto. Working Together We Can Do More. From <http://www. anc. org.za/docs/manifesto/2009/ma.> (Retrieved on April 26, 2013).

Agbalajobi DT 2008. Gender disparity and the challenges of governance in Nigeria. *Gender and Behaviour*, 6(1): 1532-1544.

Aitchison J 2003. *Ten Years of ABET Policy Implementation Plans and Research*. Centre for Adult Education. South Africa: University of Natal.

Asmal K, James W 2001. Education and democracy in South Africa today. *Daedalus*, 130(1): 185-204.

Castle J, Kiggundu E 2007. Are rural women powerless when it comes to HIV and AIDS risk? Implications for adult education programmes in South Africa. *Perspectives in Education*, 25(1): 45-58.

Chombo I 2013. Education and Poverty. From <http://www.newsday.co.zw/2013/01/19/chomb> (Retrieved on January 19, 2013).

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996. Constitutional Assembly. Wynberg, Cape Town.

Department of Education, KwaZulu Natal 2012. Adult Education and Training and FET College Report. From <http://www.kzneducation.gov.za/Portals/0/ Circuiars/General/2013/2012%20AET% 20 Brochure. pdf.> (Retrieved on March 12, 2013).

Dlodlo N 2009. Access to ICT education for girls and women in rural South Africa: A case study. *Technology in Society*, 31: 168-175.

Francis J, Dube B, Mokganyetji T, Chitapa T 2010. University-rural community partnerships for people-centred development: Experiences from Makhado Municipality, Limpopo Province. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 24(3): 357-373.

Gardiner M 2008. Education in Rural Areas. *Issues in Education Policy* Number 4. Center for Education Policy Development (CEPD), Johannesburg, South Africa. From <http://www.cepd.org.za/files/pictures/Education%20in%20Rural%20Areas202008.pdf> (Retrieved on February 5, 2013).

George TO, Onyekachi NC 2013. Education for Sustainable Widow's Empowerment: Evidence from Southwest Nigeria. International Journal of Education and Research, 1(10) From <http://www.ijern.com/October-2013.php.> (Retrieved on January 21, 2014).

Hosking K 2012. *Agenda Item 28: Advancement of Women.* United Nations, New York.

Jiyane V, Mostert J 2010. Use of information and communication technologies by women hawkers and vendors in South Africa. *Afr J Lib Arch and Inf Sci,* 20(1): 53-61.

Kehler J 2001. Women and poverty: The South African experience. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 3(1): 41-53.

Makhanya M 2012. Collaboration is central to Africa's development. Focus. *UNISA Staff News Letter,* Jan/Feb 2013.

Maliwichi LL, Simalenga TE, Oni SE 2008. A situational analysis of consumer science skills used to improve income and create self-employment in the Limpopo Province, South Africa. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 32: 399-401.

Mandela N 1994. State of the Nation Address. From <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/200/0302141> (Retrieved on March 10, 2012).

Mathaulula MA 2008. *Perceptions of Men, Women and Community Leaders on Rural Women Empowerment in Makhado Municipality of Limpopo Province, South Africa.* Honours Dissertation, Unpublished. South Africa: University of Venda.

Mbeki T 1999. State of the Nation Address. From<http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/200/0302141> (Retrieved on February 15, 2012).

Mbeki T 2005. State of the Nation Address. From <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/200/0302141> (Retrieved April 10, 2012).

McEwan C 2003. Bringing government to the people: Women, local governance and community participation in South Africa. *Geoforum*, 34(4): 469-481.

McKay V 2007. Adult basic education and training in South Africa. In: JP Comings, B Garner, C Smith (Eds.): *Review of Adult Learning and Literacy*. Vol. 7: *Connecting Research, Policy, and Practice.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 285-310.

Meliko MO, Oni SA 2011. Effect of irrigation on poverty among small-scale farmers in Limpopo Province of South Africa. *Journal of Agricultural Science*, 3(3): 190-195.

