

# THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN MARKETING OF FROZEN FISH IN LAGOS STATE OF NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

The involvement of women in the marketing of frozen fish in Lagos State was examined in this study. Two hundred questionnaires were administered to fish marketers in five markets randomly selected within the Lagos metropolis based on their storage capacities. These markets were Balogun (500 tonnes), Idumagbo and Idumota (250 tonnes each) Obalende and Epetedo (37.5 tonnes each). From the study results, a greater percentage of women (64.2%) are actively involved in marketing of frozen fish in the study areas. Over 56% of these traders are retailers while about 33% are wholesalers. More than 91% of the marketers were found to be literate. A high percentage of the frozen fish are imported (68%) 27% from coastal fishing and 5% from riverine fishing. The commonest fish in the markets were Titus (34%), Sardine (32%). Hake 19%, Cat- fish 10% and Argentine 5%. Catfish has the highest profit margin. The greatest problem of these traders is lack of modern storage facilities and where available, the erratic power supply constitutes a problem.

## INTRODUCTION

Agricultural marketing plays vital role in agribusiness because it acts as a link between production and consumption.

Adegeye and Olaide (1988) opined that marketing provides employment for the stimulation of research into the techniques of food, meat and fish preservation and the preparation of various food items to meet different tastes of the population. Oketola (2000) stressed that the increase in human population in Nigeria over the last decades has influenced greatly the demand for food products of both plant and animal origin. As a result of its higher biological value, animal protein is more preferred to plant protein. The contribution of livestock, fishery and forestry products towards the diet of Nigerians and towards the economy as a whole has kept on falling in the recent past. Ilo (1998), quoted by Adetayo *et al* (2001) reported that the per capita protein consumption of Nigerians per day has been estimated between 48g and 68g compared with 67g recommended by the World Health organisation (WHO). 37.3% of the recommended protein should be of animal origin because of the essential amino acids in them.

The declining protein consumption of Nigerians since 1960 to date, from 51g per day between 1961-1963 to 46g per day from 1984-1986 negates what obtains in most developed countries of the world.

Fish is one of the most important sources of protein, which could be processed, and prepared into fish pie, fish finger, fish cake etc which are highly nutritional and desirable food. The growth in human population has

led to increase in demand for fish as against low supply, hence fish sellers have raised prices giving the existing level of high cost of fishing business. (Ref)

Action 26 of the Global Biodiversity strategy urges us to strengthen the role of women in the sustainable use of biological resources (IUCN, 1992). Women being the primary sustainers and providers of protein in sub-Saharan Africa where poverty and malnutrition persists, there is strong reason to focus on their role in provision of protein through marketing of frozen fish. More study is needed in the potential link between the nutritional value of fish, the role of women in the chains of activities involved in storage and distribution of fish.

Peluso (1991), Gittinger *et al* (1990), reported that women are responsible for supplying the family food requirements in most developing countries especially in Africa either through home production or through their own earnings. This implies that the nutritional status of pre-school children who are vulnerable to changes in the quality and quantity of food supply, as well as the entire family depends to a large extent on the ability of women to provide sufficient and well balanced meals for the family.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted to obtain information on women's participation in the frozen fish trade interms of their sources of supply, distribution outlets and problems encountered.

## METHODOLOGY

The survey was carried out in Lagos Island Local Government Area with a population of about 40,000 inhabitants.

### SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

An initial reconnaissance survey was carried out to identify the existing markets in the area. Five markets were randomly selected based on their storage capacities namely: Balogun (500 tonnes) Idumagbo and Idumota (250 tonnes each) Obalende and Epetedo (37.5 tonnes each).

### DATA COLLECTION

A total of 200 questionnaires were administered in the selected markets to frozen fish sellers as follows: Balogun 85, Idumota and Idumagbo 41 each, and 20 and 13 in Obalende and Epetedo respectively.

Method of data analysis?

