Utilization of Information for Poverty Eradication in Nigeria National Poverty Eradication Programme, (NAPEP) ABUJA

by

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Abstract

Provision of accurate information has and will continue to be at the forefront of the efforts to manage poverty in Nigeria. Using a structured questionnaire, the study investigated the utilization of information for poverty eradication in Nigeria National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) Headquarters, Abuja. Questions on types of information generation, sourcing, purpose and use were asked. The data collected revealed that the type information generated and sourced was mostly information on skill acquisition. It was discovered that community leaders and government agencies were the major source of information. The paper concludes that information generated by NAPEP when properly utilized can help in the achievement of the goals and objectives of the programme. Some of the recommendation made include making available information on skill acquisition training a priority and Agricultural exhibition.

Introduction

National poverty eradication programme (NAPEP) came on board to alleviate and eradicate poverty in Nigeria. Its aims are to eradicate poverty through by touching the lives of rural dwellers and urban populace in Nigeria. This cannot be achieved without some set objectives among which are to point the way to what can be done for others to follow. It was also set up to facilitate, motivate, coordinate and encourage people to be self reliant by being poverty free.

NAPEP as the apex agency for the fight against poverty has shown that indeed poverty can be defeated through various means and so strives to catalytically intervene by building the "Can do" spirit among individuals in states, Local Government and Community.

With good understanding and effective partnership, states and local Government can mobilize resources to support the president's vision of poverty eradication in the country. To do this effectively, NAPEP has designed several programmes to which other stake holders are invited to partner with NAPEP for the empowerment of people across the country. Also such projects are geared towards poverty eradication and community development. These projects were aimed at creating jobs for the populace through training on skills acquisition and providing them with micro-credit facilities to help them grow, and to reduce rural-urban migration.

In addition, programmes initiated by NAPEP among others to eradicate poverty according to (Azubike, 2008) includes: The Management Attachment Programme (MAP), Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP), Farmers Empowerment Programme, (FEP) microcredit delivery programme,

village solution and Nigeria's conditional / cash transfer Cope (In Care of the people). However, as one of the cardinal objectives of NAPEP was to link the people to various sources of funding expertise and markets the world over in order to lift them out of poverty, several activities are carried out by the organization in both rural and urban areas so as to facilitate information generation for NAPEP.

However in the case of NAPEP, information management is largely done at the headquarters of the organization. The different committees in the local government, Council areas and state, bring in the information gathered on the needs of the people to a collating centre at the headquarters for storage in the management information system (MIS) department and the library. When needed it will be made available in its original form that is unedited.

Ajibero (1993) posits that information can be viewed as "data of value used in planning, decision-making and evaluation of any programme". Similarly Mundy and Sultan (1999) describes information as a basic element in any developmental activity. According to Lucey (2000) Information is that which is used and which creates value. She further argues that information has the following attributes: relevant for its purpose; sufficiently accurate for its purpose; complete enough for solving the problem; from a source in which the user has confidence; communicated to the right person; communicated in time for its purpose, enough for solving problems. As such the use of information will assist NEPEP.

Statement of the Problem

The success of any organization is seen in terms of their ability to manage and organize information generated into products and services, Ladu, (2010).

All organizations strive to provide their employees and customers with the right information, at the right time and in the right format. To achieve this, it is pertinent for the organization to generate, source and use the right information. And to do this the organization must have the right sources at its disposal and it must also know the use for which the information gathered will be put.

Information generation is often carried out in conjunction with sourcing, accessibility and use. However, despite the availability of such information generated for poverty eradication programmes in the Headquarters, Abuja Municipal. There is a gap to be filled because the people were not properly informed about the activities of NAPEP. For instance who it is meant for, how to benefit from the programme and where to go in search of such information. Could this be attributed to the fact that the right information are not generated and sourced? As a consequence of this; the right sources are not consulted and this begets the misuse of the information generated? It is to this end that the researcher intends to undertake the study.

Research Questions
The study seeks to find answers to the following questions:
i.   What types of information are generated in National Poverty Eradication Program NAPEP, Abuja?
ii. What are the sources of information generated in National Poverty Eradication Programme NAPEP, Abuja?
iii. For what purpose are these information sources used in National Poverty Eradication Program, Abuja?
iv. What types of information are used by National Poverty Eradication Programme NAPEP, Abuja?

Literature Review
For a country to achieve economic growth and development the majority of its people must be above poverty line. Nigeria since 1960 and beyond, efforts were being made to eradicate poverty in different names and phases. The operation feed the Nation (OFN) 1979, The Green revolution 1979; War Against Indiscipline (WAI) 1983; Peoples Bank of Nigeria 1985; Directorate of Food Roads and Rural infrastructure (DFFRI) Nigeria Agricultural Land development Authority (NALDA), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Family Economic Advancement Programme FEAP Better life for Rural women and Family Support

Programme. Finally in 2001 till date is the National Poverty Eradication programme. All the above programmes where instituted to alleviate and eradicate poverty. Sule (2008) agrees with the Federal Government of Nigeria in his assertion where he explained further on the relevance of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMES) as an inroad into Poverty alleviation in Nigeria. He sees the relevance of SMES which has been identified as the back bone of wealth creation and employment generation leads to self-employment.

