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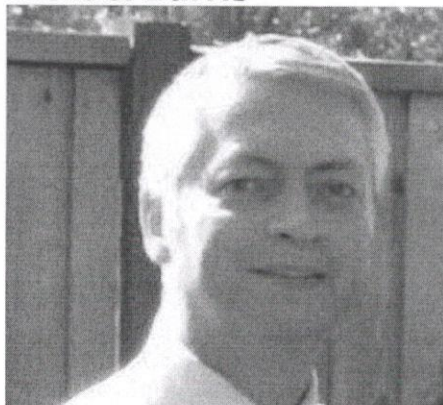
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President's Message

Michael Burris



I spend a lot of time in my columns writing about the Board's plan to re-energize the annual PNLA conference and in so doing, carve out a niche in the crowded world of library associations. The PNLA conference is the cornerstone of PNLA's services, and it supports all of the Association's activities.

While the Board realizes that conference revenue is greatest where the bulk of the membership is located (Idaho, Montana and Washington), they also recognize that holding our conference in our other member states and provinces, Alaska, Alberta, and British Columbia, is also key to the continued success of the association. Talk to just about anyone who attended the Sitka conference or the Victoria conference (held jointly with WLA) and you will get glowing reviews. I say "just about" due to the little detail that neither conference brought much revenue to PNLA and, in fact, the Victoria conference lost money.

So while the Board was adamant that we need to put the emphasis on revenue earning conferences, we were just as adamant that the conferences in our other three members states/provinces were unique opportunities to have awesome conferences in some pretty spectacular locations and build support for PNLA at the same time.

For that reason, Board members (and members in general, from what I've heard) are really anticipating the 2012 conference in Anchorage. PNLA VP Heidi Chittim and Alaska Library Association Representative Sara Saxton have assembled a terrific conference team and have planned a truly one of a kind PNLA experience for this August.

However, we are faced with a situation not of our making that has the potential to seriously damage the 2012 conference. Some background...PNLA entered into a contract in April 2010 to hold the 2012 PNLA conference in Anchorage. In August of 2011 the PNLA Board became aware of a labour dispute at the conference hotel. The Board at that time expressed concern that the dispute would have a negative impact on the 2012 conference. We were also aware that, given PNLA's precarious financial situation, cancelling the conference would have a serious, if not fatal, consequence for the association. In short, we faced a cancellation

State governments should also work with the society with regard to the development of their various indigenous languages.

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Rural Information Provision for National Development: A Study of Kwara North Senatorial District of Kwara State, Nigeria

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Introduction

The rural areas of Nigeria are inhabited by the bulk of the nation's population; which serves as the base for the production of food and fibre. They are also the major sources of capital formation for the country, and a principal market for domestic manufactures (Olatunbosun, 1975). In general terms, the rural areas engage in primary activities that form the foundation for any economic development. Yet, despite the importance attached to the rural areas, they are not attractive to live in. There is absence of infrastructure, which improves the quality of life. Usually, there is absence of potable water, electricity and good feeder roads. The rural people have low purchasing power and standard of living (Olayiwola and Adeleye, 2005). In particular, the rural women, according to Zaid (2010) are still not able to cater adequately for the basic needs of food, clothes, shelter, obligations, lack of gainful employment and skills. They have limited access to social and economic infrastructure such as economic, health, portable water, sanitation and consequently, limited chance of advancing in their quality of life.

The development of any nation can be hardly achieved without a correspondent development of its rural segment; for the fact that 75 to 80% of the inhabitants in developing countries are in the rural areas. In Tanzania, for instance, 74% of the population lives in rural areas (World Bank, 1999). It is in the

rural areas that the population is still growing at a higher rate amidst poor social and economic infrastructure support (Msoffe, 2009). According to Adeloye (2007), more than 70% of the Nigerian population dwells in rural communities that contain over 80% of the natural economic resources and over 90% of the nation's agro-workers. With their great potentials, no serious, active, conscious, sensitive, and organized government would want to neglect rural communities; as its lack of development results in the neglect of rural areas. Thus, rural neglect leads to negative consequences such as rural-urban drift, resulting in unemployment, crimes, prostitution, child labour, insecurity, money laundering, bribery, poverty, proliferation of shanty living areas, spread of diseases, and overstretching of the facilities and infrastructures in the urban areas (Harande, 2010).

