

Sustainability of Poultry Egg Distributors in Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Council of Imo State Nigeria

Ukwuaba, S.I.¹, Ihenacho, A.U.², Nwachukwu, S.O.³, Mmankor, C.D.⁴ and Ahaotu, E.O.⁵

¹Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences Umuagwo, Imo State, Nigeria.

²Department of Co-Operative Economics and Management, Imo State Polytechnic Omuma, Imo State, Nigeria.

³Department of Co-Operative Economics and Management, Imo State Polytechnic Omuma, Imo State, Nigeria.

⁴Department of Business Administration, Imo State Polytechnic Omuma, Imo State, Nigeria.

⁵Department of Animal Science, University of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences Umuagwo, Imo State, Nigeria.

Corresponding author email: emmaocy@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study was carried out on the Sustainability of Poultry egg distribution in Ezinihitte Mbaise local government council of Imo State, Nigeria. The primary data used were obtained using structural questionnaires administered to 1000 egg distributors in the study area. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data. The result showed that 40% of the distributors were between 41-60 years, 35% were married and Professional Agriculturalist 44% were fully involved in poultry eggs distribution. 88% of the respondents had formal education, 58% were males that are fully engaged in egg distribution. Egg distribution in the study area had set-backs due to bad road networks which created hindrance to egg distribution to retailers and consumers.

Key Words: Egg Distribution, Evaluation, Constraints, Poultry

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INTRODUCTION

Poultry refers to all domesticated birds kept for meat and eggs production (Ogba *et al.*, 2020 and Memon *et al.*, 2015). Eggs and poultry meat are produced primarily for food consumption. Eggs are also used in various food industries like the manufacturing of confectionary (sweet Chocolate cakes). Marketing on the other hand entails the performance of all business activities which involves the flow of products and services from the point of initial production until they get to the hands of the consumers.

Marketing further deals with the management process through which goods and services moves from concept to the consumers. Distribution of agro- products are concerned with all stages of operatives which include the movement of commodities from the farms to the consumers. It entails the performance of all activities involved in the flow of goods and services from the point of initial production until they are in the hands of the consumers. Most of the eggs distributed and consumed

sin Nigeria come from poultry birds. Only little attention is given to other sources such as quail, pigeon, ducks, turkey, guinea fowl and geese because of their ability to lay few eggs (FAO, 2009). Based on the fragile nature of eggs, its distribution has been influenced by the difficulties in handling, transportation and distribution to the consuming unit. This has also influenced the cost of eggs in the market to a point that an average Nigeria cannot afford to buy eggs to meet up with the standard nutrition requirement for protein intake per day (Ahaotu *et al.*, 2023b and Nurudeen, 2012). This study therefore examined the socioeconomic characteristics of poultry egg distributors, proffer solutions to the problems of distribution of poultry eggs in the study areas and profitability of egg distribution in Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Council of Imo State, Nigeria.

Materials and methods

Study area

This study was carried out in Ezinihitte local government council of Imo State, Nigeria. Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Area falls within Latitudes 7°25' N and 9°20' N and Longitudes 5°45'E and 7°39'E of the Equator. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2014), the projected population for the Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Area in 2013 was 759,829 with a growth rate of 9.3%. The Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Council had two distinct seasons, namely the rainy season (which begins around March and runs through October) and the dry season (which begins from October and ends in March). However, within these seasons is a brief harmattan season that is occasioned by the north east trade winds and the attendant dust haze, increased cold and dryness. The rainy season begins from April and ends in October of each year during which daytime temperatures reach 28°C - 30°C and night time temperatures are between 22°C - 23°C. In the dry season, daytime temperatures can soar as high as 40°C while night time temperatures can drop to 12°C (FCTA, 2013). Economic activities in Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Council varied including agriculture. Major crops grown include millet, corn, sorghum, rice, yam, cassava, plantain, groundnut and cowpea. Livestock production activities such as cattle, sheep, goats, chicken, duck, pig, and catfish are also important economic activities.

Sampling procedure and sample size

Random sampling technique was employed to select respondents for the study. Six towns in Ezinihitte Mbaise Local Government Council were randomly selected for the study was: Akpodim, Obizi, Onicha, Ife, Udo and Amaumara which reflected the geographical structure of the area. In the first stage, three (3) towns Akpodim,

Obizi and Onicha were selected randomly based on the large number of poultry farmers in the area. The second stage of the procedure involved a random selection of villages from each of the selected towns.

