Socio-economic Characteristics of Goat Marketers in Benue State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The main objective of the study was to examine the socio-economic characteristics of goat marketers in Benue State, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted. Two zones (B and C) were purposively selected out of the three agricultural zones in the state on the basis of accessibility and relevance to the study. From each of the two zones, two Local Government Areas (L.G.As) were randomly selected bringing the total to four. 30 respondents were randomly and proportionately selected from each of the four markets. This brings the total number of respondents for the study to 120. The analytical tools used for this study included descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics which was used include mean, percentages, and frequency tables. The socio-economic characteristics of goat marketers in Benue State show that male marketers (83%) were higher than the female marketers (17%). This can be attributed to the stressful nature of goat marketing business which most female cannot withstand, compared to the males. Goat marketers associations in the study area can improve the education of members by providing seminars on current goat marketing information so as to enhance the socio-economic characteristics of goat marketers. Goat marketers should be educated using the best efficient marketers as a role model for cost saving strategies, so as to improve profitability of goat marketing in the study area.*

Keywords: *Goat Marketers, Socio-economic characteristics, Benue State*

1. Introduction

The indigenous marketing systems for livestock in developing countries are generally exploitative, collusive and economically inefficient (Mellor, 1970). The livestock, mostly, are sold to traders, middlemen or butchers at farm gate due to inadequate transportation and time constraints. Sometimes they are sold at nearby village markets where no rule and regulations are effective (Balkrishna & kalia, 2008). The middlemen in performing the role of marketing are being accused of earning higher profit in marketing system (Bryson, 1993; Pujo, 1996). This exerts a great influence on market channels, structure, margins and consequently on supply of most agricultural products, including goats (Iheanacho, 2004). An unfavourable marketing outcome discourages production through lower output prices and consumption through high prices (Iheanacho, 2004). The rural goat marketing system is done haphazardly. There are no standard measures to guide transaction nor is there a well-defined regulatory framework (Banda, Dzanja & Gondwe 2011).

Cronge (1998) stated that goat marketing system represents an appropriate viable vehicle for improving not only the intake of protein, but also, household income and hence alleviates poverty. In recent time, the transition from conventional agriculture to sustainable agriculture has

changed the pattern of sheep and goat production thus emphasizing the use of low-internal inputs and resource conserving technology development and transfer, and efficient marketing (Olukosi & Isitor, 2007). If Goat production is, however, to benefit communities significantly, an efficient marketing system is required. Mukasa, Ojo, Adepoju & Dabo (2012) on the basis of the study conducted on livestock marketing in Kaduna, Nigeria, suggested that rural community based ruminant improvement programme should focus on marketing issues. Information on goat marketing system is, therefore, necessary in an attempt to create a balance between the price paid by the consumers and that received by the producers. In attempt to address the above highlighted goat marketing problems, Ayoola & Ayoade (1993) assessed sheep and goat market in Benue State of Nigeria with respect to concentration of the participants, product differentiation as well as freedom of entry and exit. The main objective of the study was to examine the socio-economic characteristics of goat marketers in Benue State, Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Socio-economic Characteristics of Goat Marketers

The most important socio-economic characteristics of goat marketers include age, gender and marital status. Others are household size, educational level and marketing experience as well as occupation. In livestock marketing age is an important factor. The business is laborious and need a lot of energy and time. Nasiru, Haruna & Garba, (2013) recorded a mean age range (46-58) for goat marketers in a study on goat marketing conducted in Gamawa local government area, Bauchi State, Nigeria. This is similar to range above 46% obtained by Umar and Kazaure (2012), but slightly higher than the range (27-45) recorded by Iheanacho and Ali, (2010) in similar study conducted in Jigawa and Borno State of Nigeria respectively.

One of the major predominant factors in livestock marketing is gender. Marriage and household size help in boosting live stocking marketing in terms of labour supply. Lamidi *et al* (2012) conducted a study on Economics of Livestock Marketing in Lagos State, Nigeria and observed that 83.9% and 64.29% goat marketers were male and married respectively. This result is quite different from 100% of male goat marketers and 85% of them married, household size ranging from 10-14 recorded by Nasiru *et al*, (2013). Umaru and Kazaure (2012) noted that 93 % of them were married and a slightly higher household size ranging from 11-20.

Education represents a predominant factor in information dissemination and technology adoption among marketers in diverse socio-economic and biological environment. Research result has shown that, majority (78.3%) of goat traders had no formal education (Umar and Kazaure, 2012). This result is in contrast with majority (50%) of goat marketers had formal education ranges from primary, secondary and tertiary education (Nasiru *et al*, 2013). Iheanacho and Ali (2010) obtained a higher (64%) of goat marketers were literate.

Expertise and, mastery are gotten from experience, which is known as the best teacher. Marketing experience can enhance profitability greatly. According to Nasiru *et al* (2013), 25% of goat marketers had marketing experience ranges from 5-9 years.

