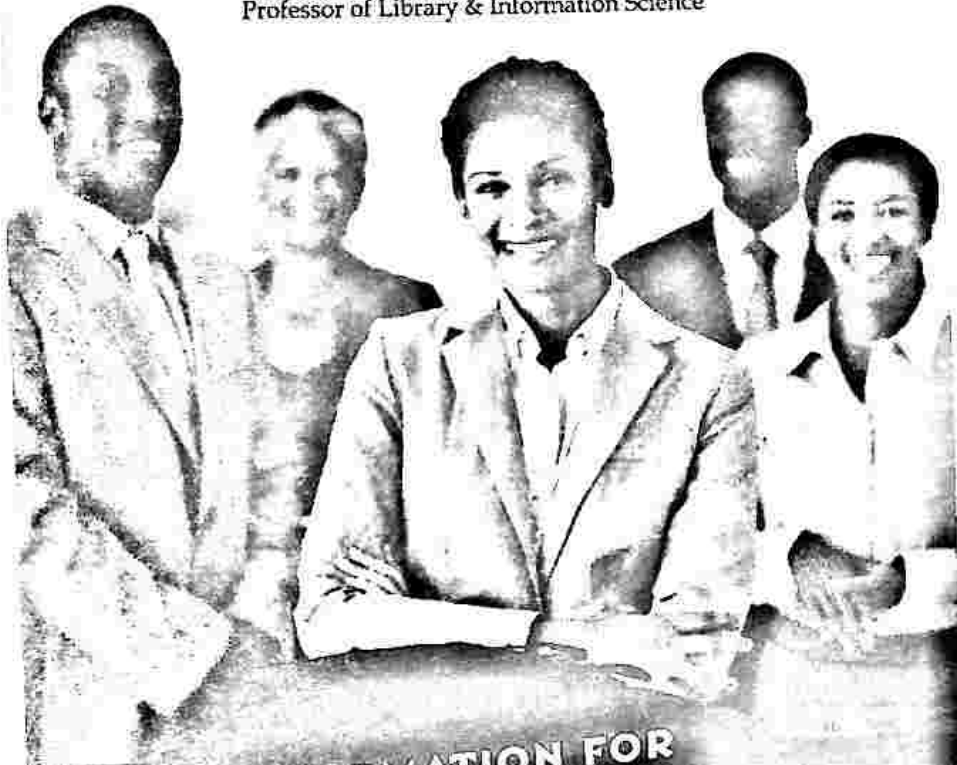


Edited by
VINCENT ENYERIBE UNEGBU
Professor of Library & Information Science



INFORMATION FOR
DIVERSE
USER GROUPS

INFORMATION FOR DIVERSE USER GROUPS

© Vincent Enyeribe Unegbu, 2019

First Published February 2019

All rights reserved

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrievable system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronics, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission of the copyright ownership

ISBN: 978-978-972-274-7

Disclaimer

Web addresses and links contained in this book might have changed since they were used in this publication due to the dynamic nature of the Internet. Some of them may no longer be valid.

The views expressed and citations made in this book are the sole responsibility of the contributors/authors. Some citations might have been misapplied and misinterpreted or even not acknowledged, pardon and forgive the oversight.

Published and Printed in Nigeria by
JAMIRO PRESS LINK

2, Alhaji Street, Mushin, Lagos.

Email: jamiropress12@yahoo.com

+2348033440634



INFORMATION PROVISION TO DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS

Basahuwa, Comfort Baliyat

Abstract

Information provision is a process by which information is provided to users' community without the individualization of content or purpose, specialization of the information or the delivery process. Urban and rural dwellers need information for individual and national development. Information provision to users' community comprises of different types according to their age group, ranging from age zero to retirees. Information is a raw material for any country's prosperity, progress and development, and this depends on the country's ability to acquire, produce and provide relevant information for its user community. Information is the lifeblood of any society; vital to the activities both to the government and private sector. No serious, active, conscious, sensitive, and organized government would want to neglect the area of information provision to its user communities. This paper shall attempt to address concept of information, its provision and information provision for different age groups and the activities involved.

INTRODUCTION

Information plays a vital role in promoting the benefits of learning. It helps individuals to address and overcome the barriers to learning, and support users in making realistic and well informed choices. Information is a raw material for development for both urban and rural dwellers. Prosperity, progress and development of any nation depend on the nation's ability to acquire, produce, access, and use pertinent information. The provision and access to information are key resources for local people in maintaining active and independent lives.

