



Assessment of Information Dissemination Mechanisms for Sustainable Livelihoods of Rural Dwellers in Bayelsa State, Southern Nigeria

Abstract

This study focused on information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihoods of rural dwellers in Bayelsa State. The purpose of the study was amongst other to examine the level of adequacy of the information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers. Three research questions and a formulated hypothesis guided the study. The study employed descriptive survey method. The population for the study were rural dwellers from which 400 rural dwellers could respond to the questionnaire were purposively selected as sample. The statistical method used in analysing the descriptive data was frequency count and simple percentages (%) for question 1 while questions 2 and 3 were presented in Likert scale tables. On the other hand, to test the formulated hypotheses, t-test at 0.05 level of significance was used. The major findings were: information dissemination mechanisms range from village heads to party leaders; most of the information dissemination mechanisms were inadequate for rural information dissemination; while establishment of community library, use of indigenous people, use of Pidgin English during town hall meetings to benefit the illiterate [non-educated] rural dwellers were strategies proffered. The study recommended that for programmes to be successful, the strategies proffered to curb the challenges identified by this study should be vigorously pursued to go a long way in making the programmes work to reasonably appreciable level. The study concluded that rural dwellers gender was significantly related to their opinions on information sources and information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihoods in the study area.

Keywords: *information dissemination mechanisms, rural dwellers, sustainable livelihoods, gender, Bayelsa State.*

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1.1 Introduction

The success of any programme for sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers in Nigeria will depend largely on the choice of the information dissemination mechanisms

used in getting the information across to the rural audience. Rural dwellers are faced daily with critical decisions that could have far reaching implications on their livelihood ventures. Considering the fact that

information is always disseminated for agricultural production which is the mainstay of the rural economy, then accessing the right information at the right time as disseminated through recognized and acceptable mechanisms, and making informed decisions becomes even more important for ensuring sustainable livelihoods for the rural communities.

The importance of information in the rural developmental process is increasingly being recognized, not only by those involved in development work, but also by the recipients of such information. It has been observed that rural dwellers in some communities in Bayelsa State are using insecticide treated mosquito nets provided by the government and NGOs for the prevention of mosquito bite and malaria, for fishing. This can be attributed to improper information dissemination regarding the use of the nets or lack of adequate information dissemination mechanisms to convey the message to the recipients. Users have different uses and reasons for information such as health, advancement in knowledge, politics, agriculture extension, sustainable livelihoods, cultural and physical development, etc. as disseminated.

Information dissemination mechanisms are the various channels through which the government and its agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), public and private companies and individuals involved in the work of providing information put through required and designated information to the target audiences. These mechanisms are traditional African methods and modern global methods both print (newspapers, magazines, government documents, periodicals, journals, books, etc) and non-print (television, radio, the Internet, etc) and library. Meyer (2003) identified methods of information transfer in traditional rural society to include: bush burning, face to face expression, storytelling, beating of gongs

and drums, the use of proverbs and riddles, sign language and body movement. Most of these methods are still practiced by rural populace today. Other traditional mechanisms are person to person discussions in beer parlours (invisible college), wrestling, dancing and festival grounds. James (2012) posited that the modern trends of information dissemination, involve the use of electronic and print media such as radio, television, newspapers and GSM (handsets), and institutions such as libraries, information centres, etc. in distributing information to rural dwellers for sustainable livelihoods.

Sustainable livelihood is a strategy to enable a specific group of people, especially the rural dwellers, to gain for themselves more of what they want and need. It involves the poorest to seek livelihood in the rural areas to demand and control more of the benefits of development. This leads to the enhancement of the individual's ability to care for and sustain his/her well-being in the rural area or society they live in. The inability of rural dwellers, considering their characteristics, to sustain their livelihoods would mean acute poverty and extensive hardship.

