

## Information Dissemination and Communication Strategy Using Town Crier in a Traditional Context in Southwestern States, Nigeria.

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### ABSTRACT

*The paper examined information dissemination and communication strategy in a traditional context, using 'town crier' as a case study. Studies have identified Osun and Oyo States in Southwestern, Nigeria with highest number of traditional towns. Random technique was used to pick one local government in each of the 3 agrarian districts in each of the two States. Based on literature review and past studies 2 traditional communities were purposively picked in each local government to give a total of 12 traditional communities in the final selection. The customized criteria considered as traditional communities are: presence of a 'town crier', no effective communication channel/institution and majority of the population neither can read nor write among others. Focus group discussion technique and interview schedule were used for data collection and a discussion guide was used in each of the group discussions. Descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression model were used for data analysis. The study identified 41 'town criers' across the study areas through the help of a key informant. The results indicated that all the Town Criers are male, average age of 55.54 years and all have post-primary education. Town crier attracts the community through traditional means of communication (like the use of horn). Town Crier primarily source of information is king/Oba (73.2%). Main information disseminated by the Town Crier bothers on security of the town (65%) and community development and projects. This channel rarely meets the information need of the people, as the study revealed that only 23.3% of such information meets these needs. The use of town crier can be more effective if the structure of receiving information for onward dissemination is enlarged. The marginal effects predicting the direct economic influence of explanatory variables on weighted information disseminated index were information index, education, and access to educational training/manual and occupation.*

**Keywords:** 'Town criers', information dissemination, key informant, participatory, approach, Osun state, Nigeria.

### INTRODUCTION

Information is an important tool used in the realization of any objective or goal set by individual. It remains the life wire of any individual or organization. It is a valuable resource required in any society; thus acquiring and using information is critical and important activities. Users of information use it for different reasons. Some use it for health; others use it for advancement in knowledge, others for politics. To all these people information seeking is a fundamental human process closely related to learning and problem solving (Marchionini, 1995, Yahaya, and Akinboye, 1999, Peters, 2012, Allgaier, *et al.*, 2013, Maru *et al.*, 2014, FAO, 2015). Many factors initiate the search for information; among these are: individual tasks for knowledge advancement, creativity and for future documentation. Information seeking process depends on these tasks, and the complexity of the task/difficulty is an important factor that influence individual in seeking information.

This reason of seeking for information depends on searcher's job, subject and educational attainment (Burkett, 1992). The importance of information in the development process is increasingly recognized, not only by those involved in development work, but also by the potential recipients of such information (Rosenberg, 1993, Adekunle *et al.*; 2002, World Bank, 2007, Famiran, 2008, Ifukor, 2013, Levi, 2014). Adimorah, (1995) identified a positive relationship between access to information and development when he stated that; "information is now accepted as an important factor in the sustained development of any society because it reduces

uncertainty, and enhances awareness of possible actions to be taken to solve problems". Lack of information is argued to act as a barrier to development because of importance of information provision in "capacity building" and "empowering communities" (Wakelin and Simelane, 1995, Campbell *et al.*, 2008, FAO, 2015).

Information and its appropriate dissemination are seen as critical resource for people and communities in both rural and urban areas (Okogbe, 2002, Ojebode, 2011, Ayubu *et al.*, 2012). However, information provision in rural contexts remains a problem. Moyo (1994) pointed out the alarming information gap that exists between rural and urban areas and noted that only little is being done to bridge this gap. It is assumed that if we know the factors which influence information need and the demand for the information we are likely to be in a better position to design better information systems and services. Therefore, it is important to ascertain and distinguish between the information needs of an individual or group and how such information needs are passed or channeled to meet these needs.

Several channels and methodology are being used to bring information to audience; such as the media, institutions, social functions, town criers among others, but in the traditional African settings where most residence are illiterates the mode of passing information to such categories of people are through a medium called "town crier" (Camble, 1994, Town Crier concept, 2007). This medium of information dissemination is found to be effective, cheap, simple and reliable (Adekunle *et al.*, 2002). The uses of Town

Criers are still in vogue in some traditional towns and villages in Africa and some parts of the Caribbean (Yahaya, and Badru, 2002, Ogwezy, 2008).

