



## INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF FARMERS IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

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### Abstract

The paper examined information seeking behaviour of farmers in North-Central, Nigeria. The paper assessed the farmers' information seeking patterns, determine the types of information resources and services required by farmers, examine farmers' interest in seeking information on improved yield methods, identify efforts by information service providers and government authorities, highlight challenges faced by farmers as it affects their yield and outline strategies to address these challenges. Six (6) research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The total population for the study was four hundred and fifty (450) farmers from three states, Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State. Purposive sampling was used to select the three states in North-Central, Nigeria. Instrument for data collection include questionnaire, observation check list, interviews and focal group discussion. The reliability of the instruments was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Data was analyzed using frequency and percentage, simple Mean (X) and standard deviation (SD). The findings showed that current awareness service (CAS) increases farm yield of rural farmers. Also, orientation programs for the rural farmers, charging of information resources, selective dissemination of information (SDI), exhibition program and freelance services helps farmers to increasing their crop yield. The study concluded that library roles in improving rural farmers' information seeking pattern was neglected and this have negative effect on farm yield of the rural farmers. Recommendations were made that, there should be adequate written government policy for the rural farmers, adequate funding to farmers for the purchase of fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, and carrying out farm mechanization, provision of resources for the rural farmers, adequate training for the rural farmers, educating rural farmers on seeking useful information for improved yield, issue of locality/ environmental factor should be properly addressed, availability of experience library managers who can educate rural farmers on the new farm technique.

**Keywords:** Information seeking behaviour, farmers, information sources, information needs and Information specialist.

### Introduction

Libraries and information professionals play a vital role in sharing and interacting knowledge across various human endeavours, from rural settlements to urban cities, encompassing peasant farmers, scientific researchers, and mechanized

farming. In North-Central Nigeria, farming is undertaken by a large section of the rural populace, primarily poor rural people with limited access to agricultural education, research, and development.



The North-Central zone's economy is predominantly agrarian, with most residents engaged in farming major food and cash crops, such as yam, rice, potatoes, beans, and cassava. Agricultural products drive commercial activities in this region. However, most farmers lack access to relevant and timely information, hindering agricultural growth and productivity (Minten, Vendeplas, & Swinnen, 2016).

Agriculture is shifting from traditional practices to information-intensive methods, necessitating access to modern communication technologies, especially in developing countries like Nigeria (Mahapatra, 2012). The need for agricultural information is as old as agriculture itself, and farmers would benefit from global information if sophisticated information centres were established in rural areas (Neela & Uma, 2020)

Providing vital information to rural farmers should be librarians' top priority, as rural farmers constitute a significant portion of developing countries like Nigeria (Obidike, 2011). Adequate access to knowledge and information is crucial for agricultural development, enhancing productivity, and informing farmers of modern farming systems (Ekoja, 2014).

### Statement of the Problem

Library resources are information resources that are housed by libraries of all categories for easy accessibility to clientele. These materials comprise of books which are in the form of (print and non-print) materials which comes as audio, video records among others. It played crucial role in meeting the multi-dimensional needs for information and knowledge acquisition in aiding research worldwide.

The libraries also provide information to support various stakeholders in their various discipline, which include; academic institutions, researchers, agricultural extension workers, rural farmers etc. However, this library resources most often are very difficult to be accessed and make available to patrons, which as a result hindered information dissemination and also affect agricultural productivity globally.

Most often, the channels in which this information or information resources are supposed to reach the patrons such as; library

orientation, library exhibition program, freelancing and current awareness services are neglected and not taken serious by the library professionals. The farmers will not get this information as expected to enable them meet with the new global trend in agriculture. And these farmers who are supposed to be reached out to concerning the new process and methods of planting will be lacking in that aspect and as such crop production will be negatively affected, since they are deprived of the needed information. Most times, new farming policies are written to help farmers improved on their agricultural activities with new breed of seedlings that will facilitate food production and supply for the populace. But the librarians will censor this information unknowingly to the farmers.