Sourcing For Information Generation in NAPEP.
Nwokocha and Uhegiou (2001) compares source of information generation and distribution today as one of the foremost factors in production which made it to compete with Land, Capital and Labour in terms of importance. Another writer Camble (1994), view development programmes in Africa as one often formulated and executed with insufficient information generated to the primary beneficiaries as a result it led to programmes failure. Again sources of information generation in NAPEP and other organizations like National Directorate of Information (NDE) is through manual record leaflet, video, digital caption and local government publication. Another way to source for information is through the community leader who knows the needs of its people.

However, source of information in any organization could be from various channels which could be formal or informal, published or not, agencies like National orientation Agency, media houses and committees set up by organizations at local and state levels. These organizations could depend on such reports for poverty eradication and improvement on all their programmes by distributing fliers in financial institutions and libraries for general public. In NAPEP, sourcing for information is two folds in that there are those meant for the eradication of poverty and those meant to be used in the organization. According to Lucey (2005) channels of communication which are of different ways could lead to information generation. This is for the fact that anything communicated have different meanings as long as it communicate a message hence information is generated too. These includes face to face, mails, internal and external reports, notice boards, bulletins, displays to mention but a few. In addition, information sourcing for poverty eradication includes those on skill acquisition, Agriculture, wealth creation. Most of these information comes from the community leaders and Non-Governmental organization.

Also in NAPEP, information sources are always available from the local communities, village heads, individual, and self-help groups in National Directorate of employment, there are radio jingles, advertisement and individual awareness group created by the mobile library and video vans who move from one locality to the other. Also individual graduates and unemployed youths came to seek for information N.D.E today (2007). Other source of information for N.D.E is the frequent visit by the media to see what programmes and events are in place and it will be reported.

Finally, Information sourcing today includes from both electronic and physical. The organizational structure must be capable of managing this information throughout its life cycle regardless of source of formation (data, paper, documents, electronic documents, audio, video, fliers to mention a few) for delivery through multiple channels that may include cell phones and web interfaces.

Use of Information in Organizations
Information is used for several purposes in an organization. The purpose for which information is needed in any organization varies for poverty eradication which entails what a poor person or citizen feels. In Tanzania, information communication Technology (ICT) is used for the purpose of spreading information on the rat of poverty and how to eradicate it.

In a paper proceedings presented by Zaipuna, (2005) in Tanzania which is one of the 191 United Nations member Nation, he asserted that ICT can be used to eradicate poverty. He further stated that when ICT are opened up in several areas and in different forms, it can be harnessed to meet the goals of 2025. Poverty in Tanzania is characterized by low income and expenditure, high mortality and mobility, poor nutritional status, low educational attainment, vulnerability to external shocks like natural disasters. All the above were issues discussed on the development of vision 2025 which aims at guiding Tanzania to achieve the five goals by the year 2025, namely: (1) High quality livelihood, (2) Peace, Stability and Unity, (3) Good Governance, (4) A well-educated and learning society and (5) a strong and competitive economy capable of producing sustainable growth and shared benefits. The vision is aiming at achieving the above objectives through information communication Technologies by providing simple information centres with notice boards, books, brochures, posters and newspapers,

audio, video cassettes for the purpose of individual and group use. This process can link individuals and communities governments and citizens in participation and shared decision making. Nigeria could also use the same approach to tackle poverty thereby eradicating it totally.

Information Use For Poverty Eradication
"People use information to seek for knowledge, but not just in the sense of data and facts but in the form of representation that provide meaning and context for purposive action" Choo (2002). Information professionals have long asked question to find out what makes an individual to seek out information. Where does the information seeker find the information to satisfy his information needs. These questions according to Knbirge (2000) are of greater importance for the fact that people using the internet to find information that is unmediated by the library.

The use of information for eradicating poverty is a very important aspect of generating such information. Here the library play a very vital role in that the information stored there are for use. Fowore (1989) and Tsafe (2004) who revealed that there is high use of library to find information at any given time.

There is a long history of research into information behavior and its constituent elements of information need, information seeking and information use. However, the three elements have been studied at varying degrees of detail. Information needs and information seeking and the narrower concept of information search have been well modeled and studied e.g., Belkin (1980); Ellis 1989; 1993; Kuhlthau 1991; Marchionini 1995; Wilson (1999). In contrast, information use has received less attention, and remains a poorly defined concept Case (2002); Taylor 1986;

Wilson, (1999). It is often linked to the concept of information need, in that information is needed so that it can be used. When discussed, use is often addressed at an abstract level, with reference to the broad, general goal that the use of information will help to achieve.

