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ASSESSMENT OF POVERTY STATUS OF COWPEA (BEANS) MARKETERS IN ABIA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
The study investigated the poverty status of cowpea marketers in Umuahia North and Aba South Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Abia State, Nigeria.. The study made use of primary data source; data were solicited through structured questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as means, frequency and percentages. More so, the study estimated the different poverty parameters as used by Foster Greer and Thorbecke (FGT,1984). The result shows that marketers were in their active age with a mean age of 41 years; Majority of the marketers were married, majority of the respondents sampled had secondary school education representing 87.5% and a mean marketing experience of 12 years. On the poverty status, poverty incidence, poverty gap and severity of 3.12%, 0.307 and 0.03 respectively for cowpea wholesalers and 12.5%, 0.169 and 0.387 respectively for retailers were estimated. The conclusion was that marketers were not poor but were living below the poverty line of 1.9$ according to World Bank (2015) World Bank, (2018) for Sub Sahara Africa. The study recommends that marketers should form marketing cooperative to mobilize their saving for their business since marketers reported inadequate finance a major constraint to cowpea marketing.

Introduction

Food security and poverty reduction have been a major campaign issues across all political parties, yet provision of enough food to feed the entire population has eluded many Governments. Poverty is one of the greatest menaces challenging many African countries (Okunmadewa *et al.,* 2010). In Nigeria, poverty is a policy and economic problem due to lack of effective implementation of the good policies that has resulted to difficult economic situation, which has subjected people to abject poverty (Ajibo and Adebo, 2014). Poverty is a state where an individual lacks the basic necessities of life such as good housing, good food, clothing, basic education, medication and sanitation facility. Poverty or being poor exists

when some persons fall short of a certain defined threshold of wellbeing such as access to basic needs for life and rights recognized according to standards of human needs and socio economic standards of the society (Gordon, 2005). It is a state, if an individual finds himself, he loses self - value and be under the control or influence of another who is classified the rich; this rich now dictate for the poor, which implies that the poor has no right of his own when decision are taken. Ajibo and Adebo (2014) noted that poverty level in Nigeria both in rural and urban areas has increased among all citizens; that about 78% and 57% of the rural and urban farmers from Ekiti and Ondo States studied were poor respectively. More so, Osundu and Obike (2015) found a poverty incidence of 67% and 56% among male headed and female headed households respectively. This implies that the trend has not change. In spite of various programmes initiated by the government with emphasis on either to permanently eradicate poverty or to alleviate poverty programmes such as National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), Nigerian Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the recent N-power; the desired result of poverty reduction has not been achieved. In attempt to earn a living and hence poverty reduction in the face of high level of unemployment, people engaged in different business enterprises such as agricultural produce marketing. The marketing of cowpea as a means of livelihood can be used to reduce the poverty level of marketers involved in the enterprises. Therefore, the study addressed the poverty status of cowpea marketers in Abia State Nigeria, Specifically the study examined (i) the socio-economic characteristic of cowpea marketers (ii) estimate the incidence of poverty of cowpea marketers (iii) estimate the poverty gap or depth (iv) determine the poverty severity and (v) constraints that militated against cowpea marketing in the study area.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Umuahia north and Aba south of Abia State Nigeria. Umuahia and Aba north are located in the eastern part of Nigeria. Umuahia north and Aba south are located on latitudes 5^0 $32^/$ and 5.1066 ^{0} of the equators and longitudes $7^0 29^/$ E and 7.3667E of the green witch meridian respectively. They have a land mass of 245 km^2 and 49km^2 and an estimated population of 732, 000, and 2,534,265 National Bureau of Statistics (NBS 2019 and 2016) respectively. Umuahia north is bounded in the North by Bende Local Government Area (LGA) and in the South by Umuahia South, in the East by Ikwuano and in the west by Imo State. Aba South LGA is bounded in the north and west by Aba north and in the south and