This issue has led to food scarcity, insecurity, and high price in food commodities such as rice, beans, millet, yams, guinea corn among others due to unavailability of library resources that are supposed to be consulted by farmers to help them know new seeds that are to be cultivated and at the appropriate season. Consequently, this has turn youths to crime and other social vices, rural-urban migration has increased, leaving farmlands that are supposed to be cultivated fallow. Libraries must prioritize information dissemination to rural farmers to combat food scarcity and insecurity in North-Central Nigeria and ensure food sufficiency.

In the other hand, the normal agricultural activities that involves the cultivation of new breeds of crops and conservation has also been neglected and abandon by farmers as a result the attitude of some ineffective librarians who has failed in their responsibilities of education and providing agricultural information for the rural farmers. It is also observed that librarians do not educate the farmers on the advantage of getting to know the particular crop to plant at the appropriate season and time. It is on this premise that this study is carried out.

### Literature Review

Food and shelter are fundamental human needs, and agriculture plays a vital role in meeting these necessities. Individuals' needs may vary, but food



is a universal requirement, making agriculture crucial for human endeavours. It provides nations with food and industries with raw materials for production.

For this reason, information experts must extend library services to farmers, primarily located in rural areas, who lack access to essential information on pest control, crop diseases, and seedlings. The information gap between rural farmers and urban professionals is significant, and bridging it is essential. According to Lampley, Sambo and Hassan (2016), Nigeria's information services cater to only 20% of the educated elite, leaving 80% of rural dwellers in information deprivation.

Research has identified the agricultural information needs of rural communities in Nigeria. Nicholase-Ere (2017) highlighted the need for information on high-yield crops, fertilizer availability, storage challenges, and new farming techniques. Extension workers should revisit their primary objectives and provide guidance to pastoral farmers, empowering them with the latest technology and farming practices (Mahapatra, 2012).

Agriculture is a critical resource and catalyst for development, essential for daily life and farming activities (Odini, 2014). Information is a powerful tool for empowerment, enlightenment, and progress (Nicholase-Ere, 2017). In modern society, information drives progress, and its importance cannot be overstated (Milovanovic, 2014). Information plays a central role in farmers' decision-making, enabling them to respond to opportunities that improve agricultural productivity (Nzozzo&Mogambi, 2016)

### Research Objective

The main objective of this study is to examine the information seeking behaviour among farmers in North-Central Nigeria.

Specifically, the study aimed at

1. assessing means of improving rural farmers' information seeking patterns in North-Central Nigeria;
2. determining the types of information resources and services required and provided to farmers in rural North-Central Nigeria;

3. examining farmers' interest in seeking information on modern methods for improved yield in North-Central Nigeria;
4. identifying efforts by information service providers and government authorities to provide adequate and timely information to rural farmers in North-Central Nigeria;
5. highlighting challenges faced by rural farmers that affect their yield in North-Central Nigeria; and
6. outlining strategies information specialists can use to address challenges faced by farmers in North-Central Nigeria.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the assess means in improving rural farmers' information seeking patterns in North-Central Nigeria?
2. What are the types of information resources and services required and provided to farmers in rural North-Central Nigeria?
3. What is the farmers' interest in seeking information on modern methods for improved yield in North-Central Nigeria?
4. What are the efforts made by information service providers and government authorities to provide adequate and timely information to rural farmers in North-Central Nigeria?
5. What are the challenges faced by rural farmers that affect their yield in North-Central Nigeria?
6. What are the strategies information specialists can use to address challenges faced by farmers in North-Central Nigeria?

### Significance of the Study

The study's findings will benefit various stakeholders.

- Farmers: applying recommendations on information seeking behaviour and library roles to enhance farming operations.



- Librarians: staying up-to-date with current practices in academic librarianship.
  - University libraries: encouraging management to provide necessary information on new agricultural methods.
  - Library managers: formulating policies supporting agricultural extension workers.
  - University library administrators: understanding the importance of new agricultural policies and information utilization.
  - Government: recognizing the need to fund public libraries for automation services and facilities.
  - Students and researchers: To the students and researchers in tertiary institutions, it is expected that the work will guide them to gain an effective research productivity.
- information dissemination to rural dwellers. The model comprises four basic systems/stakeholders:
1. Client System: individuals, families, groups, farmers, and communities receiving assistance.
  2. Change Agent System: agricultural extension workers, educators, and professionals driving change.
  3. Target System: farmers, families, groups, and communities requiring information to achieve their goals.
  4. Action System: partnerships between agricultural workers and other stakeholders to meet rural farmers' needs.

