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Marketing Extension Needs for Sustainable Extension Practices among Cassava Farmers in Surulere Local Government Area of Oyo State

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Abstract
The study investigated the marketing extension needs of cassava farmers in Surulere Local Government Area of Oyo State. Multistage sampling technique was used to select one hundred and five respondents from the list of contact farmers obtained from the state Agricultural Development Programme (ADP). Interview schedule was employed to elicit information from the respondents. Data obtained were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings from the study revealed 56.2% of the respondents were within the age range of 31 and 50 years, majority (82.9%) were married and (65.7%) had primary education. Majority (70.5%) had farming as their primary occupation with 77.1% having farming experience not less than 11 years. A large percent financed their cassava business from their personal savings. Also, substantial respondents (85.7%) source marketing information from traders. Chi-square analysis revealed that, there was a significant relationship between sex (χ^2=11.667; ρ<0.05), Marital status (χ^2=260.571;ρ <0.05), education ($\chi^2$50.057; ρ<0.05), primary occupation, (χ^2=17.610,ρ <0.05), farming experience (χ^2 =71.457; ρ<0.05) and marketing extension needs of cassava farmers. However, Age (χ^2 =39.33;ρ>0.05), religion (χ^2 =2.752; ρ >0.05) and cassava association membership (χ^2= 3.438, ρ>0.05) were not significant. Therefore, agricultural marketing techniques should be incorporated into agricultural extension delivery packages to ensure continuous farming practices and adoption of innovations.

Key Words: Marketing, Extension Needs, Cassava Farmers

Introduction

As agriculture and society develops, marketing becomes more important. In subsistence agriculture, a farmer will mainly be feeding himself and his neighbours but as the population of the cities increases, farmers have the added responsibility of feeding not only the rural market but also the growing distant urban markets (Singh, 2001). In Nigeria, cassava is playing an increasingly important role as a cash crop for urban market (Nweke et al, 2002). Cassava is a year round crop but it is also a highly perishable and bulky produce. The processing of cassava into chips, flour, gari, fufu, alcohol or starch are relevant to a variety of industries, including livestock feeds, textiles and soft drinks and the leaves of cassava are rich in protein and vitamin which are consumed as a preferred green vegetable (Ezedinma, 2007). Several initiatives have been launched to improve the cassava subsector especially in the area of production and this has yielded great results because according to FAO (2009), Nigeria is the largest producer of cassava with 43 million tonnes in 2007.

In order to have sustainable increase in cassava production the market has to be well developed. Adegeye and Dittoh (1985) defined marketing as concerning all stages of operation which aid the movement of commodities from the farm to the consumer and these include assemblage of goods, storage, transportation, processing, grading and financing of all these activities. It therefore involves all the business activities carried out for the flow of goods and services from the point of initial production until they reach the ultimate consumer. It was further stated that market exists whenever buyers and sellers can be in touch with one another. Buyers and sellers may not necessarily meet face to face before a market exists. The most important factors for the existence of market are that the goods to be sold must exist, there must be buyers and seller and both must agree on a price. For the farmer, the strategic function of a marketing system is to offer him a convenient outlet for his produce (FAO, 1997). Communication plays a vital role in determining the success or failure of commercialization/ marketing of the agricultural produce. The extension system in the rural areas should be re-oriented to meet the challenges in 21st century due to globalisation (Singh, 2001).

Erahbor and Emokaro, (2007) also stated that marketing sub-sector increasingly tend toward commercialization. Srivastava, (2007) stated that it has become absolute necessity to shift extension focus from production-orientation to market-led extension which results in increasing farm income. Market-led extension help the farmers to minimize the production costs, improve the quality of farm produce, increase the product value and marketability resulting in increase of income to the farmers. Marketing extension are activities which extension workers can carry out to assist farmers with their marketing (FAO, 2002). Therefore, for extension workers to really assist farmers in this regard, it is important to assess from the farmer's perspective in the areas in which assistance is needed for cassava marketing because programs or services can be effective only when they meet real needs and when the target population agrees that it has those needs (Posavac and Carey, 1992) so as to guaranty continuous adoption of extension practices for cassava production. In view of the above, the study was conducted to identify the personal characteristics of the respondents, investigate sources of information available to farmers on cassava marketing and determine the agricultural marketing extension needs of cassava farmers in the study area.

