

PARENTS' ASPIRATION AND YOUTH PERCEPTION TO SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT IN KAINJI LAKE BASIN.

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ABSTRACT

Artisanal fisheries development in Nigeria, like in any other developing country of the world is characterised by subsistence level of operation using dugout canoe and paddle. This implies that parents and children constitute the labour in use since they only struggle for the upkeep of the family. A total of 240 questionnaires were used to solicit information from the respondents. This total was divided into 120 each for both the parents and the youths respectively. Simple descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and percentages were used to analyze their responses. Parents have strong aspiration for their children to succeed them hence, 78.3% of the parents expressed their aspiration for succession by the younger ones while 83.3% of parents tend to support their aspiration with persuasive strategies such as allowing their children to partake in fishing activities at will. On the part of the youth over 70% of them perceived fishing as a viable business where they can succeed their parents provided government can come to their aid in form of active involvement in the development of rural fisheries. It is therefore believed that fisheries development could achieve rapid improvement if the aspiration of the parents is balanced with the perception of the youth and the government meets their expectation.

INTRODUCTION

The greater percentage of the annual fish landing of Nigeria comes from the rural areas (Amadi 1989). This implies that the peasant fisherfolks in artisanal fisheries who are resource poor and hardly enjoy any development programme from the government are the people that supply the country with her fish needs. It is also understood that the level of fish production of these fishermen and women is still grossly subsistent. It is mostly the parents and their children that are the major stakeholders. Like in many other fields of human endeavours, the parents have their aspirations and dreams on the direction of their occupation for the future so that generation after them can benefit even more than them. The parents want continuity via their children. The younger ones on the other hand have their own perceptions based on the current scenario of benefits and odds associated with job they grew to know with their parents. This research, which is targeted at the parents on one hand and the youth on the other, is based on the principle that the upbringing of the young ones is primarily the responsibility of the parents or guardians. While the young ones now look on to government assistance for their social and economic development so that they grow to be responsible citizens in their field of endeavor.

The fisherfolks comprised of parents and their wards and both groups have their respective aspirations and perceptions on themselves and mutually for each other on how to survive the future through fishing as an occupation or other legitimate sources of survival.

Aspiration is defined as the art of having steadfast desire for something above one. Thus parents aspiration to fisheries development means the consistent desire of the parents for things to improve beyond the present state so that their children can inherit and practice fishing for the sake of continuity and good living.

Perception on the other hand refers to the intuitive action of the mind in recognizing the quality and attributes of a thing. It is the sensation of the mind to an object, material or abstract thing. Therefore youth perception to fisheries development actually refers to the ability of the youth to be cognizant of what obtains in fisheries as it affects this overall judgment.

The perception of the youth to fisheries development is of utmost importance since it determines the continuity and in fact the state of fisheries in the future and it is also central to fisheries development in rural areas. What constitute fisheries development and how the society/government go about fisheries development greatly affects the perception of the youth and its associated judgment. The concept of fisheries development is fundamental to the quest for sustainability in rural livelihood anywhere in the world especially in the developing countries. Fisheries development have only one valid objective that is to promote the welfare of people that are connected to all visible strata of fisheries sub sector of agriculture. Thus, the understanding of fisheries development tends to answer questions about the status of poverty among rural fisherfolks and other stakeholders alike, the employment generation potential of fisheries to the concerned human elements of the society and the ability of fisheries sub sector to address the problem of status inequality in terms of opportunity to harness the abundant fisheries resources to a reasonable level of success without any perceived deprivation and social injustice.

In view of the above understanding of fisheries development as it affects sustainable livelihood, one important panacea to development becomes indispensable in the context of the present day society and affective governance. This panacea bothers on the understanding of the aspiration of parents vis a vis the perception of their wards on fisheries development and sustainability. This will facilitate the formulation of a policy that effectively embraces and promote fisheries development and sustainability in the developing countries. This feat cannot be achieved without first understanding the position of the youth in the society vis a vis their perception to fisheries development on one hand and the aspiration of their parents on the other. It is this understanding about the youth and their parents that go a long way to facilitating policy formulations that recognizes the veritable role of the two in socio economic development for the society.

According to Eremie (2002) young people develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes to work as partners with adults to jointly determine critical issues and the responses to solving community issues. When the potentials of rural youths are fully developed they can create, adapt and utilize technological and natural resources as well as social and institutional capital for sustainable development.

