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INFORMATION NEEDS AND UTILISATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BY THE INHABITANTS OF NYANYA SATELLITE TOWN, FCT, ABUJA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study investigated the information needs and utilisation for socio-economic development of the inhabitants of Nyanya satellite town, Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. The total population of the study was 408,768. A sample size of 384 was selected for the study using simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The data collected for the study were analysed using descriptive statistics. The benchmark score for decision on the analysis was either 50% minimum percentage score or 3.0 mean average score as the cases were.

Findings: The findings from the study revealed that the information needs of the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja, were information on proper housing schemes, educational, career and training information, health information, business and trade information, information on security and crime, information on banking and finance, agricultural information, environmental information, sport, games and leisure information, food and nutritional information, information on transportation and information on government policies. The study, however, revealed that political information, sports, games and leisure information were the only information utilised by the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town FCT, Abuja.

Implication: The FCT Administration through policies and programmes can improve on socio-economic development of Nyanya inhabitants by focusing on the information needs they rarely utilised

Originality/Value: The researchers recommended among others; that the FCTA, FCDA, STDD and AMAC should incorporate the information needs of the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja such as information on proper housing scheme, transportation, security and crime, health, education, agriculture, business and trade in the socio-economic development of the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town.

Keywords: Information Need, Utilisation, Socio-Economic Development, Satellite Town, Abuja

Paper type: Empirical Research

Introduction

Information is an important resource that contributes immensely towards the development of a nation. The prosperity, progress, and development of a nation depend upon the nation's ability to acquire, produce, and use relevant information. Information is knowledge communicated or received concerning a particular fact. A community will develop if it has the knowledge that would aid it, such knowledge can be acquired through access to information (Kamba, 2009). People need information to develop their potentials, to succeed in business, to enrich their cultural

experience, and to take control of their daily lives. It is important for individuals to obtain the relevant information they need. It helps to reduce the degree of uncertainty on how the environment, their organisation or community operate.

Information needs leads to individuals' or groups' desire to locate and obtain information to satisfy conscious or unconscious needs. The type of information needed for daily activities may vary from a person to another. Kinyua (2013), listed the information needs of satellite town inhabitants to be; on infrastructure, improved business environment,

transportation, water and sewerage services, waste disposal, environmental pollution, etc. Identification of the information needs of individuals will provide a deeper understanding of the needs of members of a community. This will determine the type of information to provide and the right source to use. Utilisation of quality information is essential for people and communities to properly plan and take decisions that will improve their living standards. Utilisation of relevant, adequate, and up-to-date information would provide people with trusted, reliable, and usable ideas that would improve their well-being and address the major challenges that could hinder the socio-economic development of satellite town inhabitants.

The needs of satellite town inhabitants are satisfied at different levels, from individuals to global communities with access to information that serves as an essential condition for socio-economic development. Relevant and adequate information could strategically reduce the level of poverty and ignorance of satellite town inhabitants. It will enlighten them on how to achieve economic, social, educational, political and cultural objectives for development of society. Socio-economic initiatives ensure that citizens meet the basic needs that are essential to live a life of dignity. The need to accelerate socio-economic development of satellite town inhabitants is vital in order to address poverty and other socio-economic predicaments. Successive Nigeria government have developed different policies and programmes on socio-economic development of its communities, their successes largely depend on the mode of implementation. (Ewetan & Urhie, 2014)

Like other countries of the world, Nigeria adopted the 17 goals of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a vehicle to free humanity from poverty; secure a healthy planet for future generations; and build a peaceful and inclusive society as a foundation for ensuring a life of dignity for all. Thus, it is important for satellite town inhabitants to be provided with information about government policies and initiatives like the Social Investment Scheme (payment of 5,000 to the extremely poor and

adequate housing for different income group vulnerable persons); Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme for unemployed youth and Women Economic Empowerment programme; Conditional Grant Transfer Scheme; N-power programme for job creation for the youth; and other Social Intervention Programmes in order to leap from one stage of development to the other for their social and economic transformation.

Problem Statement

Availability of quality information is essential for people and communities, since it improves the quality of life of people. In an ideal situation, satellite town inhabitants should be well acquainted with relevant and up-to-date information about various opportunities and government initiatives that will be usable for making the right judgment and decisions that affect their lives and businesses. They should be able to utilise information on government policies and initiatives, social investment schemes, government enterprise and empowerment programmes, etc.