Access to information is critical to letting people know their entitlement to welfare benefits and sources of support to overcome social exclusion. Information provision is that which is required for existence of any society and vital to the activities of the citizens, governments and private sectors. Bell (1974:4) opined that "how people are dependent upon information to create innovation and change, places a high premium on the ability of (developing countries) nations to provide and use information to create

advances in society". The development of countries globally cannot be achieved without the development of the rural communities. This is because 75 to 80% of the people in developing countries live in the rural areas and need positive, relevant and prompt attention in their daily activities which should be done through information provision. No organized, sensitive, active, serious and conscious government would want to neglect rural communities. Lack of information provision has a positive correlation with the neglect of rural areas which brings about negative consequences such as crimes, prostitution, child labor, insecurity, poverty, shanty, living areas and spreading of diseases.

WHAT IS INFORMATION

The term "information" is used differently by individuals in different walks of life, from specialists working in information based professions, such as communication media and information management, to those in the computing and cognitive sciences, as well as by people involved in less scholarly pursuits. Many have developed interesting and useful definitions of information for specific disciplines and classes of problems.

Some definitions or measures may be consistent with ideas held by several disciplines. These interdisciplinary definitions are superior in some senses to discipline specific definitions which are useful in only one domain. The more general definitions encompass all the phenomena of interest to the field that is covered by the field specific definition and is consistent with the field-specific definition. There is one common phenomenon to what most definitions of "information" refer and the subset of information as studied in that particular discipline. One most common way to define information is to describe it as one or more statements or facts that are received by a human and that have some form of worth to the recipient. *Cookie Monster* describes information as "news or facts about something". *The Random House College Dictionary* defines information as "Knowledge communicated or received concerning a particular fact or circumstance, news".

INFORMATION PROVISION

The term "provision" can be used in both broad and narrow sense. Broadly, it is used to encompass issues such as sources, sites and mediums of (information provision). In a narrower sense, and in accordance with the focus of this paper, it is how information is "put across" (Camble, 1994) or "transmitted" and "disseminated" (Correa, 1995), "transferred" (Mchombu, 1995), "diffused" (Diakite, 1995) or "communicated" (Durrani, 1987). Thus, the focus of the study is on what Camble, Correa and Durrani refer to as "put across", "disseminate" and communicate information to the information users.

Despite the lack of supporting empirical evidence for a link between the provision of information and development, the development process is increasingly recognized, not only by those involved in development work (Wishart, 1995) but by the potential recipients of such information. People want to be informed because they have information need, they know that the problems they face are face by people everywhere. People "have found solutions to these problems, but we are not aware of the solutions

found what shall we do to find solution, we desire that the institutions which work with us will help us to find approaches and structures that can satisfy our information needs" (Correa, 1994:92). Mchombu (1992) supports a positive relationship between access to information and development when he states that "information is now accepted as an important factor in the sustainable development of any society because it reduces uncertainty and enhances awareness of possible actions to solve problems" p.124. Wakelin and Simelane (1995:41) point to the importance of information provision in "capacity building" and in "empowering communities" and argue that a lack of information acts as a barrier to development. Information provision has been termed a formidable factor in determining whether developmental efforts in Africa are successful or not (Adinorah, 1995).

Information is seen as a critical resource for people and communities in both rural and urban areas (Mazi & Ghelfi, 1995). However, the lack of information provision in rural contexts remains a problem. Referring to Africa, Mayo (1995) points to the alarming information gap that exists between rural and urban areas and how little is being done to bridge this gap. In South African context, Wakelin and Simelane (1995:41) opined that "whilst information is becoming increasingly available to urban-based organizations through the media, modern link-ups, workshops and literature, the historical marginalization of rural-based people continues". For the purpose of this paper, it will discuss information provision to different age groups according to their age brackets.

Age 0 - 17 Months

In children's rights provision, the development capacity of a child is always taken into account. Each child develops at a different pace and with individual preferences. Children may surprise you with unexpected interests and abilities to pursue information. Information provision or activities for this group would be made available to the carers.

