



# Contribution of Integrated Functional Adult Education to Adults Livelihood Improvement: The Empirical Study in Babile Woreda Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia

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**Abstract:** This Empirical study intended to explore the contribution of integrated functional adult education program to adult learners' livelihood improvement in Babile Woreda. A qualitative phenomenological research design was used. Six respondents purposively selected and participated in the study: five (3 male and 2 female) adults those graduated through completing the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of IFAE program and one Woreda IFAE coordinator. The data collected through an in-depth interview and analyzed by thematic analysis method. The finding of the study showed that IFAE program has contribution to adults' livelihood improvement. IFAE program capacitated adult learners to have writing and reading skill it helped them to understand things in an easier way and to develop good attitude and improve their practice in all aspects of their life. Literacy knowledge and skill increase adults' self-awareness and confidence as well as active participation in their life journey. Furthermore, IFAE program assisted adult learners to increase productivity, to generate income, to live healthy life, to use technology, to protect their environment, to educate their children, and to strengthen social relations and political participation. However, the existing practice of IFAE program is weak due to several factors that related to management and delivery approach of the program. As a result of this, even if the program has contribution for adults livelihood improvement most of illiterate adults not such much benefit from this program as it designed; still they have living in extreme poverty. Therefore, it is important for government to improve the existing practice of IFAE program to bring sustainable livelihood improvement on illiterate adults.

**Keywords:** Integrated Adult Education, Adult Learners, Literacy, Livelihood Improvement

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background

Education is a prerequisite for short and long-term economic growth. As a result, no country has achieved continuous and rapid economic growth without at least 40 percent of adults being able to read and write [10]. Contemporary society has high expectations of the contribution that education can make in helping people learn to live with change, to lead change, and to support improvement in all spheres of life [8]. Adult education contributes to the achievement of all SDGs by building the foundations of change in the social, political, economic, ecological and cultural spheres [4].

The aim of adult learning is to equip people with the necessary capabilities to exercise and realize their rights and take control of their destinies [20]. It promotes personal and professional development, thereby supporting more active engagement by adults with their societies, communities and environments. It fosters sustainable and inclusive economic growth and decent work prospects for individuals. It is therefore a crucial tool in alleviating poverty, improving health and well-being and contributing to sustainable learning societies [11, 20].

Literacy is still a priority on the adult learning agenda, since illiteracy leads to marginalization and exclusion of vital manpower groaning under the weight of complex and difficult challenges in all spheres: education, culture, politics, economy, health and environment [7]. Illiteracy represents a

human rights challenge and a development challenge for both individuals and communities. Illiterate communities are thus excluded from benefiting from national development, which would support sustainable development and help societies raise and progress in economy and politics [7].

In Ethiopia, adult education is recognized as improving illiterate adults on social, political and economic aspects to create actively participating adults in the development process of the country [23]. Accordingly, the national adult education strategy was developed in 2008 with a special focus on two-year IFAE program that provides basic skills related to the adult learners' lives and development packages of the country. The program is designed to address the illiterate youths and adults, and dropouts, particularly for rural communities. The IFAE aims to foster a democratic and good governance culture, as well as social reform and sustainable economic development in the country [14, 15].

The World Bank development indicators 2021 showed that Ethiopia's literacy rate is 51.77%, a 12.7% increase from 2007 [1]. Education sector development program (ESDP VI) report also indicated that since the beginning of ESDP V (2015), approximately 3.95 million adults have graduated from IFAE programs, or 30% of the 13.2 million illiterate adults in the country [13]. However, still the high level of illiteracy in the adult population in the country is a barrier to achieving development goals that are sited at national level [13, 23].

Several research findings showed that the expansion of IFAE program has faced numerous challenges including: poor attention given to the program at all levels, unavailability of legislative framework, absence of strong and efficient structure at all levels, poor integration of sectors at all levels, low level of expansion of community learning centers and absence of short term non-formal vocational skills training [12, 16, 23].

In these challenges in millions of adults attained and completed the two cycles of IFAE program in the last 15 years, however, little research has been done on the impact of the IFAE program on participants' livelihood improvement. To improve the practice and to address illiterate adults through this program it is important to bring empirical research evidence on the impact of the IFAE program on participants' livelihood improvement.

### **1.2. Objectives and Research Questions**

The empirical study intended to explore the contribution of integrated functional adult education program for adults' livelihood improvement based on the life experience of adults who graduated through completing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of IFAE program in Bishan Babile district, in East Hararghe Zone Babile Woreda.

To achieve the intended objective of the study the following specific objectives were stated:

- 1) To explore the contribution of IFAE for participants' livelihood improvement based on adult life experience in Bishan Babile district.
- 2) To describe the determinant factors that motivated adult learners to participate in IFAE program in Bishan

Babile district.

Based on these specific objectives the guiding questions presented in empirical study were:

- 1) How do adult learners benefit from IFAE program to improve their livelihood?
- 2) What are the determinant factors that motivated adult learners to participate in IFAE program?
- 3) What do adult learners need to succeed and continuously participate in IFAE program to improve their livelihood?

### **1.3. Significance of the Study**

This empirical study has importance to increase the awareness of national, regional and district education authorities and experts about the contribution of IFAE program in improving the livelihood of adult learners as well as the success factors and adult learners need to continuously participate in IFAE program. Also, the results of this study may give initial information to policymakers to evaluate and improve the IFAE implementation strategy, process, and structure through considering the adult learners' interest. Furthermore, it may be used by researchers to identify the area of research gaps and initiate further study on the impact of IFAE program on political, social and economic development at national, regional or Zonal level.

