

Information Flow Assessment for Rural Transformation in Developing Nations

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Abstract: *This study was conducted to assess the information flow in rural community. It considered the concept of information, rural transformation and measures to be taken for rural development in developing Nations. The study also established the important of information and communication network in our contemporary society by implementing a simple modality in rural communication flows (such modality include one ways messages such as radio communications and television feed back messages)its also put into consideration the major occupation of rural dweller in developing nations, which are Agriculture. However: the stages of information and communication flows which are downward , upward, Horizontal and diagonal information flows laws are considered as the major ingredients of effective communications ...but in considering the rural information's strategist, this paper will be considering the downward and upward information's flows rules as a focus towards attaining rural development in developing Nations. its concluded that information services is a vital element in achieving rural transformation in any developing nations, so therefore its of a good opinion that effective coordination of information are essential in transforming rural community into a civilized community . this paper also, recommend the creation of literacy program for the rural dwellers, as well as provision of electricity for effective channel of information update.*

Keywords: Assessment, Information, Transformation, flow, rural, Developing Nations. Upward information flows, downward information flows, Network, Communications, Radio and Television

1. Introduction

Information plays an important role in improving the standard of livelihoods of all and Information deals with processed data which is and could be transmitted to meaningful messages. Information is raw data processed for the development of both urban and rural dwellers. Development of any nation is solely depend on the ability to identify, acquire, access and utilize information appropriately. A report on rural people (2018) indicates that “access to information and advise is a key resources for a local people in maintaining active and independent lives style. Access to information is germane to providing healthy living to people because with access to relevant information, timely decision are made which can inform positive results. This papers are to look into upward information flows from the top decision makers of any given society or Organizations and how the information is to be managed for accurate execution by the followers.

Information is the backbone of any society and it is an instrument to achieve productivity by both the public and private sector. According Wiener (2013) information “to live effectively is to live with adequate information”. The development of nations cannot be easily achieving without the development of rural community. It is so because over 80 percent of the population reside in rural environment needs positive and relevant information for their daily activities.

Rural communal are seen as the characteristics of people living in the country as opposed to urban, characterized by

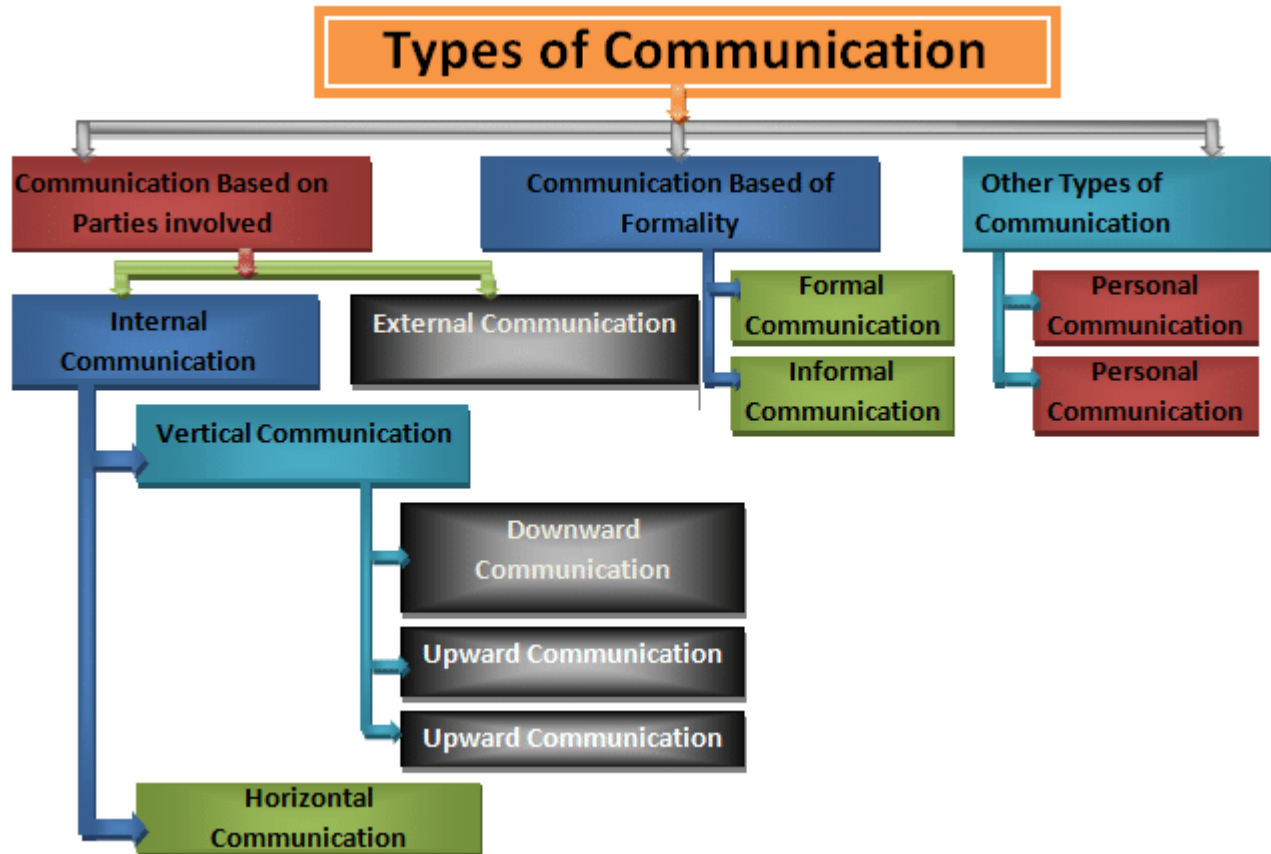
simplicity, lacking basic social and basic amenity most often engaged in agricultural pursuits. Rural communal are characterized by the following: extreme poverty, malnutrition, lack of electricity, inadequate school facilities with inexperienced teachers and poor media facilities. Activities of rural people do not require any expertise as the major activities has to do with farming.