Babies at this age need to bond with caregivers who will play with them from birth; respond to their smiles and babbling sounds, cuddles and massages them, talk and sing with them, and generally have a warm, carrying and relaxed attitude. Babies respond to touches, sounds, bright colours and movements and very soon enjoy looking at smiling faces on real people or even in pictures. They explore with their mouths first, then with their hands and feet and play with anything within their range. They soon imitate smiles and other facial expressions and play endlessly with sounds as they start learning to talk. Singing and music are activities that babies respond to. Siblings and other family members are very important to babies for extra love and care, and for stimulating new experiences. A baby is a quick learner and stimulation is important later development.

Information need and activities for children of this age include:

- a person who responds and interacts with them in talk and sound imitation;
- music, singing, being moved and danced with;
- objects that can be held: rattles, chunky objects, objects that can be safely picked up and safely put into the baby's mouth;

- provision of soft toys, teddies, dolls;
- pictures with large images such as faces, other children, animals, everyday objects;
- mobiles: shiny with bright colours placed above the bed or in the pram; some that can be touched, pushed and spun or make a sound;
- safe crawling space and things to hold onto as the baby learns to stand and walk;
- sturdy pushing toys;
- games: "peek a boo" rhymes and songs with movements, piking funny faces.

Parents and caregivers of this age group should be aware of these needs and provide them for them. They help in the development of this age group. Children of this age group do better when all these toys and activities are provided for them.

Toddlers: 18 Months to 3 Years

Toddlers are great explorers of their physical environment and all the objects that are within reach. Safety information and areas should be provided, because safety is a prime need and they need safe places to play and they also need constant supervision. They love water, sand and mud. They begin to use their imaginations so that a small block becomes a "biscuit" a match box becomes a "car" and so on.

Toddlers' information provision activities include:

- Sand pits and sand pit tools;
- Water play
- Plastic scooters and wheeled toys;
- "Make and break" play things like blocks and stacking toys;
- Swings, such as a tyre swing that can hold them safely;
- Climbing: easy jungle gyms, rocks, card board boxes to climb into;
- Coordination: post boxes, easy puzzles and inset puzzles.
- Art: chunky crayons, singer printing, play dough, goop, sticking.
- Stories and interactive books, books with thicker pages;
- Tents, dens, "houses" under tables.
- Soft toys, toddlers, dolls and prams, trucks, small cars, balls.

This group needs all the mentioned items to develop their physical and mental prowess.

Pre-Schooler: 3-6 Years

At this age children often gain a best friend, and the social skills needed to maintain cooperative social games of "houses" or "pirates" with several children taking part. This "fantasy play" also allows them to explore roles, channel emotions and "make sense" of their world. A pre-schooler's activities show their growing skills of speech, physical agility and small muscle coordination; their information provision activities include:

- More challenging climbing, balancing, swinging, park play, merry-go-rounds, slides. Safe parks are essential and there is the need for a pleasant place to the adults to stay and supervise them.

- Natural environment to explore: observing plants, insects, animals, farming, pets.
- Pretend play: dressing up, shopping, hospital kits, cooking kits, dolls, doll beds and prams, making a house or den.
- Riding small bikes and sturdy scooters.
- Games: ball, hopping, chasing, learning to catch, simple card games;
- Water play, including learning to swim.

Middle Childhood: 6-12 Years

At this age, social play-groups are bigger and may show quite cruel exclusion/inclusion negotiations. Children start playing away from home; this can be quite risky as they wander in the neighborhood. Gender stereotypes come to the fore and need to be countered. Information provision activities for middle childhood include:

- Safe outdoor play areas for sports, games, challenging physical play;
- Traditional childhood games; skipping elastic jumping, hopscotch, marbles, tops, indigenous games;
- Children clubs, organized group play and activity: games, hikes, visits to special places, campfires;
- Sports: rules and skills of sports games;
- Bike riding: skate boards;
- Mid games: cards, board games, chess computer games, puzzles.
- Creative: art projects, dance, drama, choir, dressing up, learning a musical instrument;
- Craft skills: knitting, sewing, using tools, toy-making;
- Tents, huts, houses, dens, tree houses;
- Private spaces for imagination games and fantasy play;
- Adults are needed to lead the children and manage the activities and spaces.

