

**INFORMATION RESOURCES AND SERVICES PROVISION FOR
SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL
PEOPLE IN NORTHERN STATES OF NIGERIA**

BY

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Ph.D/EDUC/46184/2004-05

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE POST GRADUATE
SCHOOL AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
THE AWARD OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE.**

**DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA, NIGERIA.**

JUNE, 2010

DECLARATION

I, Hanna Mamman Daudu hereby declare that this dissertation was written by me and that it is a record of my own research work. This work has not been presented in any previous application for a higher degree. It is my original work. All works cited are specifically acknowledged by means of references and all quotations are indicated by quotation marks or indentation.

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation titled “Information Resources and Services Provision for Socio-Economic and political Empowerment of Rural people in Northern States of Nigeria” by Hanna Mamman Daudu meets the regulation governing the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Library and Information Science) of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty and to my beloved husband Rev. Dr. Mamman Daudu without who this work would never have been completed. Also to my loving children Victor, Bunmi, Adam, Tabitha (Ladidi), Ebenezer, Comfort, Timothy and Paul. And to my lovely grand children Basil, Murna and those yet to be born.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

If the Lord had not been by my side, this work couldn't have been completed. I owe Him all the thanks and all the glory. I give Him thanks for His faithfulness and sustaining power over my life and for strength to be able to undergo this programme.

My sincere appreciation goes to my energetic major supervisor Prof. Zakari Mohammed who inspite of his many and tight schedules was able to direct me on how to go about this work, went through the work step by step and untiringly. His wealth of experience is a real asset to the department. I am sincerely appreciative for the level of commitment and intellectual contribution he exhibited while supervising this research work. I am proud to be associated with such an icon. Prof. Umar Ibrahim's contribution to the completion of this research work can not be quantified. His scrutiny and constructive criticisms contributed in no great measure to the outcome of this research. I am also grateful to Prof. Tijjani Abubakar who doubled as a member of the supervisory team and the head of department. His contribution to the completion of this research is highly appreciated.

To my loving husband, Rev. Dr. Mamman Daudu I say thank you because that is the only way to express my gratitude. The question "How far with your work?" was always like fuel in a car. It propelled me each time the zeal was dying down. The encouragement of my children and grand children

can not be overlooked. Constant phone calls from Victor, his wife Bunmi and children Basil and Murna reminded me that I needed to wake up if I was sleeping. It is the same effect that Adam, Ladidi and Eben's calls had on me. Comfort, Dr. Tim and my beloved "Dan Auta" Planner Paul, your support for the completion of my work is great. I am proud to be your mother.

I am grateful for the encouragement of my "twin sister Dabo Nkos", my younger sisters, aunty Mary, aunty Vicky, Lady D., Autan mama, and their husbands – "my sweet in-laws": Their concern for me gave me confidence that I could pursue this research, and indeed it has yielded fruit. My only brother Uncle Al, his wife and daughter are dearly valued for their support in various ways.

My special thanks go to Alh. Dr. Isa. He is more than a colleague. He assisted me to complete this research work in no small measure so also "my brother" and "first son" at the same time, Dr. M.M. Atadoga. My brother you are simply too much. Prof. J. S. Aliyu was a source of inspiration, staying with a professor of his caliber will have to affect one positively. His concern over the completion of this work is highly appreciated. My sincere appreciation also goes to Prof. C. Bolaji, who assisted in checking the statistics in this work, and Prof. C. Adebite, Dr. M. Lakpini and Mrs. L. Adamu, thank you for your contribution and comments every time we met, that was a source of encouragement and it showed I had people that cared.

I am grateful to Mr. Elimi Makama who connected me with the data analysts that coded my data, and to Mr. John who spent long nights to analyze the data. I am also grateful to Mr. Ezra Gbaje and Mr. Friday Yakubu. The systems analysts and computer wizards for the role they played in designing a model for information delivery to rural people.

To the staff of the Institute Library I say a big thank you for their understanding. The research took so much of my time that I could not give them the required attention they needed. Special mention must be made of Mal. M.L. Ibrahim who assisted me in down loading information needed for the work. I am also grateful to my colleague in the race Mr. Bawa. His words of wisdom, prayers and encouragement added the stamina needed to continue the work. I am also grateful to my friends Mrs. G. I. Nock, Mrs. S. Yani, Mrs. T. Haruna and many others too numerous to mention. Your concern showed that you are friends in deed.

I am grateful to Prof. J.A. Gwani. Dean of the Faculty of Education for his concern about the completion of this research. You made me believe that I could complete the work and I did. Mention must be made of Dr. I Ekoja, Mal. Baba Adukwu, Mal. Abu Yusuf, Mal. Hayatu Musa, Mal. Abdullahi Musa, Dr. K. A. Sanusi, Dr. K. A. Momoh, Mal. Lemu, Mal. Babangida Aliyu, Mal. Lawal Umar, Mr. Ezra Gbaje, Mrs. Ahmed, Mr. Nnachi and all other staff of the department too numerous to mention. You contributed in no small way to the

completion of this research. My neighbor Dr. (Mrs.) Raliya was a great source of encouragement. Thank you for encouraging me.

My gratitude also goes to Mal. Lawal Umar, Mrs. Justina A. Kotso and Dr. M. M. Atadoga who assisted greatly by taking the questionnaire to some of the study areas, recruited assistants in the areas, gathered and brought the data. Without their assistance I wouldn't have been able to complete the work at this time. Thank you very much.

Specific mention must be made of my computer operator Mrs. Mary M. Ndaks (Mama Isaac) who faced the pressure of this work with me as if she was a partaker of the programme. She would spend long hours on the computer just to ensure that every thing given her to produce was completed as scheduled. I can't thank you enough.

Last but not in any way the least, I am indebted to my parents Baba Alkali Alu and Mama Kanti Alkali. I can not forget the seed you sowed in my life many years ago. You sent me to school at a time that nobody in that locality considered female education to be of any value. You endured insults and mockery for sending a girl to school (Inuwan gidan wani). What I have become today is the fruit of your perseverance Baba and Mama, thank you very much. May God increase your days. Amen.

ABSTRACT

The study titled “Information Resources and Services Provision for Socio-Economic and Political Empowerment of Rural People in the three Geo-political zones of Northern States of Nigeria” was embarked upon in order to investigate what provision or lack of provision of information can do to the socio economic and political status of rural people. The objectives of the study were achieved by formulating and answering six research questions and five null hypotheses. Descriptive or survey method was adopted for the research. The instruments used to collect data for the study were questionnaire and interview which were administered to rural people in Northern States of Nigeria. The questionnaire was translated to the respondents’ local language for better understanding. The data collected were analyzed, using frequency tables and percentages in form of descriptive statistical tool. This was done in order to define the type and frequency of the most used information resources and services as well as to determine the easiest way of accessing resources and services available. Inferential statistics involving T-test and ANOVA were used. All the tests were carried out at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that although agriculture is one of the highest operated activities of the rural people which raises their socio-economic status, information in that area was not satisfactorily provided. For example, only 470 (24.4%) respondents said they received information on availability of fertilizers, 438 (22.7%) on Agricultural loan, 44.2) (22.9%) on methods of farming. The findings also revealed that information on political activities in rural area did not fare any better. Again the findings showed that there was no significant difference among the respondents in the three geo-political zones in any area of information provision of the study. The general observation in the study is that there is inadequate information provision for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people. Therefore, several recommendations were made one of which is calling for the establishment of Community Information Centre (CIC) that should be manned by information specialists, who will acquire, process and disseminate needed information to the rural people. For effective operation of this community information centre, a model for information service delivery to rural people was proposed as Appendix A.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following are operational definitions of terms used in this study.

Development: – A process of moving out of poverty into a comfortable way of life. Into a level that one can comfortably interact with people without feeling inferior.

Empowerment: – To acquire the ability of performing certain tasks which could lead to the development of an individual, community or society or to provide an enabling environment and facilities that can move one from low to a higher level of development.

Information Resources: – Any means that could be used to notify or make some one aware of his present state/need with a view of improving him/her (self).

Information Provision: – Making available to those who seek it. Allowing the seekers to have access to information that they need.

Information Service: – The act of making information available to people

Political Activities: – Awareness and the use of available government policies to participate in the scheme of affairs of the government of a country.

Poverty: – The inability to meet up with one's needs either economically socially or politically. A state of bankruptcy in one's areas of needs

Rural Development: – The efforts put in place either by rural people themselves or by government to deliver rural people from poverty, ignorance/illiteracy and backwardness

Rural people: – People that live in an area designated as less developed due to acute shortage of social infrastructure their economic level is low as a result of limited transaction opportunities which is hampered by poor road networks and lack of awareness of how to improve their lot.

Socio-economic Activities: – Ways of improving income so as to raise the social status of a people.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACK GROUND TO THE STUDY

Information is a powerful tool for development. Information is acquired using different sources and format depending on the location, the ability and the need of the information user. Information is capable of reforming an individual and making him/her have a different perception of life. It can enlighten an individual and keep him/her abreast of happenings around. Through the use of information, ignorance is eradicated and confidence is built, hence, one is empowered to live above his previous ignorant life and therefore make meaningful contribution to the development of his society. Observation shows that rural people are lagging behind regarding contribution to development because they have not been adequately empowered with information to function well.

The term “rural” refers to an area that is limited in terms of social facilities and whose primary activities are basically agriculture or production of foods, fibres and raw materials. These activities produce low income and therefore the morale of the people is low due to their low socio-economic status.

Various scholars view rural area differently. The new Oxford Dictionary (2001) defines rural as an area relating to, or with characteristics of the countryside rather than the town. Matins (1997) sees rural area as an underdeveloped area. In discussing the rurality of India and Sri Lanka, he states that there is a lot of underdevelopment which is constricted to the rural areas, where 70 percent of the population still lives. In other words a large

percentage of people in India and Sri Lanka live in the rural area. This corresponds with what Idode (1989:36) noted when describing rural areas in Nigeria. He observed that the rural Nigeria is measured by spatial index, indicating the percentage of population living in rural areas, and by an occupational index showing the percentage of the labour force in agricultural occupation.

The rural sector of the Nigerian population can be distinguished from the urban sector in terms of the volume of non-agricultural activity within the two sectors. Economic activities in the rural sector depend directly or indirectly on the exploitation of land. They centre principally around farming, animal husbandry, poultry, fishing, forestry, food processing and cottage industry and other far-related activities. This is why Adebowale and Amusat, (2005) assert that agriculture and related activities occupy about 80% of the rural population of Nigeria. They went on to say that in the crop husbandry sub-sector of agriculture, the farmer is usually a small-holder, in most cases cultivating an area of between 0.5 to 2 hectares, frequently divided into small and sometimes scattered plots. His farming is largely traditional and seasonal. In fact, he is estimated to put in, on the average, a total time of about 100 days in a year during planting, cultivation and harvesting. For most of the other days of the year, he is either idle or occasionally offering himself as hired labourer. In a situation such as this, rural incomes are understandably generally low and comparatively lower than the urban sector. Since incomes are low, social services are minimal, standards of living are generally low, diet is poor, health is poor and so productivity may also be low compared to the urban areas.

Characteristics and structure of Rural People

The definition of rural people in most literature is tied to their characteristic. Hence the characteristics and definition of rural people are interwoven. Essentially, rural communities are socially characterized by a high degree of homogeneity or sameness. The bulk of the community members may share the same ancestral past, the same religion, language, occupation and social traits. The entire community is also often segmented into a large number of production units (usually as families), each of which is, to a large extent, self – sufficient in a system of production characterized by very little or no specialization.

The nature of social stratification is a characteristic that has to do with the arrangement of the society into classes or layers of status as may be determined by social economic considerations. The layers, therefore, normally represent different levels of wealth, political power and social importance. In these contexts, social scientists have pointed to several differences between the conditions of social stratification in rural and urban communities. Onokerhorage (1978:29) observed that the rural areas in most parts of the world generally exhibit great poverty, poor health conditions and ignorance. By implication, the social layer of rural people is low, and even movement from one social class to another could be difficult.

Primarily, the ruralite has much fewer social contacts outside his environment. Hence, his social interaction is limited compared to the urbanite whose occupation and recreation normally demand contact with many people each day. In addition, the urbanite is heavily surrounded by a large variety of secondary channels of contact such as the newspapers, telephone, radio, television, billboards, advertisement. In contrast, the ruralite's daily contacts

are limited to a small circle of family members and friends. He seldom mingles with a large crowd except on special occasions. He is rarely confronted by strange faces on a daily basis. That is why he is referred to as a county bumpkin. The ruralites are usually conservative, backward in nature, uncivilized not exposed, not literate, un-enlightened, and therefore, unable to use information materials which is the key to development.(Prof S. Nkom, Personal Communication, 2008)

There are parameters by which rural communities or rural people can be distinguished. They are categorized by what they engage themselves in. these categories are referred to by social scientists as socio-economic and political activities.

Socio – Economic Activities

Rural sociologists such as Smith and Zopf (1970) and Baba (1988) identified rural people by their types of occupation and life style. The bulk of rural people, especially in developing regions of the world do not acquire adequate skill of reading and writing in western education. Informal education, however, through social activities and gatherings such as marriages, festivals, funerals, religious activities and other celebrations are prominent features in the rural areas.

Majority of rural people, particularly in developing regions are dependent on primary economic activities such as hunting, fishing, farming and pastoralism. Though these are primary production activities there is low income based on them because they are subsistence. Agriculture as a major occupation of rural dwellers in Nigeria is more demanding in terms of support facilities for large production. Access to government facilities and/ or amenities is necessary for successful agricultural activities in the rural areas.

Trading which forms part of the economic activities of rural people include selling and buying of farm produces, for example yams, cassava and grains, can be used to classify rural people as petty traders, textile dealers, building “constructors.” However, these economic activities are hampered by social factors such as lack of adequate health facilities, potable water, bad road net works, lack of electric power supply and to a very large extend communication system.

The grouping of rural people in physical, biological and socio-cultural environments is advantageous to their operation as an entity. In all its forms, the environment influences the rural dwellers differently from urban dwellers because of their individual set ups and facilities or/and amenities available to them.

Political Activities

The traditional political settings and structure of the rural people could be seen from the traditional settings of wards, clans and districts, each with its head as the leader and the subjects who make up the administrative members. The head of these settings double as the political heads, hence, all political issues related to these set-ups are handled by the administrative members through their various heads. In contemporary political dispensation, the traditional political leaders still play a great role as they serve as vehicles for penetrating into the rural people and settings especially in times of political campaigns and conversing of votes.

Rural people’s political activities are enhanced by their awareness for the need to team up using various political groups who work hand in hand with the traditional rulers to achieve their goal. Such political groups as Youth

Associations, Community Development Associations, Elders Forum and Women Associations have far-reaching impact on the political awareness and activities of rural people. Political stalwarts have access to the communities through these associations. Women are not left behind in politics; hence women leaders of political parties gain access to their women folks through women associations.

Most Community Based Organizations (CBOs), though socio-economical in nature, are also political in disguise. Such group's team up to put up proposals for certain activities, e.g. Fadama projects, "I care" programme, etc and seek for government financial support as well as support from financial organizations. Party leaders who would influence the executive at the local government level to support those groups must be in the picture if this organization will succeed.

The concept of empowerment

The term "empowerment" comes from the word empower. The Sociological definition of empower is "give power to," or "make able", hence empowerment is enabling some one to perform a certain task. Most definitions of empowerment share in common the notion that it involves a process and outcome whereby people, organizations and communities increase or gain mastery and control over their lives and become active participants in efforts to influence their environment.

Empowerment for rural people is giving them power to make contribution to the development of their nation. Before rural people can make meaningful contributions to the development of their country, they need to be aware of the areas they can contribute. Knowledge of the areas is achieved

through provision of information on those areas. When rural people receive information and act on it, they will be said to have been empowered. Being empowered involves a personal sense of self-efficacy and competence, a sense of responsibility to change self and social conditions.

Concept of Development

The purpose of socio-economic and political activities in every country is to bring about national development. According to Mohammed (2008) development can be viewed as the activities aimed at ensuring the progress of people in a society. It can also be conceived as an improvement on the material welfare of people. That is, the effort to improve the economic well-being or welfare of people in any given society or setting. In this study, the effort is the provision of information.

Development in general terms is the improvement of people's lifestyles through improved education, incomes, skills development and employment. Development means having good and motorable roads, access to telecommunication, access to decent housing, potable water, health facilities, constant supply of electricity, affordable security within houses, and availability of information. According to Aguda (1995) development should be regarded as a legal right. He went on to explain that wherever there is a right, there must be a duty. If a member of a particular society has a legal right to development, that particular society has a legal duty to provide the means by which that development can be enjoyed. In this light, the Federal Government of Nigeria, like the governments of other underdeveloped nations, has engaged International Agencies as the main promoters and financiers of rural development.

At the centre of the current international emphasis on development is the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, simply referred to as World Bank. The World Bank group includes the International Finance Corporation (IFC), which lends money to and invests in Private Corporation, Development Finance Corporation, and the International Development Association (IDA), which raises money from governments and lends it at concessional rates of interest to countries, which are deemed to be unable to afford commercial rates of interest. In a number of policy statements, the World Bank has declared a shift in lending policy towards agriculture generally, and towards providing resources to the urban and rural poor, and particularly to the small farmer, sometimes identified as the poorest because agriculture is a major means of development.

Because agriculture is mostly “practised in rural areas”, William, (1995), referring to McNamara, a World Bank Chief in 1973 suggested commitment in releasing agriculture loans to rural people as a step towards rural development. The outcome of this step will certainly give rise to the socio-economic transformation necessary to launch a country on a path of self-centred, self-reliant and self-sustaining development.

Rural development can be defined as the improvement of living conditions in rural areas through increased productivity of agricultural and related enterprises which constitute the main economic activities of the population. Based on the fact that rural people form a large proportion of the population of a society, especially the underdeveloped society, it follows that every meaningful and successful socio-economic and political development must involve the rural people. In realization of the significance of involving

rural people in the development of a society, Idachaba (1985:7) points out that the guidelines for Nigeria's fourth National Development plan lays more emphasis on rural development. Experience has shown that before the fourth National Development plan, Nigeria concentrated almost all her efforts and resources to developing urban areas. Consciously or inadvertently, the rural areas were almost totally neglected. Now that the government has shifted her development programmes from the urban to the rural settlements, this move viewed as the right step toward the right direction. This is because all citizens whether they live in the rural or urban areas have equal rights to the developmental facilities provided by government.

Rural development takes a number of forms. According to Williams (1995), these forms of development can be combined with one another to produce one solid aspect of development that will benefit the whole society. Fundamentally, to achieve an increase in agricultural production and an improvement in living standards, efforts could be put towards farm settlement, extension services, marketing cooperatives, the provision of chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides and high-yielding varieties of seeds. In addition information service delivery on how to achieve all these should be provided.

The role of Information in National Development

Nigeria as a nation is a developing country and so should depend on information for development. Information is a basic and critically important element in any developing activity. In Nigeria where more than 65% of the population is engaged in farming, effective provision of information on food and agriculture is therefore naturally important as it forms both the livelihood strategies of citizen at all levels, the policies and strategies of agencies and institutions responsible for reducing poverty of the nation and food insecurity. The nation gives public enlightenment on new improved seeds, fertilizer and effective use of farming implements, through excursion, farm officers, posters, use of radio/television. When citizens are equipped with such information, they make contributions in areas of food production to eliminate poverty/hunger which is a weapon of under-development. People will be engaged or employed and crime will be reduced.

Similarly, agricultural extension education and training can help many farmers maximize the potentials of their productive assets. Farmers need up-to-date information on sources, availability and cost of agricultural inputs, and also on the potential of different techniques and technologies used for the production and processing of agricultural goods.

National policies and programmes in other sectors such as the economy, education, health, portable water, housing etc in her development plans can be enhanced through mass media for public awareness and consumption and the role expected to be played by all stakeholders. Therefore, a multi-level, multi-sectional collaboration and coordination,

partnerships between government departments, public and private sector, civil society and international development agencies will be encouraged.

The nation can hold open debates, seminars, workshops and conferences where national issues and area of needs are discussed. From such forum, the nation can write out proposals of her development plan in various sectors which they can use to solicit for foreign aids and support. Nigeria as a nation has constantly used this approach in her educational development, agriculture, potable water and roads from donor agencies such as World Bank, UNESCO and others.

Information Resources and Services Provision in Rural Areas

The quality of development depends to a large extent on the information services provided to the people. Information service delivery should be given serious attention for any development because it is a source of enlightenment for all and sundry. Information is required at any stage of development. Ancient civilizations such as Babylonia, Greece, Assyria and Egypt, disseminated information about government policies, security awareness, agriculture, commercial enterprises and religious matters to their citizens and subjects on horsebacks, clay tablets and papyri. Ekoja (2002:1) attests to this historical claim in respect of agriculture.

Various types of information services that can lead to development can be made available to the rural people. Chapman, Slymaker and Young (2005) summed the types of information service into two categories:

1. Information for long-term capacity building involving education, training and technical support appropriate for the livelihood development of individuals or groups. This type of information contributes to the

enhancement of an individual's knowledge. It improves understanding of the systems and processes that can affect the way that assets are used in the longer term, and assists in the planning of livelihood strategies.

2. Information for short-term decision making that is used to maximize the potential of a particular asset at any one time, reduce vulnerability to shocks and respond to immediate needs.

In the context of a developing country one can add another type of information- periodicity based information which is provided only at specified seasons to sound some alerts or wake-up call.

From the above it can be seen that the two types of information are people-centred. They are focused on people's information needs. A people-centred information provision can help the poor to use information for their own needs as well as the "well-to-do" to increase their wealth.

Information is the essential basis for the progress of human civilization and it is needed in all aspects of a nation's life be it social, economic, political or otherwise. The developed nations use it for their growth and for continued world economic dominations. Development is significantly enhanced by empowerment through information. When people are empowered, they can improve their environment in terms of social, economic and political well-being.

Therefore, information is needed in the rural area just as it is needed in the urban area. The benefits of information range from business breakthrough to various aspects of social and academic achievements. Through information provision to rural people in India, an association called Self Employed

Women's Association (SEWA) was established. The members of SEWA were poor, illiterate and vulnerable to exploitation but SEWA has changed the lives of these women by giving them an organizational umbrella under which to function and leverage their potential and thus subvert exploitation. In this process SEWA has made its members conscious of their rights and their possibilities. This has been achieved through adult literacy programmes, the formation of a SEWA academy and vigorous and innovative capacity building activities conducted at SEWA centres. Dalmia (n.d.). This is what information provision can do to the rural people.

Information service delivery in almost all fields of human endeavour has today assumed greater importance because of the link between the provision of information and the expected impact upon the people. However, it is observed that Nigeria is still far behind time in terms of provision of information services especially to rural people. Indeed the African continent is crawling in the aspect of information provision for rural people. That is why Aboyade (1990) referred to Julius Nyerere the former Tanzanian Head of State as having once remarked that while other nations try to reach the Moon and perhaps Mars, Africans are still struggling to provide villages with information. This remark may sound child-like but it is not funny at all. It all points to the fact that while developed countries have gone far in utilizing modern scientific and technological inventions to provide information services to help improve the development of their citizens, African countries seem to be merely a little more than spectators or almost non-starters. However, with the coming of mobile satellite telephones and awareness of the importance of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs), some remote

locations are connected to the telephone network. To what extent has this development reached rural areas in Nigeria, and specifically the northern part of Nigeria? This is part of what this study wants to find out?. In some rural areas in Africa where rural telephony is functioning, problems such as high price in maintaining the service, lack of electricity are very prominent. Has this been the experience of rural areas in Nigeria?

