

ATTITUDE OF FISHERFOLKS TOWARDS ADOPTION OF EXTENSION ACTIVITIES IN LOWER KAINJI LAKE BASIN

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ABSTRACT ✓

This study examined the attitude of fishermen towards extension activities in the lower Kainji Lake Basin, Niger State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select five fishing villages from which 100 fishermen were drawn for the study. Structured questionnaire was developed in lined with the objectives to obtain information from respondents. Data collected were analyzed using frequencies and % counts. Majority (52%) of the fishermen was in their prime age and 57% had completed one formal education or the other. It also indicated that 67% had >20 years experience in fishing activities, 40% use gill nets that gave 95% of respondents fishing gear maintenance job. About 64% of respondents reported irregular extension visits though 72% perceived extension service to be useful and that information on fisheries were obtained from the research institute (57%) which enhanced the income of 65% of the fisherfolks. Recommendations were made on how to enhance extension delivery and adoption in the lake.

INTRODUCTION

Fish is a vital source of protein in the diet of most Nigerians. Fish also contains a number of minerals and vitamins, which are valuable components of human dietary requirement and animal feed stuff. Fisheries provide gainful employment for many Nigerians. Apart from employment in direct fishing, many Nigerians earn their living from through processing, preservation and marketing while some are engaged in fisheries research project (Oladoja, 2005). Fisheries development programme of various levels of government in the past failed to make desired impact on the fish production because their design and implementation lacked adequate research and extension (World Bank, 1980). In terms of extension in fisheries, they were concentrated in captured fisheries (Gaffar, 1990). According to National Agricultural Extension Research Liaison Service (NAERLS, 1995) prospect for fisheries extension development became brighter since the advent of the nationwide adopted training and visit extension system of the states. Agricultural development programmes institutional set up in fisheries extension include; the NAERLS, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria which has the mandate for dissemination, research findings from research institutes through print and electronic media to the whole country and Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) which supervises the state ADP who are responsible for grassroots extension delivery. The appraisal of fisherfolks attitudes towards extension activities is important because extension services use education principles to enhance the capacity of fisherfolks to enable them deal successfully with their problems. The main aim of fisheries extension is to help farmers who receive the service to increase incomes derived from various fishing activities by increasing yield, reducing cost, improving exploitations of available resources and designing a better mix of products (Keynan *et al.*, 1997).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On age, 52% of the respondents have their age range between 21 and 30 years, while 27% fell within 31–40 years, 15% accounted for the age group greater than 20years while 6% were within the age range of 41 – 50 years. This implies that, majority of the fishermen are in their productive age hence, it is expected of them to have high productivity. Also, 35% of the respondents have Koranic education, 57% have primary education while only 8% have secondary education. This implies that majority of the fishermen can read and write in English and/or Arabic, hence can decode printed extension information in either languages. This supports Oladipo (1999) that in addition to age, education is an important factor in accessing productive resources. Analyses of fishing experience revealed that majority of the respondents (67%) possess a fishing experience beyond 20 years while 23% of the fishermen had fishing experience between 11–19 years. Table 1 above shows the various sources by which fishermen obtained their fisheries information. The study revealed that 57% obtained fisheries from the research institute, while 25% obtained from the ADP and 18% from other sources varying from "Sarkin ruwa" and colleagues. Table 2 shows how often the respondents receive information from extension agents. 72% of the respondents indicated that information on extension services were received yearly, 10% quarterly, 6% monthly while 12% never receive any visitation from extension officers. The table also shows that none of the respondents receive information on

extension services weekly. This implies that the rate at which information is received affects assimilation and hence adoption of innovation.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents based on source of fisheries information.

Source	Frequency	%
ADP	25	25
Research Institute	57	57
NGO	—	—
Others	18	18
Total	100	100

Table 2: Distribution of respondents based on extension agents' visits.

Rate	Frequency	%
Weekly	—	—
Monthly	6	6
Quarterly	10	10
Yearly	72	72
Never receive visit	12	12
Total	100	100

Table 3 shows that majority of the respondents (64%) had extension services provided as being inadequate while only 23% saw extension services provided as being adequate and 13% saw the services of extension as being moderate. From the result obtained, this implies that extension service delivery is grossly inadequate in the study area. Table 4 shows the perception of respondent to extension service. Many respondents (72%) saw extension service to be useful, while 16% were not satisfied with the extension delivery and also 12% are of the opinion that extension service is not useful. The implication of this is that an increase in the extension delivery and numerical strength of agents can increase the level of acceptability and hence the adoption of innovations transferred to the target population.

Table 3 Distribution of respondents' reactions to adequacy of fisheries extension service.

Reaction	Frequency	%
Adequate	23	23
Moderate	13	13
Inadequate	64	64
Total	100	100

Table 4: Perception of Respondents to Extension Services.

Perception	Frequency	%
Not useful	12	12
Useful	72	72
Very useful	16	16
Total	100	100

With respect to impact of extension service on fishing activities, Table 5 revealed that 65% of the respondents perceived extension services have increased their income level, 7% indicated it enhanced their method of fish processing while 10% opined that it has increase their use of improved technology in fishing. This is indicative of enhanced extension delivery system for the socio-economic improvement of the fishing communities. Table 6 shows the distribution of respondents as

regards to specific extension service they receive from extension agents. It could be observed from the table that majority of the respondents (95%) benefited from service as regards to improve maintenance of fishing gear and craft, while 78% on the use of appropriate fishing mesh and 10% on preventing insect pest menace.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents on impact of extension on fishing activities.

Impact	Frequency	%
Enhanced Income	65	65
Enhanced fish processing	7	7
Increased used of improved technology	10	10
No impact	18	18
Total	100	100

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents Access to Extension Service on use of innovation.

Activities	Frequency	%
Improved maintenance of fishing gear/craft.	95	95
Hygienic handling of freshly caught fish.	20	20
Use of appropriate fishing mesh size	78	78
Improved fish smoking kiln	12	12
Preventing insect pest menace	10	10
Total	215	215

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the attitude of fishermen in the fishing communities along the Lake Basin of Niger State towards technology transfer system. Fishermen only had access to extension services provided by the research institute which was erratic hence they are of the opinion that extension delivery in the study area is grossly inadequate. Though, some of the anglers were of the opinion that extension activities are useful as it enhanced catch, qualitative processed fish, good storage hygiene and income. The study also revealed that only NIFFR extension agents were seemingly active in the study area. It was observed that irregular contact poor delivery and inadequate personnel responsible for technical ignorance, poor assimilation and hence low adoption and impact of extension delivery system in lower Kainji Lake Basin. Based on the findings the following recommendations were made; Fishermen should be given adequate awareness so that they will not find it difficult to understand extension service when brought to them. There is need for regular visit (that is fortnightly) of extension agents to the fishermen in other to train and disseminate information on new fishing techniques because the rate at which information is receive affect adoption and assimilation rate. The state and local governments should provide other source of extension service such as Agricultural Development Programme should be easily and readily available for fishermen. This will lead to increase in the rate of extension service in the study area.

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