These needs include information on; new crop species, planting periods, pests' control, harvest methods, processing, reservation, storage

### Research Methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods was employed for the study. Qualitative data was used to gathered data from farmers, agricultural extension workers, and librarians. The quantitative research method used adopted a descriptive survey design with a population size of 450 participants (farmers)from Benue, Nasarawa, and Plateau states. The reliability of the instruments was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The result indicated a high level of internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.85. 75 questionnaires were administered to farmers and 105 farmers interviewed making 180 respondents from Benue, while 65 questionnaires were also administered to some farmers and 55 farmers interviewed with a total number of 120 respondents in Nasarawa State. In the same vein, 60 questionnaires were administered to farmers and 90 farmers interviewed making a total number of 150 respondents in Plateau State, which include all the entire population in the three states. Purposive sampling was used to select the three states in North- Central, Nigeria. Instrument used for data collection was questionnaires, observation checklists, interviews, and focus group discussions. The instrument was validated by three expert, one from the department of Library and Information Science, FULafia, another from

The findings of this work will contribute to the literature information seeking behaviour of farmers in a new era in North-Central, Nigeria. Finally, the study's results will serve as a reference document for library managers and directors to educate the government on the importance of adequate library funding to agriculture to boast food production.

### Scope and delimitation of the Study

The study was restricted to farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State of Nigeria. The variables for the study were limited to improving rural farmers' information seeking patterns, the types of information resources and services required and provided to farmers in rural area, farmers' interest in seeking information on modern methods for improved yield, efforts by information service providers and government authorities to provide adequate and timely information to rural farmers, challenges faced by rural farmers that affect their yield and strategies librarians can use to address challenges faced by farmers in North-Central Nigeria.

### Theoretical Framework

Theoretically, this study is anchored on Brown's (1946) Four-System Theory, a holistic model for



the department of Agricultural Extension, NSUK and one from the department of statistics computing, faculty of social science in Federal University of Lafia.

The data was collected by the researchers with one research assistance in each state through direct contact. To ensure high percentage return, the questionnaire was administered and collected immediately after completion by the librarians with the help of the research assistants.

The data collected was analyzed using frequency, percentage, descriptive and non-parameter and inferential statistical tools to address the research question and analyze quantitative data. Simple Mean (X) and standard deviation (SD) was used to calculate. Descriptive statistics give pictorial evidence of a situation or a population as a tool for describing statistical data used in collecting information using table and simple percentage.

### Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

#### Respondent

This section explained the rate of responses of the distributed instrument shared to respondents (farmers)

**Table: 1.0: shows the instrument (questionnaires) distributed and their responses rate**

S/No	States	Items (Questionnaire Distributed)	Responses Rate	Percentage %
1.	Benue	180	177	98.3
2.	Nasarawa	120	115	95.8
3.	Plateau	150	142	94.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>288.7</b>

Table 1.0 shows a total number of four hundred and fifty (450) copies of instrument (questionnaire) that was administered to the farmers of three state respectively. A number of 180 copies of instrument was administered to the farmers in Benue State, from which 177 copies were filled and return representing 98.3%, while 120 copies of the instruments was administered to

the farmers in Nasarawa State, out of which 115 copies of the instruments were filled and returned representing 95.8% and 150 copies of the instruments (questionnaire) was administered to farmers in Plateau State, 142 copies of the instrument were also filed and returned representing 94.6%. An overall average percentage of 288.7 was realized.

#### Respondents Demographic Data

This section gives well-detailed analysis of the relative information of the gender of the respondents (farmers).