Methodology

This study was carried out in Surulere Local Government Area (LGA) of Oyo State. The local government headquarter is Iresa- Adu in Ogbomoso. It is located in the south western part of Nigeria. It also shares boundaries with Ifelodun LGA, Orolu LGA) in Kwara State, Oriire Local Government, Ogbomoso North and South LGA. The LGA comprises the following wards, Bayooje, Gambari, Iwofin, Iresa-Apa, Arolu, Iresa-adu, Iregba, Oko, Mayin and Ilajue. Farming and trading are the major primary and secondary occupation of the people in the area. Other income generating activities includes, fishing, teaching, carpentry, craft work, weaving and agricultural processing. The population of study is made up of cassava farmers in Surulere Local Government of Oyo state.

Multi stage sampling technique was used to select respondents used for the study. In the first stage, three wards (Gambari, Iresa-Apa and Iresa-Adu) were purposively selected because of the predominant cassava production in the area. Gambari, Iresa-Apa and Iresa-Adu wards comprises 32, 48 and 32 villages

respectively. In the second stage, ten percent (3, 5 and 3) of the villages in each ward was randomly selected to give a total of 11 villages across the sampled wards. Using the list of registered farmers for the sampled villages obtained from Agricultural Development Project Zonal Office in the state, ten (10) respondents were selected through random sampling technique from each of the sampled villages to give a sample size of 110. However, only one hundred and five (105) interview guides were analyzable having a response rate of 95.5%.

Data collected through interview schedule were analysed using statistical tools; (i) Frequency distribution and percentage were used to indicate the proportion of responses to certain variables. (ii) Chi-square was used to test relationship between personal characteristics and farmers' marketing extension needs

Results and Discussion

Socio-economic characteristics

From table 1, 66.7 percent of the respondents were males, while the rest (33.3 %) were females, majority of the respondents (82.9%) were married, while only 6.7% were single. More than half (56.2%) of the respondents were in the age range 31-50, few (29.5%) were in the age range of 51-60, 9.5% were older than 60 while 4.8% were younger than 30. It clearly shows that most of the respondents were in their active and productive age group hence they will maximize the use of extension information. The findings reveal that about 65.7% of the respondents had primary education, 14.3% had secondary education. The result thus identifies low literacy level of the respondents in the study area .Majority, (70.5%) of the respondents were into farming while (29.5%) were into trading. The result justified the study area as a predominantly agrarian community.

On years of experience, the table reveals that 77.14% of the respondents had more than 11years of experience in cassava farming, 17.15% had between 6 to 10 years of experience and 5years of experience (5.71%). It therefore implies that the respondents are well experienced in cassava production. Considering distribution of respondents by kinds of farmers' help groups, about half (50.5%) of the respondents were into cooperative society, very few (9.5%) respondents belonged to Itesiwaju and Alasopo help groups, while (40%) did not belong to any group. From this result, barely half of the respondents obtained benefit like credit facilities, advisory services and marketing information to improve production potentials. Also, the table shows that majority (90.1%) of the respondents had access to fund for cassava enterprise from personal savings, 39% sourced for fund by obtaining loans from friends and relatives while more than half (57.1%) got fund from the cooperative societies. The implication is that many of the respondent's access fund from personal servings and cooperative society to service their various cassava enterprises.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by personal characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage

Sex		
Male	70	66.7
Female	35	33.3
Marital status		
Single	7	6.7
Married	87	82.9
Widow	3	2.9
Widower	1	1
Separated	7	6.7
Age		
< 30	5	4.7
31-40	21	20
41-50	38	36.2
51-60	31	29.6
≥60	10	9.5
Education level		
Secondary	15	14.3
Primary	69	65.7
No formal	21	20.0
Primary Occupation		
Farming	74	70.5
Trading	31	29.5
Experience		
≤ 5	6	5.71
6-10	18	17.15
≥11	81	77.14
Types of Help Group		
None	42	40.0
Cooperative	63	60.0
***Sources of finance**		
Personal servings	95	90.5
Bank credit	2	1.9
Friends and relatives	41	39.0
Cooperative society	60	57.1

**Multiple Responses*

Distribution of Respondents by Sources of Marketing Information

Table 2 indicates that (61%) of the respondents had access to marketing information from other farmers, majority (85.7%) from traders, and 2.9% obtained from the extension agents. This implies that many of them had access to marketing information through traders and this further shows the reason for extension to assist in the area of marketing so that farmers are encouraged to adopt innovations.

Table 2: Distribution of cassava farmers' sources of marketing information

Marketing Information	*Frequency	Percentage %
Extension agent	3	2.9
Traders	90	85.7
Cooperative	56	53.3
Other farmers	64	61.0

**Multiple Responses*

Cassava Farmers' Marketing Needs

Table 3 shows the various areas of marketing in which farmers need assistance. On market category, all respondents (100%) need assistance in linking various market channels (100%), majority need produce and product market prices (62.9%), need assistance on market location for produce and products (66.7%) This implies that cassava farmers are in great need of assistance regarding marketing strategy to improve their enterprise and thereby boost their income. Links to credit sources was needed to a large extent by majority (88.6%) of the respondents. This confirms that credit sources available to farmers were their personal savings and therefore will need more sources of credit to finance their business. Also, great number of the farmers responded they needed credit to purchase equipment (66.7%), finance processing (72.4%) and transportation (75.2%).

On information need of the farmers, the respondents need information to a large extent on available markets (82.9%) for their produce or products, Procedure for maximizing profit (90.5%) and exporting procedure (55.2%). Cassava farmers need, to a large extent, protection from infestation of pest and disease (60.0%). Cassava farmers need to a "large extent" training on processing to new products (81.9%), training on processing to meet export standard (70.5%), processing modern equipment (81.9%) and training on how to use modern equipment (82.9%). Furthermore, cassava farmers to a large extent need good road network (95.2%), movement from farm to market (73.3%), movement from village to town (75.2%), group transportation (63.8%), movement from farm to processing site (72.4%) and movement from processing site to market (70.5%).

Table 3: Distributions of Respondents According To Cassava Farmers' Marketing Needs

Marketing Needs	Large Extent	Some Extent	Not At All
Marketing			
Marketing channels	105(100.0)	--	--
Produce and product market prices	66(62.9)	29(27.6)	10(9.8)
Market location	70(66.7)	24(22.9)	11(10.5)
Credit			
Link with credit sources	93 (88.6)	12(11.4)	--
Credit purchase of equipment	70(66.7)	21(20.0)	14(13.3)
Credit for paying labour	42(40.0)	47(44.8)	16(15.2)
To finance processing	76(72.4)	24(22.9)	5(4.8)
To finance transportation	79(75.2)	22(21.0)	4(3.8)
To purchase equipment	61(58.1)	29(27.6)	15(14.3)
Information			
Introducing farmer to those that can buy his/her produce	87 (82.9)	11(10.5)	7(6.7)
Where to sell product	65(61.9)	31(29.5)	9(8.6)
Market location	68(64.8)	31(29.5)	6(5.7)
Exporting procedure	58(55.2)	38(36.2)	9(8.6)
Advantage of selling beyond farm gate	44(41.9)	55(52.4)	6(5.7)
Procedure for maximizing profit	95(90.5)	8(9.6)	2(1.9)
Storage			
Protection from infestation of pest and disease	63(60.0)	32(30.5)	10(9.5)
Storage method for cassava	39(37.1)	51(48.6)	15(14.3)
Storage method for products	40(38.1)	46(43.8)	19(18.1)
Processing			
Training on processing to new products	86(81.9)	15(14.3)	4(3.8)
Training on processing to meet export standard	74(70.5)	26(24.8)	5(4.8)
Modern processing equipment	86(81.9)	14(13.3)	5(4.8)
Training on skill for operating modern equipment	87(82.9)	14(13.3)	4(3.8)
Transportation			
Good road network	100(95.2)	3(2.9)	2(1.9)
Means of transportation from farm to market	77(73.3)	19(18.1)	9(8.6)
Means of transportation from village to town	79(75.2)	17(16.2)	9(8.6)
Group transportation for cost reduction	67(63.8)	33(31.4)	5(4.8)
Means transportation from farm to processing site	76(72.4)	23(21.9)	6(5.7)
Means of transportation from processing site to market	74(70.5)	24(22.9)	7(6.7)