east by Ugwunagbo. The people of the State are Igbo speaking and agriculture is their major occupation. Other activities that take place in the areas are trading and artisan works. The study made use of primary data collected through the use of structured questionnaire. A multistage technique was use to collect data for the study. The first stage involved purposive selection of two markets from the LGAs. The purposive selection was done based on the high level of beans marketing in these markets. The markets selected were Isi-gate and Ubani markets in Umuahia north while Cemetery road and Ahia – Uhuru markets were selected for Aba south. This gave a total of four (4) markets for the study. The second stage, involved a random selection of eight (8) cowpea wholesalers and sixteen (16) cowpea retailers from each of the markets. This gave a total of thirty-two (32) wholesalers and sixty - four (64) retailers for the study. The markets sampled for the study were all daily markets where buying and selling holds. The sampling frame was drawn from the list of all cowpea marketers that was compiled from the markets through the help of heads of trader associations in the markets. Marketers who sold in bags (large quantities) were classified as wholesalers while those who sold in paints and in cups were classified as retailers. The study obtained a poverty line of 1.9$ US in line with World Bank, (2015). The poverty line measured the level of poverty among cowpea marketers. The poverty line for the study was derived from the Mean Per Capita Household Expenditure, (MPCHE). The objectives (i) and (v) on socio-economics and constraints of cowpea marketers were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean and percentages while objective (ii), (iii) and (iv) were achieved using Poverty line and poverty incidence, Poverty gap and poverty severity model as used by Foster Greer and Thorbecke (FGT,1984). The formulae are stated thus: The MPCHE was computed by dividing each household's total monthly expenditure by the household size. The Mean Per Capita Household Expenditure (MPCHE) for all respondents was obtained as a ratio of total per capita expenditure for all household to total number of household sampled.

$$MPCHE = \frac{Total\ per\ capita\ household\ expenditure\ (TPCHE)}{Total\ number\ of\ household\ (TNH)} \ldots (1)$$

$$Per\ Capita\ Household\ Expenditure = \frac{Total\ household\ monthly\ expenditure}{Household\ size} \ldots (2)$$

$$H = {}^{q}/_{n} \ldots (3)$$

H = Head count ratio
q = Number of poor cowpea marketers in each group (wholesalers and retailers)
n = Total number of cowpea marketers in each group. The head count ratio is also known as the poverty incidence.

$$P_\alpha = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{q} \quad \frac{Z-Yi}{Z} \ldots (4)$$

Where;
Z = the poverty line defined as 2/3 (*Y*) (MPCHE)
Y = Mean Per Capita Household Expenditure of cowpea marketers
,P_a, a =0, ranges from zero to 2
When a, 0= 1, it measures poverty incidence or headcount, that is, the proportion of the population that is poor or those that fall below the poverty line.

a = 1, it measures the poverty gap or the depth of poverty, which is the percent of the poverty line needed by the poor cowpea marketer to come out of poverty, or the proportion of the poverty line that an individual below the poverty line requires to attain the poverty line.

a =2, It measures how serious or the severity and inequality or variation in expenditure (income) among the poor cowpea marketers. It is also the squared poverty gap of the group.

$$P_\alpha = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{q} \left(\frac{Z-Yi}{Z}\right)2 \ldots (5)$$

Y_i =Mean Per Capita Expenditure of the poor cowpea marketers of each group.
P_a = 2 = PS = poverty severity

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of wholesale cowpea marketers in the study area

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age range		
25-35	8	25.00
36-46	18	56.25
47-57	5	15.63
>57	1	3.12
Total	32	100
Mean 41		
Sex		
Male	32	100
Marital status		
Single	4	12.5
Married	28	87.5
Household size		
1-3	5	15.63
4-6	20	62.50
7-9	7	21.87
Total	32	100
Mean 6		
Education attained		
Primary	1	3.13
Secondary	28	87.5
Tertiary	3	9.37
Total	32	100
Mean 12		
Marketing Experience		
1-10	14	43.75
11-20	16	50.00
>20	2	6.25
Total	32	100
Mean 12		
Income		
180,000-250,000	4	12.50
260,000-330,000	25	78.12
340,000-410,000	2	6.25
420,000-490,000	1	3.13
Total	32	100
Mean 229, 969.00		

Source: Field survey 2018

The result in Table1 shows that age ranges of (36- 46) representing 56. 25% of the total population sampled dominated cowpea wholesale marketing. The mean age was 41years, this implies that marketers' were in their active age and were able to put in their best in the marketing activities hence they made good profit in the business. The study is similar to the findings of Anorue, (2018) who reported that food grain marketers in the South East were in their active age of 31-40 years.

The result on sex of marketers shows that male counterparts dominated cowpea wholesale marketing representing 100 %. The result is in consonance with the findings of Faith *et al.;* (2011) who reported that 89.24% of beans marketers were males.

Result on marital status shows that about 87.5% were married. This implies that majority of the wholesale marketers were married with families. The implication is that married people will pay more attention to their source of livelihood to enable them take care of their finance need. Kyari (2018) also reported that majority of beans marketers were married representing about 96 % of the total respondents.