Past studies have shown that information/communication channels in Nigeria such as extension institutions has collapsed, there is no effective communication channels in the country again (Camble, 1994, Oladeji, 1999 and Igboka, and Atinmo, 2002.). The small number of extension officers that exists, only congregate at the urban towns, leaving behind those at the rural areas. This has pushed many rural areas/community leaders to develop their own way/form of disseminating information through the use of the "Town Crier". For instance, the king/Oba or Oba in council or Chief in council uses someone that knows the terrain and quite familiar with the community. This person is thus, tagged "Town Crier".

This model however, has its own limitations, because most of the information passed might not at all times meet the information needs of the community. In addition, the monopoly of information to be passed lies in the hands of the leader of the community. These leaders give instructions on which message or information to be passed to the community. Consequently, there is a need to carry out a study on the effectiveness and appropriateness of this channel and the programme content to the community.

Information is a critical tool for providing necessary directions for national development, the issue of accessibility and reliability of information; for instance, on increased farmer's productivity and enhanced standard of living of Nigerians have been a source of worry to past and present government administrations in Nigeria. Tackling this twin issues has focused on reorganization and/or establishment of institutional arrangements and programmes. Such administrative engineering is predicated on the hope that if appropriate and relevant technologies are generated and disseminated it could go a long way to help farmers improve on their income earning potentials and hence improve their well being (Yahaya, and Olajide, 2003, Allender *et al*, 2011, Agunga, 2012, Brossard and Schenfele, 2013). In order to bring effective information on appropriate and relevant technologies that could improve farmer's productivity particularly those in the rural areas, there is need for an intervention which is effective, cheaper, simple and reliable. To make this possible there is a need for an effective information and communication channels that could facilitate flow of information to farmers/residence of that community.

Nwachukwu, & Akinbode., 1989; Correa, 1994, Okogbe, 2002, Patterson and Radtke, 2009, Abbasi, *et al*, 2010, Farm Radio International, 2011 and Allgaier *et al*, 2013 pointed to the "questions around sources of this information, mechanisms and institutions for making this information timely, available in appropriate formats, and in accessible locations. These studies were referring to rural African communities where there is no evidence on "the most effective information transfer methods". Made (1995) and Adimorah, (1995) examined East, Central and West African countries respectively, commented on how little researches has been done to provide the required and adequate

information that could improve farming practices. Recently, the high outputs of agricultural research have led to a large pool of new agricultural technologies, which are yet to be disseminated to farmers, particularly those in the core rural/traditional areas. In order to bridge this gap, accelerate the pace of dissemination of the research findings and other necessary information that could be of benefit to farmers, a variety of communication channels have been adopted in different cities, towns and communities. This is with the hope/assumption that both the approaches and technical information packages are suitable and accessible to farmers. Consequently, this paper examines the appropriateness, reliability and effectiveness of information disseminated to people using town crier as a medium. In addition, the paper intends to; identify town crier primary source of information, evaluate type of information disseminated, pinpoint the information need of the people, assess the extent to which information disseminated meet the information need of the community, identify limitations confronting the town crier in providing effective and reliable information to the community as well as factors influencing effective information dissemination to end users.

## METHODOLOGY

This study was undertaken in Osun and Oyo States, South western, Nigeria. The choice of these States is from literature review that revealed Osun and Oyo States with the most traditional towns and villages in Nigeria (Osun State in Focus, 2007, FRN, 2007). This was attested to by the annual Osun/Oshogbo festival that always attracts tourists from the entire world. Centre of attractions visited by these tourists are located in these traditional towns. These two states are the inland States in Southwestern Nigeria. Osun State capital is Osogbo, while Oyo State capital is Ibadan. The present Osun State was created in 1991 from part of the old Oyo State. The state's name was coined out from the River Osun, the venerated natural spring which is the manifestation of the Yoruba goddess of the same name. Osun and Oyo States are divided into three agrarian districts, each of which is composed of two administrative zones. Osun state consists of thirty Local Government Areas, while Oyo State has thirty-three. Local Government Areas are the primary (third tier) unit of government in Nigeria.

