

Profitability of poultry egg marketers in Ezinihitte Mbaise local government council of Imo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Aim: Purpose of the study was to evaluate profitability of poultry egg marketing in Ezinihitte Mbaise local government area of Imo State, Nigeria.

Method and materials: The primary data used were obtained using structural questionnaires administered to 100 egg marketers in the study area. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data.

Results: The result showed that 40% of the marketers were between 41-60 years, 35% were married and Professional Agriculturalist 44% were fully involved in poultry eggs marketing. 88% of the respondents had formal education, 58% were males that are fully engaged in egg marketing.

Conclusion: It was concluded that egg marketing in the study area had set-backs due bad road networks which created hindrance to egg distribution to retailers and consumers.

Keywords: Egg marketing, evaluation, constraints, poultry

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Introduction

Poultry refers to all domesticated birds kept for meat and eggs production (Memon *et al.*, 2015). Eggs and poultry meat are produced primarily for food consumption. Eggs are also used in various food industries like the manufacturing of confectionary (sweet chocolate cakes). Marketing on the other hand entails the performance of all business activities which involves the flow of products and services from the point of initial production until they get to the hands with the consumers. Marketing further deals with the management process through which goods and services moves from concept to the consumers.

Marketing is concerned with all stages of operatives which include the movement of commodities from the farms to the consumers. It entails the performance of all activities involved in the flow of goods and services from the point of initial production until they are in the hands of the consumers. Most of the eggs marketed and consumed in Nigeria come from poultry birds.

Only little attention is given to other sources such as quail, pigeon, ducks, turkey, guinea fowl and geese because of their ability to lay few eggs (FAO, 2009).

Based on the fragile nature of eggs, its marketing has been influenced by the difficulties in handling, transportation and distribution to the consuming unit. This has also influenced the cost of eggs in the market to a point that an average Nigeria cannot afford to buy eggs to meet up with the standard nutrition requirement for protein intake per day (Nurudeen, 2012). This study therefore examined the socioeconomic characteristics of poultry egg marketers, proffer solutions to the problems of marketing of poultry eggs in the study area and profitability of egg marketing in Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria.

Materials and Methods

The study was carried out in Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Area of Imo State. Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Area falls within Latitudes 7°25' N and 9°20' N and Longitudes 5°45'E and 7°39'E of the Equator. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2014), the projected population for the Ezinihitte Mbaise

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Local Government Area in 2013 was 759,829 with a growth rate of 9.3%. The Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Area has two distinct seasons, namely the rainy season (which begins around March and runs through October) and the dry season (which begins from October and ends in March). However, within these seasons is a brief harmattan season that is occasioned by the north east trade winds and the attendant dust haze, increased cold and dryness. The rainy season begins from April and ends in October of each year during which daytime temperatures reach 28°C - 30°C and night time temperatures are between 22°C - 23°C. In the dry season, daytime temperatures can soar as high as 40°C while night time temperatures can drop to 12°C (FCTA, 2013).

Economic activities in Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Area are varied including agriculture. Major crops grown include millet, corn, sorghum, rice, yam, cassava, plantain, groundnut and cowpea. Livestock production activities such as cattle, sheep, and goats, chicken, duck and pig, catfish are also important economic activities.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size: Random sampling technique was employed to select respondents for the study. Six towns in Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Area were randomly selected for the study were Akpodim, Obizi, Onicha, Ife, Udo and Amaumara which reflected the geographical structure of the area. In the first stage, three (3) towns Akpodim, Obizi and Onicha were selected randomly based on the large number of poultry farmers in the area. The second stage of the procedure involved a random selection of villages from each of the selected towns.

Method of Data Collection: Primary data was used by survey method using structured questionnaire. Data collection commenced in May and lasted till June, 2016. The information on the socio-economic characteristics of respondents that was drawn out includes gender of respondent, age, marital status, household size and education. Input-output information including inputs and output prices as well as constraints faced by the poultry farmers and solutions to the existing problems in the study area were also drawn out from the respondents.

Production information collected include size of poultry farm, type of labour used in production, cost of feed, vaccines, source and amount of credit and access to extension services. Data on the type of constraints faced by poultry farmers were also drawn out from the respondents.

Data Analysis: The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage.

Results and Discussion

It was emphasized on the distribution of poultry eggs marketers according to sex (Table 1). It was found out that male marketers has a percentage of 58% while female had 42% which indicated that male acquired the highest population in marketing of poultry eggs than their female counterparts.

Table 1. Distribution of respondent farmers according to sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	58	58
Female	42	42
Total	100	100

Field survey: 2016

It was observed that respondent with ages ranging from 41-60 engaged more on eggs marketing follow than the other groups (Table 2).