The implication of using all these available methods is that the rural populace would be able to relate to one or several of them in an attempt to make use of information disseminated for sustainable livelihood. Demographic variables like gender, age, marital status, occupation and educational qualification may or may not influence individual's preferences or use of particular information dissemination mechanisms. Thus, this study considered rural dwellers gender as a determining factor in the use of information dissemination mechanisms.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the information dissemination mechanisms and sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers in Bayelsa State. The specific

objectives of the study are to:

1. ascertain the various information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers.
2. examine the level of adequacy of the information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers.
3. identify the various strategies to enhance information disseminated to rural dwellers in Bayelsa State.
4. measure the opinion of rural dwellers on sources of information dissemination mechanisms.

1.3 Research Questions

This research work was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the information dissemination mechanisms used for sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers?
2. How adequate are the information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers?
3. What are the various strategies to enhance information disseminated to rural dwellers in Bayelsa State?

1.4 Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis tested at 0.05 levels of significance guided this study:

Ho. "There is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female rural dwellers on the various sources of information for sustainable livelihoods in South-South Nigeria".

2.1 Review of Literature

It is obvious that rural dwellers constitute the majority of mankind. The picture as it exists for Nigeria, cuts across the entire developing countries of Africa, Latin America and Asia. Ruralism is synonymous with the general condition of underdevelopment in these countries. James (2012) puts it that rural societies imply ways

of life that are traditionally oriented, linked with, but separate from urban centres, combining market activities with subsistence production. The above implies that the rural populace is, in essence, characterized by such features as widespread ignorance which results from their inability to read and write, scattered settlements and high level of illiteracy. In addition, the rural populace represents the constituency of the bulk of victims of inaccessibility to such urban amenities as good shelter and health facilities.

Obviously, the rural populace suffers from an acute low productivity, social and economic retrogression due mainly to ignorance, which is also a direct consequence of either inadequate or total lack of information provision to them, resulting in their social exclusion from active participation in national development efforts. Considering their numerical strength in relation to the potentiality of what positively significant contributions they stand to make in the society generally, their exclusion from the main-stream of events can, at best be described as a cog in the wheel of the nation's progress. Concurring, Anele (2012) added that after all, the fact that information has always played an important role in human life and as a basic human need was never a subject of controversy. If it is then true that information and ideas, agreed upon by information experts, are basic human needs, it will not be out of place making bold to state that free and equal accessibility to such information and ideas by every member of the society irrespective of racial, religious, geopolitical and socio-economic status becomes even more foundational.

The rural dwellers are far from the government of the country and seem almost neglected. Anele (2012) underpinned the situation we he averred that, generally, the level of government presence in rural areas is abysmally low, creating the erroneous impression that rural dwellers are second class

citizens who do not deserve modern amenities that make life more comfortable. For example, epileptic electricity supply which is a general problem in Nigeria is worse in the villages ... the major problem is that political office holders are alienated from the grassroots, from the people they are supposed to serve. As a result, they do not really understand the enormity of the sufferings experienced by rural dwellers on a daily basis. Clearly, the local government system was created to bring government closer to the people. This to an extent explains why the rural people have low purchasing power and standard of living.

Touching the issue of rural dwellers' age, Deji and Enuenwemba (2005) stated that majority of their respondents were still in their active ages, which has significant implications on level of awareness and accessibility to sources of information in the rural areas. Obidike (2011) found out that Nsukka Local Government Area, majority of the rural farmers' respondents who practice farming are in the age range of 46-55 years. Few of the respondents in the age range of 36-45 years also practice farming in their different communities. These days, the active young men and women (26-35 years and 36-45 years) who should form the bulk of the work force have deserted the rural communities and moved to the cities in search of government employment. Obidike (2011) cited (Adebayo, 1999) to conclude that obviously this trend has not encouraged rural productivity as it has left farming in the hands of the old, the illiterate and very few energetic young men who live in the villages, perhaps only due to unavoidable circumstances. This by implication shows that the calibre and age range of those in majority and actively engaged in rural activities should be measured when disseminating information for sustainable livelihoods to rural dwellers.

