

# **Involvement of district traditional heads (DTH) in information provision for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone, Nigeria**

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## **Abstract**

*This study assessed the involvement in information provision for community development of district traditional heads in Kano South Senatorial Zone, Nigeria. The study was structured along five (5) specific objectives to which answers were provided. The design for the study is a descriptive survey research. A questionnaire was the instrument used in collecting data for the study. Twelve (12) respondents filled and returned the questionnaires out of a total of sixteen (16) District Traditional Heads available in Kano South Senatorial Zone, Kano State in the northern region of Nigeria. The instrument for this study contained 47 items and each item sought to determine the level of perception using 4 Likert scale options. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentages. The mean response of each item and the frequency of options for each section were collated and compared. Twelve (12) questionnaires that were filled in and returned were used in the data analysis. The reliability test of the instrument confirmed that the instrument was fit for use in the study. The analysis shows that the nature/pattern of involvement of District*

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*Traditional Heads' (DTH) provision of information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone is at a very high level. Also, the level of involvement of District Traditional Heads (DTH) in providing information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone is quite high. The DTH equally provide different kinds of information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone, particularly socio-cultural, economic and agriculture-related information. It was recommended that each district in Kano South Senatorial Zone should be provided with an information centre for easier dissemination of information by DTH. The remuneration of DTH should be increased in order to facilitate an effective information flow. NGOs should work more closely with DTH and more funds should be made available to them for the provision of information to rural dwellers. DTH should have more say in decision-making processes, especially with regard to development/security issues in their communities. There should be regular meetings among government officials, DTH and rural dwellers in order to fill any communication/information gaps. Districts should have functional community radio stations where information is transmitted in local dialects. Town criers and messengers working in the office of the District Traditional Head should be remunerated better.*

**Keywords:** Districts Traditional Heads (DTH), information, information provision, community, community development.

## **Introduction**

Information has become a basic necessity of human development, as it helps to address other relevant needs such as food, shelter and clothing necessary for survival and growth. Without information, human survival and development face serious threats. At the rural community level especially, the availability of relevant information can make a significant difference. This is because information plays a key role in improving the livelihood of farming households and small-scale rural entrepreneurs. Farmers and produce buyers, for instance, require timely information on farming input and produce markets, government policies and regulations, as well

as community-related decisions taken by local government councils. Relevant information can also accelerate the decision-making process with regard to critical issues such as epidemics, flood, drought, and rural development (Uhegbu, 2010).

The provision of relevant information, without doubt, helps accelerate the pace of development of both the rural community and the nation. The actual act of providing information needed by people in a community is referred to as community information service (CIS). Typically, community information services are offered by governments as well as non-governmental and voluntary organizations in the course of their operations in different communities. According to Majumder (2016), community information is a combination of two terms, i.e. community and information. It is the type of information needed by members of a community in addressing their day-to-day challenges. Susan (2013) considers community information to be information that is required by members of the public (or those acting on their behalf) to make effective use of the resources potentially available to them in the communities in which they live. Such information may be needed to help solve problems involving housing, disability-related issues, household finance, marriage, unemployment and many more. The common information needs of rural people range from information on agriculture and other related issues such as education, employment opportunities, health, self-employment, financial assistance, and government programmes on rural development.

As a concept, rural development arose from problems associated with the neglect of rural areas, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria. The neglect is closely related to the notion that rural inhabitants are reactionary and antagonistic to modern ideas, they are unresponsive to modern economic innovations, and that they believe nothing can be done to prevent certain negative phenomena from occurring. This notion is not unconnected with the view that rural inhabitants are unwilling to transform the social and political conditions that they inherited. This idea has for many decades led to the relegation and neglect of rural areas by various governments, thus making rural areas remain under-developed (Nwobi, 2007). Rural development, or more specifically community development, as Ajayi (1995) puts it, is a social process

by which human beings can become more competent to live with and gain some control over local conditions and the changing world. According to Ajayi and Otuya (2006), sustainable community development cannot take place through force or order, but it is most likely to happen when all actors participate and share ideas, visions and responsibilities equally and democratically in steering and implementing their community or village development projects. To Orapin (1996) one approach in creating sustainable rural development is giving the main actors (villagers) an equal opportunity to think and plan their own future. Usually, community development programmes aim at creating an awareness of rural possibilities by providing information on available resources; deploying technical assistance for skills acquisition and development; increasing the literacy level; improving productivity and productive systems; adopting appropriate technology in agriculture as well as sensitizing potential volunteers and donors, among other things. Ideally, most community development programmes in developing nations focus on peoples' felt needs and basic amenities such as good roads, electricity, health clinics, markets, school buildings, and farm settlements. These goals can only be achieved through the combined and collective efforts of all who share the conviction that rural community development must be accorded a high priority, especially in the drive for poverty alleviation and national self-sufficiency (Orapin, 1996).

