



Information Accessibility, Utilization as Correlates of Work Life Quality among Rural Women in Borno State.

¹**Anthonia Peace Joel**

E-mail: anthoniajoel@unimaid.edu.ng

²**Emmanuel Camble**

E-mail: emmanuelcamble2@gmail.com

³**Samaila Inuwa**

E-mail: inuwasamaila24@gmail.com

^{1,2,3}Department of Library & Information Science, University of Maiduguri.

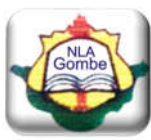
Abstract

This paper examined information accessibility, utilization as correlates of worklife quality among rural women in Borno State. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated for the study. In this study, correlation research methodology was employed. 2,007,746 women in Borno State's 27 local government areas made up the target population. The Taro Yamane sampling procedure was used to establish the sample size, which was 400 women. The questionnaire's internal consistency was examined using the Cronbach Alpha Method, reliability values of 0.77, 0.82, and 0.85 were obtained for each instrument. All of the research assistants were fluent in English as well as the local tongues of the rural women. Mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyze the data and respond to the study's questions, while multiple regression was employed to test the null hypothesis at the 0.05 alpha level. The findings revealed that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between information accessibility, and utilization and work life quality among rural women in Borno State. Based on the findings, the study concluded that when women have access to relevant information and are equipped to use it, they can make more informed decisions about their livelihoods, health, and overall well-being. It was recommended amongst others that the administration of Borno State put into operation structures to provide efficient information services based on a study of the requirements of the rural women.

Keywords: Information, Accessibility, Utilization, Work life Quality, Rural Women

Introduction

In the context of global research, the concept of quality of life has gained increased traction (Maggino & Zumbo, 2011; Tonon & De la Vega, 2016; Cai, Verze, & Bjerklund Johansen, 2021). Research on the quality of life has become more prevalent recently in Nigerian literature (Muhammad, 2016; Badiora, & Abiola, 2017; Awosoga et al., 2022). The growing socioeconomic problems that have a negative effect on how people live their lives (Nzeadibe & Ajaero, 2010; Eyenghe, 2020) may be connected to this. Quality of life seems to be built simply at first look. The majority of individuals are generally aware of the factors that would enhance both their own and others' quality of lives. The way a person perceives their life is what determines the quality of it. Some of the things people perceived as enhancing their standards of life included higher pay, longer vacations, happier jobs, having more time to pursue interesting and fulfilling leisure activities, feeling content in relationships, and leading an effective and pleasurable life – all within a safe, caring, and preserving local community (Eyenghe, 2020).



According to Phillips (2016), a number of complex factors, including conditions of housing, facilities access to resources, earnings, standard of living, and fulfillment with the physical and social environment, all have an impact on quality of life in rural areas. The definition of quality of life on a global scale can be determined using the social indicators compiled by significant international organizations like the World Bank, World Health Organizations, United Nations, European System of Social Indicators, and Australian Bureau of Statistics (Zeid & Popoola, 2010).

The World Bank has developed a framework for choosing indicators used to assess quality since they are important for project evaluation and monitoring in achieving a variety of social, environmental, and economic goals. In the context of responsible environmental management, the following conditions must be met: economic growth, earnings growth, absence of poverty and unemployment, decent housing, good health and life expectancy, an educated population, high levels of cultural participation and a low crime rate, equity in social opportunities, and the absence of political corruption (The World Bank, 2021). The domains covered as worklife quality indicators for this study include residences, job, income, wellness, schooling, neighborhood/community, familial relationships, governance, social status, and religious beliefs. They were chosen because several studies have found them to be significant for various elements of the well-being framework.

The overall demand for raising the socioeconomic standing of rural households in poverty in Nigeria may be seen in the desire to raise the standard of living for rural women. To improve the standard of living for Nigerian rural women, several projects have been created with funding from both the national government and foreign groups. The Better Life for Rural Women (BLW) program, launched in 1987 by the late Mariam Babangida, the first lady of Nigeria at the time, and the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), launched in 1993 by Mariam Abacha, who served as first lady of Nigeria from 1993 to 1997, are noteworthy (Agbi, 2019). Both programs were designed to play significant roles in enhancing the social and economic status of rural women in Nigeria. Some non-governmental groups increased their efforts to enhance the quality of life for women living in rural regions as a result of the failure of previous government initiatives. As an illustration, consider the 1982 founding of the Country Women Association of Nigeria (COWAN) in Nigeria's Ondo State (Modupe, 2018).