This result is slightly lower than 11 years marketing experiences recorded in the same study at different location (Umar & Kazaure, 2012). The trading experiences recorded above fall within the range of 6-24 years in a study conducted on goat marketing, Borno state, Nigeria (Iheanocho & Ali, 2010).

The primary (93.3%) occupation of goat marketers was farming (Umar & Kazaure, 2012). The majority (94%) of goat producers sell the livestock because of urgent cash need

(Nwafor, 2004). The livestock are usually sold during the period between planting and harvesting so as to raise cash for family use (Ayoade, 1993; Agyemang, 1997).

2.2. Empirical Review

Iheanacho & Ali (2010) in the study of goat market structure obtained a Gini coefficient of 0.877 which indicates high level of inequality in income of the marketers. This result is in contrast with the Gini coefficient of 0.104 which implies low level of inequality in income of goat marketers in a similar study conducted in Benue State of Nigeria (Ayoola & Ayoade, 1993).

Lamidi *et al* (2012) obtained a gross margin and value of ₦ 8000 per of every goat sold which is higher than ₦4066 recorded by Nasiru *et al*, (2013) in a similar studies conducted on goat marketing. The return per naira invested per goat is ₦38816.60 and concluded that goat marketing is a profitable venture Nasiru *et al*, (2013). Maikasuwa *et al* (2014) obtained a slightly high market margin of 4660 and also concluded that goat marketing is a profitable venture.

Recent research findings have shown that 36.7% and 23.3% of goat marketers faced problem of inadequate credit facilities and inadequate market information in Nigeria respectively. High cost of transportation accounted for 16.7% cost of goat marketing in Nigeria (Nasiru *et al,* 2012).

2.4. Conceptual Frame Work

The socioeconomic characteristics of the marketers will be conceptualized to have an effect on the marketing gross margin (Dastagiri *et al.,* 2013; Farayola et al., 2013). With respect to socio-economic characteristics of goat marketers, it is hypothesized that age of the marketers negatively affects marketing gross margin. This is because goat marketing is more challenging in terms of time, energy and other resources which are not in favor of older marketers. Gender of the goat marketer is also supposed to have negative relationships because female marketers are faced with more challenges compared to male in terms of the rigor in market transportation and access to market information. Also marketers engaging in full time goat marketing are expected to have high efficiency than farming and nom-farming goat marketers. This is because; they channeled the available resource in terms of energy, time and money to goat marketing. Schooling is expected to have mixed results. On one hand, educated marketers are committed in marketing and can accept improved marketing techniques faster because they understand the benefits attached to it. Educated marketer may engage in other income generating activities on the other hand, avail less attention to their goat marketing, hence lowering their efficiency. In addition goat marketers experience is expected to positively influence marking efficiency because experienced marketers are better risk takers and opportunity graspers who have learned from their past mistakes and can take rational decision compared to less experienced marketers. Market volume is also hypothesized to have a positive influence in gross margin with wholesale marketers to have economies of scale in their marketing operation compare to retailers. An efficient social marketing system is, therefore, expected to realize high gross margin per goat compared to the one that is less efficient in marketing. Such marketer is hypothesized to incur less marketing cost leading to higher return from marketing. This has, therefore, positive spill over on the welfare of goat marketers household. Improved welfare of goat marketers and their household provides a feedback effect in form of increased access to marketing infrastructure and information as well as lessons to market policy makers.

3. Methodology

3.1. Population, Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The population of the study comprised of all goat marketers in the selected Local Government Areas of Benue State, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted. Two zones (B and C) were purposively selected out of the three agricultural zones in the state on the basis of accessibility and relevance to the study. From each of the two zones, two Local Government Areas (L.G.As) was randomly selected bringing the total to four. The L.G.As selected includes Ogbadibo, Otukpo, Makurdi and Gboko. From each L.G.A., one major livestock market: (Otukpa, Otukpo, Makurdi and Gboko) within predominantly goat rearing areas was selected. 30 respondents will be randomly and proportionately selected from each of the four markets. This brings the total number of respondents for the study to 120. This is done on the basis of market accessibility, sizes of the market, and the number of buyers and sellers of goats.

3.2. Validity and Reliability of Data Collection Instrument

The face and content validity of the questionnaire for the study were ascertained by pilot-testing and passing it through scholars in the College of Management Sciences and College of Agricultural economics and extension, University of Agriculture, Makurdi. Agreement unanimously among these experts on suitability of the questionnaire for assessing the research questions and specific objectives implies its content and face validity. This is done on the basis of expertise and previous experience of these scholars.

Split-Half Method was used to test the reliability of the data collection instrument. This is done by administering the questionnaire once to the same group of respondents, after which it is divided into two equal halves comprising even numbered and old numbered items. Each of the two equal halves will be scored separately. The two sets of scores will be them correlated to obtain the internal consistency of the data collection instrument using spearman correlation coefficient (rho). High correlation indicates reliability.

3.3. Data Collection

Structured questionnaire was administered to 120 goat marketers to collect primary data. Primary data were collected on socio-economic characteristics of goat marketers (age, sex, household size, goat marketing experience, educational level, marital status, occupation, goat marketing investment capital, and association membership), marketing channels, goat prices, sales, number of goats sold, marketing costs and marketing problems.

