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## AQUACULTURE

### COMPARATIVE GROWTH RESPONSE OF AFRICAN CATFISH *CLARIAS GARIEPINUS* FINGERLINGS FED WITH IMPORTED AND LOCAL FEEDS

AUTA, J., \*YASHIM, Y.E., DAMBO, A. and TIAMIYU, B.B.

Department of Biological Sciences,  
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

[umana2007@yahoo.com](mailto:umana2007@yahoo.com)

\*Corresponding author

#### ABSTRACT

The comparative growth response of African catfish fingerlings (*Clarias gariepinus*) fed with three (3) local and three (3) imported feeds was studied in the Department of Biological Sciences, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria between September and October, 2009 with the aim of establishing the best quality feed in terms of specific growth rate, total weight and percentage survival rate for a period of 8 weeks (56 days). One hundred and twenty (120) fingerlings of *Clarias gariepinus* and six commercial feeds with varying crude proteins namely Chivita, Aquaplus, Vital, Skrettings, Multifeds and Coppens were used for the experiment. Some water quality parameters analyzed indicated temperature varied from 25.5°C to 28.0°C while pH and dissolved oxygen ranged from 6.6 to 7.2 and 6.3mg/l to 8.2mg/l respectively. The treatment shows significant difference in terms of mean weight gain, specific growth rates and survival rate. The lowest SGR was 0.31 and 0.89 the highest. Fish fed with Chivita and Coppens showed the best growth compared to other treatments.

**Key words:** African catfish, local feeds, imported feeds.

#### INTRODUCTION

The culture of fish is receiving a lot of attention in Nigeria with the result that new cultivation techniques are being introduced and adopted. Over the last decade, spectacular growth has taken place in aquaculture in Nigeria. Fish farming activity in Nigeria started about 50 years ago (Olagunju, *et al.*, 2007) and as now aquaculture in the country is in the developing stage, because it has not been able to meet the demand of the ever increasing population (Ojutiku, 2008). Fish feeds are used in aquaculture to increase production and maximize profit. Feeds in intensive fish culture consume about 60% of the capital cost (Eyo, 2001). For aquaculture to be highly successful in Nigeria there is need for good quality and cheap feed, which can also encourage small scale farmers in the field of aquaculture for sustainable production and also meet the demand of fish. In Nigeria, there are different fish feeds with different compositions. The amount of feed consumed, age, body size and temperature are the most important factors that limit maximum growth of fish (Machiels and Henken, 1985). The present work assesses the growth response of *Clarias gariepinus* fed local and imported feeds.

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

One hundred and fifty fingerlings of *Clarias gariepinus* were obtained from Kune Integrated Farm, Funtua, Katsina state. The fish were transported to the Fisheries Laboratory, Department of Biological Sciences, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in fifty (50) litres plastic bowls where they were acclimatized for one week. During the period of acclimatization the fish were fed *ad libitum* (Anibeze and Eze, 2000) at 5% body weight twice daily (Okoye *et al.*, 2001) with a formulated diet of 35% crude protein. Feed not consumed and fecal matter was siphoned out every two days. At the end of the acclimatization period, fish were randomly selected and stocked into 12 glass aquaria with each aquarium containing 10 fish. Feeding was suspended 24 hours before the feeding trial to increase appetite and reception for new diet (Madu and Akilo, 2001). Three imported (Skrettings, Multifeds, Coppens) and three local (Chivita, Aquaplus, Vital) commercial feeds were obtained. The feeds contained four different levels of crude protein-38.0%, 40.0%, 42.0% and 45.0 % (Table 1). Each test diet was fed to duplicate groups for 8 weeks.

The temperature, pH and dissolved oxygen of the water supplied the aquaria were monitored on weekly basis. The initial weight of the fish at the commencement of the experiment and final weight was determined using Metler weighing balance (model P168). Biweekly weight measurements were taken to monitor weight gain. The Specific Growth Rate (SGR) was calculated as described by Herper (1998). Mean values of the water quality parameters measured was calculated. Mean values of weight measurements were subjected to Analysis of variance (ANOVA) and tested for significance difference at P=0.05(5% probability level). Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used to rank the means.

#### RESULTS

Table 2 indicates that the mean temperature of water in the aquaria ranged between 25.5°C and 28.0°C. Mean dissolved oxygen varied from 6.3mg/l to 8.2mg/l. The data on growth response of *Clarias gariepinus* fingerlings is shown in Table 3. In terms of total weight gain, Chivita gave the best growth (53.2g) followed closely by Coppens

(52.2g), while Aquaplus had the lowest weight gain. The highest SGR (0.89) was obtained in *C. gariepinus* fed Coppens followed by Chivita. Aquaplus gave the lowest SGR. The SGR of fingerlings fed with Chivita and Coppens were significantly different from those fed with Aquaplus feed ( $P < 0.05$ ).