Goedkoop *et al* (2004) state that the experiences of the international center for tropical agriculture (CIAT) in Honduras and Columbia have shown the involvement of children; teenagers and young adults in the analysis and solution to important issues of their communities can provide a new dynamic to rural development.

This study was therefore carried out to assess the perception of the youths on one hand and the aspiration of the parents on the other as regards fisheries development and sustainability. Specifically, this paper seeks to address the following specific objectives:

- Examining the *status quo* of fisheries development with respect to occupational choice around the lake basin.
- Draw out the rationale behind the parents and youths respectively in the concept of succession in fisheries as an occupation.
- To examine the problems of the fisher folks and proffer solutions for the benefit of sustainable fisheries development, poverty alleviation and food security in the lake basin.

METHODOLOGY

The study area

The study was carried out in lake Kainji, which was formed by damming the river Niger at Kainji Island. The dam was completed in 1968 and the reservoir created behind it has a surface area of 1,120 km² at maximum level. The lake is 137km wide and its geographical position is 104°-155°N, 4° 45'E (Welcomme, 1972). Although the lake was formed majorly for hydroelectricity generation, it also offers great opportunities for artisanal fishery.

The study covered each of the sub strata of the basin by targeting the major fishing communities which include, Malale, Buka Dubu, Kokoli, Maigwagware, Dugamashaya, Hikiya, Pasatulu, Tunga Alhaji Shekare, Tunga Alhaji Danbaba, Tunga Baushe, Sakejikinka, Tunga Alhaji Angulu, Anfani, Tunga Gungawa, Maiwindi, Wara Gafara Baban tunga, Kuka-uku, Raishe, Rukubalo. A total of 240 respondents were used. 12 respondents from each of the villages. The study was subjected to descriptive statistics for analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1 shows that among the parents that were interviewed a greater majority (86.7%) of the sampled population were men while 13.3% of them were females. This gives a clue to the gender group on whose hand the onus of caring and fending for the family lies. The men also determine to a large extent, the direction of orientation of the young ones. In most cases, the young ones are guided by the parents and exposing them to the basic rules of operation on the water and out of water so that the young ones can themselves grow to perfection. This conforms to the position of Eremie (1999) that youth as a state of being young and a transition between childhood and adulthood is characterized by energy, intelligence and hope attributes that enable youth to improve their knowledge and capabilities for development and which partly compensate for the seeming handicap of limited access to economic assets such as land. In rural areas, young people have major stake on how the natural, economic and social resources of their communities are developed. However, to feel a part of this process, they must be given the opportunity to build their livelihood on their own terms.

The age group of the parents is stratified in four categories as shown in Figure 2. However the relatively young parents within the age 20-30 had the least percentage of 4.2% while the two other categories 31-40 and 41-50 years had 28.8% and 53.3% respectively. These age groups are in fact the most active group involved in fishing activities and thus are capable of making good living from fishing for the benefit of the family.

The more elderly group of over 50 years was found to be 21.7% of the total sample size. This group is most valuable for their moral guidance to the youths because they are so equipped by virtues of their age and experience. On the marital status 83.3% of the respondents are married while the widowed and divorced accounts for 15% and 1.7% respectively (Figure 3). On the occupational status 77.5% are artisanal fishermen 13.3% are processors while 9.2% are craftsmen. Table 1 shows that the proportion of the respondents with formal education was however low with 15% compared to those with quranic education. In Table 2, the respondents adduced three categories of reasons for being involved in fishing business as an occupation which include more income (20%); reduction of expenses on food (10%) and fishing by inheritance (70%). The data indicate that the drive to make more income in fishing when combined with the drive to fish by inheritance could serve as morale booster for the young ones given better prospects in the occupation. This is corroborated by the data on succession in table 2 the aspiration of the parents for their young ones to succeed them in the fish business (71.3%), though 21.7% of them declined the need for succession by their younger ones. This is because they believe the income from fishing can only sustain them at subsistent level. This fact is buttressed by the data on annual income from fishing in table 2. The table shows that 62.5% of the respondents earned a maximum of 10,000 naira per annum while less than 8% earn between

41 and 50 thousand naira per year. This implies that except there is favorable government effort geared towards assisting the fisherfolks in the area of economic empowerment, the youths may not consider it a suitable business to survive on. More so that in many countries little is done to collect information on rural youth. As a result, knowledge about rural youth livelihoods remains fragmented among service providers. Often key rural policy documents make no mention of youth at all, and even when youths are mentioned it does not reflect informed policy. Policies relating to youth and rural development tend to fall in two categories. Either youth is seen as a marginal and dependent category or they are considered a danger to themselves and a problem for society. Both these approaches undermine the capacity of development workers to see young people as a source of solutions to challenges of rural development (LEISA2004).