What was really responsible for the technological advancement of America, Britain, Japan and recently China and many other developed countries is the availability of information at their disposal. The socio-economic and political development of a nation may not likely rise above the level of information services that is provided for the people. It is not surprising therefore, that the South African Government took the decision to be part of the information revolution even though it was noted that it does not yet have a culture of which all the people are aware of the value of information or have access to it. Information is one of the agents of community social, economical and political development. The types of information resources and how they are used determine how well a community or society can benefit from it.

Information resources and services should be such that will clearly benefit rural people. Therefore, it does not necessarily have to be the same as the resources and services in urban areas. In South Africa, for example, Louw (1994:95) states that there are community resource centres or community libraries which have been established in various parts of South-Africa. The resource centres collect and make available publications and other information resources emanating from political, trade union and community organizations. They provide education to users, and, the staff of the resource

centres answer enquiries and provide reference services to users. Using community resource centres in form of Community Development Associations can be useful in achieving information delivery to rural people in the Nigerian rural areas.

Community Developments Associations are associations of people who share common social interest and who develop a sense of solidarity from their participation with others. They are people that live and interact together. As a result of their interaction, they learn about one another and develop an awareness of each other's struggles, hopes and fears. This forms the basis of them forming associations.

Associations are formed based on common interests within the community. In this study, community development associations are groups that are formed to pursue certain goals such as farmers association, market women association, butchers' association youth associations etc. Their sole aim is to come together, form a force that can be used to boost their economy. Such associations are information sources to their members on issues of interests such as bank loans, farming facilities investment possibilities and availability of new options. In addition, the community associations can be used to provide intensive advisory service using professionals who are members of that association through the use of a community resource centre. Such community resource centres include the village community hall, the district head's/village head's hall, adult education centre or even primary/secondary school premises.

The rural community resource centre in Nigeria can be established by Community Development Associations and maintained by same. There are

very many of such associations in rural areas which are held in high esteem. They can use experts and their colleagues who are members of that association on part-time basis. This is because the association may not be in the position of employing full-time staff.

Another type of information source available to rural people is the “free play” radio. Throughout rural Mali, access to information largely depends on access to a radio. Radios which are owned by over 64 percent of rural households remain the only reliable way to receive information. In April 2004, the USAID financed Women in Governance or WING project began distribution of more than 500 ‘free-play’ radios in 16 communities in four Malian regions. The free-play radios helped rural people to over-come barriers to the information they wanted and needed. Free-play radios were created for use in rural areas and harsh conditions and are designed to function without conventional batteries. Seventy turns of a manual crank in 30 seconds will provide the listener with 30 minutes of play time or the radio can be placed in direct sunlight to charge the permanent internal battery. When fully charged, the radio can play up to 24 hours. (USAID, 2005).

The free-play radios can be used for collective listening by groups as well as for personal use. With these new radios, rural people will have better access to all important information.

Information resources and services for rural people can be pursued through the use of some agencies and ministries. Camble (1994:100) counted the success of Borno State when they made use of ministries and agencies such as Agriculture, Education, Rural and Community Development, information, Health and Borno State Water Board as sources of disseminating

information. As a result, there were increases in agricultural production, mass literacy classes, programme on immunization to oral rehydration therapy, family planning, primary schools, good drinking water, and feeder roads. The success of these programmes in any rural area would depend on the articulate planning and conscientious execution of the programmes supported by relevant information.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Population distribution in many countries especially in developing countries of the world shows that more people live in rural areas than in the urban areas. This could mean that in terms of number, rural population is far the dominant population in such countries. This assertion is in line with Baba's findings which states that where as 71% of the total people who lived in less developed countries in 1980 were in the rural sector; only 29% of the estimated total of people in the more developed countries lived in the rural sector. In Nigeria, for example it is estimated that between 80 to 90 percent of the population live in the rural areas. (Baba1988:7).

Rural people by their disposition and characteristics are not exposed to most facilities that are available to the urban people. Consequently, they are backward in terms of development.

Education is a major determinant for development but looking at primary school enrolment by zones in 2006, South West had 82.3 percent enrolment, South East had 81.6 percent South South had 76.8 percent North West and North East had 43.5 percent and 42.0 percent respectively. Primary school completion rate in the same 2006 with rural-urban dis-aggregation

showed 10.6 percent completion rate for rural areas and 16.3 percent for urban areas. The national secondary school enrolment rate in rural areas was 39.6%, compared to 59.3% in urban areas. Urban area recorded 78.6% attainment of Adult literacy while the rural areas recorded 56.9 percent Central Bank of Nigeria (2006). This shows that value attachment to education is low in the North and lower in rural areas.

Realizing that education can raise the social standard of its citizens which will in turn raise their economic level and political awareness, the government took steps to improve education by introducing educational programmes at different intervals. Beginning from Universal Primary Education (UPE) that was launched in 1976, up to the present day Universal Basic Education (UBE), the governments of Nigeria had struggled to provide education for its citizens. However, due to poor funding and the rural people's level of poverty which is a barrier to sponsoring education, their wards hardly exceed the secondary level successfully. They need to know of sources of scholarships that can assist them to progress to higher level of education. Apart from that, if the beneficiaries of all the education programmes be literate, they can influence their society by embarking on educative activities and being sources of information that can improve the well-being of their parents/guardians.

Many Nigerians are faced with poverty but acute poverty is prevalent in all rural areas across the nation. Virtually all rural areas lack the infrastructure necessary for economic production and meaningful living. We all observe poverty in our villages and among our brethren when we go home. Their

suffering should be a wake-up call to seek ways to improve the lot of those citizens who are caught up in rural areas.

Even in the 21st century, agriculture continues to be a fundamental instrument for sustainable development and poverty reduction. The federal government of Nigeria had entered into agreement with many foreign organizations in order to boost the rural people's economy through agriculture. Organizations such as International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), World Bank and United Nations Development Project (UNDP) are meant to support the government's effort to address rural poverty. Government is to identify the most deprived people and empower them to effectively participate in development activities. (All Africa 2008)

Several programmes had been packaged to reduce poverty, beginning from Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) to the current National Economic Empowerment Developments Strategy (NEEDS) States Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (SEEDS). NGOs have also joined forces with Federal government to improve economic conditions of rural people e.g. Agricultural Development in Nigeria (ADENI) in conjunction with NAERLS assisted the rural people to have improved agricultural products.

Although agriculture is the principal engine of growth in many low-income developing countries, other activities that can boast income are politically inclined in Nigeria. Conditions which include lack of access to basic needs such as water, food, education, health care, sanitation and security are considered harsh, because, although they are basic needs, they are tied firmly to politics.

Government programmes that are meant for poverty alleviation in rural areas get to only a few. They are more beneficial in the urban areas than the rural areas hence, their impact are not felt. For instance, in 1987, the Better Life Programme (BLP) was launched and general impression was that rural dwellers were the target. However, it turned out that on many occasions, the programme of activities and ceremonies were conducted in state capitals. Apparently, the urban elite took over the BLP such that less than the potential impact was not brought to bear on the supposedly target rural areas. Uga and Fajinbesi (2003:225).

The attempt of government to disseminate information for the development of its citizens is mostly effective in the urban areas. For instance the network news of 31st January, 2009 presented a documentary on rural development activities showing what constitutes rural development and how rural people can be assisted. This documentary might have only been watched by urban people due to the absence of resources such as electricity television sets and network in the rural areas. Even though some rural areas have network and television sets, not many can understand the language of communication. Other formats of information resources and methods of disseminating information to rural people in the north needs to be looked into.

Based on literature consulted, Onokerhoraye (1978), Aboyade (1990) and Adebawale (2005) etc, research reports on information service for rural people is mostly in the southern part of Nigeria. In the North where this study was targeted, not much research had been reported on information provision to rural people. Hence, this research report would fill the gap.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were raised and answered in the course of this research work:

1. What are the types of information Received for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the three geopolitical zones?
2. What are the media that are accessible for the dissemination of information for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the three geopolitical zones?
3. What is the level of the utilization of information obtained from the different media for socio-economic and political empowerment of male and female in the three geopolitical zone?
4. Are the rural people in the three geopolitical zones satisfied with the information obtained from the available media in the area for the socio-economic and political empowerment?
5. What is the opinion of the respondents on the level of information available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the three geopolitical zones?
6. What are the major sources of information available to the rural people in the three geopolitical zones for their socio-economic and political empowerment?

1.4 HYPOTHESES

The researcher formulated and tested the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis I: There is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the type information media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the satisfaction with information from the different media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.

Hypothesis III: There is no significant difference between the male and female respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the usage of information obtained from the different media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.

Hypothesis IV: There is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the availability of information for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.

Hypothesis V. There is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the sources of information accessible by them for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study sets out to:

- 1 Identify the type of information received for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the three geopolitical zones of northern Nigeria.
- 2 Identify the type of resources that are accessible for the dissemination of information for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the three geopolitical zones.
- 3 Assess the level of utilization of the information obtained from the different media for socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people base on gender in the three geopolitical zones.
- 4 Determine the level of satisfaction of the rural people in the three geopolitical zones with the information obtained using the available resources in the area for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.
- 5 Determine the opinion of the respondents on the level of availability of information for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the three geopolitical zones

1.6 BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

This study was based on the following assumptions:

1. Nigerian rural and urban populace has equal opportunities for socio-economic and political development.

2. The socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in Nigeria depends on the type of information systems and services available and provided to them.

1.7 JUSTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The choice of Northern States of Nigeria instead of the whole country was informed by the fact that Nigeria is large and so, it would be overambitious attempting to cover it in one study. Again, the researcher observed that though, rural people in Nigeria had problems which affected their socio-economic and political lives, rural people in northern Nigeria had more peculiar problems. The study was, therefore, undertaken to help proffer solutions to the problems of poverty, non-literacy and ignorance which the researcher had observed to be peculiar to rural people in Nigeria through the provision of information. In view of this, the findings of this study would hopefully be beneficial to the rural people and other members of the society in the following ways:

- a. The findings of this study would hopefully lead to the formulation of special information systems and services which would be beneficial to library and information science experts. This would in turn help to solve some of the problems encountered with access and utilization of information resources and services in the rural area.
- b. Textbook publishers information pamphleteers and development agencies would also have the opportunity of reviewing text materials and leaflets in view of the package especially made for the rural populace which would provide opportunity to users of the textbook to

benefit from the package and be confident in handling information programme in the rural areas.

- c. Public libraries would pick up and utilize the challenge of establishing information resources and services that would enhance and promote socio-economic and political empowerment of rural people.

1.8 SCOPE

This study covered only three (3) states namely Gombe, Nasarawa and Zamfara States representing the three (3) Geo-political zones in the North. i.e. North-East, North-Central and North-West. The Focus of the study was on information resources and services provision for Socio-Economic and political empowerment of rural people. Therefore, it was restricted to rural areas in four (4) Local Government Areas (LGA) in Gombe State, five (5) LGA in Nasarawa State and four (4) LGA in Zamfara State. Five LGA's were picked in Nasarawa State because they had the highest number of local governments that were considered to be rural.

1.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to three geo-political zones in the North. Due to the size of the population of the study, there was limitation of funds available to cover the entire area. The distance between each zone compelled the researcher and her assistants to use more than the number of research assistants earlier budgeted for, to be able to cover all the rural areas selected as sample. Due to the size of the sample, coding and analysis of the questionnaire collected took much longer than had been anticipated.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the review of literature related to the area of study. The literature was reviewed around the following areas: Rural Sociology, Information Services for empowerment, Information Systems, Rural Development Socio-Economic, and political development. A summary of the review of the literature was presented.

2.1 RURAL SOCIOLOGY

Rural Sociology is an aspect of sociology which is a “systematic, factual and reliable study of social relationship in its manifestation (cordial or conflicting), causes and consequences” Inkeles (1964) and Denisoff and Wahman (1979). Rural Sociology examines the rural society with reference to its complex mix of social relationships. Whenever a study that is related to rural sociology is being conducted it is often associated with relationship among rural population, the relationship of the rural with state (national or international), and for all intent and purposes the relationship of the rural with its physical environment. (Ebii, 2000). By implication, any study of rural society must have a basis to compare what obtains in that rural society with what obtains in the urban or even another rural society, to find out what causes harmony or lack of it in the society that is being studied. In other words rural sociology involves a practical search towards issues related to rural life with due reference to the social and economic betterment of rural population.

Talking about rural area in rural sociology, reference has to be made to the urban area. (Ebii, 2000) refers to this as two sides of a coin. He further said, geographically. The rural population is situated in the countryside while the urban, in the town or city. Similarly, Ekong (1988) states that the differences between the village and the town or a city are only too obvious to warrant any serious debate. The city is simply where bright lights are found, where the tempo of life is fast and where all the good things of life prevail in abundance, and the village is the area with opposite attributes. Psychologically, a rural individual is referred to as a rustic, that is simple and unspoiled, while the urban individual is exposed and sometimes difficult to deal with. For Jibowo, (2000), rural people are not as dynamic as people in other parts of the society. He attributes this to the fact that rural people are less aware of the opportunities available for personal, social and economic improvements than their counterparts in other areas of the society. Even when they are aware of some of the opportunities, they have no access to those opportunities. This can be seen as denial of fundamental human right, especially as the rural areas have the highest percentage of people.

In the estimate of the United Nations, (1995), approximately 55 percent of the world population was said to be rural. In the subanalysis, it scores 66.7 percent of Africa, 65.9 percent of Asia 26.7 percent of Europe, 26.3 percent of Latin America and Caribbean, 23.9 percent of North America and 29.7 percent of Oceania. This is represented through the table below.

Table 2.1 United Nations Global Rural Population Statistics

Major Area	Population		
	Rural	Urban	Percentage Rural
World Total	3,109,122	2,520,510	55.0
Africa	468,680	239,604	66.2
Asia	2,244,111	1,159,325	65.9
Europe	194,042	532,306	26.7
Latin America & Caribbean	124,618	348,923	27.0
North America	69324	220574	23.9
Oceania	8347	19776	29.7

Source: *Adopted from Annex 1 Tables A.1 – A.17 in: UNO 1995. World Urbanization prospects: The 1994 Estimates and projections of Urban and Rural Agglomerations. United Nations Department of Economics and social information and policy Analysis. Population Division New York, PP. 74-77.*

Although it is a common view that the world is progressively being urbanized, the nations of developing economies are yet predominantly rural. The table below shows the position the rural areas occupy in developing countries.

Table 2.2: Rural Population Density in Developing Countries.

Country	Total	Urban	Rural	Percent Rural
China (Mainland)	650.0m	104.0	546.0	84
India	432.8	77.5	345.3	79.8
Indonesia	94.2	13.7	80.5	85.5
Pakistan	92.6	12.4	80.4	86.8
Brazil	70.3	31.7	38.6	54.9
Nigeria	52.0	8.6	43.4	83.5
Mexico	35.0	17.7	17.3	49.4
Turkey	27.8	7.2	20.6	74.1
Philippines	27.4	8.2	19.2	70
United Arab	26.0	9.8	16.2	62.3
Republic of Korea	24.7	6.8	17.9	72.5
Burma	22.3	3.6	18.7	83.9
Iran	20.2	6.8	13.4	66.3
Ethiopia	20.0	1.0	19.0	95
North Vietman	16.1	1.6	14.5	90
South Africa	15.8	7.4	8.4	53.2
Columbia	15.4	7.2	8.2	53.2
Afghanistan	14.3	1.3	13.0	91
Republic of Viet-Nam	14.1	2.5	11.6	82.3

Source: *United Nations Year Book (1987)*

Even though this table was based on 1960 data, the situation is not too different now from that time. In the Nigerian scene, Ekon (2003) using the 1991 census records, presented the rural population as follows:

Table 2.3: Nigeria Rural Population Density

State	Total Population	%Rural	%Urban
Abia	2,336,487	62.25	37.75
Adamawa	2,102,053	77.49	22.51
Akwa Ibom	2,409,613	87.89	12.11
Anambra	2,796,425	36.06	61.94
Bauchi	4,251,007	83.99	16.01
Benue	2,753,077	83.50	16.50
Borno	2,536,003	64.37	35.63
CrossRiver	1,911,287	74.92	25.08
Delta	2,590,491	66.85	33.15
Edo	2,172,005	54.56	45.44
Enugu	3,154,380	58.45	41.55
Imo	2,485,635	67.33	32.67
Jigawa	2,775,525	93.06	6.94
Kaduna	3,935,618	59.23	40.77
Kano	5,810,470	60.12	39.88
Katsina	3,753,133	69.68	30.32
Kebbi	2,068,490	87.63	12.37
Kogi	2,147,756	64.75	35.25
Kwara	1,548,412	57.23	42.77
Lagos	5,725,116	6.31	93.69
Niger	2,421,581	77.18	22.82
Ogun	2,333,726	55.22	44.78
Ondo	3,785,338	59.62	40.38
Osun	2,158,143	44.50	55.50
Oyo	3,452,720	30.68	69.32
Plateau	3,312,412	74.98	25.02
Rivers	4,309,557	68.65	31.35
Sokoto	4,470,176	86.46	13.54
Taraba	1,512,163	89.57	10.43
Yobe	1,399,687	75.19	28.81
Abuja (FCT)	371,674	71.19	28.81
Nigeria	88,992,220	63.72	36.28

Source: *Abstracted from Ekong (2003) who gave a comprehensive table of "Nigeria's population distribution by states, Rural-Urban Residence and Agricultural workers." He got his data from Nigerian Population Census 1991 PP.36 and 172.*

The division between 'urban' and 'rural' according to Tacoli (1998) is sometimes based on the assumption that the physical distinction between the two areas is self-explanatory and uncontroversial. However, he observed that there are three major problems with this view. The first is that demographic

and economic criteria used to define what is 'urban' and what is 'rural' can vary widely between nations, making generalizations problematic for example while Asia considered areas with high population-up to two thirds (2/3) of its population to be living in rural areas, India and China's position as well as Latin America and European nations was different. The second problem is that of the definition of urban boundaries – farm lands are easily converted into industrial, residential and recreational uses, while rural areas' land may simply lie idle with cattle grazing on grassed – over rice fields. The third problem in looking at urban and rural areas is the fact that urban residents and enterprises depend on an area significantly larger than the built up area for basic resources and ecological functions. This is in contrast to what U.N.O. (1995) say about land area- that a rural individual establishes in a less populated area to insure a maximum supply of land – input for his purpose – agriculture, livestock raising, hunting and gathering. This explains why the landless or near-landless people migrate to virgin land-surplus countryside. An urbanite requires land only for residence and workshop.

There are various other criteria used to classify an area as rural or urban. However, one thing is basic and that is that rural area is seen as an economically depressed area that has been by passed by much of modern life. In describing a rural area in the southern Appalachian mountains, Biddle and Biddle (1965) associated the occupants of the area with hunger, ill health, poor clothing and shortage of formal education. They added that educational efforts have tended to drain the more promising young people out of the areas thus increasing the difficulties of those who remain. Little has been done to

help the people find a viable way of living and thus cultivate the responsibility of self-help.

Socially, the group that makes a rural community is prone to be of the same ethnic affiliation. Where other ethnic groups co-exist in a rural area, they are usually in the minority and may not be easily noticed. On the other hand, an urban community is a composite of diverse ethnic groups competing in population, political authority and socio-economic status. Homogeneity does not allow for fast development in the rural area since there is no much competition among members of the community. Instead, the general lifestyle of the rural people inclines toward tradition. The household pattern is commonly extended family type, while that of the urban evolves into nuclear family.

The rural people depend predominantly on head porter or back-porter for their transportation of goods, while the urban easily undertake the same service by the use of hand-push cart or motorized vehicles. The village crier remains a popular rural mass media while the modern information systems are more popular in the urban centres. The customary assembly point of rural people is an open square, such as market place. In a typical rural area, seasonal festivals grant recreation and pause from all types of livelihood preoccupation, but in the urban areas, there obtains, almost daily' varying recreational options that lend themselves for relaxation, for example, varied sports, television programmes, association meetings, excursions and travels, the religions of the urban areas (in African context) are commonly the affiliates of major world religions, such as Christianity and Islam, while the rural remains generally the seat of indigenous or ancestral religious cults.

Rural and urban societies are distinguishable in their social stratification. The rural social strata are less than those of urban society. This stems from the fact that ruralites are virtually similar in many respects, such as ethnic affiliation, land wealth, occupation, religion, and political association. Rural is thus referred to as a horizontal society, that is, a society where people are seemingly equal. Unlike the rural, urban people have numerous socio-economic opportunities, which give rise to multiplication of social layers. On the strength of the above, the rural need information that will empower them to improve in their socio-economic status. Biddle and Biddle (1965).

2.2. RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In the area of social amenities such as roads, pipe-borne water, electricity, hospitals, schools, motorized vehicles, telephones, refrigerators, televisions, radio sets, improved diet and variety of proper clothing. They are lacking in many rural areas. Generally, it is maintained that the level of living in the rural area is lower than that of urban areas. Referring to the World Health Organization (WHO) Ebii (2000) stated that WHO estimated that four out of every five rural Africans are without reasonable access to safe water. Most rural areas of developing countries especially in Africa are poorly provided for in terms of materials and human resources, while the urban are everywhere found better off. Such a state of want in the rural area often stems from the fact of urban-biased development programmes of some governments. This socio-economic difference is commonly held responsible for the universal superiority attitude of urbanites toward ruralites Smith (1972). Consequently, the youth are inclined to immigrate to urban, leaving the rural

for only those activities engaged in agriculture. With adequate information about government's position on encouraging agricultural activities, the youth can still be in the rural areas and make impact in the lives of the rural people

In Nigeria, Ekong (2003) examined the infrastructures that could have effect on people. These include educational facilities health facilities, water supply, electricity supply, and communication facilities. The presence of such facilities will go a long way to empower rural people to have meaningful development.

Educational facilities in rural areas vary depending on the development of the state. Arguably, one of the educational facilities that will be more valuable to rural people is the extension education. This is an informal non-school based education. It is often directed to rural people with the aim of upgrading their competence or skills in specific areas such as agriculture, health or home management. According to Ekong (2003), the Ministry of Agriculture hires and trains agricultural extension agents to carry out agricultural extension work with farmers. Ideally, it is expected that farmer-extension agent's ratio in the country should be 750 farm families or less to 1 fulltime extension agent. However, this ratio remained at an average of 2500:1 as at 2000. According to him, this compares unfavourably with 200:1 in India or 250:1 in Kenya. As a result of this insufficiency of extension agents, Ekong continued, extension education in rural Nigeria is not a continuously sustained programme which could have generally upgraded farmers' knowledge, skills and productivity. The same problem applies to health care, home management and the establishment and management of small-scale

industries. Things will work better if indigenes are employed to work with their people in these areas of need.

Adult education or adult literacy is another educational programme that rural people should benefit from. They need to be persuaded to attend adult literacy classes. Most of them do not attend for fear of failure, lack of time or lack of appreciation of the utility of such education at an advanced age. (Patel 1974 / 75).