Ministerial Committee on Literacy 2007. Plan for a Mass Literacy Campaign for South Africa. Summary. From<http://www.education.gov.za/Link Click. aspx? fileticket= ZdE4728F%2 FY8% 3D & tabid= 135 &andmid=431> (Retrieved on April 20, 2013).

Moagi LA 2008. A gendered perspective on issues and challenges surrounding land tenure security in South Africa: Analysis of critical security studies. *International NGO Journal,* 3(12): 213-223.

Moyo CS, Francis J 2010. Women empowerment initiatives for rural development in South Africa: The missing piece of the puzzle. *Pula: Botswana Journal of African Studies*, 24(1): 43-63.

Moyo CS 2011. *Perceptions of Rural Communities on Indicators and Determinants of Women Empowerment: A Case Study of Makhado Municipality in Limpopo Province.* PHD in Rural Development (PHD RDV), Unpublished. South Africa: University of Venda.

Moyo CS, Francis J, Ndlovu P 2012. Perceived state of women empowerment in some rural areas of Limpopo Province, South Africa. *Gender and Behaviour Journal*, 10(1): 4418-4431.

Moyo CS 2013. Rural women and land, the inseparable twins: A case of South Africa. *Gender and Behaviour Journal,* 11(2): 5393-5401.

Ngugi RK, Nyariki DM 2005. Rural livelihoods in the arid and semi-arid environments of Kenya: Sustainable alternatives and challenges. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 22: 65-71.

Nhamo S, Nhamo G 2006. Macroeconomics: Adult education and poverty eradication in Southern Africa. *Review of Education*, 52: 305-322.

Oberhauser AM, Pratt A 2004. Women's collective economic strategies and political transformation in rural South Africa. *Gender, Place and Culture,* 11(2): 209-228.

Penzhorn C 2005. Participatory research: Opportunities and challenges for research with women in South Africa. *Women's Studies International Forum,* 28(4): 343-354.

Prinsloo M 1999. Literacy in South Africa. From <http://ruconnected.ru.ac.za/pluginfile.php/150385/mod_resource/content/0/Literacyinsouthafrica.pdf.> (Retrieved on April 2, 2013).

Rule P 2006. "The time is burning": The right of adults to basic education in South Africa. *Journal of Education*, 39: 114-135.

Sender J 2002. Women's struggle to escape rural poverty in South Africa. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 2(1): 1-49.

Shilubane TT 2007. *Empowerment of Rural Women of Mopani through Adult Literacy Programmes.* Masters of Education with Specialisation in Adult Education Dissertation, Unpublished. South Africa: University of South Africa.

South African National Report 2008. Development and State of the Art of Adult Learning and Education. From <www.mqa.org.za/.../Country% 20Paper% 20 Final.%2010%20 June%2008> (Retrieved on May 5, 2013).

Ukwoma SC, Njoku E 2013. Empowering Rural Women through Information Provision: The Strategic roles of the Library. Library Philosophy and Prac-

tice (e-journal): Paper 878. From <http://digital commons.unl.edu/libphilprac/878> (Retrieved on January 21, 2014).

UNESCO 1997. Adult Education in a Polarizing World. From <http://unesdoc.unesco.or/images/0011/001137/113758eo.pdf.> (Retrieved on April 19, 2013).

United Nations General Assembly, 2005. Improvement of the Situation of Women in Rural Areas. Report of the Secretary-General, Sixtieth Session. From <http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/policy_and_research/un/60/A_60_165_en.pdf> (Retrieved on March 24, 2012).

Willenberg I 2005. Starting at the beginning: Early childhood literacy intervention as a strategy for reducing adult illiteracy. *Language Matters,* 36(2): 162-175.

Williams J J 2006. Community participation: Lessons from post-apartheid South Africa. *Policy Studies*, 27(3): 197-217.

Zuma J 2010. State of the Nation Address. From <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2003/0302141> (Retrieved on May 12, 2013).

Zuma J 2013. State of the Nation Address. From <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/200/0302141> (Retrieved on June 14, 2013).