

Information Accessibility and Utilization as Correlate of Quality Of Life of Rural Women in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The quality of life of people in developing countries, including Nigeria, is often adjudged to be lower than the expected standard. This is worse with women living in the rural areas whose lives are characterised by inadequate access and use of basic amenities of life. The situation is compounded by the women's lack of access to valuable information and non-utilisation of available information which could help them meet the challenges of daily living. In addition, the rural environment and the attendant socio-economic factors pose additional limitation to the women's quality of life. This study, therefore, investigated the extent to which information accessibility and utilization correlates with quality of life of rural women in Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive research design of the *expost-facto* type. Three research questions were raised and two hypotheses were formulated. A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data from 5000 rural women purposively selected from 10 Local Government Areas in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Ten indicators namely: housing, occupation, income, health, education, neighbourhood/ community, family life, government, social status and spiritual life was developed as a scale for measuring Quality of Life of rural women. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Results show that Information accessibility and utilization have great roles to play independently and collectively towards improving the quality of life of rural women. Therefore, Nigerian government should provide special information centres in the various Local Government Areas government to provide timely information that could improve the quality of life of rural women in Ekiti State.

Introduction

Information is pervasive in nature. However, it has been accepted and recognized as a survival input of man. Popoola (2006) defined information as facts, news, opinions, messages, symbols, signals and processed data that are capable of improving the knowledge state of a user on a random phenomenon. To promote economic independence and quality of existence, there is a lifelong need to be informed and be up-to-date. Instead of drowning in the abundance of information that floods the universe, it is expected that people should know how to access, evaluate and utilize information effectively to solve a problem.

Information has power only when used and applied effectively. An important consideration in the process of information collection is the accessibility and ultimate use of such information. Aiyepku (1992) confirmed that the ease of access to information is the most important criterion determining whether important information is used or not. With the bewildering amount and variety of information available in this information age, packaging information in the right formats via the right sources and making it accessible to the rural women may have an impact on their quality of life. Rural women need information of all types for self development and improvement of their environment. However, they have developed a culture of silence, resignation and docility and only live their lives routinely using whatever information they may stumble upon or passed to them orally by relatives, friends, colleagues, community or

religious leaders (Kongolo& Bamgose, 2002; Rutakumwa &Krogman, 2000; Olorunda, 2004).

Information has power only when used and applied effectively. Boon (1992) asked how information can be put to effective use when prospective users do not know appropriate sources to consult. Today, access to and utilization of quality information have been identified as important variables which differentiate and determine whether a country is developed or underdeveloped. Advances in the awareness, availability and utilization of information have influenced and changed the structure of many societies with far-reaching results in industrialization and quality of life of the populace in developed countries. However, in Nigeria, these advances do not appear to have been sufficiently and extensively applied to improve the conditions of the rural populace especially rural women who continue to suffer from deplorably low standards of living, abject poverty, high incidence of diseases and illiteracy.

The concern for increasing the quality of life of rural women in Nigeria can be seen in the general concern to alleviate the socio-economic status of the rural poor household. Many programmes sponsored by either the national government or international agencies have been designed to improve quality of life of the rural women. Worthy to mention is the introduction of the Better life for Rural Women (BLW) in 1987 under late Mariam Babangida, (the then Nigerian first lady) and the Family

Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) under Mariam Abacha (the Nigerian first lady in 1993-97) which were planned to play critical role in alleviating the status of rural women in Nigeria, socially and economically. In recognition of the failure of the past government efforts, some non-governmental organizations stepped up efforts also to improve the quality of life among the women folks living in the rural areas. Regrettably, women in rural areas for which such programmes were meant lagged behind in terms of socio-economic advancement.

The concept of quality of life embodies new ideas about the state of the environment, housing, people's state of happiness, work and marital satisfaction and the total well being of the populace (Rapley, 2003). Most people have a reasonably clear idea of what sorts of things would enhance their individual quality of life (and probably the quality of life of other individuals too). For example, higher pay, longer holidays, more satisfaction in working lives, time to pursue enjoyable and satisfying leisure pursuits, emotional fulfillment in relationships, having a long healthy and happy life – all lived within a safe, caring and supportive local community are among the things people conceived as what could improve their quality of life (Berman & Phillips, 2000). Quality of life in the rural setting, according to Phillips (2006) is a multifaceted phenomenon determined by the cumulative and interactive impacts of numerous and varied factors like housing conditions, infrastructure, access to various amenities, income, standard of living, satisfaction about the physical and social environment. What quality of life means on a global scale can be distilled from the social indicators identified by major international organizations such as The World Bank, World Health Organizations, United Nations, European System of Social Indicators and Australian Bureau of statistics.

At the Millennium Summit in September 2000, world leaders adopted the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which are the world's time-bound and quantified targets for addressing extreme poverty in its many dimensions – income, poverty, hunger, disease, lack of adequate shelter, etc (UN Millennium Project, 2005). Many countries including developing countries like Nigeria are on track to achieve at least some of the goals at the appointed deadline of 2015. To achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, many countries need to quickly improve their economic growth, education and health systems, their management of environmental resources, and their infrastructure for water, sanitation, telecommunication and transportation – all these in place will improve the quality of life of the people (World Bank, 2007). The role which information could play in achieving these goals cannot be ignored.

Information about the Millennium Development Goals will enable stakeholders to plan, control, manage and implement actions that could further enhance the quality of life of these rural women.

Statement of problem

Women living in rural areas of Nigeria are generally known to be suffering from general deprivation including access to information resources. Rural women most often fail to access various information resources and services even when such information are available. The reasons may not be un-related to the socio-economic status of the rural women or the format in which such information is packaged.

In Ekiti state of Nigeria, it was observed that women living in the rural areas are known to be unable to access information and appropriately used it to meet the demand of the challenges of daily living. The rural women are still not able to cater adequately for the basic needs of food, clothes, shelter, obligations, lack of gainful employment and skills. They have limited access to social and economic infrastructure such as economic, health, portable water, sanitation and consequently, limited chance of advancing in their quality of life.

The State government and some non-governmental organizations such as Oil Mineral Producing Development Commission (OMPADEC) and the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) had introduced some intervention programmes such as poverty alleviation, health for all and so on which rural women living in the state could benefit from. However, these programme lack information management input which can help translate the programmes to good qualitative life for rural women in Ekiti state.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What sources of information are the most accessible to the rural women in Ekiti State, Nigeria?
2. What are the sources of information mostly utilized by rural women in Ekiti State, Nigeria?
3. What is the level of quality of life of rural women in Ekiti State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The study also sought to validate the following hypotheses:

- 1) There is no significant relationship between information accessibility and quality of life of rural women.
- 2) There is no significant relationship between information utilization and quality of life of rural women.