**Table 1.1: Gender of respondents**

S/N	Gender	Benue State Farmers Frequency	%	Nasarawa State Farmers Frequency	%	Plateau State Farmers Frequency	%
1.	Male	106	59.8	75	65.2	95	66.9



2. Female	71	40.1	40	34.8	47	32.4
<b>Average Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows farmers in Benue State, 106 respondents were males (representing 59.8%) and 71 were females (representing 40.1%) while in Nasarawa State 75(65.2%) of the respondent (farmers) were male and 40(34.8) of the respondents were female. And in Plateau State 95(66.9%) of the respondents (farmers) were

male while 47(32.4%) of the respondents (farmers) representing were female. Therefore, it can be deduced that two genders were represented and the result generated covers both male and female farmers; where male farmers outnumbered their female colleagues in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State respectively.

**Table 1.2: Respondents Farmers Categories**

S/No	Category of Library Staff	Benue		Nasarawa		Plateau	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1.	Peasant Farmers	59	33.3	51	32.9	47	33.1
2.	Subsistent Farmers	60	33.9	59	38.1	55	38.7
3.	Mechanize/ Commercial Farmers	58	32.8	45	29.1	40	28.2
	<b>Average Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table shows that 59(33.3%) of the respondents (farmers) in Benue State are peasant farmers, 60(33.9%) of the respondents (farmers) are subsistent farmers while, 58(32.8%) of the respondents (farmers) mechanize/commercial farmers. In Nasarawa State, 51(32.9%) of the respondents (farmers) are peasant farmers,

59(38.1%) and 45(29.1%) of the farmers were subsistent and mechanize/ commercial farmers respectively. While in Plateau State 47(33.1) of the farmers are peasant farmers, while 55(38.7) of them practice subsistent farming and 40(28.2) of the farmers in Plateau State practice mechanize/ commercial agriculture.

**Means of improving rural farmers’ information seeking pattern in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State, North Central Nigeria**

This section shows means of improving rural farmers’ information seeking pattern in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State.

**Table 1.3: Means of Improving Rural Farmers’ Information Seeking Pattern**

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	S.D
1	Current Awareness Service (CAS)	45	55	20	10	3.04	1.04
2	Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)	37	46	20	27	2.72	0.86
3	Library Exhibition Program	40	37	30	23	2.72	0.97
4	Charging of Information Resources	45	34	30	21	2.79	1.02
5	Freelance Services	32	39	25	34	2.53	0.89



6	Library Orientation Programs	50	43	20	17	2.97	0.85
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Table 1.3 shows the respondent’s response on the means of improving rural farmers’ information seeking pattern in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State, indicated a mean score of 3.04 indicating that Current Awareness Service (CAS) for farmers increases farm yield of rural farmers with very high score. Also, library orientation

programs for the rural farmers indicated mean score of 2.97, charging of information resources indicated 2.79. While Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) and Library Exhibition Program scored 2.4 respectively. Also 2.53 of respondents agreed that Freelance Services helps farmers to increasing their crop yield.

**The Types of Information and Services required and provided to the Rural Farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State, North Central Nigeria**

This section shows the types of information and services required and provided to the rural farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State.

**Table 1.4: Types of Information and Services required and provided to Rural Farmers**

S/N	OPTIONS	SA	A	D	SD	M	SD
1	Agricultural Farm Manual	34	33	16	17	2.50	1.5
2	Information Resources on Farm Implement	43	35	19	16	2.83	1.2
3	Material Resources on Mechanization	33	23	18	19	2.35	1.7
4	Resources on Agronomy (Insecticide, Pesticide and Weeding)	29	26	13	17	2.15	1.9
5	New Breed of Seedlings	32	31	23	18	2.60	1.4
6	Information Resources on Cultivation of Agricultural Products	22	26	32	16	2.40	1.6
7	Harvesting and Storage Process	32	28	17	14	2.27	1.73

Respondent’s response on the types of information and services required and provided to the rural farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State, indicated a mean score of 2.825 indicating that information resources on farm implement increases farm yield of rural farmers with very high score. Also new breed of seedlings for the rural farmers indicated 2.6, agricultural farm manual use in educating the rural farmers

indicated 2.5. While information resources on cultivation of agricultural products scored 2.4. Also 2.35 of respondents agreed that material resources on mechanization helps farmers to increasing their crop yield as harvesting and storage process scored 2.27. Finally, resources on agronomy (insecticide, pesticide and weeding) score 2.15. All the items scored 2.1 and above indicating that they will have negative effect on the farm yield when not properly used.