Method of data collection

Primary data was used by survey method using structured questionnaire. Data collection commenced in May and lasted till June, 2016. The information on the socio-economic characteristics of respondents that was drawn out includes gender of respondent, age, marital status, household size and education. Input-output information including inputs and output prices as well as constraints faced by the poultry farmers and solutions to the existing problems in the study area were also drawn out from the respondents. Production information collected include size of poultry farm, type of labour used in production, cost of feed, vaccines, source and amount of credit and access to extension services. Data on the type of constraints faced by poultry farmers were also drawn out from the respondents.

Data analysis

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

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Distribution of respondent farmers according to sex.

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

Field survey: 2016

Table 1 emphasizes on the distribution of poultry eggs distributors according to sex. It was found out that male distributors has a percentage of 58% while female had 42% which indicated that male acquired the highest population in distributing of poultry eggs than their female counterparts. In (Table 2), it was observed that respondent with ages ranging from 41-60 engaged more on eggs distribution follow than the other groups.

Table 2: Distribution of respondent according to age.

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

Field survey; 2016.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to educational qualification.

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

Field survey, 2016.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to marital status.

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

Field survey, 2016.

From (Table 3) the highest percentage of respondent was obtained among marketers with qualification from tertiary institutions 46% was recorded while those that had Non-formal were 12%. Table 4 revealed that majority of the eggs distributors in Ezinihitte Local Government Council of Imo State, Nigeria were married coupled with total of 35% while respondents who are divorce recorded 17% which was founded to be the least due to lack of support to boost their distributing strategies. Table 5 results show that a good number of the egg distributors were professionals in Agricultural business as a result their educational enlightenment and qualification. This is in line with the findings of Statista (2016). They recorded a total of 44% respondent while the least were civil servant due to lack of time and attention to customers who may demand for supplies at their residential times.

Table 5. Distribution of respondent according to occupation.

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

Field survey, 2016.

In (Table 6), it was observed that the highest and greatest factors militating against poultry egg distributors were bad road network. This led to loss of eggs during the process of distributing the products as they got broken thereby reducing the level of income to egg distributors. However' lack of capital was also seen as major challenge encountered by poultry egg distributors (Ahaotu *et al.*, 2023a and Smith, 2001) followed by poor

Table 6: Distribution is of respondent according to factors affecting distributing of eggs.

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

Field survey, 2016.

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

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

Field survey: 2016.

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

Table 7 indicated that the major ways to remedy the problems of distribution of poultry eggs was by ensuring proper and good road network, good transport facilities which will favour an easy supply of the eggs of the customers. However major ways to eradicate distribution problems are the provision of means through which capital can be acquired, either from banks as loans to enable proper distribution of eggs (Ahaotu *et al.* 2023c and Ojo.2003). Others used skilled agriculturalists, who specialized in some better ways of transporting and supplying eggs without great losses as indicated by (Oko *et al.*, 2021 and Oni *et al.*, 2005), as well as proper distributing channel to boost distribution of eggs.

Conclusion

Results obtained from this study revealed that educational levels of egg distributors had a significant

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

Recommendation

Due to the result of the study and series of suggestions obtained by the surveyed farmers (poultry egg distributors) the following recommendations should be adhered to for an increase in poultry eggs marketing ability. Government policies should be adjusted to ensure adequate flows of capital either through loans from banks or cooperative societies to enable distributors acquire enough capital for poultry egg distribution. There should be proper road network to encourage distributors so as to reduce loss of eggs during marketing. Poultry egg distributors should also ensure proper ways of creating awareness to enable wholesalers, retailers and final consumers get the informational on about the egg distribution business. There should also be a provision of professional agriculturalist that is equipped with the skills on distribution of poultry eggs to reduce loss. Proper distributing channels should be maintained so that the product can get to the people involved at right time. There should also be availability of poultry feed at subsidized rate so as to reduce the price of marketing the eggs to the wholesalers, retailers and final consumers as the case may be. There should also be provision of incentives to poultry egg distributors to encourage them to carry out the egg distributing business.

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