Table 2. Distribution of respondent according to age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-40	25	25
41-60	40	40
61 and above	35	35
Total	100	100

Field survey: 2016

The highest percentage of respondent was obtained among marketers with qualification from tertiary institutions 46% was recorded while those that had Non-formal were 12% (Table 3).

Table 3. Distribution of respondents according to educational qualification

Educational level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No formal Education	12	12
Primary School	20	20
Secondary School	22	22
Tertiary	46	46
Total	100	100

Field survey: 2016

It was revealed that majority of the eggs marketers in Ezinihitte Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeriawere married coupled with total of 35% while respondents who are divorce recorded 17% which was founded to be the least due to lack of support to boost their marketing strategies (Table 4).

Table 4. Distribution of respondents according to marital status.

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	20	20
Married	35	35
Widow/Widower	28	28
Divorce	17	17
Total	100	100

Field survey: 2016

The result showed that a good number of the egg marketers were professionals in Agricultural business as a result their educational enlightenment and qualification (Table 5). This was in line with the findings of Statista (2016). It was recorded a total of 44% respondent while the least were civil servant due to lack of time and attention to customers who may demand for supplies at their residential times.

Table 5. Distribution of respondent according to occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Professional agriculturalist	44	44
Trading	20	20
Civil service	7	7
Other	29	29
Total	100	100

Field survey: 2016

It was observed that the highest and greatest factors militating against poultry egg marketers were bad road network (Table 6). This led to loss of eggs during the process of marketing as they got broken thereby reducing the level of income to egg marketers. However' lack of capital was also seen as major challenge encountered by poultry egg marketers (Smith, 2001) followed by poor transport facilities, lack of skilled man power and poor marketing channel,

Table 6. Distribution of respondent according to factors affecting marketing of eggs

Factors affecting marketing	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of capital	12	12
Poor marketing policy	8	8
Bad road	20	20
Poor transport means	11	11
Lack of incentive	3	3
Lack of skilled manpower	10	10
Disease	2	2
Improper nutrition	5	5
Poor source of water inlet	1	1
Poor marketing channel	10	10
Lack of awareness	6	6
Others	12	12
Total	100	100

Field survey: 2016

Others were poor maintenance policy, lack of awareness, improper nutrition which resulted in producing eggs (USDA, 2013) of low quality which lead to difficulties in marketing to customers. There were also some other minor constraints such as disease, poor source of water and laziness which were classified under the caption others.

It was indicated that the major ways to remedy the problem of marketing of poultry eggs was by ensuring proper and good road network, good transport facilities which will favour an easy supply of the eggs the customers (Table 7). However major ways to eradicate marketing problem is the provision of means through which capital can be acquired, either from banks as loans to enable proper marketing (Ojo, 2003). Others used skilled agriculturalists, who specialized in some better ways of transporting and supplying eggs without great losses as indicated by (Oni *et al.*, 2005), as well as proper marketing channel to boost marketing.

Table 7. Distribution of respondent according to solution to problems to frequent percentage of marketing.

Solution to Problems of	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Provision of incentive	5	5
Good road network	17	17
Availability of capital	14	14
Availability of skilled	12	12
Good transport facilities	15	15
Good quality feed	11	11
Others	16	16
Total	100	100

Field survey: 2016

Conclusion

It was concluded that educational levels of marketers had a significant way of increasing the population of poultry eggs marketing in Ezinihitte Local Government Area of Imo State. It was also observed that sex, age, marital status and occupation were the personal characteristics directly related to the marketers of poultry eggs in the study area. A good number of marketers had formal education. Besides, adequate capital was seen as major way in which the problems of marketing poultry eggs in the study area could be remedied.

Recommendation: Due to the result of the study and series of suggestions obtained by the surveyed farmers (poultry egg marketers) the following recommendations should be adhered to for an increase in poultry eggs marketing ability.

Government policies should be adjusted to ensure adequate flows of capital either through loans from banks or cooperative societies to enable marketers acquire enough capital for poultry egg marketing. There should be proper road network to encourage marketers so as to reduce loss of eggs during marketing. Poultry egg marketers should also ensure proper ways of creating awareness to enable wholesalers, retailers and final consumers get the informational on about the marketing business. There should also be a provision of professional agriculturalist who are equipped with the skills on marketing of poultry eggs to reduce loss. Proper marketing channels should be maintained so that the product can get to the people involved at the right time. There should also be availability of poultry feed at subsidized rate so as to reduce the price of marketing the eggs to the wholesalers, retailers and final consumers as the case may be. There should also be provision of incentives to poultry egg marketers to encourage them to carry out the marketing business.

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