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results were tabulated to do the following:

- Summarize the gender distribution of respondents. (Table I)
- Give educational background of the respondents (Table II)
- Give sources of fish in the markets (Table III)
- Give mode of sale of frozen fish (distribution channel) (Table IV)
- Give varieties of fish in the markets (Table V)
- Summarize marketing margins of the wholesalers in all the markets (Table VI)

Analysis of the tables shows that 120 (64.20 percent) of the respondents were females while 67 (35.80 percent) were males (Table 1). This is an indication that women are more involved in the sale of frozen fish in the study area. Of the respondents 48 percent were secondary school leavers, 32.1 percent were graduates 10.7 percent have post primary education and only 9.1 have no formal education (Table II). A source of frozen fish questions to these markets revealed that 68 percent of the interviewees received their stock through importation, 26.7 percent through coastal fishing and 5.3 percent from riverine fishing (Table III). This is an indication that a greater percentage of fish sold in these markets are sourced through importation. This could be due to our low level of technological development in fishing within the country and high cost of fishing equipment.

Table IV indicates that 56.1 percent of the respondents are retailers, 33.2 percent wholesalers and 10.1 percent are both retailers and wholesalers. This high percentage of retailers could be due to huge capital needed in wholesale business, which is one of the major problems, militating against efficient frozen fish marketing. A survey of varieties of frozen fish sold in the markets revealed that 33.7 percent were Titus, 18.7 percent Hake, 9.1 percent cat-fish and 6.4 percent Argentine (Table V). This is in line with Anthonio and Akinwumi (1981)'s classification of fish based on commercial importance. They ranked Titus first in order of importance, followed by sardine and the least was Argentine. A close look at Table VI shows average cost per tonne and profit margin of Titus to be N81, 600 and N2,130 respectively. This could also be the reason why a higher percentage of the wholesaler stock Titus.

**Table I: The Gender Distribution of the Respondents**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	67	35.8
Female	120	64.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>100</i>

Market Survey 2000

**Table II: Educational Background of the Respondents**

Educational Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Post-Secondary	60	32.1
Secondary School	90	48.1
Post-Primary	20	10.7
No Formal Education	17	9.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>100</i>

Market Survey 2000

**Table III: Source of Fish in the Markets in Lagos Island**

Source	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Importation	127	68
Coastal Fishing	50	26.7
Riverine Fishing	10	5.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>100</i>

Market Survey 2000

**Table IV: Mode of Sales of Fish in Markets**

Market	Wholesaler (%)	Retailer (%)	Both	Total	%
Balogun	30(37%)	50(61.7%)	1(1.3%)	81	43.3
Idumota	10(24.4%)	20(48.8%)	11(26.8%)	41	21.9
Idumagbo	15(36.6%)	22(53.6%)	4(9.8%)	41	21.9
Obalende	5(31.2%)	8(50%)	3(18.8%)	16	8.6
Epetedo	2(25%)	5(62.5%)	1(12.5%)	8	4.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>62(33.2%)</i>	<i>105(56.1%)</i>	<i>20(10.7%)</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>100</i>

Market Survey 2000

**Table V: Varieties of Fish in the Markets**

Varieties	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Cat Fish	17	9.1	4
Sardine	60	32.1	2
Titus	63	33.7	1
Hake	35	18.7	3
Argentine	12	6.4	5
<i>Total</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>100</i>	

*Market Survey 2000*

**Table VI: Marketing Margins for Wholesalers**

Fish	Average Cost Per tonne (N000)	Average Selling Price tonne (N000)	Average Operating Cost (N000)	Gross Margin (N000)	Profit Margin (N000)
Sardines	84.4	86.52	1.46	2.12	0.66
Cat Fish	200.0	209.5	4.32	9.5	5.18
Titus	81.6	85.15	1.42	3.55	2.13
Hake	75.4	78.5	1.72	3.1	1.38
Argentine	94.8	99.3	1.65	4.5	2.85

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

These studies revealed that majority of frozen fish sellers were women. This could be attributed to role of women as cooks for the household that ensure the welfare of their families. They therefore have the monopoly of frozen fish trade. The commonest frozen fish traded among others are Titus followed by Sardine and the least was Argentine, which, are got mainly through importation. As a result of the huge sum of money involve in acquiring storage facilities most of the traders are retailers.

For an effective marketing of frozen fish, credit facilities are recommended to increase the traders capital or purchasing power for fish and storage equipment. There is also the need for both government and private individuals to establish more fishponds to reduce the current importation of frozen fish. A stable power supply will reduce operating costs and loss, and will increase profit margins of marketers.

It is highly recommended that in order to be able to have access to modern storage facilities, the traders could form themselves into co-operative societies. This is because it is safer interms of security, for government/private organisations to deal with groups than individuals.

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