The researchers observed that Nyanya Satellite Town is prone to influx of all categories of people. This poses some developmental challenges that include spread of disease epidemics (cholera, dysentery, Lassa fever, COVID-19 etc), pollution, supply of unclean water, insecurity, poor infrastructures, and poor service delivery found common in the settlement. It has been observed that Nyanya settlement witnessed insecurity challenges especially after the April 14, 2014 bomb blast by the Boko Haram terrorist which claimed many lives (Onuoha, 2014). Socio-economic development can rarely be achieved in any community where there is insecurity (Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013). Eventually, relevant information is needed to maintain security, stability and development in Nyanya.

Though, the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Development Agency (FCDA) are making positive efforts to address the plight of the Nyanya Satellite Town inhabitants so as to enhance their participation in development initiatives through policy intervention, investment initiatives, empowerment

programmes, and construction of link roads. However, the actual information needs and utilisation for socio-economic development of the inhabitants of Nyanya are rarely known. This challenge necessitated the need to investigate the information needs and utilisation by the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town for socio-economic development in FCT, Abuja.

Objectives

The following objectives were formulated to guide this study:

1. To find out the information needs of the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja
2. To discover the level of utilisation of the information for socio-economic development of the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja.

Literature Review

Information Needs of Satellite Town Inhabitants

Adereti, Fapojuwo, and Onasanya, (2006) described information need as a piece of information, whether recorded or not, which an individual or a member of a group requires for effective functioning in his/her daily activities. In other words, information is needed because it enables individuals to make a decision that affects their living. This is obvious in the study by Alaye-ogan (2008) on "Poverty among Women in Nigeria: A Case Study of Abuja Satellite Communities of Nigeria". She discovered that women in satellite towns in Abuja need information and support for their trade, loans, credit facilities, shops and other facilities. From her findings, majority of the women from some of the satellite communities of Abuja Municipal (AMAC), Bwari, Gwagwalada, and Kuje who engaged in petty trading had their shops demolished by the Abuja Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) in the demolition exercise that started in 2004 by the FCT administration. All the respondents of the said study agreed that the demolished shops were illegal structures. Yet, they need them for petty trading because they do not have another choice of shops that were

affordable to them. In the case of our study, we discovered that there is need for the provision of adequate business or trade information to the women in Nyanya Satellite Town on shop acquisition and the appropriate site to locate their businesses.

The information need of women in satellite town in Abuja on quality education for their ward is expressed in Alaye-ogan (2008). She discovered that majority of the women have five to seven, children/wards in schools. The inability of the women in satellite town in Abuja to access information on the education and career of their children can be a burden to the parents. Majority of the women complained that they could not finance their children through a good school. Information is an important factor that sustains the development of any nation as it reduces uncertainty and enhances awareness of possible actions to overcome challenges. Information is an essential ingredient for the survival of the human race. Thus, to understand the information need on education by the satellite town inhabitants in Abuja, it is necessary to understand the context of human needs that necessitated the need for information.

Information users need information for problem solving, current awareness, recreational purposes, and for up-dating of their knowledge. Ekoja (2010) explained that information needs are the information which information seekers require to conduct their businesses and live their daily lives. The identification of information needs of a person will lead to the means of seeking for that information. In order to determine people's information needs, it is essential to know who the people are, their background (qualification, mastery of language, areas of research and specialization) and the purpose for which they need the information (Kumar, 2010). Some have identified viewed information as records of facts; the content of text; and the experience stored in human mind. This is supported by Mohammed (2012), who explained that information is the impression, perception, understanding, meaning, idea, feeling, and sense derived or made out of whatever contact, exposure, connection, involvement, interaction and association with

anything, event, situation, environment, media, and action that adds to the existing knowledge, experience, understanding, competence, know-how, and expectation in whatever form and level.

