

# Appraisal of Library and Information Services to Rural Dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi Communities

Egwuonwu, Ugochi Iruoma<sup>1\*</sup>, Obiekwe, Obioma Loveth<sup>2</sup>, Nwoyeka, Ifeoma Jennifer<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Library and Information Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria*

<sup>2</sup>*Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria*

<sup>3</sup>*Department of Library and Information Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria*

**Abstract:** This study was carried out in the rural community Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State to determine the library and information services available to the rural dwellers of the community with reference to rural dwellers' information needs. Questionnaire were used to obtain data from the library users while interview was employed to obtain data from civil servants, petty traders, farmers, artisans (welders, carpenters, hairdressers,) and the unemployed in the communities. It was gathered that rural dwellers' sources of information are predominantly oral and their information need is relative to their type of occupation. More so, these group of people source information from their professional colleagues/trade masters, churches, through promotion by motor advertisements, television/radio and ceremonies, rural library provides the rural dwellers with information that are print based or documented on video/film; and majority of the rural dwellers are not aware of the resources and information provided by rural libraries but are willing to use them when services are modeled along their needs. As a result, the study recommended that rural library should conduct needs assessment so as to model their services towards the needs of their communities and that rural library providers should utilize the oral information sources that the rural communities are familiar with while providing their innovative information services.

**Keywords:** Library, Information Services and Rural Dwellers

## I. INTRODUCTION

The library has always been known as a repository of knowledge but these days, its scope and horizon are expanding and changing from just housing of a collection of reading material to the selection, acquisition, organization, accessing and dissemination of knowledge and information beyond its walls. Emphasis is now being placed to appraise the library and information services to rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi rural communities in Anambra State.

Provision of information resources, creating and impacting reading culture in the people are the key ways through which the library can touch lives of the rural dwellers and thereby making their needed resources available for them in the library. In the case of a rural dwellers, a lot of effort is needed to be able to communicate effectively and efficiently because such an environment are most times dominated by people whose standard of living is usually very challenging as a result of poverty, hunger, ignorance, illiteracy and absence of social amenities such as good road, power supply and schools ( Posigha 2010, Obinyan & Aidenojie and Abolaji 2009 ). As

asserted by Momodu (2012) the importance of libraries in general as the most efficient "vehicle" for acquiring, organizing and making information available. The library in any community is regarded as an information base/ centre for storage and retrieval of vital information which could be used for community development or transformation and national planning (Obidike and Idoko 2011). According to Abolaji (2009) one way of providing the library and information services to rural dwellers is through identification of their information needs and the provision of innovative rural public library services. Rural public library services are provided to satisfy the needs and make available the information resources needs of the rural communities, considering their locality with a focus on producing a well informed and democratic society. Abolaji (2009) 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 include facilities needed for regular information such as television occasional video viewing, radio and gramophone, posters and other handbill that could enhance public enlightenment. Newspapers and magazines are also relevant to the local dwellers needs (Hossain 2012). There is also need to provide newspapers and magazines especially for the retirees who may need such resources to keep abreast of developments in the society. Due to the predominately oral traditional communication method, most of the rural dwellers source their information through indigenous means. The provision of the appropriate resources through the appropriate medium demands the employment of qualified library professionals that are good in rural information gathering and dissemination technique which includes sources, acquiring, processing and storing (Issa 2009).

### *Statement of Problem*

The study has established the need to appraise the library and information services to rural dwellers. Functionality of a public library, depends on its ability to provides users need at any given time . Poor library services is the major problem the rural dwellers face in the community this is because the rural dwellers appears not to be aware of the library resources and services available in the library probably because they are illiterate or lack of library's publicity.

However the reason for selection of these two libraries Emeh Educational Library and Anambra State Divisional Library in

Nnobi & Nnewi communities is to appraise their library and information services to the rural dwellers they serve and the relationship with the needs of the communities they serve. This study is designed to appraise the problem.

#### *Objective of the Study*

Specifically, the study will seek to:

1. Identify the types of library and information services available to rural dwellers in Nnobi & Nnewi communities.
2. Ascertain the peculiar information needs of rural communities of Nnobi & Nnewi.
3. To ascertain the literacy level of the rural dwellers and their information seeking behavior.
4. To identify the extent use of information resources by the rural dwellers.
5. To identify the challenges usually encountered by the rural dwellers and the librarians in the information seeking process and their solutions.

