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Structural Performance of Broom Production and Marketing in Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract
The study analyzed the production and marketing of local broom in the study area. Two local government areas highly involved in the production and marketing of brooms in the state were used for the study. Specifically, the study examined the socio-economic characteristics of broom producers and marketers, examined the structure, conduct of broom marketing, the channel of distribution and the constraints facing broom production and marketing in the study area. Structured questionnaire and oral interview were used to obtain information from 250 randomly selected respondents comprising of 50 producers, 60 wholesalers and 140 retailers. From the analysis, it was discovered that the production and marketing of broom is dominated by women, majority of them (36%) falling within the age range of 30 – 39 years. The Gini-coefficient of 0.52, 0.71 and 0.62 were obtained for producers, wholesalers and retailer respectively. This implies that broom marketing is imperfectly competitive and there is a high inequality in sale distribution and income amongst the marketers. The study showed that there were five alternative marketing channels for the marketing of broom and that there was no market union amongst the marketers and market information was largely from marketing colleagues and personal observation of the marketers. The marketing constraints identified included bulkiness of products, high transport cost, poor access to credit and injury from broom sticks.

Keywords: Broom, Gini-coefficient, Marketing Channel, Production, Constraints

INTRODUCTION

A broom is a cleaning tool consisting of stiff fibres tied together or attached to a cylindrical handle used for cleaning houses, yard, streets and public places. Apart from the use of cleaning, broom are also used for ritual, medicinal, religious and political reasons. According to Anely, Yunus and Paolo (2007), for centuries, brooms have been globally used for cleaning as well as for some special functions. In Nigeria broom is usually used for sweeping, brushing, cleaning, religious and political reasons. However, amongst the Yoruba speaking people of Nigeria, brooms are also used as a special utensil in the cooking of the vegetable *corchorus olitorius* of tiliaceae family known traditionally as "Ewedu". Different regions of the world make use of different natural plant materials in manufacturing brooms. These ranges from grasses, sticks and palms and even synthetic materials etc. In Nigeria, brooms are usually made from the oil palm tree (*Elacis guinensis*) and coconut palm tree (*cocos nucifera*) as shown in plate 1. Both palms are resourceful and versatile trees as their economic importance are numerous. Red oil is obtained from the fruit of the palm tree, kernel oil from the seed, palm wine from the sap of the flower stalk, baskets and mats from the leaves, brooms from the midribs of the leaves and the trunk yields a resourceful timber (Haynes, 2000). The coconut tree produces a drupe which is usually eaten or can be processed for oil or plant milk used for cooking or cosmetics. Just like the palm tree, brooms can equally be made from the midribs of the leaves.

Plate 1: Palm Fronds from Coconut palm and Oil Palm Trees used as raw material for broom production

The oil palm and coconut palm are very important crops. They strive well in a great variety of soils but does better in a deep loamy soil rich in organic matter, and a slightly acidic soil of *pH* range of 4.5-6. The economic benefits of both crops motivated the federal government of Nigeria to establish the Nigerian Institute for Oil Palm Research (NIFOR) in Benin City, Edo State and Coconut Research Substation in Badagry, Lagos State, Nigeria in 1978. The responsibilities of the research stations are to research into the economy, ecology, production and Biology of oil palm and coconut palm with the objective of improving yields, provide employment and for opportunities for increased production of the products to the end users. (Uwubanmwen, Nwawe, Okere, Dada and Ezeigbe, 2011).

Broom production and marketing which is the purpose of this research as a vocation is a small scale business which has helped significantly in reducing poverty, unemployment, hunger and crime in the study area. A small scale business is an independently owned organization that requires fewer workforces and less or no machinery. According to Sarokin (2019), a small scale enterprise or simply a small scale business, is one marked by a limited number of employees and a limited flow of finances and materials. Globally, the contribution of small scale enterprise (SSE) has been acknowledged as a major sustenance of national economics. This is because of their capacity in enhancing the nation's economic output and human welfare. The contribution of this business outfit cannot be overemphasized as they account for a greater percentage of all business in virtually every economy and generate the majority of private sector employment and output (Kehinde et al, 2016).

