

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES TO INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR LIVESTOCK MARKET DOCUMENTATION BY MARKET OFFICIALS IN KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the challenges to information management practices on the success of livestock market documentation by market officials in Katsina State. A quantitative research methodology employing a cross-sectional survey design was adopted. Proportionate sampling technique was utilised to sample 198 market officials from a population of 539 across eighteen livestock markets. Data analysis involved using mean and standard deviation. Key findings indicated that several challenges to effective information management were identified among market officials in Katsina State. These challenges include lack of stakeholder cooperation, absence of clear responsibility for information management, lack of an appointed information manager, negative attitudes of sellers toward providing information, inadequate information management structures, resistance to change, and language and literacy barriers. Recommendations arising from this study include the appointment of information professionals responsible for managing information, raising awareness about the importance of livestock market documentation, and establishing dedicated information management units and structures were suggested. In conclusion, implementation of the recommendations will enhance traceability of animal transactions, sources, ownership, and movements. This proactive measure will reduce the likelihood of fraud and illegal activities within the livestock markets in Katsina State, Nigeria.

Keywords: Challenges, Information management practices, Katsina State, livestock market, livestock market documentation, market officials

Introduction

Livestock markets play a pivotal role in the economy of Katsina State, Nigeria, serving as crucial hubs for trading animals and related products. Effective information management practices within these markets are essential for ensuring transparency, regulatory compliance, and the overall integrity of livestock trading operations. Information management practices involve acquiring, organising, storing, retrieving, and disseminating of information within an organisation (Chatzipanagiotou, 2017). These practices are essential for effectively managing

and leveraging information assets to support decision-making, operations, and achieving organisational objectives. The potential of information management practices to provide the animal sources, ownership and movements of animals in livestock markets is evident, as they eliminate inefficiencies in the livestock market documentation (Popa, Dobrin, Popescu, and Draghici, 2011). Essentially, when livestock information such as animal identification information (nose print, pictures/sketches, tattoo, tag, notch); owner and buyer information are generated for livestock market documentation such as sale receipt, cattle offence report, slaughter, check in and check out register, the quality and impact of decisions can be considerably improved with minimal interruption to stakeholders and processes.

Livestock market documentation is important in ensuring that animal transactions are legal, valid and traceable, and that the animals being sold are healthy and fit for human consumption. It also allows buyers and sellers to verify the quality and provenance of animals being traded. Therefore, it can be concluded that, any livestock market that properly acquires, processes, stores and preserve its information will surely have a proper livestock market documentation that can instantly establish animal source, ownership and provide traceability to authorities and customers to achieve rapid trace-back via a livestock registry. Livestock market documentation encompasses various aspects, including recording sales transactions, tracking animal movements, sources and ownerships of animals being bought, sold or transported, and ensuring compliance with relevant regulations.

Despite the importance of information management practices to livestock market documentation, market officials in Katsina State such as district heads, village heads, market chairmen, brand inspectors and clerks may encounter challenges in documenting livestock transactions and maintaining accurate records. Understanding these challenges is critical for devising targeted interventions and strategies to improve livestock market documentation. By addressing these obstacles, stakeholders can enhance the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of livestock trading activities in Katsina State, ultimately benefiting market participants. By providing insights into these challenges, the study contributes to the broader discourse on information management practices in livestock markets and informs policymakers, practitioners, and researchers about the need for tailored solutions to address the specific needs of livestock markets in the region.

Problem Statement

The success of a livestock market business in Katsina State hinges upon the effective management of livestock market documentation, encompassing animal check-in, check-out, sales, slaughter, and offenses. Comprehensive documentation is essential for tracking animal transactions, sources, ownership, and movement. However, the provision and access to such documentation rely heavily on information management practices. These practices ensure accurate, reliable, and up-to-date documentation, fostering trust among stakeholders and reducing the likelihood of fraudulent activities. Furthermore, efficient information management practices enable quick access to relevant information, improving decision-making and compliance with regulations. Despite the importance of information management practices in eliminating inefficiencies in livestock markets, unidentified live animals are traded in Katsina State livestock markets, leading to livestock market closures due to the inability of the

market officials to provide accurate documentation to the Katsina State Government. The reopening of the livestock markets by the State Government without addressing the challenges to information management practices highlights the need to investigate information management practices challenges among market officials in Katsina State for successful livestock market documentation.