The findings from this study would assist information management professionals to design functional library and information services to meet the information needs in order to improve the quality of life of the rural women in Ekiti State. Similarly, this study will further raise consciousness of the rural women to the importance of information and the role it could play in enhancing their quality of life. Finally, this study will enrich existing literature in rural librarianship and gender studies.

Literature Review

It appears that the concept of quality of life is fast becoming a popular concept worldwide including Nigeria (Oluwoye, 1990). Despite its widespread use, the term has different meanings to different people. For some researchers, quality of life means almost anything beyond information about death and death rates. For others, quality of life is an umbrella concept that refers to all aspect of a person's life, including physical health, psychological well-being, social well-being, financial well-being and family relationship. Though, there is lack of general definition of the term "quality of life" but majority of individuals have a reasonably clear idea of things which would enhance their quality of life. There is an adage that says, "he who wear the shoe knows where it pinches". The concept embodies new ideas about the state of the environment, housing, people's state of happiness, work and marital satisfaction and the total well being of the populace (Philips, 2006).

Access to basic human rights is increasingly being linked to access to information (Warah, 2004). Muhammed Yunus, the Nobel Peace Prize winner for his work in microcredit in 2006 has long argued that access to information should be a fundamental human rights in a world where billions struggle to find a meal, while hundreds of billions struggled not to eat too much and where billions are forced to cook and heat their water with dangerous and dirty fuels (Yunus, 2009). According to this author, access to information may be the only way to begin to close that astounding unjust gap between the rich and the poor. McCreadie and Rice (1999), opined that access to information affects everybody's life from economic well-being to privacy rights, from workplace management and monitoring to policy and decision making, and from daily errands to transnational business.

In the last few years, more and more development agencies have recognized that information can mitigate risk and improve the quality of life of the rural dwellers (Issak, 2000). According to Okiy (2003), access to information has the potential for breaking social, economic and political barriers and improves the quality of life of the rural women. Not knowing about their rights, what services they could access, what their goods are selling for in the market, best practices in farming, plans for areas of interest or the opinions for tackling certain problems put rural women at a disadvantaged and increase their vulnerability to poverty. Diso (2006) also opines that access and adequate use of information would no doubt transform rural communities into a lively and enlightened society where structural and infrastructural problems, official corruption, unstable political and political policies and growing insecurity hamper these developments.

Rural women have considerable experience at wrestling a living, no matter how meager, from the land and other resources available to them. According to Okello (2007), accurate, adequate and timely utilization of required information would result in enhancing the economic and social development of the rural women. The author reported that because The Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET), a Non- governmental organization established in Uganda in 2000, discovered that achieving good quality of life is increasingly dependent on the acquisition of information and knowledge, the non-governmental organization is committed to directing all efforts to supporting women and women organizations to access and utilize information in their development activities to improve their lives.

Nigerian government has plans and policies targeted at improving the quality of life of the rural populace but the condition of the rural women is degenerating instead of advancing. What could be responsible for these unwanted, unbearable, uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions? Issak (2000) answered these questions when he submitted that the success of any government programmes depends on effective utilization of information in daily activities. According to Harande (2009), Nigeria has been an independent nation for the past forty nine years with policies on development of rural communities, but the rural areas are still not developed and the quality of life of the people continues to deteriorate throughout all tiers of government (Federal, state and local). The author agrees with Diso (2006) in his conclusion that the rural communities have the potential to enjoy good quality of life if effective

information services are fully provided in rural communities throughout the country.

The need for a new system approach to create access to information sources is long overdue. The need for a new approach in providing access to information is recognized by The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The UNESCO public library manifesto notes that library books should no longer be the main concern for the rural populace but materials on all subjects to satisfy all tastes at differing educational and cultural standards (UNESCO, 1994). The consensus among scholars in African librarianship seems to be that libraries in Africa should develop a new approach to information management and provision in order to serve all rural communities. Some information providers have taken a cue from the UNESCO manifesto in order to give the disadvantaged rural communities access to information.

One such example of information services provision that was easily accessible for the rural populace to utilize was reported by Ngulube (2000) at the Mudzi District, a remote rural area in North Eastern Zimbabwe include referral, information repackaging and exhibition of information materials. The Mudzi library is responding and contributing to social change and economic development in the district through the creation of access to information the rural community found easy to utilize. The aim of the library is to provide materials and services to help the rural community obtain information to improve their quality of life. The library stock comprised of books, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers and audio-visual materials such as films, tapes, posters and photographs. The library also mounted exhibition for daily living and decision making. Aspect of the displays include the importance of information, career guidance, scholarship opportunities, health issues, local service organizations, government gazettes, newspaper cuttings, current affairs and calendar of community events. In addition, the library also circulates tape recordings of radio news and national events in local languages. The displays are both in English and local languages. This approach ensures that the rural dwellers have the touch of been part of the information society which has an impact on their socio-economic status. Ngulube (2000)

averred that provision, accessibility and utilization of information are essential factors to improving the quality of life of rural dwellers.

Research Methodology

The study area: Ekiti State was one of the states created on the 1st of October 1996 alongside five other states in an exercise that brought the number of states in Nigeria to thirty six. The state was carved out of the old Ondo state and covers the former Ekiti zone of the state. The state has its capital at Ado-Ekiti. There are sixteen local government areas in the state. The state is bounded in the northwest by Kwara state, in the northeast by Kogi state and in the south by Ondo state. By the 2006 census, the population of Ekiti state was two million, three hundred and eighty four thousand, two hundred and twelve (2,384,212) National Population Commission (2006). The choice of the state was informed by the collaborative report of the Centre for Development and Action Research and Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research which shows that The World Bank once selected Ekiti State for pilot activities of its Ekiti State Community Based Poverty Reduction Agency (ESCOBPRA) and reported the state as having the highest poverty level in the Southwest Region of Nigeria.(CEDAR, 2000). The choice of the state was again designed to provide opportunity for examining the influence which access to and utilization of information could have on quality of life of the rural women living in the state.

Sampling and sample size

The multistage random sampling technique was used to select 5,866 out of a population size of 819, 545 rural women from 12 local governments areas that were categorized as pure rural areas by the Ekiti State Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. From these 12 local government areas, 10 were randomly selected by balloting. The 237 existing communities in the 10 local governments areas selected were covered. The total number of housing units in the 237 communities covered was 8,199 out of which 820 were randomly selected given a sampling fraction of 10 percent based on probability proportionate size. A total sample size of 5,866 women was obtained from the 820 housing units selected.