Methodology

The survey research method was used for this study and a structured questionnaire was administered to the respondent for the purpose of data collection. The whole population of 100 staff of research monitoring and evaluation were used. Out of 100 questionnaires distributed to the Research Monitoring and Evaluation Staff, 84 (84%) were duly completed and returned.

Data Analysis and Presentations

The data collected for the purpose of answering the four research questions raised in the study, were analyzed using frequency table and percentages and the result discussed.

Types of Information Generated In National Poverty Eradication Programme, Abuja

The researcher tried to identify the type of information generated in the National Poverty Eradication Programme headquarters, Abuja. The respondents were asked to indicate their opinions on the information that are generated. Their responses are presented in table 1 below:

Table 1: The type of information generated in National Poverty Eradication Programme, Abuja.

Types of Information Generated	Freq (%)
Skill acquisition information	48(57%)
Agricultural information	15(17.9%)
Wealth creation information	9(10.7%)
Health Information	8(9.5%)
Social information	4(4.8%)
Total	100%

From table 1 above it can be seen that 48 (57%) of the respondents indicated that skill acquisition information form the major part of information generated while Agricultural information has 15 (17.9%) and Wealth creation information has 9 (11%) respectively, Health information and social information has 8 (9.5%) and 4(4.8%) response rate. This shows that skill acquisition is the most important information generated in NAPED. This implies that skill acquisition is the major type of information mostly generated and sought for in NAPED. More so, this could be due to the fact that the mandate of the programme is to equip individuals with necessary skills and resources to become productive and self-reliant in the society. The low

response attributed to health and social information does not come as a surprise because it is perhaps less required by the stakeholders of the programme.

Sources of Information Generated In The National Poverty Eradication Programme Headquarters, Abuja

This is aimed at determining the various sources of generating information in the National Poverty Eradication Programme Headquarters, Abuja. To achieve this, respondents were asked to provide their responses as shown in table 2 below:

Table 2: Sources of Information Generated in National Poverty Eradication Programme, Abuja

Sources of information	*Frequency(%)*
Community Leaders	46 (54.8%)
Government Agencies	16(19.0%)
NGO'S	13(15.5%)
Individual	5(6.0%)
Others	4(4.8%)
Total	84(100%)

Table 2 shows the sources of information generated in NAPEP. 46(54.8%) of the respondents indicated that community leaders form the much needed source of information for the organization, while 16(19.0%) comes from Government Agencies and individual 13 (15.5%) and Non- Governmental Organization (NGOs) while individuals 5(6.0%) formed an insignificant source of information. By implication community leaders formed the major part of information source and sourcing for NAPEP organization this is because the leaders live with the people and they know their problem.

Purpose for which information are used in NAPEP Abuja.

This question was raised to know the purpose for which information are used.

Table 3: Purpose for which information are used in NAPEP Abuja.

Purpose	*Frequency*
Skill acquisition Training	48(57.14%)
Agricultural exhibition	15(17.86%)
Wealth creation seminars	10(11.90%)
Social activities awareness	05(5.95%)
Health information	06(7.14%)
Total	84(100%)

From the above table, it is revealed that 48 (57.14%) of the respondents indicated that information is used for skill acquisition training while 15 (17.86%) for Agricultural exhibition information and 10 (11.9%) is used for wealth creation purposes. The least responses are not significantly used for the purpose of information. Unlike India, (Hussain 2010) asserted that information are used for the purpose of spreading the good work of women cooperative association organized by women self employed who provide credit to market women without collateral. This single act has reduced the poverty rate.

Type of Information used by National Poverty Eradication Programme Headquarters, Abuja.
This research question was aimed at identifying the type of information used for poverty eradication by National Poverty Eradication Programme Headquarters, Abuja. To do this, a list of options was provided for the respondents to tick.

Table 4: Types of Information Used by National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)

Type of Information	Frequency(%)
Skill acquisition information	45(53.6%)
Agricultural information	10(11.9%)
Wealth creation information	10(11.9%)
Social information	08(9.5%)
Health information	06(7.1%)
Other	05(6.0%)
Total	84(100%)

The table above shows the type of information used for eradication of poverty by NAPEP headquarters, Abuja. It was revealed that skill acquisition information 45 (53.6%) is the type of information used for poverty eradication by National Poverty Eradication programme. The high frequency recorded is not unconnected to the fact that the mandate of NAPEP is to eradicate poverty by equipping the participants with some requisite skills that will make them self reliant. This is followed by agricultural information and wealth creation information with 10 (11.9%) scores each respectively. Health information, social information and market information were specified by the respondents as the least information used in NAPEP. This corroborates the earlier findings in the study on types of information generated and used.

Conclusion and Recommendations
Information to support the activities of NAPEP is being generated from within and the outside the organization. The use of information generated if properly harnessed could lead to achieving the objectives of the organization. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:
  i. Generation of information should be based on need assessment which is on skill acquisition and funding.
  ii. Information sources, workshops and training should be open to other sister organizations for the benefit of the public(National Directorate of Employment.NDE)
  iii. The library should be well equipped with modern technological equipments to access information.

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