The need for information on waste management, water and sanitation in satellite towns is unequivocal and indisputable. Orji (2007) maintained that providing information and teaching people about sanitation and private sector participation are approaches aimed at modifying people's behaviour regarding adoption of sanitation option of their choice from improved simple protected pit latrines to pour flush latrines and other sanitary practices such as use of refuse pits. Adequate sanitation promotes health and wellbeing of people. The findings from Obute (2010) study on 'Service Delivery, Constraints and Prospects of Potable Water Supply and Sanitation in Benue State' revealed that there is inadequate information on potable water supply options provided by the Water Aid Nigeria. The lack of adequate information on water supply can subject the inhabitants of satellite towns to thirst, dehydration as well as outbreak of water and sanitation related diseases like diarrhoea and typhoid fever. Hence, giving the fact that Nyanya satellite town is highly populated, unavailability of quality drinking water, and the spread of water and sanitation related diseases can cause a major outbreak that will be difficult for government to curtail. It is expedient for satellite town inhabitants to be adequately catered for in terms of portable water supply and regular sanitation.

Level of Utilisation of Information for Socio-Economic Development of Satellite Town Inhabitants

On the utilisation of information for socio-economic development of the inhabitants of satellite towns, Ajza, Gharakluo, and Khazae (2012) conducted a study on "Factors Affecting the Absorption of Population to Andisheh Satellite Town, Tehran, Iran". The findings from their study revealed that majority of the inhabitants of Andisheh Satellite Town rarely utilise information on transportation, employment, carer, health, finance, recreation,

and shopping. This is because, majority of the inhabitants still rely on Tehran for their employment, health, medical and financial facilities. Most of the respondents work, shop, and spend their free time and recreational activities in Tehran. They only utilised the information on housing in Andisheh Satellite Town. This is most common in satellite towns in developing countries, especially Nigeria (Nwalo, & Madukoma, 2012; Udofia, 2012; Jiriko, Dung Gwom, & Wapwera, 2015; Usoro, 2015). In order for satellite towns to be developed, there is need for government to establish and provide basic facilities for employment, health, education, banking and finance, transportation, sport, culture, etc. in the satellite towns.

Abimbola, Olatunji, Oladele, and Omotayo (2016) conducted a study on "Nigerian Socio-Economic Development: The Roles and Challenges of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN)" and discovered the level of utilisation of information to members of the society by a government agency in charge of the development of small and medium scale enterprises in Nigeria (SMEDAN). They discovered that Nigerians benefited from information, training, advisory services and business sensitisation organised by the SMEDAN. The Agency gave various information about how to source raw materials, equipment, general business knowledge, consultative services and means of accessing fund, through their zonal offices and specialists to a total number of 100,993 MSMEs alone cutting across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria in 2014. They also gave information and training to widows on poultry keeping, baking, events decoration, bead making, sewing, tie and die, soap making in locations such as Abuja and Abakaliki. This empowers them to be financially independent and become breadwinners of their families after the demise of their husbands.

In the study of Adio, Abu, Yusuf, and Nansoh, (2016) on "the Use of Agricultural Information Sources and Services in Kwara State" asked the respondents to rate the purposes for which information were used for improved productivity in some selected satellite communities. Among the purposes for

utilisation of available information by the farmers were: to know how to preserve and process raw agricultural produce using new post-harvest technology and to increase productivity, labour force, acquisition of capital and land availability. Other purposes for utilisation of the available information are directly associated with marketing of agricultural produce. Majority of the respondents of the said study emphasised their utilisation of information on new technology for processing agricultural produce, on improved seedlings, increased productivity and post-harvest preservation of their produce. Akomea-Bonsu and Sampong (2012) had previously emphasised that the adoption and use of technology can give valuable information, increase knowledge, improve performance, improve relationships with customers and suppliers, increase efficiency, and reduce cost of production among others. In the case of our study, utilisation of information on the new technology for farming and agriculture for inhabitants of satellite town has the potential to improve productivity and reduce capital costs and expenses.

Methodology

A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of this study were the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite

Town, FCT, Abuja. Its annual population growth rate is 9.2%.The population of Nyanya as at 2017 was estimated to be 408,768. Given a population of 408,768, the sample size of 384 was considered appropriate for this study. The members of the sample were selected using simple random sampling technique. The data collected using the questionnaire were analysed using frequency, percentage, mean. These are descriptive statistics used simply to describe the sample the researchers were concerned with. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 was used for computation of the data collected. The mean benchmark for the responses was obtained by adding the value (weight) in the Likert Scale used in the study 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and that is (5+4+3+2+1=10) and dividing by 5 to obtain a mean of 3.0 or 50% minimum percentage score. Any item ranked from 3.0 or 50% and above was regarded as positive response/agreed; while any one from 2.9or 49% and below was regarded as negative response/disagreed.