The state is divided into 3 agrarian districts with a minimum of 10 local governments in each district. Simple random technique was used to pick one local government in each agrarian district. Based on literature review and past studies (Osun State in Focus, 2007) two communities were therefore purposively picked from this local government and that fulfills the customized criteria. Before the final selection, pre-test survey was carried out to ascertain that the selected communities fulfilled the customized criteria. The customized criteria are as follows;

1. Presence of Town crier
2. Lack of effective or communication channels
3. Majority of the people are unable to read nor write
4. Majority of the communities are practicing farmers
5. Poor basic infrastructural facilities like; absence of comprehensive health centre, lack of potable water,

incessant power outage, lack of proper layout, and well structured roads.

6. Most residential buildings are either built by mud or planks and also, presence of huts and hamlets prominent within the communities.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and interview schedule were used for data collection. At each location, discussions were held with the identified Town Crier group. A group comprising of 6 -8 persons was identified through the help of key informants at each location. In addition, FGD were also held with the community, also, participants were randomly selected with the help of the key informant. This is done to help solicit participants' reaction and attitude towards the message brought by the Town Crier. In addition, at what level this information meets their information need. Key informants were trained in the techniques that drives the rationale of the survey prior to the discussions and sessions. A discussion guide was used in each of the group discussions. Discussion guide were developed and tailored to capture the objectives of the study. Objectives 1 and 2 are to elicit information from the Town Crier while 3, 4 and 5 for the community.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Town criers are members of the traditional chiefs. There are three prominent types of chiefs in Yoruba land in south western part of Nigeria, Family Ties/ruling families, Traditional Chiefs and Honorary Chiefs. These types of chiefs are members of the King/Chief in council and members of Board of Trustee of the community. Nomination into the chieftaincy title is done by the king/Oba as well as the community leaders and it is subjected to review every two years. Criteria used as documented in the Oba's brief include among others; the recipients' integrity, contribution towards the development of the town, education and familiarity with community terrain, people, traditional norms and custom of the community. Town Criers are therefore picked from the traditional chiefs, while Head of the Traditional Chiefs nominates who to belong to the town crier group. The metric for selection into the town crier groups is as follows:

1. Commitment and devotion to community project and work

2. Run errands for the king or King in council for some years (minimum of 5 years)
3. Must be resident in the community and familiarize with the community environment.
4. Participation in his ability/activities in the progress of the community
5. Must have a reasonably level of education

Therefore, all Town criers are Traditional Chiefs and not *vice-versa*. Town criers are therefore referred to as smaller chiefs by the king or king in council. The Town Criers in all communities surveyed have a group in which their leader or head appoint members to carry out the task of information dissemination. The town criers meet fortnightly to review their weekly activities of recent works and intimate the reason to carry out the next assignment. In case of emergency, the head carries out such task or delegates the responsibilities as the case may be. Town criers also participates and get involved in all other meetings, duties and obligations of other chiefs being presided over by the king. The Town Criers group has metrics and measures adopted to assess their activities. This is done through their fortnight meetings. It is at this meeting they examine and assesses past duties and activities. This forum also, used to appraise type of information passed and at what date, also who carried out such tasks and how such information disseminated were reacted to or widely accepted by the community. Any task performed by the town criers attracted no form of compensation whatsoever it is purely service to the king/oba, king/oba in council and the community at large.

Results from Table 1 revealed that 41 Town criers were successfully identified and interacted with. Their average age was 55.54 years and with age bracket of 51-65 years old. Table 1 also shows that all the town criers have minimum of primary and maximum of post-secondary education, thus, the average educational status is post-primary school. Majority of the town criers are primarily engaged in active farming, with relatively few numbers engaged in non-farming activities such as artisans' local politics and paid employment among others (Table 1). This age bracket is still active and therefore shows that the Town Criers are very keen, practicing farmers and earning livelihood to sustain their families. In addition, all the town criers are male.