Mechanisms are channels, systems or methods used to communicate information to

rural dwellers. The nature of the mechanism or medium through which information is transmitted also contributes to the success or otherwise of the communication. Varieties of mechanisms of information transfer abound in rural communities. James (2012) quoted Aboyade (1987) who listed some mechanisms of information communication to rural societies of Nigeria. These include the use of town criers or dispatch riders to outlying districts, talking drums are also used for messages involving distant areas. She also added that formal and informal giving and sharing of information happen all the time at market places and village squares usually situated in front of the rulers palaces, and concluded that nowadays, churches, mosques and schools provide avenues for passing around information affecting the life of a community.

The success of the above channels depends largely on the knowledge of the literacy level and culture of the rural society involved. Any new idea that is transmitted without taking into consideration those two factors is bound to fail. Hence this promotes sustainable cultural development and livelihood in the rural society.

Information disseminators may not exploit all available mechanisms in their quest, while continuing the use of a few with evaluating their adequacy to meet the needs of the rural dwellers. Egbule, Agwu and Uzokwe (2013) lamented the inadequacy of information dissemination mechanisms to rural dwellers that while radios can be used across all segments of the population, it provides limited range of information. Newspapers though accessible, are primarily concentrated in urban areas, and are expensive (the cost of newspapers in Nigeria average N150; which is about \$1), and are irrelevant to illiterate populations.

Going further, Egbule et al (2013) quoted (ITU, 2009) that less than 19 percent of

individuals in sub-Saharan Africa can boast of reading a newspaper at least once per week, with a much smaller share in rural areas. Landline coverage has been limited, with less than one landline subscriber per 1,000 people in 2008. In the same vein, access to other search mechanisms, such as fax machines, e-mail, and Internet, is similarly low, primarily due to their dependence upon landline infrastructure. Also, personal travel to different villages and markets to obtain information not only requires transport costs, but also the opportunity costs of an individual's time. This can be substantial in the context of unpaved roads and vast distances.

Concurring, Ozowa (1995) noted that there are some limiting factors and apparent constraints in agricultural information dissemination in Nigeria, including status differences between extension agents and their clients; agents' inadequate knowledge of rural setting, how communication works among the rural communities, lack of interagency cooperation both in programme planning and implementation; and the extension's general lack of interest in traditional media.

Furthermore, Ozowa (1995) stated that the use of the broadcasting media in Nigeria and its poor reception quality and the area covered is a major constraint. The messages carried are not tailored to the information needs of rural populations. Even when the information is relevant, it is seldom aired at the proper time and so does not get to the targeted audience.

He continued that other major constraint is the use of print media: Leaflets and newsletters as message carriers are of limited use in reaching illiterate farmers. Technical language used in communicating information is incomprehensible to the farmers. When local language is used,

emphasis is often on the three major Nigerian languages Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba. These programmes are broadcast when farmers are far away in the fields or too tired to listen after the day's toil. A majority of the farmers do not own radio sets. Ozowa (1995) concluded that the present ratio of 1 extension worker to 3,000 farmers is inadequate for effective agricultural information diffusion. The problem is compounded by the paucity of women in extension agents especially in a society where cultural and religious taboos make it impossible for male extension workers to reach women farmers who outnumber male small scale farmers.

3.1 Research Method

The research employed descriptive survey design for the study. The researcher developed a two part questionnaire titled Information Dissemination Mechanisms for Sustainable Livelihood of Rural Dwellers (IDMSLRD) as instrument for data collection. Part one was on respondents demographics while part two collected data on the research questions. The statistical analysis tools were frequency count and simple percentages for question 1 and Likert scale presentation for questions 2 and 3 while t-test of significance was used to test the formulated null hypothesis. The population of the study was 1,786 rural dwellers from six rural communities in (Igbedi, Akaibiri and Ayakoroma of Kolokuma/Opokuma LGA 871 and Tungbo, Adagbabiri and Anibeze in Sagbama LGA 915) from which 400 rural dwellers were purposively selected as sample. Also, 348 of 400 copies of the questionnaire returned were found usable.

4.1 Result and Data Analysis

Research Question 1

What are the various information dissemination mechanism used for sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers?