This implies that any nation, which neglects the development and empowerment of its rural dwellers, will have meaningful development eluding it. Alegbeleye and Aina (1985) affirmed this in their statement that "the third world countries have recently come to realize that unless the rural areas are well developed, hardly would any meaningful development occur in these countries." Okiy (2003) viewed rural development as a basis for economic development noting that information is an important ingredient in that development process. Development can only be effective if rural dwellers have access to the relevant, diverse information for their activities. She maintained that efforts must be made to give access to knowledge and information by non-literates who constitute the majority of rural dwellers.

People in rural areas whether literate or not should have access to any kind of information which will help them to become capable and productive in their social and political obligations, to become better informed citizens generally." Diso (2005) observed that the rural communities in Nigeria are the majority in terms of population, yet most neglected; partly accounting for the impediments to the effective information policy implementation. The quality of life in the rural setting according to Phillips (2006) in Zaid (2010) is a multifaceted phenomenon determined by the cumulative and interactive impacts of numerous and varied factors like housing conditions, infrastructure, access to various amenities, income, standards of living, satisfaction about the physical and social environment.

It has been noted that women living in rural Nigeria suffer from general deprivation including access to information resources. They most often fail to access various information resources and services even when such information is available. The reasons may not be unrelated to their socio-economic status or the format in which such information is packaged (Zaid, 2010). Issa (1998) expressed the view that "the rural populace suffers from acute low productivity, social and economic retrogression due mainly to ignorance which is also a direct consequence of either inadequate or total lack of information provision to them". Despite the human and natural endowment of the country, the rural communities are still essentially and largely underdeveloped.

Diso (1994) contended that Nigerian rural areas are generally characterized by poor living conditions- absolute poverty and absent of almost all amenities of life. Compared to the literacy rate in Nigeria (about 35-40%), this is even more acute among women and in rural communities. This means that the information needs of the teeming majority are not provided for, thereby resulting in underdevelopment. Borchardt (1977), once declared that none of the thousand of projects in the developing countries can be executed without the fundamental conditions of the establishment of a literate and numerate (rural) society, and a system for continuous provision of exchange of ideas, thought and knowledge on which

the (rural) society can feed and use with suitable modifications to construct their own cultural and industrial destiny.

Rural dwellers need relevant, efficient and current information. Camble (1994) believed that successful rural information programmes rest squarely on the availability and use of quality information by rural development workers and rural people noting that many of such programmes have failed in the past because the knowledge of their information needs were not so well considered. Access to information is important for proper functioning of services in all societies. Freedom and access to information is essential for development practice, representing a first step in any participatory process, now regarded as the standard development approach. Despite the fact that this has become an evolving principle in the democratization process of modern societies, free and fair flow of information remain an exception rather than a rule in many countries, especially the developing ones like Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria has the potentials to develop all sectors of human endeavour more especially if information services are fully enhanced in the rural communities. In spite of the fact that information is a basic resource for development if durable structures are to be provided for effective access and utilization, entailing information capturing, coordination, processing and dissemination (Diso, 1994), Nigerian rural communities' accessibility to pertinent information still remain largely unmet. This is because information available to them is either not reliable or is distorted in the process of transmission. This unhealthy situation constitutes a major impediment, which keeps the rural communities from the development indicators (Harande, 2009). Whereas in the developed countries, rural projects are undertaken to reduce the gap between the urban and rural communities to the barest level, information accessibility and utilization are unequally distributed between the two in Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that this study investigates the provision of information for national development among the rural populace in Kwara North Senatorial District. The study's main objective was to examine their information needs and the available opportunities for providing for such needs, including the library.

Research Questions

To achieve the objective of this study, answers would be provided to the following research questions; namely:

1. What kinds of information are needed by the rural inhabitants of Kwara North Senatorial District of Kwara State?
2. What kinds of information sources are available to them?
3. What kinds of information sources do the rural dwellers trust and prefer to use?
4. What problems militate against meeting the information needs of the rural dwellers?
5. What role can the library play in meeting their information needs?