**Farmers’ interest in seeking information on modern methods for improved yield in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State North Central, Nigeria**

This section shows the farmers’ interest in seeking information on modern methods for improved yield in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State.

**Table 1.5: Farmers’ Interest in Seeking Information on Modern Methods for Improved Yield**



S/No	OPTIONS	SA	A	D	SD	M	SD
1	Current Awareness Service (CAS)	30	22	17	31	2.3	1.7
2	Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)	39	24	14	23	3.1	1.9
3	Library Exhibition Program	34	32	12	22	3.2	1.8
4	Charging of Library Information Resources	25	41	13	21	3.3	1.7
5	Freelancing Services	34	34	12	20	2.54	1.56
6	Library Orientation Programs	37	28	14	21	3.03	0.7

Table 1.5 above shows that charging of information resources had the highest mean rating of 3.07 indicating its importance to crop yield of farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State, followed by library exhibition program scoring 3.2, Selective Dissemination of Information

(SDI) had a mean rating of 3.1. While Library orientation programs organized to educate farmers scored 3.03 and freelancing services scored 2.54 respectively. And Current Awareness Service (CAS) is indicated a mean score of 2.3 accordingly.

**Efforts made by information service providers and government authorities to provide adequate and timely information to rural farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State North-Central Nigeria**

This section shows the efforts made by information service providers and government authorities to provide adequate and timely information to rural farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State.

**Table 1.6: Effort made by Information Service Providers and Government Authorities**

S/No	Effort made by Information Service Providers and Government Authorities	Benue		Nasarawa		Plateau	
		Frequ ency	%	Frequ ency	%	Frequ ency	%
1	Organizing excursion programs	13	20.3	8	10.3	3	4.9
2	Organizing seminar programs	6	9.3	4	5.1	13	21.3
3	Organizing conferences	8	12.5	10	12.8	5	8.2
4	Organizing library exhibition program	6	9.3	14	17.9	4	6.5
5	Organizing workshops programs	8	12.5	14	17.9	8	13.1
6	Training and re-training	7	10.9	12	15.4	15	24.5
7	Organizing library orientation programs	7	10.9	8	10.3	6	9.8
8	Open air program	9	14.1	8	10.3	7	11.5

Table 1.6 shows the efforts made by information service providers and government authorities to provide adequate and timely information to rural farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State in North Central Nigeria. 13(20.3%) of the respondents identify organizing excursion programs as the efforts made by information service providers and government authorities to provide adequate and timely information to rural farmers in Benue State, while Organizing seminar

programs, Organizing conferences, Organizing library exhibition program, Organizing workshops programs, Training and re-training, Organizing library orientation programs and Open air program have 6(9.3%), 8(12.5), 6(9.3%), 8(12.5%), 7(10.9%), 7(10.9%) and 9(14.1%) responses respectively. In Nasarawa State 8(10.3%) of the respondents identify organizing excursion programs, while 4(5.1%), 10(12.8%), 14(17.9%), 14(17.9%), 12(15.4%),



8(10.3%) and 8(10.3%) of the respondents organizing seminar programs, organizing conferences, organizing library exhibition program, organizing workshops programs, training and re-training, organizing library orientation programs and open air program respectively. And in Plateau State 3(4.9%) of the respondents identify organizing excursion programs as the efforts made by information service providers and government authorities to provide adequate and timely information to rural farmers in Plateau State. While organizing seminar programs, organizing conferences,

organizing library exhibition program, organizing workshops programs, training and re-training, organizing library orientation programs and open-air program have 3(15%), 5(25%), 4(20%), 3(15%) and 2(10%) responses respectively.

**Challenges faced by rural farmers that affect their yield in North-Central Nigeria**

This section shows the challenges faced by rural farmers that affect their yield in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State.