Table 1 Frequency & Percentages of Responses on Information Dissemination Mechanisms

Information Dissemination Mechanisms	N = 348	
	Used (%)	Not Used (%)
Town crier	340 (97.70)	8 (2.29)
Radio	340 (97.70)	8 (2.29)
Health Workers	338 (97.12)	10 (2.87)
Agric extension workers	330 (94.82)	18 (5.17)
Television	330 (94.82)	18 (5.17)
Cooperative Society	327 (93.96)	21 (6.03)
Newspapers	321 (92.24)	27 (7.75)
Posters	320 (91.95)	28 (8.04)
School Teachers	301 (86.49)	47 (13.50)
Government Circular	301 (86.49)	47 (13.50)
Pastors/Imams	292 (83.90)	56 (16.09)
Village Heads	280 (80.45)	68 (19.54)
Billboards	270 (77.58)	78 (22.41)
Friends/neighbours	241 (69.25)	107 (30.74)
Internet	236 (67.81)	112 (32.18)
Party Leaders	204 (58.62)	144 (41.37)
GSM	200 (57.47)	148 (42.52)
Market Square	67 (19.25)	281 (80.74)
Banks marketing operatives	17 (4.88)	331 (95.11)
Library	Nil (0)	Nil (0)

Table 1 shows the various information dissemination mechanisms for poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods for rural dwellers. Town crier 340 (97.70%), Radio 340 (97.70%), Health workers 338(97.12%), Agric extension workers 330 (94.82%), Television 330 (94.82%) ranked the highest amongst others, while the public Library Nil (0%) recorded no response.

Research Question 2

What is the adequacy level of information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers?

Table 2 Mean score of Responses on Adequacy of Information Dissemination Mechanisms
N = 348, Cutoff Mean = 2.5, Grand mean =2.92

S/ N	Item Statement: Adequacy of information dissemination Mechanisms	Response frequencies and percentages				— X	SD	Rmks
		VHA	HA	FA	NA			
1	What is your opinion about the adequacy of the use of village heads in disseminating rural information	70	150	60	68	2.64	1.01	Not Adequate
2	How will you assess the adequacy of information delivered to you by town criers	248	88	12	0	3.68	0.54	Adequate
3	Assess the adequacy of information on rural activities disseminated to you in market squares	0	167	80	101	2.19	0.86	Not Adequate
4	How adequate is the information on agriculture disseminated to you by agricultural extension workers	200	103	27	18	3.39	0.84	Adequate
5	What is the level of adequacy of information on rural development programmes disseminated through radio	211	135	2	0	3.60	0.50	Adequate
6	How adequate is the availability of information on rural development presented in television broadcast	223	92	19	14	3.51	0.78	Adequate
7	How adequate is the use of GSM for disseminating information to you on sustainable livelihoods	100	80	20	148	2.38	1.29	Not Adequate
8	How adequate is health information disseminated to you by community health workers	150	138	40	20	3.20	0.86	Adequate
9	How adequate is the bill board used in disseminating information on your rural activities	56	102	122	78	2.42	0.96	Not Adequate
10	How adequate is the provision of information to rural populace through newspaper medium	98	102	98	50	2.71	1.03	Not Adequate
11	How will you rate the level	107	141	93	7	3.00	0.81	Adequa

12	What is your opinion about the adequacy of information communicated to you by cooperative societies	50	127	150	21	2.59	0.81	Not Adequate
13	How adequate is poster used in disseminating information on rural activities	100	174	18	56	2.91	0.99	Adequate
14	How adequate is the information from the Internet to you on development activities in rural areas	32	68	140	108	2.07	0.93	Not Adequate
15	What is the level of adequacy of information received from your place of worship	50	136	50	112	2.36	1.08	Not Adequate
16	Is information disseminated through government circulars adequate for your need	38	101	62	147	2.09	1.07	Not Adequate
17	How adequate is the available information given by bank marketing representatives to you	8	92	121	127	1.95	0.85	Not Adequate
18	How will you assess the adequacy of information delivered by party leaders on political matters	24	776	104	144	1.94	0.95	Not Adequate

