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AVAILABILITY AND ADEQUACY OF INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR RURAL RICE FARMERS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND AGRICULTURAL CENTERS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the availability and adequacy of information resources for rural rice farmers in public libraries and agricultural centers in Anambra State. The purpose of the study is to ascertain the availability of print and electronic information resources, ascertain the adequacy of the available information resources in meeting the information needs of rural rice farmers. Three research questions guided the study. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 860 registered rural rice farmers in Anambra State. The study used Taro Yamane's sampling formula to determine sample size of 273 rural rice farmers from the selected local government areas in Anambra State. The instrument for data collection was observation checklist. Data collected was analyzed using percentage. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) guidelines for public libraries resources was used as standard to measure adequacy of information resources. The findings of the study revealed among others that many of the print resources are available while large number of electronic resources are not available. Also, most of the information resources available are not adequate in the public libraries and agricultural centers in Anambra State.

Keywords: information resources, availability, adequacy, public libraries, agricultural centers.

Introduction

Agriculture is essential to life's sustenance and the bedrock of economic growth, particularly in the provision of adequate and nutritious food for human growth, survival and industrial raw materials for the industry. Nigeria as a country is blessed with fertile soil and proper climate which is highly suitable for agricultural activities particularly rice farming. Rice farming is one of the most profitable agricultural practices in Nigeria, although rice is classified as a cash crop with high demand. The majority of farming, particularly rice farming, is cultivated in rural areas where there is enough land. Opportunities for agriculture-based businesses abound, however, farmers' productivity and profitability have been negatively impacted by limited access to available and adequate information resources as a result of insufficient budgetary allocations to the sector and poor agricultural policy implementation. This development has resulted to increasing food crisis since the quantity of food supply does not meet up with the rising demand for food, especially the staple foods that are mostly consumed in our society. Rice is one of the staple foods and product of agricultural output in the country.

It is consumed by many families and used in many ceremonies as a major part of refreshment package. Nigeria is one of the largest producer of rice in Africa, and the continent has witnessed a consistent increase in the demand of rice as a result of its popularity as a major continental diet. It is necessary that rural rice farmers are provided with the appropriate information needed for rice production.

Information resources are electronic and non-electronic (print) materials that could be sourced and accessed manually or digitally by users. Print information resources are: newspapers, magazines, bulletin, reports, books, people, journal, posters, and flyers. Electronic information resources includes: CD, DVD, television, online databases, C-D Rom databases, e-journal, e-books, radio among others. According to Hoffman, Lubell and Hillis (2015) farming knowledge is passed through formal, social and experiential education pathways. Formal learning resources transfer knowledge through text from expert to learner and the resources include agricultural journals, industry magazines, text or reference books, Internet resources and self-assessment workbooks. They further stated that experiential learning is learning by doing, where knowledge is acquired through experiences, observations and engagement with the surrounding environment. Social process is learning from the people you interact with. Information is shared among a group of individuals who have a common interest in ideas, practices, beliefs and decision-making perspectives (Huiling, Bin and Guojun,2016). The majority of smallholder farmers in developing countries especially South Africa tend to rely on the knowledge and skill that they acquire informally (Blore, 2015). Some rice farmers' access information from each other as well as with information providers. The various local information channels include farmers' group associations (unions) fellow farmers, cooperatives, middlemen, community labour organizations and committees for agriculture and financial savings clubs.

Availability of information resources is ensuring that information resources are presence in the libraries for immediate use. Availability of information resources is the extent to which the information resources is available or provided for use to users (rural rice famers).

Adejo, Adejo and Edoka (2015) conducted Assessment of Farmers Awareness of Print media in the acquisition of Agro-information in Kogi State, Nigeria. The result showed that the level of awareness of print media in the study area was high (62.5%).88.3% of the respondent mostly preferred newspaper, while 82.5% of the sampled farmers used print media in sourcing for information on improved farming systems. The study further showed that the major factors limiting the effectiveness of print media in the state include: lack of interest in the part of farmers (M=2.3), selective distribution by agencies (M =2.3) and high cost of the print materials (M=2.2). The study therefore recommended that media agencies should be strengthened by government and other relevant bodies to disseminate agricultural information among the rural farmers. Also, prices of newspaper and magazine should be subsidized to farmers. Nwachukwu, Abdulsalami, and Salami (2014) investigated availability, accessibility and use of information resources

