



MARKET INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF RURAL FARMERS IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *On the premise that stakeholders in rural farmers development must understand the appropriate means of passing relevant information to farmers, this study examined the main sources of market information among rural farmers in Ogun State. It uses questionnaires to obtain quantitative and qualitative information relating to sources of marketing information, means of selling produce, place for selling produce, place for buying input and whether rural farmers in Ogun State do have up-takers for their produce. The study made use of purposive sampling of Ifo block, Simawa block, Ala block and Ado-Odo block to represent farmers from Abeokuta, Ikenne, Ijebu-Ode and Ilaro zones respectively. The results on the sources of market information were that 27.3% get marketing information from other farmers, 24.7% get information through personal enquiry, 7.3% through radio, 7.5% through buyers, 0.4% from TV, 13.7% through extension agents, 17.5% from farmers meeting and 1.5% through social media. The study concludes that rural farmers in Ogun State get market information from multiple sources. The dominant sources are other farmers, personal enquiry, extension agents and farmers meeting. The study recommends that useful information to farmers by relevant stakeholders should be through multiple choices and should include the use of extension agents and farmers' meetings.*

KEYWORDS: Market Information, Rural Farmers, Farmers Meeting, Extension Agents, Ogun State.



INTRODUCTION

Globally, more than 500 million farmers are responsible for the global food supply, with small farms holders (rural farmers) contributing most of the food production, especially in low-income and middle-income countries such as Nigeria (Herrero, Thornton, Power, Bogard, Remans, Fritz & Havlik, 2018). The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reported that rural farmers supply about 70% of Africa's total food requirements and provide around 80% of the food consumed in both Asia and sub-Saharan Africa (Ricciardi, Ramankutty, Mehrabi, Jarvis & Chookolingo, 2018). For smallholder farmers to achieve their maximum potential in developing the Nigerian economy, they must be aware of relevant information and ready to adopt new practices in production and marketing activities. The significance of participating in product markets was based on the premise that incomes and, thus, livelihoods of smallholder producers are likely to improve if they have better access to markets for their produce. Markets and improved market access for poor rural households are a precondition for increasing agriculture-based socio-economic development and increasing rural household incomes (IFAD, 2015). Rural farmers in Nigeria are generally characterized by poverty, poor health conditions and ignorance (Nicholas-Ere, 2017). Agricultural information is a key component in improving small-scale agricultural production and linking increased production to remunerative markets, thus leading to improved rural livelihoods, food security and national economics (Masuki et al., 2010). Information-based decision-making agricultural system is designed to maximize agricultural production and was often described as the next great evolution in agriculture (Mittal & Tripathi, 2009). As expressed by Magesa, Michael and Ko (2014), information enables smallholder farmers to decide what to plant, when and where to sell, and to better negotiate the prices of their agricultural products. Lack of access to required knowledge and information that can help rural farmers in their farms and achieve maximum agricultural productivity contributes in no small way to inadequate food security for the nation.

In line with the above, this study examined the sources of market information among rural farmers in the four agricultural zones of Ogun State which are: Abeokuta, Ikenne, Ijebu-Ode, and Ilaro.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In today's world, knowledge and the rural population's awareness of pathways to inclusive growth and poverty reduction are essential, as emphasized in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) blueprint. The entire agricultural value chain and architecture have been identified as a major source of economic growth through the production of farm produce beyond subsistence production. The rural dwellers, particularly smallholder farmers, need information on a multiplicity of issues that border around: agricultural related information like supply of fertilizer, supply of other farm inputs, modern methods of farming, income generation, good roads and health information (Oladele, 2011; Sani, Boadi, Oladokun & Kalusopa, 2014; Nicholase-Ere, 2017). Soyemi and Haliso (2015) affirmed that in agriculture, information is essential in determining the extent of productivity as farmers need to upgrade to current practices for higher yield and income. Thus, commercialization will be enhanced by establishing efficient and well-functioning markets because they lower transaction costs, minimize risk, and allow uniform information flow to all actors in a commodity value chain.



Hence, linking smallholder farmers to markets was vital for the sustainable development of the agricultural sector in agriculture-based economies.

