

# INVESTIGATION OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND POTENTIALS OF RURAL FISHER FOLKS IN OYAN LAKE AREA.

IKENWEIWE, N. B., OTUBUSIN, S. O., \*AWOTUNDE, J. .M. AND \*\*OKE, O. A.

Department of Aquaculture and fisheries Management

\*Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development

\*\*Department of Biological Sciences

University of Agriculture, PMB 2240, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.

E mail address:- [titobola2007@yahoo.com](mailto:titobola2007@yahoo.com).

## Abstract

An investigation of the socio-economic potential of the inhabitants living around Oyan lake (40km<sup>2</sup> surface area) was carried out between January 2001 and August 2002. Five hundred (500) questionnaires were distributed among the people living around the entire stretch of the lake and 283 people responded. The commercial fish landing estimates showed that the total landing for the entire period of study was 4,628 (number) weighing 1,856.6kg. Mean catch per boat per sampling day (number and weight) was estimated to be 113 and 4.28kg respectively. Therefore the estimated annual fish landing (number and weight) per boat from 317 fishing days were 35,821 and 1,356.7kg respectively. The potential annual fish yield from commercial fishery for the lake was 147.5 tonnes while the total number of active boats recorded for the entire lake was 43,241.

**Keywords:** Socio-economic, occupational activities, social conditions, Oyan lake.

## Introduction

Nigeria has numerous inland water bodies most of which are potential sources of fish that provide much needed protein for the people (Ita, 1993). The existence of over 323 man-made lakes occupying a total area of 137,802 hectares of land (Ita *et al.* 1985) and several natural ones, makes the study of their fisheries imperative.

Wherever such water bodies are located there are often times fishermen settlements. There are three (3) settlement camps around the Oyan Lake. These are: Ibaro, Abule titun and Igbo-Ora (O-ORBDA, 1998) The settlements have a total of 211 houses comprising 25 three-bedroom and 186 two-bedroom houses (Ofoezie *et al.*, 1991) which resettled the natives displaced by the construction of the Lake. There are other villages namely Apojola, Imala-Odo and Akiro where some migratory fisher folks settle their families in make-shift houses.

The culture and socio-economic life styles of these fishing communities relate directly to the yield of the lake and impacts on the quality of lake water. Thus, the study of the socio-economic activities of lake side inhabitants will contribute to the needed baseline data for the efficient, sustainable exploitation, and utilization of the aquatic resources of the lake. Such data will also be of immense value in providing fishery management plan for the lake. An evaluation of the fishers catches are also desirable to formulate management and development strategies that will ensure optimal utilization of fishery and economic potential of the lake.

### **Materials and Methods**

Structured questionnaires were administered to five hundred (500) randomly selected fisher folks in the three landing depots, (namely:- Station 1, Station 2 and Station 3) around Oyan Lake Area. (Fig 1 ). The objectives of the survey were to: (a) identify all the existing fishing villages around the lake, and existing social amenities. (b) take total count of all the fishers and other professionals in the villages; (c) identify the types of fishing equipment and materials used by the fishers and (d) estimate the catch per boat by numbers and weights of all species caught from a few randomly selected fishing villages and fisher. The method described by Bazigos (1972) was adopted in this research. The duration of the survey and catch assessment was 20 months (between January 2001 and August 2002).

### **Results**

**Socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the respondents.** A total of 283 artisanal fishers were located around three of the six (6) fish landing stations along the lake. 78.1% of the fisher folks were male while 21.9% are female. More than half (58.7%) were Muslims, while 27.7% were Christians and (13.4)% were traditionalists. 40% of the respondents were within 31 and 40 years while 23.7% are 41 and 50 years. 51% of them have no formal education; while 37.5% had primary education and 11.3% had secondary education. 54.4% were married and have households of between 6-12 persons. 64.3% of these have more than four children. Society lives here are prevalently communal. Most (67.1%) of the fisher folks around the lake are of the Idoma tribe from Benue State .27.9% are Hausa from Kainji Area (Nupe) and 4.9% comprise the Eguns from Lagos State, Fulanis from Chad and Niger Republic; and the Yorubas from Ogun. Only 41.3% of these settlers engage in active fishing. 61.1% of these have been fishing for more than 10 years. A quarter (25%) of them claimed making between N1,000 N15,000 from fishing in a month. Deduction from Table 1 show that less than half (44.9%) of the respondents invested mainly on fishing nets, nearly one third (32.2%) invested on canoes, and 23% invested on over half drums? As to method of disposing their catch 40.6% of the fisher have permanent customers. Majority (70%) of them sold their fish at Olomore fresh fish market while the others took their fish to Ayetoro and Lafenwa markets. 80.9% of the respondents agreed that the months of April through September were the peak marketing months which also coincide with the period of high water level and fish breeding in the lake. Fish marketing is constrained by the lacks of access roads. The only route is via the water itself. Due to lack of electricity, preservation of fish is by "ice-boxing". Only 3.5% of the fisher folk are generating sets for the operation of refrigerators.