and services of Lafia public library in Nasarawa State. The study pointed out that availability of information resources is acquiring and also providing means by which users could get necessary information resources needed to ensure that every user gets document which satisfy their quest for information. It also reveals that books are major information resources for the library. It concluded that public library should stock books, journals, serials, periodicals and electronic information resources to help the public libraries management to improve an availability, accessibility and use of its information resources. Kagha, Chesambu, Ogema and Adego (2019) in their study of access and use of Electronic Information Resources by small-holder Farmers in Busia County suggests that small-holder farmers could be supported to improve knowledge, skills by taking advantage of new technologies, policies, market opportunities to empower themselves to innovate and advocate for sustainable agricultural productivity. Ajegbomogun, Alawiye, fagbami and Adenekan (2019) investigated the assessment of electronic information resources (EIRs): availability and use among researchers in Nigerian research institutes libraries in South West, Nigeria. Findings of the study revealed that abundant electronic resources were available in the research institute that was investigated.

Public library is a publicly funded institution that provides the general public in a community with access to and use of a range of print and electronic information. Public library resources and services are provided to satisfy the needs of the local community, considering their locality with a focus on producing a well informed and democratic society. Anunobi, Ogbonna and Osuchukwu, (2014) emphasized that public library collection is geared towards providing for moral and cultural edification in contrast to other libraries that house research materials. Their resources among others include facilities needed for regular information, such as television, occasional video viewing, radio, posters and other handbills that could enhance public enlightenment. Newspapers and magazines are also relevant to the rural rice farmers (Hossain and Islam, 2012).

Agricultural centers are places where agricultural information and services are provided to farmers. The agricultural information and services provided to rural rice farmers include information on rice production and protection, pest and diseases control, fertilizer availability and application, agricultural credit facilities, market prices, improved seeds varieties, rainfall gauge extension advisory services training services agricultural show, community services, outreach among others. These pieces information are to get to rural rice farmers through extension workers, radio, television, film shows, agricultural pamphlets, government agricultural agencies. Rural rice farmers through the access and use of the information from available source will enhance farming system and improve agricultural produce.

Adequacy of information resources refers to the sufficiency of information resources to satisfy the need and preference of library users. Edet (2014) opined that adequacy of library resources is the relation between its size and ability of the library resources and services to respond to the needs of its users. Furthermore, he stressed that the ultimate value of the library depends on the quality and quantity of its stock. The

implication therein, is that the utilization of information resources is heavily predicated on its adequacy. According to Mohammed, Yakubu and Oguike (2015), provision of adequate information resources is necessary so as to attract the potential users of such libraries. Since the availability and adequacy of information resources evidently adds to the development of rural dwellers and serves as a positive indicator for national development, their involvement in developmental process becomes imperative.

According to ISO standard and guideline for public library on collection (2015) cited in Gwijeweera and Colombo (2016) stated that when building a book collection (information resources) in a very small administrative unit, the number of books should be at the rate of at least 03 books per citizen. If the total population is around 3,000, the library should have at least 100 reference books.it can be recommended that a small administrative unit having 1,000 readers should purchase at least 250 new books annually. Basically, a library should have at least 50 periodicals. A public library providing services to around 20,000 readers should have at least 200 CDs or tapes, in order to make available information resources for users including rural rice farmers.

Statement of the Problem

The ideal situation reveals that increase in agricultural productivity is a vital requirement for rapid economic growth and development of a country, especially for developing countries like Nigeria. The achievement of this objective by Nigerian farmers has been relatively low particularly in rural areas in Anambra State, Southeast Nigeria where rice farming is a major activity among the farmers. Moreover, its production is mainly in the hands of local farmers who depend heavily on the use of available technologies, information resources and services provided to them. In agriculture, the role of information available in public libraries and agricultural centers for enhancing agricultural development cannot be over emphasized. This proves that use of information in the agricultural sector enhance farming productivity in different ways. It is therefore imperative that public libraries and agricultural centers offer a wide range of information resources such as publications, government documents, posters, policy papers on government programmes, activities on agriculture. It is on this background that this study is aimed to find out the availability and adequacy of information resources for rural rice farmers in public libraries and agricultural centers in Anambra State.

Research Questions

1. What are the available print information resources for rural rice farmers in public libraries and agricultural centers in Anambra State?
2. What are the available electronic information resources for rural rice farmers in public libraries and agricultural centers in Anambra State?
3. What is the adequacy of the information resources for rural rice farmers in public libraries in Anambra state?