Rural dwellers are involved in other occupation like cloth making, tailoring, hunting, pottery. For effective utilization of their power, there is need for them to have access to information. The information seeking behaviors of rural dwellers depends on their individual attitude, personalities and level of socialization.

Information Flows

Information flow shows how information is communicated from a source to a receiver or target through some medium. The medium acts as a bridge, or a means of transmitting information. Examples of media include, radio, television, mobile phone and gadget, computer and computing devices. information flow has to do with the combination of information flow policy, a communication relation that defines permissible interaction of information from one level of communication to another, and a method of binding each and every stages of communication to a single model or ways of interaction are referred to effective communications flows. Information flow has to do with a method in which output and input are dependent, direct or indirectly to one another.

Image showing types of communication flows



Rural Transformation

Rural Transformation is a process of comprehensive societal change whereby rural societies diversify their economy and reduce their dependency level from other menial trade like agriculture, fishing, deforestation e.t.c, so as to become dependent on distant places to trade and to acquire goods, services, and ideas, by moving from dispersed villages to towns and small and medium cities; they can also become culturally more similar to large urban settings, by channeling their local produce through appropriate means of communications for effective and efficient trade. Despite the challenges been face by common development, the rural transformation has different meaning to countries who have different outcomes in terms of economic growth, social inclusion, and social sustainability, while global forces drive this transformation, they are mediated by localized social structures and institutional frameworks, and local societies at any given time, they have different potentials to do and see things in different perspective.

A more general definition is provided by (Rauch et al, (2014) who defines rural transformation as a “long – term multi – dimensional change process of the key characteristics of the economic and social life of rural populations that takes their blessedness into broader societal and global dynamics into consideration.”

Rural transformation is a process through which rural incomes grow, rural economics diversify, and linkages with urban and pre-urban areas evolve. Rural transformation is fundamental in understanding future food security, asses to good road network and electricity, which can be more

formally defined as a long term process of change in fundamental features of the way people in rural areas live and act economically, taking into consideration how they are embedded in societal and global dynamics. It is a complex phenomenon determined by a variety of interrelated political, economic, demographic, socio-cultural and environmental drivers (Berg. 2016).

The rural transformation is not about changing rural societies rather it is transforming or reorganizing of society in a given space with a norms that of urban standard. It also involves structural processes that involves relying on agriculture for nation building. Ohagwu, 2010 sees rural transformation as a total overhauling of the rural system from the monopoly of an agrarian outlook to all inclusive life programme of service generating and manufacturing engendered outlook. Rural transformation denotes rapid and radical rural restructuring such as changes in agricultural intensify, crop selection patterns, farmland, land productivity and farm income, labour and technological productivity and major improvements in rural housing and economic and social conditions resulting from industrialization, all this processes involve good and effective communication flows.

Olawepo, (2010) explained the unique features of some develop nations rural economy that necessitate specific planning. It places agriculture in the center of economic life of rural communities and it is around this that other enterprises revolve. Some developing nation has in the past focused on different approaches to develop the rural areas. Such approaches include direct participation in infrastructure development by various governments, agricultural development through governmental fiscal planning,

community development through community associations, and establishment of specific government agencies for the purpose of rural transformation. One of such policies initiated in the last decade is the establishment of community banks and recently Micro finance banks in both rural and urban centers in the country. However this cannot be achieved with a structure communications strategist.