### **1.4. Limitation of the Study**

The study was empirical so as to; it has limitation to conclude the contribution of IFAE program on participants' livelihood improvement at national, regional or zonal level. Further, the study more focused on the life experience of adults who passed through IFAE program, it does not represent all adults and the overall implementation of the program. Therefore, it needs further in-depth study to explore the impact of IFAE program on economic, social and political aspects at national or regional level.

## **2. Review Literature**

### **2.1. Concept and Characters of Adult Education**

The United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization recognized adult education as an important component in the overall development process. Adult learning and education support and enable people to understand change, to cope with change to respond to change and to transform ourselves and our world [21]. In the first International agreed definition on adult education adopted in 1976 conceptualized adult education as: "the entire body of organized educational processes whether formal or otherwise, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behavior in twofold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development" [7].

Kanukisya [6] noted that the term adult education is used with at least three different meanings. In its broadest sense, it describes the entire process of adults learning. In its more technical meaning, adult education describes a set of organized activities to a wide variety of institutions for the accomplishment of specific educational objectives. The third meaning combines all of these processes and activities into the idea of a movement or field of social practice. In this sense, adult education brings together into a discrete social system all the individuals, institutions, and associations concerned with the education of adults and perceives them as working toward common goals of improving the methods and materials of adult learning, extending the opportunities for adults to learn, and advancing the general level of life [23].

For accelerating the development of one country UNESCO [22] suggested that literate, numerate, and problem solving workers who can add value to the production of goods and services at every possible point needed. In order to improve learner participation in developmental programs, learning opportunities must be created by making education accessible to all [19]. The series of outreach programs organized by different institutions through different strategies is to bring to the knowledge of adults, the problems and solutions to different diseases, such as cholera, tapeworm and hepatitis [21, 23].

Nowadays adult education recognized as improving to illiterate adults on social, political and economic aspect to create actively participating adults in the development process of the country. Thus, one could assert that the whole society has constituted training through which adults continuously learn and attain fullness in all its ramifications. That is, in every section of the society, different and necessary education programs are continuously offered to adults. This results in improved quality of life of which modern society is blessed with education [17].

## 2.2. Contribution of Adult Education in Development

The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) explained that Adult education, especially non-formal adult education, contributes to the individual as well as collective development of societies in many ways. Adult education provides knowledge, skills and competences that can be used both in professional and private life. It also, promotes transversal and generic skills, i.e. social skills, communication skills, analytical skills etc., sometimes also called life skills [4]. All of these skills are vital for participating in the labor market and creating new jobs, engaging in democratic processes and becoming an active citizen. Furthermore, taking part in adult education has also very positive effects on the individual in terms of better health in the old age, better general wellbeing and inclusion in the community and society [8, 6].

Furthermore, non-formal adult education has other purposes besides providing skills, knowledge and competences. The promotion of active citizenship, health and personal well-being, social inclusion are among the most

prevalent objectives. There is strong link between adult education and health and wellbeing; learning can provide a healthy lifestyle, develop health literacy, and inspire personal wellbeing and overall happiness [9].

Adult education has contribution in social inclusion, it can compensate a lack of education in earlier life and enable social mobility, and thus promote social cohesion, equity and equality, this ranges from the kind of jobs they can attain to life expectancy [4]. Adult learning and education correspondingly point as the means to foster sustainable development processes and peaceful coexistence [10]. Adult education it has also, a great contribution in social affiliation, equity and gender equality. Adult education supports greater social mobility and equalizes social inequalities adult education brings together people from different paths and states of life. This contributes to democratic and social peace [5].

Non-formal adult education also aims to enlarge the choices that people make in their personal and professional lives. Adult education can trigger sustainable development on various levels – the social, economic, and even ecological level [7]. Adult education does not necessarily serve as a means-to-an-end. It is multidimensional it covers many sectors; be it social, political, economic, or ecological. Therefore, adult education is the key for achieving countries development goals, social change and reducing poverty levels around the world. It has the capacity to positively affect many dimensions of poverty, peace, reconciliation as well as conflict prevention [4].

## 2.3. Adult Characteristics and Methods of Teaching

Adults learn in a different way than children do. Adult Education thus requires specific methods and approaches to facilitate learning [2]. First of all, adults are not legally bound to go to school any more, thus their learning is voluntary and more self-directed and self-motivated than learning of children. Adults can choose what, when and where they learn. They have a certain idea about the outcome of their learning; they have specific expectations and experience to build on [7].

Adult learning theories take into account the distinct principles that have proven effective in steering adult learners to expand what they know, enhance their problem-solving skills, achieve their goals, and find their meaningful places in their respective societies [10]. By the mid-20th century, three major adult learning theories have emerged: andragogy, self-directed learning, and transformative learning. These theories are firmly lodged in the humanistic approach to learning, which emphasizes personal growth and development as the key focus of education [2].