Research Method

A survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in Anambra state, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised all the 860 registered rural rice farmers from the selected local government

areas in Anambra State. The population is made up of 220 rural rice farmers in Ayamelum, 205 rural rice farmers in Awka North, 195 rural rice farmers in Orumba North, 130 rural rice farmers in Anambra East, 110 rural rice farmers in Anambra West local government areas in Anambra State. The study used Taro Yamane's sampling formula to determine sample size of 273 rural rice farmers from the selected local government areas in Anambra State. The instrument for data collection was observation checklist titled availability and adequacy of information resources checklist (AAIRC). The instruments were validated by three experts, one from the Department of Educational Foundation (Measurement and Evaluation) and two from the Department of Library and Information Science.

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Percentages was used to answer research question one to three, For research question 1 and 2, items with value of 1 and above were considered available while those with the value of 0 were considered not available. For Research Question 3, adequacy of resources was analyzed using the standard provided in ISO guideline for public libraries to determine the adequacy which was also presented in percentage. Information resource with the expected number were analyzed to be 100% adequate while those less than expected number were analyzed not adequate.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What are the print information resources available for rural rice farmers in public libraries and agricultural centers in Anambra State?

Table 1: Print information resources available in public libraries and agricultural centers in Anambra State

S/N	Items	Ayamelum	Awka North	Orumba North	Total	Remarks
1	Print journal	88	100	70	258	Available
2	Posters	-	2	-	2	Available
3	Textbooks	58	70	49	177	Available
4	Manual	270	250	196	716	Available
5	Newspapers	3,006	3,596	3,100	9,702	Available
6	Materials in vernacular	12	15	5	32	Available
7	Reference	7	10	5	22	Available
8	Flyers	-	-	-	0	Not Available
9	Government documents	370	406	355	1,131	Available
10	Community information	-	-	-	0	Not Available
	Total	7	8	7		

Table 1 shows print information resources available in public libraries in Anambra State. Ayamelum has 7 items available out of 10 items listed, this means that 70% of the listed print information resources are available for rural rice farmers. Awka North has 8 items, this means 80% print information resources are available, Orumba North has 7 items, and this means that

70% of the 10 items listed are available for rural rice farmers in public libraries under study in Anambra State. Posters were available only in Awka North public library but not available in Ayamelum and Orumba North public libraries. Flyers and community information are not available in the three public libraries under study.

Research Question 2: What are the electronic information resources available for rural rice farmers in public libraries and agricultural centers in Anambra State?

Table 2: Electronic information resources available for rural rice farmers in public libraries and agricultural centers in Anambra State

S/N	Items	Ayamelum	Awka North	Orumba North	Total	Remark
1	Television	2	4	2	8	Available
2	Online database	2	3	2	7	Available
3	Graphic software	0	0	0	0	Not Available
4	C-D ROM databases	0	0	0	0	Not Available
5	Radio	0	0	1	1	Available
6	Audio books	77	85	79	241	Available
7	DVDs	68	75	45	188	Available
8	CDs	29	40	25	94	Available
9	E-journal	0	0	0	0	Not Available
10	E-books	0	0	0	0	Not Available Not
11	E-database	0	0	0	0	Available
12	E-report	0	0	0	0	Not Available
13	Digital video	0	0	0	0	Not Available Not
14	E-zine(magazine)	0	0	0	0	Available
15	E-theses/Dissertations	0	0	0	0	Not Available
	Total	5	5	6		

Table 2 shows electronic information resources available in public libraries under study in Anambra State. Ayamelum has 5 items available out of 15 items listed, this means that 33% of the listed electronic information resources are available for rural rice farmers. Awka North also has 5 items available out of 15 items listed, this means that 33% of the listed electronic information resources are available for rural rice farmers. While Orumba North has 6 items available out of 15 items listed, this means that 40% of the listed electronic information resources are available for rural rice farmers in public libraries under study in Anambra State. They consist of television (100%), online database (100%), audio books (100%), DVDs (100%), CDs (100%), only Awka North public library out of libraries under study has radio (33%), while graphic software (0%), C-D ROM databases (0%), e-journal (0%), e-books (0%), e-data base (0%),e-report(0%), digital video (0%), e-zine(magazine) (0%), and e-theses/dissertations (0%) are totally absent in three public libraries under study in Anambra State.

Research Question 3: What are the adequacy of information resources available for rural rice farmers in public libraries in Anambra State?

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Table 3: Adequacy of information resources available for rural rice farmers in public libraries in Anambra State.