3.4. Operational and Measurement of Variables

Independent variables

(i) **Sex:** This refers to the gender of the respondents (dummy variable: male = 1 and female = 0)

(ii) Age: Age of respondents is operationally defined as the chronological age of the women farmers. This was measured in terms of actual age of the respondent at the time of this study.

(iii) **Marital Status:** This refers to the character of being single or married, categorized as Married =1and Single =0

(iv) **Level of Education:** This is the number of years a respondent has spent in formal schooling (schooling =1 and non- schooling =0).

(v) **Household Size:** This is the number of persons living under the care of the respondent at the time of the study.

(vi) **Goat Marketing Experience:** This is the length of time the respondent has been in marketing measured in the number of years.

(viii) **Major Occupation:** dummy variable: goat marketing 2, farming = 1 and Non farming= 0)

(viii) **Goat Marketing Capital:** This is the amount of money the respondent is using for marketing at the time of the study which is measured in naira.

(ix) **Membership of Goat Marketer Association:** dummy variable: yes = 1and no = 0.

(x) **Goat Marketing Prices:** These are prices paid for performing goat marketing activities which is measured in naira (₦).

(xi) **Goat Marketing Revenue:** This is the money generated from the sales of goats.

(xii) **Gross Margin:** This refers to total revenue less total variable cost per goat.

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques
The analytical tools used for this study included descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics which was used include mean, percentages, and frequency tables.

4. Results and Discussion
4.1. Socio-economic Characteristics of Goat Marketers
The socio-economic characteristics of goat marketers in Benue State are presented in table 1. Analysis of the table shows that male marketers (83%) were higher than the female marketers (17%). This can be attributed to the stressful nature of goat marketing business which most female cannot withstand, compared to the males. This finding concords to that of Lamidi *et al,* *(*2012) who reported that small ruminant marketing is essentially an all-male affairs across Nigeria, particularly in the Northern part.

The result also revealed that only (9%) of the respondents belonged to age class less than 30 years. This implies that very few young ones are involved in goat marketing business in the study area. Most of the respondents were adults within the active age, and are energetic enough to perform goat marketing activities. This age bracket of above 30 years is higher than the one (27-45) years recorded by Iheanacho & Ali (2010) in similar study conducted in Jigawa and Borno States of Nigeria.

Majority (92%) of the respondents were married with household size range of 01-10 persons. It indicates that most goat marketers are socially responsible with reasonable household size, which supports them in carrying out goat marketing activities.

Majority (79%) and (46%) of the respondents had formal education and were engaged full time goat marketing respectively. It means that literate respondents perceived goat marketing as a lucrative venture, thus, channeled resources in terms time and money to the business on full time basis. Most (93.3%) of these marketers had farming as their primary occupation and only engaged in goat marketing as an additional means of generating income.

The majority (60%) and all (100%) of the respondents had below 15 years marketing experience and belonged to Goat Marketers Association respectively. In the study area, few large wholesalers and market association are in firm control of market supply, vital market information and mode of entry as well as exist of new entrants. This range is within the one (6-24) recorded by Iheanacho &Ali (2010).

Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Socio-economic characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	100	83
Female	20	17
Total	120	100
Age(years)		
20-29	11	9
30-39	17	14
40-49	29	24
50-59	24	20
60 and above	39	33
Total	120	100
Marital status		
Single	9	8
Married	111	92
Total	120	100
Household size		
1-10	82	68
11-20	31	26
21-30	6	5
31 and above	1	1
Total	120	100
Educational level		
No formal education	25	21
Formal education	95	79
Total	120	100
Occupation		
Goat marketing(full time)	55	46
Farming & goat marketing	50	42
Non-farming & goat marketing	15	12
Total	120	100
Marketing experience		
01-15	72	60
16-30	38	32
31-45	8	7
45 and above	2	1
Total	120	100
Membership of Goat Marketer's Association		
Members	120	100
Non-members	0	0
Total	120	100

Source: *field survey 2014*

5. Conclusion

Evidence from the study indicates that goat marketing is a profitable business venture in the study area for both wholesalers and retailers. The study examined the socio-economic characteristics of goat marketers.

6. Recommendations

   i.   Goat marketers associations in the study area can improve the education of members by providing seminars on current goat marketing information so as to enhance the socio-economic characteristics of goat marketers.
  ii.   Government should link the various marketing channels and chains for goats so as to enhance equity distribution of economic reward among the marketing actors.
 iii.   Goat marketers should be educated using the best efficient marketers as a role model for cost saving strategies, so as to improve profitability of goat marketing in the study area.
  iv.   Stakeholders such as Governments, goat traders associations, and NGOs associated with goat industry development should provide market facilities such as portable water, good housing, lighting points, unit of measurements for efficient marketing systems; and government should harmonize goat taxes paid by goat marketers and producers so as to have a unified livestock taxing system. These will go along way to reduce the constraints in goat marketing.

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