

Role of Libraries as Sources for Information by Farmers in Ogbomoso Oyo State Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *The study investigated the role of libraries as sources of information for farmers in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 150 respondents, of whom 142 (95%) responded and were valid for the analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data using a percentage table. Findings showed that 54.3% of the respondents use library resources as their information sources, while 45.7% do not use library resources. This implied that there was little disparity between those farmers who use libraries and those who do not use libraries as their information sources. Further, negative attitudes by farmers toward the use of libraries, inadequate agricultural information resources in the libraries to meet farmer needs, a low level of ICT skill by farmers to access agricultural information resources in their comfort zones, inadequate time to visit libraries and the long distance of library locations were major problems militating against the farmers use of library resources. While proper information repackaging, adequate education on the use of ICT tools should be given to farmers toward the use of library as their information sources, every library should equip their library with resources on agricultural information, a specialist agricultural librarian should be encouraged by the libraries to meet the needs of farmers; libraries should also encourage mobile services in order to bring library services closer to farmers; and farmers should also be encouraged to find time to visit the library so as to get the latest information on new agricultural innovation documents.*

KEYWORDS: role, library resources, farmers, information, librarians

INTRODUCTION

Libraries in Nigeria and around the world are engines of growth and development. They are increasingly recognized as having a broader role in the intellectual, social, economic, technological, and human resource development of a nation. In fact, the libraries serve as the main source of skilled labour needed in the various sectors of the nation. The general aim and objective of a library are to collect, organize, preserve, and provide access to knowledge and information. Libraries achieve this goal by preserving a valuable record of information that can

be passed down to future generations. Libraries are an essential link in this communication between the past, present, and future. Whether the information record is contained in books or electronic formats, libraries ensure that the record is preserved and made available for later use. Libraries provide people with access to the information they need to work, play, learn, and govern. Therefore, improving agricultural production necessitates some form of appropriate information. The agricultural sector is one of the largest contributors to the economic well-being of most Nigerians. It is important for libraries to support agricultural policy research in Nigeria, which will need to tap into globally available information resources. Announcements about resources, training, and other pertinent information could be directly conveyed to farmers by using existing free database, Access to Global Online Research in Agricultural (AGORA) and The Essential Electronics Agricultural Library (TEEAL), web-based software programs like wikis and blogs, or posters from the library. Also, it is obvious that for information sources to be effective in the provision of information to farmers, farmers must be adapted to the repackaging of information. Given the fact that a large number of farmers in Ogbomoso are not illiterate, information has to be supplied to them in a format that is understandable to them. The timeliness of agricultural practices and the need for timely delivery of agricultural information will empower the farmers so that they will have control over their farming activities. A farmer needs a library for high quality, relevant, and timely agricultural information sources to make good strategic and important decisions. Adeniyi and Ojo (2015) said libraries all over the world are on the verge of rapid changes as a result of the explosion of knowledge and literature, new subjects, the advent of new ICTs, etc. Therefore, libraries in Nigeria also witnessed changes, and they also needed to improve their agricultural information, which could also be achieved through improved roles of libraries toward agriculture.

Farmers' information sources are phenomenal, and they involve a series of actions and evaluations that different farmers undertake to meet their information needs. This call for an examination and the objectives of this paper are as follows:

1. To find the demographic factors of farmers in the study area.
2. To find various types of libraries as sources of information used by farmers.
3. To discover the role of libraries as information sources for farmers in Ogbomoso.
4. To find the problems militating against farmers when using libraries as information sources.
5. To find the ways of alleviating problems militating against Ogbomoso's farmers by realigning with the sources of information through the library.

These objectives raised a series of research questions, which are:

1. What are the demographic factors of farmers in the study?
2. What are the various types of libraries as sources of information used by farmers in Ogbomoso?
3. What are the various roles of libraries as sources of information for farmers in Ogbomoso?
4. What are the problems militating against farmers in Ogbomoso when using libraries as information sources?

5. What are the ways of alleviating problems militating against Ogbomoso's farmers by realigning with the sources of information through the library?