Justification for the Study

The study's justification lies in the fact that the information needs of the rural populace had enjoyed a comparatively low research attention, when compared with the attraction that the studies of information needs and provision in other settings have had over time; indicating further neglect. However, unless and until the teeming rural populace is well integrated into the mainstream of government policies and plans, through effective education for emancipation, real and concrete development will continue to elude the country.

This is because the importance of information and knowledge in the development process, especially rural development, is that much, which, mainly since 1998, has been noticed particularly in the reports of World Bank (Chapman & Slaymaker, 2002). In other words, there is no doubt that information is very important for rural development because improving the incomes of smallholder farm families will depend crucially upon raising agricultural productivity. Hence, the need to establish the rural information needs in the Kwara North Senatorial District of Kwara State, Nigeria, with a view to suggesting necessary platforms for meeting such needs comprehensively and adequately.

Literature Review

Rural Information Services for National Development

Success of rural development programmes depends on effective use of information in daily activities. Multidimensional as information services are, they serve as a socially binding thread among different groups of rural dwellers. The condition of rural dwellers in Nigeria and other developing countries is pathetic; with glaring evidence of abject poverty and general backwardness. Given the near-total neglect of the Nigerian rural areas by successive governments regarding infrastructural provision, which could have made their life worthy, rural dwellers (especially the youths) had little or no alternative than to drift to urban areas as an escape. Even though governments have come and gone with various policies and plans to improve their living conditions, including rural information services provision, not even the least remarkable results have been recorded.

Part of the reasons for this condition was the prevalent high rate of illiteracy among them, which accounted for their lagging behind in accessing information to necessary for meeting their diverse needs. Yet, only a little research attention have they receive when compared with their urban counterparts who are much better positioned than they are in all ramifications. Thus, "the structural and infrastructural problems, official corruption, unstable political and economic policies growing insecurity, and unstable power supply hamper this development" (Diso, 2005). The resultant effect has been that the Nigerian rural dwellers have not had their fair share of the country's enormous wealth. Information services that will greatly enhance their productivity, transform their community positively and empower them economically, are either ineffective and irrelevant, or not tailored towards their actual and potential needs. Thus, they experience information neglect; an incapacitating condition that had continued to constitute a cog in the wheel of the nation's progress and development.

Hence, poverty and illiteracy constitute the major barriers to rural development; contrary to the right of every citizen to enjoy the wealth, resources, and services rendered by the governments without any discrimination or neglect. Obasanjo and Mabogunje (1991) maintained that "for the rural populace to be able to exercise their sovereignty and assume responsibility for development, they must have necessary resources, adequate revenue allocation from Federal and State sources and internal capacity to generate their own revenue locally as well as access to relevant and desirable information for development." Indeed, information has been used by some progressive African states to re-socialize their people to value attitudes and goals compatible with their contemporary needs after political independence (Ibrahimah, 1986). This shows that the Nigerian rural dwellers could also be made information-conscious as a basis for their emancipation; ultimately bringing about national development.

Information Needs of Nigerian Rural Dwellers

The diverse nature of rural communities indicates that their information needs are many and varied. To determine the totality of their information needs. Alegbeleye and Aina (1985) quoting Ogunsheye, categorized information needs of the Nigerian rural communities to include the following:

- The neighbourhood: Information needs in the neighbourhood include problems of water supply, electricity supply, environmental sanitation, refuse disposal, road maintenance and drought.
- Health information on how individuals can, prevent different diseases that affect them, and awareness of available healthcare delivery and what it costs.
- Agriculture and allied occupations: The greatest area of information needs by rural Nigerians is in agriculture. Such information needs include planting treated seeds, soil conservation, prevention of plants and animal disease, fertilizer application, farm machineries, recommended thinning practices, proper storage of farm products, marketing techniques, cooperative activities and other agro-cultural activities.
- Education: Information needs of the existing rural schools, needs of the illiterate's and semi-illiterates. They need to have relevant information that will develop in their interest and support of teaching and learning processes.
- Housing: Rural public need information about where they can obtain loans to build houses and the type of materials to be used and where they can be easily obtained.
- Employment: Rural communities need information on employment opportunities on taxation, investment opportunities, banking and other financial activities.
- Transportation: They need information on the cost of bicycles, motorcycles and vehicles and where to obtain them. They need information about road construction and maintenance.
- Religion, Recreation and Culture: Information is required on religions, recreations and cultural activities.
- Welfare and Family matters: Information is required on problems of marriage, childcare, juvenile delinquency etc.
- Legal matters: Information is needed on laws that affect the rural dwellers. Such law ranges from marriage to land.
- Crime and Safety: Information is required on how to prevent crimes, report crimes, role of the law enforcement agents etc.
- Policies and Government: Information is needed on political rights of the people and how they can exercise such right.
- Land: Information is needed on land tenure systems, acquisition and transfer of land etc.

