

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

Gender and Adult Literacy with specific reference to the Adult Literacy Tutors Association (ALTA) of Trinidad and Tobago

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The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes that every individual has a right to education that is strongly linked to the right to literacy. The purpose of this study was to explore how gender impacts the acquisition of literacy skills of adults and at the same time focus on intervention programmes that were initiated by literacy providers in their attempt to combat illiteracy. Specific reference was paid to ALTA, since it is the only comprehensive and structured literacy provider in Trinidad and Tobago.

Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used in this study. The emphasis was on the former methodology, however, since the instruments of this approach elicited the best responses to the theoretical concerns that were raised in the study.

Theoretically, the aim was to show the biases that people face in their attempts to acquire literacy. The findings revealed that gender indeed plays a significant role in the acquisition of literacy, especially for women, some of whom have to be granted permission to be literate.

Significantly, the study also revealed that in some societies tradition was cited as a reason to keep women from becoming literate because the men in those societies did not believe women should be legitimate agents of knowledge.

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