Often, the younger ones in the rural area have the opportunity of attending primary school because of free education programme. Most of them drop out of school after primary school because, according to Ekong, secondary schools in most states are fee-paying and are often located outside the village. Although there is no reliable statistics to show the drop-out rate from rural primary schools, it is estimated that in southern part of the country, this may be in the region of 40 per cent while in the northern part of the country, it might be up to 60 per cent. In the Northern States, drop-out is not mainly a direct result of inability of parents to pay school fees since generous scholarships are often available for those who want to go beyond primary school level, but a reflection of the lingering resistance of some rural parents against westernization. The role educated rural children could play in the utilization of information for various purposes cannot be quantified. They can identify and interpret information that will empower their parents. Even for the nomadic Nigerians, education will enable them to improve their lot.

Significantly, Education does not only serve to transmit cultural heritage from one generation to another, it also provides manpower for national development because education sharpens the minds of those it

trains. Manpower planning aims at constructing a strategy of human resource development which is consistent with the country's broader aims of social, political and economic development Uche (1982). As a part of the country, the rural areas are entitled to education, and therefore, should be encouraged to pursue it to all levels.

Conventional wisdom states that "Health is wealth". It is when people are healthy that they can think and act creatively. Unfortunately, the level of health facilities in Nigeria is generally low. The ones available are mostly concentrated in the urban areas. In addition, the roads linking these rural areas with the urban areas are grossly inadequate and poor. It becomes difficult for rural people to get medical attention when they need it most.

Importantly, Electricity supply for lighting, small scale industries recreation and other uses are very vital to the raising of rural quality of life. To boost rural development programme, the fourth National Development plan 1981-85 emphasized on the rural electrification as an important component. Indeed rural electrification is aimed at providing economic empowerment for the rural people, but unfortunately electricity supply in rural areas is mainly for illumination rather than commercial or industrial use.

Regrettably, Communication Facilities are generally inadequate in Nigeria. However, the introduction of mobile cellular phones since 2001 has drastically revolutionized communication in Nigeria for urban dwellers. Most Ruralites still, however, remain unconnected. In this new information age, communication can assist a lot in enhancing empowering rural people. They can have business discussions over the phone, make contacts with relations

on social issues without having to travel. It will retain youth in the village and can even be a source of employment and revenue generation for them.

In sum, the absence of such infrastructure as discussed above is a hindrance to socio-economic and political empowerment of rural people but information service can go along way to empower them in different areas of life.

2.2.1 RURAL PEOPLE AND AGRICULTURE

Though both rural and urban people participate in agriculture, their participation is in different ways and measures. Most mechanized farming is practised in the urban area, while manual labour is mostly found in the rural areas. The mode or type of farming that encourages economic development is mostly practised in the urban areas. The rural people hardly have the capability of engaging in such agriculture.

Agriculture plays a vital role in the economy of Nigeria and rural people are involved in agriculture in Nigeria. Agriculture can create opportunities for employment and financial growth due to what the agricultural products can do but that is not the case for Nigerian rural farmers. According to Williams (1978), a large proportion of food crops comes from rural areas and they produce only marginal returns because incentives for production are low. Bottlenecks exist in transport and distribution of farm produce farmers depend on archaic and primitive tools and equipment. Improved seeds, fertilizers, chemicals credit facilities and other necessities are in short supply.

While agriculture is the most important economic activity in the rural areas in Nigeria, young people leaving school there do not want farm jobs;

they want jobs in industries located in the cities. There is need to provide information about various farming systems and how farming can boost the economy of rural people.

Inadequate or total lack of information provision to rural people causes them to suffer from acute low productivity, social and economic retrogression. Issa (1998) states that information has always played an important role in human life. It is a basic human need, therefore, free and equal accessibility to it by every member of the society-urban and rural alike- Issa stressed had been found to be considerably dependant on various types of information, though at different levels, for their existence, survival and growth on a daily basis.

2.3 INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR RURAL PEOPLE

Various information resources are required to be able to render satisfactory information service for socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people. Among the many outlets through which the populace secure information, Kadiri (2001) recognized the library to be one. According to him, while other information sources such as the electronic media in particular are ephemeral in the sense that they cannot relay the same news or programmes for ever or their past programmes accessed at will, the library preserves information on a more permanent basis and in most cases, is the supplier of background information to other media. It might be said, therefore that the library is the backbone of all information sources.

The library should be able to provide balanced information, especially, to rural populace who form the bulk of the population in most developing countries. To bring rural dwellers into a central focus, they must be well

acquainted with relevant information which can propel them into making the right judgement and taking the right decisions that affect their lives and existence. That is why, according to Kadiri (2001), librarians argue the need for rural library services to support and sustain educational, cultural, economic, social, political and other programmes designed to improve the living conditions in rural areas.

Intriguingly, the fact that library services are expected to be extended to rural areas, establishing rural libraries side by side with urban libraries, Adewale (2001) is of the opinion that a rural library service concept based largely on the print media has little relevance to the illiterate masses at the grass root. This is because, since the western type of library provision is literacy based; its relevance to the needs and aspirations of the peasants at the grass root level is not clearly seen. More often than not, these types of libraries which are aimed at taking the library message to the rural people and probably civilize them have failed to achieve the intended result. However, if the library would not only depend on the western type of library service, it can be a reliable source of information for rural people.

A rural library in the sense of a building equipped with reading tables, books and audio visuals might highly be irrelevant in the rural areas. The fundamental problems of the rural people are not literacy but access to certain information which could enable them to improve and perform better in their various occupations. What is needed of the library as an information source is for it to act as a clearing house which would coordinate community problems and queries and at the same time link people to necessary resources. It

follows therefore, that to benefit from library services, a new approach to the design, information packaging and service delivery is imperative.

Although the rural library plays a prominent role as an information and referral centre, other information sources according to Ochai (1995) are also opened to the rural dwellers including clan meetings, age groups, dance groups and town criers. The rural library may just be the librarian's operational base or a community centre. In this case, the emphasis would be to create a completely new breed of "barefoot librarians" or "oral librarians" with a strong sense of purpose and who will see service in the rural areas as a challenge. This is a marked departure from the present arm – chair role of the librarian who sits tight in his office expecting clients to come to the library to consult or borrow from his collection.

By implication, Ochai (1995) means that, like business people, librarians who are also known as information specialists should learn to play the salesman role who goes out to the street to demonstrate to the potential customers, the quality and usefulness of and the need for his products. Based on Adewale's (2001) suggestion, the rural librarians should also play the insurance broker who acts as a catalyst between customers and their choice of insurance policies.

As a result of these roles, the librarian can assume a new role of an information consultant, a counselor, a broker and link. His duties would include helping to motivate the rural populace to articulate their problems and helping to connect them with sources of information or refer them to sources that would be useful in providing the necessary information.

The involvement of the library in information transfer can make a lot of impact in the lives of rural people in all areas of their endeavours. Materials like posters, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, filmstrips, video tapes, radio and radio cassettes will enhance the work of rural librarians in meeting the demands of their clientele. As rightly painted out by Adewale (2001), the librarian may not be an expert in every area of the people's endeavour but; can play a key role in translating some of the information to a language that the people understand most. Also he can organize sessions of passing these information to the people by bringing specialists to address the villagers.

Potentially, the rural library is in a good position to reinforce specific messages in the neighborhood by helping other agencies to impress various messages on the lives of the rural recipients through constant provision of information so that they do not suddenly lose interest and abandon development projects.

In rendering information service, the rural library through some of its activities can draw interested groups together by providing a forum in particular localities where all officials irrespective of their ministries can obtain reference information and materials for their extension services. (Aboyade, 1990). That is to say that the rural library will provide a forum for mutual interaction among all officials at the local level which may be difficult at their various ministries and headquarters.

In a relevant manner Okah (2004) research has shown that rural dwellers in developing countries rely so much on change agents who visit them at irregular intervals and on traditional and social channels for the provision of their information needs. Unfortunately, change agents are known

to be largely untrained in the act of information management and dissemination. Hence, much of the information provided by them are largely underutilized because they either lack relevance or are provided in wrong format or medium.

If change agents can be used to convey information to rural people, there is nothing wrong in using librarians who live within the community as part of those change agents. This is the position of MacDonald (1984), when he said that the change agent is mainly working on his own and as a comparative stranger, he is liable to be criticized by the local community for any shortcomings.

Unlike the urban people that can freely have access to various forms and levels of information, the rural people have limited sources of information. It is in this light that change agents can be used as information sources who will encourage some form of cooperation among the rural people. Uhegbu and Opeke (2004), suggested the need for rural people to cooperate through information sharing so that areas of one's deficiency can be properly covered. They observed that even among corporate organizations that do not operate under the same functional, economic, social and political conditions, information sharing is a necessity if they intend to remain effectively afloat in the contemporary information – driven society. Information sharing can be utilized more effectively by rural people.

Not surprisingly some believe that Nigeria is still an oral society. Referring to some writers, Uhegbu and Opeke (2004), stated that for any information transfer to be successful in the rural areas, the peculiarities of the oral nature of the Nigeria society has to be accepted, and therefore present

any communication net working through the oral medium on a face – to – face basis even though this seem to be a backward method of presenting information.

In the era of new ways of acquiring knowledge, access to the infrastructure to share information is paramount for social and economic development. Hughes (2005) is of the opinion that people and communities in the developing world need access to the mechanisms that provide multiple sources of rapid information and information exchange which traditional ways of accumulating and exchanging knowledge cannot deliver.

The world has already become a global village. Whether we like it or not, we have to find a way of catching up with the new developments. It is in this light that Richardson (1997), quoted Manuel Calvelo Rios as saying.

“Modern communication technologies, when systematically applied and adapted to conditions in rural areas of developing countries, can be used for rural communication to increase participation, disseminate information and share knowledge and skills. The establishment of new institutional frameworks, including all stakeholders, which are autonomous and income generating, can lead to sustainable and cost- effective efforts, as opposed to working only with government agencies.”

While examining the issue of internet service to rural people, Richardson observed that local community oriented internet services are valuable when placed in the service of rural and agricultural development organizations which act as local communication conduits or intermediaries. Though internet and associated technologies are pivotal to the new means of knowledge acquisition, language barriers, low literacy levels, the cost of the technologies and of connectivity hamper vital access to new knowledge resources for many in the developing countries. If these barriers can be

managed properly, internet service in the rural areas, according to Richardson, can provide the following services:

- “develop local appropriate application and creative services
- provide knowledge about successful development strategies;
- provide improved access to huge variety of information, training, research and educational resources that are typically unavailable in rural and remote areas due to the costs associated with accessing printed materials and books
- enable rural young people to learn about computers and to have access to the technologies and information available to their urban peers;
- provide access to critical technical information for rural professionals such as physicians, health care workers, technicians and engineers, thereby providing further encouragement for these professionals to continue practicing in rural and remote communities,
- be used as marketing tools to promote rural tourism and market the products of small secondary industries and home – based businesses;
- enable local NGOs to gain a global presence and make better contact with potential donors and supporters through on – line publication of resources and information and through the use of electronic mail, and sensitize urban policy makers to the realities and needs of rural population.”

There are, however, more reliable information sources in Nigeria than the internet. Among all the tools of information transmission, Omenesa (1991) found the radio to have emerged as the most effective, and relatively the easiest to operate. According to him, it permeates every nook and cranny of the society provided there is a receiver with adequate supply of power.

The radio technology possesses some inherent qualities which make it a very potent tool of passing information to the public. Apart from its timeliness, it is capable of carrying information to the audience no matter where they may be whether they are in their living rooms, cars or their farms. Once the audience has a receiver with adequate supply of power, the

absence of such facilities as roads, light water are no hindrance to the radio. It defeats such obstacles as difficult topography, distance, time and most socio-political exigencies. Illiteracy is no barrier to radio messages as such messages can be related in the audience's own language.

This position is true in rural Mali USAID (2005) reported what radio programme did to women in Mali. As a result of having access to radio programme, women are now speaking out. Many ran in the May 2004 local elections and the number of elected women doubled in the targeted Communities, from 21 to 42 women.

However, one major problem of the radio is its transient nature. It has little reference value. Once a programme is over, recall may not be very easy. It may not be easy for the listener to remember all that he heard. Again, the radio is a one – way traffic. It keeps talking without waiting to know whether anybody is listening. Once a radio is on, whether anybody is in the room or not, it continues until the station closes for the day. If nobody is listening, some useful information will be wasted at that point in time. Again there is no way a listener can ask the announcer to please wait while he checks for the meaning of what he has heard or while he takes down the instruction being given. However, the information specialist can step into these gaps and make issues clearer by analyzing the radio messages.

Despite the limitation of the radio as an information source, agriculture extension workers have used it effectively to reach a large number of people very cheaply. For example, according to Omenesa, (1997) Agricultural radio broadcasting in Northern Nigeria dates back to 1952. Ten years later, the Broadcasting company of Northern Nigeria picked the cue and created air

time for disseminating agricultural information targeted at the rural farming communities scattered all over the expansive region. In 1970-76 the federal and state radio corporations played a major role in educating the masses of this country during the National accelerated Food Production Programme. Another campaign in which the radio played a prominent role was Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) in 1976 – 79. It was another federal government programme aimed at rural development.

During the second republic, the radio was used to reach millions of rural dwellers when the Shagari administration introduced the Green Revolution in 1979 – 83. Also in 1983-85, radio and television propaganda were employed to ensure public acceptance of Back to Land and War Against Indiscipline of Buhari/Idiagbon regime. Directorate of Food Road and Rural Infrastructure was launched by Babangida in 1985 – 95 and radio and television were used to spread it. The use of radio is a well accepted information system that is very useful in rural areas.

For third world or developing countries, Omenesa (1997) maintained that radio is one of the most important media of transmission of information to the grass roots level. The introduction of the portable and relatively inexpensive transistorized radio set enables greater use of radio in all parts of the world, most especially the developing countries. Illiteracy is no barrier to radio messages as such messages can be related in the audience's own language.

According to Sylvia (2005), radio has forever stood as “a major dialogue initiator, temperament respondent and untiring arbitrator.” The link therefore

between radio, the rural community, agriculture and development cannot be over emphasized.

Essentially, rural radio programmes allow members of a community to gain access to information, education and entertainment. It is different from urban radio programmes in that they are directed specifically to rural people and to their information needs. The uniqueness of the rural radio, according to Sylvia (2005), is that

“Community participation is fundamental characteristic of rural radio – live public shows, villages debate and participation in the actual management of the radio station are just a few examples. This approach empowers rural people to participate in the dialogue and decision making processes essential for them to control their own economic and cultural environment and play an active part in development activities.”

By implication, there is a radio programme specifically designed for rural people which is meant to make an impact in their lives and to make them relevant in development programmes. The radio along with other sources or method of information provision can be utilized effectively.

Based on a research conducted by Camble (1994) in Borno State, stakeholders agreed that Rural Development workers situated in ministries/parastatals can be used as source of information for rural people. This means that the rural development workers are the medium through which information is passed to the rural people and they are responsible for disseminating information on rural development programmes to rural people. The findings of this research show that rural workers can take up the responsibility of providing information for the empowerment of rural people. This is so because on the rank order of schedule of duties and responsibilities

of the rural development workers, said Camble (1994), the responsibility of acquiring and making available to rural people relevant information from appropriate institutions and other sources ranked high.

Using the rural people themselves is another way information can get to the rural people. Information services to the rural people, if well planned will be beneficial and will make them to be active participants in development processes instead of being passive receivers. Camble (1994) states that studies have shown that many rural development programmes have failed in developing countries because they were planned without involving the rural people themselves who would provide relevant information for the success of the programme.

According to Aboyade (1990) the government and its functionaries have a responsibility as primary agencies for initiating and stimulating development, to provide and disseminate information about their activities, to make the people knowledgeable about things happening around them, and also generate in them the right attitudes and encourage the adoption of desirable value systems. Apart from rural people receiving information from government, the different groups involved in the development process such as policy – makers, project managers and staff, change-agents and rural people themselves will need to have information about one another, so they do not work at cross purposes.

Overall, the main purpose of using information resources is to empower the user for one thing or the other. In this study, it is to provide socio-economic and political empowerment for rural development.

2.4 INFORMATION SERVICE DELIVERY

To a large extent, quality of life of rural dwellers can be highly improved by effective provision of relevant information to the rural communities. This does not seem to have been realized in Nigeria. Instead, according to Okeh (2002), the rural communities are exposed to information poverty because information sources and resources are very remote from them.

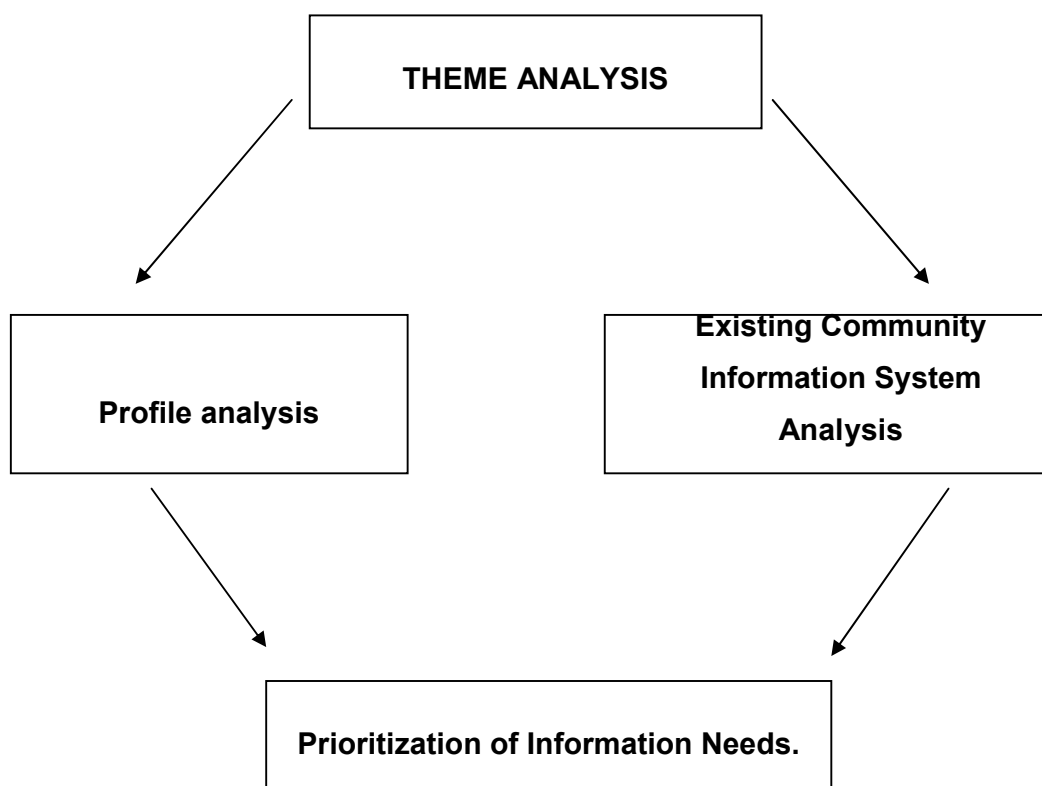
In order to provide useful information to the rural people, their needs have to be determined if the information provided will meet those needs. In India, a study on information needs assessment for rural communities was carried out in 2003. This research discovered that a majority of the population in India and developing world lives in rural areas and more importantly, poverty also co-inhabits with the rural masses in these areas. Therefore, the developmental initiatives must focus on the needs of the rural populace, to be able to provide information that can fight poverty. Another reason for the emphasis on the information needs assessment of rural masses is, the rural domain exhibits different characteristics than urban areas.

Since the needs of urban people can not be taken to mean the requirements of the rural people, the information services for the urban people can not take the same pattern with the rural people. According to the Indian research 2003, rural sector is different from the urban in quite a few respects as indicated below:

- “Marginalized from the mainstream
- Poor standard of living
- Low literacy
- Strong feeling of voiceless ness and powerlessness
- Strong local imprints
- Conservative society
- Closer to the mother nature
- Traditional ways of learning.”

Therefore, determining / or assessing the needs of the rural people would assist information providers to identify the information needs of the rural communities. As a result of the study carried out in India, an information needs assessment model IMAM was created with activities such as Theme Analysis, Existing Community Information Systems Analysis, Profile Analysis and Prioritization of Information Needs. The researchers summarized the model in the following diagram.

Table 2:4 INFORMATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT MODEL (INAM)



Source: CRSIP Group

The model was used to assess the information needs of the under privileged in rural India. To do this, they made use of already prioritized information from life and internet surveys which have been fed into the

Information Need Assessment Model and represented in the form of information categories. Their information needs were categorized into Health, Agriculture, Education and Government Information. It was discovered that their highest need was information on health, followed by agriculture, education and finally government information. This will direct the information provider on which information he/she needs to pay more attention to.

Also based on the study, a closer analysis of ICTs reveals that there is a tremendous scope of ICTs application in rural areas. ICT can reduce the globe into a village thus addressing the issue of marginalization. It can help improve the economic status directly through e-commerce applications and indirectly through access to varied kind of business information. Internet can empower people by inducing transparency and accountability in the system and also building a smooth interface with the Government. Most importantly, internet serves without any prejudices of caste, creed or religion thus removing all barriers of social injustice. In short, ICT is powered to address the issues related to the rural areas.

However, despite its high functional value it is important to emphasize that the ICT solutions should be sensitive to the rural characteristics. The applications should be designed in such a way that it speaks the rural people's language, reflect their culture and above all should address their information needs. By implication, the India study reveals the rural people's need to be social information needs. They need information that will empower them to attack such social problems as listed above.

Another study commissioned by NARO (2000) was to provide baseline information on agricultural information and communication needs of the

communities around the telecentres in Buama, Nabweru and Nakaseke. Since majority of people in the area are peasant farmers, they need information on how to combat pests and diseases, how to treat infertile soils so as to boost their income. The need for information for farming is not limited to educated farmers alone after all not many educated people are found farming in the village.

The cited study reveals this fact when it states that from expressing the need for processing of agricultural products, majority of farmers who had never been to school required information on farming systems than other farmers who had attained some level of education.

In some rural areas in other countries, their highest information need may be in the area of their economy. Information is a vital resource for commerce and industry if only it will empower the seeker to boost his business. But as long as it fails to do so it will be regarded as a nuisance. This assertion is supported by Stoot (1992:107) who stated that owners and managers of small and medium sized businesses regard information as a nuisance. This is so, according to her, for two reasons:-

- “Much of the “information” that is offered to them is superficial of the “overview” type, that cannot immediately be applied to their businesses.
- Information is ‘free’, that is supplied out of public funds at no cost to the user at point of use – via public libraries, for example. The information that is free is not exactly what they require; and to obtain the information that they require is generally expensive, or time – consuming or both. By implication the users don’t believe that the information provided to them can be of value. They need to be convinced that they can improve their economic status by the use of information. The conviction will be that the information provided in relation to a certain function actually works.”

In the words of Nweke (1993), rural Nigerians need information “to explore the upper limits of the possible as well as attempt the impossible.”

Such information needs of rural Nigerians are associated with various models of integrated rural development categorized by Idachaba (1980) as practised in Nigeria. They include information on measure to ensure increased farm productivity and income growth. Such involve information on timely provision of fertilizers, seeds pesticides and farm equipment and machinery. Information should be provided on the availability of agricultural extension staff and his role as a link between agricultural researchers and the rural farmers. Information on government measures for provision of rural infrastructures such as feeder roads for access to both farm inputs and outputs, agricultural credit facilities and the contribution of the rural Nigerians themselves that would enhance successful implementation of government programme of rural development is important.