Broom production and marketing as a small scale business is an economic activity that involves the converting of palm fronds (leaves) into brooms by the use of table knifes or razors to remove the leaf parts leaving only the midrib or the stalk behind. Onoyima (2018) opined that the traditional processing of broom is a simple but tedious activity. This industry which is mostly dominated by women involves the cutting of palm fronds from the palm trees, removing its petioles from the fronds, stacking it into a pile and stripped with a knife or razor as shown in plate 2.

Plate 2: Broom producing household in the study area

Broom production from both oil palm and coconut palm follows the same basic process. These include:

1. Finding/or harvesting of oil palm or coconut palm leaf or fronds.
2. Cut or detach the leaflets from the fronds
3. Neatly arrange the leaflets in a pile
4. By the use of a knife or a blade remove the leaf parts leaving only the midrib or the stalk behind.
5. Remove any excess scraps from the stalks or midrib
6. Gather up all the broomsticks, tying them up together with a robe or rubber
7. Trim the ends to make the broom uniform in length.

Broom production and marketing is a major vocation which has played significant roles in poverty alleviation in many countries, Nigeria inclusive. The enterprise provides a steady stream of income for enterprising individuals in the study area. This is because the product is in demand all year round by all and sundry. The production of broom is domestically operated by women as small scale business. These women involved in broom production in Nigeria and most African countries are not really schooled but have acquired relevant skills that have empowered them to frequently receive substantial returns through the marketing of brooms. This highlights the need for the potential of women in Africa and other parts of the world to be fully recognized (Onoyima, 2018).

The need for women potential to be developed is also known as capacity building. Capacity building is the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organisations and communities need to survive, adapt and thrive in the fast-changing world. Capacity building is also the process through which individuals, organisations and societies obtain, strengthen and

maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time. At the individual level, capacity building refers to the process of changing attitudes and behaviours impacting knowledge and developing skills, while maximizing the benefits of participation, knowledge exchange and ownership.

According to AMPATH (2013), capacity building is the process and means through which national governments and local communities develop the necessary skills and expertise to manage their environment and natural resources in a sustainable manner within their daily activities. This involves strengthening people's capacity to achieve sustainable livelihood, engaging a cross-sectional multi-disciplinary approach to planning and implementation and promoting innovation by developing skills that enhance both individual and group performance. Capacity building is essential for women involved in small scale business enterprise because the challenges to women entrepreneurs cover a wide spectrum including low level of education, gender inequality, lack of ownership to economic assets, lack of financial assistance by providers of fund, harsh economic realities of women lives and diverse socio-cultural constraints (Ghosh and Cheruvalah, 2007).

The need for women's capacity building for economic empowerment and self-reliance cannot be over emphasised. This is why World Bank (2012) asserts that women participation in economic activities is necessary both for growth and for inclusiveness of growth because "resources in women's hand have a range of positive outcomes for human capital and capabilities within the household. In the same vein Kabeer, (2012) asserts that women's access to economic resources improves distributional dynamics within the household", and it is also a positive step for self-help, self-employment, home business and so on (Afrin et al., 2008). AMPATH (2013) presented six capacity building activities that can enhance productivity and efficiency among small scale farmers and entrepreneurs. These include: group training activities, group management skills provision, access to financial services, market skill provision, technological expertise and production and resource management activities.

The necessity of food and product marketing cannot be overemphasized. Despite the importance, it has always been neglected, thereby affecting agricultural marketing and development. (Adeoye, Donstop, Badmus and Amao, 2011). Uloh (2015) opined that the marketing of agricultural products is very important as it helps to meet the needs of consumers and also to increase the income of the producers and middlemen in the chain of distribution. Presently, in Nigeria generally and Enugu State particularly the marketing of broom, a byproduct of oil palm tree (*Elacis guinensis*) and coconut palm tree (*cocos nucifera*) is not certain. This is because most research's conducted on both plants focused mostly on its agronomy. Facts about the market situation of brooms are scanty. This demands for a research in the marketing of broom to determine the existing market structure.