Obidike (2011) believed that the lack of access to basic agricultural knowledge and information by rural farmers may be because of certain constraints that have made these farmers stick to their old traditional methods of farming system and animal husbandry practice, hence resulting in poor crop and livestock productivity. According to her, information and knowledge are very vital in the agricultural development of any community. Where they are poorly disseminated due to certain constraints, the community's agricultural development becomes highly impeded. Thus, the role of communication in forging this linkage cannot be over-emphasized. Information is essential for facilitating agricultural and rural development and bringing about social and economic change.

Information dissemination using the right communication technology is very important if the receiver must make meaning from the received messages. Age, Obinne, and Demenongu (2012) noted that as long as there is a continued imbalance in the diffusion of agricultural information and wrongful targeting of information, the possibility of harnessing the full potential of our rural populace towards attaining sustainable and holistic national, rural and agricultural development will remain problematic and in limbo. Thus, communication is the essence of extension. It seeks to provide knowledge and information for rural people to modify their behaviours to provide sustainable benefits to them and society. This is because disseminating appropriate agricultural information to farmers is one of the major functions of extension services in any state. Oyekunle (2011) opined that this is so because the achievement of increased productivity is predicated, among other factors, on a time-bound and systematic delivery of relevant agricultural information via communication media to the farmers.

The worth of agricultural information lies in its application across the entire agricultural value chain (IFAD, 2014). Effective information communication to the ultimate end user is just as important as the information itself. In providing information to users, the information officer and librarian must develop client-centred information services that can meet users' needs in terms of both the content of the information and the channel(s) by which it is communicated. Also, all farmers, especially Nigerian farmers, require much information to develop successful practices. Information managers, i.e., those in extension service, librarians and information officers, must know the kind of information packages and communication channels that farmers prefer in order to communicate the desired information to them effectively (Adio, Abu, Yusuf & Nansoh, 2016). According to findings of a study conducted by Ternenge, Lorver and Ebute (2019) in one of the rural communities in Africa, it was observed that oral communication from neighbours tends to be the primary source of information due to a shortage of more standard organized information services.

The sources and channels through which the rural farmers satisfy their information needs are available formally and informally. The formal channels include radio and television, local government information offices, agricultural extension workers, primary health care workers, and public libraries. On the other hand, the informal channels comprise village or ward heads, the school headmaster, the religious leaders and other elite groups in the community. Others include friends and relatives, market women, and Non-Governmental Organizations (Saleh & Lasisi, 2011).



Rural farmers need information for their daily farming work for productivity enhancement, and this information needs to be packaged in a way that will greatly impact them. In packaging the information, the language of communication needs to be properly addressed, bearing in mind that most rural farmers are not educated (IFAD, 2014).

Essentially, agricultural extension provides farmers with the scientific knowledge to solve their problems. It helps the farmers learn about other alternatives in farming to choose the best alternatives for themselves (Oyekunle, 2011). He further noted that this is so because the achievement of increased productivity is predicated, among other factors, on a time-bound and systematic delivery of relevant agricultural information via media communication to the farmers. All these underscore the importance of appropriate agricultural information dissemination to farmers, which is one of the major functions of extension services in any state. However, despite all these important roles that extension workers are supposed to play in the overall achievements of sustainable agricultural development in Nigeria, there are still serious challenges that serve as obstacles to effective communication with the farmers, especially those in rural areas.

There are a varied number of methods or strategies that extension workers (who are responsible for educating the farmers) can choose to maximize the transfer of information and skills to the farmers. According to Oyekunle (2011), these communication strategies/methods include individual contact methods, group methods and mass methods. The individual contact methods involve a face-to-face discussion under a relaxed and informal atmosphere between an extension worker and a farmer for specific objectives. This may also involve farm families that comprise a father, mother, children and relatives in the household. The household is taken as an individual unit. Examples of individual contact methods include farm and home visits, office calls, telephone calls, correspondence/personal letters, informal/unplanned contacts, and the use of flags.