Statement of Research Problems

The agricultural sector is confronted with the major challenge of increasing production to feed a growing and increasingly prosperous population in a situation of decreasing availability of information sources. The perception that farmers' information sources are mostly from agricultural extension workers, friends, and ICT tools (radio, television, and the internet) gives negative views to libraries as sources of agricultural. For instance, while it has been established that farmers use various media sources, no differentiation has been made between where they actively seek and actually find agricultural information. In other words, is it when farmers seek information that they also find it? Also, either previous research has focused on sources of general agricultural information available to farmers, or has concentrated on only media sources. Other agricultural information sources, such as libraries, which are of tremendous importance to the success of most farming businesses, have been neglected. The problem being addressed in this study is therefore to find out the role of various libraries as information sources for farmers in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria.

A Brief History of Ogbomoso

Ogbomoso was founded roughly three centuries ago by Soun Ogunlola, an adopted grandson of the Olugbon of Igbon. Ogbomoso agricultural zone, which comprises of five (5) local government areas (LGAs), is composed of Ogbomoso North, Ogbomoso South, Ogo-Oluwa, Orire, and Surulere (LGAs). The zone experiences both wet and dry seasons annually. The climate of the area favours arable crop production. The rainy season usually starts in March and lasts till November. The dry season is usually very hot except during the harmattan period, when it is cold and dry. The majority of the populace combines subsistence farming with other occupations like trading, civil services, and handicraft. The zone is located in northern Oyo State, between latitudes 20291 North of the Equator and 400301 North of the Greenwich Meridian, and has an area landmass of about 37984 kilometres. The vegetation of the zone is dominated by derived savannah vegetation and agriculture is the occupation of the people.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Information

Buckland (1999) noted that since information has to do with becoming informed and reducing ignorance and uncertainty, it is ironic that the term "information" is itself ambiguous and used in different ways. This is a simplistic view and is often qualified by saying that the information only becomes useful if it is in context and is meaningful. Nevertheless, agricultural information is contained in all aspects of agriculture and could either be published or unpublished. According to Aina (1990), these consist of innovation, ideas, and technologies in agricultural policies.

Generally, these information sources are classified into two categories: traditional and modern information sources. Examples of traditional information sources used by farmers are: farmer's

personal experience, family members, and neighbour farmers. On the other hand, the modern information sources include the public extension services, agricultural faculties, farmers' unions and associations, input dealers, mass media, and the internet (Demiryurok 2000).

Various Libraries Used as Information Sources by Farmers

A Public Library: Public library is generally referred to as a library that is open to the public and that serves the whole population of a local or regional community. It is usually financed, in whole or in part, from public funds, and its basic services are free of charge or available for a subsidized fee. Services rendered by public libraries, such as information repackaging, translation, presentation of documentaries through videos, and literacy programs, among others, are the pivots that extension programs could rest upon to ensure and deployment of innovations that could boost the productivity of rural farmers who need information, which is now a very important factor of production (Jerome, Ayotunde, Chidi, Ayooluwa, Sola, and Toluwa, 2018). Also, ISO (International Organization for Standardization), (2013) found that the largest percentage of respondents used public libraries to provide information for local people, mostly extension workers and farmers.

Academic Library: Yusuf and Iwu (2010) described the academic library as the nerve centre or the hub around which scholarship revolves. It is an indispensable instrument for intellectual development. A well stocked academic library is a storehouse of information, or a record of human experience that users may turn to for data or information. This type of library is established at a higher institution of learning.

National Library: National Library served as a nation's intellectual property custodian. Anthropological and ethnological details were preserved in the national library. Such a library has been used as a centres for research in tracing and resolving genealogies and family histories. Agricultural land and other socio-cultural property documents in the national library have served as tools for judges in resolving disputes between communities.

School Library: This is a library that was purposefully established for both primary and secondary schools. Whereas a good number of Nigerian secondary and primary schools do not have standard libraries, where they exist, they have been found to be tools for the all-round development of the child. The Abadina Media Resources Centre of the University of Ibadan and the libraries of a number of "private" schools in the country are examples here.

Special Library: A library can be special if it only serves a particular group of users, such as lawyers, doctors, agriculturists, etc. Special libraries often cover a specific and definable subject field.