Key: VHA = Very Highly Adequate, HA = Highly Adequate, FA = Fairly Adequate, NA = Not Adequate, X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 2 shows the level of adequacy of the various information dissemination mechanisms for poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods for rural dwellers in South-South Nigeria. Information disseminated through town criers with a mean value of 3.68, radio 3.60, television 3.51, agricultural extension workers 3.30, health workers 3.20 and colleagues/friends 3.00 ranked above the grand mean of 2.92 and are therefore adequate information dissemination mechanisms for poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods for rural dwellers. However, majority of the information dissemination mechanisms like bank marketing representatives with a mean value of 1.95 and party leaders with mean value of 1.94 amongst others are lower than the grand mean of 2.92 indicating that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that information disseminated to them through these mechanisms are not adequate.

Research Question 3

What are the various strategies to enhance information disseminated to rural dwellers of South - South Nigeria?

Table 3 **Strategies for enhancing information dissemination**

N = 348, Grand mean = 3.0

	Statement	Response frequencies and percentages						Rmks
		SA	A	SD	SDA	X	SD	
1	Establishment of community libraries/information centres	98	172	60	18	3.01	0.81	Agreed
2	Recruitment of indigenous librarians	98	172	60	18	3.01	0.81	Agreed
3	Use of indigenous extension workers	104	216	12	16	3.17	0.70	Agreed
4	Linkage between public libraries and extension workers	104	216	12	16	3.17	0.70	Agreed
5	Identifying rural dwellers information needs first	290	58	0	0	3.83	0.37	Agreed
6	Identifying the most effective information dissemination mechanisms to use	290	58	0	0	3.83	0.37	Agreed
7	Collaboration between the various information disseminator	158	190	0	0	3.17	0.37	Agreed
8	Packaging and repackaging information in the right format	48	300	0	0	3.14	0.35	Agreed
9	Use of local language to disseminate information	107	180	40	21	3.07	0.81	Agreed
10	Regular use of audiovisual materials by public libraries/extension workers	131	217	0	0	3.38	0.49	Agreed
11	Regular use of town hall meetings for government information dissemination	158	132	38	20	3.23	0.87	Agreed
12	Use of indigenous people for information dissemination	107	180	42	19	3.08	0.80	Agreed

Key: SA =Strongly Agree, A = Agree, DA = Disagree, SDA = Strongly Disagree, \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 3 shows the various suggested strategies to enhance information disseminated to rural dwellers in Bayelsa State for sustainable livelihoods. Identifying rural dwellers information needs first with a mean value of 3.83, Identifying the most effective information dissemination mechanisms to use with a mean value 3.83 and Regular use of audiovisual materials by public libraries/extension works with a mean value of 3.38 ranked the highest and greater than the grand mean of 3.0 indicating that the respondents agreed that, regular use of audiovisual materials by public librarians/extension workers is a way to enhance information dissemination to rural dwellers for sustainable livelihoods, amongst others.

4.2 Tested Hypothesis

The null hypothesis earlier formulated was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

HO “There is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female rural dwellers on the various sources of information for poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods in South-South Nigeria”.

Table 4: t-test of significant difference between the opinions of male and female rural dwellers on various sources of information for poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods in South -South Nigeria

Sources of Information for Rural Dwellers

Statement	Group	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	P-value
Sources of Information	Male	218	2.36	0.85	0.29	346	0.05
	Female	130	2.39	0.80			

Key: N = Respondents, SD = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom, t = t-calculated

Table 4 shows the analyzed opinion of male and female rural dwellers on sources of information for poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods in South-South Nigeria. With a calculated P-value of 0.05 which is equal to the 0.05 level of significance, it could be said that there is a significant difference between the opinions of male and female rural dwellers on the various sources of information for poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods in South-South Nigeria. Pennsylvania State University (2018) state that when P-value is less than or equal to the stated level of significance 0.05, a null hypothesis is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is rejected.

5.1 Findings and Discussion

Information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers.