In addition, Nweke (1993) identified more areas of information needs of rural people. He said rural Nigerians also require information regarding such social amenities as water supply, health and medical facilities, educational facilities, telecommunications facilities, rural electrification schemes and other information needs about government programmes to mobilize rural Nigerians for increased political and social participation from local to the national levels. Information service for rural people is an arrangement to extend comprehensive information in organized and efficient manner to rural communities in all aspects of their daily information needs. Concerted effort should be made to integrate various piecemeal information services into the information profession to make rural information service comprehensive and more supporting.

On his part, Berry III (2002) narrated his experience of information service in the rural area when he mentioned the Delta county public library service. In his opinion, a rural information provider can be closer and more personal to the rural people because everyone involved in seeking for information is known. As soon as information is located in any area of need, they can be contacted faster than urban people. Again, results are seen much more quickly. Berry III (2002) ascertained that the work he did in the rural area was visible in two or three months as against two or three years of such service in the urban area.

There is need, therefore, to evolve information service specifically tailored to meet the information needs of rural Nigerians bearing in mind the fact that rural Nigerians are mainly non literates. In which case, the kinds of information which would be most valuable to them are those which are closest to the point of application, set out in a manner which shows the advantages of application and presented in their local languages and dialects. (Nweke, 1993). This calls for the information provider to be close to the rural people or to those that need his services.

2.4.1 INFORMATION SERVICE THROUGH TEAM WORK

The idea of providing information service through team work in a particular geographical area was encouraged around Colorado's Delta country public library. As a result, the library was able to make an impact even in the political affairs of the area. With the support of state libraries local libraries were encouraged to become districts. That gave them some financial security and autonomy in making decisions. Colorado Librarians, for example,

told the story of a little library in a rural country somewhere in the state. The library had a total annual budget of about 70,000 dollars. The county commissioners informed the librarian that because the county needed a new fire truck, they would have to severely cut the library budget. The librarian in a personal act of defiance and in recognition of the significance of information to the community saw the commissioners' pronouncement as an act of information denial. As a result, he mobilized libraries around to form a library district so as to have a common front. Consequently, the district was approved and the library budget for that year increased to 72,000 dollars. If the librarian had just accepted the commissioners' pronouncement, there would have been shortage of funds for service. Since he realized fighting alone would not yield any fruit, he engaged others in fighting for information service for the rural people.

One of the strategies used to provide information service to the rural people by Colorado librarians was circulating books to them aiming at providing excellent service on a consistent level. To them, this was the way people would benefit from their information even though it might seem old-fashioned. Some aspects of this service included "full reference service, collection depth, full children's services and programs, and, of course the whole range of online and digital services" (Berry III, 2002).

Another addition to the debate has involved the maxim: "Better information produces better citizens." is an idea that should be part of every society. Reporting the efforts of the American library tradition, Peer (2001) stressed the importance of face-to-face in information service. It provides confidence on the side of the information seeker and makes them better

citizens since the provider will take the pains of supplying the information to him personally. This will also encourage the seeker to respond to any call made within the community. There is a testimony of such encouragements in San Francisco where information seekers have time to meet with information providers to discuss issues which translate to “community information on the Web, and Reading Discussion Groups for Adult learners” (Peer, 2001). An individual may find it difficult to make this kind of Impact but team work can easily achieve much.

Importantly, Some steps have to be taken to make such programmes/projects accessible and practicable. These steps are what this research refers to as information initiatives. Based on Chapman, Slaymaker and Young's (2005) recommendation, Governments and service providers such as institutions that can handle that assignment could be used as information providers to the rural people.

Specifically, some of the institutions that can be used to enhance information provision to rural people include government departments and extension services, non-governmental organizations, farmers' organizations and women groups. These institutions rely on information to perform their basic functions of coordination and management of member activities and so, passing information through them can be effective. This has been true for institutions throughout history.

Today, new institutions are being formed in the context of a global information society that relies increasingly on electronic networks and digital information to function. In developing countries, electronic networks and digital information is not very common. However, there are numerous

organizations that are trying to improve the dissemination of information relevant to rural people. Many new initiatives seek to harness the potential of telecommunications, digital information networks, computer databases and multimedia tools to improve both the quality and quantity of information that can be accessed locally, (Chapman, and Young, 2005)

For the less developed nations, Adebawale and Amusat, (2005) suggest visitation and training by experts as an initiative for providing information to rural people. Experts are expected to visit the rural people with adequate information on their areas of needs. This can be referred to as an informal out-of-school system of timely transferring technologies/information to rural people. When rural people are visited, they feel encouraged, especially when the visitation goes along with something beneficial to them.

Traditional information workers may not be available all the time information is needed to be dispatched but Okeh (2002:34) made mention of change agents. They are people who are specialists in their various fields that could deliver information at the points of need. For example, community nurses could be used to relate information on different types of diseases and how to avoid them. Agriculture extension officers can give information on farming which would be of interest and value to rural people. Again, Agriculture extension officers could translate agricultural research findings into messages and provide feedback from farmers to research institutes. Information Services to rural people is meant to mobilize them. Mobilization can be described at different levels. Personal/Individual level and Group level

The Personal / Individual level of mobilization is raising the level of awareness of an individual so as to create a platform for optimizing ones

efforts, especially in becoming effective socially, economically, spiritually and even culturally. The individual could mobilize himself or could be mobilized by fighting illiteracy through enrolling in adult literacy classes. Adult literacy has the important task of raising the literacy level of the citizens thereby making them capable of understanding issues and improving their well being. With a certain level of literacy, Nigeria will be able to adequately defeat poverty, hunger disease and exploitation by the privileged few. An individual can also mobilize himself through engaging himself in same form of trade, farming and other activities to fight poverty. Politically, an individual is mobilized through joining or formation of think – tank groups where ideas could be generated and discussed. Group level mobilization is organizing individuals and members of the community to bring about goal-oriented results especially those designed for individual and communal upliftment.

Formation of cooperative groups can be categorized under group level mobilization. Cooperatives are capable of contributing significantly to the socio-economic development of a nation, and for rural development specifically. Among the cooperatives that can be established are agricultural cooperatives. Agriculture cooperatives by nature are located in the rural areas and they can therefore be used as vehicles to develop such areas. This is enough reason to mobilize farmers to organize themselves into cooperative societies.

Once an individual or a group has knowledge about a certain phenomenon, he/she can use that knowledge to excel in that area. Rural people can be mobilized effectively through the use of cooperative societies if correct information about what interests them is available.

2.4.2 INFORMATION SERVICE FOR A TARGET AUDIENCE

To begin with, based on the needs or potentialities of a community, information service can be rendered to meet specific needs of that community. The information needs of a target population should be identified by an information worker and made available to them from research findings. Research findings are very useful materials that should be made accessible to users but according to Loho (1992), much of the information from research results in Nigeria disappears from view as they fail to filter down to the level where they should.

Secondly, Information is very critical in strengthening the link and achieving the integration of various social groups. Social groups can be tagged target audience that information should flow to. In Nigeria the need to reach target audience or potential users in rural areas with comprehensive, relevant and up-to-date information to meet all aspects of their daily information needs has become urgent, in view of the present government's commitment to rural development. This can be seen in the Federal Republic of Nigeria's National policy on Integrated Rural Development (1991:44). The section on information and communication in the policy states that: "The primary purpose of the information and communication system envisaged under the policy shall be to inform, educate, non-scientist and mobilize Nigeria's rural populations to exercise effective citizenship and to participate effectively in the economic, socio- cultural and political dimensions of integrated Rural Development."

Thirdly, one of the objectives of this policy which is relevant to this study is "To encourage the systematic and effective collection, organization

dissemination, accessing and utilization of development and other information.” Of the strategies suggested to achieve the objectives stated, the Federal Government of Nigeria thought of the establishment and promotion of Rural Newspapers and Community Resources Centres (comprising library, information bureau, meeting rooms, viewing centres and documentation room) at local Government and community levels.

2.5 EMPOWERMENT

To debate, many people have adopted various methods of improving the rural people but seem to have no success. Biddle and Biddle (1965) reviewed what Mr. Fellows attempted for thirteen years to improve the lot of rural people around him but became discouraged after all. The local people were unresponsive and had not learned how to develop any initiative or their own improvement. For that reason, he (Mr.Fellows) wondered if it would be possible for a new approach to be made, using the methods of community development to pass information for the empowerment of the community. In support of what Mr. Fellows proposed, Dunham (1970) identified some ways of empowering rural people to include rural leadership. The success of a rural development programme does not depend on material resources alone, the human element is equally important. A man is ready for change only when he is himself convinced that he has a problem, and that he will have some share in solving it. Mature and able local leadership in rural programmes is one of the best ways of bringing about this happy result.

The leader, known to and having influence with those whose life he wishes to improve, can indicate the direction of a proposed change that clears

its objectives and values, and involve those wishes of the local people to high government officials.

Another way of empowerment is community development. Properly understood, community development can have a vital role to play. The term connotes that the people themselves exert their own efforts, joining with governmental authorities, to improve their economic, social and cultural conditions. Clearly, there is value in the feature that this system has of integrating the community into the life of the nation and allowing the latter to contribute to national progress. Dunham (1970) continued by saying community development is concerned with total community life and needs. Ideally, it involves all the members of the community and requires their fullest participation in first making and then implementing decisions. Working together as a people is a source of empowerment for any project.

In recent years, the development policies of many African countries have shown increasing emphasis on rural development. In East Africa alone, according to Idode (1989) Tanzania's Ujamas Vijijini, Kenya's special rural development programme, and Zambia's independent development zones, point to the new emphasis. In West Africa, the Third Nigerian National Development plan, 1975-80, also ranked rural development high in its policy objectives. According to the plan:

"It is necessary to recognize that, about 70 percent of the Nigerian population live in rural areas and have benefited relatively little few years. The improvement in the welfare of the average Nigerian will therefore enquire a substantial increase in rural income. Accordingly, in the allocation of scarce resources in the course of plan implementation, priority will be given to programmes and projects directly benefiting the rural population, particularly projects to increase the income of small

holder farmers and to improve the economic and social infrastructure in the rural areas.”

This is an indication that the question of how best to improve welfare for the masses of the people in the rural areas is now the focus of considerable attention.

The arguments for giving increased attention to rural development in Africa are powerful and widely accepted. Chambers (1974) identifies some reasons that stand out. Firstly, and most obviously, the majority and usually the overwhelming majority, of the people live and find their livelihoods in the rural areas. Secondly, the drift to the towns (rural-urban migration) is a matter of concern, because of the increasing crime rates and other attendant social evils. Thirdly; it is in the rural areas that most of the poorer and most disadvantaged people are found. A government which accepts these reasons has many choices of strategies for improving rural life, one of which is empowering them through the provision of information systems and services. Information when provided has to be accessible if the users will be properly empowered. Aguolu (1994) suggests that the basic infrastructures that foster development and promote information accessibility include steady supply of electricity, good roads and transportation, health, education and library services postal and telecommunication networks. poor communication and transportation facilities are regular features in developing countries which also inhibit information transfer and accessibility both internally and externally. Lack of good roads, transportation, postal and telecommunication services is a great impediment to free flow of information.

Realistically, even when the above infrastructures are available, and information is accessible to the rural people, there is a major constrain that

has to do with illiteracy. Information in form of published documents may not be useful for empowering the rural people. That is why Aguolu said that increased availability of publication may not mean wide spread accessibility because of the barrier of illiteracy and other constraints.

To overcome this constraint, the issue of telecentre can be pursued. Telecentre is simply having access to information through the use of telephones, faxes, photocopying machines, e-mail and internet services. If a community or a rural area has access to telecentre, in the words of Jensen and Esterhuysen (2001)

“their self confidence will be boosted, negativity about effecting change will be banished and many other positive benefits for development in the community will result.”

Telecentres are capable of empowering the communities they serve because they are seen as structures that can encourage and support communities to manage their own development through access to appropriate facilities, resources, training and services.

The advantages of tele-centres are numerous. Opportunities, training and business enterprise, comparison of options, personalizing informations received and upliftment of self-esteem emerges as gains. Various aspects of socio-economic and political empowerment can be achieved when telecentres tailor their services towards that direction. In the words of Jensen and Esterhuysen (2001),

“Telecentres allow entrepreneurs and business people to plan and prepare their arrangements and to communicate with partners and potential clients from a distance. Through the internet students and educators can register with educational institutions anywhere in the world; access archival inaterials or receive online instruction from central national services. Telecentres can also serve distance education students by providing educational software

packages on site and upgrading them as new educational packages are produced. Specialized services can be offered to healthcare workers, enabling them to use telediagnosics programs, or supplies pass on public health information, and to obtain specialist advice for complex health problems”.

This kind of service is referred to as “Multi-purpose” service which is capable of providing information to various groups within a community. The information will in turn empower them appropriately.

2.5.1 SOCIO–ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Unequivocally, Poverty is a reproach to human beings and they would accept every thing that will attempt to break it. This explains why information on farming activities, which remains the most dominant occupation of the rural majority, is very valuable to rural people. Since farming is one of their means of income, information on farming can provide empowerment for rural people.

Universally, Agriculture contributes significantly to the Socio-economic development of a rural area because most people depend directly or indirectly on the marketing of agricultural surplus for a substantial portion of their cash income. Bendavid–Val (1991). The social and economic status of rural people is raised as a result of income generated through the marketing of their farm products. For rural economy to be boosted, Bendavid–Val (1991) stated that agricultural produce must be marketed. Expanding agricultural production coupled with growth in a wide variety of markets is thus the basis of a sustained area economic development dynamic and it strengthens the rural area economy.

When farmers know the markets that demand their products, they would invest in enterprises that will serve such markets. Hence, their

investment would lead to more local trade and to a larger flow of export earnings into the area. More local trade and a larger flow of export earnings are at the very heart of rural area economic growth.

In a study by Abdullahi (1983), agriculture was reported to be the main national employer and the main source of national income in Nigeria. And it was stressed that agriculture has the potentialities of elevating the current abysmal living conditions of the teeming rural producers. In essence, the whole concept of rural development is related to efforts to bring about development in rural areas to the advantage of the majority, low – income populations. Development in the sense of “improving living standards of the mass of the low – income populations residing in rural areas and making the process of their development self-sustaining.”

Interestingly, One outstanding feature of many developing countries is the magnitude of their internal disparities in the degree of economic development, disparities which are expressed in their social structures. To buttress this point, Onokerhoraye (1978), observed that rural areas in most parts of these countries generally exhibit great poverty, poor health conditions and ignorance as a result of varying degrees of geographical, social and political isolation. Why should people in this era still live in ignorance when every citizen is entitled to all the social amenities available in his/her country? For example, every Nigerian is entitled to information on health. But there is this dreadful disease – HIV/AIDS that is claiming many lives in the rural areas due to ignorance. The rural people are ignorant of the fact that there is this disease. With the ideas of Press and Diggs – Hobson (2005), librarians can meet the health information needs of individuals and their communities by

meeting people where they are, not where they are required to be. Every one's health information needs cannot be met if a criterion for who should be served, where and when the service should take place is set.

The idea is that information for social empowerment can be provided by various professionals in collaboration with one another. For example, librarians or information workers can partner with the health workers to provide information that can be beneficial to the community they are serving. The librarians may not produce the information but, according to Press and Diggs – Hobson (2005), “the librarian is critical but in the background.” Information for empowerment could be passed through various means, through worship places, local schools, village squares, community meetings, elders' fora, kiosks, polices stations and health centres.

In a remarkable turnaround, policy makers have realized that rural development is significant; hence, there is an awakening to focus attention on rural development. The recent concern is related to the philosophy of self-reliance and the aspiration of the government and people of the country to become self-sufficient in the production of food items and agricultural raw materials and to increase the contribution of agriculture to the growth of the national economy Infact for a long time, the focus of rural development in all parts of Nigeria has been on the agricultural production function.

On the efforts of improving rural economy through agriculture, Onokerhoraye (1978), observed that the results of rural development schemes in terms of their contribution to raising the level of living of rural people in Nigeria have not been satisfactory. As regards the direct benefits of these schemes, they continued, various studies have shown that no

significant success has been achieved by way of influencing the peasant farmers surrounding them. Something is lacking.

It is in realization of this that the Nigerian government has been coming up with programmes such as “Operation Feed the Nation (OFN)” “National Accelerated Food Production programme (NAFPP)” “Green Revolution programme” and “National Economic Empowerment Developments (NEEDs)” at federal levels which is also taken to state levels as “States Economic Empowerment Developments (SEEDs)”. To what extent these programmes would succeed depends on how much information is available to the people that the programmes are meant for. There is no doubt that individually and collectively, an obstacle facing the rural people in Africa is poverty, and most forces creating poverty are essentially social and those must be fought. One of the major obstacles to overcome in fighting poverty is the perception of poverty itself-and of the poor. In this regard, IFAD (1993) states that perhaps, the most important point is that poor people are not idle. Nobody is simply “poor” because he/she does not work. In other words, it is not just a state of being. In this regard, “poor” is more aptly used as an adjective rather than as a noun. The rural poor are poor farmers, poor herders or poor fishermen. In short, producers who are poor; their income is earned by their labour. From this perspective, overcoming poverty means helping the poor to be more productive.

The basic element in the effort to render the rural poor in Africa more productive is the provision of information for social and economic empowerment which the rural poor have tended not to receive in the past- as a result of oversight or deliberate design. The masses of the rural poor are

self-employed but it is upon the improvement in the means of production directly accessible to them that their prosperity depends.

Health and education as social organizations are very important, but offer more if combined with the material means of making a living. IFAD (1993), identified some of the assets needed, among others, as land, water (irrigation), physical infrastructure, credit, appropriate technology and its effective diffusion, focus on the traditional crops of the poor, the promotion of off-farm income – generating activities, the enhancement of the productive role of women, preserving the environment and the promotion of people's participation in development efforts. Though there is no direct mention of provision of information systems and services, it is embedded in the concept of what is needed to fight poverty as a social problem.

In IFAD (1993), the issue of provision of roads, credit facilities, supporting rural women were discussed. As important as these infrastructures are, especially to agriculture, the rural people need empowerment to be able to appreciate the provision of these infrastructure. The empowerment comes only through the provision of relevant information systems and services.

If agriculture is the backbone of the economy of rural people, then everything including results of researches on agriculture and major climate changes should be made known to them. Confirming the assertion that agriculture is the backbone of rural economy, Phiri (1991) states that 90% (ninety percent) of the rural population in Malawi depend on smallholder agriculture for survival. The government of Malawi sees farming or agriculture as a means through which they can develop the rural sector to improve their

standard of living and to distribute social and economic benefits equitably between urban and rural areas.

These seemingly concentrated efforts on agricultural and rural development have emphasized persuading farmers to adopt improved technologies designed at research stations. A substantial research would need to be conducted, and the results published. The publication of research result should part of information service for socio-economic empowerment of the rural people.

In many countries of the world, especially, third world countries such as Nigeria and Malawi socio-economic facilities have a remarkable impact on the pattern of socio-economic life and development in the rural areas. Apart from the vital role which these facilities play in the economic life of the rural population, they also play a critical role in the maximization of the social welfare of the people. For example, while transport services enhance the process of economic growth in the rural areas by making products and markets function more efficiently.

They also increase the social welfare of the rural population, enabling them to commute regularly to places where other essential social services such as health, education and employment establishment are located. Furthermore, the provision of other public utilities such as electricity, water postal services, communication services, market places and waste disposal systems not only facilitate economic activities but also provide important and direct consumption benefits for rural dwellers. (Okafor and Onokerhoraye, 1994).

Some writers have observed that policy makers and development economists have changed their view on agriculture. Instead, development of rural non-farm activities is suggested as an alternative.

In a study by HO (1986), it was discovered that rural non farm activity assumes increased importance as an alternative or supplementary source of rural employment and income in many developing countries in Asia. The study revealed that there is a realization in many parts of the world that rural non-farm activity is important and dynamic. Given its importance and its apparent responsiveness to economic opportunities, rural non-farm activities merits special attention.

Some of these activities can be provision of farm implements, servicing of farm equipment and even transportation of farm produce. Some of these non-farm activities can be very beneficial to small and landless families. Instead of engaging in clashes and idleness, they can engage on non-farm activities. In India, Pakistan and Thailand for instance, traditional tools and farm equipment are usually made by rural craftsmen. Many modern agricultural inputs such as chemicals, fertilizers and tractors are either imported or produced by urban-based industries, but even for these, distribution and servicing may create rural non-farm employment opportunities.

The most important linkage between agriculture and rural non agricultural activities is consumer demand. In developing countries farm households spend about 30 – 40 percent of their incomes on non food items, and around 10 – 15 percent on foods requiring substantial processing. Anderson (1982) noted that for many non food goods, the transport and

marketing costs between urban and rural areas are high in many developing countries, so that local manufacturing on a small scale may be more efficient than large – scale production in urban centres. It will be more profitable for rural people to produce what they would need themselves than “importing” such things from urban areas due to cost of transportation.

Rural non-agricultural activities sometimes exist to serve external (both foreign and domestic) markets. In some economies, a substantial proportion of the handicraft commodities produced in rural areas is for urban and international markets. For example, in Iran, handicrafts (the most important being carpets) are the largest export category after petroleum, and 60 percent of handicraft production is done in rural areas, (Dhamija, 1976). In India and Chiangmai area of Northern Thailand, production of rural handicrafts is also particularly important for export or urban consumption. All that rural people need is information on what is in high demand, and some encouragement to enable them to produce such materials and their socio-economic condition will be enhanced.

2.5.2 POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

Typically, Social and economic conditions of a community are some of the areas that politicians employ to capture the minds of the people especially rural people during electioneering campaigns. When politicians are seeking for the votes of rural people, they will try to win them by promising them improvement in their farming activities, social amenities and infrastructural facilities. In most cases, these promises are short lived. From previous occurrences and experiences, What is important is for politicians to provide a

long-term benefit for the rural people through some kind of programmes or training that they will continue to be benefit long after the politicians have left office.

In Francophone Africa, Albrecht (1990) reported the efforts of politicians in stimulating socio-economic activities of rural people. They see the rural areas as units composed of grouping with diverse, even conflicting interests and power struggles. This realization made them to work on the rural people so as to turn them into confident, development-oriented partners capable of challenging the local development administration and to force them to abandon their colonial role of passive receivers of instructions. The communities were supposed to articulate their own needs and present them as projects in the national discussion of the development plan. Until the rural people are educated to depart from the mentality of colonial administration that had created lack of confidence in themselves, they cannot take responsibility and act maturely, politically.

In most probability deficiencies could be remedied by empowering them through training. Train them to take up leadership roles without competing with anybody, without trying to discredit anybody and yet they should ensure that things work the way they want them to work.

This concept, according to Albrecht (1990), was first applied successfully in Morocco and then transferred in 1959 to Senegal using the following procedure:-

- **“1st stage:** creation of an “Animation Rural” service in the Ministry of Rural Development.
- creation of a central authority
- Selection of regions for programmes
- Creation of a “centre d’ Animation” at regional department level

- Preparation of course programmes

2nd stage: Preparation of selected farmers for their role as “Animateurs Ruraux” (AR).

- recruitment of future Animateurs
- Running courses at first level

3rd stage: Mobilising communities

- Supervision, control, further training of Animateurs on the job
- Running courses; 2nd level = technical and organizational know-how
- Restructuring the rural communities in the larger projects to create “Cellules de Developement.”