## **Historical background of Kano South Senatorial Zone, Kano State**

Kano State is the second most populated state in Nigeria, after Lagos. It is the centre of commerce in the northern region of Nigeria and the second most industrialized in the country. It is also the most politically active in the north, and arguably the most homogeneous in the Nigerian federation. It is a state where people have tremendous respect for tradition; traditional leaders are highly esteemed and the government recognizes this. As such, the general administrative machinery across the state is a combination of both the modern and the traditional. There are the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government, Local Government Councils, as well as the Traditional/Customary administrative structures. The state government is

headed by an elected governor with elected lawmakers. Local Government Councils have elected chairmen and councilors. But at the traditional level, there is the Ward/ Neighborhood Head (Mai Unguwa), the Village Head (Dagaci), the District Head (Hakimi), while the Emir is at the top of the hierarchy. District Heads are appointed by the Emir after consultation with the local governments, and with approval from the State Governor. There is the Emirate (traditional) Council with the Emir as president; other members of this Council are the traditional kingmakers, chairmen of Local Government Councils and nominated persons who are capable of making useful inputs in the decision-making process (Memorandum for creation of Tiga State, 2009).

There are three senatorial zones in the state and Kano South Senatorial Zone is one of them. These zones are political arrangements meant basically to elect the three senators that are required by the constitution to represent Kano State in the nation's Senate. According to the National Population Commission (2006), Kano South Senatorial zone has 3,028,177 people (1,544,488 males representing 51.0% and 1,483,689 females representing 48.9%). Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy of the area, employing between 60-80% of the populace. The preponderance of rivers, Fadama lands (marshlands), man-made lakes and the favorable climatic condition make farming a year-round affair (Memorandum for creation of Tiga State, 2009).

### **Historical overview of traditional leadership in community development**

According to Rugege (2009), traditional leadership has been the basis of local administration on the African continent throughout history. Freddie (2011) argued that African people knew no other form of government except the institution of traditional leadership. He also explains that the African traditional style of government is different from the Western forms. Freddie (2011) pinpoints some errors prevalent in the literature of European colonialists about the African style of administration. One is the assertion that traditional leaders have absolute power. However, their power was never absolute. Khunou (2011) notes that customary law is regarded by members of

the African traditional community as binding on both the leaders and the followers alike. It was within this context that the traditional authority was vested with powers to enforce compliance with the values and customs of a traditional community. The traditional leader passed laws, judged with the consent of his traditional council and took action through the members of the community. Traditional leaders who were dictatorial actually faced revolt or secession by their people (Khunou, 2011). If people were dissatisfied with the leader they could desert him for another, arrange for his death or overthrow him through a civil war (Rugege, 2009). Rugege further notes that the traditional institution was a form of democracy where, in some cases, the decision-making process was participatory through the general assembly of all adult men on important matters affecting the community. This is similar to Locke's (1632-1704) view in his work, *The Second Treatise of Government*. Locke argues that sovereignty resides in the people and he explains the nature of government in terms of natural rights and a social contract. According to Khunou (2011), in the pre-colonial era traditional leaders were a very important institution in traditional life and they played an essential role in the day-to-day administration of their areas and people. However, it has been observed over the years that the institution of African traditional leadership has the potential of developing and changing with the times, especially in terms of its usefulness. This is a relevant issue in the current study.

## **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this study is to investigate the extent of involvement of District Traditional Heads (DTH) in information provision for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone. Specific objectives of the study are to:

Ascertain the nature/pattern of involvement of District Traditional Heads (DTH) in information provision to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone.

Determine the kinds of information provided by DTH to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development.

Determine the communication channels used by DTH in disseminating information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development.

Highlight challenges confronting DTH in providing information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development.

Determine the solutions to the challenges affecting DTH in providing information to their subjects.

## **Theory and literature review**

The review highlights theoretical premise and provides a brief LR focusing on themes on the study's point of focus.

