

Public Library Services for Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in Ayedaade Rural Community of Osun State Nigeria.

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Abstract

The study is a descriptive survey to find out the role of public library in providing information in Ayedaade community in Osun state, Nigeria. The respondents were sixty purposely chosen farmers and artisans who were asked questions through the use of focus group discussion to find out the awareness of rural dwellers about Sustainable Developmental Goal (SDG), impact of public library as regard the attainment of SDG in the community, challenges facing the attainment of SDG in rural areas, and strategies for attainment of SDG. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents were not aware of the role of public library in implementing sustainable developmental goal especially goal one and two which are the crux of this work. It was also revealed that the majority of the people in the community do not benefit from public library services. The study recommends that public libraries have a great role to play in the attainment of sustainable development goals especially in rural areas. Therefore, there is need for the librarians and other staff of the library to take their services to the users and potential users.

Introduction

Information is power, this is because it gives knowledge and when knowledge is utilized, problems are solved, and this therefore implies that information is indispensable. In view of this, information is a tool and any nations that need development have to be informed. Relatively, Oyeronke (2012) said that the development of a country depends on how much information its citizenry is able to acquire. This implies that access to information is essential in achieving sustainable development goals

and also makes the difference between those who have opportunities and those who do not. Libraries play an important role in the dissemination of knowledge by providing information.

Libraries especially public libraries provide resources for knowledge, recreation, intellectual products of society and also process them in such a manner that the individual gain access to them readily. Public library holds and provides access to a wealth of resources that people can use to explore differences, promote heritage, learn about solutions to problems, and so on. Man needs to be well-informed to be able to stand his ground as a person. One of the roles of the library is to provide access to resources which will give information on all aspects of life, through this, man will be able to build up himself and also have positive disposition to life and this will enable him to contribute his own quota to his community and to the world at large. This is why Emmanuel (2012) gave the notion that the library can lift man from a position of illiteracy and ignorance to the position of an informed and rational person. This therefore means that a quality library provides access to quality information which has direct impact on individual and subsequently on national development. This also apply to rural community and in this case, a lot of effort is needed to be put in by the librarians to make sure the rural dwellers have access to the actual information needed and, in the language, and format they will understand.

The characteristics of the rural community population in Nigeria vary according to different geographical location; the most common among them is the high degree of illiteracy. Aguilar (2005) defined rural community as a society in which there is a low ratio of inhabitants of open land and the most important economic activity is the production of food stuff, fibres and raw materials. Rural areas could be regarded as places with agricultural orientations. Also, Elumilade and Asaolu (2006) posit that Nigeria's population is increasingly becoming one of the poorest in the world and this is more prominent

in the rural areas. This is more in rural area due to the fact that urban areas have more access to resources than the rural areas. To buttress this, Ogar, Dika and Atanda (2018) stated that urban settings were once rural but due to advancement, technology information and government intervention, their status changed over time. Consequently, rural communities can also develop overtime with access to information and needed resources. This showcase that Information and library services are vital needs to all and in essence to people in rural communities for the attainment of personal and societal development. Sustainable developmental goals especially the first and second goals which are to put an end to poverty and hunger can also be achieved in rural communities.

The sustainable development goals (SDGs) are universal set of seventeen goals, subdivided into 169 goals and adopted by the United Nations on 25th September 2015 in order to build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and complete what they did not achieve. The 2030 Agenda is a more comprehensive, progressive and innovative agenda that responds to the many challenges faced by the world today.

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere;

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture;

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages;

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;

Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all;

Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;

Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all;

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation;

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries;

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns;

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts;

Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development;

Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss;

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels and

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development (General Assembly, 2015). These goals and targets are set forward as a continuum to the improvement of 15 years Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which commenced on the year 2005 and ended on year 2015.

Out of the 17 SDGs, this paper focused on Goals 1 and 2 to end poverty in all its forms everywhere; and end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; by 2030. It is a common knowledge that Nigeria is one of the countries that signed in to this sustainable development goals, this was done to in a bid to develop the nation. However, the

development of society and individuals can only be attained through the abilities of well-informed citizens to play active roles in the society and to also exercise their democratic rights; and since rural communities represent significant part of the population, it is therefore vital that the rural communities are not left behind in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This therefore signifies that if rural dwellers are adequately having access to quality information like the counterparts (urban dwellers) about every sphere of life, it will go a long way to achieve the development that the nation need.

