

A GENDER ANALYSIS OF SMALL- SCALE FISHERIES- NIGERIA CASE STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

- Small-scale fisheries provides employment and a means of subsistence for both men and women.
- Employ labor-intensive harvesting, processing, and distribution methods to maximize the utilization of fisheries resources for local markets and subsistence consumption.
- Gender refers to **the characteristics of women, men, girls, and boys that are socially constructed**. This includes norms, behaviors and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl, or boy, as well as relationships with each other.
- Gender **intersects** with other sociocultural aspects/identities, such as class, age, (dis)ability, ethnicity, indigeneity, and sexuality, which altogether impact a person's lived reality and experiences of disadvantage or privilege.
- **Intersectionality** is the core of the gender analysis because it helps capture the diversity of women's and men's lives and provides a fuller understanding of gendered power relations

INTRODUCTION

- In Nigeria, the start of women studies in fisheries can be attributed to Prof Stella Williams.
- Shift in paradigm evolved from women in fisheries to gender in fisheries but research capacity still ***lacks robust*** application of intersectionality.
- Fisheries statistics lacks gender elements; heavily focused on fish production and mentions ***number of fishermen.***
- Women gleaning and fishing are typically not included in fisheries statistics, which means that they are not counted as ***fishers just as*** pre-harvest and post-harvest nodes; ***foot fisheries*** in which men engage are not reported .
- Subjective hints of women's paid contributions and possible economic valuation of fresh, frozen and smoked fish from their average prices.

APPROACH

- To understand gender roles in the fishery system, including the value chains, families as working units and community.
- Gender Analysis Framework to present a situational analysis of gender and highlight on gendered power dynamics, and inequalities (or gaps) .
- Reviewed division of labor (tasks) , time and income for productive, reproductive, and community work.
- Productive work: is labor that involves the production of goods and services for consumption and trade, fishing, etc.
- Reproductive work: taken on by women, often undervalued, not considered “real work,” and may not be included in economic analyses.
- Community work: frequently overlooked in economic analyses and involves the collective organization of social and religious events and services, including volunteering etc.

GENDER ROLES

- Women play diverse roles in SSF and differ in socio-economic status.
- Roles may vary among and within contexts and are cross-cutting in all value chains (Etim et al., 2020a).
- Most studied roles of women are in the postharvest sector.
- Postharvest fisheries is regarded as 'primarily women activities or traditional women tasks', perceived as low-entry nodes and less productive or less profitable
- But men are beginning to show interest in fish smoking, marketing, drying, and storage activities, as against (Benson et al., 2018)

GENDER ROLES IN POSTHARVEST NODES

- Fish smoking is carried out within the closet of the compounds and restricts marketing access to community markets; imperfect market.
- Men sun-dry fish and market in Northern Nigeria (Dambatta et al 2016) but in other places are more involved in marketing.
- Women participate to generate income for meeting their daily, personal, and family needs.
- Men participate mainly for capital/profit.
- Gender intersection of capital or livelihood assets defines or shapes the individual roles, challenges, and opportunities.

GENDER ROLES IN POSTHARVEST NODES

- Women of different socio-economic status, size of business and capital investments differed as did outcomes (Oloko et al.,2022).
- Fish processing and/or trading occurs at different scales, dependent on volume of fish handled, and a function of social and financial capital, respectively.
- Depending on fish product form and/or value chain, women combine fish processing and/or trading with other tasks upstream or downstream the fish value chain, or outside of fishing altogether.
- In some studies, female fish marketers are the most influential and fared better than processors or fishers' (Ilemobayo and Ijigbade, 2019: Abasilim et al 2020).
- However, a study Mafimisebi et al., (2015) indicated that women fishers achieved greater profits than women traders

GENDER ROLES IN POSTHARVEST NODES

- Successful women are fish mummies', wives of fishermen, big fishmongers, socially successful women in their communities.
- Primary users form matron-client relationships with fishers and poor fish traders providing credit in return for regular supply of fish and fix prices.; control catches and fish trade.
- Credit system though exploitative, represents a socio-cultural and economic factor; defines power relations.
- Women's **income** and **social standing** vary greatly, and these differences have an impact on people's ability to acquire fish as well as to generate profit.
- Successful women diversify into capital - intensive businesses using savings against vagaries of the fish trade while vulnerable women diversify into micro-scale businesses to earn sufficient income for maintenance of their households.