4th stage: Creation of new administrative and social structures and integration in the national political system.”

The crucial state in the programme was selecting Animateurs, training them and encouraging them in their work situation. If Nigeria will adopt this process rural people could be empowered. They might not allow themselves to be tossed up and down by politicians. Information is the only tool that can empower them. Information can raise an individual or group to attain a certain level of awareness which will in turn empower him/her politically.

Undoubtedly, Political empowerment of rural people is a powerful instrument of development for a country. China is a very good example of this assertion. In accounting how China rose as a result of rural or grassroots level to date has taken place not in the cities, but in the countryside, in China’s villages.

Grassroot Local government practices in Nigeria are the options of government that should affect the rural people. Ideally, the local government system should bring government nearer to the people. The rural people should benefit from government policies through the local government. Based on the positions of Iyoha (1989) and Ola (1983), rural people can be used by

the local government authority to achieve government policies such as provision of drinkable water, public transit system, health centres, feeder roads, schools and public parks and recreation centres. The local governments can also awaken the interest of the citizens in agricultural development through the provision of extension service and modern technical inputs to the rural people.

In getting the rural people involved in the development of an area, the local government should educate the rural people. Education is an empowerment tool, and empowerment leads to development. Mohammed (2008) asserts that education is a tool for national development. The emphasis is that education practices whether formal or informal, conventional or indigenous are vital for sustainable development of a people, society, community and nation. Whether non-formal or formal education, its philosophy should be anchored on the development of an individual into a sound and effective citizen. The education of individuals in a society is a major contribution to national development.

2.6 SUMMARY OF REVIEW

In this study, Most of the literature reviewed revolved around rural people having general characteristics of being poor due to the absence of most social amenities that could provide opportunities for socio-economic development. The literature review started by examining rural sociology because rural sociology examined the rural society. In other words rural sociology involves a practical search towards issues related to rural life with due reference to the social and economic betterment of rural population.

Worldwide, Rural people are identified by the infrastructure available to them or the absence of certain infrastructure. These infrastructural indices include educational facilities, health facilities, water supply, electricity supply and communication facilities. Many writers are of the opinion that the absences of these infrastructures have negative effect on rural people.

By any yardstick, Agriculture is key to socio-economic activity of rural people. While agriculture is the most important economic activity in the rural areas in Nigeria, young people prefer office or salaried jobs. Consequently, they move “en mass” to the urban area avoiding farming which is mostly done using manual labour in the rural areas. As an antidote, information service delivery on better ways of farming, financial assistance and other agricultural activities could be provided. This could, in many ways, empower the rural people.

From the perspective of this researcher, Empowerment is improving the rural people by utilising different methods such as leadership training community development, and information provision. All these efforts are geared towards improving the socio-economic and political status of rural people.

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CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter has presented the method adopted in conducting the research. The steps followed were as outlined below:

- Research method adopted for the study
- Population for the study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Instrumentation
- Procedure for Data Collection
- Procedure for Data Analysis

3.1 RESEARCH METHOD ADOPTED FOR THE STUDY

The study was designed to find out the type of information resources and services available in rural areas and establish the purpose for which these information resources and services were used. Therefore, the descriptive or survey method was adopted. Survey method according to Asika (1990:13) focuses on describing the present situation in relation to the demand of the study. In agreement with this position, Ali (2006) states that survey is a type of descriptive research which uses sample data to describe and explain what is existent or non-existent on the present status of a phenomenon being investigated.

The choice of this method was in agreement with Kerlinger's (1973) position on survey or descriptive research. He states that

“Survey research studies large and small populations (or universes) by selecting and studying samples chosen from

the populations to discover the relative incidence distribution and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables.”

In this study, therefore, the survey was carried out to identify the present status of information resources and services for socio-economic and political empowerment of rural people.

3.2 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The target population of the study was the rural people in the three (3) geo-political zones of the Northern states of Nigeria, namely North East, North Central and North West. Three (3) states represented these zones. The States were Gombe, Nasarawa and Zamfara. They were identified as the less developed states from their respective zones. There were several reasons that suggested the identification of these states as the less developed or backward states. But because this study was on information for socio-economic empowerment, only reasons related to this phenomenon were used as the yardstick as stated below:

- Education has emerged as key to the attainment of any development and was therefore used. The backwardness of the population educationally has been exhibited in their inability to fill their quota in tertiary educational institution admission as discovered in Ahmadu Bello University (A.B.U), Zaria Academic Office (2006).
- Funding of Agricultural development programme is a major source of rural economic development. The states identified as the population have weak funding as indicated in Agricultural performance survey (2008).

- These states were carved out of bigger ones i.e Gombe from Bauchi, Nasarawa from Plateau and Zamfara from Sokoto. Hence, they did not compare favourably with their mother states in terms of socio-economic and political development.

In order to narrow down the population, the researcher further identified the Local Government Areas (LGA) that were more rural from each state by classifying the LGAs in each state into urban, semi-urban and rural. Only the rural LGAs were taken as the population of the study. This is presented in table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Population of the study

S/No	Zone	State	Rural LGA	Population
1	A North East	Gombe	1. Funakaye 2. Kwami 3. Balanga 4. Shogom	236087 195298 212549 <u>151520</u> <u>795,454</u>
2	B North Central	Nasarawa	1. Kokona 2. Wamba 3. Awe 4. Keana 5. Obi	109749 72894 112574 79253 <u>119077</u> <u>493,547</u>
3	C North West	Zamfara	1. Anka 2. Bakura 3. Shinkafi 4. Birnin Magaji	142280 186905 135649 <u>178619</u> <u>643,453</u>
Grand Total	3	3	13	1,932,454

Source: *Federal Republic of Nigeria, population official Gazette vol.94 15th May, 2007 as presented by the population census of 2006.*

3.4 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE SIZE

The technique employed in selecting the sample was area or cluster sampling. Cluster sampling is a process in which groups, not individuals are randomly selected. The first step in cluster sampling is to divide the population into cluster groups. This may be all members with similar characteristics or on the basis of geographical proximity (Olayiwola, 2007). The cluster sampling in this study was on geographical proximity.

The rural population was clustered based on rural local government areas per state per zone. In line with this, all the rural population of the local government areas in Gombe, Nasarawa and Zamfara states were considered as one cluster each.

To determine the sample size, the recommendations of Ali (2006) and Roscoe (1975) which said, if a population is large, only a small size of it that the researcher can manage well ought to be sampled were adopted. To arrive at acceptable study subjects, systematic sampling technique was employed. According to Thomas and Nelson (1996), systematic sampling technique will yield a good sample and should be equivalent to random sampling if the sample is fairly large. In the light of this a large sample of 2000 study subjects was picked using the systematic sampling technique. This decision was taken so that it could be justifiable to generalize the findings of the research as the population was large.

Table 3:2 Samples for the study.

S/NO.	ZONE	STATE	NAME OF RURAL LOCAL GOV. AREA	STUDY SUBJECTS PER LGA	TOTAL NO. OF LGA	TOTAL SAMPLE PER ZONE
1	A North East	Gombe	Funakaye Kwami Balanga Shogom	154 153 154 154	4	615
2	B North Central	Nasara w a	Kokona Wamba Awe Keana Obi	154 154 154 154 154	5	770
3	C North West	Zamfara	Anka Bakura Shinkafi Birnin Magaji	153 154 154 154	4	615
		Total			13	2000

Based on the table above, the sample distribution was based on 3 zones from which 3 States were selected comprising 13 local government areas with a total sample of 2000 for the study. This number was employed for data collection.

3.4 INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The instruments used in this study were questionnaire entitled “Information Resources and Services Provision Questionnaire”, interview and observation.

3.4.1. QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was divided into three (3) sections. The first section sought to bring out the bio-data of the subjects, the second section was

multiple choice items to determine the respondents' preference, and the third section required them to rank their responses to questions on information resources and services provision to them based on the Likert-type attitude scale to measure the opinion of respondents on the effect of the information resources and services on their socio-economic and political empowerment. That is, the items and responses were ticked in the appropriate columns according to the respondent's opinion. The scoring scale was Strongly Agree (SA) = 5; Agree (A) = 4; Undecided (U) = 3; Disagree (D) = 2; Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

3.4.2. INTERVIEW

In addition to the questionnaire, structured interview was conducted to get information from the non-literate study subjects and to have a face-to-face contact with them. The interview assisted the researcher in gathering information from the respondents on some of the areas on level of use of information sources.

3.4.3 OBSERVATION

The researcher went to few locations and also requested the research assistants to see whether there were facilities put in place in the rural areas which could motivate the rural people to seek information for their socio-economic and political empowerment. Such facilities included libraries, viewing centres equipped with audio-visual materials and reading rooms.

3.5 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF INSTRUMENTS

A validity and reliability test of the instrument was conducted. This was necessary because according to Thomas and Nelson, (1996), reliability test gives confidence for a test instrument. In other words, it makes an instrument dependable. The validity and reliability test were carried out for both content and construct of the instruments.

3.5.1 CONTENT AND CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

The content and construct validity of the instrument was carried out by subjecting the questionnaire to vetting by experts and three (3) Senior Lecturers in the Department of Library and Information Science. Their comments and observations were used in the final draft for the study. Also the questionnaire was administered to a rural area that would not be part of the sample of the study. These steps were necessary because the researcher wanted to make sure the contents and constructs of the questionnaires were in line with the ability and experience of the sample i.e. rural populace. The items accepted and corrected were used as the draft of the instrument.

3.5.2 RELIABILITY

The items in the questionnaire were subjected to the test for reliability. The Split-Half method of measuring reliability was used and the reliability coefficient was found to be 0.86. In this method, the questionnaire was administered to a rural area that would not be part of the study. Copies of the questionnaire returned were numbered. All odd numbers constituted one half and even numbers the second half. The responses in the two sets of the

questionnaires were correlated. The correlation or reliability value obtained is referred to as internal consistency measure according to. Ali (2006). Based on this exercise, the questionnaire was found to be reliable and capable of producing a good result.

3.6. PILOT STUDY

After the content validation of the questionnaire through subjecting it to scrutiny by senior members of staff of the department (and corrections made), a pilot study was carried out using one (1) local government in Nasarawa state that was exempted from the sample of the study.

The pilot study was to determine the extent to which the data collected were relevant to the problem of the research and to find out whether the instrument was valid, appropriate and useful for the research as recommended by Sambo (2005) and Ali (2006).

The subjects that participated in the pilot study were eighty (80) in number, five persons were used to assist the researcher in administering the questionnaire. For those who could neither read nor write in English language, the questions were translated to the languages of the respondents by the assistants.

The questionnaire consisted of one hundred and thirty six (136) items. The results of the pilot study were used to determine:

- a. the difficulty level of each questionnaire item
- b. reliability coefficient of the questionnaire
- c. the appropriate duration for the completion of the questionnaire.

The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was determined using split – half method. This method was adopted because only one set of questionnaire was administered to the subjects. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was found to be 0.86. It was within the theoretically acceptable range suitable for use according to Satterly (1986).

3.7 PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

The researcher with the help of assistants administered the questionnaire to the study subjects. In collecting the data, two weeks were used to distribute and collect back the administered questionnaire from the subjects in the study. Before then, research assistants were trained on how to translate and administer the questionnaire. The training was done on how the respondents would be approached and how they would translate the question in the questionnaire in the language that the respondents understood most.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

The data that were collected from the research instrument were analyzed using frequency tables and percentages in form of descriptive statistical tool. This was done to define the type and frequency of the most used information resources and services, as well as to determine the easiest way of accessing information resources and services available.

The hypotheses were tested with inferential statistics specially hypotheses 1 and 2. Hypothesis 3 was tested with 2 samples T-test because of the two groups involved in the test. Hypotheses 4 and 5 were tested with

ANOVA because of the multiple levels of the independent variables. The use of those inferential statistics was informed by the dependent variables. All the tests were carried out at the 0.05 level of significance.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the report is given on how data collected from the three geopolitical zones of the Northern States of Nigeria in relation to information resources and service provision for socio-economic and political empowerment of rural people in the zones were descriptively and statistically analyzed. Statistical analysis was used to complement the descriptive analysis. The first part of the analysis consisted of the demographic variables of the respondents presented in a table of frequencies and percentages. The variables were also graphed to enhance visual comprehension. The second part of the chapter was made up of the analysis of the variables like the types of information, sources of information and media through which information were disseminated to the rural people. Other issues included in the analysis were the usage of the different information received by the people for socio-economic and political empowerment. The hypotheses of the study were tested and the discussions of the findings were presented in the last two sections of the chapter.

4.1 RESPONSE RATE

Of the total number of 2,000 copies of questionnaire distributed to the respondents, 1925 (96.00%) were returned duly completed. The response rate was high due to the fact that the research assistants that were recruited were highly committed and were indigenes of the areas so they were able to follow the respondents carefully until they retrieved most of the questionnaires

distributed. Table 4.1 and figure 1 below shows the distribution and response rate by zones.

TABLE: 4.1 RESPONSE RATE

ZONES	NO. ADMINISTERED	NO. RETURNED	PERCENTAGE
A North East	615	596	97%
B North Central	770	746	97%
C North West	615	585	95%
Total	2000	1927	96%

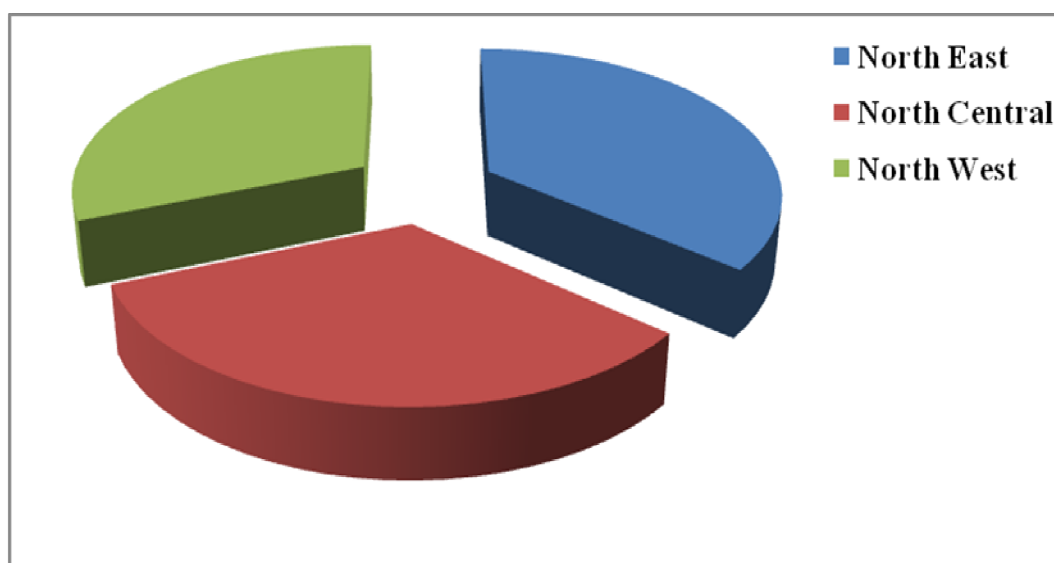


Fig. 1: Classification of the respondents by geopolitical zones

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

This section sought to discuss the ways data collected for the study were analyzed. This was done under two sections; section one presents the descriptive analysis while section two discussed the statistical analysis.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The descriptive analysis provided a clear view of the areas in the questionnaire that assisted to answer the research questions. These were presented under headings seen below.

4.2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

The classification of the respondents' ages in table 4.2 below revealed a relatively proportionate distribution across the age ranges except in the last age range of 61 years and above where the respondents in that category were ostensibly few. In terms of educational qualification, the table revealed the true rural characteristics of the respondents. From the distribution, majority 715 (37.1%) of the respondents did not have what could be referred to as formal education. Interestingly, 203 (10.5%) of the respondents acquired not only formal education but Diploma and Degree Certificates. The implication of this finding is that if new programmes are designed and people are needed to assist in the implementation, these respondents could be identified and used as strategic points of focus groups. Out of all the respondents 1271 (66.0%) of them were males and 656 (34.0%) were female. This unequal representation of the gender in the study was partly due to accessibility problems encountered in the administration of the questionnaire. Farming was found to be the dominant occupation of the respondents as indicated in

the table. This accounted for 1110 (57.6%) of the total number of the respondents. Trading and business closely followed farming with 216 (11.2%). It is not surprising to find out that the respondents who were involved in civil service in the area constituted the least with only 85 (4.4%) because there were not many institutions in the rural areas to offer them employment. This partly explains why the large migration of rural people to the cities.

Table 4.2: Classification of respondents by their demographic characteristics

Variables	Variable classification	Frequency	Percentage
Age	20yrs and below	201	10.4
	21– 30 yrs	377	19.6
	31 – 40 yrs	464	24.1
	41 – 50 yrs	283	14.7
	51 – 60 yrs	535	27.8
	61yrs and above	67	3.5
	Total	1927	100.0
Highest Educational qualification	No formal education	715	37.1
	Adult literacy	326	16.9
	Primary	399	20.7
	Secondary	285	14.8
	Diploma	141	7.3
	Degree	62	3.2
	Total	1927	100.0
Gender	Male	1271	66.0
	Female	656	34.0
	Total	1927	100.0
Marital status	Married	1010	52.4
	Single	917	47.6
	Total	1927	100.0
Occupation	Farming	1110	57.6
	Trading & business	216	11.2
	Artisan	119	6.2
	Civil service	85	4.4
	Others	397	20.6
	Total	1927	100.0

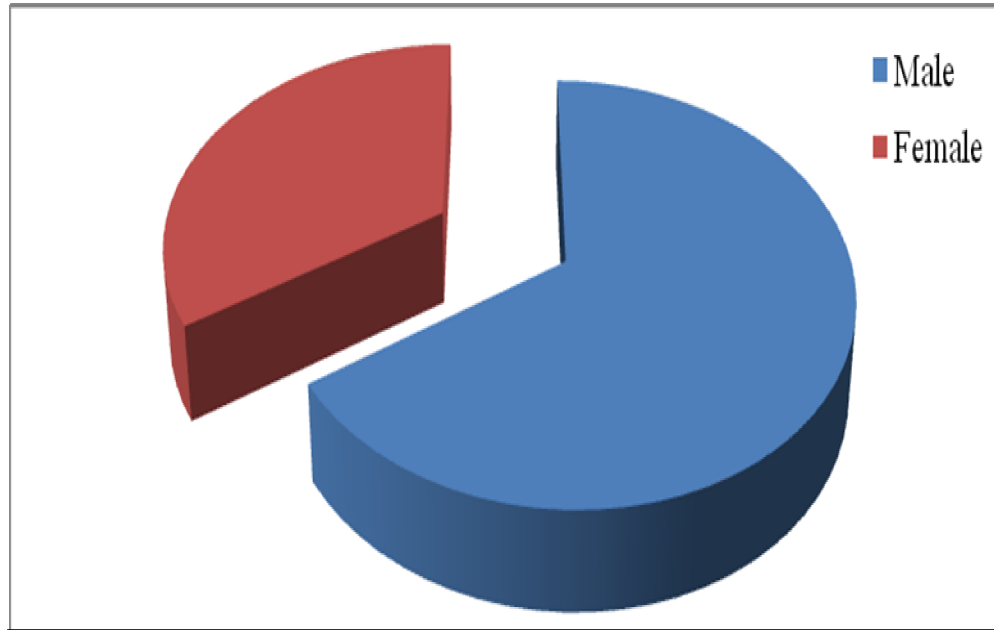


Fig. 2: Classification of the respondents by gender

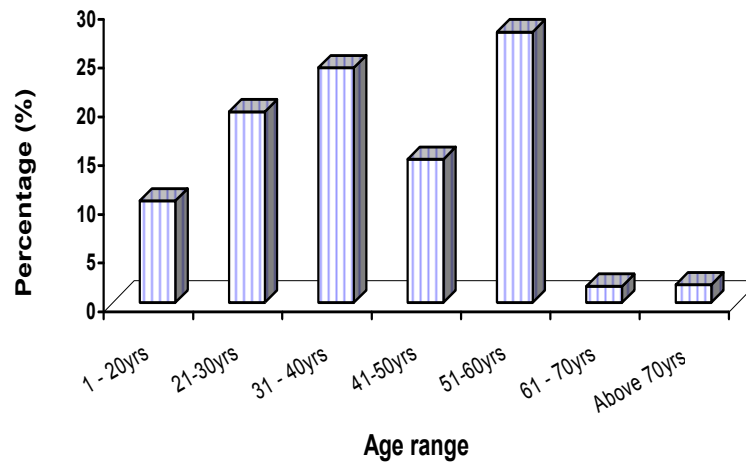


Fig. 3: Classification of respondents by age range

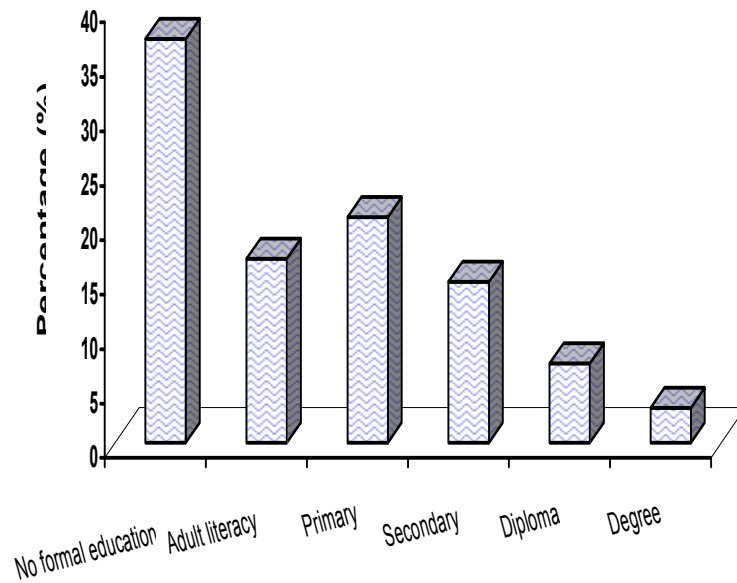


Fig. 3 : Classification of the respondents by educational level

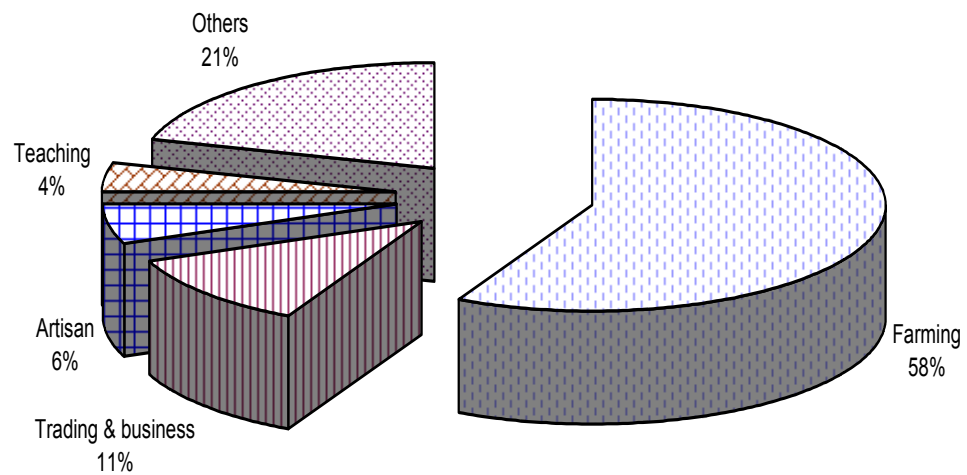


Fig. 5 Classification of the respondents by occupation

4.2.2: TYPES OF INFORMATION RECEIVED BY THE RURAL PEOPLE FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

One of the major objectives of this study was the identification of the types of information available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the three geopolitical zones selected for this study. To achieve this, the information received by the respondents were classified into two groups. These were information on socio-economic empowerment and those required for the political empowerment of the people in the area. The opinions of the respondents on the types of information they received with regard to these two variables in the area were sorted out and the result presented in table 4.3 below. The table is partitioned into two sections to allow comprehension of the dichotomous nature of the type of information they received in the area.

