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Theme: Mainstreaming Entrepreneurship in Agricultural Extension Practice in Nigeria

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Secondary School Students Perception of Fisheries as a Profession in Borno State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study assessed the perception of secondary school student across Borno State towards fisheries as a profession. A total of 300 structured questionnaires was administered among secondary school students in five (5) Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) zone which were Maiduguri, Biu, Gwoza, Bama and Monguno zones. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics. The result revealed that, 65% of the respondents were male while 25% were female. The source of awareness about fisheries was through their teachers which had 50.70%, 16.27% through mass media, 15.06% through extension agent, 13.57% through friends, while others had 4.6%. The respondents' interest/likeness about fisheries revealed that 52.14% had interest, 32.14% has no interest while 15.72% are yet to decided. A total of 76.43% had positive perception in practicing fish farming while 23.57% had no interest. Awareness about fisheries as profession revealed that 72.14% are aware while 27.86% are unaware. Conclusively, the perception of secondary school students to fisheries is encouraging, so there is prospect for fisheries as a profession in Borno state. It will be recommended that more awareness should be created to secondary school students about fisheries profession and as prospect for youth empowerment.

Keywords: Fisheries, Perception, School, Student, Profession.

Introduction

FAO (1995b), reported that most water-bodies fished across the Lake Chad basin, indicated that large part of the fishing activities is temporal due to seasonal flooding as a result of climate change. Climate change alters all aspects of the hydrological cycle ranging from evaporation through precipitation, run off and discharge (Mcguire *et al.*, 2002). The global warming and decreasing rainfall together with the erratic pattern of rainfall produce a minimal recharge of groundwater resources, wells,

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lakes and rivers in most parts of the world especially in Africa thereby creating water crisis. In Nigeria, many rivers have been reported to have dried up or are becoming more seasonal, Lake Chad shrunk in area from 22,902 km² in 1963 to 1304 km² in year 2000. This shows that what is left of Lake Chad in the year 2000 is just 5.7% of 1963 (Odjugo 2007). Awake (2009), also confirms the fact that Lake Chad has shrunk by 95% since the 1960s. Lake Chad and so many rivers in Nigeria, especially in Northern Nigeria, are in the danger of disappearing. Therefore, aquaculture was seen as a possible alternative to the overburdened wild fisheries sector, and importantly new source of food for the poor (FAO, 1995a). The only way to boost the fishery sector is through youth participation in aquaculture.

Hence, the involvement of secondary school students in harnessing sustainability in fisheries development is paramount since they constitute the hope of future leadership. Consequently, there is the need to feel the pulse of the secondary school students on how they envisage fisheries as a profession. The specific objectives were: (1) to evaluate the sex and source of awareness about fisheries; (2) to determine respondent interest about fisheries; (3) to determine respondent perception on fish farming and ascertain their awareness about fisheries.

Methodology

This study was carried out in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, which is one of the inland states contributing significantly to Nigeria domestic supply of freshwater fisheries products. The location is accessible to the Chad Basin, as well as numerous networks to intra and inter trading in fish and fisheries products. (Borno state Diary 2014).

The state is located in the North-eastern corner of Nigeria, sharing international borders with three countries namely: Niger to the north, Cameroon to the east and the Republic of Chad in the North-east. It lies within latitude 11° 15` North and longitude 10° 25` East. Borno State covers land area of 69,436sqkm (NPC, 2014). Majority of the people of the state are crop farmers, herdsman and fishermen (Borno State Diary 2014).

This study was carried out using simple random technique as described by Oloyo (2001) in the selection of schools for the study. Five schools were selected in each of the five Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) zones in the state (Maiduguri, Biu, Gwoza, Bama and Monguno). A total of twenty-five schools were sampled. Three hundred questionnaires were randomly administered on selected students in each of the selected schools (Appendix 1).

Senior secondary school was purposively selected in each zone and sixty (60) questionnaires were randomly distributed among the SSIII students. The questionnaire was designed to collect information on their demographic characteristics (sex, age, and

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class), source of awareness about fisheries, perception about fisheries as a profession and affiliation for fisheries experts. Generally, out of the three hundred (300) questionnaires distributed among the students two hundred and eighty were recovered, which represents 93.3% of respondent. Descriptive statistics was used for data analysis.