Furthermore, the result showed that marketers with household sizes of 4-6, representing 62.50% of the total population studied. A mean household size of 6 persons was estimated; this implies that majority of the wholesale cowpea marketer had a relatively large household size. This household size is important since they could provide family labour to the marketers. The study is in consonance with the findings of Ibrahim *et al.* (2011) who reported that cowpea marketers had a mean household size of 6 persons. Furthermore, the result shows that marketers with secondary education (12) years representing 87.5% dominated the business. This implies that the marketers were educated and could adopt innovations such as preservation technique that could enhance their marketing activities. The study corroborates the findings of Kyari (2018) who reported that 85% of the marketers had various form of education and that educational exposure helps marketers to handle marketing activities effectively. On marketing experience, marketers had a mean marketing experience of 12 years. This means that marketers had wealth of knowledge on how to overcome the challenges that are associated with cowpea marketing. The finding is in agreement with Katanga *et al.* (2016) who reported a mean years of cowpea marketing experiences of 10 years. On marketers' income, the marketers had mean incomes of N 229, 969.00. This implies a relatively high income. This is not far from the truth that marketers with higher income that serve as capital will reinvest it into the business that will attract higher income.

Table 2: Socio-economic characteristics of Retail cowpea marketers in the stu

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age range		
24-30	31	48.44
31-37	18	28.13
38-44	10	15.62
45-51	5	7.81
Total	64	100
Mean 33		
Sex		
Male	27	42.19
Female	37	57.81
Total	64	100
Marital status		
Single	26	40.63
Married	38	59.37
Total	64	100
Household size		
1-3	33	51.56
4-6	29	45.31
7-9	2	3.13
Total	64	100
Mean 3		
Education attained		
Secondary	60	93.75
Tertiary	4	6.25
Total	64	100
Mean 12		
Marketing Experienc		
1-10	58	90.63
11-20	6	9.37
Total	64	100
Mean 7		
Income		
24,000-34,000	8	12.50
35,000-44,000	19	29.69
44,000-54,000	26	40.63
55,000-64,000	10	15.62
>64,000	1	1.56
Total	64	100
Mean 45,171.90		

Source; Field survey

The result in Table 2 shows that age ranges of 24- 30 representing 48.44% of the total population sampled dominated cowpea retail marketing. The mean age was 33years, this implies that marketers were in their active age and were able to put in their best in the marketing activities hence they made good profit in the business. The study is similar to the findings of Gaya *et al* ., (2020) who reported that cowpea marketers in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council and Jere Local Government Area of Borno State were in their active age of 20-40years. The result on sex of marketers shows that female counterparts dominated cowpea retail marketing representing 48.44% . The result is contrary to the work of Alam, *et al. (*2015) who reported that 69.01% of cowpea marketers sampled were male. Result on marital status shows that about 59.37% were married. This implies that majority of the retail marketers were married with family. Aliyu *et al*. (2020) also reported that majority 65% of beans marketers in Mubi North were married. The result implied that the marketers will be more serious with their business in order for them to cater for their family responsibilities. Furthermore, the result showed that marketers had household sizes of (1-3) representing 51.56% of the total population studied. A mean household size of 3 persons was estimated; this implies that majority of the retail cowpea marketer had a relatively small household size. This could be attributed to the fact that marketers are still in their youthful age and they are still given birth. The study is contrary to the findings of Katanga *et al.* (2016) who reported that cowpea marketers had a mean household size of 12 persons. Furthermore, the result shows that marketers with secondary education (12) years representing 93.75% dominated the business. This implies that the marketers were educated and could adopt new innovations such as preservation technique that could enhance their marketing activities. The study corroborates the findings of Kyari (2018) who reported that 85% of the marketers had various form of education and that educational exposure helps marketers to handle marketing activities effectively. On marketing experience, marketers had a mean marketing experience of 7 years. This means that marketers are relatively experienced and as such they can overcome the challenges that are associated with cowpea marketing. The finding is in agreement with Katanga *et l.* (2016) who reported a mean years of cowpea marketing experiences of 10 years. On marketers' income, the marketers had mean incomes of N 45,171.90. This implies a relatively low income. This is not far from the truth that, marketers with low income as capital will have little or nothing to reinvest into the business except from external sources to boost the growth of the business.

CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE	Umuahia North and Aba South LGA
Food	₦ 39,680.397(45%)
Non food	₦ 48,498.263 (55.0%)
Total MPCE	₦ 88,178.66 (100.0%)
2/3 of MPCE (PV L)	58,785.77

Source: Field Survey 2018 :

Poverty status of cowpea marketers in the study area was measured using the mean per capita expenditure (MPCE) and poverty line (PL). The MPCE of marketers was broken in to food and non-food expenditure. This gave an understanding of the proportion of expenditure that was spent on food and non-food items among the marketers studied. The result in Table 3: shows that cowpea wholesale marketers spent about 45.0% of expenditure on food while 55.0% of the expenditure was on non-food items. The result shows that the MPCE of the cowpea wholesale marketers was N88,178.66, .This implies that each household head in the study area spent N88,178.66 on a monthly bases on both food and non-food item in order to meet their basic needs of life.

