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Profitability of Garri Marketing in Igwuruta, Ikwerre Local Government Area Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

This study on the profitability of Garri marketing in Igwuruta, Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State aimed to describe the socio-economic characteristics, determine the profitability, describe the marketing channel and identify the constraints affecting Garri marketing. Data were collected from 30 registered Garri marketers through simple random sampling techniques, using structured questionnaire. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Results from the study shows that the majority (60%) of the marketers were female, 53.3 % were between the ages 26-35 years, 53.4% were married, most (53.4%) had secondary education as the highest education, 53.3% had an average trading experience of 1-5 years. The positive net profit (₦165,500), healthy profit margin (20.0%) and favorable Rate of Return (1.46) all confirmed the profitability status of garri marketing. The study concludes Garri marketing as a viable income-generating business, and recommended Road infrastructure improvement to facilitate transportation and improved access to credit through microfinance and cooperative societies.

KEYWORDS: *Garri, Profitability, Marketing, Market*

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1. Introduction

Garri, a staple food in Nigeria, is a processed product derived from cassava tubers. In meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of food security in Nigeria and fostering economic empowerment, the cassava value chain development have been identified because of the country huge potential for cassava production and growing global demands (AFDB, 2015). Abubakar, (2018) noted that the current trend in cassava production and demand showed that the cassava production is increasing globally and that growing of cassava is expanding to semi-arid areas where cassava was not cultivated 30years ago.

Garri production involves the use of raw materials such as cassava and equipment such as grater, cassava press, dryer, etc. The processes involved in Garri production includes, harvesting, sorting, peeling, washing, grating, pressing, drying, sieving (cake breaking), frying, cooling, packaging and storing. Products derived from cassava are Garri, starch, fufu, flour, pellets, tapioca and chips.

Profitability is closely related to profit but with one key difference. Profit is the financial gain or surplus earned by a business or individual after deducting all expenses, costs, and taxes from revenue. It's usually measured in terms of a specific period, such as quarterly or annually. Profitability, on the other hand, measures the ability of a business or investment to generate profits in relation to its costs, expenses, or investments. A farmer can increase its profitability by boosting sales which requires an increase in production.

Marketing can be defined as the performance of all business activities involved in the flow of goods and services from the point of initial agricultural production until they are in the hands of the ultimate consumers Panda (2018). In the subsistence economy agricultural marketing may be of little significance since farmers only produce food for their household to eat leaving very little or nothing to sell, but as agriculture

is becoming commercialized, agricultural marketing becomes very important (Philip & Akoroda, 2004). According to Thomsen, the study of agricultural marketing, comprises all the operations, and the agencies conducting them, involved in the movement of farm-produced foods, raw materials and their derivatives. Normally the key issue is finding people for cultivation and as well as for marketing (Unnamalai & Gopinath, 2020)

Several constraints affect the profitability of garri marketers which limits its contribution to the development of Nigeria's economy, boosting garri production without boosting its marketing can lead to several things ranging from its spoilage to its scarcity and high cost.

The problems of marketing channels and distributions, ranging from producer to wholesalers, retailers and to the final consumer. Researches have been executed as regard to agricultural produce marketing channels in Nigeria. Eze *et al.,* (2015), the women marketers perceived constraints on some produce marketing in Enugu, have been identified ranging from produce deterioration, inadequate processing equipment, poor marketing facilities, high cost of shops (warehouse), inadequate packaging to lack of timely information, and so on, as some of the problems of Agricultural marketing confronting women in Agricultural produce marketers in Southeast Nigeria.

The aim of the study was to examine the profitability of Garri marketing in Igwuruta, Ikwerre Local Government Area. The specific objectives were to:

i. describe the socio-economic characteristics of garri marketers in the study area;
ii. determine the profitability status of garri marketing in the study area;
iii. describe the marketing channel of garri distribution in the study area; and
iv. Identify the constraints affecting garri marketing in the study area.

2. Methodology

Study Area

The study was carried out in Igwuruta, Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State, the town has a relatively high population density, with an average of 500 people per square kilometer. The town is approximately 20 kilometers east of Port Harcourt, the state capital. Igwuruta is bounded by several neighboring communities, including Rumuigbo, Omagwa, and Isiokpo. The predominant occupations of the inhabitants of this area is farming and trading.

Research Design

Survey research design was used for data collection from the target population. Data was collected through structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised of garri marketers in Igwuruta, Ikwerre local government area.

