

# THE ROLE OF FISHERMEN COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF FISHERIES RESOURCES ON KAINJI LAKE BASIN, NIGERIA.

BY

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## ABSTRACT

*Field survey was conducted to evaluate the role of fishermen cooperative in the development of fisheries resources in Kanji Lake. The study was conducted with aid of questionnaires administered in five fishing villages namely Monnai, Yuna, Kaya, Malale and Tunga Danbaba. Ten questionnaires were administered in each fishing village. Majority of the fishermen interviewed are between the ages of 20 – 40 years. The results of the educational background revealed that 60% of the respondents were knowledgeable only on Quranic education. Majority of the respondents (86%) were members of fishermen cooperative societies. Only 32% of the respondents indicated to have benefited for loan and credit facilities. Sixty-nine (69) percent of fishermen realized income of between ₦1, 000 – ₦2, 000 daily. The major problem facing fishermen cooperative includes lack of capital, lack of access to loan and credit facilities, shortage of adequately trained and well-motivated fisheries extension workers, inadequate fishing inputs and high charge of fishing license fees by Kainji Lake Fisheries Management and Conservation Unit (KLFMCU). Recommendation was made on how to improve fishermen cooperative for the development of the lake fisheries resources.*

## INTRODUCTION

Kainji Lake Basin is endowed with a lot of fish resources, but its irrational exploitation and management has led to low catch and consequently low supply of the product. If rationally exploited, there will be increased in the production of fishery needs of the surrounding environment and part of the country's domestic needs at large.

In 1980, Federal Government decided to boost fish production in Nigeria through fishermen cooperative as effective machinery for improvement of economic and social welfare of small-scale farmers through out the federation (Adeyemo, 1982). The history of fishermen cooperative existence in Kainji Lake Basin is dated to 1969 as an offshoot of Cooperative Food Marketing (Ayanda, 1979). When Federal Government Established the Department of Agricultural Cooperatives (FDAC). The Department was responsible for promotion and development of agricultural Cooperatives, Implementation and Monitoring of Cooperatives Projects. Field Officers were mobilized out as a means of involving all farmers groups at grass root level in the decision making process and organization of fish supplies at competitive prices to the consumer. Other side benefits of the societies are the increased and effective employment of labour at the different stages of fisheries activities. The availability of an increased fish output as a result of these activities do contribute immensely to improvement of the socio-economic life of fisher-folks. An additional role given to fishermen's cooperative society is the implementation of fisheries development programme under different successive plans by Nsentip (1981).

Today, perhaps the result of the oil-boom era, fisheries Cooperatives is mainly dormant, poorly organised managed and financed and completely little or various fishing communities are feeling none of their impacts today.

The contemporary fishing cooperative ethnology has led to the investigation of their roles to their clients, whether they are still living up to the above expectations.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.**

This study is intended to access the role of fishermen cooperative/women cooperative society or association in the development of fisheries resources in Kainji Lake Basin. Objectives of the study includes:-

1. To identify the various fishermen cooperative society in Kainji Lake
2. To examine the role of fishermen cooperative or association
3. To examine the problem of the existing fisher folks cooperatives or association in Kainji Lake Basin
4. To make recommendation on way of improving the activities of the fisher folks cooperative or association for fisheries development.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS.**

#### **STUDY AREA.**

Kainji Lake is an artificial lake situated between latitude  $9^{\circ} 50' - 10^{\circ} 55'N$  and longitude  $4^{\circ} 25' - 4^{\circ} 45'E$  with a surface area of  $1,270km^2$  (Welcome, 1972). The lake is bordered by Niger and Kebbi States.

The study covered five (5) fishing villages in the lake (Figure 1) namely; Monnai, Yuna, Malale, Tunga-Darbaba and Kaya.

The population studied was on assessment of fishermen participation in five (5) villages in Kainji Lake Basin.

#### **DATA COLLECTION.**

The methodology of this research study is informed by the system of data collection and analysis. The primary data is made up of questionnaire, total of fifty (50) copies were served on the fishermen.

Ten in each of the five villages, the fishermen were selected randomly. The secondary data were obtained through literature reviewed based on published relevant research works.

#### **DATA ANALYSIS.**

In analyzing the data, the information contained in the questionnaire administered was scored and percentage of the parameters calculated appropriately and tabulated as shown in the tables.