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of town criers

Local Government	Selected Communities	Frequency of Town Criers	Age Bracket (years)	Educational Status (Range)	Primary Livelihood (Percentage)	Secondary Livelihood (Percentage)
<b>Osun State</b>						
Oriade	Ikeji-Arakeji	8	51-62	Primary-Secondary	Farming (79)	Paid Employment (15)
	Ijeda	6	55-63	Secondary-Post Secondary	Farming (65)	Artisans (26)
Atakunmosa East	Faforiji	7	52-60	Secondary-Post Secondary	Farming (73)	Local Politics (16)
	Ajidi	8	54-65	Secondary-Post Secondary	Farming (62)	Artisans (31)
Isokan	Ikoyi-ile	6	51-58	Primary-Secondary	Farming (81)	Local Politics (11)
	Idi-odan	6	52-56	Secondary-Post Secondary	Farming (75)	Paid Employment (10)
Total/ Average		41	55.54	Post-Primary	Farming (72.5)	
<b>Oyo State</b>						
Ido	Aba Emo	9	52-56	Primary-Secondary	Farming (83)	Paid Employment (12)
	Fasan	7	55-63	Secondary-Post Secondary	Farming (72)	Artisans (08)
Iseyin	Abugaga	8	54-63	Secondary-Post Secondary	Farming (88)	Local Politics (11)
	Igunrin	6	51-65	Secondary-Post Secondary	Farming (78)	Artisans (12)
Surulere	Arolu	7	60-64	Primary-Secondary	Farming (83)	Local Politics (07)
	Iregba	8	51-62	Primary-Secondary	Farming (91)	Paid Employment (04)
Total/ Average		45	55-65	Post-Primary	Farming (81)	Local Politics (11)

Source: Field Survey (Focus Group Discussions) 20013/14

Town Crier primary source of information are from: king/Oba (73.2%), some influential members of the community (14.3%) and the Oba/chief in council (12.5%) (Table 2). This shows that King/Oba has the monopoly of passing information to the people through the town crier. The implication is that effective and useful information may not be passed at all times to the people through the use of town crier. Other criteria used by the Town crier to attract the

community when information was to be delivered include the use of Gong (85.37%), Horn and Creating Bonfire (48.78%) and also the use of local gun shot to attract attention (Table 3). When such instruments/mode of communication are heard by the community, the people would know that town crier is around and may troop out to hear what sort of information the town crier will voice.

Table 2: Town Crier Primary Source of Information

Source of Information	Frequency (%)
King / Oba	15 (73.2)
Influential members of the community e.g. Top-class government worker	3 (14.3)
Oba/chief in council	2 (12.5)

Source: Field Survey 2014

**Table 3; Instrument Used To Attract Attention When Disseminating Information**

Instruments Used	Town	Frequency (Percentage)
Gong	Ikeji-Arakeji, Ikoyi-ile, Ajidi, Faforiti, Idi-odan	35 (85.37)
Horn	Ijeda, Idi-odan, Ajidj	20 (48.78)
Shooting Local Gun	Ikeji-Arakeji, Faforiji,	15 (36.59)
Creating Bonfire	Idi-odan, Ajidl, Ikoyi-ile	20 (48.78)

Source: Field Survey 2014

Information disseminated by the Town Crier include; Issues bothering on the security of the town (65%), community development and projects (62%), health awareness (58%), community development levies and taxies (55%), information on the visit of important dignitaries to the community (43%) and announcing the next market days and other important peculiar date of the community (31%) (Table 4). The

community assessment of information disseminated by town criers revealed that the community felt security issues were paramount (76%), community development and projects (65%) and health (61%). However, the community still feels that town criers' information delivered to them is not at times useful as it did not bother on their livelihood security and improvement.

**Table 4: Information Disseminated by Town Crier to the Community**

Type of Information Disseminated	Percentage
Security of the town	65.0
Community development and projects	62.0
Health awareness	58.0
Community development levies and taxies	55.0
Visit of important dignitaries to the community	43.0
Market days and other important peculiar date of the community culture	31.0

Source: Field Survey 2014.