Roles of Libraries as Sources of Information for Farmers

Apata and Ogunrewo (2010) classified the sources from which farmers obtain information into modern and traditional or formal and informal. Modern or formal sources include agricultural extension agents, public libraries, and farmers' cooperatives. On the other hand, the traditional sources are interpersonal in nature and include interaction between and within the farmer's

families, relatives, and friends. Therefore, the library, as one of the modern or formal information sources for the public service agency, needs to be involved in providing information to farmers. Given the fact that libraries are located within every local government area in Nigeria and that their business is the provision of information to all users, regardless of status, a linkage between farmers and libraries may alleviate the information dissemination problem of libraries to farmers in Oyo State. They should be in a position to contribute positively to disseminating information to farmers. Apart from personal contacts often used by farmers as their information sources, they also utilize other methods such as agricultural shows, posters, radio/television broadcasts, farming magazines, motion pictures and slides, etc. According to Aina (1985), with these other methods are within the purview of libraries, yet there is no evidence to show that the libraries are substantially involved, either directly or indirectly, in the provision of information to farmers in Africa. In a study with 258 farmers in Nigeria, it was revealed that only 5% of the farmers obtained information from librarians. Despite the fact that Aina (1985) disagreed, Aguolu (2002) agree that institutions and their libraries generate and disseminate agricultural information or knowledge to agricultural extension workers, researchers, students, farmers, and government policymakers. Adeniyi, et al (2015) viewed the roles of libraries to the farmers as: a point of access to indigenous knowledge on farming activities, collection, organization, and dissemination of information to increase farm produce, information repackaging through various forms to suit the targeted group and the libraries also provides agricultural information to farmers to both local and western knowledge system. Similarly, Raman (2006), cited by Blessing (2021), pointed out that, regardless of the constraints on information dissemination in rural areas, village libraries contained a substantial quantity of agricultural information materials and script in local languages for the use of farmers. This suggests that farmers continue to rely on libraries to obtain information. However, Mugwisi, Ocholla, and Mostert (2012), after emphasizing the position of libraries, the internet, colleagues, personal and departmental collections, workshops, and seminars, argued that farmers preferred print sources face to face interaction.

Problems motivating farmers to realign when using libraries as information sources

According to Adimorah (1995), agricultural information users comprise researchers, extension workers, farmers, students, agribusiness personnel, educators, bankers, industrialists, policymakers, and agricultural librarians. There is poor bibliographic control of agricultural literature, especially technical reports, and a lack of coherent and up-to-date lists (Olorunyomi 1992). Adeniyi, et al (2015) sited from Aguolu (2000) poor library funding limits their acquisition of many relevant materials, and that economic recession in Nigeria contributed to a reduction in government grant for institutions and their libraries; there is resistance to the application of agricultural information to improve agricultural education to farmers, which could lead to sustainable development. This has been unsatisfactory because the majority of the personnel do not have formal training to enhance agricultural education and sustain the desired development. In another work, Tiashe (2014) reviewed the use of libraries and information centres by agricultural researchers and extension workers in Zimbabwe and opined that the lack of qualified librarians to staff libraries compromises the quality of service delivery to the farmers.

Methods for Resolving Militant Farmers' Problems in Realigning with the Use of Libraries

To alleviate some of these problems mentioned above, Katunmoya (1992) advocates for public libraries to provide community information services. He suggested that public libraries establish community information departments with the aim of providing information to rural users. Also stated is that public libraries should develop collections of pamphlets, posters, and booklets on issues like health, sanitation, agriculture, and civic rights. They also need to repackage relevant information produced by government ministries and departments, media organizations, and non-governmental organizations, and disseminate such information to users in a non-literate setting through displays, meetings, talks, etc.

METHODOLOGY

Ogbomoso agricultural zone comprises five local government areas, namely: Ogbomoso North, Ogbomoso South, Surulere, Orire, and Ogo Oluwa. A multistage sampling technique is adopted in order to choose villages that are primarily known for farming activities. Six villages were randomly selected from each local government area. Subsequently, from each of the villages, five farmers are also randomly selected. This brings the total number of respondents for each local government area to thirty (30), thereby bringing the total number of respondents for this study to one hundred and fifty (150) respondents. The simple random sampling procedure of balloting is employed for the selection of both the villages and the respondents. Only one hundred and forty-two (142) questionnaires were valid; this represented ninety five percent (95%) for analysis. In order to get the necessary information needed to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses, the responses obtained from the completed copies of the questionnaires were recoded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected from the respondents. Such descriptive statistics include the use of percentages, frequency distributions, and regression analysis was used in finding relationships between variables.