A critical analysis of the data on sources of labour in Table 2 indicates that those that use self-labour accounts for 75% of the respondents while family and hired labours are 20.8% and 4.2% respectively. This implies that the fishing activities as practiced by the fisherfolks is labour intensive but they have limited opportunity to hire labour given their subsistence level of operation with low income from fishing activities.

Parents however encourage their wards to pick interest in their occupation through various means. For instance while majority of the respondents (83.3%) gives the younger ones freewill to partake in fishing activities, a few others (16.7%) resolve to the use of such methods as helping the young ones to alleviate their difficulties and also use the profit margin in fishing business as a basis to persuade their children for more dedication and encouraging financial rewards. This goes to underscore the point that a greater proportion of the parents actually want their wards to succeed them after their retirement or even demise.

In line with the encouragement, which the parents give the young ones, the youth are equipped with the necessary training required to keep them on a higher pedestal to really survive in the business. For example, about 66% teach their children on fishing methods, 17.5% on craft/gear making, 13.3 on processing and 3.3% on navigation. Details of this is indicated in table2 under training the youth data

However, given the current scenario of fishing activities at its subsistent level in conjunction with the aspiration of the parents as regards their young ones succeeding them, the fisherfolks were divided on whether their future is secured. The response of the fisherfolks indicate that for a secured future, government need to come to their aid with a progressive policy on fisheries with the youth in focus. This is particularly important since fishing in the study area is majorly an inherited occupation including the youth, Government programme will ensure continuity and sustainability. All the respondents however attributed the insecurity of the future to the following problems in their respective categories e.g. Table 4 categorizes the problems as follows: 20.8% identified insufficient funds, 54.2% identified government negligence, 13.3% poor market while 11.7% decried declining catch in the lake. These problems they consider as very serious threat to fisheries development and the quest for sustainability except something positive is done by way of government intervention through aggressive policies aimed at abating the fisherfolks problems.

The second aspect of this study is based on the position of the youth on sustainable fishery development since youth is an important factor necessary for preserving the heritage of fisherfolks through enabling environment to harness the fishery resources for the benefit of mankind. It is therefore important to examine their perception given the situation of fisheries development at present. Of the 120 youth respondents 79.2% of them were male while 20.8% were females. This indicates that the young males are particularly more active in the art of fishing and play leading roles compared to their counter part young females. Table 4 presents the age group of the respondents (youths) as follows: 15-20 years 60%, 21-25years 34.2% and 26-30 years 5.8%. Evidently the age group of 15-25years is the practically active group in fishing and fish processing activities. Only very few of the respondents (13.3%) were actually found to have

formal education while a greater proportion (86.7%) of them have no formal education. This goes to underscore the problem of lack of infrastructures development such as schools which most of the fishing communities are facing. In a related development when asked if they wish to be more involved in fishing or schooling, the responses showed unequivocal resolve in favor of schooling. Thus 80% of them affirmed their preference for school while the remaining 20% responded in aversion but preferred to carry along their fishing. The group in favor of going to school however maintained that it is only through the use of their knowledge from formal education that they can help themselves to develop fisheries and lift fishing profession from the current doldrums of poverty, stagnation and conservatism which prevents their parents from being successful in the occupation in their attempt to improve on their *status quo* beyond subsistent level of production. This is corroborated by their response to whether or not they wish to succeed their parents in fisheries occupation; 70.8% of them answered "yes" while 29.2% responded on the negative and anchoring their reasons to the problem of negligence which the occupation face presently from government and the problem of fund (Table 5). They affirmed that other professions relating to other sectors of the economy enjoy more government interest and preference. They argued further that even in the agricultural sector; crop and livestock sub sectors are better funded than artisanal fishing. However in order to stem the problem of fund in the short run some sections of the youth preferred to combine fishing with other trade, this includes 82.5% for fishing and schooling; 10% for apprenticeship in other trades and 7.5% for trading (Table 4). This also confirms the fact that the fisherfolks are in dire need of financial assistance to augment the income from fishing as well as the need for the children to be formally educated. Despite the gloomy scenario in the sight of some youths a larger proportion of them still share common faith in the ability of the fishing occupation to sustain them thus securing their future given a favorable operational environment. On what they perceived as the problem of fisheries development they identified them in various perceptions. For example about 23.3% identified poverty as the bane of fisheries development, 37.5% mentioned government negligence of the artisanal fisheries sub sector, 10% decried shortage of fund while 29.2% of them mentioned lack of infrastructure especially schools nearby to develop the young ones. These, the youths believe if the appropriate authorities such as government and interested stakeholders solve them, the occupation would be their main area of interest.