Factors Necessitating for Rural Transformation

There are series of factors responsible for the attainment of transformation in the rural society. The factors are which may include;

- a) Land.
- b) Populations.

a) Land Factors

Large space of land that's meant for expansion, invention and creation of opportunities both in human and natural resources that is yet to be exploited. Rural society has large proportion of population that call for transformation of rural region base on abundant space or large geographical area.

According to Ugwuanyi & Emmanuel (2013) said rural sector is the major source of capital formation for the country and a principal market for domestic and raw materials for industrial processes. Nyagba (2009) opine that, the most important sector of the Nigerian.

b) Population Factors

Population is also among the major factor that should be considered in rural transformation because most of it dwellers were push from urban society due to high cost of living and by that it increased the populations of rural dweller. It is argued that rural area dwellers have been found to engage in primary economic activities that form the foundation of any country's economic development due to it large population. As it is conspicuously glaring from the foregoing, given the national economy, enhancing the development of the rural sector should be central to government and public administration by effective communication connect. Regrettably, these rural sectors of any Nation that are vital to the socioeconomic development of the nation are faced with the problem of retard development due to communication connect / or interruption between the urban and rural communications. This has been attributed to the top down approach policies of most Government in the approaches to rural development.

Another possible reason for the poor state of the rural areas could be attributed to not continuity of rural development policies and projects by successive government due to lack of strong communication means. In this regard, Ajadi (2010) noted that there is usually the absence of sustained, comprehensive and conclusive implementation of rural development policies in most Developing Nations.

Rural Information Services for Rural Transformation

Information services are multidimensional and serve socially as a binding thread among different groups of rural dwellers. There is need for rural dwellers to have unrestricted access to information and communications Strategist which could be done through direct communications or direct communication by keying to government social and

development programs or by showing their interest directly to the government with social development.(downward communications or upward communication strategies) There are several information outlet which can provide information to the rural dwellers which will help in their rural activities such as improving their productivity, standard of living and even marketing of their product. Rural changes is a complex and nuanced phenomenon. The more that policy makers understand the local experience, and the more the intervention strategy can accommodate.

Some developing Nations has policies and plans which include rural information service, but the condition of the rural communities is degenerating instead of advancing. What could be the reason for this unwanted, unhealthy, uncomfortable, and unbearable situation? The answer is not hard to determine. A high rate of illiteracy in the rural community is the major contributing factor. People in rural areas lag behind in accessing information to attain their goals. Harande (2009) observes that "the rural populace suffers from acute low productivity, social and economic retrogression due to ignorance, which is also a direct consequence of either inadequate or total lack of information. Despite the fact that the country is endowed with both human and natural resources; our rural communities are suffering due to absence of indices of development and communications strategist.

In line with the above, Musibau, Mahmood & Hammed (2017) opine that structural and infrastructural problems, official corruption, unstable political and economic polices growing insecurity, and unstable power supply hamper this development. Rural inhabitants in the present day are not reaping from the fruits of the enormous wealth the country has. Information services that will greatly enhance their productivity, transform their community into a lively and enlightened one, and empower their economic base, it not effective and relevant, and the service is not fashioned towards the above mentioned objectives. Generally, in our rural areas, there is an acute shortage of information services. This makes the rural community incapacitated and makes it difficult to associate with other communities to develop and make progress. Diso (1994) observes that information service in terms of more enlightenment activities and announcements about what the state does and plans to do for the people and justification for that. Even serious information, like disseminating of agricultural research results and other major rural activities is often subtly reduced to persuasive propaganda to make people appreciate and accept the state's, benevolence' and benignity' for providing farming inputs or new methods of cultivation", fishing and other activities In a country that has poor concept of information service, the rural development never be a reality. these types of services lead to a poor information environment with inappropriate services, outdated materials, tools, and technologies, unqualified, inexperienced, and very difficult information officers who have contributed to making the rural communities uncomfortable, disorganized, and with a narrow-minded approach to any new thing that is introduced to them. Poverty and illiteracy are the major barriers to rural development (Afeadie, 2018). Who is to blame for this terrible condition? The government should take the blame

completely, because it is the right of every citizen to enjoy the wealth, resources and services rendered by the government of the country without any discrimination or neglect.