Objective

The study achieved the following objective:

1. To explore the challenges to information management practices for livestock market documentation by market officials in Katsina State, Nigeria

Literature Review

Information management is a critical component of every organization's success. Equally, livestock markets will be unable to get insights, respond to changes, or make educated business decisions unless they have the capacity to correctly manage their information. However, it is seldom problem-free, since unresolved information management challenges can add to what we label information chaos. Challenges or simply obstacles to information management practices for livestock market documentation by market officials in Katsina State are those barriers that deter Market Officials to adequately deploy the practices or activities of managing information for livestock market documentation. Without knowing such challenges, one may face difficulties in formulating strategies towards improving livestock market documentation. It is important to have a clear understanding of the challenges since it is by addressing them that better livestock market documentation can be provided to ensure accurate, reliable, and up-to-date documentation, fostering trust among stakeholders and reducing the likelihood of fraudulent activities.

Researchers have revealed several challenges to information management practices, such as, Maitland, Tchovakeu and Tapia (2009) set out to study organisational barriers, coordination arising specifically from information management and information technology issues among others. It emerged from the study that in dealing with information management it requires a higher level of organisational change as compared with information technology. This suggests that information management issues are different from those of information technology and the former require the attention and involvement of all the organisational members, especially the top level managers. Burns, Ferris, and Liatsopoulos (2009) conducted a review to ascertain the awareness on the need for effective information management practices and to identify the challenges confronting many African countries in that regard. The study emphatically indicates that the various poverty reduction strategies being implemented by the various African governments will be fruitless if they do not include some policies and strategies that address governments' records. Using specific examples from some African countries, the study identifies the following challenges: problem associated with the colonial administrators' failure to create an appropriate record/information management scheme; lack of funding, old and insufficient infrastructure, lack of staff with appropriate training on digital divide. The study argued that until these issues are addressed appropriately no significant impact will be made in Africa in terms of development since effective information management is an integral part of any country's rebuilding process.

Lawal (2007) attributes the challenges associated with information management practices in most organisations to corruption or inadequate finance. According to him, corrupt leaders in Africa do not provide adequate funds, facilities, and infrastructure for proper and efficient electronic information management. Instead, corrupt bureaucrats intentionally distort public policies, public information, decision-making apparatuses, and sometimes go to a length to transfer experienced information managers in a bid to create opportunities for embezzlement. Bribery and corruption contribute to 90 per cent of the underdevelopment of Africa and their ineffective information management practices across institutions.

Otuama (2010) identifies the following as the problems associated with information management practices in most organisations: absence of an archival institution, the problem of oral traditions, inadequate skills and high staff turn-over, inadequate funding, poor housing and equipment, absence of an information law, high levels of illiteracy, poor transport and communication network. Ilana (2008) identifies lost information and information storage as challenges associated with information management. According to her, lost information can range from a minor inconvenience for businesses to an enormous hassle that takes months, or even years, to resolve. Thus, if clients request information from the company on a regular basis and the company is unable to provide them in a timely manner, or at all, the company risks the loss of their business in the future. If important information is needed for a legal matter, such as defending the company against a lawsuit, not supplying the appropriate information can cost huge sums of money, or even mean the dissolution of the business entirely. On information storage, she states that depending on the type of business for which the company keeps information as well as how long the company has operated, the company may find itself running out of space.

Ngoepe (2008) indicates that the problems of information keeping identified generally in government institution in Kenya include: non-adherence to information legislation, policies, standards and guidelines which lead to loss of vital information and inadequate computer terminals. Others are difficulty in information retrieval and lack of appreciation by management and staff of the need for well-controlled information. However, theory and literature are emphatic as the significant contribution of good information system to an organisation if it will actualise its objectives in both the short- and long-term decisions. Weintraub, Owens, and Jedinak (2013) asserted that the poor state of the management of information in Kenya is aggravated by; failure by top management to establish proper information management objectives and practices, failure to hire qualified staff for the management of information, lack of proper supervision in their registries lack of training in information management practices and failure to provide adequate storage facilities in the registries.