The current study has therefore adopted the two theories – modernization and structural functionalism (Ega, 2005). Modernization theory is a theory used to explain the process of modernization that a nation goes through as it transitions from a traditional society to a modern one, while structural functionalism is a framework for building theory that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability (Yol, 2010). It is believed that both theories serve the study well because both deal with social structure involving traditional rulers, people, their behaviour as well as attitudes towards community development and information provision. This is a prerequisite for any meaningful community development. Without the provision of information, no meaningful project can take place in rural communities.

The two theories, i.e. modernization and structural functionalism, are based on the assumption that deals with the sociological behavioural pattern of changing from the traditional mode to the modern era format, especially with regard to the administration of either a community or a nation (Brohman, 2005). This includes how a community behaves in a social order, changes in attitude of community members from the traditional form to modern forms, as well as the relationship that exists in the social institutions which make up the social system rather than as unrelated units. To this end the two theories are better used together, as they closely explain vital aspects of

the current study. It is believed that both theories serve the study well because both deal with social structure involving traditional rulers, people, their behaviour as well as attitude towards community development and information provision. This is a prerequisite for any meaningful community development. Without information, no meaningful projects can exist in rural communities.

### **Nature of involvement of district traditional heads in information provision for community development**

Venson (1995) observes that by preserving their own cultural traditions, traditional rulers are automatically involved in the mobilization for peace and order among their people. There are traditional judicial arrangement and system of accountability. Crime rates are low as these traditional rulers oversee the mechanisms for maintaining law and order. In some places, youth are effectively mobilized to police the communities and are also called upon to provide communal labour. Traditional leadership in its former form, before foreign interference occurred, operated on the principle of community participation, consultation, consensus, and an acceptable level of transparency through the village council or open tribal consultative meetings. These traditional principles are not too different from the ones that modern political thinkers prescribe as essential for democracy. It might prove useful, therefore, if countries that are striving for good governance in Africa were to look with renewed interest at traditional forms of governance and imbibe some of their valuable principles.

Donkoh (2002) states that traditional District Heads visit their subjects (rural inhabitants) in their various houses or kindred in the community, mostly to share information. They link up with agencies of Local and State Governments for vital information that will be useful to rural dwellers. Moreover, traditional rulers contact media houses like radio and TV stations for relevant and up-to-date information that would benefit rural communities. Leaders at the local level are also in constant touch with traditional the rulers' council (Emirate Council) in order to get essential community-based information. Kolawole and Igwe (2016) highlight traditional rulers' involvement in the following areas. They liaise with NGOs and community-based organizations on community development issues. They organize town hall meetings



with all categories of people in the community for the purpose of sharing information. They meet with opinion leaders and other key stakeholders who subsequently transmit information to rural dwellers. They hold periodic meetings with associations in the community (e.g. women's group, men's group, farmers, etc.) in order to share information. Other studies also show how traditional rulers are involved in information provision in the areas of health and agriculture. Such studies to a degree show the level of involvement of traditional rulers in the overall development of their communities (Kolawole & Igwe, 2016).

### **The kinds of information provided by DTH to their subjects (Rural dwellers)**

Kolawole and Igwe (2016) acknowledge that a broad categorization of information needs shows that individuals in a community have various information needs which may cut across some, or possibly all, the outlined needs. For instance, farmers, agricultural experts and other practitioners in the field of agriculture would have *agricultural information needs* in the areas of production, post-planting, marketing, improved seedlings, methods of fertilizer application, credit facilities for agriculture, etc. Students and other stakeholders in the educational system have *academic information needs* like admission systems in tertiary institutions, tuition fees, types of academic programmes in various institutions, how to prepare assignments and term papers, strategies of answering examination questions, and so on. *Business information needs* centre on business opportunities in a given environment, how to prepare a business plan, planning cash flow and profits, products and services most demanded by customers, etc. As for *economic information needs* there is the issue of business information on a given economy with regard to costs, prices, rates of productivity, profit levels, production capacity and trade statistics, etc. *Political information needs* include political systems and forms of government in a nation, responsibilities of tiers of government, how to mobilize and support candidates contesting elections, and how to assess and analyse policies and programmes of government, among others. *Socio-cultural information needs* have to do with festivals, carnivals, religious practices and worshiping systems. Other needs are

environmental, geographical and health information needs, that may be of relevance to health professionals, patients, caregivers and consumers.