Gaffney (2019) view that “for the rural populace to be able to exercise their sovereignty and assume responsibility for development, they must have necessary resources, adequate revenue allocation from supreme Government (superior government) and internal capacity to generate their own revenue locally as well as access to relevant and desirable information for development.” Enlightenment, awareness, and development of the rural majority depend on the nature and relevancy of information they received from the government. Progressive changes depend on the nature of information consumed. Tazen, Diarra, Kabore, Ibrahim, Bologo/Traoré, M., Traoré & Karambiri, (2019) asserts that “equally, information is a means to re-socialized people to value goals and attribute it with Africa’s contemporary needs”. This is a clear signal that rural societies in Nigeria can be transformed to an information-conscious societies that will form the bases for their socioeconomic development.

Challenges of Rural Development

The challenges and problem faces by rural dwellers are quite different. Possibilities for attracting employment opportunities are limited, In disadvantaged regions and inhabitant might feel less concerned to their area. Also, their willingness to invest time and capital to improve the livelihood’ of their habitat deteriorates. Educated individuals are often the first to leave, causing a so-called ‘brain-drain’ which leads to rural areas with low potential (Stockdale, 2006; Wellbrock et al., 2012). On the other hand, there are rural regions which are successful in seizing the opportunities arising from globalization and thus are referred as ‘hot-spots’ of development (Wiskerke, 2007, quoted by Wellbrock et al., 2012; BBR 2008). Faced with the complexity and variety of rural development paths it is common to stress the uniqueness of each individual rural area (Copus et al., 2011).

It is hypothetical that the factors behind the different economic performances of rural regions are related to the interplay of local and global forces, in which territorial dynamics, population dynamics and the globalization process are the main determinants (Terluin, 2003; Agarwal et al., 2009). By analyzing differences in the economic performance of rural regions, Terluin (2003) proposes a general guideline for their economic development strategies that recommends improving the capacity (knowledge, skills and attitude of rural dwellers) of local actors to establish and sustain development within the region as one of the key issues. Successful development approaches therefore include human skills, capacity building and innovation as crucial elements (Pollermann, 2006; Tomaney, 2010). Thereby knowledge processes and innovation take place within specific social and cultural contexts and networks of social relations, and innovation and communication is essential for fostering smart places in rural areas (Bruckmeyer and Tovey, 2008; Neumeier, 2011; Bock, 2012).

However, one of challenges threatening rural communities especially in developing countries are numerous and cut across all spheres of life. Most often, rural development policies or programs are discontinued whenever there is a change in governance. Most times, a new government abandons the projects and programs of its predecessor even when such programs are appropriate. In this regard, Ajadi (2010) noted that there is usually the absence of sustained, comprehensive and conclusive implementation of rural development policies. A typical example is the abandonment of the Better Life for Rural Women program of former First Lady Mariam Babangida for the Family Support Programme by the succeeding regime of General Sanni Abacha. (case study of west Africa Region) Some are not well implemented and the targeted population (rural dwellers) hardly benefit as government officials are corrupt and pocket some of the funds released for such programme. To this end, some of the rural development initiatives are haphazardly implemented as a result of poor supervision and corruption. This is evident in many rural communities are lack of water with start up project.

Factors Effecting Rural Development include

- 1) Poor infrastructure.
- 2) High level of illiteracy.
- 3) Lack of Communications.
- 4) Migration.
- 5) Low social interaction.

Note: this paper has focus on Communication Bridge between Rural dwellers and Government (both policies and focus negligence).

2. Conclusion / Recommendations

Information is an important element in the rural transformation. Developing a nation is tantamount to developing its rural communities which is very paramount to nation building. Effective information and communication service delivery and coordination are also essential tools for transformation. Information and effective communication provision and dissemination is essential which must be recognized and given appropriate attention. It’s concluded in this paper that lack of information and communications flows as cause a setback in transforming rural dweller into a productive community, information service policy has never been favorable to the rural dwellers. The onus is on the government who failed to ensure that activities and policies of the government do not have any impact on the rural community. Those who represent the government in implementing the policies have failed in informing the rural inhabitant on the issues that has impact on their daily activities.

In providing solution to the problem, this paper offers a number of recommendations as a means of meeting the information services required by the rural communities.

These includes:

- 1) Creation of literacy program to instill in the rural dwellers.
- 2) Introduction of ICTs based program in rural communities which would be serve as a means of providing solutions to their problem.

- 3) Effort should be made to ensure total implementation of effective information services in rural areas, which would serve as a measure in curbing influx of people to urban centers.(such include provision of communications gadgets)
- 4) Provision of timely information on the government activities to the rural communities.
- 5) Government must introduce lighting system in the rural communities which could be either solar power or connection to the national grid.
- 6) Provision of good road network and drinkable water in order to alleviate the suffering of the rural communal.

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