Production is said to be complete only when the produced commodity gets to the final consumer through a designated route called the channel of distribution. The channel of distribution also known as marketing channel is the path that a product passes as it moves from producer to the final consumer. Kohls and Uhl (2002) defined marketing channels as alternative routes of product flows from producer to consumers. According to Achumba and Osuagwu (1994), marketing channels is a business communication system that links together the manufacturer and consumers of commodities that are scattered all over the world. Marketing channels differ from commodity to commodity and place to place. Tor producers and manufactures to reach their target markets and production goals, marketing channels has to be established.

Efficient and good marketing system can only operate where there is fully utilized good market structure and conduct. Olukosi, Isitor and Ode (2005) presents market structure as those features of the organization of a market which seem to influence strategically the nature of competition and pricing within the market. These features include the number and relative size of buyers and sellers in and out of the market, market information and the knowledge about cost, prices and market conditions among the market participants. Okereke in Uloh and Alimba (2018) opined that amongst the variables in studying market structure that market concentration is the most important. This is because it depicts a situation in which a few large firms have the largest share of the business. Market conduct focuses on a marketer's behavior with various aspects of trading strategies particularly, than the profit earned in the business.

The need for broom production and marketing in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. This is because it has the potential to make major contributions to the economic and environmental development of the nation. The production of brooms occupies a huge position in the nation's economy. This is captured in the fact that it provides employment and a steady stream of income to a large number of people living in the producing areas. Its marketing will also provide business and investment opportunities that are economically attractive to thousands of people both at home and abroad. According to the findings of

Onoyima (2018) women engaged in broom production make between 50,000 and 100,000 naira every month, which is equivalent to $136.36 and $274.72 respectively. This activity has empowered the women to contribute to the economic welfare of their families and the livelihood of the rural poor.

The commonly used slogan "cleanliness is next to Godliness" is a statement usually used to depict the necessity of personal and environmental sanitation and hygiene. The federal government of Nigeria in 1995 launched a national environmental sanitation policy. This policy which is a good step in the right direction is aimed at securing quality environment for good health and social well being of present and future generations. In the observance of this national exercise, various kinds of devices are used to clean the environment, remove waste, dirts or dusts. Amongst devices such as vacuum cleaners, mops, rakes, brooms etc, the broom which is locally made from palm fronds in Nigeria are extensively used. No matter the level of technology, the use of palm frond brooms can never change. This is because the product is natural, cheaper and environmentally friendly. The advantages of the locally made broom over other cleaning devices in Nigeria are so numerous. Classic amongst them is the non-environmental pollution of the broom against the synthetic brooms that degrade easily, thereby posing environmental hazard. Also, the locally made brooms do not need electrical or fuel power for operation. It is cheap to buy, easy to handle, store and use. The study is limited only to small scale women involved in Broom production and marketing in Igbo-Eze North and Igbo-Eze South Local Government Area of Enugu State of Nigeria.

Broom production in the country is high but its marketing is not certain and documented. This is because the marketing in Nigeria is only carried out locally. There is also gap in the marketing system as there is little or no literature available to give explanation of how the product is been marketed. Due to this dearth of information on broom marketing, there exist gaps in policy and development. A study on broom marketing will bridge these gaps by providing the necessary data required for planning and policy formulation.

In the words of Ajala and Adesehinwe (2008), marketing in developing countries is generally exploitative, collusive and economically inefficient. The extent to which this statement is true with reference to broom is uncertain. This is due to the fact that the state of knowledge on the oil palm and coconut tree marketing largely comes from studies on other by products of both trees such as palm oil, palm wine and coconut fruit. Thus, studies on broom which is also a by-product of coconut tree and palm tree is scarce] Also, the increasing demand for broom in line with the rapid population growth requires a more efficient marketing system. None of the studies reviewed or known to the researcher has been carried out to identify the performance, functioning and efficiency of broom marketing system in the study area. It is this gap that the study intends to bridge. In order to carry out the research which is on the structural performance of broom production and marketing in Enugu State, Nigeria, the following specific objectives have been formulated to guide the study.