Table 4.3: Types of Information received by the rural people

SOCIO-ECONOMIC			SOCIO-POLITICAL		
TYPES OF INFORMATION RECEIVED	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	TYPES OF INFORMATION RECEIVED	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Fertilizers	470	24.4	NAPEP	286	14.8
Agric loan	438	22.7	Community Development	371	19.2
Method of farming	442	22.9	Local Government News	394	20.4
Improved seeds	661	34.3	State news	388	20.1
Pest control	670	34.8	Scholarship	120	6.2
Crops in high Demand	345	17.9	School admission	328	17.0
Marketing of Crops	550	28.5	Coronation	250	13.0
Storage methods	584	30.3	Politics	328	17.0
Seeds	472	24.5	Drugs news	130	6.8
Fadama projects	369	19.1	Business	405	21.0
Prices of local Commodities	431	22.4	Health	379	19.7
Water conservation	18	0.9	Cultural activities	405	21.0
Farming	655	34.0	Social activities	1367	70.9
Water treatment	18	0.9	Child care	629	32.6
Job vacancies	12	0.6	NEEDS	258	13.4
Food and Nutrition	669	34.7	SEEDS	472	24.5

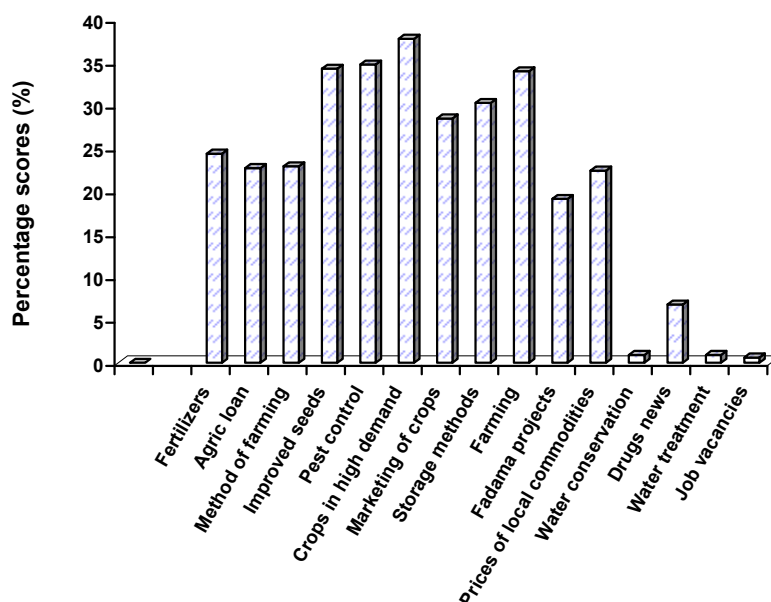


Fig. 6: Respondent' opinions on socio-economic information received in the area

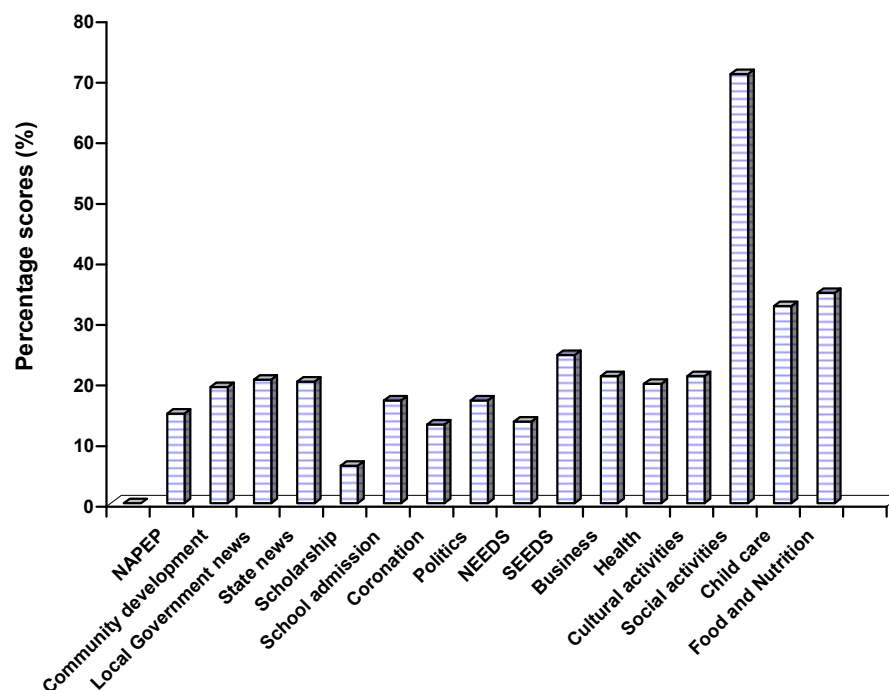


Fig. 7: Respondents' opinions on the type of socio-political information received in the area

above indicated that not many of the rural people actually received the necessary information they needed for their economic and political empowerment. This is evident as no percentage in the table exceeded (35%) in both socio-economic and political activities.

To buttress the above finding, it can be argued that though 1110 (57.6%) of the respondents were involved in farming or agricultural-related activities as observed in table 4.2, yet those who really received information needed for improvement in areas such as fertilizer application 470 (24.4%), farming – 655 (34.00%) crops storage method – 584 (30.3%) etc were very few. This meant that more than half of the farmers who needed this information on improvement in the sector did not actually have such information. This pattern was not different from other socio-economic fields as indicated in the table. Only 438 (22.7%) received information on agricultural

loan facilities while 442 (22.9%) received information on improved methods of farming. The slight improvement in the percentages of the respondent who received information on improved seeds – 661 (34.3%) and pest control – 670 (34.8%) could be attributed to the individual private entrepreneurs who used various strategies in marketing their products.

Considering the fact that agriculture is the major occupation of the respondents as observed in this study, it would be expected that programmes targeted at the peoples' socio-economic and political empowerment would include provision of information on agriculture. This observation is consistent with that of Abdullahi (1983) and NAERLS, (2008) where agriculture was reported to be the main national employer and one of the sources of income in rural Nigeria. In spite of this fact the rural people didn't have adequate information on Government fertilizer supply, availability of seeds, seedlings and herbicides/pesticides. From the general information available to the respondents in the zones, agricultural information was found to be inadequately provided. This was observed in the provision of information on fertilizers, Fadama Project, irrigation management and methods of farming which most respondents did not seem to have much information about in the zones.

In order to further buttress the opinion that entrepreneurial strategies were responsible for the relative high awareness of the respondents' information on seed and pest control, 661 (34.3%) and 670 (34.8%) of the total respondents agreed that they received information on improved seeds and pest control respectively in the areas. A further increase of the respondents' response was observed in areas of storage of the agricultural

produce. This further reflected the effort of the private enterprise in the process of marketing their goods. Not many of the respondents were aware of the Fadama Project which was a programme designed by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) to enhance the rural dwellers economic activities. In the table, only 369 (19.1%) of the respondents received information on such matters.

The socio-political information did not fare better in the area covered by the study. For example, data on table 4.3 and figure 7 above showed that information on National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) as indicated by 286 (14.8%) ranked among the least information received by the people. The low awareness of this programme in the rural area could be a source of concern since it was one of the cardinal programmes of the government towards the reduction of poverty among the people. This could be attributed to the attitude of individuals who divert such facilities to urban areas. For example “KEKE NAPEP” was meant to assist alleviate rural people’s transportation problem but most of it was found in the cities instead of the rural areas. This was because information on how to access funds and assistance to acquire such facilities was not at their disposal. In the same vein, information from local and state governments did not really get to most of the people in the areas. As indicated in Table 4.3 and figure 7 very few of the respondents tended to receive information relating to those agencies. Even in areas of community development, most people in the area did not receive such information. Only 371 or (19.2%) of them said they received such information in the area. This was also the pattern of the information relating to Local Government news and State news. It would be expected that

the era of democracy would be accompanied with its information accessibility by the rural people. From the observation in this study, only 328 (17.0%) of the total respondents said they received political information in the area.

In this era of democratic changes and political development, it was expected that the rural people could easily be mobilized through effective dissemination of information. This was especially so since electoral votes from the people would be needed for elective offices in the areas. What was observed was that most of the respondents were not aware of the political activities in the zones that could possibly empower them politically. They needed to know that as electorates they had the right to challenge their political representatives if they performed below expectation.

In the areas of education, access to information was worse. As indicated in table 4.3 and Figure 7, only 12 (0.6%) respondents said they received information on scholarship and only 328 (17.0%) were receiving information on school admission. This same pattern of access to information was exhibited in areas of job opportunity where only 12 (0.6%) had access to such information. Again, the educational level of the rural people was so low that not many of them could secure salaried jobs. To compound the jinx, the jobs were not available in the rural areas due to absence of infrastructures. What was however clear in the finding was that information that was circulated through privately motivated strategies, tended to reach the people in the area than information that emanated from the government even where such information was for the benefit of the people.

Another interesting finding of this study worth discussing was the information respondents received with regard to social activities. This

recorded the highest 1367 (70.9%) in both socio-economic and political activities. Little wonder profit-inclined organizations such as suppliers of general goods, GSM providers, vendors of packaged food and other itinerant salesman were increasingly utilizing social events to market their products. This may equally mean that in order for other non-profit organizations like libraries and information centres to fare well, the use of social events for the dissemination of information is very essential.

The implication of the above findings is that rural communities are starved of information concerning both socio-economic and political empowerments. Even with government Projects, such as the Fadama projects NEEDS SEEDS, NAPEP, etc, rural communities have not actually received the required information for them to participate. This might have contributed adversely to the reasons why these laudable government programmes have not succeeded.

4.2.3 TYPES OF MEDIA AVAILABLE FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INFORMATION TO THE RURAL PEOPLE

The second objective of this study was the identification of the information media that were for the dissemination of information for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the three geopolitical zones studied. In order to investigate and achieve this objective, the media used in the dissemination of information to the people in the area under study were assessed based on availability to the rural people. The two variables (type of media and level of availability of the media) were tabulated so as to comprehensively address the objective and provide answer to the

research question. The selected media are tabulated in table 4.4 and figure 8 & 9 below with the level of accessibility to the respondents.

Table 4.4: Types and levels of Availability of media

Information Media	Not Available	Available
Village Head/ Traditional Rulers	208 (10.8%)	1,719 (89.2%)
Radio	14 (0.7%)	1913 (99.2%)
Television	14632 (76.8%)	464 (24.1%)
Bill Board	1904 (98.8%)	23 (1.2%)
Government Circulars	1904 (98.8%)	23 (1.2%)
Newspapers	1181 (61.3%)	746 (38.7%)
News Letter/Bulletin	1925 (99.9%)	2 (0.1%)
Memoranda	1925 (99.9%)	2 (0.1%)
Posters	1924 (99.8%)	3 (0.2%)
Library	1924 (99.8%)	3 (0.2%)
Town Criers	1110 (57.7%)	817 (42.3%)
Community Dept. Leaders	1109 (57.6%)	818 (42.4%)
Political Party Leaders	1150 (59.7%)	777 (40.3%)
Extension Worker	858 (44.5%)	1069 (55.5%)
Bank Representatives	1926 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)
Colleagues	2 (0.1%)	1925 (99.9%)
Friends	2 (0.1%)	1925 (99.9%)
School Teachers	766 (39.8%)	1161 (60.3%)
Cooperative societies	596 (30.9%)	1331 (69.1%)
Market squares	575 (29.8%)	1352 (70.2%)

Fig. 9: Respondents' opinions on the sources of information in the study area

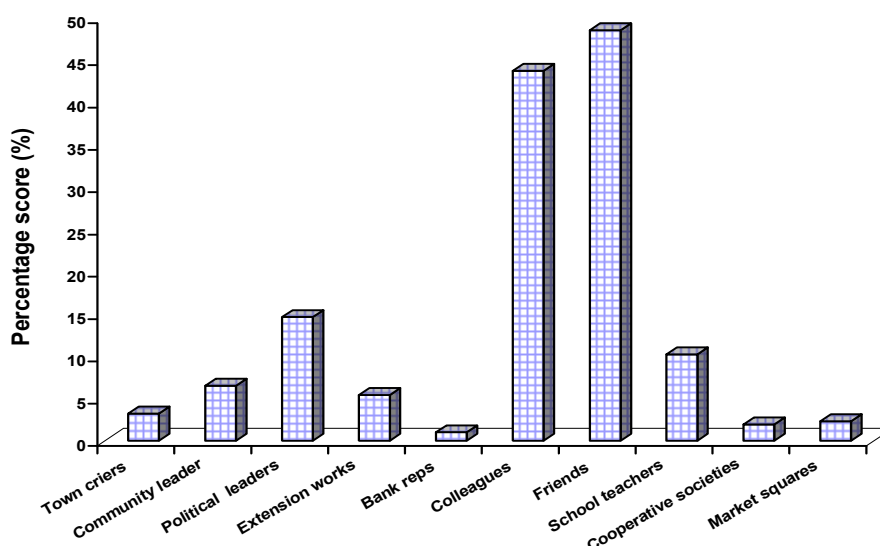
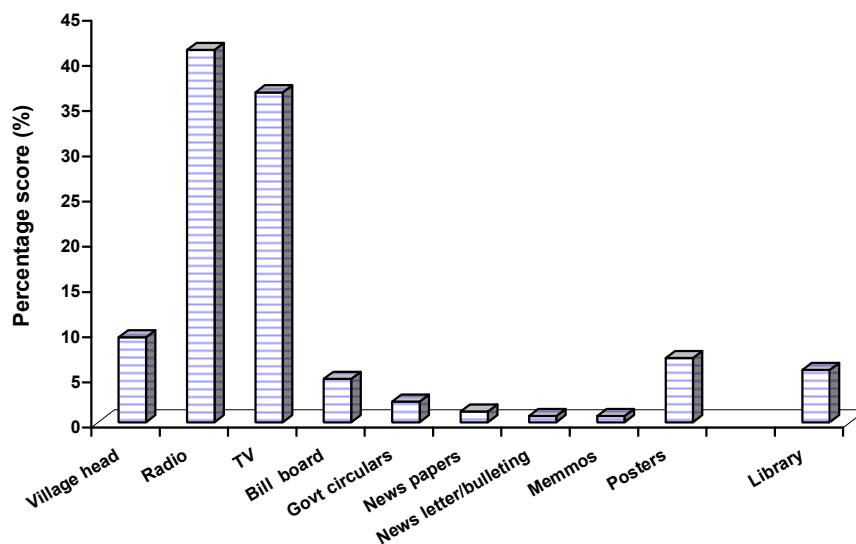


Fig. 8: Respondents' opinions on information resources available to them in the area

From table 4.4 and figures 8 & 9 above, it could be seen that the information resources/sources available to the respondents at these levels were colleagues recording 1925 (99.9%), friends recording 1925 (99.9%) radio 1913 (99.2%) and village head 1719 (89.2%) in that order. This was closely followed by market squares 1352 (70.2%) cooperative societies 1331 (69.1%) and school teachers 1161 (60.3%). The availability of these

resources/sources to rural people was in line with their characteristics-rural people are oral in nature, they prefer passing information verbally. And due to their characteristics of sameness, they have many things in common so they can easily share information on their areas of interests through these sources. Of all the sources/resources available at high levels, the radio was the only source that writers like Omenesa (1991) and USAID (2005) recommended as one of the most effective and the source that conveys information for socio-economic and political empowerment. Along this dimension, Sylvia (2005) reported that radio programmes allowed members of rural communities to gain access to information that provides education and entertainment. However, the use of these other sources could be value added advantage to the rural people.

It is not surprising that T.V as a medium for information dissemination to the rural people was not available despite its dual function of audio-visual functions. Only 464 (24.1%) respondents said such media was available to them. Lack of power supply and network connectivity were responsible for the low level of availability of this information medium. It is not also surprising that the library and printed sources of information were said to be “not available” because of the educational level of the respondents.

Based on observation, the researcher, recorded that the rural area did not have information resources that motivated them to seek to use information for their socio-economic empowerment. State library branches were only found in the Local Government Headquarters. In the villages where the bulk of the rural people were, libraries and reading rooms were absent. They only depended on verbal information passed to them via the village head. They

could not use or access information from newspapers or other printed sources due to their level of education.

Table 4.5: Extent of accessibility of information from the different media available to the rural people

INFORMATION MEDIA	NOT AT ALL	OCCASIONALLY	REGULARLY
Village head	341 (17.7%)	553 (28.7%)	1,033 (53.6%)
Radio	770 (40.1%)	485 (25.2%)	672 (34.8%)
Television	443 (23.0%)	1026 (53.3%)	458 (23.8%)
Bill board	774 (40.2%)	1133 (58.8%)	20 (1.0%)
Government circulars	770 (40.0%)	914 (47.4%)	243 (12.6%)
News papers	906 (47.0%)	970 (50.3%)	51 (2.6%)
News letter/bulleting	1,024 (53.1%)	759 (39.4%)	144 (7.4%)
Memos	1,368 (70.8%)	563 (29.2%)	-
Posters	985 (51.1%)	942 (48.9%)	-
Library	1180 (61.3%)	675 (35.0%)	72 (3.7%)
Town criers	1,095 (56.8%)	830 (43.0%)	2 (0.1%)
Community development leaders	868 (45.0%)	901 (46.7%)	158 (8.2%)
Political party leaders	442 (23.1%)	1145 (59.9%)	325 (17.0%)
Extension workers	774 (40.2%)	1087 (56.4%)	66 (3.4%)
Bank representatives	770 (40.0%)	914 (47.4%)	243 (12.7%)
Colleagues	34 (1.8%)	1423 (73.8%)	470 (24.4%)
Friends	95 (4.9%)	800 (41.5%)	1127 (53.6%)
School teachers	300 (15.6%)	871 (45.2%)	756 (39.3%)
Cooperative societies	442 (22.9%)	1124 (58.4%)	361 (18.7%)
Market squares	34 (1.8%)	1064 (55.3%)	829 (43.0%)

It was one thing for the media to be available and the other for it to be accessible. The extent of accessibility of information media by the respondents was the point of the construct in this section. Though the rating was based on Linkert five point scale, analysis of data was condensed into three levels. This means that the column conveying responses of “Regularly” and “Very regularly have been merged to “Regularly.” The column conveying

“Rarely” and “Occasionally” have been merged to “Occasionally” and the column of “Not at all” is left at that). The scores as shown in table 4.5 above point out some very important information media or resource; that were accessible to the respondents. First in this ranking was information from friends 1127 (53.6%) and village head 1033 (53.6%). These sources of information were seen to be available because of their nature. Rural people interact with one another very freely and so could easily relate information that might be of benefit to each other. Other information sources accessible to the respondents were the market squares, 829 (43.0%) of the respondents said such information source was regularly accessible. Rural people visited village markets where they trade on their local products and so they easily acquired information on various issues that affected them. Next to these sources were school teacher 756 (39.3%), then radio 672 (34.8%) Information from other sources were occasionally accessible to the respondents as the table indicates and so the frequency of their use were relatively low. This implies that most information sources and resources accessible to rural people were oral and so could easily be forgotten. There might be little impact made in their socio-economic activities.

4.2.4 LEVEL OF USE OF INFORMATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT FROM THE DIFFERENT MEDIA AVAILABLE TO THE RURAL PEOPLE

The third objective of the study was the determination of use of information for socio-economic and political empowerment from the different media available to the rural people in the three geopolitical zones. The media were rated on the rate or level of usage of information from them by the

respondents. In Table 4.6, the frequency scores along with the scale were presented along with their percentages in brackets.

Table 4.6: Level of use of information from the different media available to the respondents

INFORMATION MEDIA	NOT USED	FAIRLY USED	MOST USED
Village head	469 (24.3%)	688 (35.6%)	770 (40.0%)
Radio	34 (1.7%)	8 (0.3%)	1885 (97.7%)
Television	1708 (88.75%)	210 (10.8%)	9 (0.5%)
Bill board	813 (42.1%)	1083 (56.1%)	31 (1.6%)
Government circulars	1024 (53.1%)	692 (35.8%)	211 (11.0%)
News papers	1142 (59.2%)	581 (30.1%)	204 (10.5%)
News letter/bulleting	626 (32.4%)	1097 (56.8%)	204 (10.5%)
Memos	582 (30.2%)	1163 (60.3%)	182 (9.4%)
Posters	1095 (56.8%)	759 (39.3%)	73 (3.7%)
Library	926 (47.9%)	770 (40.0%)	231 (11.9%)
Town criers	18 (1.0%)	1649 (85.5%)	260 (13.4%)
Community development leaders	1109 (57.5%)	813 (42.15%)	5 (0.2%)
Political party leaders	442 (23.0 %)	980 (50.8%)	505 (26.2%)
Extension workers	3 (0.1%)	1158 (60.1%)	766 (39.8%)
Bank representatives	1095 (56.8%)	759 (39.3%)	73 (3.7%)
Colleagues	3 (0.1%)	334 (17.2%)	1590 (82.5%)
Friends	176 (9.1%)	2 (0.06 %)	1749 (90.8%)
School teachers	868 (45.0%)	694 (36%)	365 (19.0%)
Cooperative societies	168 (8.61%)	983 (51.0%)	776 (40.2%)
Market squares	382 (19.8%)	5 (0.25%)	1540 (79.8%)

The frequency scores in table 4.6 above revealed that information from the radio and personal contacts with friends 1885 (97.7%) and 1749 (90.8%) respectively were the most used information by the respondents. Next in this hierarchy were information from colleagues 1590 (82.5%) followed by market squares 1540 (79.8%) and cooperative societies 776 (40.2%). Other most

used information were from village head 770 (40.0%), from extension workers 766 (39.8%). The least used information was from T.V. 9 (0.5%) and community Development leaders 5 (0.2%). The low number of respondents that have access to Television might have been responsible for the negligible level of use of that information source. Again, the community Development leaders lacked the ability to source for information for their members due to their limited level of education and exposure.

The rural people were not actually aware of the fact that the other sources of information not used such as the library, newspaper posters, memos, bill boards etc contained vital information for their benefit. This finding was contrary to that of Kadiri's (2001) where the library was considered to be a major source of information to rural people. However, the finding was in line with that of Adewale (2001) where it was pointed out that rural library services concept based largely on print media had little relevance to the masses in rural communities.

Efforts should be made to acquaint the rural people with those information sources by frequently using such information sources like the library to pass information to them. Similarly, the resource/sources of information that are frequently utilized by the rural people should be made available in greater measure.