Table 1: Female Population in each Local Government Areas and sample selected

LGA	Female Population	Number of rural communities	Number of housing units	Sample Selected (10%)
Efon Alaaye	42022	29	669	420
Ilereje	20918	22	57	210
Oye	69634	26	283	700
Ekiti East	66058	20	537	660
Gbonyin	70958	27	1,143	710
Irepodun/Ifelodun	67257	16	636	670
Ido/Osi	75913	22	143	760
Ikere	74559	22	400	746
Ise/Orun	54428	28	3,166	540
Emire	45037	25	1,155	450
Total	586,856	237	8,199	5,866

Procedure for data collection: Self developed questionnaire was used to collect data. Copies of the questionnaire were personally administered with the assistance of ten trained research assistants. A letter of introduction from the Permanent secretary, Ministry of Rural Development facilitated the distribution and collection of data from homes, schools, offices and place of work of the rural women. Copies of the questionnaire were administered through heads of department in offices, principals of schools, village heads, community and youth leaders, farm associations, mosques and the churches.

In all, five thousand, eight hundred and sixty six (5,866) copies of the questionnaires were administered. Out of this number, five thousand, two hundred and fifteen (5,215) copies were retrieved out of which two hundred and fifteen (215) were found not usable leaving a total of five thousand (5,000) copies which was considered useable for data analysis.

The data collection exercise lasted from 1st June, 2009 – 8th August, 2009. All the research assistants had the capacity to speak, read and write in the local languages of the rural women as well as in English language. The research assistants were trained on how to administer the questionnaire by interpreting the contents to non-literate

women in local language. Descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyze the data.

Results and discussion of findings

From the data collected, the result from table 2 shows that the major sources of information very easily accessible to the rural women in Ekiti State are information from friends and relations in the same locality (X=3.43, SD= 0.85), radio (X=3.25, SD= 0.99), religious institutions (X=3.21,SD=0.11) friends and relations from urban areas (X=3.07, SD=0.86). The market places (X=2.92, SD= 0.22), television (X=2.88, SD= 0.19), village heads (X=2.75, SD=0.86), telephone (X=2.63, SD= 0.27), information from local government headquarters (X=2.54, SD=0.92) and information from educated people in the society (X=2.54, SD=0.09) were sources the respondents found easily accessible. Information from health workers (X=2.34, SD=0.99), community development staff (X=2.38, SD=0.06), posters (X=2.33, SD=0.07) and social groups were sources that were also accessible to the respondents. Information from newspapers, libraries, information centers, journalists, film shows, Internet facilities, telecenters and community viewing centers were sources not accessible to the rural women in Ekiti State, Nigeria

Table 2: Mean and Standard deviation scores of sources of information accessible to the respondents

Item	Not accessible	Accessible	Easily Accessible	Very Accessible	Mean (X)	Std. Dev.
Friends and relations in my locality	134 (2.7%)	786 (15.7%)	879 (17.6%)	3200 (64.0%)	3.43	0.85
Friends and relations from urban areas	177 (3.5%)	1164 (23.3%)	1773 (35.5%)	1886 (37.7%)	3.07	0.86
Village head/local heads	268 (5.4%)	1841 (36.8%)	1788 (35.8%)	1103 (22.1%)	2.75	0.86
Local government headquarters	635 (12.7%)	1876 (37.6%)	1624 (32.5%)	865 (17.3%)	2.54	0.92
Social group	1592 (31.8%)	1473 (29.5%)	1143 (22.9%)	792 (15.8%)	2.23	0.06
Health workers	1136 (22.7%)	1770 (35.4%)	1358 (27.2%)	736 (14.7%)	2.34	0.99
Agricultural extension staff	1908 (38.2%)	1613 (32.3%)	876 (17.5%)	603 (12.1%)	2.03	0.02
Community development staff	1196 (23.9%)	1738 (34.8%)	1058 (21.2%)	1008 (20.2%)	2.38	0.06
Educated people in the society	1044 (20.9%)	1543 (30.9%)	1097 (21.9%)	1316 (26.3%)	2.54	0.09
Radio	379 (7.6%)	840 (16.8%)	913 (18.3%)	2868 (57.4%)	3.25	0.99
Television	955 (19.1%)	985 (19.7%)	748 (15.0%)	2312 (46.2%)	2.88	0.19
Newspapers	3238 (64.8%)	623 (12.5%)	381 (7.6%)	758 (15.2%)	1.73	0.12
Film show	3899 (78.0%)	427 (8.5%)	293 (5.9%)	381 (7.6%)	1.43	0.91
Libraries	3775 (75.5%)	508 (10.2%)	312 (6.2%)	405 (8.1%)	1.47	0.93
Information centre	3909 (78.2%)	417 (8.3%)	341 (6.8%)	333 (6.7%)	1.42	0.88
Internet facilities	4195 (83.9%)	269 (5.4%)	244 (4.9%)	292 (5.8%)	1.33	0.82
Telephone	1502 (30.0%)	747 (14.9%)	826 (16.5%)	1925 (38.5%)	2.63	0.27
Leaflets/handbills	2371 (47.4%)	1128 (22.6%)	991 (19.8%)	510 (10.2%)	1.93	0.04
Posters	1529 (30.6%)	1072 (21.4%)	1614 (32.3%)	785 (15.7%)	2.33	0.07
Bulletin board	2880 (57.6%)	1167 (23.3%)	577 (11.5%)	376 (7.5%)	1.69	0.95
Journalists	3908 (78.2%)	498 (10.0%)	241 (4.8%)	353 (7.1%)	1.41	0.87
Text messages from mobile phone and bank statement etc	2661 (53.2%)	272 (5.4%)	474 (9.5%)	1593 (31.9%)	2.20	0.36
Talks, lectures by rural development personnel	2995 (59.9%)	526 (10.5%)	630 (12.6%)	849 (17.0%)	1.87	0.18
Religion institutions e.g.	786	310	979	2925	3.21	0.11

church, mosque etc.	(15.7%)	(6.2%)	(19.6%)	(58.5%)		
Non-governmental organizations	2754 (55.1%)	770 (15.4%)	932 (18.6%)	544 (10.9%)	1.85	0.07
Market places	1165 (23.3%)	252 (5.0%)	1096 (21.9%)	2487 (49.7%)	2.98	0.22
Workshops/demonstrations	3494 (69.9%)	615 (12.3%)	487 (9.7%)	404 (8.1%)	1.56	0.96
Letters	3193 (63.9%)	511 (10.2%)	799 (16.0%)	497 (9.9%)	1.72	0.06
Books and monographs	3804 (76.1%)	473 (9.5%)	469 (9.4%)	254 (5.1%)	1.43	0.86
Video tape	3680 (73.6%)	388 (7.8%)	550 (11.0%)	382 (7.6%)	1.53	0.96
Telecenters/Community viewing centers	4066 (81.3%)	344 (6.9%)	285 (5.7%)	305 (6.1%)	1.37	0.84
Overall	Mean			Std. Deviation		
	67.96			17.63		