### **Communication channels used in disseminating information for community development**

Ogidi (2014) highlights channels of information used as follows:

**Inter-personal channels of information communication:** This is referred to as face-to-face communication, involving an exchange of ideas and information between sender and receiver. The mode of interaction is usually of a conversational nature and involves the exchange of either verbal or non-verbal information. Interpersonal communication dominates activities at home, in an office, a market and elsewhere. Contrary to what obtains in formal relationships, it tends to be informal and generates warmth as well as creating harmony necessary for socio-economic development. One major advantage in this personal contact is immediate response; this gives an opportunity to those concerned to immediately decode and modify subsequent messages in order to achieve a determined objective. This is why contact between DTH and their subjects or representatives for information dissemination purposes is significant. Aderibigbe (1990) believes that interpersonal communication is important in linking up with rural farmers, since a majority of them are illiterate.

**Town Crier:** Traditional mass media serve both utilitarian and aesthetic purposes. They form the vehicle for acquiring and disseminating information to rural people. Ngwaimbi (1995) notes that town criers, the market place and word of mouth are popular among African rural people in terms of longevity of use and effectiveness in transmitting messages. He explains that in rural areas, town criers are village messengers who go from street to street delivering messages. Occasionally, striking a bell or drum, they report the news to villagers.

**Market places and worship centres:** Rural people are known to acquire and disseminate a huge amount of information at market places and worship centres such as churches and mosques. Awa (1988) observes that many issues or events are discussed in market places more than elsewhere. He reports that markets in Africa

have been successfully used for advertising new food products and drugs. Moreover, information on better nutrition and inter-village relationships has been spread by local agents trained by Afro-centric technicians. Bame (1990) notes that this mode of communication is development-oriented and messages are self-evident. Opeke and Ifukor (2000) point out that socio-political information often comes from preachers in churches and mosques. Some government agencies also pass on vital information on immunization, registration of children in school, etc. through these same channels.

**Role play, song, dance and drama:** Songs, poems and drama pieces are useful channels for information acquisition and dissemination among people. Fayose (1998) opines that among rural dwellers singing is usually associated with work, hunting, warfare, funeral, title-taking, birth and nursing, moonlight plays and other ceremonies. Songs address all types of social issues in the community. Some songs ridicule undutiful fathers, lazy mothers, wayward children, etc., while others encourage the well-behaved to keep it up. Fiofori (2005) states that there are also speech surrogates such as talking drums, gongs, oral narratives, etc. used in rural settings. Festivals are integral parts of life in rural communities where drama and role-play are used not only as a means of entertainment but also as a means of imparting socially accepted norms and values. Fayose and Dike (2002) identify poetry as another channel for the dissemination of information. Role-play is an impromptu dramatization and is often used to pass information on health and other issues to people. The World Health Organization and the United Nations International Children Education Fund (1989) report that role-play is a good teaching and learning method for children. They emphasize that it is very useful in influencing people's healthcare habits and agricultural practices. Equally, Aboyade (1990) observes that on clinic days health instructors use group singing to express essential health precautions to their audience.

**Radio:** With its flexibility and adaptability radio informs, educates and entertains audiences. Hiebert (cited in Edward, 2017) says that radio has become more individualized and personalized. Individualization of the radio is in keeping with some megatrends identified by Naisbitt and Aburdene (n.d., cited in Edward, 2017).

**Television:** Television appeals to more than one of the five senses and has thus become a dominant leisure activity. Television "is society's mass entertainer, mass informer, mass persuader, and mass educator" (Edward, 2017). To reach the most people with general information, television is the logical though more expensive choice.

### **Challenges confronting traditional rulers (DTH) in providing information for community development**

Access to information in rural communities in Africa faces a number of barriers such as basic infrastructure (electricity, telecommunication, utilities, roads and transportation), a low level of literacy, lack of proper information services, etc. A non-passable road especially means a lack of access to remote communities. This affects DTH in their effort to provide information to rural dwellers. Kolawole and Igwe (2016) state other challenges that constitute impediments. These are a poor attitude of government towards supporting Districts Heads in information provision, inadequate support from NGOs to District Heads in providing information to rural dwellers as well as communal conflicts and activities of vandals/criminals in the districts. Literature shows that traditional rulers generally have serious challenges wherever they operate. In Nigeria, the situation of traditionalism is further complicated by the fact that many of them are civil servants, farmers, and businessmen. In Namibia, the work that a traditional title holder does is part time. Keulder (2016) and Yol (2010) concur that there are challenges to the information dissemination process in rural areas. These include a poor attitude on the part of government towards supporting District Heads, inadequate support from NGOs, financial constraints, bad road networks among communities, communal conflicts, etc.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted a descriptive survey design using frequency counts and percentages. The population comprises all District Traditional Heads in Kano South Senatorial Zone in Kano State, Nigeria, which has sixteen (16) District Traditional Heads, such as (Ajingi, Albasu, Bebeji, Bunkure, Doguwa, Garko, Gaya, Karaye, Kibiya, Kiru, Rano, Rogo, Sumaila, Takai, Tudun Wada, Wudil). All were used as