The group methods involve bringing farmers together by extension workers in one form or another to carry out their jobs. This allows for interaction among group members and the extension worker. It provides the members with an opportunity to participate by allowing farmers to ask questions for clarifications during discussions on issues affecting them with the extension workers and reach a mutual understanding on how best to resolve such. Extension workers usually use this group method as it allows them to reach more farmers simultaneously and save cost and time. Examples include method demonstration (extension worker teaching a skill to a group of farmers), result demonstrations (a procedure by the extension agents to prove the advantage of and build confidence in a practice or technology recommended or introduced to the farmers), meetings (the extension agent meets with the farmers at specified dates and venues). Also, fields days/field trips (the extension agent and farmers visit farmers where proven and adopted technologies were used), group discussion (farmers within the same vicinity break into a discussion group) and excursion/conducted tour (group of farmers travelling to another location for a day or more to observe agricultural practices and projects that are not available locally) (Oyekunle, 2011).

The mass methods involve the use of techniques that can reach a large number of people at the same time. Mass methods are grouped into three main media techniques: print (posters, newspapers, pamphlets, leaflets, flyers or extension guides, bulletins), screen (slides and multimedia projectors presentations) and broadcast media techniques (radio, television, film, and video). It is noted that irrespective of the communication strategies/methods used, it is



obvious that the axis of effective agricultural communication is the farmers, their needs, attitudes, perceptions and behaviours. Any communication strategy must be based on an understanding of the farmers' perspectives, the hidden constraints a farmer might encounter in trying an innovation, and to understand the incentives that will promote or inhibit adoption (Oyekunle, 2011).

Existing studies have noted that each communication medium has a different level of effectiveness among rural farmers. For example, Age, Obinne, and Demenongu (2012) stated that information dissemination to farmers using the right communication technology was very important. The current study hypothesized that the communication channel that was most effective for on-farm input information might not be the most effective in giving farmers marketing information.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive research design. It employed both qualitative and quantitative techniques to describe the sources of market information among rural farmers in Ogun State. This study adopted the classification of farmers according to the Ogun State Agricultural Development Programme (OGADEP), which divides Ogun State farmers' population into four zones of Abeokuta, Ikenne, Ijebu-Ode and Ilaro. Each zone, made up of multiple local government areas, is further divided into agricultural blocks. Abeokuta zone is made up of Odeda, Abeokuta North, Abeokuta South, Ewekoro and Ifo Local Government Areas. The Ikenne zone is made up of Ikenne, Sagamu, Obafemi and Remo North Local Government Areas. The Ijebu-Ode zone is made up of Ogun Waterside, Ijebu-East, Ijebu-North, Ijebu-Ode, Odogbolu and Ijebu-North East Local Government Areas. The Ilaro zone is made up of Egbado North, Egbado South, Ado-Odo/Otta, Imeko/Afon and Ipokia. This study makes use of purposive sampling of Ifo block, Simawa block, Ala block and Ado-Odo block from Abeokuta, Ikenne, Ijebu-Ode and Ilaro zones respectively. Based on the methods described in Cochran (1977) and Singh and Masuku (2014), the study made a random sample of 372 farmers from Ifo block, 360 farmers from Simawa block, 368 from Ala block and 372 from Ado-Odo block, making a total of 1472 samples. The quantitative information was obtained through the use of structured questionnaires while the qualitative information was obtained through in-depth interviews with the extension officers and focus group discussions with farmers. The quantitative analysis involved the use of descriptive methods of frequencies, proportions and bar chart while the qualitative analysis involved thematic summary of the responses.



RESULTS

Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

The results of the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents are in Table 1. It shows that about 23.1% of the respondents were below the age of 40, 39.6% were between 40 and 49 years, 22.6% were between 50 and 59 years, and 14.7% were above 60 years. This implies that middle-aged people dominate farmers in Ogun State. Concerning gender, 64.6% of the respondents were males, while the remaining 35.4% were females. This indicates that males dominate the crop farming activities in Ogun State.

Table 1 : Distribution of Respondents by Socio-demographic Characteristics

| Characteristics | Categories | Frequencies | Percentage |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|------------|
| Age | Less than 30 | 86 | 5.8 |
| | 30-39 | 254 | 17.3 |
| | 40-49 | 583 | 39.6 |
| | 50-59 | 333 | 22.6 |
| | 60 and above | 216 | 14.7 |
| | | 1472 | 100 |
| Gender | Male | 951 | 64.6 |
| | Female | 521 | 35.4 |
| | | 1472 | 100 |
| Religion | Christian | 775 | 52.6 |
| | Muslim | 567 | 38.5 |
| | Others | 130 | 8.8 |
| | | 1472 | 100 |
| Marital Status | Married | 1206 | 81.9 |
| | Single | 173 | 11.8 |
| | Others | 83 | 6.3 |
| | | 1472 | 100 |
| Level of Education | Secondary Education | 549 | 37.3 |
| | Primary Education | 387 | 26.3 |
| | Tertiary Education | 263 | 17.9 |
| | No formal education | 273 | 18.5 |
| | 1472 | 100 | |