A critical challenge for sustainable rural and agriculture development in Nigeria is therefore the mobilization of large numbers of youth as active participants in the development process.

Waldies (2004) reported that the youth livelihood studies funded by DFID's National Resource system Programme shows that many young people establish successful livelihood by using natural and non natural resources in such a way that the profit from one is later used to invest in another. The youth therefore requires the support of the rural development workers and policy makers in the youth' attempts to meet their needs of "youthhood" while moving towards adulthood to make sustainable living. The absence of this much needed support often results in unpleasant consequences such as rural – urban migration and the attendant resultant effect of being constituted as a societal nuisance, which could be more costly to manage.

A good starting point of nibbling this ugly trend in the bud is to assess the perception of the younger ones as regards to their involvement in an identified field of endeavor. For instance in fisheries where the larger percentage of the annual fish landing of Nigeria comes from the rural areas, parents and the young ones constitutes the principal elements in the production chain. However the current phenomenon of rural – urban migration among youths has reached alarming level that the future of fisheries production on one hand, and the society in general on the other hand is at stake given the Nigerian population growth rate index, crime rate and the standard protein requirement of the country.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research has indicated the complex interrelationship between parents' aspiration and youth perception of fisheries development. It has succeeded in creating a strong basis for resource management through the use of key human resources across generations and which must take proper cognizance of the overwhelming importance government rural policy formulations that provides enabling environment for survival of these generations. In the context of fisheries resource management for the benefit of mankind, the quest for sustainability becomes incomplete unless the aspiration of the parents is balanced by the perception of the youth. This is only possible if youth is recognized as a veritable agent of change and their role in rural development understood as an intricate mechanism necessary to propel one generation to another over time. Thus fisheries resource will continue to sustain man for as long as these two interrelated human elements are adequately cared for. Parents provide the bedrock for the survival of the youth who in turn inherit the legitimate struggle for survival from the parents. But how well the youth succeed in this struggle depends on the quality of fine-tuning enjoyed from the larger society in the form of enabling environment by the government.

Waldie (2004) observed that the key to developing a sustainable rural livelihood is the ability to use key resources in such a way that the ability of future generations to meet their own needs remain un-compromised. Thus the idea here is that sustainability depends on the exchange of information, resources and entitlements between generations. An understanding of how assets and opportunities could be passed from generation to generation is of critical importance in developing rural policies that are appropriate and effective, especially as far as rural youth is concerned.

In the light of the above, the following recommendations are of veritable importance:

- ✓ Government should be fully involved through rural focus- oriented approach in using appropriate rural development workers to regularly conduct research in remote rural fishery communities in order to understand their felt needs and problems.
- ✓ Use the findings of such research to formulate policies that tend to create sense of belonging to a seemingly forgotten but very important segment of human society and whose roles the larger society cannot afford to overlook.
- ✓ Such policies should as a matter of fact focus on rapid appraisal and development of the primary fisheries occupation with an aim of putting up the structures necessary to generate worthy and reliable employment from such occupation for the benefit of the rural people.
- ✓ Human resources development infrastructure such as schools, market and health paraphnelias should be made basic necessities since their absence retards production, innovation dissemination and general development of the fisheries communities and consequently creating negative link on the economy of the larger society.
- ✓ Bankers, other financial institutions, charity foundations and interested stake holders should be encouraged by government through people oriented policies to show practical interest in developing the micro and macro economies of the fisherfolks and their communities at large.

These recommendations when accomplished will no doubt give fisheries development a new facelift and make fisheries occupation a positively generational and sustainable means of livelihood.