Andragogy is developed in 1968 Developed by Malcolm Knowles, it refers to the concept of adult learning and how it differs from children's education. Knowles stated that adult learning is premised on five key assumptions: self-concept, adult learner experience, readiness to learn, orientation of learning, and motivation to learn. Also, Knowles conceptualized self-directed learning as "a process in which

individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes” [2]. In essence, self-directed learning is an informal learning process that takes place outside the traditional classroom setting. In this approach, the learner decides about the method, content, resources, and evaluation of learning programs. By determining their needs, setting goals, and seeking resources, learners assume full responsibility for the learning process [19].

The transformative learning originally developed by Jack Mezirow, an American sociologist, transformative learning theory refers to how learning changes how individuals think about themselves and their surroundings. He describes it as “learning that transforms problematic frames of reference to make them [learners] more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and emotionally able to change” [19]. Transformative learning challenges students’ underlying assumptions and opinions about the world. In doing this so, learners become more encouraged to apply critical thinking when forming their beliefs and judgment [2]. Transformative learning theory touches on two basic kinds of learning: instrumental and communicative. Instrumental learning includes task-oriented problem-solving, as well as the determination of cause-and-effect relationships. Meanwhile, communicative learning emphasizes how learners communicate the needs, feelings, and desires [2].

#### **2.4. Adult Education Context in Ethiopia**

The Ethiopia Education and Training Policy 1994 placed adult education as a primary need. However, Adult education programs implemented so far had not been geared towards problem-solving and was not relevant to the day-to-day life of the adult population [14]. In order to alleviate the adult education problems, as how education sector development program III [16] put it that life skill-based, work-oriented and community based adult education programs must be scaled up. To this, the strategy for adult education was developed with the active participation of all stakeholders in 2008. It was designed to create environment to adults to read and write in order to acquire knowledge and skills in agriculture, health, civic education, cultural education, etc. the strategy defines the content of adult and non-formal education to include literacy, numeracy and the development of skills that enable learners to solve problems and to change their lives [15].

Moreover, in the IFAE program implementation, the strategy sited different sectors should place adult literacy at the center of their plan. The Education; Agriculture and Health, are among the sectors that are highly involved in the provision of the adult literacy program in Ethiopia. Accordingly, at district level and IFAE center it is expected that these sectors delivering the program in integrated approach that involved IFAE facilitators’ teachers, development agent and health extension workers [14].

In ESDP IV and V also, attention was given to adult education to afford citizens opportunities to attain self-fulfillment and national development in the twenty-first century. The education sector development plan evaluation report [13] showed that, since the beginning of ESDP V, approximately 3.95 million adults have graduated from IFAE however, still in millions of adults did not attain IFAE program in the country. In ESDP VI great emphasis given to improve the IFAE program practice through lifelong learning. In the ESDP VI period, adult and non-formal education sector focuses to expand equitable access of adult and non-formal education programs in all regions so as to improve quality of life and enhance literacy level after eradicating illiteracy in the country [13].

### **3. Research Methods**

#### **3.1. Research Design**

In this study, a qualitative phenomenological research design was used to explore the contribution of integrated functional adult education program for participants’ livelihood improvement based on the life experience of graduated adults in Bishan Babile district, East Hararghe Zone Babile Woreda. As Creswell [3] explained, a phenomenological research design enables the researcher to describe the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon. It also focuses on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon. Therefore, the researchers used phenomenological research design to explore the lived experience of adults’ on their livelihoods improvement as result of participation in integrated functional adult education program.

#### **3.2. Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques**

##### **3.2.1. Population**

East Hararghe Zone Babile Woreda was selected as the site of the study because, it is a working place of the researchers and for it geographical proximity. Therefore, the samples of the study were selected from Babile Woreda kebeles. Accordingly, Bishan Babile district selected as a site of the study. According to 2021 Babile woreda education annual report, Bishan Babile district was on the 1<sup>st</sup> rank on IFAE implementation also, from this district at an Average 157 adult’s graduated annually for the past 5 years through completing second cycle of IFAE program. Some of the graduates got recognition at Woreda, Zone and Region level. So that, it is based on the assumption that selecting adults those participated in IFAE in this district enable the researches to gain ample information regarding the contribution of IFAE program for participants’ livelihood improvement.

##### **3.2.2. Sample Size**

The participants partaken in the study were individuals those had participated in IFAE program and graduated

through completing first and second cycle. Accordingly, five (3 male and 2 female) Participants those had good participation in IF AE were purposively selected for the study. The decision to include five participants was made based on the recommendation by Creswell and Dukes [3] which states, studying 3 to 10 individuals in one phenomenology study is advisable. Creswell [3] described that the more diverse the characteristics of the individuals, the more difficult it will be for the researcher to find common experiences, themes, and the overall essence of the experience for all parts. By considering all these, the researchers have included five individuals in the study those had been participated in IF AE. Their being five helped the researchers to gain in-depth information about the contribution of IF AE program for participants' sustainable livelihoods improvement based on graduated live experience as well as to efficiently manage the study.

In addition to those five participants, the researchers have included one (Female) participant from Babile Woreda IF AE program coordinator. There were two reasons that the researchers decided to include this participant in the study. The first reason is to gain ample information about the practice and under what circumstance that IF AE program has been implemented in Babile woreda particularly, on the site of study. The other reason is to use the data obtained from this participant for triangulation and cross checking purpose in order to confirm the data obtained from the five participants.

### 3.2.3. Sampling Techniques

The participants in this study were selected purposefully through snowball or chain a technique which was accompanied by sort of consultations with IF AE program coordinator of Babile Woreda Education office and Bishan Babile district IF AE facilitators.