From the foregoing, it is clear that they needed in nearly all human endeavours while development can only be possible, effective and relevant when their information needs have been met. It has also been established that the rural communities in Nigeria have either poor or no communication systems (Businessday Newspaper, 2007). Yet, to develop, the rural dwellers must be informed and educated to develop along with the urban sections through an effective communication with the rural communities of the country (Adeloye, 2007).

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can play an important role in many aspects of rural development and also help to better govern their various aspects of development. ICT can strengthen the role of each governance pillar in rural development and poverty reduction; facilitating speedy, transparent, accountable, efficient and effective interaction between the public, citizens, business and other agencies. (IICD, 2001). The goal of using ICT with marginalized groups, such as the poor, is not only about overcoming the digital divide, but also enforcing/furthering the process of social inclusion, required for transformation of the environment and social system that reproduces poverty (Warschauer, 2002).

There are many examples about the role of ICT in strengthening rural livelihoods, providing market information and lowering transaction costs of poor farmers and traders. As poor people are often unaware of their rights, entitlements and the availability of various government schemes and extension services, ICT can also improve their access to the information they need. Through info kiosks or with the help of mobile phones, farmers can access information on market prices or on extension services. Timing is often crucial when it comes to the sale of produce. Workers can also get information on available jobs and minimum wages. Abissath (2008) noted that Ghana, like Malaysia, Singapore and other technology minded countries, is today gradually but steadily taking ICTs to rural communities so as to bridge the digital divide between urban and rural dwellers.

One such strategy adopted to achieve this was the establishment of Community Information Centers (CICs) in districts throughout the country. By providing cheap and efficient tools for access to information and exchange of ideas and knowledge, ICT can become an enabling tool for wider socioeconomic development. When properly used, it can greatly increase the ability of the poor people to benefit from economic development and from development programs meant to help them. A major handicap in mass application of IT in rural areas is that the information content is generally not directly relevant to people for whom it is developed. The contents are written or designed by people who have themselves not lived in rural areas. As a result, these systems have a heavy urban-bias.

A key component of improving socio-economic status of people in villages is to ensure that their products find the right kind of markets, reach them in minimum time without the middle men involvement. The reach of IT in rural areas will provide unique opportunities to producers of rural products, agriculture/agro-processing products and rural handicrafts to have direct access to markets. Internet will enable advertising of rural products produced even in the remotest villages to global markets. The agriculture extension worker can access latest information on farm technology and products, and disseminate the same to villages. Health care is yet another area where IT can play a major role in rural areas. Doctor and the paramedic staff at the local public health centre or its subsidiary can access latest information about health schemes and seek advice from specialists about diseases or ailments they cannot diagnose or treat. Development of relevant contents in local languages, availability of computers that can run on low power and sensitization of local government officials towards IT can go a long way in using IT for rural development in near future.

The Place of the Library in Rural Information Provision

Numerous studies have highlighted the short-comings of traditional print- and library-based methods of providing information to rural farmers and rural community who are generally illiterate and relatively remote from formal sources of information. Technology can overcome these barriers by delivering information right and need based to the rural people via new information technologies (Morris, 2005; Ommami, 2005). New information technologies are critical factors to open new information channels to the information-poor rural areas of developing countries (Morris, 2005).

Issa (2003) noted that the dissemination of information constitutes a major task of the public library as it is linked to any other communications organization to a great extent in respect of their importance to a democratic society just as those that manufacture the electronic and other mass media. In a sense, the public library concerns itself with the contemporary views and also serves as the society's "mind" and its "collectively memory". Thus, there is a sense in Usherwood's (1989) contention that "public libraries are potentially a means of establishing some measure of equal access to and redistribution of, the wealth of information. The need for such accessibility lies in the fact that information is fundamental to the life chances of the individuals and the community. In fact, to frustrate all manners and degrees of brains-washing, the public library need to be freely available to all and sundry.