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The religion distribution of the respondents revealed that 52.62% were Christians, and 38.5% were Muslims. The table further shows that about 81.9% of the respondents were married while 11.8% were single. This indicates that most of the respondents were married. The educational distribution indicates that 37.3% of the respondents have secondary education, 26% possess primary education, 17.9% have tertiary education, while 18.5% have no formal education. These findings imply that the majority of the respondents in the study area were literate.



Nature of Market Information Seeking Behaviour

The result of the responses on the nature of market information sources is summarized in Table 2. On the sources of market information, 29.8% of the respondents from Abeokuta zone get market information from farmers' meetings, 22.6% get it from other farmers, 12.9% from extension agents and 12.6% from personal enquiry.

Table 2: Nature of Market Information Seeking Behaviour

| Variables | Categories | Zone | | | | Total |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | Abeokuta | Ijebu | Ikenne | Ilaro | |
| Sources of marketing information | Other farmers | 84 (22.6%) | 83(22.6%) | 107(29.7%) | 128(34.4%) | 402(27.3%) |
| | Personal enquiry | 47(12.6%) | 95(25.8%) | 117(32.5%) | 105(28.2%) | 364(24.7%) |
| | Radio | 34(9.1%) | 19(5.2%) | 34(9.4%) | 21(5.6%) | 108(7.3%) |
| | Buyer | 29(7.8%) | 0(0.0%) | 33(9.2%) | 49(13.2%) | 111(7.5%) |
| | TV | 4(1.1%) | 0(0.0%) | 2(0.6%) | 0(0.0%) | 6(0.4%) |
| | Extension agents | 48(12.9%) | 85(23.1%) | 27(7.5%) | 41(11.0%) | 201(13.7%) |
| | Farmers meeting | 111(29.8%) | 82(22.3%) | 40(11.1%) | 25(6.7%) | 258(17.5%) |
| | Social media | 15(4.0%) | 4(1.1%) | 0(0.0%) | 3(0.8%) | 22(1.5%) |
| Means of selling produce | Consumers | 72 (19.4%) | 38 (10.3%) | 78 (21.7%) | 55 (14.8%) | 243 (16.5%) |
| | Retailers | 115 (30.9%) | 251 (68.2%) | 146 (40.6%) | 135 (36.3%) | 647 (44.0%) |
| | Wholesalers | 83 (22.3%) | 20 (5.4%) | 97 (26.9%) | 131 (35.2%) | 331 (22.5%) |
| | Exporters | 32 (8.6%) | 5 (1.4%) | 2 (0.6%) | 3 (0.8%) | 42 (2.9%) |
| | Processors | 57 (15.3%) | 51 (13.9%) | 37 (10.3%) | 46 (12.4%) | 191 (13.0%) |
| | Government | 10 (2.7%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 2 (0.5%) | 12 (0.8%) |
| | Other | 3 (0.8%) | 3 (0.8%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 6 (0.4%) |
| Place for selling produce | On the farm | 140 (37.6%) | 172 (46.7%) | 135 (37.5%) | 125 (33.7%) | 572 (38.9%) |
| | Local market | 215 (57.8%) | 188 (51.1%) | 202 (56.1%) | 220 (59.3%) | 825 (56.1%) |
| | Processors factory | 17 (4.6%) | 5 (1.4%) | 23 (6.4%) | 24 (6.5%) | 69 (4.7%) |
| | Other | 0 (0.0%) | 3 (0.8%) | 0 (0.0%) | 2 (0.5%) | 5 (0.4%) |
| Place for buying input | On the farm | 34 (9.1%) | 8 (2.2%) | 48 (13.3%) | 27 (7.3%) | 117 (7.9%) |
| | Government | 32 (8.6%) | 70 (19.0%) | 84 (23.3%) | 56 (15.1%) | 242 (16.4%) |
| | Farmers market | 186 (50.0%) | 239 (64.9%) | 212 (58.9%) | 205 (55.1%) | 842 (57.2%) |
| | Extension agent | 120 (32.3%) | 51 (13.9%) | 14 (3.9%) | 77 (20.7%) | 262 (17.8%) |
| | Other | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 2 (0.6%) | 7 (1.9%) | 9 (0.6%) |
| Having Up-taker | Yes | 150 (40.3%) | 74 (20.1%) | 99 (27.5%) | 56 (15.1%) | 379 (25.7%) |
| | No | 222 (59.7%) | 294 (79.9%) | 261 (72.5%) | 316 (84.9%) | 1093 (74.3%) |