i. examine the socio-economic characteristics of broom producers and marketers
ii. analyzed the structure and conduct of broom marketing
iii. examine the marketing channel of broom in the study area, and
iv. ascertain the constraints facing broom production and marketing in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Enugu State, Nigeria. The state is made up of seventeen local government areas. The state is an important zone where brooms are being produced because of the high density of palm trees in the area. The state had a population of 3,267,837 people as at 2006 census. Present population estimate according to Ohaneze Ndigbo (2013) is over 4 million people. Two local governments in the state were purposely selected to be used for the study. The two local government areas were purposely selected because of the high level of palm trees in the area and their prominence in brooms production. A preliminary survey was conducted and result obtained that about 67% of families in the selected Local Government were engaged in the production and marketing of brooms. This was not so in other Local Government Areas, hence the decision to make use of these two local governments which are Igbo-Eze North and Igbo-Eze South Local Government Areas of Enugu State.

Geographically, the two selected local government areas are in the northern part of Enugu State and shares boundary with Udenu LGA in the East, Okpo in Kogi State in the west and north and Akpanya in Kogi State in the West. The economic activity of the inhabitants of the area is basically farming, which is often combined with broom production, marketing of agricultural products and non-farming activities in varying degrees.

Structural questionnaire and oral interview were used to obtain information from randomly selected 250 respondents, which comprises of 50 Local broom producers, 60 broom wholesalers and 140 broom retailers. Four markets were used for the study. Two from each selected local government area. From Igbo-Eze North Eke-Ozi at Ogurute and Afor Okpo market

were used, while from Igbo-Eze South Nkwo Ibagwa and Afor Unadu markets were used.

From the four selected markets, 50 broom producers, 60 broom wholesalers and 140 broom retailers were randomly selected and used for the study. Inferential/descriptive statistical tools such as frequencies, percentages and tables were used to present the results of the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, problems encountered, sources of market information, record keeping and mode of transport used. Gini-coefficient analysis was used to determine the degree of market concentration, amongst the marketers.

The Gini coefficient (a) was computed as follows

$G = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^{k} x_1 y_1$ =1

Where

x_1= percentage of sellers in the 1th class traders

y_1= cumulative percentages of sellers in the *i*th class traders

The Gini coefficient varies from *0* to *1*where *0* implies perfect quality in the distribution (Perfect Market) and *1* implies Perfect Inequality (Imperfect Market). The closer the Gini coefficient is to zero, the greater the degree of equality and the lower the level of concentration and the more competitive are the markets. level of concentration and the more imperfect are the markets.

Similarly, as the Gini coefficient approaches to Unity, the greater is the degree of inequality and the higher the

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Outcome of the findings of this study is shown in Tables 1 – 6. and figure 1. Table 1 which is on the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents is a determination of the effect of the outlined socio-economic attributes on the performance and efficiency of the respondent in the production and marketing of brooms in relation to others. The table shows that majority (76.8%) of the respondents were females, 76% were married and 68.8% had formal education mostly primary and secondary education. The high percentage of female respondents over men could be because broom is feminine friendly and domestically manufactured. The high percentage of married respondents could mean that the business is viable and could generate enough income for family sustenance. This agrees with Cocks and Dold (2004) who asserted that investment into broom production and marketing by women in Eastern Cape Province of South Africa contributes to poverty redemption, livelihood diversification and risk reduction. Majority (64%) of the respondents fall between 30 and 50 years of age. The implication of this is that most of the respondents are in their active age when they have the ability of going about their business with vigour. This agrees with Oladejo and Sanusi (2008) were 80.9% of the respondents involved in the marketing of plantain in Owo and Ose LGA, of Ondo State, Nigeria fell between 31 and 50 years of age as shown in plate 3.

Plate 3: A cross section of broom marketers in the study area.

On the issue of household size 62% had a household size of 1-5 persons. This agrees with Uloh (2015) who reported that most (45%) of the respondents involved in banana marketing in South East Nigeria had a family size of 1-5 persons. This could imply that their children help them in the production and marketing of broom.