There is no pipe-borne water. 78.4% of them depend on the lake water while 19.1% dug wells, and insignificant percentage (2.5%) fetch water from outside the locality. Equally there are no health facilities. Fishing, farming, hunting, trading and artisanship are the predominant activities of the settlers around the Oyan Lake, but fishing is more significant. Other activities such as weaving (mending and making) of fish nests, gura, wire trap, bamboo traps are "pass-time" activities.

### **Discussion**

Fishing activities in the stations is neither gender nor status dependent as both males and females whether married or not, nor widowed or divorced engage in active fishing. This is especially the

## Conclusion

The percentage of settlers at the Oyan lake area who engage in fishing activities is very high being above 97%. Fishing activities involve fishing (capture) and ancillary activities like net mending, marketing and processing. All these are commercial in proportion since other activities are mainly part time. Hunting is a secondary activities engaged in to supplement income. The absence of any social amenity and health care affects the general welfare of the settlers. Good roads, electricity and pipe borne water are very essential in this community to enhance their productivity and improve their income.

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents (n=283) based on Investment and Social Amenities, Marketing Cumulative**

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage	Percent
<b>1 Major Investment in Fishing</b>			
Canoes	91	32.2	32.2
Over/Half Drums	65	23	55.1
Fishing Nets	127	44.9	100
<b>2 Types of Health Facility used Area</b>			
Non in Locality	282	99.64	99.64
Private Hospital/Chemist	1	0.36	100
<b>3 Method of Disposal of catch</b>			
Combinations	83	29.3	29.3
Daily market	43	15.2	44.5
Permanent buyer	115	40.6	85.2
Weekly market	42	14.8	100
<b>4 Common methods of Preserving fish</b>			
Combinations	84	29.7	29.7
Degutting, salting & Smoking	47	16.6	46.3
Sun drying	19	6.7	53
Smoking	133	47	100
<b>5 Availability of market in Study area</b>			
Yes	0	0	0
No	283	100	100
<b>6 If market is not available, Indicate the nearest</b>			
Olomore	200	70.6	
Ayetoro	62	21.91	92.51
Lafenwa	21	7.42	100
<b>7 Peak Marketing Months</b>			
Jan-March	26	9.2	9.2
April June	117	41.3	50.5
July Sept.	112	39.6	90.1
Oct. Dec.	28	9.9	100

## References

- Bazigos, G.P.(1972). The design of fisheries statistical survey inland waters. Fisheries Technical Paper 133pp.
- Braimah, L.I. (2002). Fisheries of Lake Volta In: Current Status of fisheries and fish stocks of the four largest African Reservoirs Kainji, Kariba, and Volta. CIFA Technical Paper 30. Pp.113-133.

- 
- Henderson, H.F.(1973a) A limnological description of Kainji Lake. FAO Technical Report No 10. pp 47.
- Henderson, H.F.(1973b) Stratification and circulation in Kainji lake. In: Man-Made lakes, their problems and environmental effects. Geophys. Monogr. Ser. Vol. 17, (eds) W. C, Ackermann, G.F White and E.B. Washington, D.C 1973).
- Ikenweije, N. B. (2005). Limnology and plankton abundance in relation to Fish production in Oyan Lake, South West Nigeria. A Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Aquaculture and Fisheries Management, University of
- Ita, E. O. and Mdaihi, M. (1997). The current status of fish stock and fisheries In Kainji Lake. Consultancy Report on fish stock assessment in Kainji Lake, to the Nigerian German (GTZ) Kainji Lake Fisheries Promotion Project, New Bussa.
- Ita, E. O (1993). Inland fishery Resources of Nigeria. CIFA/FAO Occasional Paper No. 20.DT/T1230 pp. 120.
- Ita, E. O, Sado, E.K, Balgun, J.K, Pandogari, A, and Ibitoye, B, (1985) Preliminary checklist of inland water bodies in Nigeria with special Reference to ponds, lakes, reservoirs and major rivers. Kainji Lake Research Institute technical Report series. No. 14. 51p.
- Ofiezue, J. E, Imevbore, A.M.A, Balogun, M. O. Ogunkoya O.O, Asaolu, S.O (1991). A Study of an outbreak of Schistosomiasis in two Resettlement villages near Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. Journal of Heminthology, 65: 95 102.
- Ogun Osun river Basin Development Authority (O-ORBDA) (1998). Oyan River Dam facilities. Report of the committee on the utilization Of Oyan River Dam facilities. What it is, what it does and how it works. Unpublished.
- Olurin, K. B. (1994). Ecology of feeding, reproduction and growth of the Fisheries in Oyan Lake, Abeokuta, Nigeria. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ibadan. 270 pp.