Source: Field Survey, 2022



In the Ijebu zone, 25.8% get information from personal enquiry, 23.1% get it from extension agents, 22.3% of respondents get market information from farmers' meetings, and 22.6% get it from other farmers. From the Ikenne zone, 32.5% of respondents get market information from personal enquiry, 29.7% get it from other farmers, and 11.1% get market information from farmers' meetings. From the Ilaro zone, 34.4% of respondents get market information from other farmers, 28.2% get it from personal enquiry, and 13.2% get information from buyers.

The in-depth interview and focus group discussions revealed that many farmers get market information from multiple sources, such as phone calls, OGADEP extension officers, fellow farmers, and farmer's group meetings. A female extension agent, for example, stated the main sources of market information to be:

For me, the main sources of market information for the rural farmers are OGADEP extension officers and fellow farmers among themselves, especially during their farmers' group meetings.

IDI/Extension Officer/Female/Yoruba/55years/Abeokuta/2022

Focus group discussion in Ikenne revealed that farmers also made phone calls; participants stated sources of market information to be:

We (Farmers) received marketing information through different sources. Even through phone calls, we do call ourselves, most especially if we cannot attend the farmers' meeting. We used to place a call through to be well informed and be updated.

FGD/Farmer/Male/Yoruba/59years/IKENNE/2022

During a focus group discussion in Abeokuta, participants mentioned that farmers made use of all available means to get market information as participants stated sources of market information to be:

Most of us farmers get our marketing information through different channels here in Abeokuta, input information and output information through different means of communication channels.

FGD/ Farmer/Male/Igbo/47years/Abeokuta/2022

An extension officer from Ikenne noted that the economic conditions of farmers often made them sell before market prices; she described the situation as follows:

Sometimes our farmers get information about the price from the market; sometimes, it is from their neighbour. They have 5-day and 10-day markets. An example of the market is the Simawa market, which is ten, ten days circle market. For example, if you do today, Monday, or the next one, you will count ten days after that Monday. So it might be Tuesday for the following market. Also, we have the Sagamu market, that one is five, five, days. Again we have Awolowo market along Ikenne; it is also five, five days. Farmers would not want to sell cassava and carry it to the market and then start asking its price at that time. To avoid this, they use to do meetings. They have a cooperative that they do attend, so from there; they will know the price. They use to have recommended selling price announced during the meeting, but some farmers don't use to comply with their rules, they will go and sell at a lower price, ... you know some farmers are so funny, needing money urgently at times ... don't let farmers comply with rules. For example, if the normal price declared by other farmers is ₦5000 per basket measure of cassava, but



because some farmers need money urgently, they will want to sell fast, fast at a cheaper rate which makes them reduce the price, a farmer may sell at ₦3,000 per basket.

IDI/Extension Officer/Female/Yoruba/45years/Ikenne/2022

A farmer alluded to this problem and its impact on other farmers by stating:

The cooperative does not sanction farmers that sell below the agreed market. Is it my farm? It is to the farmer's detriment; that's the way the farmer wanted it. At least one day 'sha', the product will finish. Then others will be able to sell their own at their desired price.

FGD/Farmer/Male/Yoruba/54years/Ijebu/2022

The comment indicated that farmers' groups and extension officers make efforts to keep farmers informed of the current market price. However, they do not force them to comply. The failure of some farmers to comply due to economic pressure reduces their bargaining power.