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation scores of sources of information respondents mostly utilized

Item	Never Used	Annually	Quarterly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily	Mean (X)	Std. Dev.
Friends and relations in my locality	138 (2.8%)	73 (1.5%)	61 (1.2%)	67 (1.3%)	614 (12.3%)	4046 (80.9%)	5.21	0.53
Friends and relations from urban areas	186 (3.7%)	52 (1.0%)	537 (10.7%)	642 (12.8%)	2406 (48.1%)	1177 (23.5%)	4.71	0.18
Village head/local heads	345 (6.9%)	71 (1.4%)	767 (15.3%)	2110 (42.2%)	1185 (23.7%)	522 (10.4%)	4.06	0.22
Local government headquarters	435 (8.7%)	234 (4.7%)	1300 (26.0%)	1854 (37.1%)	706 (14.1%)	471 (9.4%)	3.71	0.29
Social group	1674 (33.5%)	388 (7.8%)	979 (19.6%)	824 (16.5%)	648 (13.0%)	487 (9.7%)	2.97	0.73
Health workers	783 (15.7%)	320 (6.4%)	1746 (34.9%)	1176 (23.5%)	613 (12.3%)	362 (%)	3.32	0.40
Agricultural extension staff	1577 (31.5%)	712 (14.2%)	1128 (22.6%)	914 (18.3%)	371 (7.4%)	298 (6.0%)	2.74	0.53
Community development staff	762 (15.2%)	490 (9.8%)	1417 (28.3%)	1147 (22.9%)	741 (14.8%)	443 (8.9%)	3.39	0.48
Educated people in the society	808 (16.2%)	352 (7.0%)	1163 (23.3%)	822 (16.4%)	947 (18.9%)	908 (18.2%)	3.36	0.67
Radio	357 (7.1%)	90 (1.8%)	377 (7.5%)	199 (4.0%)	288 (5.8%)	3689 (73.8%)	5.62	0.03
Television	906 (18.1%)	83 (1.7%)	368 (7.4%)	178 (3.6%)	483 (9.7%)	2982 (59.6%)	4.64	0.96
Newspapers	2939 (58.8%)	126 (2.5%)	246 (4.9%)	338 (6.8%)	353 (7.1%)	998 (20.0%)	2.61	0.09
Film show	4057 (81.1%)	147 (2.9%)	116 (2.3%)	124 (2.5%)	212 (4.2%)	344 (6.9%)	1.66	0.52
Libraries	3934 (78.7%)	123 (2.5%)	176 (3.5%)	188 (3.8%)	283 (5.7%)	296 (5.9%)	1.73	0.54
Information centre	3946	190	152	244	253	215	1.66	0.43

	(78.9%)	(3.8%)	(3.0%)	(4.9%)	(5.1%)	(4.3%)		
Internet facilities	4093 (81.9%)	103 (2.1%)	219 (4.4%)	165 (3.3%)	225 (4.5%)	195 (3.9%)	1.58	0.36
Telephone	1066 (21.3%)	225 (4.5%)	464 (9.3%)	374 (7.5%)	986 (19.7%)	1885 (37.7%)	4.13	0.97
Leaflets/handbills	2056 (41.1%)	254 (5.1%)	565 (11.3%)	1218 (24.4%)	685 (13.7%)	222 (4.4%)	2.78	0.68
Posters	2111 (42.2%)	295 (5.9%)	637 (12.7%)	1180 (23.6%)	545 (10.9%)	232 (4.6%)	2.69	0.66
Bulletin board	3187 (63.7%)	249 (5.0%)	463 (9.3%)	593 (11.9%)	319 (6.4%)	189 (3.8%)	2.03	0.54
Journalists	3897 (77.9%)	138 (2.8%)	246 (4.9%)	265 (5.3%)	182 (3.6%)	272 (5.4%)	1.70	0.47
Text messages from mobile phone and bank statement etc	2756 (55.1%)	138 (2.8%)	223 (4.5%)	234 (4.7%)	391 (7.8%)	1258 (25.2%)	2.83	0.20
Talks, lectures by rural development personnel	3130 (62.6%)	205 (4.1%)	298 (6.0%)	486 (9.7%)	504 (10.1%)	377 (7.5%)	2.23	0.77
Religion institutions e.g. church, mosque etc.	712 (14.2%)	128 (2.6%)	246 (4.9%)	357 (7.1%)	2133 (42.7%)	1424 (28.5%)	4.47	0.67
Non-governmental organizations	2832 (56.6%)	240 (4.8%)	424 (8.5%)	454 (9.1%)	600 (12.0%)	450 (9.0%)	2.42	0.83
Market places	1128 (22.6%)	107 (2.1%)	166 (3.3%)	455 (9.1%)	1726 (34.5%)	1418 (28.4%)	4.16	0.90
Workshops/demonstrations	3477 (69.5%)	125 (2.5%)	344 (6.9%)	312 (6.2%)	426 (8.5%)	316 (6.3%)	2.01	0.67
Letters	3302 (66.0%)	165 (3.3%)	392 (7.8%)	403 (8.1%)	384 (7.7%)	354 (7.1%)	2.09	0.70
Books and monographs	3750 (75.0%)	179 (3.6%)	297 (5.9%)	306 (6.1%)	226 (4.5%)	242 (4.8%)	1.76	0.48
Video tape	3683 (73.7%)	171 (3.4%)	189 (3.8%)	141 (2.8%)	476 (9.5%)	340 (6.8%)	1.92	0.68
Telecenters/Community viewing centers	3392 (67.8%)	197 (3.9%)	147 (2.9%)	91 (1.8%)	162 (3.2%)	161 (3.2%)	1.61	0.38
Overall	Mean						Std. Deviation	
	67.96						15.56	

The major sources of information utilized by rural women in Ekiti State, Nigeria to improve their quality of life includes: the radio ($X=5.62$, $SD=0.03$), friends and relations in their locality ($X=5.21$, $SD=0.53$), friends and relations from urban areas ($X=4.71$, $SD=0.18$), television ($X=4.64$, $SD=0.96$), religious institutions ($X=4.47$, $SD=0.67$), market places ($X=4.16$, $SD=0.90$), mobile phone ($X=4.13$, $SD=0.97$) and village heads ($X=4.06$, $SD=0.97$). These sources were used daily, weekly and monthly by the rural women. Information from local government headquarters ($X=3.71$, $SD=0.29$), community development staff ($X=3.39$, $SD=1.48$), educated people in the community ($X=3.36$, $SD=1.67$)

and health workers ($X=3.32$, $SD=0.40$) were also sources the rural women used but less frequently. The rural women in Ekiti State, Nigeria were mostly illiterate; it was therefore not surprising that newspapers, books and monographs, libraries, Internet, letters, bulletin board, posters, leaflet/handbills were not major sources of information they utilized. Oral media were relied upon for information but unfortunately, greater proportion of useful information including those originating from government is disseminated through printed media and this kept the rural women in the dark.