Table 5 showed communities responses or feelings about the Town crier message conveyed to them. When there is call for community labour; information about tax payment and payment of public utilities like energy or water, communities' response to such information were always poor. Most of the time, these types of information received a very poor

response from the communities (Table 5). Information that bothers on free access to medical facilities, training and empowerment programmes and access to credit facilities among others (Table 5) are types of information the communities expect to hear from the mouth of the town crier.

**Table 5: Response of the community to the information disseminated by the Town Crier (Low Reaction) N= 302.**

Information on	Scale of Response	Frequency
Community Labour	Low	12
Visits of Very Important Guests	Medium	38
Tax payment	Low	14
Scholarships/Bursary for Indigent Student	High	78
Payment For the use of public utilities (Energy and Water)	Low	13
Distribution of special gift items	Medium	45
Special days	Medium	47
Special prayers for the community	Low	18
Free access to medicals facilities	High	89
Training and empowerment programme	High	85
Conflicts resolution among the elders	Low	11
Access to credit facilities/important farm inputs at government controlled price	High	84

Source: Field Survey 2013

In order to evaluate the information need of the communities *vis-vis* information convey to them by the town criers. Results of this finding were presented in Table 6. The results showed that most of the information disseminated did not meet the

expectation of the communities. Information on livelihood security and improvement were met by only 20% as against 90% required by the community (Table 6). The overall result of the findings revealed that information disseminated by the

town criers only meet about 20% of the information need of the people. This thus, showed that most information disseminated by the town crier are not always useful to the communities. Moreover, community responses to the information brought by Town crier were appraised through their attitudes towards the message disseminated to them. For example, when such information were conveyed to their

attention and at the end of the message, the communities always reacted. For a positive/ beneficial/relevance information, majority of the community reacted like this “Baba re a gbe”: meaning the Town Crier has spoken well. For non-beneficial, non-relevance information, majority of the community will just walk away and cease from listening.

Table 6: Assessing the frequency of Information need of the community and Level of meet up by the information disseminated by the town crier (N=302)

Information on	Community Info. Need (%)	Town Crier Info. Dissemination (%)
Development of the Town	72 (16.48)	25 (5.70)
Education and Infrastructural Development of the Town	68 (15.56)	15 (3.40)
Issues Bothering on the Security of the Town	64 (14.64)	21 (4.10)
Reliable source of Agricultural Inputs at reduced cost (e.g. Fertilizer, Improved seed)	82 (18.76)	14 (3.20)
Provision of Basic Amenities for the Town	61 (13.96)	10 (2.30)
Improving their present Livelihood	90 (20.60)	20 (4.60)
<b>Total</b>	<b>437* (100)</b>	<b>105 (23.30)</b>

Source: Field Survey 2014. \* Represents number of multiple responses by the respondents

Furthermore, during the FGD and interview schedule with the people, the results revealed that 89.2% of the participants were aware of the existence of “Town Crier” and 16.7% indicated that information disseminated by this channel of communication only met about 23.30% of their information need. While about 76.70% indicated that it rarely met their information needs. This was due to the fact that source of information disseminated by the Town Crier came from the King/Oba of the Town or the council of chiefs as the case may be. These categories of people (was assumed) might not know fully the information needs of the community at large.

Analysis on other sources where communities obtained relevance and useful information were presented in Table 7. The able revealed that through Radio, Television, Extension agents, Osun State Agricultural Development Programme (OSADEP), Farmer’s groups/association/cooperative. Information received was mainly on improved farming practices, agricultural development issues and livelihood security and development. The results revealed that responses to Radio Channels received 52.34%, Farmer’s groups/association/cooperative got 37.09%, Extension agent 31.79%, Television received 4.97%, and 1.99% went to others such as social functions.

Table 7: Sources Where Respondents Access Information (N= 302)

Sources	Frequency (%)
Radio	158 (52.34)
Farmer’s groups/association	112 (37.09)
Extension agent	96 (31.79)
Television	15 ( 4.97)
Town Crier	59 (19.53)
Others (Social Function)	6 ( 1.99)

Source: Field Survey 2014

The study shows that most of the communities have access to Radio and they do listen to Radio programme from time to time. The choice of this channel of receiving information (Radio) often gives relevance and useful information. On Farmer’s groups/association/cooperative, members always attend to the meeting for help and also to get solution to their problems. In this regard, the group liaises with institutions that can address such problem/limitation if it is beyond their reach, particularly on technical issues. To address technical issues and problems, the leader of the group used to call experts/resource persons to address these issues, in addition

to workshop/seminars delivered to the groups on good farm management practices and post-harvest handling activities.