To find those individuals who have best experience in livelihood improvement as results of IF AE program participation, the researchers set the following criteria. The first criterion was adults those graduated in IF AE program through completing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle before 2018 because, it enabled to study the contribution of IF AE on adults' livelihood at least in the past 4 years after graduation and The second criterion was successfulness or improvement on the participant's livelihoods and those are taken as a model in the community in their life after graduated in IF AE program.

### 3.3. Data Collection Tools

In this phenomenological study, data collection has carried out through an in-depth interview. Creswell [3] suggested that in phenomenological study using in-depth interview tool enable the researchers to collect rich information from individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon being explored and can articulate their lived experiences. Therefore, the researchers believed that in-depth interview is the appropriate tool to collect relevant information that helps to explore the contribution of IF AE program for participants' livelihood improvement.

### 3.4. Data Collection Producers

There were two main steps, pre interview and during interview, that the researchers have passed through to collect the information from the key participants using the in-depth interview.

*Pre interview:* Before proceeding to the interview process, the researcher had contacted the identified individuals as participants through their mobile phone and informed them prior to the interview about who the researchers are, why want to meet them, why being selected and even the purpose of the study which was aiming to assure their willingness to participate in the study. This approach has helped the researcher to build understanding, trust and facilitating the interview condition for the success of data collection process. After obtaining the willingness of those individuals to participate in the study, the researcher had made a discussion with them in advance independently to settle the comfortable place and appropriate time to conduct the interview and finally agreed on when and where to make the interview.

*During Interview:* In the interview session the researcher deployed a one-on-one interview type. This approach has enabled the researcher to collect the most useful information directly from individuals which help to answer research questions properly. Right after joining the participants at agreed time and place, the first task was to introduce one another and explaining the purpose of the study and convincing them to sign the consent form which has been prepared prior to the interviewing process. The main contents of the consent form include the title of the study and brief description of the study which was accompanied by the purpose, sample selection procedure, data collection tools and so forth. In the consent form, it was stated that the participant has the right to decide anything regarding the interview, the confidentiality of the information and that the process is risk free and only for research purpose. Finally, the participants were signing the consent form as per the agreement made.

Furthermore, for the success of the interview process the researcher has developed an interview protocol guide. As Creswell [3] stated the interview protocol enables a person to take notes during the interview about the responses of the interviewee. It also helps a researcher to organize thoughts on items such as headings, information about starting the interview, concluding ideas, information on ending the interview, and thanking the respondent. Accordingly, the interview protocol guide developed by the researcher has three major parts. The first part the protocol incorporates title of the study and brief description of the study accompanied by the purpose, sample selection procedure, data collection tools and so forth. The second part of the protocol embraces the general information of the informant which includes personal information. The third part of the protocol on the other hand is all about the four interview guiding questions.

During the interview the researcher proposed the following procedures to follow and acted accordingly. Those procedures are to focus only on the questions that proposed

in interview protocol with flexible approach, probing questions; to complete the interview within the agreed up on and specified time (40-60 minutes); to be respectful and polite during the interview; and to be a good listener rather than a frequent speaker during the interview. The interviews were ended by letting the participants to add if some think left and finally, through taking comment on the process of interview and deepest greeting for all the six interviewees. All the interviews were recorded by using mobile recording tool and immediately transferred to laptop to make it ready for transcription.

### **3.5. Data Analysis Procedures**

In this study, thematic data analysis method has been used to analysis the data which had been obtained from the participants through in-depth interview. The three research questions were used as the themes of the analysis and the themes which were emerged due to coding process through the four guiding interview question were also categorized as sub themes. It was based on Creswell [3] description that states thematic analysis can be used to analysis qualitative data to explore, giving meaning, and organizing questions about participants lived experiences, perspective, the factors and social process that influence and shape particular phenomena. Therefore, in this phenomenological study the researcher believed that thematic analysis approach enable to analyze and conceptualize the data obtained through in-depth interview from lived experience of participants in IFAE program.

In the data analysis process the researcher set the following steps to pass through. These are data storing, organizing the data, conducting a preliminary read-through of the database, coding and organizing themes, representing the data, and forming an interpretation and reporting.

#### **3.5.1. Data Storing**

Right after the interviewing process has completed, the researcher directly stored the original interview in to lap top through creating a separate folder for each of the Participants to prepare it for data analysis process. Not only the audio data but also all the other documents related to each participant has stored in the previously opened folder. The documents stored in the separated folder for each participant include the consent form, interview guiding protocol, transcribed and the translated documents as well as the documents with the coded data. To protect the anonymity of the participants, all the documents stored in the storage folder were kept confidential through assigning later and number for the participants rather than using their true name. Further, all the documents were stored on external hard disk storage to secure the data through backup system (develop backup copies).

#### **3.5.2. Data Organization**

*Transcription and Translation Process:* Before the transcription process has started, the researcher has developed an interview transcription template to make the

transcription process easier. The transcriptions were made directly from the recorded interview based on the questions asked by the interviewer and the responses given by the participants. In the transcription process, a line-by-line and word-by-word/verbatim transcription method was deployed through applying the principle of fidelity to stick to the original meaning of the words of the participant. On the other hand, the transcriptions were made in original languages where 6 of the interviews were made in Afan Oromo. After completing the transcription process, all the transcribed information was directly translated in to English language for further analysis.