To mitigate the economic situation, some farmers do other activities, especially during the dry season. This was confirmed by an extension officer as follows:

Some farmers also do other things or work to corroborate farming work. For instance, during this drying season, there are a lot of farmers who have gone to ride 'okada' or 'maruwa', so we don't see them on farms now; some are on farms, and we just need them to clear their farm land to prepare for the season, so people we are dealing with now is just the live stocks farmers that are getting vaccines. On a good day, the vaccine is 15,000, but the government is giving them for free now. While for crop farmers, some are doing dry-season farming of vegetables. Those vegetable farmers still need fertilizer and the techniques they can use to have a good yield from their farming.

IDI/Extension Officer/Female/Yoruba/38years/Abeokuta/2022

The result in Table 2 also shows that 16.5% of the respondents sell their agricultural produce directly to the consumers, while 44.0% sell to retailers and 22.5% sell to wholesalers. Again, 42 (2.9%) sell to exporters, then 13.0% sell to processors, 0.8% sell to the government, and 6 (0.4%) sell through other channels. The table further shows that 38.9% of the respondents sell their agricultural produce on the farm, while (56.1%) of the respondents sell at the local markets, 4.7% sell at the processors' factory and 0.4% sell through other means that were not identified.

In relation to the roles of extension officers in helping farmers to sell their products, an extension officer stated:

It can also be viewed in two ways; sometimes, we extension workers serve as middlemen between the farmers and the buyers of agricultural produce. That is if farmers call us to say that they would like to sell their market through our channel. So we help the farmers to look for buyers, but we will not sell it at the poor price some farmers use to sell, especially when they need money urgently. We will help the farmers to sell at a standardized rate. And it will really pay the farmers a lot. That is, if they can exercise patience. After selling, the extension officer will give the farmers all their money without asking the farmers to give money or commission. The farmers usually appreciate extension officers from time to time and not when they are involved in a transaction. For example, farmers used to give the extension workers



out of the different agricultural produce they planted during harvest as a gift to appreciate the extension officers' effort, and the extension workers should not reject it. Anything the extension officers like they should do with it, either eat it or sell it or give it out as well. None of the farmers' business.

IDI/Extension Officer/Male/Yoruba/47years/Ijebu/2022

Also, the Table reveals that 7.9% of the respondents buy farm inputs on the farm, while 16.4% buy from the government, and 57.2% buy from farmers' markets. Also, 17.8% buy from extension agents and 0.6% buy through other channels that were not revealed.

Concerning the purchase of input, an extension officer explained as follows:

For the farm input, farmers are using fertilizers like seedlings and the rest. Individual buys anyhow. Sometimes some of the farmers contact us, and we, the extension workers, help them to get fertilizers. But sometimes, the government gave them fertilizers at discounted rates through the extension officers. If farmers need anything, they do contact any OGADEP representative around them. They call us 'akowe agbe'. If a farmer calls me for fertilizer and I don't have it, I can call my block supervisor, that 'oga' (and ask), "Do you have any one with cheap fertilizer?" If there is, I will give the person's contact to the farmer. We don't act as a middle man for our farmers; we don't collect money from them; we will give them the contact to go and call the person direct. If farmers are not contented with the price from our contact, they are free to go and buy themselves from anywhere. Those selling the farm input like fertilizers and the rest also come to us the extension officers that we should introduce them to our farmers. Also, for other inputs like chemicals, farmers do contact us for advice on the appropriate one for their purpose and where to get the original and reasonable price. We used to give them correct information because that's part of the work of the extension workers, to make work easier for the farmers.

IDI/Extension Officer/Male/Yoruba/48years/Ilaro/2022

There were also 25.7% of respondents having up-takers and 74.3% of respondents that were not having up-takers. On the issue of up-takers, a farmer narrated as follows:

For the issue of uptaker, i.e. that somebody has agreed that, this my farm, this is the person that will buy all the produce uprooted for this year. Not all farmers have uptakers. What most farmers do is that when we cultivate cassava, we sell (it) to companies that buy in bulk and pay together. They can buy from many farmers at the same time. For example, we have the improved cassava stem that extension officers brought to us, the TME419; it is very, very good in starch, so when we plant it, it has enough starch. When companies are desperately in need of it, most of the farmers will not sell to the market; they will sell to companies so that they will get their money instantly.