Teenagers 12 - 17 Years

In this age, children indulge on events like alcohol, drugs, and negative social adjustments which could pose a risk in their future. Information should be provided on the following areas:

- Health information: physical development/reproductive systems, nutrition, hard drugs, sex before marriage and the consequences;
- Sports and fitness;
- Education: career guidance, education to tertiary institutions;
- Civic education/local history

ADULT

In this paper "adult" refers to a person from 18 years and above, and are categorized into four groups viz: youth, middle age, rural dwellers and retirees.

1. Youth

A youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of children to adulthood's independence. That is why, as a category, youth is more fluid than other fixed age-groups. Yet, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment, because 'youth' is often referred to as a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding first job. "The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines 'youth' as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years as without prejudice to other definitions by members states". Africa Sub-sahara term 'youth' to be associated with young men from 15 to 30 or 35 years of age. The Nigerian National Youth policy (2009) defines youth as a person between 18-35 years. Youth is an experience that may shape an individual's level of dependency which can be marked in various ways according to different cultural perspectives. Personal experience is marked by an individual's cultural norms or tradition, while a youth's level of dependency means the extent to which he still rely on his family emotionally and economically. The youth need information in different situations and conditions. Information need of the youth is basically information on civil education; e.g.

- The legal working age required by a person to work in each country or jurisdiction;
- Students rights in higher education such as civil, constitutional, contractual and consumers rights with regular students rights and freedom and allow a student to make use of their educational investment. These include such things as the right to speech and association, to due process, equality, autonomy, safety and privacy and accountability in contracts and advertising.
- Socioeconomic issues like unemployment.
- School and education: on years to be spent on a particular level of life e.g educational setting, when to marry, etc.
- Health: drugs e.g tobacco, alcohol etc, sexual behaviours that contribute to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STD), including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. Unhealthy dietary behaviour, physical inactivity, plus overweight.

2. Middle Age/ Middle Adult

This is the period of age beyond young adulthood but before the onset of old age. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* middle age is between 45 and 65. The US census lists the category of middle age from 45 to 65 years. This time the body may slow down and the middle age might become more sensitive to diet, substance abuse, stress, and rest. Chronic health problems can become an issue along with disability or disease. Information provision to the middle age should include:

- Visible signs of aging e.g changes might occur in the nervous system, women between 48-55 years experience menopause, changes occur in skin etc.
- Social and personality characteristics: marital satisfaction, other family relationship can be more difficult. The issue of mortality may be made irrefutable.

3. Rural Communities

Any nation that neglects the development and empowerment of the rural communities should not expect meaningful development. Algebeleye and Aina (1985:13) stated that "The third World countries have recently come to realize that unless the rural areas are well informed and developed, hardly would any meaningful development occur in these countries". Development can only be effective if rural dwellers are provided with relevant information for their different activities. Poverty and illiteracy are the major barriers to rural development. The government should be blamed completely, because it is the right of every citizen to enjoy the wealth, resources and services rendered by the government of the country without any discrimination or neglect. Progressive changes depend on the type of information provided. Ibrahim (1986:3) opines that "after political independence, information has been used by some progressive African States to re-socialize their people to value attitudes and goals compatible with African's contemporary needs". The diverse nature of rural communities indicates that information provision to them will be many and multidimensional viz.

- The neighborhood: include problems of water supply, electricity supply, environmental sanitation, refuse disposal, road maintenance and drought.
- Health information on how individuals can prevent different diseases that affect them, and awareness of available healthcare delivery and what it costs.
- Agriculture and allied occupations: the greatest area of information provision to rural communities is in agriculture. Such information includes planting treated seeds, soil conservation, prevention of plant and animal diseases, fertilizer application, farm machineries, recommended training practices, proper storage of farm products, marketing technique, cooperative activities and other agro-cultural activities.
- Education: providing information on the existing rural schools, needs of the illiterate and semi-illiterates. They need to have relevant information that will develop their interests and support their teaching and learning processes.
- Housing: rural public need information about where they can obtain loans to build houses and the type of materials to be used in their domain and where they can easily be obtained.
- Employment: rural communities need information on employment opportunities, on taxation, investment opportunities, banking and other financial activities.
- Transportation: they need information on the cost of bicycles, motorcycles and other vehicles, and where to obtain them. They need information about the roads construction and maintenance.
- Religion, recreation and culture: information is required on religions, recreation and cultural activities.
- Welfare and family matters: information is required on problems of marriage, childcare, juvenile delinquency, etc.