GENDER ROLES IN HARVEST

- Women's participation in fishing is location or context-specific, shaped by religious and socio-cultural reasons, limiting the involvement of women in fishing (Bawa et al 2019), and permitting women's participation in fishing (Ibrahim et al. 2012; Obetta et al. 2019).
- Women's activities are mainly shored or land-based.
- Men, also differ in economic status; some are boat –owners and others working fishermen hired as crew or labour on canoes.
- Men do a lot of deep sea fishing; employ **mainly** large gears, motorized and bigger canoes, and also fish in the **same habitats** as women.
- Both men and women catch the **same species** in shallow waters or in near shores but large-sized bony fishes and cartilaginous fishes are caught by men.
- Gleaning, trap and pot fishing, and net fishing; use of paddles and canoes are **jointly done by men and women**.

Case Study 1 : Estuarine and mangrove Ecosystem-Based Shellfisheries (Chuku et al., (2022)).

- In West Africa, Nigeria is reported to have most harvesters with 39,340 shellfishers and estimated 415,548 direct beneficiaries(Chuku et al., 2022)
- Shellfish harvesting areas are almost exclusively accessible to the public, with no private ownership
- Women-led fisheries; women harvesters dominate the bivalve and gastropod shellfisheries and men the crustacean and gastropods fisheries.
- Men control the harvesting and transportation nodes of the crustacean and cephalopod fisheries whereas women remained chiefly in the processing and marketing nodes.
- Women shellfisher groups are the chief custodians of management and regulation of the conduct of harvesting within their catchment areas.

Case Study 2: Women-led Macrobrachium fishery (Kingdom and Erondu 2012).

- Part-time fishery, women-led fishery.
- Women fish and market their catch; exercise customary access rights to dugout channels where traps are mostly placed during the 3 months fishing season.
- Ownership rights passed on within womenfolk in the family from generation to generation.

Case Study 2: Gender differentials among crayfish harvesters. Etim et al 2020a, Etim et al., 2020b.

- In communities of Niger Delta, crayfish is harvested by both genders.
- Women are poorer and more vulnerable to poverty than men.
- Men have a higher income share than women but the income is more evenly distributed among women.
- Men contributed more to overall income inequality than women.
- In midst of poverty and hunger, most important coping strategy adopted by men is to spend of the saved income while women preferred their children to eat first to satisfaction as they regard children as their pride.

GENDER ROLES IN COMPLEMENTARY WORK

- Women are also involved in uploading, sorting fish, mending nets, transportation in the same way as men.
- These activities are **direct work** and may be **unpaid** especially when a woman or girl –child is providing labour or support for the family.
- **Indirect and unpaid work** may include cleaning the beach front, reproductive work and maintenance.
- For men, maintenance is an **indirect** and **paid work**; participating in monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) of the fishery resources is also **indirect** work but whether it's paid or unpaid depends on the context.

GENDER AND INSTITUTIONALIZED NORMS

- Cultural norms and taboos, realities of the hazardous nature of sea fishing limit women from participating in the capture operations.
- Dependence of women on other links in the chain, particularly production restricts their full autonomy.
- Stereotypical gender roles expect women to fulfil *unpaid* reproductive and complementary work which limit both time and mobility.
- Reproductive and some complementary work are often undervalued, not considered “real work,” and may not be included in economic analyses.
- State- interventions have focused on covering practical needs in the processing sector to women by providing modern charcoal-fired smoking kilns and to men, fishing boats and inputs at subsidized rates.

GENDER AND INSTITUTIONALIZED NORMS

- Lack of gender policy specific to small-scale fisheries, despite the fact that women in fisheries have been included in agricultural policy instruments in the past and present.
- The 2019 National Policy on Gender in Agriculture aims to address gender disparities in agriculture, including fisheries and aquaculture.
- Policy failure is imminent if elements supporting effective gender mainstreaming are hampered by a lack of political will and resources, including information and capacity.

CONCLUSION

- In official fisheries statistics, catch is attributed to men and information on local ecological knowledge owned by men or women, if at all available is sparse.
- Social capital is an important entry point for interventions.
- Intrafamilial relations enables a new entrant to enjoy the privilege of starting up a trade without any physical capital.
- Women lacking direct access to fish implies limited opportunities to participate and grow in the fishing business.

CONCLUSION

- Within local contexts, expertise and success achieved in postharvest nodes are independent of formal schooling.
- Important to demonstrate in economic or financial terms to decision-makers, men and women's unpaid and paid labor in SSF.
- Push for a gender mainstreaming policy in small-scale fisheries.

THANK YOU!

