

Marketing of Cassava Products among Women in Oyo State, Nigeria

O. Pipy Fawole and Stella Olusola Odebode
 Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development,
 University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

Abstract: The study examined marketing of cassava products and non-cassava based commodities among women in Iddo Local Government Area (LGA)-a major cassava-processing zone in Oyo State, Nigeria. Data on the commodities were obtained from 80 registered women marketers through a structured interview schedule. The study revealed a mix of cassava products with marketed and varied levels of involvement. The average annual income of cassava products was between N5, 000 and N49, 000 while that from non-cassava based commodities was between N5, 000 and N20, 000. It is concluded that cassava products have a strong potential in contributing to increase in volume of trade at local, state and national levels. It is imperative, therefore, that these women are provided with technical and managerial skills to enable them increase productivity, manage their income and cope with market forces.

Key words: Marketing, cassava products, women, Oyo State, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Cassava products are basic food items for many Nigerians. They also serve as feed for livestock and industrial base of many products. It is estimated, that cassava provides livelihood to 500 million farmers, processors and traders worldwide^[1]. Many Nigerians women derive their livelihood from the production, processing and sale of cassava products. The ever-rising demand and prices of these productions continue the search of how to improve production, distributive trade and income of all stakeholders in the cassava system. There have been initiatives targeted at stakeholders in the cassava industry, particularly women who dominate the processing and sale of cassava and its products in Nigeria^[1-3]. These women are still constrained by bottlenecks created by poor pricing, market outlet, managerial skills, storage and transport facilities. They are yet to derive adequate reward for their activities in the cassava industry.

A current initiative-Global Cassava Development Strategy (GCDS) envisages that cassava will spur rural and industrial development and raise the incomes for producers, traders and all stakeholders in the cassava chain. The strategy also proposes to use a demand-driven approach to promote and develop cassava-based industries with assistance of a coalition of groups and individuals in the cassava chain. It is hopeful that this strategy will contribute to food security and the financial status of producing and consumer households. The

vision of this strategy promises a bright future for all stakeholders in the cassava chain. It is important that Nigerian women, who dominate the cassava industry, are part of this initiative and derive maximum benefits that it will offer. It is against this background that this study investigates the activities of women who market cassava products in Iddo Local Government Area a major cassava production and processing zone in Oyo state. Specifically, this study investigated types of cassava products available and marketed, income derived from non-cassava based items, problems encountered and the role of extension in their activities. All these will provide necessary information required to enable these women be a part of this initiative.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To achieve the objectives of this study, four villages were selected from the cassava area of Iddo Local Government Area. The population of cassava marketers in each village are Panu 186, Siba 179, Bodegbo 181 and Olosun 201. Ten% of the respondents were randomly chosen from each village. This produced 20 women from each village, which gave a total of 80, which constituted the sample size of the study.

An interview schedule based on the objectives of the study was constructed. Variables measured are income derived from cassava products, non-cassava items and the role of extension. Descriptive statistics was used to aggregate and give proportion of the variables measured.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Cassava products marketed: The study reveals that there are different types of cassava products sold by women in Iddo Local Government Area of Oyo state. Table 1 indicates that these women specificity different types of cassava products. The frequency order of women according to cassava products sold are gari (fried cassava granules) 41.20%, lafun (cassava flour) 25.00%, fufu (wet fermented cassava paste) 18.80%, starch 10.0% gari/lafun or gari/fufu 2.50%, respectively.

Gari appears to be the primary cassava product in the study as indicated by high frequency (41.20%) of women who sell this product. High consumption, easy packaging, storage and transportation are likely factors.

Income from cassava and non-cassava products: Table 2 indicates that income derived from the available cassava products are varied from non-cassava products. Income derived per product annually are Gari (N5,000-49,000), fufu (N5,000-28,000), lafun (N5,000-49,000) starch (N5,000-10,000) and non-cassava items (N10,000-20,000). From these results, income obtained from cassava products ranges between N5,000-49,000 annually. While the highest income comes from the sale of gari, only a few (8.8%) sell this product.

However, the annual incomes from cassava products are generally low and even lower for non-cassava products. This could be partly responsible for the deep-rooted poverty prevalence in the rural areas of Nigeria. Nonetheless, the sale of cassava products have potentials to raise income levels, if properly organized.

Marketing problems and role of extension: The results show that women who engage in the sale of cassava product encounter certain problems in their marketing activities. They indicated poor marketing outlets, particularly during glut periods and they have to accept

lower prices for their products. They also attribute poor sales to bad roads, storage facilities and lack of vehicles. These women also said that they are sometimes forced to sell at lower prices to middlemen, who take advantage of their situation and bring their own vehicle to buy their products. They also indicated, that they require managerial skills to enable their businesses grow and make better profits.

Majority (71.3%) of the women who engage in the sale of cassava products have had contact with extension agent. While 66.3% actually have assistance from extension agent. Majority (56.3%) also indicated that they were visited fortnightly by extension agent. These results show that extension activities in the study area is high. However, the output and volume of sales are still low going by the annual income derived from cassava and non-cassava items. It is important that extension agent spend more quality time with these women and assists them with how to get credit and other necessary input to enable them expand their trade.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that gari, lafun, fufu and starch are the cassava product marketed in Iddo Local Government Area of Oyo state. Other income generating activities they engage in are crafts and petty trading. Gari is a major cassava product marketed in the study area. Income derived from sale of cassava products ranges between N5-49,000 and N10,000-20,000 for non cassava items. Marketing problem encountered by these women include, poor market outlet, poor roads, storage facilities and lack of vehicle for transportation of products. Extension activity is high as majority of the women indicate contact and assistance from extension agent, although annual income from sale of cassava products is low. It is recommended that these women be trained to acquire managerial skills so that they can manage their businesses better and make better profits. Also, extension agents should spend quality time with these women. They should also be assisted on how to get credit and other input to enable them expand the activities.

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Table 1: Types of Cassava products and frequency distribution of women marketers

Cassava products	Frequency	Percentage
Gari	33	41.0
Lafun	20	25.0
Fufu	15	19.0
Starch	8	10.0
Gari and Lafun	2	2.50
Lafun and Gari	2	2.50
Total	80	100.00

Table 2: Women's income from cassava and non-cassava products

Income	Gari	Fufu	Lafun	Starch	Crafts	Petty trader
N5	6(7.5)	6(7.5)	9(11.3)	4(5.0)		
N5-15	3(3.8)	5(6.3)	7(8.8)	7(8.8)	13(16.3)	11(13.0)
N15-21	5(6.3)	8(8.0)	22(27.6)		27(28.7)	33(41.3)
N22-29	12(15.1)	10(12.6)	4(5.0)		40(50.0)	17(21.2)
N30-39	37(46.4)					
N40-49	7(8.8)					