Findings of the Study

Information Needs of the Inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja

We tried to found out the information needs of our respondents in Nyanya settlement. The result is contained in Table 1.

Table 1: Information Needs of the Inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town

S/N	Information Needs	Yes		No	
		Freq	%	Freq	%
1	Information on Proper Housing Scheme	284	81.1	66	18.9
2	Educational, Career and Training Information	275	78.6	75	21.4
3	Health Information (health centres, drugs, diseases, treatment etc.)	257	73.4	93	26.6
4	Business and Trade Information	242	69.1	108	30.9
5	Information on Security and Crime	225	64.3	125	35.7
6	Information on Banking and Finance etc.	212	60.6	138	39.4
7	Agricultural Information (fertilizers, pesticides, livestock, etc.)	196	56.0	154	44.0
8	Environmental Information	194	55.4	156	44.6
9	Sports, Games and Leisure Information	194	55.4	156	44.6
10	Food and Nutritional Information	188	53.7	162	46.3
11	Information on Transportation	184	52.6	166	47.4
12	Information on Government Policies	182	52.0	168	48.0
13	Political Information	161	46.0	189	54.0
14	Technological Information	155	44.3	195	55.7

15	Information on People and Culture	155	44.3	195	55.7
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Note: F = Frequency, % = Percentage

Based on 50% minimum score benchmark for decision making, our study revealed that the inhabitants of Nyanya mostly needed information on proper housing scheme (81.1%), educational, career and training information (78.6%), and health information (73.4%), business and trade information (69.1%), information on security and crime (64.3%), information on banking and finance (60.6%). In addition our findings revealed that the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT,

Abuja, are less in need of political information (46.0%), information on people and culture (44.3%), and technological information (44.3%).

Level of Utilisation of Information for Socio-Economic Development of the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja.

We tried to find out the level of utilisation of information of our respondents in Nyanya settlement. The result is contained in Table 2.

Table 2: Level of Utilisation of Information for Socio-Economic Development of the Inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja.

S/N	Information Needs	Fully Utilised	Partially Utilised	Rarely Utilised	Not Utilised	Undecided	OM	D
1	Political Information	135 (36.6)	94(26.9)	15 (4.3)	21 (6.0)	85 (24.3)	3.87	U
2	Sports, Games and Leisure Information	64 (18.3)	171 (48.9)	38 (10.9)	20 (5.7)	57 (16.3)	3.63	U
3	Educational, Career and Training Information	66 (18.9)	56 (16.0)	71 (20.3)	75 (21.4)	82 (23.4)	2.90	NU
4	Information on People and Culture	74 (21.1)	35 (10.0)	79 (22.6)	81 (23.1)	81 (23.1)	2.83	NU
5	Information on Security and Crime	61 (17.4)	54 (15.4)	77 (22.0)	92 (26.3)	66 (18.9)	2.75	NU
6	Health Information (health centres, drugs, diseases, treatment etc.)	59 (16.9)	71 (20.3)	78 (22.3)	99 (28.3)	43 (12.3)	2.74	NU
7	Information on Government Policies	58 (16.6)	62 (17.7)	64 (18.3)	104 (29.7)	62 (17.7)	2.73	NU
8	Information on Transportation	64 (18.3)	28 (8.0)	198 (56.6)	34 (9.7)	26 (7.4)	2.68	NU
9	Information on Banking and Finance	41 (11.7)	34 (9.7)	145 (41.4)	40 (11.4)	90 (25.7)	2.68	NU
10	Agricultural Information (fertilizers, pesticides, farms, livestock, feeds etc.)	71 (20.3)	39 (11.1)	102 (29.1)	94 (26.9)	44 (12.6)	2.68	NU
11	Technological Information	37 (10.6)	49 (14.0)	54 (15.4)	113 (32.3)	97 (27.7)	2.55	NU
12	Information on Proper Housing Scheme	44 (12.6)	41 (11.7)	73 (20.9)	110 (31.4)	82 (23.4)	2.53	NU
13	Business and Trade Information	54 (15.4)	31 (8.9)	116 (33.1)	95 (27.1)	54 (15.4)	2.52	NU
14	Food and Nutritional Information	50 (14.3)	47 (13.4)	35 (10.0)	160 (45.7)	58 (16.6)	2.40	NU
15	Environmental Information	44 (12.6)	32 (9.1)	76 (21.7)	134 (38.3)	64 (18.3)	2.36	NU