### **RESULTS**

#### **PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS.**

The age, number of wives, educational qualification, fishing experience and number of children are shown on Table 1. Majority of the fishermen interviewed were within the age groups 20-25 years and 26-30 years, and these constituted for 36% and 28% respectively, that is a total of 64% of respondents fall between 20-30 years old. 50% of the respondents have one wife; while 36% had 2 wives, 3 and 4 wives constituted only 6% where as 8% of respondents were single

The results of the educational background shows that majority of the fishermen interviewed (60%) had Quranic education while the remaining (40%) had Western and Adult education. The results of the fishing experience of the respondent indicated that 56% of respondent have reasonable years, while 26% had between 21 – 30 years of experience. Only 16% and 2% of the respondents had experience of 5-10 years and 31 and above respectively.

**Table 1: Distribution of co-operative members by personal characteristics in Lake Kainji.**

<b>Parameters</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age (years)</b>		
20-25	18	36
26-30	14	28
31-35	9	18
36-40	8	16
41-45	-	-
46- 50	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Number of wives</b>		
0	4	8
1	25	50
2	18	36
3	2	4
4	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
Qur'anic	30	60
Primary	-	-
Secondary	4	8
Tertiary	2	4
Adult education	14	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Fishing experience (years)</b>		
5-10	8	16
11-15	14	28
16-20	14	28
21-25	8	16
26-30	8	10
31 ad above	1	2
<b>Number of Children</b>		
1-5	39	78
6-10	11	22

The number of children of the respondents (Table 1) shows that majority (78%) had between 1-5 children while only (22%) had between 6-10 children.

#### **FISHERMEN COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES.**

The membership of fishermen cooperative society and kind of the assistance needed by the society are shown on Table 2, while years of membership registration with cooperative societies are shown in figure 2. Eighty-six percent (86%) of fishermen interviewed belong to cooperative societies, while only 14% had not registered with any cooperative societies. Majority of the respondent (60%) indicated financial assistance as one of the assistance needed by their societies while 32% indicate fishing inputs, only 8% demanded for advised.

The percentage distribution of the fishermen years of registration with cooperative societies is shown in figure 2. Only 46% registered between 1980-1985, while 28% registered

between 1991-1995 and only 22% and 4% registered between 1986-1990 and 2001 – 2004 respectively indicating decline in membership drive

Table 2: Membership and nature of assistance required by fishermen  
Cooperative societies in Kainji Lake Basin, Niger State Nigeria.

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Membership</b>		
Member	43	86
Non-member	7	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Kind of assistance need by society.</b>		
Financial assistance	30	60
Fishing inputs	16	32
Advised	4	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