#### **3.5.3. Coding and Organizing Themes**

In the coding process, the researcher has developed a format that embraces the interview guiding questions, manuscripts (the translated participants' responses), the codes, categorical level (theme) and note on the issues. It was made through deep reading of the sentence or the whole paragraph of the manuscript to capture what the response is about and to identify which word, phrase or sentence has potential to be taken as initial code. After the initial code has emerged as a word, phrase or sentence, they were taken to the code column of the template and assigned similar identity number with part of the manuscript from which the code has emerged from. Those emerged codes have categorized further to certain theme under categories and note on the issues has also been taken to enable what the codes tend to mean.

The researcher had deployed open coding and constant comparative techniques to generate new codes and to avoid repetition. The coding process was undertaken manually and the researcher used Microsoft excel sheet for organizing the coded data and to categorize them to certain themes. To understand and give meaning to the codes, the researcher listing the codes to see the differences and similarities, relating various codes to the appropriate themes and sub themes, revising the codes and their categories and developing thematic structure /map has been carried out in the process.

Furthermore, the researchers have prepared code book which includes the code, brief definition of the code and when to use the codes aiming to develop shared understanding and agreement on the meaning of the codes and when to use them.

#### **3.5.4. Interpretation and Reporting**

After completing the process of coding, the researcher has passed to the process of interpretation based on the combined codes into categories (main themes and sub themes). It was done through developing lists of significant statements on how participants conceptualize the importance of IFAE program, how IFAE program benefited adults to improve their livelihood; what are the determinant factors that motivated adult to participate in IFAE. The full descriptions on the contribution of IFAE program for participants' livelihood improvement structured based on the participants' life experience and tangible life they are living this day.

Finally, the final report of this study was prepared by considering all the processes passed through in the study and through addressing thoroughly all the findings obtained from the participants in an ethical manner.

### 3.6. Ethical Issues

In the process of this phenomenological study the researcher set the following ethical issues to respect in all phase of the study. In the data gathering and interpretation process the researcher has to protect the anonymity of the Participants by assigning numbers and using pseudonym to individuals. During data gathering process, the researchers has to explained the purpose of the study to create transparency, presented the consent form and got signed after reaching on an agreement. The researcher has to showing respect for the site and the participants, and gathering data in ways that they were not influencing the participants. During the recording process the interviewers did not call the name and position of the interviewees to secure their identity. It was agreed that the recorded information would be deleted by the researchers from all the storages if the issue becomes problematic and if reported it harms individuals.

During data analysis the researcher, used only the participants' responses without siding and shaping the findings in a particular direction, as well as respecting the privacy of individuals as their information are reported. In the reporting phase the researcher has honestly reported; communicated openly and share the findings to the concerning bodies.

## 4. Findings and Discussion

### 4.1. Background Information of the Participants

To explore the contribution of IF AE program for adults' livelihood improvement six participants were participated in the study as a primary data source. The findings on the background information of the participants revealed that 5 (3 male and 2 female) participants were adult learner and one participant was IF AE program coordinator. Their age ranges from 32 to 47; all have married and got children. Regarding their participation in IF AE program 5 of them (3 male 2 female) had participated in IF AE program and graduated through completing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle. Two Participants (1 male and 1 female) graduated in 2017 and two (2 male) participants in 2016 the one (female) participant graduated in 2015. All 5 of the participants got recognition later from BWEO for their participation in IF AE also; two participants got medallion award from EHZE and OEB for their participation in IF AE and model in their district in improving their livelihood. On the other side, one of the participants in the interview was worked as IF AE program coordinator in Babile Woreda Education Office, her education status was BA degree in Adult education program and served for 13 years as IF AE program coordinator. To protect the anonymity of the participants the researcher used numbers and pseudonym name (AP1, AP2, AP3, AP4, and AP5 given

for adults in the data analysis.

### 4.2. Findings

The findings of this study organized in three themes by considering the research questions that intended to address how adult learners benefited from IF AE program to improve their livelihoods condition; the determinant factors that motivated adult learners to participate in IF AE program and the adult learners need to succeed and continuously participated in IF AE program to improve their livelihood condition. Accordingly, the first theme focus on the benefits of IF AE program to adult learners livelihoods, the second emphasis on the success factors that promote adult learners to participate in IF AE program and the third center on adult learners need to succeed and continuously participate in IF AE program from their point of view.

#### 4.2.1. The Benefits of IF AE Program to Participants Livelihoods Improvement

To describe the benefits of IF AE program to participants livelihood improvement the researcher requested participants' two questions: the first focused on why IF AE program is important to illiterate adults and the second question focused on how IF AE program benefits for participants to improve their livelihoods, in this question they requested to explain their life experience how IF AE program changed their life related to social economic aspects.