- Legal matters: information is needed on laws that affect the rural dwellers. Such law ranges from marriage to land.
- Crime and safety: information is required on how to prevent crimes, report crimes, role of law enforcement agents, etc.
- Policies and government: information is needed on political rights of the people and how they can exercise such rights.
- Land: information is needed on land tenure systems, acquisition and transfer of land etc.

RETIREES

Several definitions have been provided for the term retirement. Omoyemi (1996) describes it as a "period of time when one gives up one's work, position or business either private or public sector of the economy". Oniye (2001) opines that retirement means an official and formal ending of a work life. Retirement is a third concept because it connotes different things and offers differences for different people. While some individuals feel it's something that would be worried about at a much later time, others view it positively and anticipate it with all wishfulness, and some others dread it with great anxiety. Therefore, it could be said that it is not a homogeneous experience for everyone, but whatever be the case some day in the life of every worker, he/she would be facing the reality of retiring days and the only underlining factor that determines retirement days is the conduct of one's present lifestyle.

Retirement is a time of significant transition as far as the use of time is concerned. Thus, its importance is made more glaring by the fact that the retired person is made to face some challenges because of his/her new status (as a retired person). Therefore, one's present lifestyle has a long way in affecting his/her retirement days. It has been noted that retirement is a stressful experience to many because of its associated decision change in the matter of life arrangement generally. There are different things to consider when planning for retirement and after retirement. There are also different times for retirees to have the interest of starting their retirement plans. Some start three years, one year, six months, and other as late as two months or even one month prior to retirement.

As such there is need for information provision to retirees before retirement. Information about housing, health care, cash benefits and social services, environment, leisure, investment, education, volunteer service, news and current affairs and religion should be provided. Information should be channeled on daily basis on different media such as television, radio and social media.

INFORMATION PROVISION AFTER RETIREMENT

This is information about retirement pension plan benefits, income taxes, direct deposits and health insurance subsidy program benefits, withholding certificate for pensions payment forms. Information on this should be provided to the retiree for exemption on taxes on income. Direct deposit authorization should be provided - information per payments directly to the retiree's bank or financial institution. Information of health

insurance coverage is also an important aspect to retirees who wish to receive health insurance subsidy.

Elderly/ Aged

The terms elderly and aged are taken here to mean people aged over 65 years of age. According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2015) most developed countries of the world have accepted the chronological age of 65 years as definition of elderly person. Everyone needs information to survive and strive in the 21st century, just as doctors need information to treat patients, lawyers need information to handle cases, teachers need information to prepare lesson notes, teach their students and prepare them for a career ahead of them, the elderly also requires much information to stay healthy, make choices, and remain current with news and happenings around them. The elderly are usually inquisitive and this prompts their need for information provision.

Bruce (2005) states that information plays a significant role in our daily professional and personal lives, and that we are constantly challenged to take charge of the information that we need for work, fun and everyday decisions, and tasks. The elderly, like younger counterparts, requires information to meet their day to day needs. Information provision to the elderly can be from public or private sector. It is important that the information to the elderly would be provided to the carers of this age. They need information on the following:

Information on Pension and Welfare

Information on pension and welfare is vital to the elderly, lack of information in such area has caused poverty among older pensioners as such most are living in poverty. Information should be given on how to find their way around the benefits system and access their entitlements. There is a continuing need for such information in order to reduce poverty and low income.

Information on Health Care

Information provision on health care will enable the elderly make meaningful choices about health care providers, and how to access quality health care services.

Information on Energy and Keeping Warm

Energy bills are a major area of expenditure to some elderly people especially in the developed countries where the weathers are at the extremes, and a source of concern for elderly people, particularly with continuing price rises. Information about switch supplier, keeping warm and how to make home energy efficient are needed for them. In the developing countries, kerosene for lighting the stove and firewood for heating the rooms and warming the elderly is necessary.

Information on Social/Amenities

Provision of information on housing needs, social needs, neighborhood services and transport links that will make them live independently is important. Information on their rights and entitlements from the concerned authorities as well as their local options based

in their need and ability to purchase support, such as community networks and schemes as well as forward services like knowledge of local community.