From the results in tables 2 and 3, it was obvious that the respondents found the informal sources more

accessible to utilized. It is disturbing to note that libraries, information centers, workshops and demonstrations were not considered by the respondents as vital sources to consult when searching for information to improve their quality of life. This result

corroborated the views of Atinmo, Dahwa and Jimba (1996), Leach (2001), Okiy (2003) and Tandon (2006) who opined that rural dwellers do not embrace formal sources when searching for information. Rather, they emphasized interpersonal sources of information.

The level of the quality of life of rural women in Ekiti State

Housing

Table 4: Level of quality of life of the respondents in the housing domain

S/N	Items	Not true of me	Occ. True of me	True of me	Very true of me	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	I have an adequate and comfortable place to live in	693 (13.9%)	1254 (25.1%)	1582 (31.6%)	1471 (29.4%)	2.77	1.02
2	The house in which I live in is not modern	2167 (43.3%)	801 (16.0%)	1499 (30.0%)	533 (10.7%)	2.08	1.07
3	Aside from not paying rent, I collect rents from other houses I own	3518 (70.4%)	761 (15.2%)	290 (5.8%)	431 (8.6%)	1.53	.94
4	Owing to insecurity of life and properties in my community, my houses and properties are not safe from armed robbers.	4169 (83.4%)	412 (8.2%)	252 (5.0%)	167 (3.3%)	1.28	.71
Overall		Mean			Standard Deviation		
		7.66			2.27		

The result in table 4 shows that the rural women in Ekiti state have the lowest sense of fulfillment in the housing domain. Only 1,471 (29.4%) of the rural women admitted that they have adequately and comfortable place to live in, 431 (8.6%) of the women reported they have their personal house and other house where they collect rent. However, only 167 (3.3%) reported that their houses and properties are not safe from armed robbers due to insecurity of life and properties. This shows clearly that in spite of the fact that the rural women do not have a modern, adequate and comfortable house to live in, there is a bit of stability in the security of their lives and properties.

Housing, a basic necessity of life is one of the most important indicators for measuring people's quality of life. This result does not corroborate

with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 25(1) which stated that:

'Women share the right to a decent housing and standard of living. That housing fulfils physical need by providing security and shelter from weather and climate. It fulfills psychological needs by providing a sense of personal space and privacy. It fulfills social needs by providing a gathering area and communal space for the family which is the basic unit of the society'. www.un.org (2009).

According to Okello (2007), with access and adequate use of information, rural women can be mobilized to gain access to land, resist eviction, manage savings and credit or raise fund to build their own house and where to obtain the types of materials to be used to build houses.

O c c u p a t i o n

Table 5: Level of quality of life of the respondents in the occupation domain

S/N	Items	Not true of me	Occ. True of me	True of me	Very true of me	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	I have an interesting job in which I can make full use of my talent	1386 (27.7%)	2557 (51.1%)	628 (12.6%)	429 (8.6%)	2.02	.86
2	I derive maximum satisfaction from my present job	1157 (23.1%)	2319 (46.4%)	857 (17.1%)	667 (13.3%)	2.21	.95
3	The necessary tools/machineries are not available for me to do my job	2252 (45.0%)	919 (18.4%)	1000 (20.0%)	829 (16.6%)	2.08	1.14
4	The environment in which I live is conducive enough for me to do my work	784 (15.7%)	2326 (46.5%)	1043 (20.9%)	847 (16.9%)	2.39	.94
5	I am among the best women in my occupation	1349 (27.0%)	1868 (37.4%)	1094 (21.9%)	689 (13.8%)	2.22	.99
6	I am not very successful in my occupation	3018 (60.4%)	1325 (26.5%)	336 (6.7%)	320 (6.4%)	1.59	.87
Overall		Mean			Standard Deviation		
		7.66			2.27		

I n c o m e

Table 6: Level of quality of life of the respondents in the income domain

S/N	Items	Not true of me	Occ. True of me	True of me	Very true of me	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	I live above the national minimum wage every month (i.e. N9,500)	1668 (33.4%)	979 (19.6%)	1276 (25.5%)	1077 (21.5%)	2.35	1.15
2	I can afford sending my children to good school for as far as possible in their education	2541 (50.8%)	1344 (26.9%)	556 (11.1%)	559 (11.2%)	1.83	1.02
3	I am rich by any standard because I can conveniently meet my obligations towards my family	2780 (55.6%)	1259 (25.2%)	489 (9.8%)	472 (9.4%)	1.73	.98
4	My financial strength has made me to live a good life	2509 (50.2%)	1474 (29.5%)	547 (10.9%)	470 (9.4%)	1.80	.97
5	I am not admired and respected by others in my community because I do not possess any property	3226 (64.5%)	1242 (24.8%)	293 (5.9%)	238 (4.8%)	1.51	.81
6	I can conveniently acquire essential and necessary household materials for my convenience and that of my family	1648 (33.0%)	1930 (38.6%)	885 (17.7%)	537 (10.7%)	2.06	.97
7	I personally do not attach any importance to money as long as I am happy	1760 (35.2%)	1591 (31.8%)	665 (13.3%)	984 (19.7%)	2.17	1.11
8	My ability to operate a bank account has improved my comfortability/ standard of living	3599 (72.0%)	596 (11.9%)	425 (8.5%)	380 (7.6%)	1.52	.94
9	I have saved enough to operate a life assurance policy	3850 (77.0%)	490 (9.8%)	419 (8.4%)	241 (4.8%)	1.41	.84
10	My inability to save every month has negatively affected my comfortability	2773 (55.5%)	606 (12.1%)	836 (16.7%)	785 (15.7%)	1.93	1.16
Overall		Mean			Standard Deviation		
		7.66			2.27		

The occupation domain with overall mean score of 12.52 and standard deviation of 3.35 shows that only 429 (8.6%) of the rural women reported that they have an interesting job. These categories of women are professionals with white collar jobs. Majority of the women who were farmers, traders and artisans have the lowest sense of fulfillment in their occupation. They reported they are not very successful in their occupation because the necessary tools/machines are not available for them to do their jobs.