Results and Discussion

Results in Table 1 revealed that, majority 68.5% of the respondents were male while 25% were female. This goes in line with work of Chima and Sobere (2011), that the percentage of male are more than female in secondary schools in Rivers state. About 69% of the respondents are in science and 34.1% are in art class, also 45.0% of the respondents are above 20 years of age. This agrees with (Ogunlade, 2007; Maidala and Dantata, 2011; Okwu and Acheneje, 2011) that active ages are required in fish farming.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Variables	Percentage (%)
Sex	
Male	65
Female	35
Class	
Science	68.6
Art	31.4
Age (years)	
13-16	11.1
17-20	43.9
Above 20	45.0

Source: Field work 2015

Figure 1, indicates that teachers were at the forefront of creating awareness about fisheries which had 50.70% followed by mass media with 16.27% while 15.06% of the students got to know about fisheries through extension agents and 13.57% of the respondents through friends. The result indicates that, information dissemination is very important and agreed with the work of Ewuola and Ajibefun (2005) that most of the farmers got their information from training and workshop; an indication that, training impact positively on adoption process in aquaculture.

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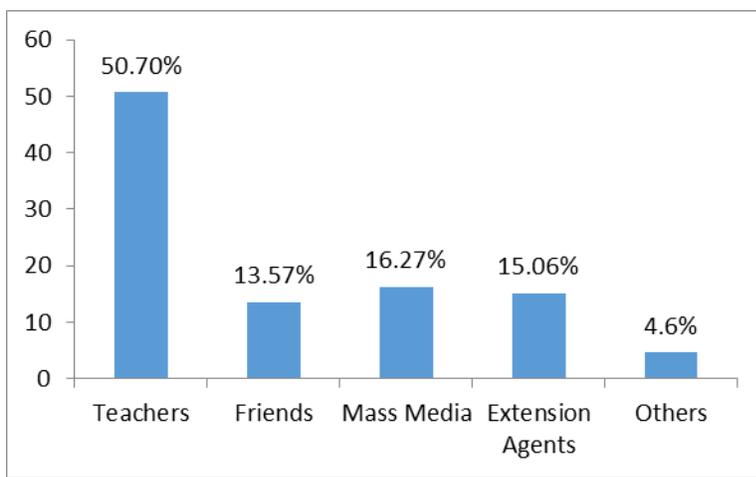


Figure 1: Source of awareness about fisheries.

Figure 2, indicates that 52.14%, representing more than half of the respondents had likeness or interest in fisheries as a profession while 32% expressed their dislike for fisheries as profession and 15.72%, are yet to decide (undecided). This disagreed with work of Chima and Sobere (2011), in which less than 4.0% of students expressed willingness in studying the Forestry and Wildlife Management while over 97% do not want to study the course.

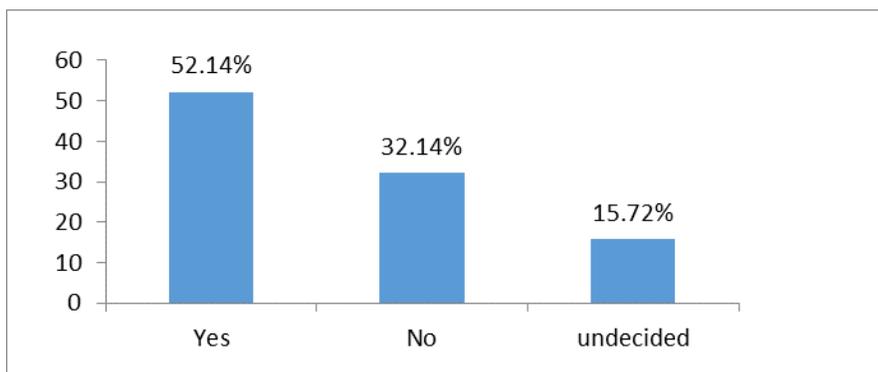


Figure 2: Respondents' interest/likeness about fisheries

Figure 3, shows that 76.43% of the respondents had positive perception into the practice of fish farming while 23.57% had negative perception. Also, 64.29% of the respondent which represents more than half of the respondents showed willingness to marry a fisheries expert while 35.71% do not have flare for the profession. According to Daramola (2009) "Interest" is the foremost of all the factors guiding a choice of career.

