

# Roles of Women in Bush Meat Trade in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State

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## ABSTRACT

The study on role of women in bush meat trade was carried out in Oluyole local government area using 100 structured questionnaires to collect data out of which 93 were retrieved. A multistage sampling technique was used to sample enumeration. A descriptive statistical method was used in analyzing the data collected. Married people 62.4% dominated the business and majority 49.5% of the traders had no formal education. The business is funded from personal savings and support from cooperative society. The majority 41.9% derived profit from bush meat trade 55.9 sold smoked and fresh bush meat, majorly 48.4% involved in the processing of the bush meat. The challenges facing the bush meat trade include seasonal fluctuation, a storage facility which affects the profit in the trading. Based on the result obtained, it is therefore recommended that policy formation in Nigeria should be extended toward bush meat more than before in terms of educational program so as to educate the traders and also put in place improved domestication of the animals.

(Keywords: *bush meat, game animals, animal protein, women, role, gender roles, Oluyole, challenges, environmental impact, economic impact, poaching*).

## INTRODUCTION

Animal protein consumption is most in most urban and rural areas are inadequate (Ibrahim, et al., 2014). This has been attributed to the inherent poor performance of conventional animal protein sources, like poultry, cattle, sheep, and goat (Njidda, 2010 and Yashim, 2014). This has necessitated the search for alternatives from wildlife resources, which are cherished in most communities, due to their therapeutic properties

(Eraldo, 2005, White, 2015, and Ayodele, et al. 1999).

Bush meat has traditionally been a natural protein source in most agrarian societies and consumed for different reasons. It is regarded as a delicacy by the urban elite, while the rural poor consume it as a matter of necessity (Halidu,, 2019, Abulude, 2017, Ebabhamiegbegbho and Ohanaka 2012, and Ayodele, et al., 1999). It is a natural resource, which is harvested by farmers, hunters, and other stakeholders and consumed to bridge the protein consumption gap. The value chain of bush meat trade between trapping and consumption, involved men and women (Bowen, et al., 2002 and Okiwelu, et al., 2009).

It has been ascertained that 43% of agricultural work force are women; this value rises to 70% in some countries, while 80% of agricultural supply from the rural areas are from women (Adefalu, et al., 2000, and Brown, 2003). Rural women dominated marketing, processing, transport of produce from the farm to the market.

According to DEFRA (2006), bush meat is defined as wild animal protein that is hunted for human consumption. This research work evaluates the role of women in bush meat trade in Oluyole Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria, in order to provide documented information on sustainable bush meat trade and organize the stakeholder into functional group for a better economic empowerment and coordination.

Trade is defined as the action of buying and selling of goods and services, for the purpose of making profit (Oxford dictionary, 2011). Bush meat trade is attractive to the rural poor because of its low capital requirement (Branch, 2020, Asobey, et al., 1990, and Udo, 1999) and

abundance, unlike other trading activities like cocoa, cashew, and palm kernel (De marodi, et al., 2004). Some of the rural women carry out bush meat trade to generate income and support the family in the times of hardship (Brown, 2003, Bifarin, et al., 2008, Nasi. et al., 2008, and Robinson and Bernett, 2004).

Bush meat trade is generally secretive, illegal and without proper documentation, and most of the stakeholders are not well educated (Halidu, 2019). It has been recognized in most west and central African countries as source of employment for women, thus requiring to be investigated in order to determine women involvement in bush meat trade, to further explore the potential of this sector of the economy to foster cooperation and coordination among traders.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Selection of the Study Area

The study was conducted at Oluyole Local Government Area in Oyo State, Oluyole. This is

one of the oldest Local Government Councils in Oyo State. The Local Government has its headquarters at Idi-Ayunre Old Lagos/Ibadan Road. It shares boundaries with four Local Government Areas (i.e., Ibadan, South-West, Ibadan, South-East, Ona-Ara and Ido all within Ibadan Metropolis, and Ogun State through (Egbeda-Obafemi, Odeda and Ijebu-North) Local Government Areas. There are 10 wards in Oluyole Local Government and these wards are divided into two sectors, namely Idi-Ayunre Sector and Olode Sector. The political ward division of the local government are Ayegun, Orita/Odoona-elewe, Pegba/EgbedaTuba, Muslim/Ifelodun, Odo-onanla/IdiAyunre, Latunde, Olomi/Olounde, Abanla/Olonde,

### When the Research was Conducted

The investigation in the role of women in bush meat trade was carried out between March and October 2019, in order to retrieve relevant information from all identified stakeholders in the bush meat trading points in the local government area.