#### *Significance of Study*

The outcome of the study will be of importance to the following groups of people such as public library, rural users of public library and student. It will help them to utilize the available funds provided for public library to enhance the availability and use of information resources of the rural dwellers that use their library. To the rural users, the study will help them to know their actual information resources and how to use the library services to their own benefits. This will support the rural dwellers in assessing the available library services more easily.

#### *Scope Of Study*

The scope of this study is to access the appraisal of library and information services to rural dwellers in Nnobi & Nnewi communities in Anambra State. Also to find out their peculiar information needs, the types of information resources they need and the ones available for them, to identify their literacy level, identify the challenges usually encountered by the rural dwellers and their information seeking behavior.

#### *Research Question*

1. What are the types of library and information services available for the rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities?
2. What are the peculiar information needs of the rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities?
3. What are the literacy levels of the rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities?
4. What is the extent information use of the rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities?
5. What are the challenges encountered by the rural dwellers in information delivery process and their solutions?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Libraries are built and maintained to provide information resources for a specific and define community. A public library serves the residents of a specific geographic region Patel (2015). Libraries only exist to serve its parent community. Each library performs three basic functions in the process of serving its community, selecting and collecting information, organizing information and serving users Patel (2015). Library has been described as a collection of books and other forms of records housed, organized and interpreted to meet broad and varying needs of people for information, recreation and aesthetic enjoyment (Obaiten 2004).

Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) presented the library as a special institution created to conserve knowledge, preserve the cultural heritage and provide information for education and research. Library and information services are agents for social development which can function and bring about development only when both male and females in the community use them (Ghaji 2007). Library and information services are collection of human endeavors in different formats and languages, preserve, organized and interpreted to address broad and different needs of individuals for information, education, research, knowledge, recreation and cultural advancement (Salaam 2013).

According to Patel (2015) suggested four basic functions in the area of library and information services which includes instructing the users about library management, assisting the users to solve his/her queries, aiding the users in selection of good works, promoting the library within the community. The primary objective of a library irrespective of type or size is to promote the use of its resources. Library and information services bring together the documents or information sources and their users by personal efforts of the library staff (Patel 2015).

Libraries provide a variety of library and information services to satisfy different information requirements of users. Patel (2015) mentioned library and information services for rural dwellers which includes reference services, current awareness services, selective dissemination of information services, translation services, web-Opac services, lending services, outreach services, ICT base library services, reprography services, abstracting & indexing service, document delivery services.

#### *Rural Dwellers*

Rural dwellers are those people whose standard of living is usually very challenging as a result of poverty, hunger, ignorance, illiteracy and absence of social amenities Abolaji (2009). Rural dwellers are larger group of individuals living together for a long time in a locality having common interest, goals, ways of life and norms and they are those people who source their information through indigenous means (Umar 2012).

Rural dwellers are those people who dwell in the community areas that are still under development and not civilized based on geographical conditions and their information needs is based on their activities which includes those which helps them attend to health, agriculture, social, political, textile, pottery and other crafts as well as other cultural matters (Amadusa 2005).

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### III. DATA PRESENTATION

#### *SECTION A: Bio data of the rural dwellers*

Table 1: response of bio data of the rural dwellers.

Type	Age				Education		Sex	
	10-20	21-35	46-45	45above	WAEC	Higher Degree	M	F
Farmers	4	10	2		1	1	14	2
Traders	6	8	2	6	7	6	10	
Artisans	12	3	1	12	1	14	2	
Civil Servant	10	5	1	2	14	8	8	
Unemployment	16	-	-	12	4	10	6	
TOTAL	48	26	6	34	23	52	28	

Table 1 shows that majority of the sampled respondents are aged between twenty one and thirty five. Though farmers and traders have their age concentrating between thirty six and forty five, artisans and civil fall within twenty one and thirty five of age. All the unemployed are aged between twenty one and thirty five. Most of the respondents have WAEC and dwellers certificate above WAEC. Whereas the majority of the farmers, traders and artisans and even the unemployed posses FSLC and WAEC. Almost all the civil servants possess WAEC certificates and above.