Table 2 showed the distribution of broom producers by total value of monthly sales. The average monthly sales per producer was ₦7,988. 30 percent of the producers made sale valued ₦87,300.00 representing 22% of the total value of monthly sales. The distribution gave a Gini coefficient of 0.543. The distribution of broom wholesalers by average size and total value of monthly sales are shown in table 3. The average monthly sales was ₦19,644. Thirty Six percent (36.6%) of the wholesalers made sales valued ₦187,000 representing 16% of the total value of monthly sales, while 7% made sales worth ₦302,700 representing 26% of the total value of monthly sales. The distribution gave a Gini Coefficient of 0.71. At the retail level, table 4 showed that the total value of monthly sales was ₦533,000. Thirty four (34%) percent of the retailers made sales valued ₦96,250, while 7% of the retailers made ₦180,500.

Furthermore, 9% of retailers made sales valued N106,300. The distribution gave a Gini-Coefficient of 0.621. The Gini-Coefficient of 0.52 (producers) and the Gini Coefficnt of 0.71 (wholesalers) and 0.621 (retailers) indicates high level of concentration. Though there was a relatively high income equality and level of concentration in wholesaling (0.71) than retailing (0.62) and producing (0.54). This result agreed with the separate studies carried out by Anuebunwa (2008) and Taru and Lawal (2011) on Okra marketing and yam marketing in Ebonyi State and North Eastern Nigeria respectively that there was high degree of inequality in sellers income and that the markets were highly concentrated. This Gini index therefore, implies that there were income inequality in producer, retailing and wholesaling thus, high concentration of sellers and market power in the broom market. These are features of imperfect market of monopolistic nature.

From table 5, none of the marketers indicated belonging to any market union. This indicates that there was no broom market union in the area studied. Anybody can supply broom to the market for sale. On market information, all the producers, wholesalers and retailers asserted that there sources were their marketing colleagues, friends and personal observations. See plate 4.

Plate 4: The researcher Interviewing broom marketers in the study area

This finding is in consonant with Taru and Lawal (2011) who observed that 73.1% of both wholesalers and retailers obtained market information informally from friends and colleagues. This means that market information are asymmetry. The implication of this is that it can bring about market segmentation, wider marketing margin and mistrust in the whole marketing system, thereby producing market inefficiency (Rashid and Minot, 2011). Most of the wholesalers and retailers, (93.3%) and (92.9%) respectively do not keep record of their market transactions. This could be attributed to their low level of education and exposure. On the type of transportation frequently used all the wholesalers made use of public transports. The retailers gave a multiple response to the type of transportation used. However, 88% of the retailers asserted that they usually transport their brooms by the use of public transport. This collaborates with Enibe (2002) who asserted that wholesalers and retailers mostly convey their banana fruits by the use of public transport such as pickup van, taxi cabs, buses and Mercedes 911 Lorries.

Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Socio-economic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	58	23.2
Female	192	76.8
Total	**250**	**100**
Marital Status		
Single	28	11.2
Married	190	76
Divorced	12	4.8
Widowed	20	8
Total	**250**	**100**
Educational Level		
No Formal education	78	31.2
Primary Education	102	40.8
Post Primary Education	60	24
Post Secondary Education	10	4
Total	**250**	**100**
Sources of Finance		
Personal Saving	114	45.6
Money lenders	54	21.6
Friends/relative	64	25.6
Banks (Microfinance Banks)	18	7.2
Total	**250**	**100**
Size		
1 – 5	155	62
6 – 10	68	27.2
11 – 15	20	8
16 & above	7	2.8
Total	**250**	**100**
Age		
11 – 20	24	9.6
21 – 30	38	15.2
31 – 40	96	38.4
41 – 50	64	25.6
51 & above	28	11.2
Total	**250**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 2: Distribution of broom producers by total value of monthly sales

Monthly Sales (₦)	Freq.	% of producers (X_1)	Cumulative %	Total value of monthly sales (₦)	% of total Value of Monthly sales	Cumulative % (Y_1)	$\sum_{x_1 Y_1}$
10,000 – 20,000	3	6	6	20,000	5.0	5.0	0.002
20,000 – 30,000	6	12	18	37,750	9.5	14.5	0.017
30,000 – 40,000	10	20	38	52,250	13.0	27.5	0.055
40,000 – 50,000	12	24	62	72,100	18.0	45.5	0.109
50,000 – 60,000	15	30	92	87,300	21.9	67.4	0.194
60,000 & above	4	8	100	130,035	32.6	100	0.080
Total	**50**	**100**		**399,435**	**100**		**0.457**