Table 1: A summary of the sample sizes and sampling procedures N = (150)

	Local Government Area (LGA)	Num. of Villages Selected From a LGA	Num. of Farmers Selected From a Village	Respondents Selected (Num. of Villages X Num. of Farmers) from a town
1	Ogbomoso North	Six	Five	Thirty
2	Ogbomoso South	Six	Five	Thirty
3	Surulere	Six	Five	Thirty
4	Orire	Six	Five	Thirty
5	Ogo Oluwa	Six	Five	Thirty

Table 2: A summary of the sample sizes and the percentage of the questionnaire valid for analysis N= (142)

	Local Government Area	Number of Questionnaire Distributed	Number of Questionnaire Valid for Analysis	Percentage of Questionnaire Valid for Analysis
1	Ogbomoso North	30	30	21.1
2	Ogbomoso South	30	28	19.8
3	Ogo Oluwa	30	29	20.4
4	Orire	30	27	18.9
5	Surulere	30	28	19.8

Table 2 shows a summary of the sample sizes and the percentage of questionnaires valid for analysis.

Table 3: Demographic Factors of the Respondents N= (142)

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age			
Less than 24 years	13	9.2	9.2
25-29 years	21	14.8	24.0
30-34 years	42	29.6	53.6
35-39 years	25	17.6	71.2
40-44 years	22	15.4	86.6
45-49years	11	7.8	94.4
50 years above	8	5.6	100.0
Total	142	100.0	
Sex			
Male	121	85.2	85.2
Female	21	14.8	100.0
Total	142	100.0	
Marital Status			
Married	100	70.4	70.4
Single	32	22.5	92.9
Widowed	5	3.5	96.4
Divorced	3	2.2	98.6
Separated	2	1.4	100.0
Total	142	100.0	
Formal Education			
Yes	137	96.5	96.5
No	5	3.5	100.0
Total	142	100.0	
Level of Education			
Primary	49	35.8	35.8
Secondary	60	43.8	79.6
Tertiary	22	16.1	95.7
Others	6	4.3	100.0
Total	137	100.0	

Types of Farming Activities			
Animal Farming	22	15.5	15.5
Crops Farming	30	21.1	36.6
Both Farming	90	63.4	100.0
Total	142	100.0	
Agricultural Zone			
Ogbomoso North	30	21.1	21.1
Ogbomoso South	28	19.8	40.9
Ogo-Oluwa	29	20.4	61.3
Orire	27	18.9	80.2
Surulere	28	19.8	100.0
Total	142	100.0	

Table 3 shows that the majority of the farmers (29.6%) were between the ages of 30-34 years. This is followed the farmers between the age of 35-39 years were (17.6%), while farmers above 50 years of age constitute the least (5.6%). There were more male farmers (81.2%) than female farmers (21.8%). The larger numbers of the farmers were married 70.4%, followed by respondents who were single (22.5%), while the least were the respondents who were separated (1.4%). The largest group of respondents (96.5%) were formally educated, while (3.5%) farmers were uneducated formally. Furthermore, the majority of the farmers (43.8%) had a secondary educational background, while (35.8%) had primary education, and (16.1%) had tertiary education. Also, (63.4%) of farmers practiced both animal and crop farming. Finally, the local government area with the highest number of respondents is Ogbomoso North (21.1%), followed by Ogo-Oluwa (20.4%), and the local government area with lowest respondents is Orire (27%).