Occupation, besides serving as a means of earning a living, gives people feeling of having something to do, of having a purpose in life, indeed a sense of worthiness.. Access to and utilization of information will empower the rural women on a path toward financial stability which would improve their quality of life.

The result in table 6 shows that only 1,077 (21.5%) of the rural women reported they live above the national minimum wage. 2,541 (50.8%) reported they could not afford to send their children to good school. 2,059 (50.2%) said their financial strength has made them not live a good life. 3,599 (72.0%) of the

women reported that their inability to operate a bank account has not improved their comfortability and standard of living. Only 1,422 (28.4%) can conveniently acquire essential and necessary household materials for their convenience and that of their family. Due to their financial situation, only 660 (13.2%) could operate a life assurance policy.

The result shows a decline in spite of the minimum wage increase of ₦7, 500.00 introduced in Nigeria since 1999. This may be due to the inability of the new wages to cope with the country inflation rate. Studies have shown that one of the main problems faced by women worldwide, especially those residing in rural areas, is poverty (Fasoranti, 2008 & Modupe, 2009). This result is in agreement with Mooko (2005) who asserted that women living in the rural areas are poor income earners. Poverty among the rural women also limits the amount of capital they can invest in businesses. Hence rural women tend to invest in activities that require very minimal initial investment. There is no doubt about the need to provide rural women with information that could boost their socio-economic status

H e a l t h

Table 7: Level of quality of life of the respondents in the health domain

S/N	Items	Not true of me	Occ. True of me	True of me	Very true of me	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	I feel good because I enjoy good health and physical condition	620 (12.4%)	1258 (25.2%)	1357 (27.1%)	1765 (35.3%)	2.85	1.04
2	I am not happy because doctors have said that I am not free from debilitating diseases	3728 (74.6%)	704 (14.1%)	304 (6.1%)	264 (5.3%)	1.42	.83
3	I maintain good health because I enjoy good nourishment	674 (13.5%)	1747 (34.9%)	1395 (27.9%)	1184 (23.7%)	2.62	.99
4	I have access to good medical care in my community	1502 (30.0%)	1467 (29.3%)	961 (19.2%)	1070 (21.4%)	2.32	1.12
5	I limit the number of children I have to properly take care of them and enjoy life	1519 (30.4%)	989 (19.8%)	1673 (33.5%)	819 (16.4%)	2.36	1.08
6	I do not have a personal doctor and so could not do any medical routine check	1776 (35.5%)	610 (12.2%)	780 (15.6%)	1834 (36.7%)	2.53	1.30
7	I can afford to pay for my medical bills whenever the need arises	1188 (23.8%)	2212 (44.2%)	721 (14.4%)	879 (17.6%)	2.26	1.01
Overall		Mean			Standard Deviation		
		16.36			3.82		

In the health domain, 1,184 (23.7%) and 1,395 (27.9%) reported they maintain a very good health because they enjoy good nourishment. 1,747 (34.9%) said that they occasionally maintain good health and only 674 (13.5%) reported they do not maintain good health. This shows that the rural women in Ekiti State of Nigeria maintain good health because of the freshness and richness of their food intake. 1,070 (21.4%) claimed they have access to good medical care in their community. 1,188 (23.8%) reported they cannot afford to pay for medical bills whenever the need arises.

There is a popular saying that health is wealth. The individual's state of health and the expectation for a healthy life affect the individual's sense of well-being and productivity. Health status of people has been used as an indicator of development by many International Conferences, some of which include the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Fourth World Conference on Women and World Bank. The analysis in the health domain shows that the respondents do not

From the result in the education domain Table 8, 3,147 (62.9%) of the respondents do not have best education. 3,226 (64.5%) said that they feel so little because they did not go to school, colleges or adult literacy centers. The result suggests that the higher level of education an individual attains, the higher the likelihood that such an individual will be in a position to reach out to other family members. No wonder, 2,736 (54.7%) of the respondents had intention to enroll at any available vocational centres to acquire knowledge and skills.

Odumosu and Omisakin (1998) opined that the higher the level of education an individual attains, the higher the likelihood that such an individual will be in a position to reach out to other family members. Access to information and subsequent utilization would lead to attainment of education and skills as women with basic skills and education seem to find opportunities to expand their economic options (FAO, 2009). This statement is in agreement with Tise (2000) that corroborated that the main reason for lack of improved quality of life is the general lack of supportive institutions particularly (health, information and education services) and the inadequate attention to the improvements of rural infrastructure.

From the result in the neighbourhood domain Table 9, 2,700 (54.0%) of the respondents reported that the

experience fulfillment in this domain. The majority of the respondents reported they maintain good health because they enjoy good nourishment. This shows that the rural women maintain good health because of the freshness and richness of their food intake which comes from the farm produce. This is in agreement with Food Agency Orientation (2005) that asserted that fresh vegetables and other nutritional value of agricultural produce boost the health status of the rural dwellers. In relation to quality of life under the health domain, Okello (2007) says that access and adequate utilization of information may prevent the rural women from indiscriminate use of drug. Besides, the spread of incurable and terminal disease could be avoided if information about the risk gets to the grassroots (The World Health Organization, 2009). Recently, there has been a wake-up call for actions to prevent breast cancer, a killer disease among women. Information about this disease is mostly in the formats (books, newspapers, handbills, internet etc) that rural women cannot utilize. Observational information about the disease to the rural women may stop the spread.

community in which they live have access to satisfactory road network. 2,126 (42.5%) claimed the community has network of telephone services. However, 3,191 (63.8%) of the respondents reported they do not feel safe in the neighbourhood because it is not free from corruption or robbery. The neighbourhood and the entire community where people live exert certain influence on them as well as determine the level of their quality of life. Neighbourhoods are not restricted to houses rather they are surroundings, areas and space dimensions within which people interact informally. According to Berman and Phillips (2000), the consideration of whether a neighbourhood is desirable or fulfilling is dependent on some factors, namely, how clean and pleasant it is, how safe it is from violent crime, how cordial is the overall human relationship and how democratic and participatory is the community. These conditions may be negatively or positively perceived by individuals in the neighbourhood based on their level of satisfaction and expectations. Majority of the respondents reported they do not feel safe in their neighbourhood because it is not safe from corruption and violent crime. The political instability in Ekiti State during the period of this study could be responsible for this assertion. There were numerous cases of attempted murder and murder of many people during the May 2009 re-run election in the state.