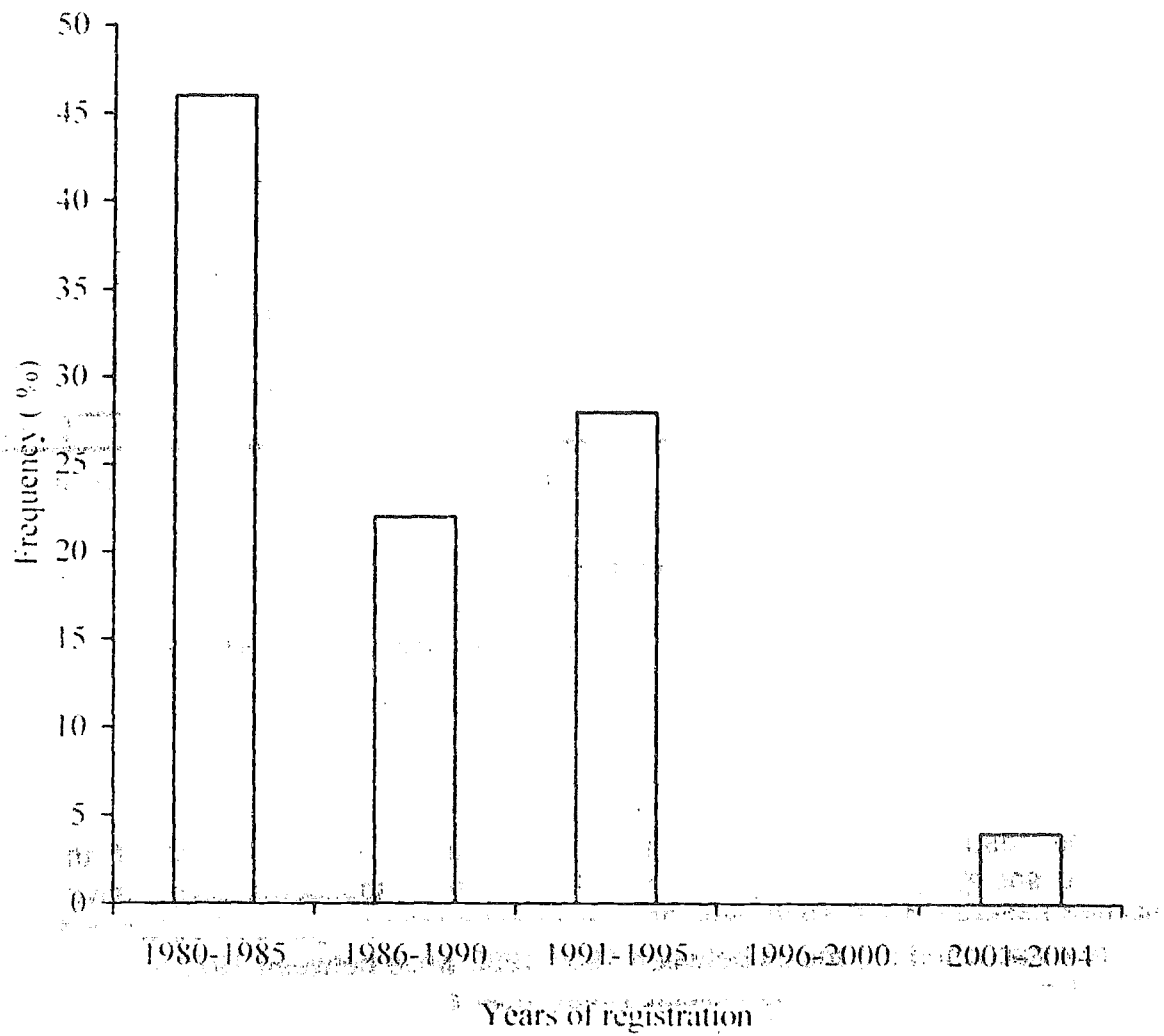


Figure 2: Year of membership registration with co-operative Societies of fishermen in Lake Kainji