4.2.5 LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FROM THE SELECTED MEDIA AVAILABLE FOR THE RURAL PEOPLE

In this section the researcher wanted to determine the level of satisfaction of the respondents in the zones studied with the information for socio-economic and political empowerment from the different media available

to them. The satisfaction of the respondents was measured in the construct on a five-point Linkert scale. The satisfaction with the information was measured on the basis of the media through which such information was received. The observed frequencies and the corresponding percentages enclosed in bracket were condensed into three point scale for each of the media in table 4.7 bellow.

**Table 4.7: Level of satisfaction of the respondents with
Information from the different media available in the area**

Information	No Idea	Not satisfied	Satisfied
Village head	15 (0.8 %)	914 (47.4%%)	998 (51.8v)
Radio	3 (0.2%)	33 (1.7%)	1891 (98.1%)
Television	1.531 (79.4%)	331 (17.2%)	16 (0.9%)
Bill board	868 (45.0%)	902 (46.8%)	157 (8%)
Government circulars	831 (43.1%)	767 (39.8%)	329 (17.1%)
News papers	774 (40. 2%%)	827 (42, 9%)	326 (16.9%)
News letter/bulleting	770 (40. 0%%)	914 (47.4%)	243 (12.6%)
Memos	813 (42.2%)	1058 (54.9%)	56 (2.9%)
Posters	1,024 (53.1%)	755 (39.2%)	148 (7.7%)
Library	1,271 (66.0%)	656 (34.0%)	0. (0.00%)
Town criers	985 (51.1%)	942 (48.9%)	0. (0.00%)
Community development Leaders	582 (30.2%)	1326 (68.9%)	19 (1.0%)
Political party leaders	1095 (56.8%)	795 (41.2%)	37 (1.9%)
Extension works	868 (45.0%)	901 (46.8%)	158 (8.2%)
Bank representatives	517 (26.8%)	1078 (56.0%)	7 (0.4%)
Colleagues	0. (0.00%)	290 (15.0%)	1637 (85.0%)
Friends	3 (0.2%)	330 (17.1%)	1594 (82.8%)
School teachers	31 (1.8%)	466 (24.1%)	1427 (74.1%)
Cooperative societies	332 (17.2%)	571 (28.6%)	102 (53.1%)
Market squares	34 (1.8%)	622 (32.3%)	1271 (66.0%)

From the above table it could be said that among the media from which the respondents were generally satisfied with the information were radio, colleagues, friends and school teachers. In the case of the radio, for example, 1,891 (98.1%) of the respondents were satisfied with information from the radio, while 1637 (85.0%) and 1594 (82.8%) were satisfied with information received from colleagues and friends respectively. Information from school

teachers accounting for 1427 (74.1%) and market squares 1271 (66%) were next in that order. Cooperative societies 1024 (53.1%) tended to be information source through which respondents obtained satisfactory information. Of importance was the information from the village heads. In this table, 998 (51.8%) of the respondents said they were satisfied with information from the village head. Information from other media as indicated in the table such as Bill boards, library, and bank representatives did not satisfy the respondents because they were not available.

Most of such sources and resources that respondents were not satisfied with, like the library and extension workers are the professional and most effective information resources/sources that should be used for information provision in rural areas. The library could easily acquire information on socio-economic activities process and disseminate same through either extension workers or other channels. This would be a more reliable way of providing information since the librarian is a professional in that area.

4.2.6 THE LEVEL OF ADEQUACY OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF THE RURAL PEOPLE

The opinion of the respondents on the adequacy of information for socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the three geopolitical zones was the next objective addressed in this section. The focus of the construct here was to gauge the general perception of the respondents on the adequacy of socio-economic and political empowerment information to the people in the area. The Assumption was that information provision could act as service provider to the people. The items selected were those that

dealt with agricultural production, marketing of agricultural produce, government related programmes for the enhancement of the economic activities of the people and political empowerment. Others were information relating to social infrastructure and amenities provided by government in the area. The socio-cultural activities among the people were also evaluated with some of the items. The construct also looked at the factors determining the respondents' ability to adequately acquire such information in the area as indicated in Table 4.8. Below:

Table 4.8: Adequacy of information available for Socio-Economic Empowerment of the rural people.

S/No	Socio-economic and political empowerment information	Adequate	In adequate	Undecided
1	What is your opinion about the availability of information to you on the production of economic crops?	53 (2.8%)	1242 (64.5%)	632 (32.8%)
2	How will you assess the adequacy of the information on the availability of fertilizer to you?	400(20.7%)	1095 (56.8%)	434 (22.4%)
3	How adequate is information on new methods of improved crops production made available to the community	209 (10.8%)	1196 (62.9%)	522 (27.1%)
4	Assess the availability of information on the rise and fall of farm produce made to you	22 (1.1%)	1099 (57.1%)	806 (41.8%)
5	How adequate is the information to you on the purchase of governments' subsidized fertilizer?	807 (41.9%)	863 (44.8%)	257 (13.3%)
6	Assess the information received about prices of farm produce before taking them to the market	54 (2.8%)	1070 (55.5%)	803 (41.7%)
7	How adequate is the information on socio-economic programs by local, state and Federal Governments publicized to enable you benefit from it?	402 (20.8%)	1024 (53.1%)	501 (26.0%)
8	How adequate is the availability of information to you on NGOs that give assistance for socio-economic development?	0 (0.00%)	1872 (97.2%)	55 (2.9%)
9	How much information do you receive on such government programmes like NEEDS, SEEDS, NAPEP etc?	429 (22.2%)	1350 (70.0%)	148 (7.7%)
10	How adequate will you say is the benefit you derive from government socio-economic programme?	107 (5.5%)	1242 (64.5%)	578 (34.3%)
11	How adequate are film shows in giving you better understanding of socio-economic and political activities?	1160 (60.2%)	442 (22.9%)	325 (16.9%)
12	How adequate is the information made available to you on drinking water.	0 (0.00%)	946 (4.9.1%)	981 (50.9%)
13	How adequate is information passed to you on the sales of farm produce at worship places?	1545 (80.2%)	355 (18.5%)	27 (1.4%)
14	How adequate is the information about ceremonies to enable you to participate in them	1322 (68.6%)	442 (23.0%)	163 (8.5%)

From table 4.8 above, the five Likert scales of measurement that were used to collect data from respondents were also merged to three. Thus: "Very

Adequate and “Adequate is equal to Adequate Fairly adequate and Inadequate equal Inadequate and Undecided was left as that. From item 1 in the table, there was no adequate information provided on the production of economic crops to the people in the study area. Indication for this opinion could be deduced from the first item in the table where only 53 or 2.8% of the respondents agreed that information on the production of economic crops was adequate. In the case of adequacy of information about fertilizer, only 400 (20.7%) stated that information was adequate. With regard to information on new methods of improve crops production, only 209 (10.8%) of the total respondents agreed that this information was always made available to their respective communities. In item 4 of the table, only 22 (1.1%) of the total respondents agreed that information on the rise and fall of farm produce price was always at their disposal. This explains why 807 (41.9%) of the respondents agreed that the cycle of planting and selling farm produce to purchase fertilizer was a constant thing in their respective communities. They have no knowledge of where to get assistance hence they have to find a way of making ends meet. This was indicated in item 5 of the table. This fact was further explained by the response to item 6 in the table where the respondents disagreed with the notion that they received information about prices of farm products before taking them to the market.

The respondents 402 (20.8%) disagreed with the notion in item 7 of the table that information on socio-economic programmes by Local, State or Federal Government were usually publicized to them and that they usually benefitted from such programmes. Item 8 did not fare better, none of the respondents agreed that information on non-Governmental Organizations

(NGOs) that give assistance for socio-economic development of rural people was always made available to them. The non-availability of information explains the dearth of information which was further exhibited by the respondents in item 9. Here only 429 (22.2%) of the respondents agreed that information on government efforts to improve the socio-economic status of rural people through programmes such as NEEDS, SEEDS & NAPEP was usually brought to them in their respective areas. It would not therefore be a surprise as indicated in item 10 where only 107 (5.5%) of the respondents agreed that they derived some socio-economic benefits from such government programmes. In item 11 of the table, 1160 (60.2%) of the total respondents agreed that film shows on various activities that concern them provided adequate information for socio-economic and political empowerment. The low level of information concerning the socio-economic and political empowerment permeates all aspects of the rural people. In item 12, none of the respondents agreed that information on drinking water was made available to them in their respective area. As important as the issue of drinking water is, information on this area was conspicuously absent. Since rural people's source of drinking water is not very safe, there was need to provide information on how drinking water could be purified, how they could seek for assistance from NGO's and government.

Social gatherings such as wedding or funerals and worship areas seem to play vital roles in providing adequate information to people in the area of study. This situation accounts for the high response of 1545 (80.2%). The adequacy of the information is as a result of the channels of disseminating the information. This fact is confirmed by 1322 (68.6%)

respondents who agreed that they participate actively in activities due to adequate information passed to them in their worship places.

Information providers can utilize such channels to provide awareness to rural people on information that can benefit them so as to improve their socio-economic competitiveness and political awareness.

4.2.7 THE USEFULNESS OF SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON RURAL PEOPLE'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

The study was also to identify the usefulness of the sources of information to the rural people in the three geopolitical zones studied for their socio-economic and political empowerment. This is presented in table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9: Usefulness of sources of information on the Socio-Economic and Political Empowerment of the rural people.

S/NO	SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE
1	Information we get from radio is more useful then other sources	52 (2.7%)	332 (17.2%)	1463 (75.9%)
2	Audio/visual information source is more understood than printed information source	157 (8.1%)	328 (17.0%)	1442 (74.8%)
3	Computer, internet facilities as information source is available and in use often	1099 (57.1%)	828 (43.0%)	0 (0.00%)
4	The level of education of rural people is a barrier to the use of information resources available to them	770 (40.0%)	257 (13.3%)	900 (46.7%)
5	Lack of connection to electricity does not allow us use information sources successfully	31 (1.6%)	257 (13.3%)	1639(85.1%)
6	Information on what education can do to a community has encouraged me to send my children to school	332 (17.2%)	555(28.8%)	1040(53.9%)
7	School teachers in our area are very useful in providing & interpreting information for our benefit	624 (32.4%)	32 (1.7%)	127(66.0%)
8	Our community leaders make information on community development available to us	985 (51.1%)	33 (1.7%)	942(48.9%)
9	Health workers educate us on health issues like HIV/aids bird flu etc thru health talks	30 (1.6%)	582 (30.2%)	1325(68.3%)
10	Information brought by extension workers is too technical for us to use	767 (39.8%)	810 (42.0%)	350 (18.2%)
11	We obtain loans from micro-finance banks through information from our community based groups	1278 (66.3%)	163(8.5%)	486(25.3%)
12	We obtain socio-cultural information from places of worship	355 (18.5%)	27 (1.7%)	1545 (80.2%)

In emphasizing the usefulness of the sources of information on the rural people in the study area, 1463 (75.9%) of the respondents agreed that the radio had more use on their socio-economic and political life than other

sources of information. These were indicated in item 1 of the table. In item 2, as an apparent reference to radio as a major source of information, 1442 (74.8%) of the respondents agreed that audio information source was more effective than printed information source. The respondents were equally emphatic on the effect of audio visual devices such as films, radio, TV programmes and charts for the dissemination of information. None of the respondents agreed with the opinion that computer and internet facilities as information source were effective and that they were used often in their respective communities. In item 3 of the table, the respondents did not agree that computer and its appendage resources like Internet could be seen as important sources of information in the area.

The various community leaders were considered as important sources of information to the respondents. As indicated in the expressed opinion on item 8 of the table, 942 (48.9%) the respondents agreed that their community leaders made information on community development available to them. Other sources of information available in the area included health personnel. In item 1325 (68.3%) the respondents agreed that health workers educated them on health issues like HIV/AIDS and other such diseases through health talks.

The places of worship, community leaders and health personnel in the zones were other agents that were found to be effective for information dissemination in the rural areas of the zones studied. This finding was in line with that of Okeh (2002) where it was reported that rural dwellers in developing countries relied much on change agents, traditional and social channels for the provision of their information needs.

It was observed that though these media were available, the rate at which they disseminated information on socio-economic and political empowerment to the people was below average. This finding is consistent with that of Mansary (1991) where it was noted that most rural areas of developing countries in Africa were poorly provided with material resources for development.

Agricultural extension agents are seen as sources of information available to the respondents even though their role in this perspective is minimal because of the low accessibility to most people in the area. This is indicated in item 10 of the table, where only 350 (18.2%) of the respondents agreed that they constituted information sources to them in the area. Also low in this hierarchy of information sources to the people were agents associated with financial institutions. In item 11, only 486 (25.3%) of the respondents indicated that such financial institutional representatives were effective sources of information available to them.

As one of the major determinants of accessibility to sources of information in the rural area, the effect of education and other factors like electricity for ensuring the functioning of electronic media were considered. In item 6 of the table, the respondents portrayed that lack of education was a major barrier to the use of information resources. In the item, 1040 (53.9%) of the respondents agreed that the level of education of the rural people tended to constitute a barrier to their use of information resources available to them. This, according to the respondents, had encouraged them to send their children to school. In item 5 of the table, 1639 (85.1%) of the respondents agreed that lack of connection to electricity did not allow them to use some

information sources requiring the use of electricity available to them successfully. Such items include TV sets, Computers and Films. In item 7, 1271 (66.0%) of the respondents agreed that school teachers in their respective areas were very useful in providing and interpreting information for their benefits.

Adequate power supply, is not a luxury, rather it is a necessity to achieve development of the country goals particularly of rural communities. Without it the people's socio-economic programmes meant to empower them will be paralyzed.

4.3 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The study tested five null hypotheses. These hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and T-test. The significant level of 0.05 level which is the most commonly accepted level in social science research was adopted to either accept or reject the null hypotheses.

4.3.1 TEST OF HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were raised to provide statistical validity to the solution proffered to the research questions in the study.

Hypothesis I: There is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the type of information media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.

The scoring of the type of information media was done on the basis of a three-point interval scale. In the test of this hypothesis, the One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used because of the multiple levels of the

independent variable (Zones) involved in the test. The result of the test is summarized in Table 4.10. Below.

Table 4.10: One way analysis of variance on information media by zones of respondents

Source of Variation (SOV)	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	P.	Remarks
Between Groups	275.156	2	137.578	.633	.531	Not significant
Within Groups	417913.594	192	217.324			
Total	418188.750	192				

The result in the above table revealed no significant difference among the respondents in the different zones on the type of information media available for their socio-economic and political empowerment. The observed level of significance in the test is 0.531 ($P > 0.05$). This means that the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the type of information media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people is rejected. The mean scores by the respondents in the different zones are presented in Table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11: Mean scores of the respondents on available information media in the areas

Zones	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
North Central	642	2.456	0.7495	0.0296
North West	595	2.410	0.7156	0.0294
North East	690	2.442	0.7436	0.0283
Total	1927	2.437	0.7370	0.0168

The similarities of the type of information media among the three geopolitical zones are due to the homogeneity of the characteristics of the respondents. This implies that information sharing in these zones could be made simple since information media available are similar.

The means indicated in the table are basically the same. This accounted for the no significant difference observed in the test. The aggregate mean (2.437) in the table revealed that the respondents were of the opinion that the media were available.

Null Hypothesis II: There is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the satisfaction with information from the different media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.

The levels of satisfaction of the respondents with the information provided by the available media in the areas were assessed. In the test of this hypothesis, the one-way analysis of variance was adopted to determine possible significant difference among the respondents in the three zones. A summary of the analysis of variance is indicated in Table 4.12 below.

Table 4.12: One-way analysis of variance on satisfaction with information from the available media by zones of respondents

Sources of Variation (S O V)	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remarks
Between Groups	67.195	2	33.597	.323	.724	Not significant
Within Groups	200161.518	1924	104.034			
Total	200228.713	1926				

There is no significant difference among the respondents from the different zones. The observed level of significance is 0.724 ($P > 0.05$). The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on their level of satisfaction with information from the different media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people is therefore accepted. The mean scores of the respondents on the satisfaction of information from the different media are presented in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Mean scores of the zone of respondents on satisfaction with information from the available media in the areas

Zones	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
North Central	642	2.738	1.0490	0.0207
North West	595	2.715	0.9934	0.0203
North East	690	2.728	1.0152	0.0193
Total	1927	2.727	1.0196	0.0116

The mean scores in the table were all at the same level and going by the 5-point interval scale used in the construct, the aggregate mean score (2.727) clearly indicates that the respondents were not satisfied with the

information they obtained from the different media. The idea of taking aggregate mean instead of the overall was to be able to determine the actual level of satisfaction with the information used by the respondents. Summing up the means would not be able to explain the level of satisfaction by the respondents.

This non-satisfaction with the available media encompasses all the respondents in the three zones. It implies that the information providers need to improve on their strategies of information dissemination to the people.

Hypothesis III: There is no significant difference between the male and female respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the usage of information obtained from the different media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.

This hypothesis was tested with the gender of the respondents as the independent variable. The dependent variable used is the expressed opinion of the respondents in Table 4.6. The two sample t-test was the statistical technique used in the test and the summary of the test is presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Two sample t-test on use of information by sex of the respondents

Gender	N	Mean	S. D	S. E	t-value	DF	P	Remarks
Male	1271	3.307	.7165	.0201	7.570	1925	.000	Significant
Female	656	3.060	.5997	.0234				

The test in the table revealed that significant difference existed between the male and female respondents in the utilization of information from the available media in the three geopolitical zones involved in the study.

The observed t-value is 7.570 and the level of significance observed in the test is 0.00 ($P < 0.05$). This means that the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the male and female respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the usage of information obtained from the different media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people is rejected. The result in the table showed that the male respondents tended to make use of available information from the media more than the female respondents in the different zones. The result is in favour of male respondents as reported in their mean score.

Hypothesis IV: There is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the availability of information for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.

The one-way analysis of variance was used in the test of this hypothesis because of the multiple levels of the independent variable (zones). The scores of the respondents in Table 4.3 constituted the dependent variable used in the test. The analysis of variance is summarized in Table 4.15. Availability of information for socio-economic and political empowerment is not significantly different in the three geopolitical zones.

Table 4.15: One way analysis of variance on availability of information by zones of respondents

SOV	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	P.	Remarks
Between Groups	.604	2	.302	.48	.616	Not significant
Within Groups	1197.569	1924	.622			
Total	1198.173	1926				

The result in the table did not reveal significant differences among the different respondents in the three zones on the availability of information for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people. The observed level of significance is 0.616 ($P > 0.05$). This means that the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the availability of information for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people is accepted. The mean scores of the respondents on the availability of information for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the zones are presented in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Mean scores of the respondents on availability of information in the zones

Zones	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
North Central	642	2.433	.80215	.03166
North West	595	2.389	.76825	.03149
North East	690	2.418	.79416	.03023
Total	1927	2.414	.78874	.01797

The mean as indicated in the table did not differ significantly among the respondents in the three zones. From the aggregate mean score (2.414), it could be concluded that the respondents were not of the opinion that information necessary for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people in the zones were readily available. There is need for information workers to step into this issue of making information resources readily available to rural people in the area of study.

Null Hypothesis V: There is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the sources of information

accessible to them for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.

The sources of information accessible to the respondents in the zones were assessed on a 5-point interval scale. In the test of the hypothesis, the mean scores of the respondents in the table were subjected to one-way analysis of variance because of the multiple levels of the independent variable. The summary of the result is presented in Table 4.17 below.

Table 4.17: One-way analysis of variance on sources of information by zones of respondents.

Source of Variation (SOV)	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remarks
Between Groups	.963	2	.482	1.047	.35	Not significant
Within Groups	885.392	1924	.460			
Total	886.355	1926				

The result in the table did not reveal significant difference between the respondents in the different zones on the sources of information accessible for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people ($P > 0.05$). This means that the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones on the accessibility to sources of information for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people is accepted. The mean scores for the respondents in the different zones on the sources of information accessible to them for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people are presented in Table 4.18.

**Table 4.18: Mean scores of the respondents on sources of information
in the Zones**

ZONES	N	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	STD. ERROR
North Central	642	2.4210	.67988	.02683
North West	595	2.4514	.66024	.02707
North East	690	2.3965	.69224	.02635
Total	1927	2.4216	.67838	.01545

The means clearly reveal that the sources of information accessible to the respondents in the three geopolitical zones were similar. The major sources of information were radio, friends, colleagues and places of worship. Other sources identified were health workers and community leaders in the various zones. From the outcomes, it would be seen that professional or conventional information resources and sources need to be made available and used for better results.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary of the study and findings. Conclusion was drawn and recommendations made on how to provide information service for the socio-economic and political empowerment of rural people in the area under study.

5.1. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The study investigated the information resources and services provision for the socio-economic and political empowerment of rural people in three geopolitical zones of Northern Nigeria. The variables assessed in the investigation were among others, types of information received by the rural people, the level they are satisfied with the information they receive, and the effect of the information they use on their socio-economic and political empowerment. Six research questions and five hypotheses were raised and respectively answered in the study.

The research method adopted for the study was the survey method. The population of the study comprised the rural people in the three geopolitical zones of Northern Nigeria. From each zone, one state was taken to represent their zone. It was the Local Governments that were considered to be more rural that were identified to form the population. A sample of 2,000 subjects were selected using cluster and systematic sampling techniques. Most of the respondents were within the active age of 20 to 60 years. A close

ended questionnaire, interview and observation were the instruments used to collect the data.

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive and statistical analysis. The descriptive analysis presented results of the findings in tables showing frequencies of responses and their corresponding percentages in bracket, while ANOVA and t-test were used to test the hypotheses.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5.2.1 Findings of Descriptive Analysis

1. The study revealed that most rural people received information on social activities but not many received the necessary information needed for their economic and political empowerment. For example, information on NAPEP, Fadama projects, NEEDS, SEEDS were types of information that could provide economic and political empowerment but there was a limitation of such information. On information about education related activities such as admission opportunities, the rural people didn't receive those types of information that is why the areas under study are among the educationally disadvantaged areas.
2. The commonest information media for rural people was the radio, which also happened to be identified by the respondents of this study as the most available. Many studies such as those of Omenesa (1997) and Sylvia (2005) have supported the use of the radio for information dissemination to rural people. However, the study revealed that though the radio was more available than other sources, the respondents accessed information more regularly from friends, market squares and

school teachers than from the radio. This could be attributed to the limitation of the radio.

3. The study revealed that the rural people lacked understanding of the significance of documented information resources and therefore the level of use of such information media like the library, circulars, posters, bulletins and memoranda was negligible.
4. It was discovered in the study that respondents were satisfied with information from the popular media they had identified with that is the radio, friends colleagues, school teachers and market squares. In addition to these media, the respondents were satisfied with information from the village head despite the fact that he was not so identified as a popular source through which they received information. Their level of satisfaction with information from him was due to the respect they accorded him. They believed he would not mislead them so no matter how little the information that came from him, they were satisfied with it.
5. Merging information received and the actual activities that brought about socio-economic and political empowerment was done and this revelation was made. That the respondents did not benefit seriously from information service that could grant them socio-economic and political empowerment.
6. It was discovered that places of worship were very useful in passing information to rural people but the information passed through this medium was mostly social and not economical or political. So information from the radio, school teachers, health workers, and

extension workers were still useful for economic and political empowerment.