Table 1: Biochemical Composition of Commercial Feeds

Feed	Protein (%)	Fibre. (%)	Fat (%)	Ash (%)	Phosphorus (%)
Chivita	45.0	3.0	8.0	8.0	0.8
Aquaplus	40.0	3.0	3.5	-	1.0
Vital	38.0	3.5	9.5	-	2.0
Skrettings	45.0	0.9	14.0	8.5	1.3
Multifeeds	45.0	2.5	12.0	8.5	1.2
Coppens	42.0	1.8	13.0	7.4	1.0

Table 2: Mean ( $\pm$ SE) values of water quality parameters measured during the experiment.

Week	Temperature( $^{\circ}$ C)	pH	Dissolved Oxygen(mg/l)
1	27.0 $\pm$ 0.5	7.1 $\pm$ 0.3	6.3 $\pm$ 0.05
2	26.5 $\pm$ 0.1	6.7 $\pm$ 0.1	6.8 $\pm$ 0.1
3	28.0 $\pm$ 0.3	7.1 $\pm$ 0.2	8.2 $\pm$ 0.5
4	26.5 $\pm$ 0.2	6.9 $\pm$ 0.04	6.5 $\pm$ 0.3
5	26.0 $\pm$ 0.1	7.2 $\pm$ 0.2	7.1 $\pm$ 0.3
6	25.5 $\pm$ 0.3	6.6 $\pm$ 0.03	6.9 $\pm$ 0.03
7	25.9 $\pm$ 0.5	6.8 $\pm$ 0.3	7.3 $\pm$ 0.2
8	27.4 $\pm$ 0.1	7.1 $\pm$ 0.4	7.5 $\pm$ 0.3

Table 3: Growth performance of *Clarias gariepinus* fingerlings fed commercial feeds.

Feed	MIW(g)	MFW(g)	TWG(g)	DWG(g)	SGR(%d <sup>-1</sup> )
Chivita	25.50	78.71	53.21	0.95	0.87 <sup>a</sup>
Aquaplus	25.59	38.25	12.67	0.23	0.31 <sup>b</sup>
Vital	28.98	69.12	40.14	0.72	0.69 <sup>ab</sup>
Skrettings	25.64	65.59	39.95	0.71	0.70 <sup>ab</sup>
Multifeeds	24.58	57.22	32.64	0.59	0.65 <sup>ab</sup>
Coppens	24.31	76.52	52.21	0.89	0.89 <sup>a</sup>

MIW=Mean Initial Weight, MFW=Mean Final Weight, TWG=Total Weight Gain, DWG=Daily Weight Gain, SGR=Specific Growth Rate. Means having the same superscript are not significantly different ( $P > 0.05$ ).

## DISCUSSION

The water quality parameters showed little variation. The range of temperature (25.5 $^{\circ}$ C-28.0 $^{\circ}$ C), pH (6.6-7.2) and dissolved oxygen (6.3mg/l-8.2mg/l) obtained is favourable for fish culture, they are within the range described as optimal by Boyd (1979) and this agrees with similar work by Balogun, et al., 2004. Agokei, et al. (2011) reported a higher SGR value of 3.19% $d^{-1}$  which may be due to feeding frequency and the type of feed. Feeding frequency influence growth performance of *Heteroclaris* under laboratory conditions (Dada and Akinwande, 2005). The high growth rate recorded in fingerlings fed Chivita and Coppens may be attributed to the high nutritive value of the feeds and tolerable physico-chemical parameters against the lesser values in Multifeeds and Aquaplus could which could be due to the anti nutritive elements present in the feeds, this is also in line with Dada and Gnanados, 1983 who obtained high values for Chivita and Coppens. The growth of fish depends upon the ingredients and its percentage in the formulated feed (Glencross, et al., 2007).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, Chivita and Coppens are the best feeds that supported the growth of *Clarias gariepinus* cultured in glass aquaria tank, economically vital feeds also performed well and is the cheapest in terms of price as such its preferred for most optimal growth and cost benefits.

Therefore both imported and local feeds are equally recommended for use in feeding of fingerlings of *Clarias gariepinus*. Further investigation should be carried on other fish species under different culture conditions in earthen and concrete ponds.

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