Sampling Procedure and Sampling Size

Simple random sampling techniques was used to select 30 registered garri marketers. These were marketers registered with market cooperatives in Igwuruta main market (ahia-odu). From the available cooperative register a total of 46 garri marketers were registered with the cooperative. A total of 30 garri marketers were interviewed with a structured questionnaire as a sample size for the study. These were the marketers who were willing to participate in the survey. A sample size of 30 was accepted to be appropriate based on the central limit theorem, which holds that samples of $n \geq 30$ approximate a normal sampling distribution.

Data Collection Methods and Sources

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaires and oral interview. The questionnaire covered socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, profitability of Garri marketing, marketing channel, and constraints affecting Garri marketing.

Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained for this study was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as simple percentage, frequencies and mean score to analyze objective (i) cost and return method was used to analyzed objective (ii) marketing channel was used to analyzed objective (III) and mean score and frequency analysis was used to analyzed objective (iv).

3. Result and Discussions

Information about the socioeconomic characteristics of garri marketers in the study area are presented in Table 1

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Garri Marketers According to their Socio-Economic Characteristics

Variable	Categories	Frequency (n=30)	Percentage (%)	Mean
Age	18-25	4	13.3	
	26–35	16	53.3	
	36–45	4	13.3	37 Years
	46–55	5	16.7	
	56 and above	1	3.4	
Total		**30**	**100**	
Sex	Male	12	40	
	Female	18	60	
Total		**30**	**100**	
Marital Status	Single	12	**40.0**	
	Married	16	53.4	
	Divorced	0	0.0	
	Widowed	2	6.6	
Total		**30**	**100**	
Educational Level	No Formal Education	7	23.3	
	Primary	1	3.3	
	Secondary	16	53.4	
	Tertiary	6	20	
Total		**30**	**100**	
Years of Experience	Less than 1 year	3	10.0	
	1–5 years	16	53.3	
	6–10 years 11-15 years	9 2	30.0 6.7	
Total		**30**	**100**	
	15 years and above	0	0.0	
Household size	1-3 members	9	30	
	4-6 members	15	50.0	5 members
	7-9 members	1	3.4	
	Above 9 members	5	16.6	
Total		**30**	100	
Member of Association?	Yes	14	46.6	
	No	16	53.4	
Total		**30**	**100**	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 presents the frequency distribution of garri marketers according to their socio-economic characteristics. The data were collected from 30 respondents (n=30) in Igwuruta, Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State. The table captures eight socio-economic variables: age, sex, marital status, educational level, years of experience, household size, and membership of association.

The age distribution of respondents showed that the majority (53.3%) were between 26 and 35 years, followed by those aged 46–55 years (16.7%), while 13.3% each were in the 18–25 and 36–45 age brackets. Only 3.4% were 56 years and above. The mean age was 37 years. This indicated that garri marketing in the study area is dominated by young adults in their productive and economically active years. This is advantageous because younger marketers are likely to be more energetic, adaptable, and capable of withstanding the physical demands of garri marketing. The presence of older marketers (56 years and above) suggests that the business accommodates all age groups, though at a minimal level.

The table reveals that females (60%) outnumbered males (40%) in garri marketing. This suggests that garri marketing in Igwuruta is a female-dominated enterprise. This finding is consistent with the general perception that foodstuff marketing, particularly garri, is largely handled by women in many Nigerian communities. The higher female participation could be attributed to the traditional role of women in food processing and distribution, as well as their need to supplement household income.

In terms of marital status, 53.4% of the respondents were married, 40.0% were single, and 6.6% were widowed. None of the respondents was divorced. The high proportion of married marketers suggests that garri marketing serves as a means of supporting family livelihoods. Married individuals may be more

motivated to engage in the business to cater for the needs of their spouses and children. The presence of widowed respondents (6.6%) further underscores the role of garri marketing as a survival strategy for those who may have lost their partners.

The educational background of respondents shows that the largest proportion (53.4%) had secondary education, followed by those with no formal education (23.3%), tertiary education (20%), and primary education (3.3%). The relatively high percentage of marketers with secondary and tertiary education suggests that garri marketing is not limited to the uneducated. However, the presence of 23.3% without formal education indicates that the business also accommodates those with little or no formal schooling, possibly because it requires practical skills rather than formal academic qualifications. The low percentage of primary school leavers (3.3%) may be coincidental or due to the small sample size.

The distribution of years of experience shows that the majority (53.3%) had 1–5 years of experience, followed by 30.0% with 6–10 years, 10.0% with less than 1 year, and 6.7% with 11–15 years. None had 15 years and above of experience. This indicates that garri marketing in the study area is largely undertaken by relatively new entrants, with most marketers having between 1 and 5 years of experience. This could suggest that the business is easy to enter, or that older marketers may have diversified into other ventures. The absence of marketers with over 15 years of experience may also imply that the business is not typically a lifelong career in this area.