However, most of these initiatives have not succeeded in enhancing the working and living conditions of rural women since they lag behind in terms of socioeconomic development. Momodu (2019) claims that this is because rural Nigerian women have fostered a culture of composure, resignation, and docility. The author stressed that rural Nigerian women are not doomed for disease or poverty. Instead, they possess abundant natural resources and fertile land, as well as a huge and productive labor force that can be used to produce goods and services.

Women desire knowledge to help them reach their full capabilities and take control of their lives via education, training, and business ownership. Information activities and policies should be targeted and developed in regions with restricted access to information in order to support grassroots development, with a focus on women in particular (Okiy, 2016). This might be accomplished by establishing accessible comprehensive databases in women's communities. By giving women with access to pertinent information, these information systems and centers lessen their information demands. These findings compelled the researcher to investigate the relationship between rural women's quality of life in Borno State and information accessibility and use.



Statement Problem

Rural women typically do not have access to such resources and services, even when they are readily available. In Borno State, it was found that women who live in rural regions lack access to information that might help them cope with the challenges of daily (Modupe, 2018) life. This has had a substantial influence on their ability to meet basic needs like food, clothes, and shelter as well as obligations to extended family members and learning skills for fulfilling job. They have limited access to social and economic infrastructure including civic centers, hospitals, and clinics, as well as readily available water and hygienic facilities, which limits their ability to enhance their quality of life.

The Federal Government of Nigeria well-known companies such as the Oil Mineral Producing Development Commission (OMPADEC), the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), and, just recently, the Ministry of Rural Development as a reaction to the overall desire of boosting the standard living in outlying communities. These organizations began intervention programs such as poverty alleviation and health for all in order to enhance the work life quality for women in remote areas. However, these programs did not result in a better quality of life for rural women in Borno State. As a result, this study looked at how access to information and utilization connect to work life quality among rural women in Borno State.

Objective of the study

The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Determine the relationship between information accessibility and work life quality among rural women in Borno State.
2. Examine the relationship between information utilization and work life quality among rural women in Borno State.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between information accessibility and work life quality among rural women in Borno State
2. There is no significant relationship between information utilization and work life quality among rural women in Borno State

Theoretical Approach

The Information Utilization Capacity Theory

This study adopts the Information Utilization Capacity Theory to examined information accessibility, and utilization as correlates of work life quality among rural women in Borno State. The information utilization capacity hypothesis Currans presented in 1986 served as the basis for the theory. The theory holds that the capacity of an information user to maximize profit from the usage of readily available information resources and services is restricted. Language barrier, cognitive ability, money, level of education, communication channel or format, and access to a collection of information resources all play a role in this. It describes information use in terms of physical and intellectual access to information. Information consumption is based on the user's capacity to obtain and then make use of information. Cultural, financial, political, and geographic circumstances all have an impact on one's capacity to utilize accessible knowledge.

Information consumption is based on the user's capacity to obtain and then make use of information. Cultural, financial, political, and geographic circumstances all have an impact on one's capacity to utilize accessible knowledge. It also discusses the suitability of the



information, the channel of communication, and the characteristics of the information source. One of the requirements for its utilization is access to information. Despite being physically accessible, information may not always be utilized cognitively. The ability to think critically and recall information from several sources is essential for some knowledge that is significant, especially when it comes to the information needs of rural women.

Exposure to information literacy enables the ability to remember and discover knowledge from official databases for subsequent use. People that are knowledgeable about information know how to look for and use information to study various information sources for addressing everyday problems. For instance, after developing the ability to read, a person may expand the range of their experience by engaging with print media. Rural women who are able to engage in adult literacy and vocational training are exposed to an overall positive mentality toward new ideas as well as many sources of information that she may explore and employ to obtain a decent quality of life. This is because print media messages tend to promote change. The ability of rural women to utilize information sources is assumed to be influenced by income, another indicator of quality of life. This is due to the fact that women are more inclined to seek out and acquire information for practical purposes the higher their wealth. The poor quality of life and restricted participation in development projects that result from rural women's limited access to knowledge and its many sources.