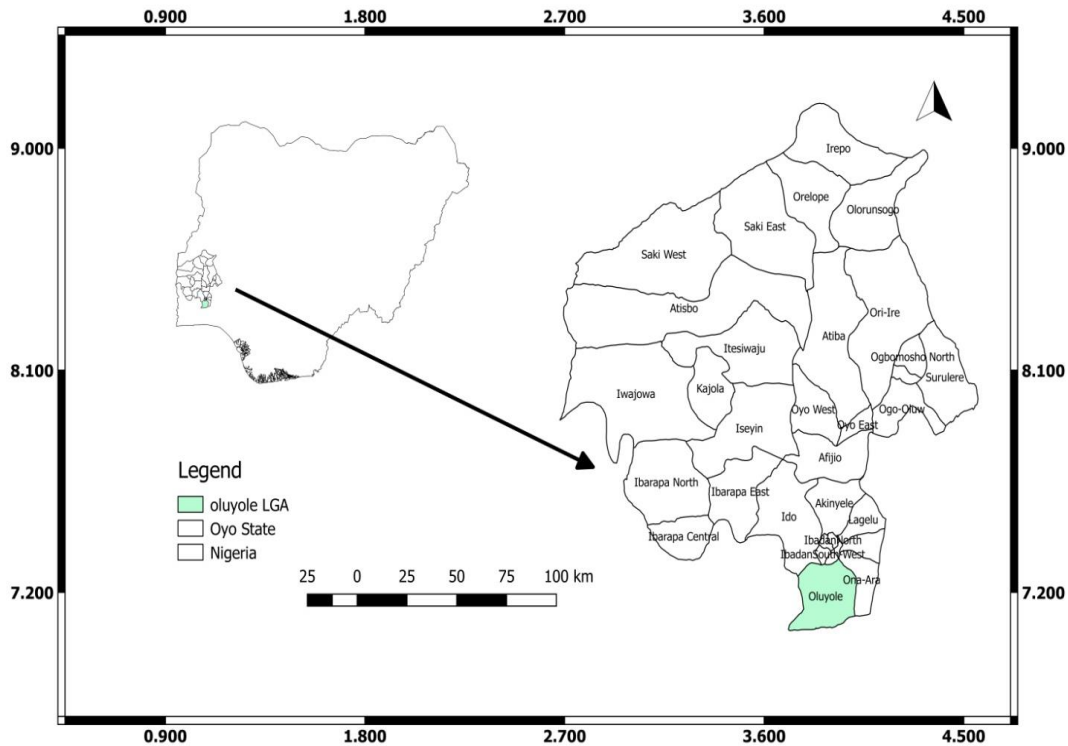


Figure 1: Study Area.

### **Method of Data Collection and Sampling Technique**

Data was collected with the administration of structured questionnaire. Secondary data was equally collected from publications and journals. Purposive sampling technique was adopted in collecting the research information because the study sample is defined. One hundred questionnaires were administered out of which 93 were retrieved.