primary population for the study. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection and a four-point Likert scale type of questionnaire was designed and divided into five parts. Sixteen (16) copies of the questionnaire were administered to all sixteen (16) District Traditional Heads. The reason for using the instrument was that it is not easy to meet with the district heads due to the nature of their work, therefore the Secretary to the council advised us to have something for them to fill at their convenience. This was our reason to administer the questionnaire as an instrument for data collection to allow the DTH to fill the instrument in at their convenience, as all efforts to meet them had failed. All the portions of the instrument were thoroughly filled in by the respondents. Since the number of instruments was not too high (and in line with the advice of Kerlinger, 1991), we used all sixteen (16) Districts Traditional Heads in all sixteen (16) districts of Kano South Senatorial Zone as primary population for the study; thus there was no sampling. Of the sixteen (16) copies of questionnaires administered, twelve (12) were returned and analyzed in line with the objectives of the study. The administration of the questionnaire was carried out by the co-researchers and assisted by a research assistant. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics that are commonly used in social science and educational research, that is frequency counts and simple percentages.

George and Mallery (2003) provide the rules for the acceptance of the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach's Alpha Value as follows: any value greater than .9 indicates Excellent Reliability; a value greater than .8 indicates Good Reliability, a value greater than .7 indicates Acceptable Reliability, a value greater than .6 indicates Questionable Status, a value greater than .5 indicates Poor, while less than .5 indicates Unacceptable Reliability. The reliability values of the current study were between .887 and .975. This is an indication that there is a positive correlation and strong consistency between the items of the instruments; hence, they were reliable and suitable for the study.

## **4.1 Results**

This section is organized by research questions aligned to the research objectives as represented on Tables 1 to 5 below.

**Table 1: What is the nature/pattern of involvement of District Traditional Heads (DTH) in information provision to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone?**

S/N	Items	Response categories			
		SA	A	D	S
1.	They link up with agencies of local and state governments for vital information that will be beneficial to rural dwellers	5 (42%)	3 (25%)	2 (17%)	2 (17%)
2.	They contact media houses like radio and TV stations for relevant and up-to-date information that will benefit rural dwellers	2 (17%)	6 (50%)	3 (25%)	1 (8%)
3.	They are always in touch with the traditional rulers' council (Emirate Council) for essential community-based information	2 (17%)	6 (50%)	2 (17%)	2 (17%)
4.	They liaise with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) on community development issues	6 (50%)	3 (25%)	2 (17%)	1 (8%)
5.	They organize town hall meetings with all categories of rural dwellers in their communities to share information	5 (42%)	2 (17%)	3(25%)	2 (17%)
6.	They share information with opinion leaders and other key stakeholders in their communities for onward transmission to rural dwellers	3 (25%)	5 (42%)	3 (25%)	1 (8%)
7.	They hold periodic meetings with associations in their communities (e.g. women's groups, men's groups, farmers, etc.) to share information	3 (25%)	5 (42%)	3(25%)	1 (8.%)
8.	They visit subjects (rural inhabitants) or kin in their various houses in the community, mostly to share information	7 (58%)	3 (25%)	1 (8%)	1 (8%)

The table above shows that the nature/pattern of involvement of District Traditional Heads (DTH) in information provision to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development is at a high level, especially the visits made to subjects (rural inhabitants) or kin for the purpose of sharing information. This is because the item has the highest agreement level of 11 (92%), while 1 (8%) was in disagreement. Liaising with NGOs and CBOs on community development issues is also high. It has the highest agreement level of 9 (75%), while 3 (25%) were in disagreement. As such, the nature/pattern of involvement of District Traditional Heads (DTH) in information provision to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano

South Senatorial Zone is very high. This is especially the case regarding visits made to subjects (rural inhabitants) or kin. The same applies to liaising with NGOs and CBOs. This finding is in line with the finding of Kolawole and Igwe (2016), and Donkoh (2002) who point out that District Traditional Heads liaise with NGOs and CBOs on community development issues. Equally, DTH organize town hall meetings with all categories of rural dwellers, opinion leaders and other key stakeholders. They also hold periodic meetings with associations, as well as visit subjects (rural inhabitants) or kindred, mostly to share information. They contact media houses like radio and TV stations for relevant and up-to-date information, and they are in constant touch with the traditional rulers' council (Emirate Council) for essential community-based information. Moreover, they link up with agencies of local and state governments for information that will be beneficial to rural dwellers.

**Table 2: What are the kinds of information provided by DTH to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Districts?**

S/N	Items	Response categories			
		SA	A	D	SD
1.	Health information (e.g. fight against HIV/AIDS, immunization practices against polio, infectious diseases, hygienic practices and environmental sanitation)	6(50%)	3(25%)	2 (16.7%)	1 (8%)
2.	Agriculture-related information (e.g. new farming techniques, high yielding crops, fertilizer accessibility and application, livestock production, etc.)	8(66.7%)	3 (25%)	1 (8%)	-
3.	Educational information (e.g. educational opportunities, admission slots, literacy programmes, scholarships, etc.)	8 (66.7%)	3 (25%)	1(8%)	-
4.	Economic information (e.g. job opportunities, business ventures, funding, credit facilities, government programmes, skills acquisition centres, etc.)	5 (41.7%)	6 (50%)	1(8%)	-
5.	Political information (party politics, political sensitizations and mobilizations, voter registration, voting during elections, etc.)	8 (66.7%)	2 (16.7%)	1(8%)	1(8%)
6.	Socio-cultural information (acceptable social practices, values and norms, culture and traditions, etc.)	4 (33%)	5(41.7%)	2 (16.7%)	1(8%)
7.	Security information (neighbourhood watch system, security practices, vigilante services, etc.)	7 (58%)	4 (33%)	-	1(8%)

8	Legal information (human rights protection, maintenance of law and order, settlement of disputes – farmlands or boundaries, etc.)	4 (33%)	5(41.7%)	2 (16.7%)	1(8%)
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It is obvious from the table above that the kinds of information provided by DTH to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone are various. Information provided most by DTH includes security information, economic information, education information, as well as agriculture-related information, which has the highest total of 11(92%) in agreement, while 1(8%) is in disagreement. Other notable information provided by DTH is political information which attracts the second highest agreement level of 11 (83%), while 2(17%) disagree. Consequently, DTH provide high and notable kinds of information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone, especially information on security, economy, education, agriculture and politics. This finding is in line with Majumder's (2016) view that various types of community information services can be provided, including information on health, drinking water, transport, emergency services, government activities, self-help programmes, rights and duties, environmental pollution, legal aid, etc.

**Table 3: What are the communication channels used by DTH in disseminating information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Districts?**

S/N	Items	Response categories			
		SA	A	D	SD
1.	Town criers and palace messengers	7(58%)	4(33%)	-	1(8%)
2.	Town hall meetings (e.g. for lectures, exhibitions and demonstrations).	8(66.7%)	3(25%)	1(8%)	-
3.	Market places	8(66.7%)	3(25%)	-	1(8%)
4.	Traditional Festivals (songs, dances, etc.)	7(58%)	3(25%)	1(8%)	1(8%)
5.	Telephones (e.g. handsets)	5(41.7)	4(3%)	2(16.7%)	1(8%)
6.	State, local governments and their agencies	5(41.7)	4(3%)	2(16.7%)	1(8%)
7.	Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)	6(50%)	4(3%)	1(8%)	1(8%)
8	Associations in the community (e.g. women groups, men groups, farmers, etc.)	4(3%)	6(50%)	1(8%)	1(8%)
9	Radio stations	7(58%)	3(25%)	1(8%)	1(8%)



10	Television (TV) stations	3(25%)	8(66.7%)	1(8%)	-
11	Newspapers and magazines	5(41.7)	4(3%)	1(8%)	2(16.7%)
12	Internet and social media platforms	6(50%)	4(3%)	1(8%)	1(8%)
13	Traditional rulers' council (Emirate Council)	7(58%)	3(25%)	2(16.7%)	-
14	Liaising with outsiders on community development issues	8(66.7%)	3(25%)	1(8%)	-
15	Inter-personal channels (e.g. opinion leaders)	6(50%)	4(3%)	1(8%)	2(16.7%)