Table 4: Demographic Factors of Farmers by the use of Library

Demographic Factors	Library Use			
	Use of Library		Do not use Library	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Sex				
Male	63	44.4	55	38.7
Female	14	09.9	10	07.0
Total	77	54.3	65	45.7
Age				
Less than 24 years	07	04.9	10	07.0
25-29 years	12	08.5	11	07.8
30-34 years	20	14.1	18	12.7
35-39 years	16	11.3	10	07.0
40-44 years	14	09.9	09	06.3
45-49years	05	03.2	05	03.5
50 years above	03	02.1	02	01.4
Total	77	54.0	65	46.0

Marital Status				
Married	50	35.2	44	31.0
Single	20	14.1	18	12.7
Widowed	3	02.1	2	01.4
Divorced	2	01.4	1	00.7
Separated	2	01.4	0	00.0
Total	77	54.2	65	45.8
Formal Education				
Yes	73	51.4	64	45.1
No	04	02.8	01	00.7
Total	77	54.2	65	45.8
Level of Education				
Primary	30	21.1	25	17.6
Secondary	40	28.2	35	24.7
Tertiary	05	03.5	04	02.8
Others	02	01.4	01	00.7
Total	77	54.2	65	45.8
Types of Farming Activities				
Animal Farming	20	14.1	18	12.7
Crops Farming	12	08.5	10	07.0
Both	45	31.7	37	26.1
Total	77	54.3	65	45.7
Agricultural Zone				
Ogbomoso North	22	15.5	20	14.1
Ogbomoso South	13	09.2	10	07.0
Ogo-Oluwa	18	12.7	15	10.6
Orire	15	10.6	13	09.2
Surulere	09	06.3	07	04.9
Total	77	54.3	65	45.8

According to Table 4, 54.3% of respondents use libraries as their primary sources of information, while 45.7% do not. Furthermore, 14.1% (30-34 years) of the age group of respondents use a library, and these were the productive ages in farming activities. Those who were married among the farmers had the highest percentage (35.2%) of respondents who use libraries for information sources, while those who were divorced or separated (1.4%) had the least. Furthermore, 51.4% of those who use libraries for information have a formal education, while 45.1% of those who do not use libraries have a formal education. The highest percentage of the respondents had a secondary school certificate, and 28.2% used the library as their information source. Also, 31.7% of the farmers that use libraries as information sources practice both animal and crop farming. The library is used by 15.5% of respondents in Ogbomoso North, while Orire agricultural zone respondents use it the least (6.3%).

Table 5: Types of Libraries Preferred

Types of Preferred	Least Preferred		Preferred		More Preferred		Most Preferred	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Public Library	4	2.8	12	8.5	43	30.3	83	58.4
Academic Library	3	2.1	13	9.2	57	40.1	69	48.6
School Library	28	19.7	32	22.5	59	41.6	23	16.2
Special Library	59	41.6	40	28.2	22	15.5	21	14.7
National Library	102	71.9	30	21.1	6	4.2	4	2.8

From Table 5 above, public libraries (58.4%) and academic libraries (48.6%) are the most preferred libraries for farmers to get agricultural information. However, the least preferred libraries used by framers were special library (41.6%) and national library (71.9%).

Table 6: Distribution of Perceived Roles of Libraries as Sources of Information by Farmers

The Perceived Role of Libraries	Libraries' Role		
	Agree (%)	Not Sure (%)	Disagree (%)
The library repackages agricultural information so as to be easily accessible by farmers.	45.0	2.0	7.2
The library often presents agricultural documentaries through video to educate farmers.	51.6	0.9	1.7
Libraries use ICT tools such as internet and computers to improve farmers' free access to existing database by farmers.	50.2	2.1	1.9
The library provides free access to existing databases such as Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA) and The Essential Agricultural Library (TEEAL) for farmers.	53.1	0.6	0.5
Library resources also bridge the gaps between agricultural researchers and farmers.	52.0	1.8	0.4
Using library resources give me more insight to solve agricultural problems	48.2	5.4	0.6
I like using library resources because it exposes me to a new agricultural innovations	53.6	0.2	0.4