**Table 1.7: Challenges faced by rural farmers that affect their yield**

S/No	Challenges faced by rural farmers that affect their yield	Benue		Nasarawa		Plateau	
		Frequ ency	%	Frequ ency	%	Frequ ency	%
1.	No adequate government policy for the rural farmers	10	19.6	16	22.2	4	20
2.	Inadequate funding to purchase, fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, etc. including farm mechanization	4	7.8	10	13.9	2	10
3.	Lack of resources for the rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop production	6	11.8	10	13.9	4	20
4.	No adequate training of the rural farmers	11	21.6	10	13.9	3	15
5.	Locality/ Environmental factor	10	19.6	12	16.7	3	15
6.	Un-experience library managers who hardly carry rural farmers in their activities	10	19.6	14	19.4	4	20

From the results shown in the table above, it indicates that 10(19.6%) of the respondents (farmers) view lack of adequate government policy for the rural farmers as the main challenge faced by rural farmers that affect their yield in Benue State. While 4(7.8%) indicate inadequate funding to purchase, fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, etc. including farm mechanization. 6 respondents, representing (11.8%) of the respondents identify lack of resources for the rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop production. 11 respondents representing (21.6%) of the respondent identified no adequate training of the rural farmers as a challenge faced. 10(19.6%) indicate locality/ environmental factor. While 10(19.6%) of the respondents in Benue State indicate that un-experience library managers is a challenge faced by rural farmers

that affect their yield. In Nasarawa State, 16(22.2%) of the respondents (farmers) indicates that no adequate government policy for the rural farmers is the challenge faced by rural farmers that affect their yield. 10(13.9%), 10(13.9%) and 10(13.9%) of the respondents respectively indicate farm implements, insecticides, etc. including farm mechanization, lack of resources for the rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop production and no adequate training of the rural farmers as a challenge faced. While 12(16.7%) respondents indicate that indicate locality/ environmental factor and 14(19.4%) of the respondents indicate that un-experience library managers who hardly carry rural farmers in their activities un-experienced library managers are challenge faced by rural farmers that affect their yield. In Plateau State 4(20%), 4(20%) and 4(20%) respectively indicates that no



adequate government policy for the rural farmers, inadequate funding to purchase, fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, etc. including farm mechanization. Whereas, 3(15%), and 3(15%) of respondents indicate lack of resources for the

rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop production, no adequate training of the rural farmers, locality/ Environmental factor while 2(10.0%) un-experience library managers who hardly carry rural farmers in their activities

**Strategies information specialists can use to address the challenges faced by farmers in North-Central Nigeria**

This section shows the strategies information specialists can use to address the challenges faced by farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State.

**Table 1.8: Strategies information specialists can use to address challenges faced by farmers**

S/N	Strategies information specialists can use to address the challenges faced by farmers	Benue		Nasarawa		Plateau	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1.	Adequate government policy for the rural farmers	10	19.6	15	20.8	6	30
2.	Adequate funding to purchase fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, etc including farm mechanization	10	19.6	15	20.8	7	35
3.	Provision of resources for the rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop production	10	19.6	15	20.8	4	20
4.	Provision for adequate training for the rural farmers	8	15.7	15	20.8	3	15
5.	Issue of locality/ environmental factor should be properly addressed	8	15.7	12	16.7	-	-
6.	Availability of experience library managers who can carry rural farmers in their activities	5	9.8	-	-	-	-

In table 1.8 above, it shows that 10 (19.6%), 10 (19.6%) and 10 (19.6%) respondents (farmers) in Benue State identified adequate government policy for the rural farmers, adequate funding to purchase fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, etc. including farm mechanization, provision of resources for the rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop production as adequate strategies that librarians can use to address the challenges faced by farmers. 8(15.7%) and 8(15.7%) respondents (farmers) indicate provision for adequate training

for the rural farmers and issue of locality/ environmental factor that should be properly addressed as strategies that librarians can use to address the challenges faced by farmers. While 5(9.8%) farmers identify availability of experience library managers who can carry rural farmers in their activities as a strategy that librarians can adopt in tackling the challenge faced by farmers.