The various information dissemination mechanisms used for sustainable livelihoods for rural dwellers were found to range from village heads, town criers, market square, agricultural extension workers, radio, television, GSM, health workers, billboards, newspapers, school teachers, friends/ neighbours, library, cooperative societies, pastors/imams, posters, Internet, government circulars, banks marketing representatives to party leaders as itemized on the questionnaire. Varieties of mechanisms of information transfer abound in rural communities. This research finding is buttressed by the works of

James (2012) which quoted Aboyade (1987) who listed some mechanisms of information communication to rural societies of Nigeria. to include the use of town criers or dispatch riders to outlying districts, talking drums are also used for messages involving distant areas.

Information dissemination is medium dependent. Information disseminated through radio, television, newspapers, Internet and GSM may make sense to literate and semi-literate rural dwellers, but the illiterate rural dwellers who do not own those gadgets, cannot and do not relate with those mechanisms will not make sense of information emanating from them. As such, they rely heavily on human sources to relate information gleaned from those information dissemination mechanisms.

Adequacy of the information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihood of rural dwellers.

Majority of the various information dissemination mechanisms (village heads, town criers, market square, agricultural extension workers, radio, television, GSM, health workers, billboards, newspapers, school teachers, friends/neighbours, library, cooperative societies, pastors/imams, posters, Internet, government circulars, banks marketing representatives and party leaders) were deemed not adequate for sustainable livelihoods for rural dwellers. Information disseminators may not explore all available mechanisms in their quest, while continuing the use of a few while evaluating their adequacy to meet the needs of the rural dwellers. This finding also corroborated the findings of Egbule et al (2013) as they lamented the inadequacy of information dissemination mechanisms to rural dwellers that while radios can be used across all segments of the population, it provides limited range of information. Newspapers though accessible, are primarily concentrated in

urban areas, and are expensive (the cost of newspapers in Nigeria average N150; which is about \$1[before 2015]), and are irrelevant to the illiterate populations. Going further, Egbule et al (2013) quoted (ITU, 2009) that less than 19 percent of individuals in sub-Saharan Africa can boast of reading a newspaper at least once per week, with a much smaller share in rural areas.

The timing and manner the information is delivered can be largely responsible for most of the information dissemination mechanisms not being adequate to the rural dwellers. Most of them go to farm in the morning and returns when it is almost day dark to prepared for and eat supper. Information disseminated during that time period cannot get to the farmers first hand and becomes distorted when and if it finally reaches them. They know some things about newspapers, television sets, radio and mobile phones amongst others, but these gadgets being information dissemination mechanisms through which they are expected to get information from, is of little or no meaning to them in that respect.

Strategies to enhance information disseminated to rural dwellers of South-South Nigeria

Strategies to enhance information dissemination to rural dwellers in Bayelsa were found to range from establishment of community library, recruitment of indigenous librarians, use of indigenous extension workers, linkage between public libraries and extension workers, identifying rural dwellers information needs first, identifying the most effective information dissemination mechanisms to use, collaboration between the various information disseminators, packaging and repackaging information in the right format, use of local language to disseminate information, regular use of audiovisual by public librarians/extension workers, regular use of town hall meetings for government

information dissemination and use of indigenous people for information dissemination as gleaned from the study. This finding supports the work of Coetzee, et al (2001) that recommends the following steps as strategies to enhance information dissemination: determine issues that are top on the priority table; list all role players; conduct an analysis of the target group; formulation of clear objectives; design appealing and understandable message elements; select the media; communication design; pre-test materials and develop an action plan for implementation of the strategy.

Also, this finding is in corroboration with the research work of Annune et al (2014) which put forward some strategies for enhancing information sources to rural dwellers as: identifying the most effective sources of information needed by fishermen and dissemination of same for enhanced fishery production, linking public libraries with extension workers for effective information dissemination, the establishment of agricultural advisory boards comprising librarians and extension workers to make extensive use of non-print media as a means of overcoming ineffective dissemination of information to farmers and fishermen.