##### A. The Importance of IF AE Program

The participants' explained that participating in IF AE program have several importance for illiterate adults. They describe that IF AE program is important because it capacitated adult learners to have writing and reading skill and to understand things in an easier way. One of the participants said that:

*... for several years I couldn't write and read, always when I saw people those can write and read I hate myself... when I go to bank I used to sign with my finger but I was able to sign by hand using pen. I able to write and read different reading materials through participating in IF AE program...now I have full of confidence in my life journey... (AP2).*

The other participant explained that IF AE program is important it able illiterate adults to use mobile technology and IF AE program make life easier:

*...before participated in IF AE program I request educated peoples to help me in all my concerns even I was need their assistance to call mobile but after participating in IF AE program I capable to use my phone. Now when I need to call mobile I can access people name and their telephone number ... Also, I access information on different issues by searching with my mobile phone, to me IF AE program make life easier... (AP4).*

Furthermore, the participants explained that IF AE program has importance it assisted adults to increase productivity, to generate income, to identify income and expenses as well as to educate their children and to strengthen social relations. One of the participants on importance of IF AE program said

that:

*...We haven't interest and be reluctant when government authorities advised us to attend adult education but now that we have started studying adult education we are seeing changes in our lives and our interest in learning is increasing ... We understood how much IFAE program is important to us when we saw changes in all our life ... (AP1).*

#### *B. The Benefits of IFAE Program in Improving Adult learners' livelihood*

The participants explained that they have got a lot of benefits through participating in IFAE program; they believed that the contents of IFAE program training helped them to develop their knowledge and skill on agriculture, environment protection, income generation, health, education, gender issue and social participation.

The participants explained IFAE program assisted them to improve their income through applying modern agriculture practice: one of the participants said that:

*...Before participating in IFAE program we used to sow traditional seeds it was less productive and we harvested little product that was not enough for our conception, we were in extreme poverty but now we are in good situation, we use selected seeds, we attentively followed the advice of agriculture development agents... to increase our productivity we prepared traditional fertilizer and also we use effectively modern fertilizers it increased my production. Now in this year I have got excess product. I told you the truth IFAE program helped me to improve production and to be free from hanger... (AP5).*

Furthermore, participants explained that IFAE program assisted them to improve their income by producing various products, through irrigation and by preparing water reservoirs. They also told that they produce products that have value in the market. One of the participants told that:

*...I earned income by producing various products that important in the market, I had prepared water reservoir and grow vegetables, our income is better now. I have bought land from the city and built house, and our children are attending high school in it... (AP3).*

Moreover, participants explained that IFAE program benefited them to improve their income through participating in livestock and local trade. One of the participants said that:

*... Through participating in IFAE program I learnt how my income could be improved by participating in livestock and local trade... now I raising cattle; goats and supply it to the city. My income improved I have benefited a lot from adult education (AP2).*

On the other direction participants revealed that their participation in IFAE program benefited them to protect their health and in child care. They believed that through IFAE program they learnt and gained knowledge and skills on health issues: how they can protect themselves from transmitted diseases, WASH and sanitation, family planning, balanced diet and child care. One of the participants told that how IFAE benefited to live healthy life:

*...we had used our living room to live with cattle but now*

*we have identified a place where cattle live and people live in it, this is the change we got from adult education... for several years I and my families were in health problem, I lost my 2 kids but now my family are in better way we enjoy healthy life... (AP1).*

Furthermore, the participants revealed that IFAE program improved their thinking about health and the culture of using health centers, clinic and hospital for treatment, childbirth, and vaccination. They believed that using modern health service reduced mothers and children mortality and enabled them to live healthy life as well as their children raise in good manner. One of the participants in this issue said that:

*...before participated in adult education We didn't think much about our health and children, we didn't have the culture of taking them to the hospital, we treated them with traditional methods and many of our children were hurt by us due to lack of modern treatment, but now after studying adult education we have a great change in the way we can protect our health and that of our families. I have started using health post and clinics properly, women are now giving birth in the clinics, the baby is being vaccinated... Adult education has helped us to be aware of everything (AP3).*

Moreover, the participants explained that IFAE program improved their attitude and practice in child care and send them to school. They have good understanding on the importance of feeding their kids balanced diet and taking share responsibility in the family for child care and raisings. One of the participants told that:

*...I used to say that we don't consider raising a child as a man's responsibility but only women's duty but now after I studied adult education, I realize that a husband must also take care of the children and take them to the hospital if they get sick (AP5). Further, the participant said that... before participated in adult education, I have no care to my kids' diet but now our children feeding different food that helped them to be healthy (AP5).*

Related to WASH and hygiene the participants explained the IFAE program improved their attitude and practice to take care for their environment, to use treated and clean drinking water, and on toilet usage. One participant told that:

*...I used to not consider it necessary to take care of our environment but now adult education has made us take care of the land, protect our environment... before our kids and we used to burn outside but now we use the toilet... (AP1).*

On the other direction participants explained that from IFAE program they learnt a lot how they can protect their environment and participated in environmental conservation practice. They believed that land tracing and planting works are important practice to reduce the impact of drought. The participants told that they actively participated in environmental protection practice yearly by leading and mobilizing the local communities.

Related to social coexistence and social political participation, the participants revealed that their participation in IFAE program improved their understanding and practice

of social coexistence and developed a sense of support each other. They have great stand on the importance of peace and living together in their community. One of the participants told that:

*...Adult education has helped me to have an understanding of community coexistence and a sense of support because we now meet in adult education centers, in government forums and in all social activities in this entire situation I have good concern to my community I always teaching them the importance of peace and living together... (AP3).*

The other participant described that participation in IFAE program improved their political participation and increased their self-awareness and confidence to voting, expressing freely own idea on public meeting as well as to know their right and responsibilities:

*...I used to be afraid that the government would arrest us if we expressed our views, and I thought so, but now in any government meeting we can speak and tell our feeling, we participate in elections, we choose our own leader, our participation in politics is increasing, we know our right and responsibilities, adult education has helped us to increase our self-awareness and confidence... (AP4).*

#### **4.2.2. The Success Factors That Promote Adult Learners to Participate in IFAE Program**

The participants requested to explain the factors that initiate them to participate in IFAE program from their life experience. Accordingly, they explained that the success factors that promote them to participate in IFAE program related to life challenge; the way of living status difference between educated and uneducated person; Teacher motivation; delivery approach and contents of IFAE program; the schedule and place of learning, and Teaching children inspired to get involved in adult education.