Regarding household size, 50.0% of the respondents had 4–6 members, 30.0% had 1–3 members, 16.6% had above 9 members, and 3.4% had 7–9 members. The mean household size was 5 members. The moderate household sizes suggest that marketers have manageable family responsibilities, which may allow them to devote time to their businesses. However, the presence of 16.6% with above 9 members indicates that some marketers have larger families, which could increase the pressure to generate more income from garri marketing.

Finally, the table shows that 53.4% of the respondents were not members of any marketing association, while 46.6% belonged to one. The slightly higher proportion of non-members suggests that formal association membership is not a prerequisite for garri marketing in the study area. However, the substantial percentage of members (46.6%) indicates that some marketers recognize the benefits of collective action, such as access to market information, credit facilities, and price regulation.

Table 2: Costs And Return Of Garri Marketing

Items	**Quantity**	**Amount (₦)**
Fixed Costs		
Furniture Cost		54,500
Basin Cost		40,000
Total fixed cost		**94,500**
Variable Costs		
Transportation/Week		75,000
Loading & Offloading/week		75,000
Packaging materials/Week		45,000
Rent/week		39,000
Tax/week		31,000
Garri Purchase Cost/week		300,000
Total variable cost		**565,000**
Returns		
Selling Price per Basin		16,500
Weekly Sales Volume (Basins)	50	
Total costs (TFC+TVC)		**659,500**
Total Revenue		825,000
Gross margin (TR-TVC)		260,000
ROR (TR/TVC)	1.46	
Net profit (TR-TC)		165,500
Profit margin (NP/TR) ×100	20.0%	

Source: Authors Computation

Table 2 presents the costs and returns of garri marketing in Igwuruta, Ikwerre Local Government Area. The analysis is based on monthly fixed costs, weekly variable costs, and weekly returns. The key profitability indicators presented include Total Fixed Cost (TFC), Total Variable Cost (TVC), Total Cost (TC), Total Revenue (TR), Gross Margin, Rate of Return (ROR), Net Profit, and Profit Margin.

These costs vary directly with the volume of garri marketed. Transportation and loading/offloading costs are particularly high, reflecting the logistical challenges of moving garri from production areas to marketing outlets. The garri purchase cost (₦300,000) constitutes the largest single variable cost, representing 60.6% of the total variable cost. Packaging materials (₦45,000) account for 9.1% of TVC. The total revenue of ₦825,000 is derived from selling 50 basins of garri at ₦16,500 per basin. This indicates a healthy sales volume, suggesting consistent demand for garri in the study area. The gross margin of ₦260,000 indicates that after covering all variable costs, the marketer has ₦260,000 available to cover fixed costs and contribute to profit. This is a positive indicator of profitability. The Rate of Return of 1.46 means that for every ₦1 invested in variable costs, the marketer generates ₦1.46kobo in revenue. This indicates a favorable return on investment in garri marketing. The net profit of ₦165,500 per week (approximately ₦662,000 per month) demonstrates that garri marketing in Igwuruta is a profitable venture. This profit is realized after accounting for both fixed and variable costs. The profit margin of 20.0% indicates that for every ₦100 of garri sold, the marketer retains ₦20 as profit. This is a healthy profit margin, suggesting that garri marketing is a viable and sustainable business in the study area.

The result in Table 2 provided compelling evidence that garri marketing in Igwuruta, Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State, is a profitable venture. The positive net profit (₦165,500), healthy profit margin (20.0%), and favorable Rate of Return (1.46) all confirm the profitability status of garri marketing. The findings suggest that garri marketing is not only profitable but also sustainable, making it a viable source of livelihood for marketers in the study area. However, efforts to reduce variable costs, particularly transportation and garri purchase costs, would further enhance profitability and ensure the long-term sustainability of the business. According to Sulaiman *et al.* (2023) the income of a business is a deciding factor in continuity or discontinuity of a business as it shows the profitability and success of a business. A Gross margin of ₦260,000 represents what the business made after paying for the direct cost of doing business, which includes materials and other direct marketing costs.