### **Sample Size**

Oluyole Local Government Area was selected due to the predominance of bush meat trade in the area. 100 questionnaires were administered at 10 per market in each political ward. The whole local Government area consists of 10 wards. At the end of the trial, only 93 questionnaires were retrieved.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics like frequency and percentages.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1 show the socioeconomic appraisal of the respondent, which shows that majority (40.77%) were 50-60 years old, while the least 17.2% were above 60%. It was evident that women above 30 years were involved in the trade and those in their active age (30-60 years) are more involved (82.8%), because all the activities involved, such as moving from one market to another, dressing of carcass, smoking and evisceration are energy dependent, coupled with their marital responsibilities, which makes it a less attractive vocation for older people, corroborating the view expressed by (Adefalu, et al., 2012 and Meduna, et al., 2004), that participation of women in agro processing diminishes with advancement with age. The marital status of the respondent showed that 62.4% were married, while others were widowed, divorced and single.

This confirmed the observation of Brown (2007) and Nasi, et al. (2003) that women in bush meat trade were mostly married and that they engage in business to support their husbands. The field

survey has revealed that high educational attainment is not necessary to engage in bush meat trade, since most of the processes only require energy and minimal intellectual engagement, most skills in the value chain are learnt by practice not through formal education, aligning with the observation of Halidu (2019).

All religious practices were fairly represented in the vocation; it is a business that involved Christians (40.9%), Muslims (38.7%), and traditionalist (20.4%). The women that are in trade engaged in other primary endeavors, such as farming (18.3%), trading (74.2%), and civil service (7.5%); this is because bush meat is mostly illegal, affected by conservation policies of government and outbreak of diseases such as Lassa fever, Ebola other Zoonotic diseases and seasonal variation in supply. The same views were held by Jayeoba (2013). The trade is always abandoned when threatened by such challenges due to absolute scarcity and high cost of stock.

The appraisal of the business of bush meat selling revealed that respondent had varied years of experience from one year to above 30 years; this is because it is operated as a family business and the skill is inherited by children from their parents. This corroborated the views of Adefalu et al (2012) and Branch (2000) that rural women's children are found by the road side hawking bush meat and that they also assist their parents in smoking and dressing of carcasses, which encouraged them to also develop interest in the business .

The average monthly income of the respondents ranged from #10000 to above #50000. Most of the practitioners (45.2%) realized above #50000 monthly. The respondent reported that the business is profitable which aligns with the findings of Adefalu, et al. (2012) when he regarded profit as the greatest motivation for women who engages in the trade. Bush meat trading require reorganization, support and coordination to assist the traders with financial support, since most of them self-fund their business from personal savings (49.5%), cooperative society loan (28.0%) and family support (16.0%). Government participation is nil and this should be improved for sustainable trading.

**Table 1: Socio Economic Characteristics of the Respondents.**

VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
<b>AGE</b>		
30 – 40	18	19.4
40 – 50	21	22.6
50 – 60	38	40.7
Above 60	16	17.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>		
Single	56	6
Married	58	62.4
Widowed	27	29.0
Divorced	02	2.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND</b>		
Primary	37	39.8
Secondary	8	8.6
Tertiary	2	2.2
No formal education	46	49.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>RELIGION</b>		
Christian	38	40.9
Muslim	36	38.7
Traditional	19	20.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>OCCUPATION</b>		
Farming	17	18.3
Trading	69	74.2
Civil service	7	7.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>YEARS OF EXPERIENCE</b>		
1 – 10	37	39.8
11 – 20	28	30.1
21 – 30	21	22.6
Above 30	7	7.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>MONTHLY INCOME</b>		
10,000	7	7.5
10,000 – 25,000	23	24.7
25,000 – 50,000	21	22.6
ABOVE 50,000	42	45.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>NATURE OF BUSINESS</b>		
Wholesalers	19	20.4
Retailers	25	26.9
Both	49	52.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>SOURCE OF CAPITAL</b>		
Bank loan	6	6.5
Self savings	46	49.5
Cooperative society	26	28.0
Family	15	16.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2:** Benefit Derived from Bush Meat Trade.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Profit	39	41.9
Income	21	22.6
Animal protein consumption	33	35.5
Total	93	100

**Table 3:** Processing and Value Addition to Bush Meat.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Smoked	31	33.3
Fresh	10	10.8
Smoked and Fresh	52	55.9
Total	93	100