However, Adimorah (1990) in Ogbomo (2008) noted that our information services are still elitist, serving only 20% of the educated group while the 80% illiterate rural dwellers wallow in information deprivation. According to Okeh (2002), the literature has stressed that the quality of life of rural dwellers can be improved by effective provision of relevant information to rural communities. Aina (1985) recommended that libraries should be established in rural areas so as to meet the needs of farmers. In order to ensure access to information, there is need provide for an information infrastructure, which includes appropriate and effective communication channels, delivery systems and access points needed for the acquisition, processing and use of information (Kiondo, 1998). Indeed, library services are essential to the educational, political, and social development of the rural population. The information gap between the urban and rural areas can be bridged by effective library services. The federal, state, and local governments have the responsibility to better the lives of rural people by reaching rural communities through effective library services (Ebiwolate, 2010).

Since the fundamental aim of libraries is to provide timely, accurate, pertinent, and reliable information for their users, there is now a growing recognition that public library services are an integral part of national socioeconomic development and improvement of the general quality of life (Kibat, 1990). However, the establishment of public libraries in Nigeria has been mostly limited to urban areas; resulting in illiteracy and ignorance among young people in rural areas. In Nigeria, a majority of the population lives in remote areas. Some of these areas are only accessible by boat, donkey, or bicycle. The inhabitants of these rural areas are without education. The library can have an important role in the advancement of knowledge. This role can be effectively carried out with well-structured and well-planned library services.

Research Methodology

This is survey research method focussing on the rural communities spread across the remote parts of the Kwara North Senatorial District of Kwara State, Nigeria, numbering several hundreds. Representing this senatorial district are: Lafiaji, Patigi, Tsaragi, Ilesha Baruba, Bode Saadu and Malete. However, two of them were exempted on the ground that they have lost their ingredients of rurality though in different ways. Bode Saadu, for being on the federal highway and Malete, now a university town, would no longer meet the demand of this research. To collect data for the study, a total of 480 copies of the questionnaire were administered among the rural residents found at the time of visit to the remaining four areas. This number was considered adequate to the population of the rural residents in the four areas considering that the visits were on working days when many of them would be on their farms or gone to their local markets.

Of this number, 285 copies were duly completed and returned. The administration of the questionnaire was done during excursions by the course students to the areas, thereby facilitating the process. The analysis of the data presented here was therefore based on the number of returned questionnaire. While the descriptive statistics was employed to answer the research questions, the correlation statistics Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the three hypotheses of the research. The visit also allowed for informal interview with some of the respondents for some clarifications as well as the observation of certain things.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Composition of Respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Senatorial District	83	29.13
Lafiagi	62	21.75
Patigi	54	18.95
Tsaragi	49	17.19
Okuta	37	12.98
Ilesha Baruba	285	100
Total	80	28.06
Occupations	77	27.1
Trading	48	16.83
Artisans	40	14.01
Civil Servants	20	7.0
Farming	20	7.0
Hunting	285	100
Fishing	120	42.10
Total	74	26.0
Educational Attainment	54	18.95
Primary	20	7.0
Secondary	17	6.0
OND/NCE/HSC	285	100
B.Sc.	20	7.02
Postgraduate	29	10.18
Total	56	19.65

Age	60	21.05
18-22	120	42.10
23-27	285	100
28-32	80	28.06
33-37	205	71.94
38 & Above	285	100
Total		
Gender		
Male		
Female		
Total		

Table 1 showed that the distribution of respondents cuts across the 5 of the 7 districts select for the purpose of this study with both Lafiagi (29.13%) and Patigi (21.75%) having the majority while Okuta (17.19%) and Ilesha Baruba (12.98%) with the least. Significantly, their occupational spread was predominated by trading (28.06%) and artisanship (27.1%) while hunting and fishing (7.0% each) are of the least responses. This is quite unusual given the age long predominance of farming as the typical predominant occupation of the rural dwellers. Expectedly, majority of them (42.10%) had primary school education, 26.0% with secondary school and 18.95% with OND/NCE/HSC qualifications. Only an insignificant number had higher qualifications. As for their age composition, majority (42.10%) fall in the 38 and above category while the female (71.94%) predominated.