There are several limitations confronting effective and useful information from the town crier to the community. But mainly the people do not have access to the Town Crier nor the Chief/King in council to express their opinions on type of information passed by the town crier as well as their own information need. They can only grumble or simply, walk away when irrelevant information is being released to them. Since such information is from the highest authority of the town, therefore such information can never be queried. In

addition, the channel of information is reserved mainly for the king or king in council and to be carried out obediently by the town crier. Factors influencing Town crier in the effectiveness of information dissemination to rural communities were done using a regression model method.

Multiple linear regression model was applied to examine these factors taken a cue from the past studies of Abbass *et al*, (2010), Campbell *et al*, (2008) and Adekunle *et al*, (2002):

**Model specification**

$$Pa = X\beta + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Pa is the weighted information disseminated index.

X is the explanatory variables

$\beta$  is the coefficient and

$\epsilon$  is the error term (to cover for unexplained variables).

This is captured by comparing how many times information is being passed by the town criers to the communities and how many people utilized/make used of such message(s)

$$\text{Equation one is then modified as: } Pa = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_8 X_8 + \epsilon_i \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method was used to estimate equation (2)

The variables below are hypothesized as having significant influence on weighted information disseminated index.

Table 8: Definition of Variables

Variables	Definition
Pa (Dep. Variable)	Weighted information disseminated index
X <sub>1</sub> (Education)	Average years of education of Town Crier (imputed)
X <sub>2</sub> (Age)	Age of Town Crier in years
X <sub>3</sub> (Household size)	Number of household members living under the same roof (no)
X <sub>4</sub> (Occupation)	Source of livelihood of the Town Crier
X <sub>5</sub> (Information index)	The information index that was used in the regression analysis include: frequency of access to reliable sources of information to be disseminated, capacity of the Town criers to understand the information, mode of communication of such information to the community and tools/equipment to be used in information dissemination. The information index was obtained by summing up all the factors indicated above and relating to each factor. The responses (access to these factors) were averaged across the factors and multiplied by 100 for each information disseminated.
X <sub>6</sub> Access to educational Training/manual	This variable describes Town Crier access/attend training and workshop on information dissemination strategy or related issues.
X <sub>7</sub> Access to extension agent	Access to extension agent or interaction with extension agent
X <sub>8</sub> Socio-economics status	This variable describes Town Crier economic status in the community.
X <sub>9</sub> Attitude	This variable describes Town Crier disposition or state of mind about the task at hand.

**Table 9:** Multiple regression estimates of Town crier in the effectiveness of information dissemination to rural communities.

Independent variables	Estimated coefficients	Standard Error	T-ratio
Constant	7.3051	1.4357	
X <sub>1</sub> (Education)	0.0421	0.0218	1.9311*
X <sub>2</sub> (Age)	-0.4210	0.4102	-1.0263
X <sub>3</sub> (Household size)	-0.3105	0.1415	-2.1943**
X <sub>4</sub> (Occupation)	1.1821	0.5932	1.9928*
X <sub>5</sub> (Information index)	0.0762	0.0321	2.3738**
X <sub>6</sub> Access to educational Training/manual	0.8417	0.3818	2.2046**
X <sub>7</sub> Access to extension agent	0.0418	0.0402.	1.0398
X <sub>8</sub> Socio-economics status	-1.3822	0.9983	-1.3846
X <sub>9</sub> Attitude	-1.1050	0.4646	-2.3784**

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Dependent variable = Weighted information disseminated index; Marginal effect is at the mean value. \* 10% significant level. \*\* 5% significant level,  $R^2$  (Multiple of determination of the model) = 0.6791, Adjusted R = 0.6015, DW = 2.10