Table 4: Estimated monthly and daily poverty line (PL) of cowpea wholesale marketers

VARIABLE	Umuahia North & Aba South LGAs
Monthly poverty line	58,785.77
Daily poverty line	2,099.49 ($5.5249)
Poverty incidence (P_0)	3.125 %
Poverty gap or depth (P_1)	0.3075 %
Poverty severity (P_2)	0.03 %
Household sizes	5

Source: Field Survey 2018 :

Table 4 shows that the daily poverty lines for the household heads were N2,099.49 ($ 5.0905). This implies that the wholesale cowpea marketer household heads were living on daily poverty line N2,099.49 per day. This could be too low to meet the daily needs of the entire household sizes of 5 persons, implying that each individual spends or lived on N 419.89 ($1.1049). The estimated poverty lines are lower than the international poverty threshold of $1.9 per day per person according to world Bank (2015 and 218), for people living in sub-Saharan Africa and Asian countries. The study is similar to the findings of Ogbonna *et al. (*2012), who reported that yam farmers were living below the poverty threshold of $1.25 per day.

Furthermore, the PL of the wholesale cowpea marketers was used to estimate the poverty parameters for the study. Poverty parameter such as Poverty incidence (Po), Poverty depth (P1) and Poverty severity (P2); were estimated using poverty line of $1.9. The poverty incidences (Po) in the study area was 0.03125. This implied that about 3.125 % wholesale cowpea marketers were living below the poverty line and were classified as poor. The poverty gap estimate of the wholesale cowpea marketers in the study area was 0.00307. This implied that a wholesale cowpea marketer required 0.307%, of the poverty line of $1.9 to come out of poverty; and as such the poverty gap is low as a wholesaler cowpea marketer required the sum of N 18,047.23 to come out of poverty using the poverty line N58,785.77. The poverty severity (P_2) index measures variation in the poverty level of individual cowpea marketer households. The result indicates that there was 0.0303% variation among poor marketers' households in the study area. In other word the Poverty severity (P_2) among the wholesale cowpea marketers, was very mild (not severe). This could imply that wholesale cowpea marketers know the technicalities involved in the business to accrue more income. The study is in agreement with the findings of Ehinmowo *et al.* (2015) who reported that poverty severity among women entrepreneurs in confectionery enterprise was fairly low in the study area, although wholesale cowpea marketers' households are living below the recommended poverty line of $1.9.

Estimated poverty status of wholesale cowpea marketers

Table 5: Estimate of Poverty status of wholesale cowpea marketers in the study area

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	1	3.12
Non poor	31	96.87
Total	32	100

Source: Field survey 2018

The poverty status of the wholesale cowpea marketers shows the number of people that fall within, above or below the poverty line used for the study. The result shows that majority 96.87% of the wholesale cowpea marketers were not poor as at the time of study. The study is contrary to the work of Adebo and Ajiboye (2014), who reported a high incidence of poverty of 78% and 57% of rural and urban farmers of Ekiti and Ondo States respectively.

Mean per capita expenditure (MPCE) and poverty line (PL) of retail cowpea marketers

Table 5: Mean per capita expenditure (MPCE) and P L of retail cowpea marketers

Consumption Expenditure in (₦)	Umuahia North & Aba South LGA
Food	25,194.32 (56.4%)
Non food	19,476.46 (43.6%)
Total MPCE	44,670.78 (100.0%)
2/3 of MPCE(poverty line)	29,780.52

Source: Field survey 2018

Similarly, poverty status of retail cowpea marketers in the study area was measured using the mean per capita expenditure (MPCE) and poverty line (PL). The MPCE of marketers was broken in to food and non-food expenditure. This gave an understanding of the proportion of expenditure that was spent on food and non-food items among the marketers studied. The result in Table 5: shows that retail cowpea markers spent 56.4.0% on food items while 43.6% of the expenditure were on non-food items. The result also showed that MPCE of cowpea retail marketers were N 44,670.78

Estimated monthly and daily poverty line of retail cowpea marketers

Table 6:**Estimated monthly and daily poverty line of retail cowpea marketers**

VARIABLES	ABIA STATE
Poverty Line	29,780.52
Daily Poverty Line	1,063.59 ($2.7989)
Poverty incidence (P0)	12.5 % (8)
Poverty gap or depth (P1)	1.6944 %
Poverty severity (P2)	0.3877 %
Household sizes	3