Many of the rural communities of Bayelsa play host to people of other tribes who migrate to and stay in such communities for economic reasons. This has made Pidgin English the most accepted medium of communication. Since the information disseminated is for the rural populace, it becomes evitable to package information in Pidgin English. The community radios in villages in the Bayelsa State are not actually radio stations with frequencies. They are referred to as Radio Houses used by town criers, as noted by Etebu (2009) that a microphone in a central position (radio house) and loudspeakers placed in different locations in the communities ensure that town criers cover a wider range without moving from their positions. Through these

radio houses announcements are broadcast, instructions passed as deemed necessary to the people.

Opinions of male and female rural dwellers and the various sources of information

The formulated hypothesis was rejected as there was a significant difference between the opinions of male and female rural dwellers and the various sources of information for sustainable livelihood. This finding is in line with and keyed into ideas and assertions of (Association for the Development of Education in Africa, 2006) that gender analysis helps the extension agent to: find ways of providing information to men and women in the performance of shared tasks; provide information to both men and women as to what relates to their specific tasks; provide technical information to farmers; provision of information in understanding gender roles as it relates to crops and tasks; provide alternative ways of communicating information to farmers; facilitate the formation of women farmers groups; present new technologies in ways that are easily understood by both men and women farmers and can be implemented one step at a time, bearing in mind literacy and language issues faced by women in particular.

This research finding shows that information disseminators should always do a systematic assessment of males and females often different needs, activities, and preferences as well as different access and control over resources by males and females, sexual division of labour, and income-generating activities and participation of men and women in development opportunities. Men in the South-South rural areas, especially in Ijaw and Urhobo communities, do less farm work than their women folks. Many of the men attend invisible colleges at the expense of the women who toil away in the farms and markets during the day and do their domestic chores upon their return in the evenings and

finally end the day performing their matrimonial duties. This means that the men will definitely get information from human sources and non-documentary sources more than the women. The men would in turn pass distorted information to the women who put such information into use.

Conclusion

Information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihoods of rural dwellers in Bayelsa is apt as several poverty alleviation and reduction programmes have been initiated and carried out by successive government of the country, past and present. Bayelsa State is a paradox because the living conditions of the people especially the rural dwellers do not reflect the riches of the State in economic, socio/cultural and political terms. Research questions raised and answered and null hypothesis formulated and tested show that there are numerous information dissemination mechanisms available to rural dwellers. Very few of these information dissemination mechanisms were deemed adequate while majority of them were not adequate especially the public library which was significantly absent, implying that the benefits of library as an information disseminator is lost to the rural dwellers. Solutions to effectively enhance information flow were proffered. Rural dwellers gender is of utmost significant while considering information dissemination mechanisms for sustainable livelihoods of the rural dwellers in South-South Nigeria.

Sustainable livelihoods programmes do not appear to be meeting up their objectives due to the challenges militating against effective dissemination of information to the intended target audience. The strategies proffered to curb the challenges identified by this study will go a long way in making the programmes work to reasonably appreciable level.

Recommendations

1. Amongst the various information dissemination mechanisms used for sustainable livelihoods for rural dwellers ranging from village heads to party leaders as itemized on the questionnaire, Government and other information disseminators should evaluate, pinpoint and make regular use of those ones the rural people are attuned to the most, for effective information dissemination.
2. The various information dissemination mechanisms as gleaned from the questionnaire were not adequate for sustainable livelihoods for rural dwellers. Bearing in mind that in the rural setting information is medium dependent, the adequacy of the various information dissemination mechanisms should be assessed at intervals to determine and use the most adequate ones.
3. Regarding strategies to enhance information dissemination to rural dwellers of Bayelsa which range from establishment of community library to use of indigenous people for information dissemination as shown from the study, it should be noted that availability as well as accuracy and currency of information are a must to the rural dwellers. Therefore information providers and disseminators should make sure to know that for information to achieve the desired results in the rural communities, the sources that provide for the flow of information should not be monopolized and politicized.
4. Sustainable livelihood programmes do not appear to be meeting up their objectives due to challenges militating against effective dissemination of

information to the intending target audience. For these programmes to be successful, the strategies such as establishment of community library and use of indigenous people for information dissemination proffered to curb the challenges identified by this study should be vigorously pursued to go a long way in making the programmes work to reasonably appreciable level

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