Method

This study used a correlation research design to determine the link that existed between variables of interest. The target population comprised 2,007,746 women living in the 27 local government areas of Borno State (National Population Census, 2006). Sample size of 400 women was determined using the Taro Yamane sampling process. The 400 women were then classified as rural women for the purposes of this study by using a deliberate sample to ensure that they were all drawn from rural areas. This sample was selected from Maiduguri and Biu, two LGAs with a higher percentage of rural women. For the purposes of this study, rural women were defined as farmers, artisans, and educated students. The researcher created a structured questionnaire that was utilized to gather data. Three components, A, B, and C, made up the questionnaire. With regard to Section A's "Questionnaire on Information Accessibility" (QIA), which has eight items and uses a scoring scale of Very Accessible (3.50–4.00), Easily Accessible (2.50–3.49), Accessible (1.50–2.49), and Not Accessible (1.00–1.49), women's access to resources for information is elicited. The "Questionnaire on Information Utilization" (QIU), found in Section B, is a 13-item questionnaire that asks respondents how frequently they use various information sources. The options are Daily (5.50–6.00), Weekly (4.50–5.49), Monthly (3.50–4.49), Quarterly (2.50–2.49), Annually (1.50–2.49), and Never Used (1.00–1.49, respectively). Section C is the "Work life Quality Scale (WQS); it is a 20-item question meant to assess rural women's work life quality on a rating system of Very True of Me (3.50 - 4.00); True of Me (2.50 - 3.49); Occasionally True of Me (1.50 - 2.49) and Not True of Me (1.00 - 1.49).

By verifying the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, it was standardized. Two experts in the field of library and information science from the University of Maiduguri were consulted to verify the face validity. Cronbach Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the three instruments, and reliability scores of 0.77, 0.82, and 0.85 were found for QIA, QIU, and QLS, respectively. Rural women were given copies of the questionnaire on an individual basis by five study assistants. All of the research assistants were fluent in English as well as the local tongues of the rural women. Utilizing statistical techniques like descriptive and inferential data



analysis, the acquired data was evaluated. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the study questions, and null hypotheses were evaluated at the 0.05 alpha level.

Result

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between information accessibility and work life quality among rural women in Borno State?

Table 4: Pearson r on information accessibility and work life quality among rural women

Source of variance	N	Information accessibility (r)	Work life Quality	Remark
Information accessibility	400	1.00	0.74	strong relationship
Work life quality	400	0.74	1.00	

In table 1 it was observed that a strong relationship of 0.74 exists between information accessibility and work life quality among rural women in Borno State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between information utilization and work life quality among rural women in Borno State?

Table 5: Pearson r on information utilization and work life quality among rural women

Source of variance	N	Information utilization (r)	Work life quality (r)	Remark
Information utilization	400	1.00	0.82	Strong positive relationship
Work life quality	400	0.82	1.00	

In table 2 it was observed that a strong positive relationship of 0.82 exists between information utilization and work life quality among rural women in Borno State.

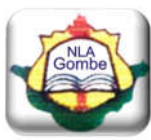
Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between information accessibility and work life quality among rural women in Borno State

Table 3: Linear regression on the significant relationship between information accessibility and worklife quality among rural women

R	r ²	N	Df	p. value	α	Decision
.74	0.548	400	398	0.000	0.05	Significant

Adjusted r² = 0.526

Table 3 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance and 398 df, with p-value 0.00 which is less than 0.05, (p<0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between information accessibility and work life quality among rural women in Borno State. The adjusted r² explains that 52.6% of the total variability in quality of life of the rural women can be explained by information accessibility.



Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between information utilization and work life quality among rural women in Borno State

Table 4: Multiple regression on the significant relationship between information utilization and work life quality among rural women

R	r ²	N	Df	p. value	α	Decision
.84	0.706	400	398	0.0000	0.05	Significant

Adjusted r² = 0.661

Table 4 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance and 398 df, with p-value 0.000 which is less than 0.05, (p<0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between information utilization and work life quality among rural women in Borno State. The adjusted r² explains that 66.1% of the total variability in quality of life of the rural women can be explained by information utilization.

Discussion of Findings

The study's findings demonstrated a substantial positive association between information accessibility and work life quality among rural women in Borno State. This suggests that access to knowledge has a significant impact on the worklife quality of rural women. This study corroborated Zaid and Popoola's (2010) finding that there is a considerable positive association between information consumption and quality of life in Ekiti State. According to the corresponding hypothesis, there is a substantial association between information accessibility and the work life quality among rural women in Borno State. This conclusion is consistent with Jiyane and Ocholla's (2019) finding that access to information is a key predictor of rural women's quality of life.

The study also found a strong correlation between information utilization and work life life quality among rural women in Borno State. This shows that the quality of rural women is significantly impacted by information use. This research supports the findings of Aiyepetu (2016), who found a significant positive relationship between information consumption and the standard of living of rural women in Lagos State. The corresponding hypothesis states that there is a significant correlation between information utilization and worklife quality among rural women in Borno State. This conclusion was consistent with Mooko's (2018) finding that access to knowledge is a significant factor in determining the quality of life for rural women.