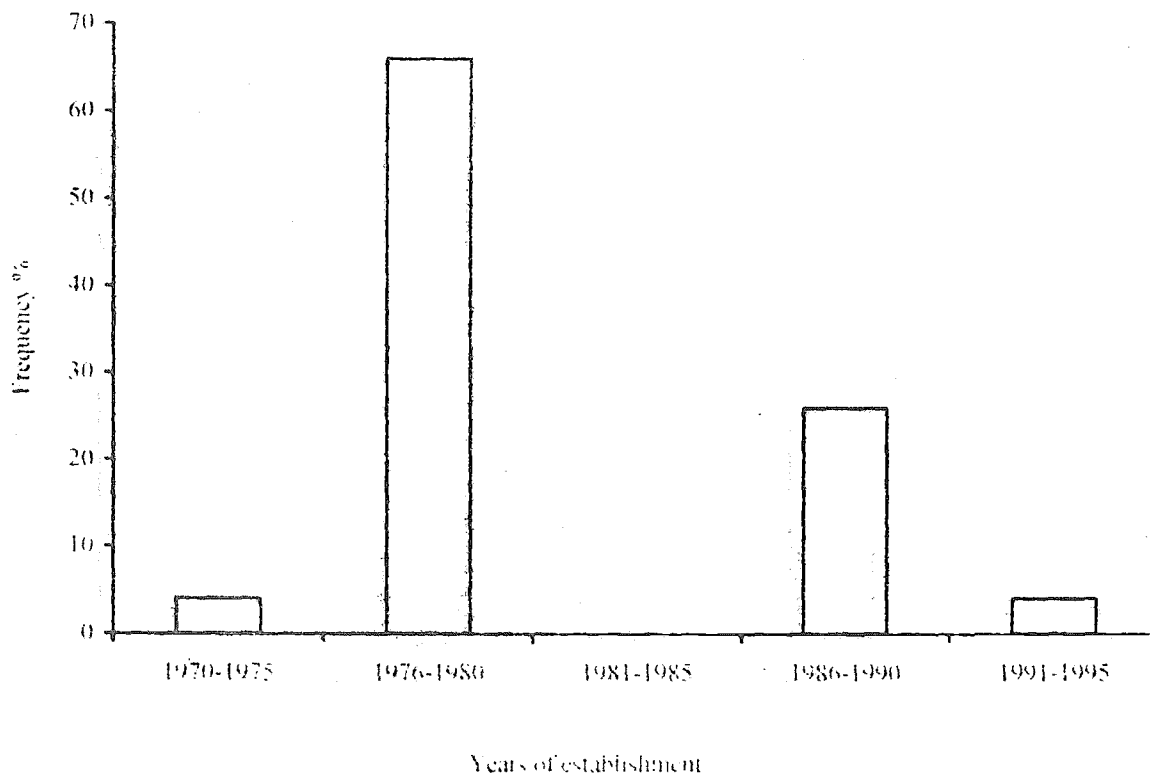


Figure 3 Years of establishment of the members with Co-operative Societies in Lake Kampi

The results from figure 3 shows the year of establishment of the respondents' cooperative societies. Sixty-six percent (66%) of the respondents cooperative societies were established between 1976-1980, only 26% were established/organized between 1986-1990, while between 1970 – 1975 and 1991-1995 constituted only 4% each. This indicates that most of the societies have been in existence for more than two decades.

#### **LOAN AND CREDIT BENEFIT BY RESPONDENTS.**

The loan and credit benefit sources of loan are shown in Table 3. While figure 4 shows the total interest paid from loan obtained by the respondents. Only 32% of respondent benefited from loan and credit facilities from banks and other government agencies. About 68% of fishermen had not benefited from any credit, but only depended on their personal savings to purchase their fishing inputs, 37.5% of the loan beneficiaries obtained their loan from the Nigerian Agricultural Cooperative and Rural Development Bank (NACRDB), while 31.3% and 18.8% obtained loans from Borgu Community Bank (BCB) and local Government respectively. Only 6.2% each obtained loans from Niger State Agricultural Development Project (ADP) and GTZ.

Kainji Lake Fisheries Promotion Project (KLFPP). figure 4 shows the distribution of fishermen total loan interest paid, 62.74% of the respondents paid interest rate of between -N-200- -N-1,000 while 18.25% of the respondents paid total interest between -N1,200 - N2,000, others 12.5% paid total interest of between -N-2,300 - 4,000 and -N-9,200-N10,000 respectively.

Table 3: Loan and Credit benefit by members of fishermen cooperative society in Kainji Lake.

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Do you obtained loan		
Yes	16	32
No	34	68
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
Sources of loan		
Local Government	3	18.8
Nigeria Agricultural coop & Rural Development Bank	6	37.5
Niger State ADP	1	6.2
GTZ KLFPP	1	6.2
Borgu Community Bank	5	31.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>

#### SALES OF FISH CATCH BY RESPONDENTS.

Table 4 shows form of fish sales and sales distribution. While figure 5 shows the daily income of the respondents. Majority (54%) of the respondents sale their fish in fresh form while 46% smoked-dried their fish before they sale. Majority (52%) of the respondents sales catch to fish mongers at the landing site, while 44% sales their catch directly to consumer. Only 2% sell their catch to either cooperative societies or both. Table 5 shows the role of fishermen wives.

#### FISHERMEN COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES AND THE PROBLEMS FACING THEM.

Fishermen cooperative societies play the following roles: procurement of loan to members, purchase of fish from members for sale and assist members in buying of fishing inputs.

The problems faced by fishermen cooperative societies are presented in Table 6.

Table 4: Sales of fish catch by members of fishermen cooperative society in Kainji Lake.