FGD/Farmer/Male/Yoruba/42years/Abeokuta/2022

On how the selling price to companies compares relatively to the selling price to market, an extension officer stated as follows:

For the issue of price, before, the company price was usually higher than the market price, but when the supply is more than what they can take, this makes them slash the price. But farmers

still sell to companies because they buy in bulk and pay together. For the market women, the purchase would be bit by bit over time, and payment may be delayed for a whole market cycle. When the market price is good, a farmer can do serious capital projects like building a house after selling cassava. You know now, in Nigeria 'afi ki olohun saanu fun wa'. Everything is turning upside down; this is making the farmers just sell anyhow. For example, one farmer even came to me, Mr Ebenezer, he said, "Ha! Akowe Agbe, kilamase si awon oko yii. Awon company o ra daada mon kankan, Kilafese?" Mr Ebenezer has one five-hectare and one two-hectare. He use it to plant cassava and agbado. He also has a plantain farm. So from these farms, Mr Ebenezer sold cassava and bought a car in the past. He even took me with that car to go and see his fellow farmers that are doing akuro farming; this is the type of farming farmers plant during the dry season. You know akuro is very profitable during the dry season. That is when the farmers make their money. So Mr Ebenezer took me to the akuro farm land. We call it fadama. The akuro, they use it to plant vegetables. Now he is complaining that the companies are not buying it like before. What did you want us to do? The best cassava they are selling in my area currently is for fufu makers, onifufu poo gan ni Simawa and that's the best fufu in Ogun state.

IDI/Extension Officer/Female/Yoruba/45years/Ikenne/2022

The overall distribution of the sources of market information among farmers in Ogun State is illustrated in Figure 1.

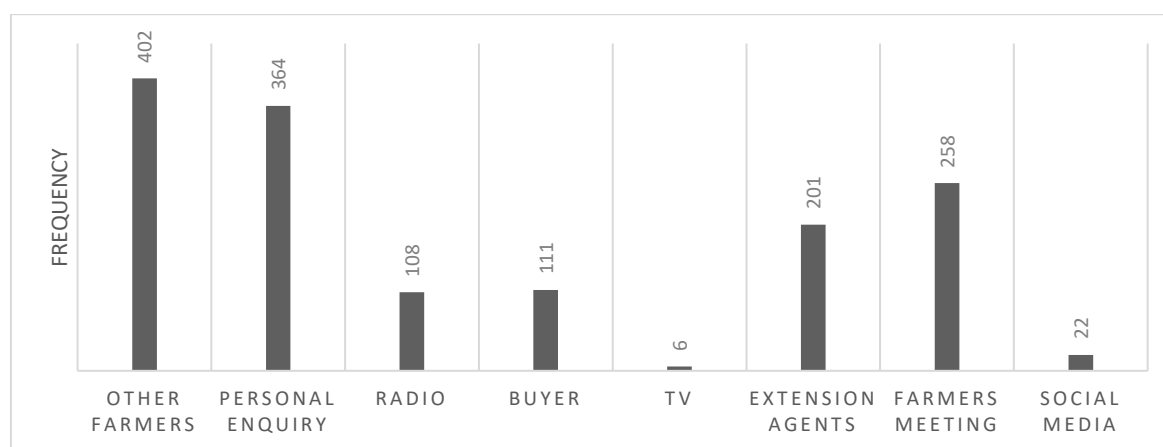


Figure 1: Sources of Market Information among Farmers in Ogun State

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The figure shows that for most of the farmers, 27.3% get marketing information from other farmers. Also, 24.7% of the respondents get information through personal enquiry, 7.3% through radio, 7.5% through buyers, and 0.4% from TV. Again, 13.7% of the respondents get information through extension agents, 17.5% from farmers' meetings and 1.5% through social media.



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The focus of this study is to examine main sources of market information among rural farmers in Ogun State. It uses questionnaires to obtain information relating to sources of marketing information, means of selling produce, place for selling produce, place for buying input and whether rural farmers in Ogun State do have up-takers for their produce. The results on the sources of market information were that 27.3% get marketing information from other farmers, 24.7% get information through personal enquiry, 7.3% through radio, 7.5% through buyers, 0.4% from TV, 13.7% through extension agents, 17.5% from farmers meeting and 1.5% through social media.

The study concludes that rural farmers in Ogun State get market information from multiple sources. The dominant sources are other farmers, personal enquiry, extension agents and farmers' meetings. The study recommends that useful information to farmers by relevant stakeholders should be through multiple choices. It should include the use of extension agents and farmers' meetings.

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