Okello (2007) earlier reported that access to and utilization of information enhanced the quality of life of the rural women in Uganda because of the prompt access to information about water supply, refuse disposal and poverty eradication action plan in their neighbourhood. In Ekiti state, the presence of Global Systems of Mobile Communication (GSM) of major

networks like ZAIN, MTN, GlobaCom, and Visafone are easily felt in the local areas which made communication easy. The use of this device to access prompt information from urban and their neighbourhood has greatly enhanced the quality of life of the rural women in Ekiti state as thousands earn a living from the use of mobile telephone daily.

E d u c a t i o n

Table 8: Level of quality of life of the respondents in the education domain

Items	Not true of me	Occ. True of me	True of me	Very true of me	Mean	Std. Dev.
I have the best education	3147 (62.9%)	675 (13.5%)	679 (13.6%)	499 (10.0%)	1.71	1.04
I feel so little because I did not go to school colleges or adult literacy centres	3226 (64.5%)	1318 (26.4%)	242 (4.8%)	214 (4.3%)	1.49	.78
I intend to enroll at any available adult education vocational centres to attain the minimum level of education	2736 (54.7%)	1231 (24.6%)	664 (13.3%)	369 (7.4%)	1.73	.95
I have attained personal growth, knowledge and skills in what I am doing	736 (14.7%)	915 (18.3%)	2612 (52.2%)	737 (14.7%)	2.67	.90
Overall	Mean			Standard Deviation		
	7.60			2.28		

Neighbourhood/Community

Table 9: Level of quality of life of the respondents in the neighbourhood domain

S/N	Items	Not true of me	Occ. True of me	True of me	Very true of me	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	The community in which I live do not have access to satisfactory road network	2700 (54.0%)	514 (10.3%)	970 (19.4%)	816 (16.3%)	1.98	1.18
2	My community has network of telephone service(s)	1166 (23.3%)	538 (10.8%)	1170 (23.4%)	2126 (42.5%)	2.85	1.20
3	There is no threat to my hygiene because my community enjoy good treated water	1067 (21.3%)	776 (15.5%)	1218 (24.4%)	1939 (38.8%)	2.81	1.17
4	I play an active role in the development of my community	1019 (20.4%)	1743 (34.9%)	970 (19.4%)	1268 (25.4%)	2.50	1.08
5	I do not feel safe in this community because it is not free from corruption	3191 (63.8%)	1180 (23.6%)	254 (5.1%)	374 (7.5%)	1.56	.89
	Overall	Mean			Standard Deviation		
		11.70			2.91		

*Family life***Table 10: Level of quality of life of the respondents in the family life domain**

S/N	Items	Not true of me	Occ. True of me	True of me	Very true of me	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	I enjoy a happy family life, closeness and safety of loved ones	361 (7.2%)	1257 (25.1%)	1433 (28.7%)	1949 (39.0%)	2.99	.96
2	I have peace of mind because of the good relationship I have with my family	364 (7.3%)	1077 (21.5%)	1822 (36.4%)	1737 (34.7%)	2.99	.92
3	I am not in a position to assist members of my extended family financially	1360 (27.2%)	2244 (44.9%)	757 (15.1%)	639 (12.8%)	2.13	.96
4	I have time for relaxation each day after work with members of my family because of the existing affection among us	771 (15.4%)	1881 (37.6%)	1161 (23.2%)	1187 (23.7%)	2.55	1.02
Overall		Mean			Standard Deviation		
		10.67			2.56		

The result in family life domain shows that rural women in Ekiti State enjoy family relationships. 1,949 (39.0%) reported that they enjoy happy family life, closeness and safety of loved ones. 1,737 (34.7%) claimed they have peace of mind because of the good relationship they have with member of their extended family. But 1,360 (27.2%) of the respondents are not in a position to assist members of their extended family financially even in spite of the family ties.

The family constitutes a basic unit of the society. In Nigerian society, family relationship is held in high esteem. In reality, whatever affects these relationships are of utmost importance. Diso (2006) supported this view and emphasized that access to information about how problems in marriages, childcare and juvenile delinquency could be handled would improve the quality of life of rural dwellers. Only few of the respondents reported they have time for relaxation with members of their family after work each day. Nowadays, there is a fight for time available to the individual; the time is to be shared between the work and the family among other things, thus reducing the time and opportunity to share affection with loved ones. The situation is the same among rural women whom Nwagha (1992) and Ocholla (2002) noted are too busy working on the farm all day, weeding grass, planting and tending the crops and only return home at sunset to cook the evening meal for her family and to carry out other domestic duties. Majority of the respondents are not in a position to assist members of their extended

family in spite of the family ties because of their financial position.

The result in government domain in table 11 shows that the rural women have not really felt the impact of the government as it affects their quality of life. 1,386 (27.7%) of the respondents claimed that they do not enjoy living in their community because the state government does not provide needed infrastructure. According to 2,010 (40.2%) of the respondents, the state government does not have projects and programmes tailored towards improving quality of life of the rural women. 1,998 (40.0%) of the rural women reported that the state government does not listen to the complaints of her citizens which does not make them happy. As a result of bad policies and programmes in Ekiti State, the women in the rural areas were worst off as claimed by 1,724 (34.5%) of the respondents.

The government exercises power on behalf of her citizens and exists to promote their welfare. However, the result in the government domain shows that the respondents have not really felt the impact of the government as it affects their quality of life. This is in agreement with Omotoso and Owolabi (2007) who asserted that the quality of life of the people in Ekiti state is evidently low because the people are unable to have three meals, unable to afford a decent home, unable to have portable water at home for safe drinking, unable to afford children fees and unable to afford medical expenses of the family because government did not provide the adequate infrastructure required. This was in confirmation with

the number of respondents who reported not enjoying their community because the government does not provide needed infrastructure. Access to and ultimate utilization of information can be a powerful tool

when implemented as part of larger development plans to improve the quality of life of the rural populace (Harande, 2009).