#### *Section B. Research Question one*

What are the types of library and information services available for the rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State?

Table 2: The available library services to rural dwellers in Nnobi &amp; Nnewi communities.

S/N	Available Library Service	X	Decision
1	Reference services	3.55	Agree
2	Children services	2.00	Agree
3	Abstract services		not available
4	Indexing services		not available
5	Reader services	3.39	Agree
6	Internet service		not available
7	Book loan services	2.93	Agree
8	photocopying service		not available
9	Current awareness services		not available
10	Document delivery services		not available

Table 2 shows that the available library services provided for the rural dwellers on their information resources in Nnobi and Nnewi communities are reference services, children services, readers services while abstract and indexing services, internet services, book loan services, photocopying services, current awareness services, document delivery services are not among the available library services provided for rural dwellers in Nnobi & Nnewi communities of Anambra State.

#### Research Question two

What are the peculiar information needs of the rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State?

Table 3: The peculiar information needs of the rural dwellers.

S/N	Peculiar Information Needs	X	Decision
1	The Neighborhood	2.00	Agree
2	Health information	3.45	Agree
3	Agriculture	3.55	Agree
4	Occupation	3.36	Agree
5	Transportation	2.93	Agree
6	Welfare & family matter	3.36	Agree
7	Crime & safety	2.25	Agree
8	Land	2.00	Agree
9	Religion	2.00	Agree
10	Recreation	3.00	Agree
11	Culture	1.55	Agree

Table 3 shows that the peculiar information needs of rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State. The above items have means of above 2.5 which shows that the respondents accepted that their peculiar information needs are Neighborhood, Health information, Agriculture, Occupation, Transportation, Welfare & family matter, Crime & safety, Land, Religion, Recreation, Culture.

#### Research Question 3

What are the literacy levels of the rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities of Anambra State?

Table 4: Literacy level and information seeking behavior of the rural dwellers

S/N	Literacy Level and Information Seeking Behavior	X	Decision
1	Seek from the library	2.25	Agree
2	Seek from friends	3.00	Agree
3	Seek from family	3.35	Agree
4	Seek from colleagues'	3.00	Agree
5	Seek from neighborhood	3.45	Agree
6	Seek from church	2.05	Agree
7	Seek from ceremonies	2.05	Agree
8	Seek from school	3.00	Agree

Table 4 shows the Literacy level and information seeking behavior of rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State. The above items have means of above 2.5 which shows that the respondents seek their information needs through the library, friends, family, colleagues' neighborhood, church, ceremonies and school.

#### Research Question 4

What is the extent information use of available library services by rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State?

Table 5: The extent information use of available library services by rural dwellers

S/N	Extent Information use of available Library Services	X	Decision
1	Reference services	3.32	HE
2	Children services	3.23	HE
3	Abstract and Indexing services		Not available
4	Translation services		Not available
5	Reader services	3.39	HE
6	Internet services		Not available
7	Book loan services	1.30	VLE
8	photocopying services		Not available
9	Current awareness services		Not available
10	Document delivery services		Not available

Table 5 shows the extent information use of available library services by rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State. The respondents agree that the high used available services are Reference services, Children services, Reader services while Abstract and Indexing service, Translation services, Internet services, Book loan services, photocopying services, Current awareness services and Document delivery services are not used as the available library services in the community.

*Research Question 5*

What are the challenges encountered by the rural dwellers in information delivery process in Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State and their solutions?

Table 6: The challenges encountered by the rural dwellers in information delivery process.

S/N	Challenges encountered By the rural dwellers	X	Decision
	Language	3.07	Agree
	Illiteracy	3.32	Agree
	Lack of qualified personnel	3.10	Agree
	Lack of infrastructure	3.55	Agree
	Lack of awareness	3.35	Agree
	Environmental factors	3.36	Agree
	Costs	3.39	Agree
	Inadequate fund	3.55	Agree

Table 6 shows that the challenges encountered by rural dwellers in information delivery system in Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State. The above items have means of above 2.5 which shows that the respondents accepted that the challenges encountered by rural dwellers in information delivery system are Language, Illiteracy, Lack of qualified personnel, Lack of infrastructure, Lack of awareness, Environmental factors, Costs and Inadequate fund.