However, Egbe (2014) pointed out that there is an acute shortage or absence of social amenities and essential commodities that will make life bearable in rural communities. Though, Nigeria has policies and plans which include rural information service, but the condition of the rural communities is degenerating instead of advancing. This is the state in which Ayedaade community is. In view of this how has the public library being able to implement these goals especially goal number one and two-(1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere (2) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture in its policy; and what are the perspective of rural dwellers to these goals.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions

1. What is the level of awareness of the people of Ayedaade community on sustainable developmental goal?
- 2: To what extent do public library services enhance SDGs in Ayedaade community?
- 3: What are the challenges encountered by the people of Ayedaade community in achieving the SDG?
- 4: What are the proposed strategies to achieve SDG in Ayedaade community?

Literature Review

Libraries are seen as the repository of information and have been acknowledged as social oriented and service organizations. Igbeka and Atinmo (2002) are of the view that information is an important tool and a valuable resource required for the realization of any objective or goal set by any individual or organization. Information plays a vital and indispensable role in the socio-economic development of a nation (Srikanth, 2017). Information is needed in all facets of life, knowledge and understanding as well as keeping one well-informed about all events. The role of information in any nation cannot be left behind because libraries are seen as the custodians of knowledge and the most reliable information centre that deals with the acquisition, organization, dissemination and preservation of information for actualizing sustainable development. According to Ukubeyinje and Ejitagha (2019) libraries and librarians can provide such access to information which would enable people to lead gainful lives, due to the fact that librarians are skilled at acquiring, organizing, offering for use and publicly preserving information irrespective of the form in which it is packaged.

Public libraries are an integral part of any community, regardless of size and their services are indispensable to the educational, political, and social development of the rural population. While libraries are recognized for improving literacy, promoting culture, and preserving and making heritage available, what often goes unrecognized is the role they play by ensuring equity of access to life-changing information and communications technologies that help communities address their most pressing challenges. In view of this, Nwachukwu (2018) recognizes that eradicating poverty in all its forms and manifestations, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Public libraries help people, particularly those who are marginalized such as those living in poverty or rural areas or due to gender or disability, to use the internet to access health information,

improve their education, access online government services and find jobs. Dada (2016) expressed that the success of any institution, country or society rests squarely on the adequacy of its library collections because the library is seen as an agency for findings, discovery, innovation, vocational skills' repository, scholarship and research.

Public library helps provide information and educative materials to those who like to pursue self-education. Mamman (2015) gave the view that public library acquires, organizes and stores recorded knowledge for the purpose of giving information and knowledge to their users to enrich their personal lives. In this view Onah, Urom & Amanze-Unagha (2015) purported that unhindered access to information is required for the actualization of all the SDGs. All members of the community irrespective of race, religion, colour sex, language status, educational attainment is allowed equal access. In this way a public library can contribute to the welfare and development of the community it serves thereby becoming a social force. As a result a public library can help in the achievement of the aims and objectives in order to achieve the aspiration of the people. (Obinyan, Obinyan & Aidenojie 2011). In the opinion of Okoro, Akidi & Arua (2014), libraries are tools for the development of society. Giving people in every part of the world the support they need to lift themselves out of poverty in all its manifestations is the very essence of sustainable development.

The concept of rural community has been given different definitions to afford it an adequate description. In most rural area in Nigeria, basic infrastructure where they exist at all, are too inadequate for meaningful development. Survey (2013) described rural community development as choice influenced by time, space and culture In line with this, Egbe (2014) regards rural areas as places with agricultural orientations. The houses are farm houses, barns, sheds and other structures of similar

purposes. Also, Anunobi, Ogbonna and Osuchukwu(2014) states that, in Nigeria, the rural environment is characterized by highly illiterate petty traders as well as subsistent farmers. Nwokocha and Chimah (2006) imply that the inhabitants of rural area are engaged in agriculture and other mini commercial activities. They are generally characterized by abject poverty, low literacy level, lack of social amenities and poor environmental conditions. Another common characteristic according to Momodu (2012) is the poor road network system, because these communities are inaccessible, and therefore, makes information dissemination on the state of the nation's economy, health – especially modern family planning difficult. This according to Ogar, Dika, and Atanda (2018) is because such setting is most times dominated by people whose standard of living is usually very challenging as a result of poverty, hunger, disease, ignorance, illiteracy and the absence of social amenities such as good roads, power and schools

Saleh and Lasisi (2011) remarked that Nigeria as a third world country has certain features of rural population which include illiteracy, poverty, hunger, disease and general absence of basic infrastructure such as roads, schools, electricity and so on. There is need for development in rural community as this can prevent the issue of rural-urban drift that usually cause a situation whereby urban areas become congested. Relatively, Mba (2015) noted the need for periodic assessment of the needs of those living in the rural areas and hence plan their development programs accordingly. Also, Yusuf (2010) affirms that since the development of rural dwellers services are positive indicators for national development, their involvement in developmental process becomes imperative. One way of doing this is through the identification of their information needs and the provision of innovative rural public library services as these will go a long way in development and sustaining the development.