In summary, the challenges associated with information management practices for livestock market documentation in Katsina State are multifaceted and deeply rooted. Weak legislative and organizational infrastructures, technophobia among older employees, and the growing use of information technologies without proper assessment are major hurdles. Corruption and inadequate funding further exacerbate these challenges, leading to ineffective information management institutions. Additionally, problems such as absence of archival

institutions, inadequate skills, high staff turnover, and poor transport and communication networks contribute to the complexities of managing information effectively. Furthermore, issues like lost information, inadequate storage, and non-adherence to information legislation pose significant obstacles to proper information management. To address these challenges, organizations must establish proper information management objectives, invest in skilled personnel and infrastructure, and adhere to information legislation and policies. Only through concerted efforts and strategic interventions can these challenges be overcome, ensuring the successful management of information for organizational success and compliance with regulatory requirements.

Methodology

The study used quantitative research approach and cross sectional survey research design. The population of this study consisted of market officials from eighteen (18) livestock markets spread across sixteen (16) Local Government Areas in Katsina State. Proportionate and simple sampling techniques were employed for sample selection in this study. The population of market officials in the livestock markets studied in Katsina State was divided into three (3) locations representing the senatorial zones in the state: Daura zone as location 1, Funtua zone as location 2, and Katsina zone as location 3. The researcher opted for a proportionate sampling method, selecting 30% of the livestock markets using simple random sampling technique from each smaller location, with the final sample consisting of all. A total of five (5) livestock markets, constituting of all the one hundred and ninety-eight (198) market officials, were selected as the sample for this study. Questionnaire was used as the research instrument for data collection in this study. The data collected for the study was analysed using descriptive statistics.

Results and Discussion

This section provides the finding of the study followed by discussions in line with the objectives of the study.

Response Rate

The researcher distributed 198 copies of the questionnaire to the market officials in their respective livestock markets; out of which 142 of the copies of the questionnaire were returned duly completed and found useful for the analysis. This represents a response rate of 71.8%. This response rate was achieved due to the fact that the researcher gave adequate time to the respondents to complete the filling of the questionnaire. Table 1 shows the response rate of the respondents according to their livestock markets.

Table 1 Response Rate of the Respondents

S/no	Locations	Livestock Markets	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Returned	Percentage of Questionnaire Returned
1	Location 1 <i>Daura</i>	Mai'adua Livestock Market Officials	38	32	16.2
2	Location 2 <i>Funtua</i>	SHEME Livestock Market Officials	49	30	15.2
3		Kagadama	36	23	11.6

	Location 3 Katsina	Livestock Market Officials			
		Charanchi Livestock Market Officials	43	33	16.7
		Dankama Livestock Market Officials	32	24	12.1
	Total	5	198	142	71.8

Questionnaire Distributed = 198 Questionnaire Returned = 142

Table 1 revealed that Charanchi livestock market has the highest response rate of 33 (23.2%); while Kagadama livestock market has the least response rate of 23 (16.2%). The variations in the response rate were due to the fact that the sample sizes of the market officials in the livestock markets are not of equal proportion. This is because some livestock markets are bigger in size and in number of buyers and sellers compared to others. Therefore, it is clear from the table 1 that Charanchi livestock market has the highest response rate of 33 respondents.

Challenges to Information Management Practices for Livestock Market Documentation in Katsina State

The main objective of this research is to identify the challenges to information management for livestock market documentation by market officials in Katsina State. The respondents were asked to indicate the challenges they encountered in managing information for livestock market documentation in Katsina State as outline in the table 2.

Table 2 Challenges to Information Management Practices for Livestock Market Documentation in Katsina State

S/no	Challenges to Information Management Practices	Mai'adua Livestock Market		Sheme Livestock Market		Kagadama Livestock Market		Charanchi Livestock Market		Dankama Livestock Market		Total Mean	Std
		F	Mean	F	Mean	F	Mean	F	Mean	F	Mean		
1	Lack of cooperation among stakeholders	23	0.72	20	0.67	16	0.70	21	0.64	18	0.75	0.69	0.46
2	Lack of clear responsibility for information management	22	0.69	19	0.63	14	0.61	21	0.64	15	0.63	0.64	0.48
3	absence of the appointment of an Information Manager	17	0.53	21	0.70	12	0.52	19	0.58	16	0.67	0.60	0.49
4	Negative attitude of sellers in providing information	28	0.88	21	0.70	18	0.78	25	0.76	17	0.71	0.77	0.42
5	Lack of enabling information environment	23	0.72	20	0.67	15	0.65	19	0.58	19	0.79	0.68	0.47
6	Lack of funding	28	0.88	24	0.80	18	0.78	26	0.79	15	0.63	0.78	0.41
7	Poor information management structures	24	0.75	23	0.77	17	0.74	20	0.61	15	0.63	0.70	0.46
8	Resistance to Change	18	0.56	22	0.73	14	0.61	23	0.70	13	0.54	0.63	0.48
9	Limited Infrastructure and Facilities	27	0.84	22	0.73	19	0.83	24	0.73	17	0.71	0.77	0.42
10	Language and Literacy	26	0.81	22	0.73	20	0.87	23	0.70	15	0.63	0.75	0.43
11	Security Concerns	16	0.50	15	0.50	15	0.65	17	0.52	13	0.54	0.54	0.50
12	Limited Storage Space	16	0.50	16	0.56	13	0.57	20	0.61	17	0.71	0.58	0.49