The participant explained that the life challenges in their journey initiated them to decide to participate in adult education. They said that when they go to hospital, court and government service sectors they challenged because of illiterate, they lack self-esteem, confidence and are dependent on other. To out themselves from this challenge they decided to attend adult education. One of the participants on this concern said that:

*...I asked people to read number and worlds, I couldn't understand the rooms number when I went to the hospital, I couldn't read and use what the doctor prescribed for me properly, I couldn't file a written complaint in court and all the rest came from my lack of education regretfully went to adult education... (AP2).*

Furthermore, the participants revealed that the way of living status difference that exists between educated and uneducated person instigated them to participate in in IFAE program. One of the participants witnessed that:

*...There are huge differences between educated and uneducated people in productivity, child development, participation in development, social acceptance, commuting especially in the city to sell and buy things this*

*is what prompted us to study adult education with the regret of why we don't study... (AP5).*

On the other direction, the participants explained that Teacher motivation and delivery approach and contents of IFAE program initiated them to attain adult education. They said that the teachers created the motivation in them, they were fascinated by the contents of the IFAE program learning that: how to write and read, how to increase productivity, how they protect their healthy, how to raise their children, how to protect their environment, and how to participate in development etc. when teachers told to them the benefits that they could gain being participated in adult education, they are initiated to participate in IFAE program. One of the participants said that:

*...the contents in the adult book is so much that it made us love the adult education because it has everything we need for our lives... it attracted us... (AP3).*

Furthermore, the participants explained that teachers (adult education facilitators) being in their village to teach them and having an adult education center near where they live motivated them to attain adult education. Also, the participants said that they liked participation in adult education because the manner of delivery did not have influence on their personal circumstances; they have attained adult education based on their well-planned schedule. Moreover, the participant explained that teaching children inspired them to get involved in adult education. One of the participants said that:

*...When we sent our children to school, they advised us on several issues and asked us why this should be like this and why don't, then I decided that if education have power to shape my thinking I have to participate in adult education and starting participating in adult education... (AP4).*

#### **4.2.3. Adult Learners Needs to Succeed and Continuously Participate in IFAE Program**

Finally, the researcher requested the participants to explain the adult learners needs to succeed and continuously participated in IFAE program to improve their livelihoods. They advocated that adult education is important for all illiterate people because it helped people those passed in adult education to lead their life in a better way. They suggested that in the future, more illiterate adults should participate in adult education to improve their life and benefit from it.

The participants also, commented that the existing IFAE program in their district is weak. It lack continuity, not effectively managed, all concerned bodies not participated in adult teaching, lack of coordination among facilitators, development agents and health workers, the delivery approach is not practical based as well as the learning centers are not attractive and lack education materials and low illiterate adult participation in IFAE program.

To improve the existing practice and to make adult education more effective and attractive to illiterate adults the participants suggested the way of improvement and their

need. They recommended that the importance of improving adult education approach. They elaborate their need if adult education approach is practical based in which adults develop various skills that include modern farming, livestock, handicrafts, small scale manufacturing, trade, etc. also, they suggested on the importance of the continuity of the program. One of the participants said that:

*....we have interest if in our district adult training center opened in which illiterate adults get training on technical skills after completing the two cycle of IFAE training. Because, there are a lot of illiterate youth those need technical training to improve their future life... (AP3).*

Further, the participants suggested that the need of collaboration on adult education delivery approach. They believed that if the adult education training provided in a coordinated manner by health, agricultural and teacher professionals they would more benefited from the program. They also suggested that the need of improved learning center that equipped with the necessary teaching materials in which they learn through demonstration of life experience of success adult's learner through TV or radio.

On the other direction, the participants explain the need of organizing and providing initial financial support through providing credits to adults those graduated over completing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle IFAE training to engage and inspire them on income generation activities. One of the participants said that:

*... If there were a system of organizing and providing loans to adults to engage in income-generating activities after completing their two-year education their livelihood improved and other illiterate adults will be come to IFAE program to change their life (AP5).*

Moreover, the participants suggested that the importance of community awareness and mobilization to fight illiteracy from their district. They said that the village and religious leaders should play their role in awareness creation and community mobilization in adult education, the responsibility of adult education is not the things that we left only for government.

#### 4.3. Discussion

The finding of this study shows that the IFAE program has contribution for participants' livelihood improvement. This contribution related to education, health, economic as well as social and political benefits to adult learns. From education point of view, adults those participated in adult education it capacitated them to have writing and reading skill, also to understand things in an easier way. Literacy knowledge and skill increased adults' self-confidence in their life journey. Illiteracy makes adults to exclude from government sectors to gained service along with in social and political participation; in all aspect of their life they need the assistance of educated people. This situation leads them to have negative attitude on their personal character and lost self-confidence in the community. Katrin Denys [7] explained that Illiteracy represents a human rights challenge and a development challenge for both individuals and communities: not being able to develop their abilities and acquire general educational,

cognitive and cultural tools keeps individuals from acquiring their basic rights.