What are the solutions to the challenges encountered by the rural dwellers in information delivery process in Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State?

Table 6 b: Solutions to the challenges encountered by the rural dwellers in information delivery process.

S/N	Solutions to the challenges Encountered by the rural dwellers	X	Decision
	Acquisition of indigenous Literature	3.55	Agree
	Qualified library staff	3.40	Agree
	Adequate fund	3.36	Agree
	Creation of awareness	3.32	Agree
	Sufficient infrastructure	3.07	Agree
	Power supply	2.93	Agree
	Adequate maintenance	3.32	Agree

Table 6b shows that the solutions to the challenges encountered by rural dwellers in information delivery system in Nnobi and Nnewi communities in Anambra State. The above items have means of above 2.5 which shows that the respondents agreed that the solution to the challenges encountered by rural dwellers in information delivery system are Acquisition of indigenous Literature, Qualified library staff, adequate fund, Creation of awareness about the Library services in the library, Sufficient infrastructure that will

Support library services, Power supply, Adequate maintenance.

## IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From the analysis presented in this chapter, the major finding that emerged from the study was summarized as follows:

1. The bio data of rural dwellers using the public library in Nnobi & Nnewi rural communities are youths and the adults, qualified as college users, graduates and post graduates.
2. Based on the data collected and analyzed, the available library services provided for the rural dwellers on their information resources includes reference services, children services, readers services while abstract and indexing services, internet services, book loan services, photocopying services, current awareness services, document delivery services are not among the available library services provided for rural dwellers.
3. The peculiar information needs of the rural dwellers includes Neighborhood, Health information, Agriculture, Occupation, Transportation, Welfare & family matter, Crime & safety, Land, Religion, Recreation, Culture.
4. Literacy level and information seeking behavior of rural dwellers, the respondents seek their information needs through the library, friends, family, colleagues' neighborhood, church, ceremonies and school.
5. The extent information use of available library services are Reference services, Children services, Reader services while Abstract and Indexing service, Translation services, Internet services, Book loan services, photocopying services, Current awareness services and Document delivery services are not used as the available library services in the community.
6. The challenges encountered by rural dwellers in information delivery system are Language, Illiteracy, Lack of qualified personnel, Lack of infrastructure, Lack of awareness, Environmental factors, Costs and Inadequate fund. The solutions to the challenges encountered by rural dwellers in information delivery system are Acquisition of indigenous Literature, Qualified library staff, adequate fund, Creation of awareness about the Library services in the library, Sufficient infrastructure that will Support library services, Power supply, Adequate maintenance.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the study concludes that the available library services for the rural dwellers of Nnobi & Nnewi are digital services, reference services, children services, reader's services, book loan services. , the peculiar information needs of the rural dwellers in Nnobi includes peculiar information needs are Neighborhood, Health information, Agriculture, Occupation,

Transportation, Welfare & family matter, Crime & safety, Land while Nnewi includes Neighborhood, Health information, Agriculture, Occupation, Transportation, Welfare & family matter, Crime & safety, Land, Religion, Recreation, Culture. The information resources needs of the Nnobi & Nnewi rural dwellers includes Books on health, Newspapers, Magazines, Computers, and Posters. The rural dwellers seek their information needs through the library, friends, family, colleagues' neighborhood, church, ceremonies and school. The rural dwellers in Nnobi & Nnewi sources their information needs through Town criers, Newspapers, Mobile phone, Posters, Magazines, Church bulletin, Radio, Television, Civil servants, Ceremonies and Motor advertisers. The extent use of the available services in Nnobi includes Reference services, Reader services and digital services while in Nnewi includes Reference services, Reader services, Book loan services, and children services. The challenges encountered by the rural dwellers in Nnobi and Nnewi rural communities includes Language, Illiteracy, Lack of qualified personnel, Lack of infrastructure, Lack of awareness, Environmental factors, Costs and Inadequate fund. The solution to the challenges encountered by the rural dwellers in Nnobi & Nnewi rural communities includes are Acquisition of indigenous Literature, Qualified library staff, adequate fund, Creation of awareness about the Library services in the library, Sufficient infrastructure that will Support library services, Power supply, Adequate maintenance.

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