Note: OM = Overall Mean, D = Decision, U = Utilised, NU = Not Utilised

Based on the mean benchmark score of 3.0, we have discovered that the information mostly

utilised by the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town are political information (3.87), sports, games and leisure information (3.63). also, the

Table 2 revealed that the information less utilised by the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town FCT, Abuja are educational, career and training information (2.90), information on people and culture (2.83), information on security and crime (2.75), health information (2.74), information on government policies (2.73), information on transportation (2.68), information on banking and finance (2.68). The result from Table 2 revealed agricultural information (2.68) is also less utilised by the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the first objective of our study revealed that the major information need of the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite town are information on proper housing scheme, educational, career and training, health information, business and trade information, information on security and crime, and information on banking and finance. This conforms with the result of Odefadehan, Akinola, and Odefadehan, (2016) study that revealed that education, social wellbeing and family are the motivating factors that stimulate (pushes) the need for information. Their study showed high-level need for information on adult literacy programme, followed by the need for information on the side effect of family planning, child spacing, social welfare programme, and poverty alleviation. Alaye-ogan (2008) study also supports that women in satellite towns in Abuja need information and support for their trade, loans, credit facilities, and shops. The less need for political information, information on culture and technological information among Nyanya inhabitants as seen from the result of the findings can bring about disconnection between the local leaders of Nyanya satellite town and the government agencies involved in development of Nyanya Satellite Town, as the culture and politics in most Nigerian communities is largely tied to its development.

Findings from the second objective of our study revealed that the information that is less utilised by the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town FCT, Abuja are educational, career and training information, information on security and crime, health information, information on

banking and finance, and information on transportation. These findings conform with Ajza, Gharakhluo, and Khazae (2012) study that also discovered that the majority of Andisheh Satellite Town inhabitants in Iran rarely utilise information on employment, career, health, finance, recreation, and shopping because they still rely on the main city (Tehran) for their employment, health, medical and financial facilities. The same can also be the reason for the low level of utilisation of information among the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja. A large number of the Nyanya inhabitants are working in town and other districts within the FCT where government agencies, companies and other business are located. They will be less interested about information on education, security, training, health, technology, business and trade in Nyanya because the major education institutions, security outfits, health facilities, technological hubs, factories, businesses, national and international agencies and government institutions are scantily or not located in Nyanya but in the Central Business District (CBD), Maitama, Garki, Wuse, Jabi, and other districts in Abuja.

The result from the findings also revealed that agricultural information is less utilised by the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town. This might be a result of the neglect of the agricultural sector by most Nigerians in search for white-collar and blue-collar jobs especially in the FCT. People who move from their states and local communities where there is easy access to land and potentials for agriculture, to the state capital where land is highly expensive, will not be motivated to seek for agricultural information. This is why the study by Adio, Abu, Yusuf, and Nansoh, (2016) in Kwara State, Nigeria, unlike Nyanya discovered that the farmers utilise agricultural information to an extent and also adoption of technology for improved agricultural productivity. The reason for this is largely because Kwara state is agriculturally driven with more than one state owned farms and several other agricultural investments as compared to Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja with majority of the inhabitants being civil/public servants, traders

and artisans.

Conclusion

This research revealed that the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town mostly utilised information on political information, sports, games and leisure information. Other information needs such as educational, career and training information, information on people and culture, information on security and crime, health information, information on government policies, information on transportation, information on banking and finance, agricultural information, technological information, information on proper housing scheme, business and trade information, food and nutritional information, and environmental information are rarely utilised by the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja. The FCT Administration through policies and programmes can improve on socio-economic development of Nyanya inhabitants by focusing on the information needs they rarely utilised.

Recommendations

Based on the major findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made. That:

1. The FCTA, FCDA, STDD and AMAC should incorporate the information needs of the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT, Abuja such as information on proper housing scheme, transportation, security and crime, health, education, agriculture, business and trade in the socio-economic development plans and strategies of the inhabitants of Nyanya Satellite Town.
2. STDD should collaborate with AMAC to establish a functional library and or information centre in Nyanya Satellite Town, FCT Abuja and also embark on motivation of the inhabitants on the need to accept and patronise the library and information centre located in their settlement as major reliable source of information for their socio-economic development.

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