Table 2 shows the challenges to managing information for livestock market documentation in Katsina State. The result of the finding indicated that, majority of the items listed were considered as challenges to managing information for livestock market documentation. Consideration from the table 2 shows that, lack of funding has the highest mean of 0.78, followed by negative attitude of sellers in providing information and limited infrastructure/facilities with a mean score of 0.77 each. Language/literacy and lack of cooperation among stakeholders are also the challenges to managing information for livestock market documentation in Katsina with a mean score of 0.75 and 0.69 respectively. It was also observed that, poor information management structures, lack of enabling information environment, lack of clear responsibility for information management, resistance to change, absence of the appointment of an information manager, limited storage space and security concerns were considered as challenges to managing information for livestock market documentation in Katsina State as they score a means of 0.70, 0.68, 0.63, 0.54, 0.60, 0.58 and 0.58 respectively.

This finding was very disturbing as all the challenges returned accepted by the market officials in Katsina State livestock markets. Continues existences of these challenges can lead to poor information management practices, thereby making it difficult to come up with comprehensive livestock market documentation for proper and accurate tracing of animals, buyers and sellers in livestock markets. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Hassan (2009) who reported that, lack of dedicated personnel for information management, insufficient funding, language barriers and low literacy levels can hamper the implementation of information management systems, leading to manual methods, outdated and inconsistent practices.

Conclusion

The poor state of information management for livestock market documentation in Katsina State is primarily due to the lack of cooperation among stakeholders; absence of appointed information manager; and lack of enabling information environment are majorly responsible for poor livestock market documentation in Katsina State. Thus, if measures are not taken to address the identified challenges encountered in the management of information for livestock market documentation, the market officials would continue to face difficulties to provide relevant authorities with comprehensive livestock market documentation. The acceptance of these challenges by market officials suggests a pressing need for intervention to address the underlying issues. Failure to do so could result in poor information management practices, hindering the development of comprehensive livestock market documentation crucial for tracking animals, buyers, and sellers effectively. Addressing the identified challenges is paramount to improving information management practices for livestock market documentation in Katsina State. Stakeholders must collaborate to develop strategies that mitigate these challenges and foster the establishment of robust information management systems. Only through concerted efforts can the livestock industry in Katsina State achieve the transparency, efficiency, and integrity necessary for sustainable growth and development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings arising from the study the following recommendations were made:

1. Information environment and programme to effectively manage information should be in place especially by establishing information management unit in order to coordinate the information management functions effectively so as to ensure that standard information life cycle management process, and appropriate information policy and guidelines are developed to bring together all of the requirements and standards applicable to manage information. Such information policy should cover the relevant legislations such as the Nigeria Data Protection Act 2023 (“NDPA”) signed into law by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu on 14 June 2023, Freedom of Information Act 2011 among others. This should be in addition to communication strategy to help stakeholders to work together cordially to enhance better performance and high productivity. Above that, an information professional or consulting with information professionals, such as information manager or records managers, who have the expertise to effectively organise and manage information, should be appointed and entrusted with the responsibility of managing information. It is important to engage qualified information professional who will be key in implementing information management programmes. The information professional should be trained at different levels including, diploma and bachelors as well as postgraduate studies in relevant specialty and topped up with continuous short course periodically. Over and above that, livestock market management personnel should be made to be aware that livestock market documentation is the life-blood of their livestock market. This can be achieved by mounting regular training programmes like seminars and workshops to sensitised the livestock market personnel on the importance of livestock market documentation.

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