Conclusion

The study on "Information Accessibility and Utilization as Correlates of Work Life Quality among Rural Women in Borno State" sheds light on the critical issues faced by rural women in accessing and utilizing information, and how these factors are linked to their overall work life quality. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that there is a strong and significant relationship between information accessibility and work life quality among rural women in Borno State. The study also concluded that there is a strong and positive relationship between information utilization and work life quality among rural women in Borno State. When women have access to relevant information and are equipped to use it, they can make more informed decisions about their livelihoods, health, and overall well-being.



Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Borno State administration should put in place mechanisms for effective information services based on an understanding of the requirements of rural women. The many aspects that influence the design of services must be thoroughly understood. For example, the time at which rural women would be required to use services and modes of communication.
2. The administration of Borno State should construct libraries in each local government area to give rural women rapid access to official sources of information. Books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers, and audio-visual resources like movies, recordings, posters, and photos should all be available at the information centers or libraries. Additionally, the libraries or information centers should regularly display exhibits on how access to knowledge may enhance quality of life. The ladies will be better informed as a result of this.

References

- Agbi, M. (2019). *Poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria: What can legislature do?*. National Assembly Legislative Digest, vol 2
- Aiyepoku, W.O. (2016). Information utilization by policy-makers in Nigeria. Part 1: Accessing degrees of information consciousness. *Journal of Information Science*, 15, 19-24.
- Awosoga, O. A., Odunaiya, N. A., Oyewole, O. O., Ogunlana, M. O., Mbada, C. E., Onyeso, O. K., ... Odole, A. C. (2022). Pattern and perception of wellbeing, quality of work life and quality of care of health professionals in Southwest Nigeria. *BMC Health Services Research*, 22(1). doi:10.1186/s12913-022-08808-3.
- Badiora, A. I., & Abiola, O. B. (2017). Quality of life (QoL) of rural dwellers in Nigeria: a subjective assessment of residents of Ikeji-Arakeji, Osun-State. *Annals of Ecology and Environmental Science*, 1(1), 69-75.
- Cai, T., Verze, P., & Bjerklund Johansen, T. E. (2021). The quality of life definition: Where are we going? *Uro*, 1(1), 14-22. doi:10.3390/uro1010003.
- Eyenghe, T. (2020). Influence of customs and traditions on the process of community development among rural communities in Enugu state, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(6), 575 -590. doi:10.7176/jep/11-32-08.
- Hodges, A. (Ed) (2012). *Children's women's rights: A wake-up call situation assessment and Analysis*. Abuja: National Planning Commission and UNICEF.
- Jiyane, V. & Ocholla, D. N. (2019). An exploratory study of information availability and exploitation by the rural women of melmouth, Kwazulu-Netel, *South Africa Journal of Library and Information science* 70(1), 1 – 8.
- Maggino, F., & Zumbo, B. D. (2011). Measuring the quality of life and the construction of social indicators. *Handbook of Social Indicators and Quality of Life Research*, 201-238. doi:10.1007/978-94-007-2421-1_10.



- Modupe, F.M. (2019). Economic implication of poverty alleviation programmes on rural women in Ondo state: Case study of Country Women Association of Nigeria. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(4), 352 -357
- Mooko, N. P. (2018). The use of awareness of women's groups as sources of information in three small villages in Botswana. *South African Journal of Library & Information science*. 68(2), 104 – 112.
- Muhammad, Z. (2016). Improving quality of life through community-based participatory development in Nigeria: Explanatory factors for success and failure. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 222, 151-159. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.05.206
- Nwagha, K. N. (2017). *Information needs of rural women in Nigeria*. Information development. <http://www.idv.sagepub.com/cgi/content/8/2/76>. Accessed July 23rd, 2008
- Nzeadibe, T. C., & Ajaero, C. K. (2010). Assessment of socio-economic characteristics and quality of life expectations of rural communities in Enugu state, Nigeria. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 5(4), 353-371. doi:10.1007/s11482-010-9096-4
- Okiy, R. B. (2016). *Availability and utilization of occupational information as correlates of occupational income of rural women in the Southern Part of Delta State, Nigeria*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Of the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies. University of Ibadan.
- Phillips, D. (2016). *Quality of life: Concept, policy and practice*. Oxon: Routledge. Pp 1-39.
- The World Bank (2021). World development indicators. Available at <http://www.worldbank.org>. Accessed December 13th, 2008
- Tonon, G., & De la Vega, L. R. (2016). Measuring quality of life and inequalities in South America. *Indicators of Quality of Life in Latin America*, 3-17. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-28842-0_1
- Zaid, Y. A., & Popoola, S. O. (2010). Quality of life among rural Nigerian women: The role of information. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 513. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/513>