The result of this study also shows that adults those passed through IFAE program believed that adult education is not only important for literacy it assisted them to increase productivity, to generate income, to use technology, to protect their environment, as well as to educate their children and to strengthen social relations and political participation. IFAE program helps adult learners to improve their income through applying modern agriculture practice. Through participating in IFAE training adult learners gain knowledge and skill how they improve their productivity.

Adult those passed in IFAE program their income improved through increasing agriculture production. IFAE program improve the attitude and practice of adult learners on agriculture. The IFAE training leads them to accept the development agent advices accordingly, adult those passed in IFAE program using selected seeds, prepare traditional fertilizer, also use effectively modern fertilizers it increased their productivity. Furthermore, they produce various products, through irrigation and by preparing water reservoirs; even they produce products that have value in the market.

On the other direction, IFAE program helped adult learners to improve their income through participating in livestock and local trade. Adults those attained IFAE program actively participate on livestock and local trade. There are adults those have their own properties like living home in the city through this work. Also, they using the mobile technology in trading process to have information on the market cost on agricultural products; this empowers them to be the decision maker on their products.

IFAE program have benefits to adult learners to protect their health and in child care. Through attaining IFAE program adults learners gain knowledge and skills on health issues: how they can protect themselves from transmitted diseases, WASH and sanitation, family planning, balanced diet and child care. This improves adult learners thinking on health as well as develops the culture of using health center, clinic and hospital for treatment, childbirth, and vaccination.

Adult those passed through IFAE program have positive attitude on modern health service and using it effectively. They believed that using modern health service reduced mothers and children mortality and enabled them to live healthy life as well as their children raise in good manner. The IFAE program improved adult learners' attitude and practice in child care. Adults those passed through IFAE program, they feed their kids balanced diet and take share responsibility in the family for child care. Moreover, they are in better way to send their children to school and in following their learning.

IFAE program improved adult learners' attitude and practice on environmental conservation WASH and hygiene. The life experience of adults those passed through IFAE program in this study shows that, they are better in taking care for their environment, using treated and clean drinking water, and on toilet usage. Moreover, they believed that land tracing and planting works are important practice to reduce

the impact of drought and hunger. Accordingly, they actively participating in environmental protection and planting practice in their district by leading and mobilizing the local communities.

IFAE program improved adult learners understanding and practice on social coexistence and develop a sense of support each other. Adults those attain IFAE program have great stand on the importance of peace and living together in their community. They actively participate in social issues; have good concern to their communities further, they teaching people on the importance of peace and living together. Concerning the educated people OECD [18] explain that Educated people tend to engage more in civic activities, a cohesive society can be found in countries where citizens actively engage in civic activities, trust others and have faith in the functioning of public institutions. The participation in IFAE program also improves the adult learners' political participation. Adults those graduated in IFAE program are better in political participation, they have sound self-awareness and confidence to voting, expressing freely own idea on public meeting as well as to know their right and responsibilities.

The life experience of adults those attained IFAE program explained that the success factors that promote adult learners to participate in IFAE program related to cope life challenge; the way of living status difference between educated and uneducated person; Teacher motivation; delivery approach and contents of IFAE program; the schedule and place of learning, and Teaching children inspired to get involved in adult education. This indicates that there are several positive factors that direct illiterate adults to engage in Adult education. Katrin Denys [7] explains Adult Education requires specific methods and approaches to facilitate learning related to adult learner character. They have a certain idea about the outcome of their learning as well as they have specific expectations and experience to build on it.

Adult education is important for all illiterate people because this study shows that it helped people those passed in adult education to lead their life in a better way. But, the practice on the ground show that there are a lot of illiterate people those still do not come to IFAE program. Adult those passed in the IFAE program articulated that challenge as: It lack continuity, not effectively managed, all concerned bodies not participated in adult teaching, lack of coordination among facilitators, development agents and health workers, the delivery approach is not practical based as well as the learning centers are not attractive and lack education materials and low interest of illiterate adults to participation in IFAE program challenging the program.

To improve the existing practice and to make adult education more effective and attractive the participants have need on the improvement of adult education approach to practical based in which adults develop various skills that include modern farming, livestock, handcrafts, small scale manufacturing, trade, etc. also, they suggested on the importance of the continuity of the program to lifelong learning. Bouchika [2] suggests that

adult learning is most successful when the delivery approach considers adult learners expectations, interests and previous experience as well as the learners into account when developing a curriculum, training plan and selecting learning methods.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

This empirical study revealed that IFAE program has tangible contribution for adults' livelihood improvement. IFAE program capacitated adult learners to have writing and reading skill it helped them to understand things in an easier way and to develop good attitude and improve their practice in all aspects of their life. Literacy knowledge and skill increase adults' self-awareness and confidence as well as active participation in their life journey. Furthermore, IFAE program assisted adult learners to increase productivity, to generate income, to live healthy life, to use technology, to protect their environment, to educate their children, and to strengthen social relations and political participation. However, the existing practice of IFAE program is weak due to several factors that related to management and delivery approach of the program. As a result of this, even if the program has contribution for adults livelihood improvement most of illiterate adults not such much benefit from this program as it designed; still they have living in extreme poverty. Therefore, it is important for government to improve the existing practice of IFAE program to bring sustainable livelihood improvement on illiterate adults.

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