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Appendix

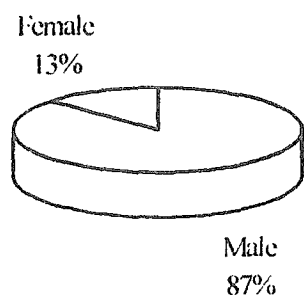


Figure 1: Sex distribution

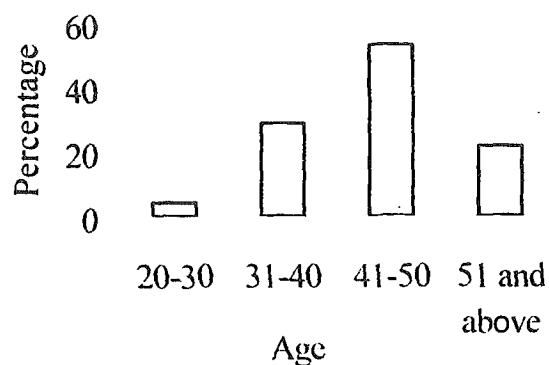


Figure 2: Age distribution

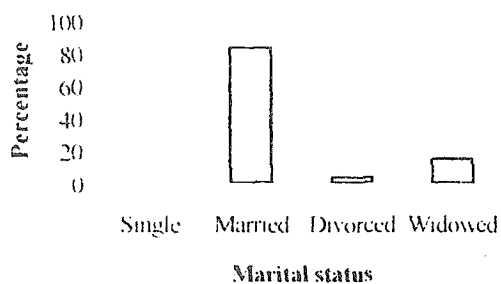


Figure 3: Marital status of respondent

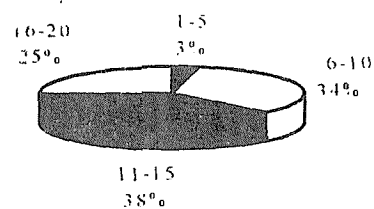


Figure 4: Household distribution

	FREQUENCY	%
OCCUPATION		
Fishermen	23	77.5
Processor	16	13.3
Craft men	11	9.2
Fish marketers	-	-
Total	120	100
EDUCATION		
Formal	18	15
Quranic	102	85
Total	120	100

Table 1: Demographic information

SOURCES OF LABOUR:	FREQUENCY.	%
Self	90	75
Family members	25	20.8
Hired labour	5	4.2
Total	120	100
INCOME REALISED PER ANNUM IN NAIRA		
1000- 10,000		
11,000-20,000	75	62.5
21,000-30,000	18	15
31,000-40,000	13	10.8
41,000-50,000	10	8.3
Above 50,000	6	5
Total	120	100
REASONS FOR INVOLVEMENT IN FISHING BUSINESS		
More income	17	14.2
To reduce expenses on food	5	4.2
Inheritance	98	81.6
Total	120	100
NEED FOR YOUTH TO SUCCEED PARENTS		
Yes		
No	94	98.3
Total	26	21.7
	120	100
PARENTS ENCOURAGING THE YOUTH ON FISHING THROUGH:		
Open declaration of profit	5	4.2
Assisting youth in areas of problems	15	12.5
Allowing the children freedom to partake in fishing at will	100	83.3
Total	120	100
TRAINING THE YOUTH ON:		
Method of fishing	79	65.8
Craft\gear making	21	17.5
Processing	16	13.3
Navigation	4	3.3
Total	120	100

Table 2. Sources of labour, income per annum, reasons for fishing and need for succession.

CATEGORIES OF PROBLEMS	FREQUENCY	%
Insufficient fund	25	20.8
Government negligence	65	54.2
Poor market	16	13.3
Declining catch	14	11.7
Total	120	100

Table 3: Constraints to fishing as a sustainable occupation

SEX	FREQ	%	AGE	FREQ	%	LEVEL OF EDUCATION	FREQ Q.	%	DESIRE TO COMBINE FISHING WITH SCHOOLING & OTHER BUSINESS	FREQ Q	%
Male	95	79.	15-20	72	60	Formal	16	13.3	Fishing & schooling	99	82.5
Female	104	20.	21-25	41	34.	Not in school	104	66.7	Apprentice ship	12	10
Total	120	8	Above 30	7	5.8				Trading	9	7.5
			0	-	-						
			100	120	100					120	100

Table 4: Youth demographic characteristics

THOUGHT OF SUCCEEDING PARENTS AND CERTAINTY OF JOB SECURITY	FREQUENCY.	%
Yes	85	70.8
No	35	29.2
Total	120	100
PROBLEMS FACED OR OBSERVED:		
Poverty	28	23.3
Government negligence	27	37.5
Shortage of fund	30	10
Lack of nearby school and other infrastructures	35	29.2
Total	120	100

Table 5: Youth perception on succession and constraints to fishing as a secured occupation