The result shows that the majority of the farmers, 45.0%, agreed that library repackages agricultural information so as to be easily accessible by farmers, while a small number of farmers, 2.0%, are not sure. Also, 51.6% of the farmers agreed that libraries oftentimes present agricultural documentaries through video to educate farmers, while 0.9% of the farmers were not sure and 1.7% of the farmers disagreed. The result also shows that, majority of the farmers, 50.2%, agreed that the library use ICT tools such as the internet and computers to enhance free access to an existing database by farmers, while a few of the farmers, 1.9%, disagree. Also, 53.1% of the farmers agreed that libraries provide free access to existing databases such as Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA) and The Essential Agricultural Library (TEAL) for farmers; however, 0.6% of them were not sure and while some of the farmers 0.6% disagreed. Also, the majority of the farmers (52.0%) agreed that the library also bridged the gaps between agricultural researchers and farmers, while 1.8% were not sure and a few of the farmers (0.4%) did not agree that the library bridged the gaps between agricultural researchers and farmers. Furthermore, the majority of the farmers (48.2%) agreed that using library resources gives farmers more insight to solve agricultural problems, 5.4% were not sure and 0.6% totally disagreed. So also, 53.6% of the farmers use library resources because they are exposed to new agricultural innovations, while the rest, 0.4% of the respondents, do not.

Table 7: Mitigating Farmers' Problems with Realignment with Libraries when Using Libraries as Information Sources

Problems Mitigating Against Farmers When Using Libraries	Not a Problem		Serious Problem	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Improper information is repackaged by library personnel for easy accessibility by farmers.	71	92.2	6	7.8
Negative attitudes by farmers toward the use of libraries	15	19.5	62	80.5
Inadequate supply of agricultural information by the libraries to meet the needs of farmers.	30	39.0	47	61.0
Low level of competency by library personnel in meeting the information needs of farmers.	52	67.5	25	32.5
Farmers have a low level of ICT skill to access library resources in their comfort zone.	8	10.4	69	89.6
Inadequate time to visit the library.	4	5.2	73	94.8
A long distance from the library	2	2.6	75	97.4

Farmers' negative attitudes toward library use (80.5%), an insufficient supply of agricultural information (61.0%), a low level of ICT skill among farmers (89.6%), insufficient time to visit libraries (94.8%), and the long distance between library location (97.4%) were identified as a serious problems confronting farmers in their use of libraries as information sources. However, improper information repackaging by library personnel for easy accessibility by farmers (92.2%) and a low level of incompetence by library personnel to meet the information needs of farmers (67.5%) were seen by the farmers as not a major problem.

Table 8: Solutions to Militating Farmers' Problems in Realigning with Library Use

Ways of Alleviating Problems	Strongly Agreed		Agreed		Disagreed		Strongly Disagreed	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Proper information is repackaged by the library's personnel for easy accessibility by farmers	61	79.2	10	13.0	4	5.2	2	2.6
Proper education should be given to farmers regarding the use of libraries as their information sources.	73	94.8	2	2.6	2	2.6	0	0.0
Every library should equipped their library with resources on agricultural information	70	90.9	5	6.5	1	1.3	1	1.3
Libraries should encourage a specialist agricultural librarians to meet the needs of farmers.	59	76.6	13	16.9	2	2.6	3	3.9
Farmers should also increase their ICTs skill so as to utilize library resources optimally	52	67.5	14	18.2	8	10.4	3	3.9
Farmers should be encourage to find time to visit library to get latest information on new agricultural innovation documents that will assist farmers	48	62.3	15	19.5	7	9.1	7	9.1
Libraries should also encourage mobile services in order to bring library services more closer to farmers	75	97.4	2	2.6	0	0.0	0	0.0

Table 8 shows ways of alleviating problems militating against farmers through the use of libraries. The largest percentage of respondents (79.2%) strongly agreed that there should be proper information repackaging by library personnel for easy accessibility by farmers. 94.8% strongly agreed that proper education should be given to farmers toward the use of libraries as their information sources, while 2.6% of respondents disagreed. Also, 90.9% strongly agreed that every library should be equipped with agricultural information resources, while 1.3% strongly disagreed. Similarly, 76.6% strongly agreed that library management should encourage agricultural specialist librarians to meet the need of farmers, while 0.7% disagreed. Furthermore, 67.5% of respondents agreed that farmers should also increase their ICT skills so as to utilize library resources optimally. 62.3% of respondents strongly agreed that farmers should find time to visit libraries to get the latest information on new agricultural innovation documents that will assist them. Also, 97.4% strongly agreed that libraries should encourage mobile services in order to bring library services closer to farmers, while none of the respondents disagreed.