The number of communication channels used by DTH in disseminating information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone is quite vast. The most used communication channels are town criers and palace messengers, town hall meetings, market places, radio and television (TV) stations. DTH also liaise with outsiders on community development issues. This item attracted the highest agreement level, 11(92%) among the respondents, while only 1 (8%) was in disagreement. The next most used communication channels by DTH are traditional festivals, non-government organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs), associations in the community, Internet and social media platforms and traditional rulers' council (Emirate Council). These attracted the second highest agreement level of 10 (83%), while only 2 (17%) disagreed. The third most used channels of communication by DTH are telephones, state and local governments and their agencies, as well as newspapers and magazines. These attracted the third highest mean response, 3.408 with details showing that a total of 9 (75%) agreed, while the rest 3 (25%) did not. Consequently, the number of communication channels used by DTH in disseminating information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone is vast, good and robust. In particular, most of them subscribe to the use of town criers and palace messengers, market places, traditional festivals associations in their communities, the Internet, as well as newspapers and magazines. This finding is in line with the findings of Ogidi (2014), Bame (1990), Ngwaimbi (1995)&Fayose (1998). All of them emphasized the use of town criers and palace messengers, market places, traditional festivals, associations in their communities, the Internet, as well as newspapers and magazines, etc.

**Table 4: What are the challenges confronting DTH in providing information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Districts?**

S/N	Items	Response categories			
		SA	A	D	SD
1.	Absence of community information centres for rural dwellers	5(41.7%)	4(33%)	2(16.7%)	1(8%)
2.	Problem of communication gaps between rural dwellers and their traditional rulers	3(25%)	5(41.7%)	2(16.7%)	2(16.7%)
3.	Inadequate cooperation from rural dwellers	6(50%)	3(25%)	2(16.7%)	1(8%)
4.	Inadequate capacity in terms of finance for accessing and disseminating information	7(58%)	4(33%)	1(8%)	-
5	Poor attitude of governments towards supporting District Heads in information provision	3(25%)	8(16.7%)	1(8%)	-
6	Problem of basic infrastructure for information generation and dissemination to rural dwellers	4(33%)	6(50%)	1(8%)	1(8%)
7	Inadequate support from NGOs to District Heads in providing information to rural dwellers	7(58%)	3(25%)	1(8%)	1(8%)
8	Communal conflicts and activities of vandals cum criminals in the districts	4(33%)	5(41.7%)	2(16.7%)	1(8%)

The above are the perception of respondents on challenges confronting DTH in providing information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development. These challenges are enormous. Specifically, the greatest challenge is inadequate capacity in terms of finance for accessing and disseminating information as well as the poor attitude on the part of government towards supporting district heads in information provision. Regarding this, 11 (92%) were in agreement while 1 (8%) disagreed. Another challenge is inadequate support from NGOs to District Heads, along with problems of basic infrastructure for information generation and dissemination. This attracted the second highest agreement level, 10 (83%), while 2 (17%) disagreed. Inadequate cooperation from rural dwellers and the absence of community information centres are other challenges, with 9 (75%) being in agreement, while 3 (25%) disagreed.

The challenges confronting DTH in providing information to their subjects are enormous. This finding affirms the view held by Keulder (2016), Yol (2010) that there are challenges to the information dissemination process in rural areas. These include a poor attitude on the part of government towards supporting District Heads,

inadequate support from NGOs, financial constraints, bad road networks among communities, communal conflicts, etc.

**Table 5: What do you think can be done to tackle the identified challenges?**

S/N	Items	Response categories			
		SA	A	D	SD
1.	Provide community radio and TV stations to serve rural inhabitants.	5(42%)	4(33%)	2(17%)	1(8%)
2.	Provision of community information centres for rural dwellers.	5(42%)	5(42%)	1(8%)	1(8%)
3.	Adequate funding for information provision	6(50%)	4(33%)	1(8%)	1(8%)
4.	Provision of basic infrastructures for information generation and dissemination to rural dwellers.	6(58%)	4(33%)	2(17%)	-
5	Government and NGOs should provide adequate funding for dissemination of information to rural dwellers	3(25%)	7(58%)	1(8%)	1(8%)
6	Adequate support from NGOs to District Heads in providing information to rural dwellers.	6(50%)	3(25%)	2(17%)	1(8%)
7	Regular sensitization, training and funding for District Heads to provide needed information for rural dwellers.	4(33%)	5(42%)	2(17%)	1(8%)

