

The use of pull information mode to support poverty reduction programmes in rural Tanzania: A case of Monduli and Bagamoyo districts

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Abstract:

The present study analyses the extent to which pull information media such as mobile phones can help rural communities in their poverty reduction efforts to enhance their livelihoods in a more effective way by formulating a 'pull information mode'. The study also sought to establish the relationship between information and development programmes in supporting poverty reduction efforts using the rural communities of Bagamoyo and Monduli districts in Tanzania as a case study. It was hypothesised that the use of push information media such as the radio, TV and newspapers in poverty reduction strategies is not effective enough in empowering rural communities in Tanzania to access and use relevant, appropriate and timely information and improve their livelihoods as well as alleviate poverty. Mixed [both quantitative and qualitative] methods were employed to design the research tools as well as collect and analyse the data collected. The findings suggest that the pull information mode can be more effective and appropriate than the push in poverty reduction programmes due to the following advantages: higher level of satisfaction with the pull than the push media; enjoyment of relatively more freedom and control over the pull media and information accessed than is usually possible under the push media; the participatory nature of the pull mode in the creation, and dissemination of information; greater accessibility and affordability, particularly the mobile phone; enhanced availability of relevant and appropriate information tailored to the specific needs of rural communities; the convenience in terms of time and space. Further, the findings reveal that the pull information media contributes to the improvement of development information accessibility and usability. The development information directly contributes to the improvement of an individual or community's livelihoods. Indeed, it provides more direct link with 'problem-based information' of the rural communities. Finally, the study suggests follow-up research, particularly a study to assess the tangible socio-economic impact of the 'pull' information approach.

Subjects Library science; Information technology; Public policy; Information science