Mean= 7,988.70 Gini Coefficient = 1 – 0.457 = 0.543

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 3: Distribution of broom wholesalers by total value of monthly sales

Monthly Sales (₦)	Freq.	% of Wholesalers (X_1)	Cumulative %	Total value of monthly sales (₦)	% of total Value of Monthly sales	Cumulative % (Y_1)	$\sum_{x_1 Y_1}$
50,000 – 100,000	4	6.7	6.7	78,050	6.7	6.7	0.0045
100,001 – 150,000	12	20	26.7	158,800	13.5	20.2	0.040
100,001 – 200,000	22	36.6	63.3	187,000	15.9	36.1	0.058
200,001 – 250,000	12	20	83.3	202,600	1701	53.2	0.034
250,001 – 300,000	6	10	93.3	249,500	21.1	74.3	0.021
300,001 & above	4	607	100	302,700	25.7	100	0.007
Total	**60**			**1,178,650**			**0.29**

Mean= 19,644 Gini Coefficient= 1 – 0.29 = 0.71

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 4: Distribution of broom retailers by total value of monthly sales

Monthly Sales (₦)	Freq.	% of retailers (X_1)	Cumulative %	Total value of monthly sales (₦)	% of total Value of Monthly sales	Cumulative % (Y_1)	$\sum_{x_1 Y_1}$
20,001 – 30,000	14	10	10	28,000	5.3	5.3	0.005
30,001 – 40,000	26	18.6	28.6	50,650	9.5	14.8	0.028
40,001 – 50,000	30	21.4	50	71,300	13.4	28.2	0.060
50,001 – 60,000	48	34.3	84.3	96,250	18.0	46.2	0.158
60,001 – 70,000	12	8.6	92.9	106,300	19.9	66.1	0.057
70,001 & above	10	7.1	100	180,500	33.9	100	0.071
Total	**140**	**100**		**533,000**	**100**		**0.379**

Mean= 3,807

Gini Coefficient = 1 – 0.379 = 0.621

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 5: Marketers response to market union, sources of market information, record keeping and type of transport used

	Producers		Wholesalers		Retailers	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Market Union						
Membership	-		-		-	
Non-membership	50	100	60	100	140	100
Sources of Market Information						
Personal observation	50	100	60	100	140	100
From Colleagues	50	100	60	100	140	100
Social Media (Radio, TV)	-		-			
Record Keeping						
Yes	5	10	4	6.7	10	7.1
No	45	90	56	93.3	130	92.9
Type of Transportation						
Public transport	50	100	60	100	124	88.6
Private van	2	4	-		-	
Head carriage	6	12	-		-	
Motorcycle	7	14	-		40	28.6
Bicycle	2	4	-		6	4.3
Wheel Barrow	15	30	-		30	21.4

Source: Field Survey, 2019

*Multiple response.

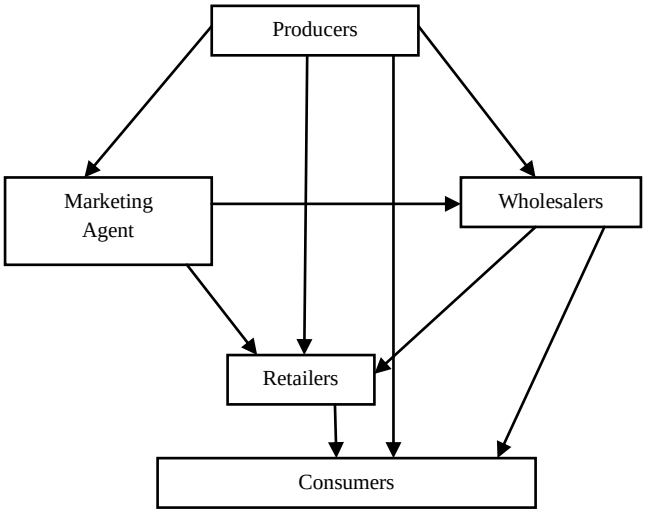

Figure 1: Marketing channels of brooms in the study area
Source: Field survey, 2019