Table 2: Categories & Sources of Information Needed by the Respondents

Information Needs	Respondents	Percentage
Occupation-related information	40	14.04
Political Information	40	14.04
Socio-cultural Information	40	14.04
Security-related Information	20	7.02
Health-related Information	16	5.60
Combination of 1 & 4	32	11.23

Combination of 1, 2 & 4	27	9.47
Combination of 1 & 2	20	7.02
Combination of 4 & 5	20	7.02
Combination of 2 & 5	15	5.26
Combination of 3 & 5	15	5.26
Total	285	100
Information Sources Available	80	28.06
Radio	60	21.06
Telephone	40	14.04
Television	40	14.04
Newspapers	35	12.28
Friends/Relatives	30	10.52
Extension Officers	285	100
Total	80	28.06
Challenges of Meeting their Needs	72	25.26
Lack of time	60	21.06
I am uneducated	40	14.04
I cannot afford it	33	11.58
Lack of electricity	285	100
Lack of interest		
Total		

Table 2 showed that the respondents have a diverse and wide ranging information needs typical of any human community; especially the occupational, political and socio-cultural needs each with 14.04%. That security and health related information needs accounted for just 7.02% and 5.60% respectively could be partly due to their closely-knitted and highly security-conscious nature of rural communities as well as their traditional health institutions of long reckoning. Also noteworthy is that many more also had series of combinations of information needs; implying that rural information needs are no longer of the simple, one-

directional type. This is a further confirmation of the widely held belief that information needs are basic to human existence regardless of where they reside, their socio-economic status or educational qualifications. On their sources of information, the radio ranked first (28.06%) and then telephone (21.06%) while friends/relations (12.28%) and extension officers (10.52%) are of the least. That the telephone now competes favourably with the radio as a source for meeting rural information needs in this case indicated that while the radio still retains its dominance in this regard, the telephone is steadily making its inroad into the rural areas as a veritable information source. Contrarily, that the newspapers are not so popular (14.04%) is not as surprising as the low response rates for friends/relations and extension officers. This may not be unconnected the popularity of both radio and telephone which may have supplanted the role of the two as information sources among the rural dwellers. Meanwhile, their major challenge with meeting their information needs border more on lacking in i. time (28.06%); ii. literacy (25.26%) and iii. interest (11.58%)

Table 3: Respondents' Trust and Preference for Information Sources

Information Sources	Well-trusted (%)	Trusted (%)	Not Trusted (%)
Radio	225 (78.90)	40 (14.0)	20 (7.0)
Telephone	163 (57.20)	103 (36.1)	19 (6.7)
Television	55 (19.3)	10 (3.51)	220 (77.2)
Newspapers	40 (14.0)	120 (42.1)	125 (43.86)
Library	40 (14.0)	25 (8.79)	220 (77.2)
Friends/Relatives	40 (14.0)	225 (78.9)	25 (8.8)
Agricultural Extension Officer	25 (8.8)	100 (35.09)	160 (56.14)
Health Officer	19 (6.7)	103 (36.1)	163 (57.2)
Information Sources	Most preferred (%)	Preferred (%)	Not preferred (%)
Radio	194 (68.07)	60 (21.1)	31 (10.88)
Telephone	149 (52.3)	120 (42.1)	16 (5.6)
Television	60 (21.1)	100 (35.1)	41 (14.4)
Newspapers	55 (19.3)	100 (35.1)	40 (14.00)
Library	45 (15.79)	100 (35.1)	13 (4.6)
Friends/Relatives	40 (14.0)	119 (41.8)	42 (14.7)
Agricultural Extension Officer	36 (12.63)	118 (41.40)	126 (41.40)
Health Officer	31 (10.88)	60 (21.1)	194 (68.07)

Table 3 showed the results on respondents' trust and preference of information sources available to them. The result revealed that the radio (78.90%) and telephone (57.20%) are their most trusted and preferred sources whereas agricultural extension officers (12.63%) and health officers (6.7%) are the least trusted and preferred. The reason for this finding may not be unconnected with their availability, affordability and easy usability of both radio and telephone (GSM).

