

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

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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.