Figure I shows the channel of distribution in the marketing of brooms in the study area. The study revealed that in the study area, the producers produce the brooms and sell to the wholesalers, marketing agents or retailers. The marketing agents who purchases from the producers further sell to retailers or wholesalers, who in turn sell to the consumers. The producers also sell to the retailers and consumers, as they sell some quantity of brooms at home. This finding showed five alternative marketing channels for broom. This collaborates with that of Amao, Adebisi, Olajide, Adeoye and Olabode (2011) where five alternative marketing channels were identified for pineapple marketing in Edo/Delta State of Nigeria. However, the finding contrasts with that of Agbugba (2012) and Uloh (2015) where eight alternative channels were identified for cocoyam and banana fruits marketing in South East Nigeria.

Table 6: Constraints encountered by broom producers/marketers

		Frequency	**%**
1	Bulkiness of the product	226	90.4
2	High transport cost	180	72
3	Injury from broom sticks	150	60
4	Poor access to credit	210	84
5	Poor sales	112	4408
6	Taxes/market charges	68	27.2
7	Illiteracy	62	24.8

Source: Field survey, 2019
*Multiple response

Table 6 shows the constraints encountered by broom Producers and Marketers. Amongst the various constraints limiting the performance of market activities for brooms, high transport cost (72%), bulkiness of the product (90.4%) poor access to credit (84%) and injury from broom sticks (60%) were the major hindrances encountered by the marketers in the marketing of brooms in the study area. The study is at congruence with Folayan and Bilfarin (2011) and Anuebunwa (2006) who asserted that transport cost were major constraints encountered by the marketers in marketing plantain and rice in Ondo and Ebonyi States of Nigeria respectively.

Just like most research works, finance was the major limitation. In conducting this research several field trips were made to the producers and marketers to ensure that accurate data was obtained. Another limitation is that some of the respondents were reluctant and uncomfortable with releasing the information needed, in spite of assurance that the data sought and collected were purely for academic purpose. Due to lack of understanding and illiteracy, some of the respondents were scared because they felt that the information gotten would be used for tax purposes and in promulgating marketing policies that will not be favourable to them.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study examined the structural performance of broom marketing in Igbo-Eze South and Igbo-Eze North LGAs of Enugu State Nigeria. Majority of the sampled broom markets were young and agile. Female respondents dominated the study and this is in line with the assertion that broom production is a domestic activity and feminine and hence its production is the business of women. The few men involved in the business operate mostly as wholesalers. They buy from the producers or marketing agents and supply to the northern parts of the country. Also, the results gotten from the study revealed that majority of the respondents had just primary education which could adversely affect their marketing strategy. The Gini-coefficient index of the producers (0.54), wholesalers (0.71) and retailers (0.62) implies that there was inequality in the share of the market indicating an imperfect competitive market which is monopolistic in nature. High transport cost, bulkiness of the product, poor access to credit and injury from broom sticks were the major constraints encountered by the brooms in the study area.

Unlike Sheona (2007) that asserts that broom business was only a survival strategy for poor households in Bushbuckridge South Africa. In the study area and in Nigeria, it is a promising small scale business enterprise that has the capacity to take one out of poverty, meet several family needs and live comfortably.

It is relevant to recommend at this point that credit facilities should be made available by credit institutions and agencies to improve broom marketing. Local

government parastatals and extension workers should organize programmes that will improve broom marketing. Modern harvesting and processing machine such as stripping machine as suggested by Ebunilo, Efosa and Osaghae (2015) can be used to replace the use of razor and knives. This will go a long way to increase production and erase the negative stigma attached to broom production and marketing. Government should encourage the establishment of cottage industries in the study area and other broom producing areas of the country. This will help create employment and contribute to rural development and livelihood of the people. Finally, attention should be given to the constraints identified. This will help to reduce the degree of seller concentration and accrue more higher profit margin.

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