In Nasarawa State, adequate government policy for the rural farmers, adequate funding to



purchase fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, etc. including farm mechanization, provision of resources for the rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop production and provision for adequate training for the rural farmers indicates 15(20.8%), 15(20.8%), 15(20.8) and 15(20.8%) responses respectively while availability of experience library managers who can carry rural farmers in their activities shows 12(16.7%) responses as strategies for librarians to adopt in tackling the challenge faced by farmers. In Plateau State, 6(30%) of the respondents (farmers) identify adequate government policy for the rural farmers as the strategies for librarians to adopt in tackling the challenge faced by farmers. 7(35%), 4(20%) and 3(15%) of respondents identifies adequate funding to purchase fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, etc including farm mechanization, provision of resources for the rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop production and provision for adequate training for the rural farmers respectively.

### Summary of findings

Findings of the study revealed the roles in improving rural farmers' information seeking pattern in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State as Current Awareness Service (CAS), Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Library Exhibition Program, Charging of Information Resources, Freelance Services and Library Orientation Programs.

It was also revealed from the study that agricultural farm manual, information resources on farm implement, material resources on mechanization, resources on agronomy (insecticide, pesticide and weeding), new breed of seedlings, information resources on cultivation of agricultural products and harvesting and Storage Process are the main the types of information and services required and provided to rural farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State. This finding aligns with that of Nicholase-Ere (2017) who highlighted the need for information on high-yield crops, fertilizer availability, storage challenges, and new farming techniques; as well as that of Mahapatra (2012) who are of the opinion that extension workers should revisit their primary objectives and provide guidance to

pastoral farmers, empowering them with the latest technology and farming practices,

There is no doubt that, the farmers' interest in seeking information on modern methods for improved yield in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State, actually made the respondents (farmers) to disclose that Charging of Library Information Resources, Library Exhibition Program and Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) are the major information resources (medium) of farmers' interest in seeking information on modern method. This finding aligns with that of Nzonzo et al., (2016) who are of the opinion that Information plays a central role in farmers' decision-making, enabling them to respond to opportunities that improve agricultural productivity.

Efforts made by information service providers and government authorities to provide adequate and timely information to rural farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State, such as organizing excursion programs, organizing seminar programs, organizing conferences, organizing library exhibition program, organizing workshops programs, training and re-training, library orientation programs Organizing and open-air program were discovered to be the positive efforts made by the librarians.

Inadequate government policy for the rural farmers, Inadequate funding to purchase, fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, etc. including farm mechanization, lack of resources for the rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop production, no adequate training of the rural farmers, locality/ environmental factor as far as un-experience library managers who hardly carry rural farmers in their activities were discovered to be factors militating against challenges faced by rural farmers yield in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State.

Strategies that were discovered to minimize the challenges include; adequate government policy for the rural farmers, adequate funding to purchase fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, etc. including farm mechanization, provision of resources for the rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop



production, provision for adequate training for the rural farmers, issue of locality/ environmental factor should be properly addressed and availability of experience library managers who can carry rural farmers in their activities.

### **Conclusion**

The study examined the library role and information seeking behaviour of farmers in a new era: a case study of North-Central, Nigeria. From the findings. It was observed that the library roles in improving rural farmers' information seeking pattern was neglected and this have negative effect on farm yield of the rural farmers. Since, the challenges faced by rural farmers that affect their yield in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State was discovered to be alarming, there is need for all hands to be on deck in order to eradicate these vices by making sure that these challenges do not recur. This effort would help to strengthen the rural farmers in having more quality and bumper yield and as such increasing food availability in Nigeria. Therefore, food insufficiency will be a thing of the past and completely roll out in Nigeria. The eradication of these vices would in turn encourage rural farmers to effectively venture into commercial farming in order to enhanced food productivity and economic development and also dealt with or addressing inadequate food security in Nigeria

### **Recommendation**

The following recommendations were made for this study:

1. There should be adequate written government policy for the rural farmers. This will help in guide the farmers in their yield.
2. Adequate funding to farmers for the purchase of fertilizers, farm implements, insecticides, etc. and carrying out farm mechanization
3. Provision of resources for the rural farmers to build up on the new global trend in crop production
4. Adequate training for the rural farmers, educating rural farmers on seeking useful information for improved yield
5. Issue of locality/ environmental factor should be properly addressed
6. There should be availability of experience information managers who can carry rural farmers in their activities.



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