DISCUSSION

The result shows that there are more males (85.2%) and married farmers (70.4%) in the local government area, and they are within the age range of 30-44 years. The implication of this is that the use of libraries by farmers is principally in the hands of the middle-aged who are still in active age. However, the majority are married (70.4%), while few are either divorce, widowed, or separated among the farmers. A large number of the farmers had formal education (96.5%). Secondary and primary levels had the highest percentages of the respondents 43.8

and 35.8 respectively. In addition, 63.4% of farmers practiced combined farming, which involves raising both animals and crops. Furthermore, 54.3% of the respondents use libraries as their sources of agricultural information, while 45.7% do not use libraries. The implication is that there is only a minor difference between farmers who use as information resources and those who do not. This ascension negated the finding of Aina (1985), which stated that there is no evidence to show that the libraries are substantially involved either directly or indirectly in the provision of information to farmers in Africa. It was estimated that 5% of the farmers obtained information from librarians. Furthermore, the majority of farmers who use the library for information are between the ages of 30-34. To an extent, the experience gathered increases with age and therefore the use of libraries by yam farmers is expected to increase as age increases, but only up to a point when old age takes its toll on the farmers. The implication of this is that the use of the libraries by farmers is principally in the hands of the middle-aged who are still in their active years. Many of the farmers who use libraries as information sources have formal education (51.4%). Public libraries (58.4%) and academic libraries (48.6%) were the most preferred libraries for farmers to get agricultural information. This finding agreed with Jerome et al. (2018) and ISO (2013), which stated that public libraries were established to provide information for local people, mostly extension workers and farmers, to boost productivity. Also, almost all the farmers in the study areas have positive attitudes toward the perceived roles of libraries, such as repackaging agricultural information, presentation of agricultural documentaries, and use of ICT tools to enhance free access to existing databases by farmers, such as Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA) and The Essential Agricultural Library (TEEAL). Libraries also help to bridge the gap between agricultural researchers and farmers by providing more insight into agricultural problems and introducing farmers to new agricultural innovation. The finding is not in line with Aina (1985), which viewed these roles as being within the scope of libraries, yet there is no evidence to show that the libraries are substantially involved either directly or indirectly in the provision of information to farmers in Africa. In contrast to Aina (1985), Adeniyi (2015) agreed with the finding that libraries perform roles for farmers such as collection, organization, repackaging of information materials, and dissemination of the information through different means to increase farm produce. Negative attitudes toward the use of libraries, inadequate agricultural information, low levels of ICT skill among farmers, insufficient time to visit libraries and long distances between library locations of libraries location were the problems militating against the farmers use of library resources as their information sources. These conclusions were in line with those of Adeniyi et al. (2015), who found that poor funding limited the application of ICT tools to train rural farmers on how to use ICT tools to access agricultural information, while Tiashe (2014) agreed that a lack of qualified agricultural librarians compromised the quality of service delivery to the farmers.

CONCLUSIONS

This study provided empirical data on the role of libraries as sources for information by farmers in Ogbomoso State, Nigeria. The finding revealed that male respondents outnumbered female respondents, and the majority of respondents were educated. Also, the majority of the farmers use library resources to obtain their information, but the differences between the farmers that

do not use library resources were not significant. Negative attitudes, inadequate agricultural information resources, inadequate time to visit libraries, and the long distance to the library's location were seen in the study area as major problems confronting farmers. Proper information should be repackaged and libraries should introduce well organised library mobile services to bring library services closer to farmers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Proper information should be repackaged by library's personnel for easy accessibility by farmers.
- Proper education should be given to farmers regarding the use of libraries as their information sources.

- Every library should equip their collection with resources on agricultural information.
- Libraries should encourage a specialist agricultural librarians to meet the needs of farmers

- Farmers should also increase their ICT skills so as to utilize library resources optimally.

- Libraries should also encourage mobile services in order to bring library services closer to farmers.

- Farmers should be encouraged to find time to visit the library to get the latest information on new agricultural innovation documents that will assist farmers.

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