Overall the Multiple linear regression model successfully predicts the possibility of weighted information dissemination index (67.91%). This suggests that 68 per cent of the explanatory variables explained the dependent variables while the remaining 32% remained unexplained. This is a research for future to consider factors influencing the unexplained variables. Also, the Durbin Watson indicator (measurement of multicollinearity between variables) of 2.10 revealed a goodness of fit of the regression estimates of the independent variables considered. Based on the estimated results, 6 variables are found to have significant influence on the effectiveness of information dissemination by the Town Crier and these are information index, household size, education, attitude, access to educational training/manual on strategy of information dissemination and occupation respectively (Table 8). The significant positive signs on information index, education, and access to educational training/manual and occupation variables can be explained from the perspective of reliable information source, literate level of the Town Crier and consistent income source. Fairly literate Town Criers tend to have the capacity to understand reliable information sources and to disseminate such information accordingly. Thus make it easier for people to understand the information and be able to utilize it. This finding is line with the outputs of Patterson and Radtke (2009) that indicated moderate literate level, consistent and reliable income source are major factors influencing effectiveness of information dissemination. This positive relationship is expected because farmers with formal education (for example, secondary or post-secondary school) are likely to have more exposure to the external environment including risks and possess more skills. In contrast, a significant but negative relationship is found between variables household size and attitude of Town Criers in performing a task. This result thus suggests that a Town Crier with large-sized households are less likely to perform task given worthily. Variable attitude of the Town Crier in discharging his duties is significant in performing information dissemination task. The result revealed a negative influence thus suggesting that disposition and state of mind of the Town Crier in performing a task in not heartening and this might affect the effectiveness of the information disseminated. In addition, an adverse attitude towards carrying out an assignment could decrease the likelihood of effectiveness of information to be disseminated. Also this result in line with the evidence of the reports of Made (2004) and Igboka and Atinmo (2002) that attitude is major significant factor in predicting the success or otherwise the effectiveness of information dissemination by extension agents.

The marginal effects are also calculated for the regressors of the model to provide a direct economic interpretation on the influence of these variables on weighted information disseminated index. For example, the marginal effect of household size indicates that an additional member increase in the family would decrease the probability of the Town Crier discharging effectively his task of information

dissemination. Conversely, the probability of information index, education, and access to educational training/manual and occupation variables effect on weighted information disseminated index would increase by 0.7%, 0.4%, 0.8%, and 1.1% with every 1% increase in weighted information disseminated index. These findings revealed that occupation and attitude played a major role in effective information dissemination (Table 9).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper appraised the effectiveness of the channels of information dissemination to some selected rural populace of Osun and Oyo states, Nigeria and to see the extent to which such information disseminated met the information needs of the community. The paper revealed among others that: the use of town crier rarely meets the information need of the people, as only 23.3% of such information meets their needs. The influence and impart of Town Criers in terms of bridging this gap where majority of the communities are non-literate do not meet the community expectations in terms of people information need. However other sources where community accesses relevance and useful information are Radio and Farmer's groups/association/cooperative. Although these other channels often do not provide salient and important information bothering on the security and progress of the community. Consequently, the use of town crier becomes relevance and significant in conveying to the community such important information.

The marginal effects predicting the direct economic influence of explanatory variables on weighted information disseminated index were information index, education, and access to educational training/manual and occupation. The use of town crier can be more effective if the structure of receiving information for onward dissemination is enlarged. This is to accommodate opinions of interactive session of the king in council and the people. For technical issues and problems from this interactive session town crier can liaise with institutional information and communication channel such as Library, Media institution, agricultural institutions, Universities, research institutes and government institutions. Town crier presenting these issues and problems as the case may be to these institutions and bring back available appropriate and useful response to the community. Thus, in turn Town Criers make available this information to his people using his style of information dissemination. Past studies have documented that information/communication channels in Nigeria such as extension institution has collapsed, there is no effective communication channels in the country again. The small number of extension officers that exists, only congregate at the urban towns, leaving behind those at the rural areas. Thus, the use of town criers in this regards can be used effectively to fill this gap and could also be trained on basic extension work.



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