Table 4: Respondents' Expectations in a Library of their Choice

Library Experience	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
I have been to a library before	120 (42.1)	165 (57.9)	285 (100)
There is a library in my community/environment	120 (42.1)	165 (57.9)	285 (100)
The library has benefits for the community	180 (63.2)	105 (36.8)	285 (100)
Activities Expected to Take Place in your Library	200 (70.2)	85 (29.8)	285 (100)
Community meetings	205 (71.9)	80 (28.1)	285 (100)
Socio-cultural engagements	176 (61.8)	109 (38.2)	285 (100)
Television, Video, Cinema viewing/audio listening centre	145 (50.9)	140 (49.1)	285 (100)
Story telling centre for children	246 (86.3)	39 (13.7)	285 (100)
Source of ante/post-natal information for women	221 (77.5)	64 (22.5)	285 (100)
Source of agricultural information for farmers	232 (81.4)	53 (18.6)	285 (100)
Source of occupational information for traders/artisans			

Majority of the respondents (57.9%) have neither been in a library before nor have a library in their communities/environments. This result is however without prejudice to the remainder 42.1% who have visited a library before and even have one either in their communities or in the neighbouring communities. This latter response is by no means remarkable, given the unpopular status of the library especially in the rural communities, as it pointed to an improved popularity. This result was further attested to by the fact that 63.2% majority indicated that library is beneficial to the community where it is available; pointing to their perception about what the library can do to a community where it exists.

On the activities that respondents would like to see taking place in the library of their choice, the responses are as interesting as they are diverse. These range from seeing the library serving as a source of: ante/post natal care information for women (86.3%); occupational information for traders/artisans (81.4%) and agricultural information for farmers (77.5%). Other desirable activities indicated by the respondents include using the venue for socio-cultural engagements (71.9%); community meetings (70.2%); television, video viewing and audio listening centre (61.8%) and storytelling centre for children (50.9%).

The Results of the Tested Hypotheses

In testing the three hypotheses of the study, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics was employed; the results of which are presented in this segment.

Table 5: Analysis of the Relationship between Respondents provided, and those not provided, with Needed Information

Variables	N	Means	SD	Df	Calculated r-value	Critical value	Decision
Rural Dwellers provided with needed information	285	12.72	3.08	284	0.874	0.113	Rejected Ho
Rural Dwellers not provided with needed information	285	10.51	7.13				

From the table above, the calculated r-value is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance. The Null hypothesis of no significant relationship between rural dwellers who are provided with information and those who are not, is therefore rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between the rural dwellers provided with information and those not provided. This implies that information provision is of great importance in the life of the rural dwellers just as it is for the urban dwellers. The implication of this finding is that the provision of information to rural dwellers such attract equal, if not more, attention of all the stakeholders since such provision will have a far-reaching positive impact on their day to day undertakings thereby enhancing their potentials towards national development.

Table 6: Analysis of the Relationship between Information Sources trusted and those preferred by the Respondents

Variables	N	Means	SD	df	Calculated r-value	Critical value	Decision
Rural Dwellers' trust of Information Sources	285	15.04	3.47	284	0.942	0.113	Rejected Ho
Rural Dwellers' preference for the trusted sources	285	16.33	4.38				

From the table above, the Calculated r-value (0.942) is greater than the Critical value (0.113) at 0.05 level of significance. The Null hypothesis of no significant relationship between information sources trusted and those preferred, is therefore rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship those information sources trusted by the respondents and their preferred sources. This implies that there is a link between the sources trusted by the respondents and those preferred by them for meeting their diverse information needs. In other words, those sources trusted by the respondents are most likely to be the most preferred by them.

Table 7: Analysis of the Relationship between Other Information Sources and the Library for Rural Information Provision

Variables	N	Means	SD	df	Calculated r-value	Critical value	Decision
Other sources of rural information provision	285	11.10	4.21	284	0.936	0.113	Rejected Ho
Library as a source of rural information provision	285	5.75	1.64				

From the table above, the Calculated r-value (0.936) is greater than the Critical value (0.113) at 0.05 level of significance. The Null hypothesis of no significant relationship between other sources of rural information provision and the library, is therefore rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between other sources of rural information provision and the library. This result implies that there is a role for the library to play in the provision of information to the rural dwellers; if only the right framework for the establishment of such a library, taken into account the peculiarities of the rural circumstances, will be evolved.