Source: Field survey

Table 6 shows the monthly and daily poverty lines for retail cowpea marketers. The daily PL for the household heads was N 1,063.59 ($ 2.7989). This implies that the retail cowpea marketer household heads were living on the daily poverty line per day. This could be too low to meet the daily needs of the entire household sizes of 3 persons implying that each individual spent or lived on N 354.53($0.9329) in the study area. This estimated poverty lines is lower than the international poverty threshold of $1.9 per person per day, according to World Bank (2018), for people living in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asian countries. The study is similar to the findings of Ogbonna *et al. (*2012), who reported that yam farmers were living below the poverty threshold of $1.25 per day.

Furthermore, the PL of the retail cowpea marketers was used to estimate the poverty parameters for the study. Poverty parameters such as Poverty incidence (Po), Poverty depth (P1) and Poverty severity (P2) were estimated using poverty line of $1.9. The poverty incidences (Po) in the study area was 0.125 This implied that about 12.5 %, of the retail marketers were poor. The poverty gap estimate for retail cowpea marketers in the study area was 0.001694. This implied that retail cowpea marketers require 0.169%, of the poverty line of $1.9 to come out of poverty. This implies that a retailer requires the sum of N 5,044.82 to come out of poverty; this implies a low rate of poverty gap. The poverty severity (P_2) index measures variation in the poverty level of individual cowpea marketer households. The result indicates that there existed 0.3877 % variation among poor marketer households in the study area. In other word the Poverty severity (P_2) among the retail cowpea marketers, was mild not severe in the study. This could imply that retail cowpea marketers know the technicalities involved in the business to accrue more income. The study is in agreement with the findings of Ehinmowo *et al.* (2015) who reported that poverty severity among women entrepreneurs in confectionery enterprise was fairly low in the study.

Poverty status (PS) of retail cowpea marketers

Table 7: Estimated poverty status (PS) of retail cowpe

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	8	12.5
Non poo	56	87.5
Total	64	100

Source: Field survey 2018

The result in Table 7: shows that 87.5 % of the cowpea retail marketers were not poor. Only 12.5 % of the total retailer sampled were poor. This implies that majority of the sampled respondents were not poor as at the time of study. The study is contrary to the work of Adebo and Ajiboye (2014), who reported a high incidence of poverty of 78% and 57% of rural and urban farmers of Ekiti and Ondo States respectively.

Constraints to cowpea marketing in the study area.

Table 8: Constraints to Cowpea marketing in the study area

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Ranked
Inadequate finance	30	100	1st
High cost of transport	30	100	1st
High cost of product	29	96.67	2nd
Fluctuation in price	28	93.33	3rd
High tax rate	28	93.33	3rd
Unavailability of product	27	90.00	4th
Poor storage facility	26	86.67	4th
Competition in the business	25	83.33	5th
Weevil attack	23	76.67	6th
Low patronage	20	66.67	7th
Seasonality of product	4	13.33	8th
High interest rate	-	-	
Poor information Dissemination	-	-	
Total	>30	>100	

Source Field survey 2018

The result in Table 8 shows the constraints identified by cowpea marketers in Umuahia North and Aba South LGAs of Abia State. The constraints identified were ranked and it was found that inadequate finance and high cost of transportation were the number one constraints followed by high cost of product, fluctuation in price of product and high tax rate that ranked second and third; respectively while unavailability of product, poor storage facility and competition in the business followed. Generally, it can be infered that these constraints militated against cowpea marketing seeing that majority of the marketers identified them as constraints that hindered cowpea marketing in the study area, The study is in agreement with the finding of Kyari (2018) who reported that 84.17% of the cowpea marketer sample identified these constraint as the major constraint that militated against cowpea marketing in Biu Local Government Area of Bornu State, Nigeria , except for low patronage and seasonality of product that were not in the list of her constraints.

Conclusion

The study analyzed the poverty status of cowpea marketers in Umuahia North and Aba South Local Government Area of Abia State, Nigeria .The study estimated poverty incidence , poverty gap and severity of 3.12%, 0.307 and 0.03 respectively for cowpea wholesalers and 12.5%, 0.169 and 0.387 respectively were obtained for the retailers .The study therefore inferred that the poverty status of cowpea marketers in the study area was not high both at wholesale and retail level although the marketers were living below the poverty line of 1.9 $ per day as recommended by the World Bank (2015and 2018).

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