CONCLUSION

Information hunger is prevalent and biting hard on the citizenry, which leads to lack of development in most countries. Success and progress in developed and developing countries lies on the amount of relevant information provided to its citizenry. However, effective information provision using the appropriate channels is an essential ingredient for the development of any country. Therefore, government should ensure infrastructures and make resources available for the proper provision of information to both public and private sector for onward channel to different age groups especially the aged.

Enhancement of information provision services to all strata in the society is a vital issue and will form a solid base for development of an entire nation. A policy on information provision on public and private sectors should be formed and be effected by the government. Categories of public information provision services should be introduced including all information from the government in the form of enlightenment programs or propaganda dissemination by the government. Also information provision services by agencies like libraries, documentation and information centers, archives and agricultural and health extension services for the private information services is needed

References

- Adinorah, E. (1994). An overview of the state of information provision to rural communities in Anglophone West Africa. *Proceedings of the seminar on information provision to rural communities in Africa, 22-25 June* (pp.21-31). Gaborone, Botswana: Uppsala University Library.
- Alegbeleye, G.O. & Aina, L.O. (1985). Library services and rural community in Nigeria. *An introduction Ibadan*, 13.
- American-English, A. (2012). Middle age: Definition of middle age in Oxford Dictionary.
- Bell, D. (1979). Communication technology: for better, for worse. *Havard Business Review*, 57(95), 4.
- Bruce, H. (2005). Personal, anticipated information need. *Information Research*, 10(3).
- Camble, E. (1994). The information environment workers in Bano State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Library, Archives and information science*, 4(2), 105.
- Correa, A. (1994). Training of information providers for the rural context: . *Proceedings of the seminar on information provision for rural communities in Africa, 22-25 June* (pp.92-97). Craborone, Botswana : Uppsala University Library.
- Diakite, F. (1994). The dissemination of information in a rural environment: the public library services and the rural audio libraries of Mali. *Proceedings of the seminar on information provision to rural communities in Africa, 22-25 June* (pp.71-79). Uppsala University Library.
- Durani, S. (1987). Agricultural information services in Kenya and Third World needs. *Journal of Librarianship*, 19(2), 108 - 121.
- FGN. (2009). *Nigerian National Policy*. Lagos: FGN.
- Furlong, A. (2013). *Youth studies: An introduction*. USA: Routledge.

- Ibrahimah, M. (1986). Public libraries and rural development. *Nigerian Library Association Seminar*, 1-10.
- Kochen, M. (1976). *Information for the community*. edited by Manfred Kochen and Joseph C. Donohue. NY: HBR.
- Lancashire-council. (2007, April 20). *Rural proofing project-libraries and information services*. Retrieved May 18, 2017, from http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/rural/pathfinder/evidencebase/92s_rural%20proofing9020libraries%20www.lancashire.gov.uk
- Manzie, S.M. & Ghelfi, L.M. (1995). Challenges for rural environment in a global economy. *Library trends*, 44(1), 7-20.
- Mchombu, K. (1992). Information needs for rural development: the case study of Malawi. *African Journal of Libraries, archives and information science*, 2(1), 7-32.
- Merriam-W. (2017). Youth. *Education*, 19.
- Ochogwu, M. C. (2009). Educating library and information science professionals to bring library services to all. *Paper presented at NALISE Conference held at the University Nigeria Nsukka* (pp.5-7). Enugu: University of Nigeria.
- Omoyeni, M. (1996). Retirement: A study of adulthood psychological stress in Ondo State, Nigeria. *Ife Journal of Psychology*, 2(1), 86-96.
- Oniye, O. (2001). Problems associated with retirement and implications. *ONS resources*. The pointer, Thursday, May 25, 2017 by Ifeyinwa Houlor, Accessed online 25th May 2017.
- Wakelin, F. & Simelane, S. (1995). The regional consultative forum on rural development and information provision to rural communities. *Innovation*, 11, 40-43.
- WHO, (2015). Definition of an older or elderly person. Proposal working definition of an order person in Africa for the MDS project. World Health Organization. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/healthinfo/survey/ageingdefinitionorder/en> on 25 May 2017.
- www.lgl-global.com (2017, May 19). www.lgl-global.com/journal/information-resources-management-journal-lfmj/1073. Retrieved May 19, 2017, from www.lgl-global.com: www.lgl-global.com