**Figures in parentheses are percentages*

Test of hypothesis

The Chi-square analysis on table 5 tested relationship between personal characteristics of cassava farmers and farmers' marketing extension needs. Results showed that sex, marital status, education, primary occupation, Cassava farming experience (χ^2=260.71, 11.667, 50.057, 17.610 and 70.714, *P<0.05* respectively) of

the respondents were statistically significant. The relationship between marketing extension needs and age of the farmers, Cassava association membership and religion (χ^2=39.333, 3.438 and 2.752 respectively) of the respondents were not significant at *P<0.05*. Sex of the respondents may be significant because majority were male and will need assistance in marketing. Nweke, (2002) corroborates this finding that men worked predominantly on land clearing, ploughing and planting which are production activities. That of marital status may be true because cassava is a good source of income generation for household. Ogundari and Ojo (2007) also validated this finding that cassava serves as a source of income generation for households.

Primary occupation had a significant relationship with marketing extension needs since the primary occupation of most respondents was farming and will therefore need assistance of extension agents in handling increased productivity which comes from the cultivation of improved varieties. Erahbor and Emokaro (2007) stated that improved varieties produce higher yield. Therefore, Cassava farming experience had a significant relationship between marketing extension needs of farmers. This could be because as the farmers gain more experience their productivity increases but because cassava is a crop that does not have long shelf life, farmers will need assistance on marketing.

Table 4: Chi-Square Result Showing Relationship between Personal Characteristics and Farmers' Marketing Extension Needs

Variable	df	χ^2	Significant level	Decision on significance
Sex	1	11.667	.001	Significant
Marital status	4	260.71	.000	Significant
Age	34	39.333	.243	Not Significant
Education	2	50.057	.000	Significant
Primary occupation	1	17.610	.000	Significant
Cassava farming experience	29	70.714	.000	Significant
Cassava association membership	1	3.438	.064	Not Significant
Religion	1	2.752	.097	Not Significant

df- Degree of freedom χ^2 - Chi-value

Conclusion

The conclusion of the finding indicated that, majority of the cassava farmers had low level of education but are well experienced in cassava production. Personal savings was their major source of finance and that the major source of marketing information for the famers were trader hence, the needs for agricultural extension agents to assist in the area of marketing so that farmers will be encouraged to adopt innovations. Cassava farmers are therefore in great need of assistance in marketing of cassava and its products

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby suggested.

- Extension agents should take conscious effort to encourage the farmers to form a formidable association that will help the cassava farmers in maintaining a profitable price for their produce.
- Agricultural extension system should train extension agents on issues relating to marketing of agricultural commodities. Agricultural marketing techniques should be incorporated into agricultural extension delivery packages.
- Government and NGOs (Non-governmental organizations) should organize seminar and workshops more frequently in order to educate farmers on information regarding cassava production and marketing.

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