5.2.2 FINDINGS FROM STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The Null hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-test. The following are summaries of the findings:

1. There was is no significant difference among the respondents in the different zones on the types of information media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people.
2. There was no significant difference among the respondents on the satisfaction with information from the different media available to the rural people in the three geopolitical zones. The test revealed that respondents were not significantly satisfied with the information they received from the different media.
3. There were differences between the male and female respondents on the use of information obtained from the different media available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people. This means that the male respondents made use of available information from the media more than the female respondents.
4. The research revealed that there was no significant difference among the respondents in the three geopolitical zones and that the availability of information for socio-economic and political empowerment was limited in the three geopolitical zones. This means that no zone was better than the other.

5. There was no significant difference among the respondents on the sources of information available for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the rural people. The sources of information available to the respondents in the three geopolitical zones were similar.

5.3 CONCLUSION:

From the findings of this study, it could be concluded that rural people in the Northern States need identical types of information. This is because, they have basically the same types of socio-economic activities; for example; farming still remains the major economic activity of rural people in the North. Yet, information on access to government supplied fertilizer, sources of agricultural loan, improved crop varieties and health matters was very limited to them.

The rural people in the Northern States were not satisfied with information from the different media used to disseminate information to them. Hence, It can be concluded that the rural communities have been seriously starved of information concerning both socio-economic and political activities. Surprisingly, even government activities and programmes that were designed for rural people were not sufficiently publicized for the benefits of the rural people.

It can be concluded that the females in the areas covered did not have access and do not use information as much as their male counterparts did. The disposition of women in this geographical region of this country could be responsible for this disparity. Some of the women were in “purdah”, and so did not move freely and so encountered only limited access to information.

It was also concluded that though farming still formed the major economic activity of rural people in the area, information on such activities were not available to them. This shortage of availability cut across the three geo-political zones covered. Perhaps this explained why poverty was so manifest and virtually ubiquitous. On the channels used to disseminate information to the rural people, the study concluded that satisfactory channels were not used. For example channels such as professional information workers, extension workers, cooperate societies and school teachers were not highly used. The use of such channels would likely produce better outcomes in terms of specific and generalized enlightenment.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The success of information service delivery to any target group depends on the resources, personnel and the strategy used to disseminate the information. In this light, information service delivery to rural people in Northern Nigeria needs attention for such an exercise to be successful. For this reason, the research has made a number of recommendations which are as follow:-

1. Information for socio-economic and political empowerment is mostly disseminated through public media and, sometimes, through government controlled media. Information providers with the assistance of public libraries should exploit the possibilities of processing, repackaging and disseminating such information using extension workers, social and religious places. This could emulate NGOs and profit-making enterprises such as GSM providers, marketing

companies and Teachers. who disseminate information to their target audience.

2. The library is an all encompassing information media centre that stores all the information resources that can be available in a society. The state Library Boards should take up the responsibility of ensuring that state library services collaborate with Community Information Centres and provide relevant information to the rural people. They can do this through ensuring that the Local Government Information Unit employs professionals to handle that unit. Part of the information for socio-economic and political empowerment could come from the Local Government Information unit to the rural Community Information Centre (CIC).
3. Most people in rural areas covered could not read nor access information in libraries and other places. Also the radio as a medium of information dissemination had some limitations, one of which was that no assurance existed that the information passed was being received by the target audience. To address these issues, a Community Information Centre (CIC) has been hereby recommended.
4. A model for the establishment of Community Information Centre has been proposed in this research work as Appendix A. The CIC model is to be used to provide adequate and satisfactory information to rural communities. It can be sited either in the rural reading room of the society (where there is one) or, the chief's palace's hall or the community hall (town Hall). It should be equipped with audio – visual materials that can easily be operated in the village such as DVDs and

DVD players, video cassettes and video players and television sets etc. Those socio-economic programmes could be shown to the rural people at regular intervals. The first part of the model consists of the process of collecting, processing and storing information by the information specialist. The information specialist must have found out the information needs of people. He will then use various sources of information to sort out relevant information that could be classified according to the various needs of the individuals. Those relevant information would be repackaged in various formats and stored in the information system. Dissemination of information could be done using different channels depending on the areas the information is covering. Information on education for instance could be disseminated through school teachers, family heads and youth groups while information on agriculture can be disseminated through extension workers, farmers' association leaders and Motor Driver's union. This system will enable viable information to reach its correct destination and make the information useful. For every component of the data base, information on each variable would be broken into areas of need and areas that affect the rural people most. This is to provide information at the doorsteps of the rural people which will improve their socio economic and political status.

5. In view of the fact that government programmes that are aimed at reducing poverty in rural areas do not really reach the rural people due to inadequate information, the CIC could work hand in hand with cooperative societies to ensure that information on such programmes,

e.g. Fadama project, NAPEP, Agric loans etc, are translated to the local languages and made available to the rural people.

6. With the assistance of places of worship, the Community Information Centre should endeavour to motivate the rural people to improve themselves through watching film shows on some activities that could create awareness in them. The assistance the worship places can render is through the passing of announcements across to worshippers in their various places of worship.
7. The similarities of the types of information media among the three geopolitical zones were probably due to the similarities of the characteristics of the respondents. The Community Information Centres should endeavour to get connected so that information sharing in the zones could be made possible.
8. Since socio-economic and political empowerment is not limited to males only, more females should be encouraged to make use of information for socio-economic and political empowerment as this could go a long way to reduce poverty in the zones. This is so since women play effective roles in community development in every society.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. It was observed that respondents in the three zones did not really have access to information for their socio-economic and political empowerment. It might be necessary to investigate the role of education on information accessibility for the socio-economic and political empowerment of the people in the zone.

2. It could be of academic interest to investigate the ineffective dissemination of information on government programmes like the NAPEP, NEEDS and SEEDS in the zones especially among rural communities.

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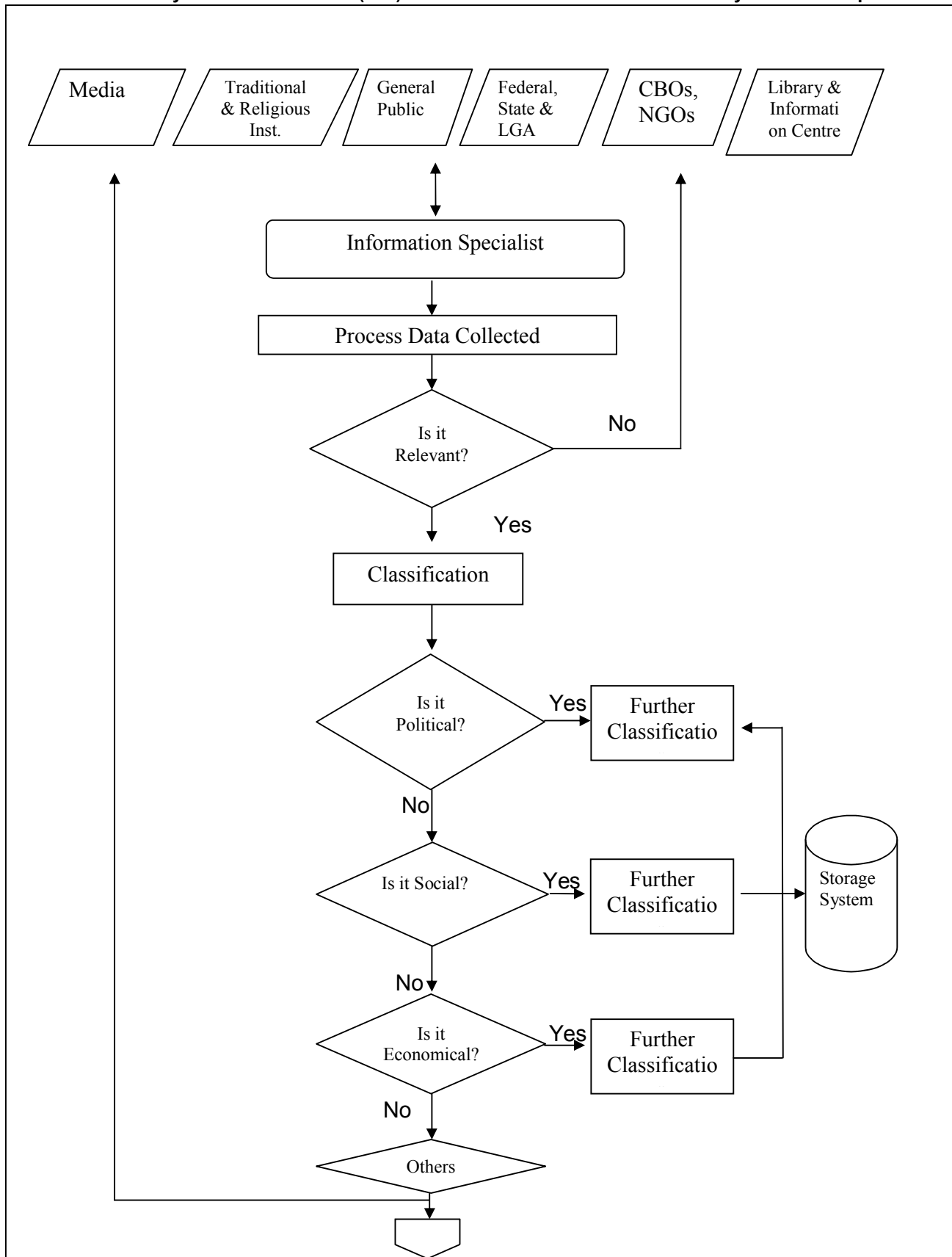
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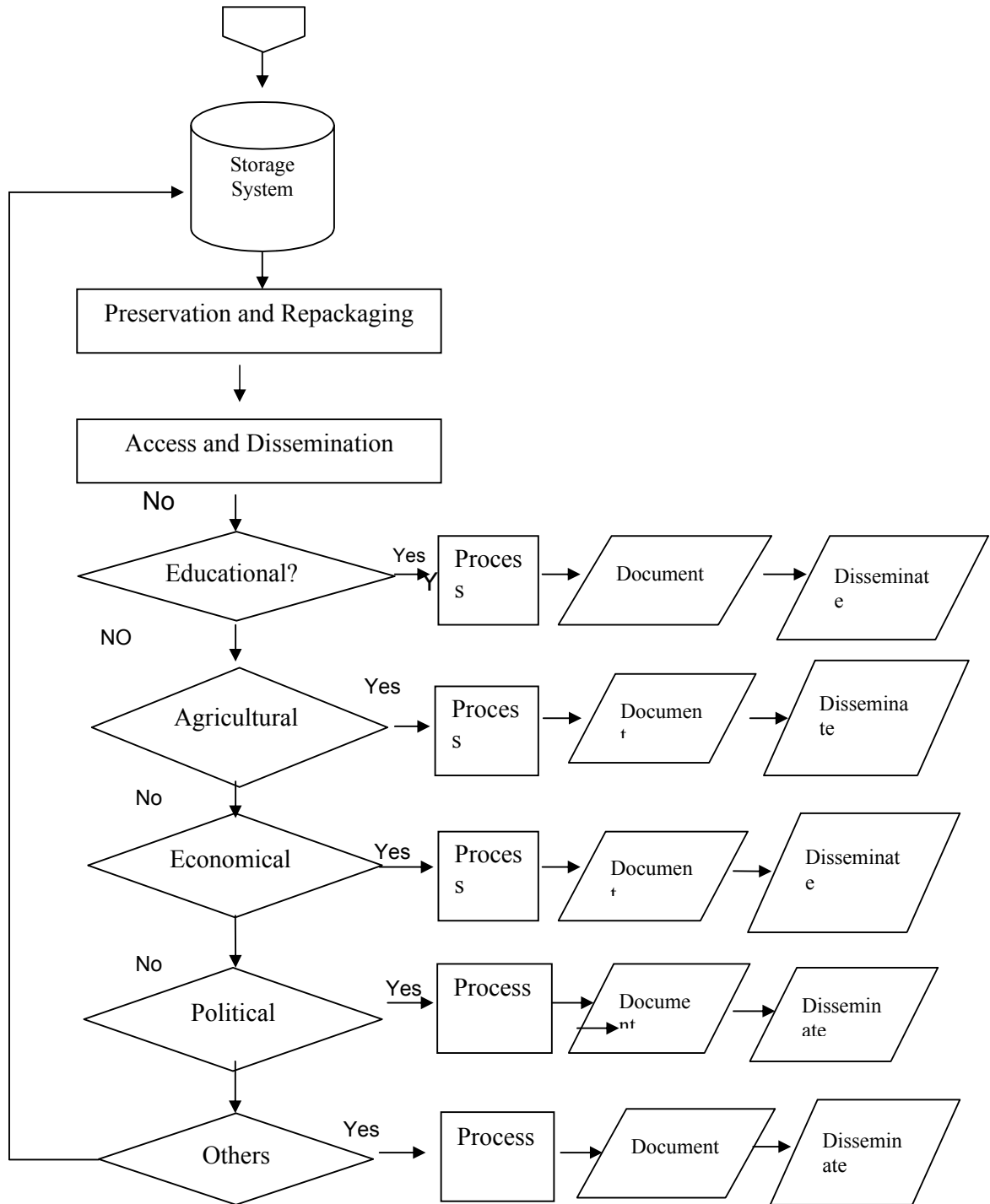
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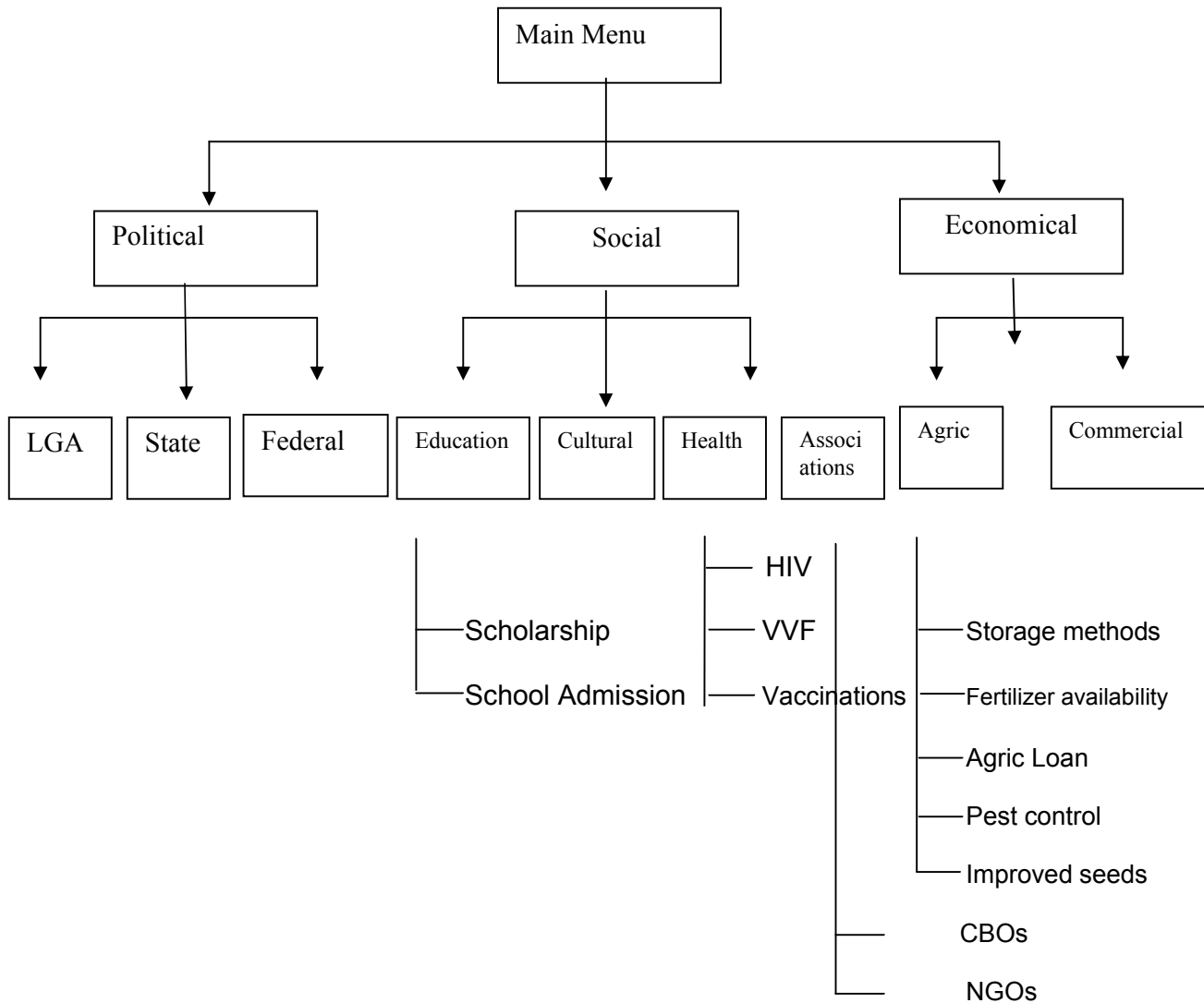
Appendix A:
Community Information Centre (CIC) Model for Information Service Delivery to Rural People



Access and Dissemination



APPENDIX B: CIC Database Structure



APPENDIX C:

Dept. of Library and Information Science,
Faculty of Education
Ahmadu Bello University,
Zaria.
Date:

Dear Sir,

This study is aimed at finding out the types of information resources and the sources of information used to obtain information in your area. We want to know how the information you receive helps you or empowers you in your Socio-Economic and Political activities and status.

The information collected will be used strictly for the study and will be treated in confidence.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. H. M. Daudu

APPENDIX D:
Information Resources and Services Provision Questionnaire
(IRSPQ)

SECTION A

Bio-data

1. State: _____

2. LGA: _____

3. Age:- _____

4. Gender M ☐ F ☐

5. Marital Status: Married ☐ Single ☐

6. Educational Qualification:

None _____ ()

Adult literacy _____ ()

Primary School _____ ()

Secondary _____ ()

Diploma _____ ()

Degree _____ ()

Any other specify _____ ()

7. Occupation:

Farming _____ ()

Trading/Business _____ ()

Transport _____ ()

Teacher _____ ()

Others specify _____ ()

8. Areas of Information needs:

Education _____ ()

Politics _____ ()

Farming _____ ()

Business _____ ()

Health _____ ()

SECTION B:**Availability and use of Information Resources**

1. Do you receive information in relation to the following activities?

Activities	Yes	No
i. Farming activities		
- Availability of fertilizer		
- Agric loan		
- New method of farming		
- Improved seeds		
- Pest control		
ii. Poverty Alleviation Programme		
- NAPEP		
- NEEDS		
- SEEDS		
- Fadama Projects		
- Rise and fall of prices of local commodities		
iii. Political activities		
- Community Development Meetings		
- Party meetings		
- Local Government Council Notices		
- State Government Notices		
iv. Educational related activities		
- Scholarships		
- Admission Vacancies		
- Job opportunities		
v. Social Activities		
- Health		
- Drugs and Drug Abuse		
- Water Disease		
- Water Treatment		
- Water Conservation		
- Wedding Ceremonies		
- Funerals		
- Coronation		
- Personal Hygiene		
- Child care		
- Food and food nutrition		

2. What type of information resources are available to disseminate the information on above activities?:-

S/No	Information Resources	Always Available	Not Always Available	Not Available
1	Village Head			
2	Community Development Leaders			
3	Political Party Leaders			
4	Market square			
5	Extension workers			
6	Radio			
7	T. V			
8	Bill Boards			
9	Government circulars			
10	Newspapers			
11	News letters/Bulleting			
12	Memos			
13	Posters			
14	Library			
15	Bank representatives			
16	Cooperative societies			
17	Colleagues			
18	School Teachers			
19	Town Criers			
20	Friends			

3. Which do you use most and which ones do you use least? (Most 1 followed by 2 then by 3 least 4 used is). Describe your level of information resources usage (1=most used 2 = more used 3 = fairly used 4 = least used

S/No.	Sources	1	2	3	4
1	Village Head				
2	Community Development Leader				
3	Political Party Leader				
4	Market square				
5	Extension worker				
6	Radio				
7	T. V				
8	Bill Board				
9	Government circulars				
10	Newspapers				
11	News letters/Bulleting				
12	Memos				
13	Posters				
14	Library				
15	Bank representatives				
16	Cooperative societies				
17	Colleagues				
18	School Teachers				
19	Town Crier				
20	Friends				

4. How often do you use the information resources available to you?

S/No	Information Resources	Frequency of use			
		Very regularly	Regularly	Occasionally	Rarely
1	Village Head				
2	Radio				
3	T. V				
4	Bill Board				
5	Government circulars				
6	Newspapers				
7	News letters/Bulleting				
8	Memos				
9	Posters				
10	Library				
11	Community Development Leader				
12	Political Party Leaders				
13	Extension workers				
14	Bank representatives				
15	Colleagues				
16	Friends				
17	School teachers				
18	Cooperative societies				
19	Market square				
20	Town Criers				

5. How satisfied are you with the information resources you use to get information?

S/No	Information Resources	Level of satisfaction			
		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Undecided
1	Village Head				
2	Community Development Leaders				
3	Political Party Leaders				
4	Market square				
5	Extension workers				
6	Radio				
7	T. V				
8	Bill Boards				
9	Government circulars				
10	Newspapers				
11	News letters/Bulleting				
12	Memos				
13	Posters				
14	Library				
15	Bank representatives				
16	Cooperative societies				
17	Colleagues				
18	School Teachers				
19	Town Criers				
20	Friends				

SECTION C

Information Services for Socio-Economic and Political Empowerment.

Tick the option applicable to you

S/No	Discussions	VA	A	FA	IA	UD
1	What is your opinion about the availability of information to you on the production of economic crops?					
2	How will you assess the adequacy of the information on the availability of fertilizer to you					
3	New or Various methods of improving crops production is always made available to our community.					
4	Assess the availability of information on the rise and fall of farm produce made to you.					
5	How adequate is the information to you on the purchase of fertilizer?					
6	Assess the information received about prices of farm produce before taking them to the market					
7	How adequate is the information on socio-economic programs by local, state and Federal Governments publicized to enable you benefit from it?					
8	How adequate is the availability of information to you on NGOs that gives assistance for socio-economic development?.					
9	How will you assess the information on government efforts to improve your socio-economic status through programs like NEEDS, SEEDS and NAPED?					
10	How adequate will you say is the benefit you derive from government socio-economic programme?					
11	How adequate are film shows in giving you better understanding of socio-economic and political activities?					
12	How adequate is the information made available to you on drinking water.					
13	How adequate is information passed to you on the sales of farm produce at worship places?					
14	How adequate is the information about ceremonies to enable you participate actively in them?					
15	Computer/Internet facilities as an information source is available and in use often					
16	How is the education level of rural people in relation to the use of information available?					

17	What is the level of electricity in relation to use of information sources					
18	How much information do you receive and use on what education can do to your society.					
19	How much do school teachers contribute to information provision in your locality?					
20	How adequate is information brought to you by health workers to enable you know about HIV AIDS Bird flu Swan flu etc.					
21	Health workers educate us on health issues such as HIV/Aids, Bird flu, swine flu etc through health talks					
22	Information on how to handle drinking water is made available to us					
23	Information on weddings or funerals are passed to us through our various worship places					
24	We participate actively in ceremonies due to adequate information passed to us					
25	How adequate do community base groups provide information about micro finance banks and other financial supports.					

VA = Very Adequate

A = Adequate

FA = Fairly Adequate

IA = Inadequate

UD = Undecided