**Table 4:** Stages of Involvement of Women in Bush Meat Trade.

Operations	Frequency	Percentage
Processing	8	8.6
Marketing	7	7.5
Gathering	6	6.4
Retailing	7	7.5
Sorting/Grading	6	6.4
Procurement from hunters	6	6.4
All of the above process	53	57.2

Table 2 revealed the benefits derived from bush meat trading, which was categorized into three, these are profit making (41.9%), income generation (22.6%) and animal protein consumption (35.5%). Profit making ranked highest, which is the primary motive of doing business, income generation important in order to meet their family need and support their husbands. It was also submitted by Jayeoba et al (2013) that women engage in bush meat trade for profit and income generation. The trader also opined that most buyers procured from them for consumption and medicinal use and most of the end users primed bush meat because they are palatable, nutritious and also regarded as a delicacy.

Table 3 shows that 55.9% of the respondents smoked their bush meat while (10.8%) sold fresh bush meat and (55.9%) engaged in the sales of fresh and smoked bush meat. This revealed that the market requires standardization on the form of sales of bush meat through value addition, in order to reduce carcass spoilage sales of unsafe carcass.

Table 4 shows that women dominated bush meat trade and they engaged in different operations, which ranged from processing (8.6%), marketing (7.5%), gathering of wildlife (6.4%), retailing (7.5%), sorting and grading (6.4%). A majority of the respondents (57.2%) combined all processes, which is tedious and such traders depend on family labor to accomplish the operations. Halide (2019) opined that the engagement of family labor in wildlife processing and sales enhances income, profit and minimize overhead cost. It was further emphasis that all the operations are easier to achieve by women

The challenges of the business were highlighted on Table 5 as seasonal fluctuation and diseases (61.5%), high transportation cost (17.7%) and lack of storage facilities accounted for (20.8%). The effects of these constraints were minimized by the alternative business the respondent engaged in, such as buying and selling, food processing and farming.

**Table 5:** Constraints of Bush Meat Trading.

Constraint	Frequency	Frequency
Seasonal changes & diseases	59	61.5
Transportation	17	17.7
Storage facilities	20	20.8

**Table 6:** Common Species of the Bush Meat in the Study Area.

Common Name	Species	Ranking in study area
Rabbit	<i>Sylvilages brasiliensis</i>	1
Python	<i>Python sebae</i>	2
Civet cat	<i>Civettictis civetta</i>	3
Grass cutter	<i>Thryonomis swiderianus</i>	4
Stripped Ground Squirrel	<i>Euxerus erythropus</i>	5
African Grass Rat	<i>Arvicanthus niloticus</i>	6
Common Gray Duicker	<i>Sylvicapra gramma</i>	7
Double spurred francolin	<i>Francolinus bicalcaratus</i>	8
Pangolin	<i>Phataginus sp</i>	9
Bush pig (forest Hog)	<i>Potamocheorus spp</i>	10
Water Buck	<i>Kobus eilipsiprymnus</i>	11

Availability of bush meat profiling on Table 6 shows that rodents were the most available in the area based on availability ranking followed by python and civet cat. This was because supply depended on nature, however all the listed species in Table 6 were regularly available in the markets and their supply is greatly dependent on season of the year, more abundant in the dry season because it is less tedious to catch or trap them at this period.

## CONCLUSION

This study has revealed that women engaged mostly in bush meat trade in their active age because the vocation is energy demanding. The business is dominated by married women and it is profitable.

The practitioners are not enjoying government financial support; they funded their business from personal income. The major challenges of bush meat trade identified are seasonal supply, high transportation cost and lack of storage facilities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Based on this study, government should fine tune policies to regulate the practice of bush meat trading, in order to encourage data collection and collation.
- There should be advocacy on sustainable wildlife harvesting, targeted at the major stakeholders.
- The traders can be trained in other vocations as a form of empowerment and skill acquisition.
- Enforcement agents should regulate poaching activities, to preserve wildlife biodiversity
- Bush meat hygiene should be promoted by improving storage and eradicating open display of bush meat by the roadside



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