S/N	Local Govt. Area	Expected No. of items	No. of items available	Adequacy (%)	Remarks
1			**Periodicals**		
	Ayamelum	50	3,464	692.8%	Adequate
	Awka North	50	4,102	820.4%	Adequate
	Orumba North	50	3,525	705%	Adequate
2			**Books**		
	Ayamelum	660	328	50%	Not Adequate
	Awka North	615	320	52%	Not Adequate
	Orumba North	585	245	41%	Not Adequate
3			**Reference**		
		7			
	Ayamelum	7	7	100%	
	Awka North	7	10	142%	Adequate
	Orumba North		5	71%	Adequate
4		7			Not Adequate
		7	**Posters**	0%	
	Ayamelum	7		28%	
	Awka North		**0**	0%	Not Adequate
	Orumba North		**2**		Not Adequate
5		2	**0**		Not Adequate
		2		100%	
	Ayamelum	2	**Television**	300%	
	Awka North		**2**	100%	Adequate
	Orumba North		**6**		Adequate
		2	**2**		Adequate
6		2		2,350%	
		2	**Audio book**	3,250%	
	Ayamelum		47	1,750%	Adequate
	Awka North		65		Adequate
	Orumba North	2	35		Adequate
		2			
		2		3,750%	
			DVDs	4,750%	
7	Ayamelum		75	3,500%	
	Awka North		95		Adequate
	Orumba North		70		Adequate
		2			Adequate
		2			
8		2		1,450%	
			CDs	2,000%	
	Ayamelum			1,250%	
	Awka North		29		
	Orumba North	2	40		Adequate
		2	25		Adequate

9		2		0%	Adequate
			Online databases	0%	
			0	0%	
	Ayamelum	2	0		
	Awka North	2	0		Not Adequate
	Orumba North	2		0%	Not Adequate
10			**Graphic software**	0%	Not Adequate
				0%	
	Ayamelum	2	0		
	Awka North	2	0		Not Adequate
	Orumba North	2	0		Not Adequate
				0%	Not Adequate
11			**C-D ROM databases**	0%	
		2		0 %	
	Ayamelum	2	0		
	Awka North	2	0		Not Adequate
	Orumba North		0		Not Adequate
				0%	Not Adequate
12		2	**Radio**	0%	
		2		0 %	
	Ayamelum	2	0		Not Adequate
	Awka North		0		Not Adequate
	Orumba North		0		Not Adequate
		2		0%	
13		2	**E-Journal**	0%	
		2		0 %	
	Ayamelum		0		Not Adequate
	Awka North		0		Not Adequate
	Orumba North	2	0		Not Adequate
14		2		0%	
		2	**E-Book**	0%	
	Ayamelum			0 %	
	Awka North		0		Not Adequate
	Orumba North		0		Not Adequate
		2	0		Not Adequate
		2		0%	
15		2	**E-Databases**	0%	
	Ayamelum			0 %	Not Adequate
	Awka North		0		Not Adequate
	Orumba North	2	0		Not Adequate
		2	0	0%	
16		2		0%	
			E-**Report**	0 %	Not Adequate
	Ayamelum				Not Adequate
	Awka North		0		Not Adequate
	Orumba North	2	0		
		2	0	0%	
17		2		0%	Not Adequate
	Ayamelum			0 %	Not Adequate
	Awka North		**Digital video**		Not Adequate

	Orumba North	2			
		2	0		
		2	0	0%	
18			0	0%	Not Adequate
	Ayamelum			0 %	Not Adequate
	Awka North		**E-Zine (Magazine)**		Not Adequate
	Orumba North				
			0		
			0	0%	
19			0	0%	Not Adequate
	Ayamelum			0 %	Not Adequate
	Awka North		**E-Theses/Dissertations**		Not Adequate
	Orumba North				
			0		
			0		
			0		

