

Women Participation in Fish Marketing as a Source of Economic Empowerment and Poverty Reduction in Lau Local Government Area of Taraba State - Nigeria

ANITA, D.A AND WACHAP, E.D.

Home and Rural Economic Department
College of Agriculture Jalingo, Taraba State, Nigeria.
E-mail: juliusnyameh@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The study attempts to assess women perception in fish marketing as a source of economic empowerment and poverty reduction in Lau Local Government Area of Taraba state in Nigeria. Seven (7) political wards were randomly selected with ten (10) fish marketers selected from each ward. A total of seventy (70) structured questionnaires were administered among the selected fish marketers through random sampling techniques. The result shows that majority of the fish marketers are youths (38.57%, 28.57% and 4.30%) respectively. Similarly, all the respondents are females (100%), most of the women involved in the survey are married women (42.86%) while the rest were single, divorced and widows (28.5%, 18.57% and 10%) respectively. The sampled population has 42.86% primary school leavers only 20% of the sampled size has not attended formal education. Most of them 42.86% were engaged in marketing of smoked fish while 7.14% were involved in marketing of live fish. Half of the respondents (50%) get their capital for operation through the local community bank while 7.14% do not have access to any form of loan except gift through friends and relations. It was therefore, concluded that women participation in fish marketing is a potential economic activity in the area that need to be motivated and encouraged by engaging especially the single women and ladies by providing them with a viable source of capital in form of loans from perhaps commercial banks in the area at a less interest rate. This when done will empower the women economically and it will reduced and/or eradicate poverty to a tolerable level among the inhabitants particularly the women fold.

Keywords: Women, Fish Marketing, Empowerment, Poverty Reduction.

Introduction

Commodity production and trade have a significant bearing in a sustainable livelihood of rural population. In Taraba state fish marketing is one of the few economic activities that hold great potentials for income generation and poverty

reduction among communities living near the riverine areas which Lau local government area of Taraba state is one of such community.

Fish products being one of the cheapest source of protein which is common; has received the most patronage in Taraba state in recent times. Fish product provides up to 40% essential protein in human nutrition and also provides substantial employment opportunities to average Nigerian women in different fields of fishery activities Olatunde (1998).

Fish production, processing, transportation and distribution are mostly carried out by women. However, the fish market structure is characterized by the organization of a market which seems to influence strategically the nature of competition and pricing behaviour within the market which is based on demand and supply.

The major players in fish distribution are the middle men or women who channel fish to customers before reaching the end users (customer). In this channel of fish marketing activities, the price of the commodity changes as it passes from one person to another this shows that the price of the commodity will have to be exorbitant when it reaches the final consumer.

This study was carried out to assess women participation in fish marketing as a source of economic empowerment and poverty reduction in Lau local government area of Taraba state Nigeria. The specific objectives were to determine the socio-economic characteristic of the fish marketers, determine the different methods employed by the respondents (women) in marketing their fish and to find out the sources of their capital for business operations.

Materials and Methods

Study Area

Lau local government was created in 1991 with head quarters in Lau and has ten (10) wards. It has an area land mass of 135,000.39km with a projected population of about 229,000 according to 1991 Census figure.

The local government shares a common boundary with Karim Lamido local government to the North, Ardo-Kola to the West, Yororo to the South East and Jalingo local government to the South West. The majority tribes found within the local government area include Hausa/Fulani, Yandang, Mumuye, Jenjo, Lau Habe, Minda, Shomo, Bandawa etc. Due to their land mass, favorable climate and

geographical condition while majority of the people are farmers (Taraba Diary, 2010).

Sources of Data and Sampling Techniques

Simple random sampling technique was employed to select seven (7) wards and ten (10) fish marketers were randomly selected in each of the seven wards to give a total of seventy (70) fish marketers as the sample population of the study. A designed structured questionnaire was used to obtain data from the fish marketers (respondents). The data generated was analyzed using a descriptive statistic such as the simple percentage (%).