Sustainable development is a programme that is developed to meet the needs of the present generation and also those of the future generation. The dictionary defines sustainability as the continuity of a process, activity or achievement of results without failure or decrease. Sustainability in the sense that it would not only promote the values of these heritage resources but also equally preserve them meet the worthy expectations of the people and consider the interest of future generations. European Union (2016) reported that sustainable development is a type of development that take cognisance of future needs even in its bid to meet the needs of the present Sustainable development is a continuous, guided process of economic, environmental and social change aimed at promoting wellbeing of citizens now and in the future. This therefore implies that the sustainable developmental goals are goals that are meant to sustain the development of the society. Information from the office of the senior special assistant (OSSAP 2016) to President Buhari revealed that the President was part of the team of leaders that endorsed the take-off of Sustainable Developmental Goals; he affirmed support for SDGs to succeed especially in Nigeria, which is in line with the positive change goal of his administration. Sustainable development covers a wide range of interrelated issues in the areas of environmental, economic, social, and political, all within the limits of the world's natural resources to ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by the year 2030. According to Nicholas & Perpetual (2015), Sustainable development is the overall change and improvement in any given society as related to individual progress. In the opinion of Igbuzor, (2006) it is argued that the purpose of the development is to improve people's lives by expanding their choices, freedom, and dignity

Libraries in Nigeria are faced with a number of challenges which that may hinder the implementation of SDG goals Adejumo & Adejumo (2014) identified some factors as obstacles to achieving sustainable development in developing countries like Nigeria, and they are: the priorities of

governments and individuals are often short termed, corruption which makes it difficult to prioritize long term issues, lack of qualified people to develop and implement alternative technologies due to poor educational system and lack of education about finite resources.

In order to provide strategies to these challenges public library need to sensitize the people of the community: farmers and traders in this regard, Pearson and hall (2015), identified the following as top ten strategies for libraries to create greater awareness and impact for national and international development: Create and tell your library's story, 2. Develop key messages, 3. Ensure that staff, Board, and volunteers understand and can deliver key messages and that everyone is speaking from the same script!, Engage the media, 5. Identify target audiences and create objectives for each audience, 6. Engage your audience and allow them to participate, 7. Create a public awareness campaign and tie it to an advocacy campaign, 8. Use your website, social media, and print materials to spread your message, 9. Don't stop with the story make 'the ask' for public or private support!, 10. Evaluate your success - what government has on ground for them to make life easier like provision of fertilizers, seedlings, soft loan etc.

Furthermore, Onah, Urom&Amanze-Unagha (2015) contend that unhindered access to information is required for the actualization of all the SDGs. In their view, information such as business information, economic information, agricultural information, for starting and managing small business etc, will lead to drastic reduction and possible end to poverty and hunger, among others. Librarians according to Ubale and Yahaya (2016) need to take up their responsibilities as professional information analysts in offering ideas and services for the attainment of the SDGs by giving information on provision of soft loans to less privileged persons to promote Small and Medium, scale Enterprise (SMEs). Job training of people in skills relevant to their immediate work environment and rural development should be incorporated. -

Agriculture and food security policies should be enhanced by strengthening research and development to improve production and enhance exportation thereby boosting income.- Strengthen the regulation and supervisory framework of the financial sector .- Promotion of indigenous goods and services especially through SMEs. According to Mojapelo (2018) adequate, well-resourced and well-staffed library and information services (LIS) are indispensable in the disadvantaged rural communities to address and redress inevitable backlogs and socioeconomic challenges such as provision of quality education, health issues, extreme poverty and unemployment crises, which greatly affect rural populace. Government at all levels also has vital role to play by putting a stop to insurgencies so that people can peacefully do their trade and go to their farm in peace.

Methodology

The study adopts descriptive design to give a description of what is on ground as regarding sustainable developmental goals in rural area. In view of this, Ayedaade community was chosen. This community is situated in Osun State Nigeria. The people of Ayedaade community share common cultural traits with other Yoruba found in the south western Nigeria. This is a community that is dominated by agrarians and small-scale business people. Five villages make up this community. Purposive selection was used to select fifty agrarians and ten small scale business men and women making a total of sixty respondents. This method was used to have access to the agrarians that usually comes home after each day's farm work. Ten agrarian and two business people were chosen from each village. Focus group discussion was used in each village by the researcher to elicit information from the people.