Table 3 analysis shows that 6 out of 19 listed information resources are adequate based on ISO standard for public libraries resources. Periodicals Ayamelum has 3,464 out of 50 expected which is (692.8%), Awka North has 4,102 out of 50 expected which is (820.4%), Orumba North has 3,525 out of 50 expected which is (705%), all the libraries under study has adequate periodicals. Reference are adequate in Ayamelum with 7 out of 7 expected (100%), Awka North has 10 out of 7 expected (142%), and not adequate in Orumba North which has 5 out of 7 expected (71%). All libraries under study have adequate television as expected base on ISO Standard for public libraries resources, Ayamelum has 2 out of 2 expected (100%), Awka North has 6 out of 2 expected (300%), Orumba North has 2 out of 2 expected (100%). Audio book were adequate in all the libraries under study, Ayamelum has 47 out of 2 expected which amounts to (2,350%), Awka North has 65 out of 2 which is expected and it is (3,250%), Orumba North has 35 out of 2 which is expected and it is (1,750%). For DVDs, Ayamelum has 75 out of 2 expected (3,750%), Awka North has 95 out of 2 expected (4,750%), while Orumba North has 70 out of 2 expected (3,500%). For CDs, Ayamelum has 29 out of 2 expected (1,450%) Awka North has 40 out of 2 expected (2,000%), Orumba North has 25 out of 2 expected (1,250%). While all libraries under study do not have adequate book as expected base on ISO Standard for public libraries resources, Ayamelum has 328 out of 660 expected (50%) Awka North has 320 out of 615 expected (52%), Orumba North has 245 out of 585 expected (41%). Posters are found not adequate in the libraries under study, Awka North has 2 posters out of 7 expected at (28%) while others have none (0%). All the libraries under study do not have other electronic information resources therefore, they were found not adequate (0%) as required by ISO standard for public libraries resources, they include: Online databases , Graphic software, C-D ROM databases, Radio, E-Journal, E-Book , E-Databases , E-Report, Digital video, E-Zine (magazine) and E-

Theses/dissertations.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in table 1 shows that many of the print information resources identified are available in public libraries and agricultural centers in Anambra State. However, there are other print information resources that are not available in some of the information centers like posters which is available only in Awka North public library while community information and flyers are completely not in existence in all the public libraries under study area. Therefore, for rural rice farmers' information needs to be successfully satisfied, public libraries under study must address this absence of information.

The current study affirmed the findings of Adejo, Adejo and Aliyu (2015) which revealed that information resources made available to users include newspapers that was available at (82%) and was the most preferred information resources. Nwachukwu, Abdulsalami and Salami (2014) reasoned in this line when they noted that books are the major information resources in the library and advised public library management to improve availability, accessibility and use of its information resources.

Findings in table 2 show that large numbers of electronic information resources are not available in the public library and agricultural centers under study. The present study's finding was in agreement with the studies by Kagha, Chesambu, Ogema, and Adego (2019) which reveals that electronic agricultural information resources are in low supply and advised that government should create and implement a policy to support ICT usage. The current study's finding do not agree with the study of Ajegbomogun, Alawiye, Fagbami, and Adenekan (2019) that recorded abundance of electronic information resources. Therefore, lack of electronic information resources is a serious issue that needs to be addressed by public libraries and agricultural centers in order to close the gap, to ensure that information needs of rice farmers are fully satisfied.

Findings in table 3 show that information resources are not adequate in the public libraries studied in Anambra State. Only periodicals, television, audio book, DVDs and CDs were found adequate in all the libraries under study while reference were found adequate in two areas and not adequate in one area under study, other resources such as posters, book, online databases graphic software, C-D ROM databases, radio, e-journal, e-book, e-databases, e-report, digital video,. e-zine (magazine), and e-theses/dissertations were not adequate. Most of the information resources found available were not adequate to meet the information needs of rural rice farmers.

The current findings concur with Ajegbomegun, Alaiye and Fagami (2019) that only few electronic information resources were available while some are not even used at all and they are therefore not adequate. Yahaya (2019) in his study, were satisfied with relevant and accuracy of information resources but on the other hand not satisfied with accessibility and adequacy to print and electronic information resources, therefore recommended that farmers satisfaction with agricultural information encourage the adoption of modern farming

techniques which translate into sustainable agricultural production.

Conclusion

There are several information resources available in public libraries and agricultural centers, intended to serve rural rice farmers, including both print and non-print resources. The majority of the resources were found not to be adequate and this has established the necessity for stakeholders to devise strategies that would facilitate the adequate provision of information resources.

Recommendations

Librarians and extension officers ought to create awareness to inform, inspire and to educate their users on the information resources and services available in print form. Also print resources like flyers and community information should be made available to help them serve the users well. Public libraries and agricultural centers management should make electronic information resources available to users to facilitate appropriate access to those resources. Also, State government should allocate money from its budget to support public libraries and agricultural centers in providing internet services and find lasting solutions for problems like poor internet access and power outages. Acquisition of library collections should be in line with the guidelines and standards to facilitate the provision of adequate information resources in the library. More so, library management should seek for donations from philanthropists and subscribe to institutions concerned with agriculture to enable them stock library collection with adequate and updated materials.

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