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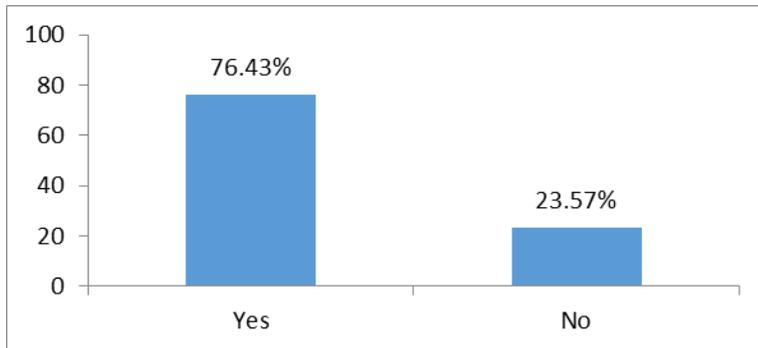


Figure 3: Respondents perception to fish farming

Figure 4, shows the level of awareness of fisheries as a profession among the students. Two hundred and two (202), representing 72.14% of the respondents, were aware of the profession, but 78 of the students, representing 27.86%, were not aware at all, despite the campaign for aquaculture to boost supply and decrease importation of fish. Also, Akintola *et al.* (2009) reported that aquaculture activities, produced highly priced product for export, as a source of foreign exchange, creates employment opportunities and also utilizes large expanse of land and water bodies.

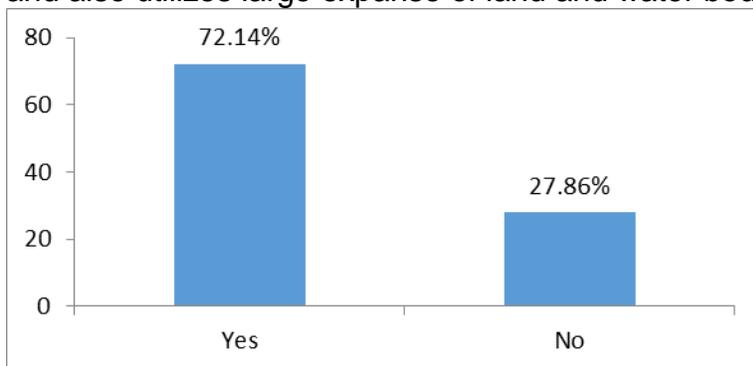


Figure 4: Respondents awareness about fisheries

Conclusion and Recommendations

The perception of secondary school students to fisheries and the willingness to practice fish farming is encouraging, so there is prospect for fisheries as a profession in Borno state.

There should be establishment of Agricultural Extension Society of Nigeria (AESON) and Fisheries Society of Nigeria (FISON) in all secondary schools in order to create more awareness about fisheries and its importance. This will prepare future leaders who pragmatically face challenges of environment through extension services. Hatcheries could also be set up in schools where fingerlings could be produced for members of the community. By so doing the youth will become leaders who will focus more on aquatic/fish conservation strategies.

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Appendix 1: Selected schools and their locations

Zones	Selected schools
Maiduguri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Government Girls Secondary School, Yelwa ii. Foundation Secondary School iii. Saviour Model Senior School iv. Immaculate College v. Federal Government College
Biu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Senior Secondary School, Biu ii. Government Girls Secondary School, Mirga iii. Government Secondary School, Shani iv. Government Girls Secondary School, Shafa v. Government Science Secondary School, Waka
Gwoza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Government Girls Secondary School, Ngoshe ii. Government Secondary School, Gwoza iii. Government Secondary School, Ville iv. Government Secondary School, Damboa v. Government Day Secondary School, Gwoza
Bama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Government Senior Science Secondary School, Bama ii. Government Senior Secondary School, Dikwa iii. Government Girls Secondary School, Konduga iv. Government Senior Secondary School, Mafa v. Government Day Secondary School, Bama
Monguno	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Government Senior Science Secondary School, Monguno ii. Government Secondary School, Kukawa iii. Government Secondary School, Marte iv. Government Girls Secondary School, Gajigana v. Government Secondary School, Damasak

Source: Field survey data, 2015