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Assessment of Small-Scale Fisherfolks' Marketing Channels and Strategies in Ido and Egbeda LGAs of Oyo State

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ABSTRACT

Marketing strategy allows an organization to concentrate its limited resources on the greatest opportunities for increasing sales and dominance of a target market. This study was conducted to assess the marketing channels and strategies adopted by small-scale fisherfolks in Ido (Eleyele reservoir) and Egbeda (Asejire reservoir) LGAs of Oyo state. A two-stage (purposive and simple random) sampling technique was used for this study. A total of 150 respondents participated in the study. A well-structured questionnaire was used in eliciting information from the respondents. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics. The results revealed that majority (75.3%) of the respondents were male, while a higher proportion (41.3%) had secondary education. In addition, most of the respondents ((67.3%) were fishermen and in the age range 40-49 years (38.0%). Larger proportion (69.3%) sell their fish products in the local market and most (82.0%) offer special discount to attract customers. In addition, 68.0% of the respondents added value to the fish to increase income. Majority (62.0%) needs training on branding of their products and more than half (59.3%) opined that regulations could help improve fish marketing. We hereby recommend that the fisherfolks' groups in the study area should be trained on products' development and branding. Also, there should be establishment of fish market for the purpose of price regulation.

Keywords:
Fish market, marketing channels and strategies, products' branding, small-scale fisherfolks

Introduction

Marketing is generally considered as the process by which companies build strong customer relations (Kotler & Armstrong, 2019). A strategy on the other hand is a firm's game plan for competition and survival in a turbulent environment (Kortler & Porter, 2018). According to Porter and Kramer (2019), a marketing strategy allows an organization to concentrate its limited resources on the greatest opportunities to increase sales and dominance of a target market niche.

Fish from inland capture fisheries are amongst the most traded commodities in the world and therefore contribute significantly to supporting livelihoods (Loring, 2019). According to FAO (2020), 120 million people are dependent on fisheries for their livelihoods, and more than 90 percent participate in small-scale fisheries. Small-scale fisheries play a crucial role in promoting sustainable livelihoods, and reducing poverty.

Despite this, small-scale fishers often receive inadequate financial compensation due to various factors that hinder their ability to sell their catch at fair prices and add value to it. These factors include local

marketing schemes, trade barriers, etc. This study aims to assess the marketing channels and strategies adopted by small-scale fisherfolks in Ido and Egbeda LGAs of Oyo state.

Methodology

A multi-stage sampling technique was used for this study. The first stage involved purposive technique for selecting the two (2) LGAs (Ido and Egbeda) hosting inland water bodies where small-scale fishers, operate. The second stage involved simple random sampling for selecting seventy-five (75) respondents from each of the LGAs. A well-structured questionnaire was used in eliciting information from the respondents. The data collected was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Variables	Labels	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Sex	Female	37	24.7
	Male	113	75.3
Marital Status	Single	37	24.7
	Married	104	69.3
	Widowed	8	5.3
	Divorced	1	.7
Education	Non-formal	29	19.3
	Primary	24	16.0
	Secondary	62	41.3
	Tertiary	35	23.3
Age Group	Below 20	4	2.7
	20-29	29	19.3
	30-39	41	27.3
	40-49	57	38.0
	50 and above	19	12.7
Job Occupation	Fishermen	101	67.3
	Middlemen	8	5.3
	Trader	24	16.0
	Smoker	7	3.3
	Fisher Trader	10	6.7

Job experience	Less than 2 years	6	4.0
	2-5 Years	34	22.7
	6-10years	41	27.3
	11-20 years	50	33.3
	20 years and above	19	12.7

Table 1 showed that more than half (75.3%) of the respondents were male with higher proportion (38.0%) in the age range 40-49 years. A majority (69.3%) of the respondents were married and most were fishermen. A greater proportion (41.3%) had a secondary education while some (33.3%) had between 11 and 20 years of work experience. The details were presented in Table 1.

Table 2: Marketing channels and strategy.

Variables	**YES**		**NO**	
	Frequency (N)	**Percentage (%)**	**Frequency (N)**	**Percentage (%)**
Do you make sales daily?	107	71.3	43	28.7
Do you currently sell your fish directly to consumers?	131	87.3	19	12.7
Have you ever used social media to market your product?	48	32.0	102	68.0
Do you sell your fish at local market?	104	69.3	46	30.7
Do you currently have a website or online store to sell your fish?	39	26.0	111	74.0
Have you advertised your fish product in a local newspaper or magazine?	33	22.0	117	78.0
Do you offer any special discount to attract customers?	123	82.0	27	18.0
Have you ever partnered with a restaurant or chef to feature your fish product?	105	70.0	45	30.0
Do you offer any value-added fish product such as smoked fish, fried fish, fish filleting?	102	68.0	48	32.0
Have you ever participated in a fisherman's cooperative or association for marketing purpose?	40	26.7	110	73.3

It is revealed in Table 2 that a majority (71.3%) made daily sales of fish and higher proportion (87.3%) interacted directly with their customers. Also, larger proportion (69.3%) sold their products in the local market, while only few (32%) used social media for fish marketing. In addition, a majority (82%) always offer discounts to attract customers, and most (70%) have partnered with restaurant in selling their products. The details were presented in Table 2.

The finding in this study agrees with the opinion of Eschmeyer, *et al*., (2019) that fishermen who catch fish from common-property water bodies do not usually sell fish in retail markets.

Table 3: Identification of potential improvements in small scale fisheries venture.

Variables	YES		NO	
	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Have you ever received training or information on how to market your fish effectively?	83	55.3	67	44.7
Have you ever faced challenges in finding buyers for your fish?	85	56.7	65	43.3
Are you able to differentiate your products from others in the market e.g. branding or labelling?	57	38.0	93	62.0
Do you believe that policies or regulations could help improve fish marketing?	89	59.3	61	40.7
Do you think that small scale fisheries cooperatives can help in enhancing the marketing of fish products?	88	58.7	62	41.3
Do you believe personal hygiene also help attract customers?	135	90.0	15	10.0

From Table 3, it was shown that few (38.0%) could identify their products in the market because of no branding. Also, a slightly higher than half (59.3%) opined that fish marketing could be improved through policies and regulations while more than half (58.7%) felt that cooperatives of small-scale fishers would be of great help in fish marketing. The details were displayed in Table 3. The finding in this study agrees with Moyle & Cech (2019) who opined that markets at the primary catch stage are almost completely non-competitive and therefore, exploitation is high.

Conclusion

This study provides insights into the current marketing landscape of small-scale fisheries in Ido and Egbeda LGAs. More than half of the respondents were male, married and in the age range 40-49 years. Also, most were fishermen with a secondary education and work experience between 11 and 20 years. In addition, a majority made daily sales of fish and had direct interactions with their customers. Furthermore, larger proportion sold their products in the local market, while only few used social media for fish marketing. Likewise, a majority offers discounts to attract customers and at the same time partnered with restaurant in selling their products. Although, only few could identify their products in the market, more than half felt that cooperatives of small-scale fishers would be of great help in fish marketing.

Recommendation

Considering the findings from this study, we hereby recommend the following:

1. Training or capacity building of the fisherfolks' groups on products' development and branding. Also, there should be e
2. Establishment of fish markets for price regulation.

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