Presentation of Research Findings

Research Question 1:

What is the level of awareness of the people of Ayedaade community on sustainable developmental goal?

In response to this, majority of the respondents said they were not aware of government policy on sustainable developmental goals while few of the respondents said they are aware of it. In view of this, those that said they were aware were further asked how they got to know about it. In response they said that they attended a meeting of farmers where some people were talking about it. Particularly, one of the farmers said, “ we usually hear this type of thing like a rumour, that government is doing this or that without being sure, and no proper information on what to do”.

Research Question 2:

To what extent do public library services enhance SDGs in Ayedaade community?

The researchers find out that public library services were at no extent enhancing SDGs in Ayedaade community, in regard to this, the respondents revealed that they do not visit the library, this they said is because they view the library as a place where those preparing for examination do go to read. One of the artisans said in quote, “what i know about the library is that when my daughter was preparing for exam, she usually go there with her friends to read”.

The researchers further asked the respondents if the staff of the library do have any service that they usually rendered to the community. In response to this, the respondents said they were not aware of any service and if there were any, it will be for the students that usually go to the library to read. Moreover, they complained that most of the programmes run by the public library were done in English language and this has made them believe that the library is meant for those in school.

Research Question 3:

What are the challenges encountered by the people of Ayedaade community in achieving the SDG?

The respondents revealed that they do not have adequate access to information on sustainable development goals. In correspondence, one of the respondents emphasized in quote, “we don’t usually get information, even from the library”. Inadequate flow of information according to people of Ayedaade community has possibly debarred them from getting help from governments and hindered them from producing agricultural products in large quantity. Relatively, the respondents on small scale farming/business are of the notion that there is no help from government in terms of provision of seedlings, fertilizers and credit facilities such as grant, small and flexible loan. Also, the respondents said the bad roads also hinder the development of their community, this is as a result of the fact that their products get spoilt since they don’t have good transport that can easily facilitate the movements of the products to urban areas to sell. Furthermore, most of the respondents lamented on insecurity situation in the community especially havoc caused by herdsmen on their cash crops.

Research Question 4:**What are the proposed strategies to achieve SDG in Ayedaade community?**

In response to this, the respondents revealed that they will like to be informed about any policy of government that can affect them one way or the other. According to one of the respondents, “If the people in the library can help us get information from the government, we will be happy.” Inclusively, the respondents revealed that government should provide them with grant to improve their businesses and agricultural products. There is also need, for provision of good seedlings and fertilizers to improve soil fertility. In regards to what is happening concerning security, some of the respondents(farmers) said they want government to find a lasting solution to problems of farmers and herdsmen so they can go about their business with peace of mind. Besides, there is also need for repairing and construction of roads to link the community to markets and urban areas.

Discussion of Major Findings

Finding revealed that the rural dwellers were not aware of sustainable developmental goals in ayedaade community. This means that the policies and input of government are not being felt and utilized as it supposed to be in this community. To buttress this, Emmanuel (2012) noted that reason why all the rural development schemes in Nigeria did not succeed was because of a lack of information at the planning and execution stages. Information is a vital tool in any developmental process, this therefore implies that this is area dynamic, well-stocked and functional public libraries have a responsibility to reduce poverty by offering information job-related” resources and services to community members.

In finding the impact of public library as regard the attainment of SDG in the community, the FGD revealed that the respondents were not benefiting from the services of the public library. This therefore means that the librarians need to create programmes in formats that meet the need of everyone in the community. To buttress this, Ubale and Yahaya (2016) gave the notion that librarians need to take up their responsibilities as professional information analysts in offering ideas and services for the attainment of the SDGs by giving the necessary information needed by all.

Conclusion

Even though the respondents said they don’t visit the public library in their community and they don’t benefit from the library’s services, it is still evident that public libraries have an indispensable role to play in the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals. This is revealed in the findings where the respondents gave the view that they lack information that can help them to develop their trade and their farm work. This therefore necessitate the need to equip the library especially public library and also for librarians to take their service out of the walls of the library to the users and potentials users. It is also evident that government also has its own role to play so that the sustainable developmental goal1

(eradication of poverty) and goal 2 (Zero hunger) can be accomplished. Nigeria is a developing nation and it is clear that since the success of rural development programmes rests squarely on the availability and use of quality information for proper planning and implementation, it becomes necessary to identify the areas of need of the rural community and to provide the information needed. Rural community development is the back bone of a country's development, ignoring rural communities is a great impediment to the actualization of sustainable developmental goals in Nigeria.

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