Solutions to the challenges are the provision of community information centres, adequate funding for information provision, and provision of basic infrastructures for information generation and dissemination to rural dwellers. Ten (10 or 83%) of DTH agreed that government and NGOs should provide adequate funding for information dissemination, while 2 (17%) disagreed. The second most suggested solution includes the provision of community radio and TV stations, adequate support from NGOs to District Heads and regular sensitization. This has an agreement level of 9 (75%), while 3 (25%) disagree.

## **Discussions and conclusions**

The following are the major findings of the study:

1. The nature/pattern of involvement of District Traditional Heads (DTH) in information provision for their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone is very high, especially as they regularly visit subjects

(rural inhabitants) or kindred to share information as well as liaise with NGOs and CBOs on community development issues.

2. DTH provide high frequency and notable kinds of information for their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone. This includes socio-cultural, economic, educational and agriculture-related information that rural inhabitants need.

3. The number of communication channels used by DTH in disseminating information to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone is quite vast, reliable and robust, especially as most of them use town criers and palace messengers, radio stations, market places, etc.

4. The challenges confronting DTH in providing information for their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone are enormous. The most notable challenges include inadequate capacity in the area of finance for accessing and disseminating information, inadequate support for District Heads from NGOs, inadequate cooperation from rural dwellers, etc. in providing information for their subjects (or rural dwellers) in that order, among others.

Solutions to identified challenges include the provision of community radio and TV stations, provision of community information centres, adequate funding as well as provision of basic infrastructures for information generation and dissemination to rural dwellers.

There are many measures to be taken to address the challenges confronting the obstacles facing DTH in discharging their responsibility.

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that the nature/pattern of involvement of District Traditional Heads (DTH) in information provision to their subjects (or rural dwellers) for community development in Kano South Senatorial Zone is very high. DTH provide important and notable kinds of information and the number of communication channels that they use is vast, reliable and robust. DTH are confronted with many challenges, the most notable of which are inadequate funding, inadequate support from NGOs and inadequate cooperation from the rural

dwellers. Adequate funding, provision of basic infrastructures for information generation and dissemination, adequate support from NGO are a few of the possible solutions.

The following recommendations are made based on the outcome of this study:

1. Each district in Kano South Senatorial Zone should be provided with an information centre for easier dissemination of information by DTH.
2. The remuneration of DTH should be increased in order to facilitate effective information flow.
3. NGOs should work more closely with DTH and more funds should be made available to them for the provision of information to rural dwellers.
4. DTH should have more say in decision-making processes, especially with regard to development/security issues in their communities.
5. There should be regular meetings among government officials, DTH and rural dwellers in order to fill any communication/information gaps.
6. Districts should have functional community radio stations where information is transmitted in local dialects.
7. Town criers and messengers working in the office of the District Traditional Head should be remunerated better.
8. Further studies could be carried out on the factors militating against the effective development of grassroots communication between subjects and District Traditional Heads in other parts of the northern region of Nigeria.

The outcome of this study will be relevant to various stakeholders in the area of community development. One reason is that both the relevance and adequacy of information provided in a community impact on the extent of its usage. For instance, good quality information can engender good quality healthcare (Gould & Gomez, 2010). The current study covers a relatively scarcely researched area regarding information provision by District Traditional Heads in this part of Nigeria where there are identified challenges to community development. As such the study will contribute

to the body of knowledge on this area as well as providing insights needed by governments and traditional rulers who are major stakeholders in community development issues. This research work will help members of the public be better informed about the roles of District Traditional Heads in information provision as well as the problems they encounter in Kano South Senatorial Zone in particular. This work may also help people be constructive in their criticisms. The outcomes will equally assist subsequent researchers to engage in even more detailed studies in this area or other parts of the country. The current study will reveal the relevance of DTH in information provision to government, information practitioners, District Traditional Heads themselves and other stakeholders. Traditional leaders will benefit more from this study if their capacity gaps are identified and they use the suggested means of overcoming them. The study would, hopefully, be indispensable to Librarians, Library and Information Science students and all those who want to know about the involvement of District Traditional Heads in information provision. The findings of the study will not only add to existing knowledge in this area, but they will serve as reference materials for future research.

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