Results and Discussion

Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1 indicates the socio-economic features of the respondents. The result shows that majority of the respondents 38.57% fall within the ages of 31-40 years which are all in their youthful age.

Similarly, those that fall within the youthful age brackets were 4.30% and 28.57% which are below 20 years and 31 - 30 years respectively. Among the 70 respondents that were interviewed in all of them were females. The result of the study also shows that married women were the majority among the respondents, this may be as a result of the fact that most of them were primary school leavers which at times is difficult for them to secure government work with that certificate. The single respondents have 28.57% which make them to be second followed by the married women (18.57%).

The widows were not much on this economic activity, they only form 10% of the total population. The result on the educational attainment of the respondents shows that 20% of them did not attend formal education, but most of them 42.86% attended primary school while 22.85% and 14.29% attended secondary and tertiary education respectively. These results may not be connected to perhaps lack of interest from the respondents but may be due to inadequate capital and/or money to pay school fees in secondary and tertiary schools.

Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Age (Years)		
Below 20	3	4.30
21-30	20	28.57
31-40	27	38.57
41-50	10	14.28
51-60	5	7.14
Above 60	5	7.14
Total	70	100
Marital Status		
Single	20	28.57
Married	30	42.87
Divorced	13	18.57
Widow	7	10.00
Total	70	100
Educational Background		
No formal education	14	20
Primary education	30	42.86
Secondary education	16	22.85
Tertiary education	10	14.29
Total	70	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Types of Retail Fish Marketer in Lau Local Government Area

The results presented in table 2 shows that most of the respondents (42.86%) in the area were involve in marketing of smoked fishes this may be as a result of the fact that most live and fresh fish may not be preserved using refrigerator or any other form of cold storage due to of lack of electricity in the area. Only 7.14% of the respondents do sell live fish while 21.43% were engaged in marketing of fresh fish. The other category of the respondents 28.57% were into marketing of sun-dried fish.

Table 2: Types of Retails Fish Marketers in Lau Fish Market

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Live fish marketers	5	7.14
Fresh fish marketers	15	21.43
Smoked fish marketers	30	42.86
Sun-dried fish marketers	20	28.57
Total	70	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Sources of Capital for Fish Marketing

Table 3 present the different sources of acquiring capital for fish marketing by the respondents. The results indicated that half of the respondents (50%) acquired their capital through local community banks in their various communities; this may be partly due to inadequate commercial banks in the area. In the same vein, 28.57% of the respondents collect loan from civil servants at high interest rates.

The only commercial bank in the area also give few agric loans to some respondents (14.29%) while 7.14% of them get their operational capital through gifts from their friends and relations.

Table 3: Sources of Capital for Fish Marketing

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Local commercial banks	35	50
Loans from civil servants	20	28.57
Agric loans from bank	10	14.29
Gifts from friends and relations	5	7.14
Total	70	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Conclusion

The study shows that most of the respondents were youths within the ages between below twenty (20) years to forty (40) years. This may be as a result of unemployment which may be a developmental threat to the community. The fish marketing business and/or activity is mostly dominated by women. However, most of the respondents that were involved on the fish marketing business are married women and single ladies; there are also little divorced women and very few widows who take part in fish marketing in the area of study.

Moreso, half of the respondents get their capital for transaction through the local community banks around, also some sizeable number of them obtained their money through loans from civil servants and few from commercial bank in the area in form of Agric loan with high interests.

References

NPC (1991). National Population Commission, Census.

Olatunde, A.A. (1998). Approach to the Study of Fisheries Biology in Nigerian Inland-waters. Proceedings of International Conference of Two Decades of Research in Lake Kainji. Pp. 338-541.

Taraba Diary (2010). Ministry of Information.

References to this paper should be made as follows: Anita, D.A and Wachap, E.D. (2014), Women Participation in Fish Marketing as a Source of Economic Empowerment and Poverty Reduction in Lau Local Government Area of Taraba State - Nigeria. *J. of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Pp. 106 - 111.