Discussion

The result on the diverse nature of the respondents' information needs/demands is significant on a number of accounts. This finding attested to the long established and widely held belief that information is basic to every human being regardless of their areas of residence. There is no doubt therefore that satisfying such diverse needs could contribute to the empowerment and emancipation of the individuals, culminating in national development. Thus, the role of information in rural development for national development cannot be overemphasized (Borchardt, 1977; Issa, 1998; Diso, 2005; Zaid, 2010).

Furthermore, there is a link between the results which revealed that trading and artisanship are the dominant occupations of the respondents with the one showing that the studied areas are populated mainly by women and the aged. This finding did not only confirm the much-talked- about rural-urban drift syndrome, but more importantly that with the depletion of rural areas of able-bodied youths, the traditional farming occupation of the rural dwellers is fast becoming a thing of the past. The consequence of this, especially on the long run, may spell doom for the areas studied, and by extension, the nation's development. These results did not support many earlier views and positions expressed by Olatunbosun (1975); Olayiwola and Adeleye (2005) and Adeloje (2007).

Whereas the findings on the diverse information needs of the respondents agreed with the position of Alegbeleye and Aina (1985), and Issa (2003), the competitive role of the telephone (GSM), coming very close to the radio, which had been the most popular medium of rural information provision, was quite noteworthy. Thus, the GSM has come to establish itself clearly as another source of outstanding reckoning in this regard. This was indicative of the dominant role of ICT in the development of both the urban and more importantly, the rural areas.

Significantly too, the result pointed to the fact that the library is also making its mark in this regard; especially among those who have had previous contacts with the library. However, the result was indicative of the need to reposition the rural library so as to take cognizance of the peculiarities associated with the rural environment; if it must impact positively as a veritable tool for effective rural information provision for national development. This finding agreed with those of Issa (1998), Issa (2003), Ebiwelate (2009) and Ogidefa (2010).

Meanwhile, the results of the three tested hypotheses rejected the Null Hypotheses of *No Significant Relationship* (NSR), between: i. respondents provided with needed information and those not provided; ii. sources of information trusted and those preferred; and iii. other sources and the library. The implications of the results are that: i. the respondents who were provided with needed information make the difference from those who were not; ii. the sources of information trusted by the respondents turned out to be their most preferred sources; and iii. that the library, given the necessary orientation and modifications compatible with rural peculiarities, can serve as a good source of rural information provision for national development.

The implication of the results on the various activities that respondents would like taking place in the library of their choice is that, for the library to be relevant to their information needs, peculiarities of their idea of a library must be taken into consideration. Anything contrary to this may render it use-less irrelevant and therefore counterproductive. This means that the conventional type of library may not work with the demands of the respondents; hence, the need for appropriate modifications.

Conclusion and Recommendations

On the basis of the analysis of data and the discussion of the findings provided above, this study concludes that the rural dwellers in the areas studied are as information-hungry as any group of human beings anywhere else. This condition presents a huge challenge, which must be overcome; if the vast potentials of the rural dwellers must be harnessed, with a view to enabling them contribute their significant quota to national development efforts.

It is on the basis of the above that the following recommendations are made:

1. Due to the diverse nature of their expressed information needs, a concerted effort will be required to satisfy same through the deployment of a combination of sources, techniques and approaches towards satisfying the needs by the State Ministry of Information, the State Library Board and the GSM operators.
2. Coupled with the traditional, popular role of the radio, other agencies of information especially the agricultural extension and health officers, must be well exploited towards meeting rural information needs.
3. A combination of information dissemination apparatuses namely the radio, telephone, library and television should be explored complementarily in conjunction with the agricultural extension and health officers towards meeting the diverse needs of the rural dwellers.
4. The authorities of the State Library Board must strategise itself for this purpose such that it can liaise with the other information agencies in concretizing efforts towards satisfying their information needs.
5. In so doing, the Library must take into account the obvious peculiarities associated with the rural environment, so that at the end of the day, the effort will not be use-less, irrelevant and ultimately counterproductive.

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