G o v e r n m e n t

Table 11: Level of quality of life of the respondents in the government domain

S/N	Items	Not true of me	Occ. True of me	True of me	Very true of me	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	My state government provides basic needs such as good water, transportation, roads and electricity	1026 (15.4%)	1881 (37.6%)	1161 (23.2%)	1187 (23.7%)	2.78	1.16
2	I enjoy living in this community because the state government provided needed infrastructure	1345 (26.9%)	1069 (21.4%)	1200 (24.0%)	1386 (27.7%)	2.53	1.16
3	As a result of bad policies and programmes, the women in the rural areas do not enjoy the state (%)government	1724 (34.5%)	1207 (24.1%)	930 (18.6%)	1139 (22.8%)	2.30	1.16
4	The state government have projects and programmes towards improving the quality of life of the rural women	1286 (25.7%)	2010 (40.2%)	713 (14.3%)	991 (19.8%)	2.28	1.06
5	My state government does not listen to the complaints of her citizens be they rich or poor and this does not make me happy	1641 (32.8%)	1998 (40.0%)	678 (13.6%)	683 (13.7%)	2.08	1.00
Overall		Mean			Standard Deviation		
		11.96			3.15		

S o c i a l S t a t u s

Table 12: Level of quality of life of the respondents in the social status domain

S/N	Items	Not true of me	Occ. True of me	True of me	Very true of me	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	I have a personal telephone for easy communication	806 (16.1%)	395 (7.9%)	956 (19.1%)	2843 (56.9%)	3.17	1.12
2	I have children who are doing well in their chosen careers and this gives me joy	581 (11.6%)	1897 (37.9%)	1231 (24.6%)	1291 (25.8%)	2.65	.99
3	I am not always in good mood	2992 (59.8%)	1045 (20.9%)	563 (11.3%)	400 (8.0%)	1.67	.96
4	I live a good life	742 (14.8%)	1708 (34.2%)	1093 (21.9%)	1457 (29.1%)	2.65	1.05
5	I have fulfilled my life desires	1204 (24.1%)	2158 (43.2%)	969 (19.4%)	669 (13.4%)	2.22	.96
6	I am well respected in my community	1031 (20.6%)	2326 (46.5%)	822 (16.4%)	821 (16.4%)	2.29	.97
Overall		Mean			Standard Deviation		
		24.06			4.57		

From the result on socio-status domain, 2,843 (58.9%) of the respondents reported that their quality of life has improved in the socio-status domain because mobile telephone has made communication easy. 1,291 (25.8%) reported that they have children who are doing well in their chosen careers and this gives them joy. 2,326 (46.5%) of the respondents feel fulfilled in their social domain because they are well represented in their community. The result shows that the rural women with good socio-status are contented with the quality of their lives. The extreme between poverty and affluence is represented with the socio-economic status classification. The socio-economic status of an individual could affects the sense of fulfillment such individual derived. The result in the social status domain shows that majority of the respondents felt their social status has improved since the availability of mobile telephones in the state.

It is clearly seen from the result on spiritual life domain, that the rural women in Ekiti State have fulfillment in their spiritual life. 4,115 (82.3%) of the respondents, reported they have spiritual values and religious faith. 2,283 (45.7%) claimed they have full

freedom to practice their religion in the state. 2,334 (46.7%) reported they have something they believe in because there is freedom to their religion. The result shows that the rural women in Ekiti State enjoy inner harmony and peace of mind in the spiritual life domain.

The entire human race is descriptively religious, especially Africans. Spiritual life gives meaning to why people aspire to be good and do well within their own powers. The consideration of whether one's spiritual life is fulfilling depends on a number of factors, which include how free is one in choosing and believing in what he/she thinks is worthy of worship, and how relaxed and the peace of mind the person has internally.

From the analysis in the spiritual life domain, the respondents have fulfillment in their spiritual life. The respondents reported they have spiritual values and religious faith with freedom to practice their religion. In this domain, the respondents will enjoy inner harmony and peace of mind if they could access the required information needed for their spiritual development.

Spiritual Life

Table 13: Level of quality of life of the respondents in the spiritual life domain

S/N	Items	Not true of me	Occ. True of me	True of me	Very true of me	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	I do not have spiritual values/religious faith	4115 (82.3%)	184 (3.7%)	205 (4.1%)	496 (9.9%)	1.42	.96
2	I have full freedom to practice my religion	252 (5.0%)	1147 (22.9%)	1318 (26.4%)	2283 (45.7%)	3.13	.93
3	I have inner harmony and peace of mind	303 (6.1%)	1071 (21.4%)	1768 (35.4%)	1858 (37.2%)	3.04	.91
4	I do not do something that I believe in because there is no freedom to one's religion	2334 (46.7%)	1597 (31.9%)	661 (13.2%)	408 (8.2%)	1.83	.95
	Overall	Mean			Standard Deviation		
		9.41			2.12		

Testing of the hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between Information Accessibility and Quality of Life of the rural women in Ekiti State.

Table 14: Summary of test of significant relationship between information accessibility and quality of life of rural women in Ekiti State, Nigeria

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Df	R	P	Remark
Information Accessibility	67.96	17.63	5000	4999	0.645	.000*	Significant.
Quality of Life	120.82	21.41					

Significant at $p < .05$

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between Information Utilization and Quality of Life of the rural women in Ekiti State.

Table 15: Summary of test of significant relationship between information utilization and quality of life of rural women in Ekiti State, Nigeria

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Df	R	P	Remark
Information Utilization	94.01	27.05	5000	4999	0.645	.000*	Significant.
Quality of Life	120.82	21.41					

Significant at $p < .05$

Table 14 shows that the relationship between information accessibility and quality of life of the rural women in Ekiti state is strong, positive and significant ($r = 0.645$, $df = 4,999$; $p < .05$). This indicates that the rural women’s access to information significantly correlates with their quality of life. The relationship tested significant hence, the null hypothesis 1 is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between information accessibility and quality of life of rural women in Ekiti state.

From table 15, there is a strong, positive relationship between information utilization and quality of life of the rural women in Ekiti state ($r = 0.645$; $df = 4,999$; $p < .05$). This means that information utilization by the rural women is associated with their quality of life.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The inference that can be drawn from the outcome of this study is that information accessibility and utilization play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of life of rural women. There is no doubt that innovative solutions to the problem of improved quality of life of rural women reside in different information sources which only need to be made accessible for rural women to utilize.

The provision and organization of information services for rural women in Ekiti State should therefore be seen as a cyclical process which entails defining the need, establishing the objectives in light of the need, putting in place services to meet the objectives, running them, following up and

evaluating, revisiting the objectives and so on. Using well trained information facilitators at all these stages will ensure that information accessed and well utilized correspond in the best possible way to the information needs of the rural women they serve. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were suggested.

1. Special information centres to provide quick information to support the rural women with their socio-economic situations and quality of life should be set up in each local government areas. This is to enable the women to be better informed.
2. These information centers should provide adequate information materials such as audio visual material, handbills, posters, exhibitions and so on to meet the wide range of information that could improve the quality of life of rural women in Ekiti State
3. The State and local government should encourage the rural women to make intensive use of information sources available to them to improve their quality of life.
4. The State public library should provide ease of access to information materials relevant to the needs of rural women so as to enhance their quality of life.
5. Finally, the example of multi-purpose telecentres already established by UNESCO in some African countries such as Uganda and Mali should be adopted by Nigerian Government for the rural areas.

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