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Form of fish sales		
Smoked-dried	23	46
Fresh	22	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
Sales distributions		
Directly to consumer	22	44
Fish monger	26	52
Cooperative	1	2
Both	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5: Role of fishermen wives in fishing activities in Kainji Lake Basin.**

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Smoked drying	20	43.5
Gutting and washing of fish for before selling	8	17.4
Fish mongers	18	39.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 6: Problem facing fishermen cooperative society.**

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
1. Lack of capital	42	30.4
2. Lack of access to loan and credit facilities	18	13.0
3. Shortage of adequately trained and well motivated fisheries extension workers	15	10.9
4. Inadequate fishing input	20	14.5
5. Low fish catch	6	4.3
6. High charge of fishing license	32	23.2
7. Poor monitoring and supervision of cooperative society by cooperative worker	5	3.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100</b>

The total number not equal to 50 because of multiple responses

## DISCUSSION

Majority of the respondents within the lake are between the ages of 20-40 years, which shows lack of participation of children below the age of 20 years. The contributing factors to these may include schooling and engagement in other occupation especially farming as children are mainly used as farm assistants (Ahmed, 1998). On the other hand, the age range of 46-50 years participates in fishing and formed about 2% of the respondents. The result of the educational background of the fishermen (Table 1) shows that 60% of them are knowledgeable only on Quranic education. This supports the points of Ahmed (1998) that most of the fishermen were Muslim who are mostly knowledgeable in Quranic education. The implications of this as reported by Bolunduro and Falaye (2003) is that most of the fishermen may not be able to read and write (Western education) or have favourable disposition towards adoption of recommended technologies.

Membership of fishermen cooperative societies comprises most of the majority (86%). Some of these societies include Himma Fishermen Cooperative Society Kaya, Alheri Fishermen Cooperative Society Yuna, Monnai fishermen Cooperative Society Monnai, Sarakawa Fishermen Cooperative Society Malale, Danbaba, Fishermen Cooperative Society Tunga – Danbaba.

Some fishermen when asked the reason for not being a member of a Cooperative Society claimed that they were not aware, others claimed that there is no good leadership. The assistance needed by most of the Cooperative Societies to Survive includes, financial assistance, provision of fishing inputs and advised

Majority of the fishermen join the Cooperative Societies between 1980-1995. Only 32% of the respondents indicated to have benefited for loan and credit facilities from Nigeria Agricultural Cooperative and Rural Development Bank (NACRDB), Borgu Community Bank (BCB), Local Government, GTZ Kainji Lake Fisheries Promotion Project (KLFPP) and Niger State Agricultural Development Project which they paid installmentally with interest as shown on figure 4.



Of the total number of fishermen interviewed 54% claimed to sell their fish at landing sites. While 46% smoked their catches, they do sell their smoked fish products at New Bussa and Sabon Pegi markets. There is a good relationship between middlemen in the area of sales of fish. They prefer selling fish directly to consumers who may not be regularly wanting. 69% of fishermen realized between N1000-N2,000 daily.

#### **RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION.**

In view of the numerous problems that have crippled fishermen cooperative societies in lake Kainji, the following recommendations are made to bring them on stream for role-play.

The Niger State and Federal Government through their respective fisheries sections under the Federal and State Ministries of Agriculture, should make fishing inputs such as nets, hooks, outboard engines, canoes readily available to fishermen cooperatives as enjoyed by their counterparts in the other sector of Agriculture. The existing poorly functional fishermen cooperative societies should be revived and new ones established to have a voice to government and have access to credit facilities and extension of fisheries technology. The income generated on fish daily from sales of fish shows that fishing could be attractive and profitable venture with a high tendency of reducing the present high tendency of high unemployment rate in the country.

In order to have a positive effect on the economy, the finance or lending institutions should be encouraged to provide loans to artisanal fishery sector.

Fisheries cooperative societies should pool resources together to handle the marketing of their catch in order to influence the prices of their products.

Agencies in charge of supervision of cooperative societies should step-up their supervisory and advisory roles to bring them stand on their feet.

These societies can as well liaise with the Apex Fishermen/Association to solicit for support from their stronger counterparts from developed nations to come to their aid.

At the end of this survey on the Role of Fishermen Cooperative in the Development of Fisheries Resource on Kainji Lake, indicated that, there were no functional or active fishermen cooperative societies in the lake. This is a major constraint to fishing and the development of the lake.

Fishermen do not have access to loans, credit facilities, training, advice from extension agents and supervision to accord them the opportunities to acquire inputs, processing and storage of facilities, knowledge on the use of new technology etc to enhance their productivity.

It has been reported that 30,000 tones of fish was caught in 1997 equivalent to eight hundred and forty million Naira (840 m). If the above figures is to be sustained every year in the Lake Kainji of Niger and Kebbi States (which have jurisdiction over the lake) fishermen cooperative societies need to be activated the play their roles efficiently.

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