Marketing Channels Analysis

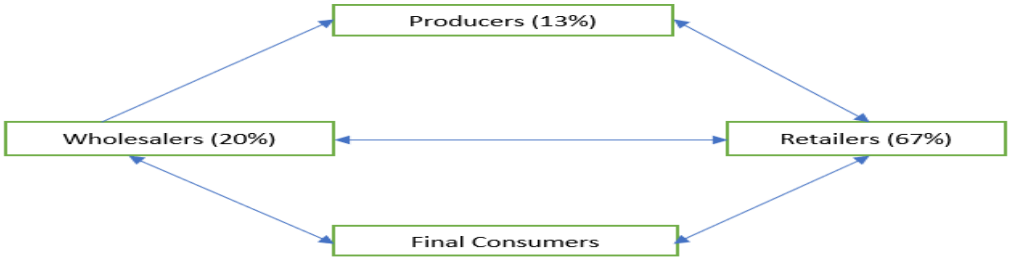


Figure 1 Channel of Distribution

The diagram illustrates the various pathways through which garri moves from the producer to the final consumer in the study area. It identifies four key actors: Producers, Wholesalers, Retailers, and Final Consumers. The percentages (13%, 20%, and 67%) represent the proportion of marketer's participation in the various marketing channels to get to the final consumer.

The most striking feature of the diagram is the dominance of Retailers (63%). This indicates that the retail segment is the largest component of the garri marketing chain in the study area. Retailers act as the primary interface between the supply chain and the final consumers. The diagram shows that retailers source their products from two main avenues:

- Directly from Producers.
- From Wholesalers.

Wholesalers (20%) serve as a critical bridge in the distribution network. The diagram shows a two-way arrow between Wholesalers and Retailers, suggesting a dynamic relationship where wholesalers supply retailers in bulk. The wholesalers themselves are supplied by the Producers. Notably, the diagram does not show a direct link between Wholesalers and Final Consumers, implying that in this study area, wholesalers strictly deal with retailers rather than selling directly to the end-users.

Producers (13%) represent the smallest percentage in the diagram. They are the origin point of the commodity. The diagram highlights that producers have multiple exit points for their goods:

- They can sell directly to Wholesalers.
- They can sell directly to Retailers.

- They can sell directly to Final Consumers

The Final Consumers are the terminal point of the channel. The diagram shows they are supplied by both Retailers and Producers. However, the arrow from Retailers to Final Consumers suggests that the vast majority of consumers purchase garri through retailers, reinforcing the 63% dominance of the retail segment.

The diagram revealed that the garri marketing system in the study area is retailer-dominated. While producers and wholesalers play vital roles in supply, the retailers (63%) are the primary drivers of the final distribution to consumers. The presence of multiple arrows indicates a flexible marketing system where actors can bypass intermediaries (e.g., producers selling directly to retailers or consumers), but the most structured flow involves the Wholesaler-Retailer link.

Table 3 Constraints Affecting Garri Marketing

Constraints	SA	A	N	D	SD	Freq.	Total	Mean
Poor road network	12	12	3	3		30	123	4.10
Price instability	18	9	3			30	135	4.50
Access to credit	7	10	9	4		30	110	3.66
Storage facilities	7	7	11	3	2	30	104	3.46
Security challenges	12	9	6	3		30	120	4.00
Grand mean							**592**	**3.94**

Source: Field survey, 2025 **Criterion mean score: 3.00**

Table 3 presents the responses of 30 garri marketers regarding five identified constraints affecting garri marketing in Igwuruta. The constraints were rated on a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) .

The criterion mean score is 3.00, which is the standard midpoint for a five-point Likert scale:

Therefore, any constraint with a mean score of 3.00 and above is considered a constraint, while any constraint with a mean score below 3.00 is considered not considered a constraint.

Poor Road Network (Mean = 4.10): With a mean of 4.10, which is well above the criterion mean of 3.00, poor road network is a constraint affecting garri marketing in Igwuruta. A total of 24 out of 30 respondents (80%) agreed or strongly agreed that poor road network is a challenge. This indicates that bad roads make transportation of garri difficult and costly, reducing profit margins and limiting market access.

Price Instability (Mean = 4.50): Price instability recorded the highest mean score of 4.50, making it the highest constraint affecting garri marketing in the study area. With 27 out of 30 respondents (90%) agreeing or strongly agreeing, price fluctuations are a major challenge. Unstable prices make it difficult for marketers to plan, negotiate fair prices, and maintain consistent profit margins, thereby negatively impacting profitability.

Access to Credit (Mean = 3.66): Access to credit had a mean score of 3.66, which is above the criterion mean of 3.00, making it a constraint. A total of 17 respondents (7 SA + 10 A) agreed that limited access to credit is a challenge. This indicates that garri marketers in Igwuruta struggle to obtain financial support, which limits their ability to expand their businesses, purchase in bulk, or invest in better marketing strategies, thereby affecting profitability.

Storage Facilities (Mean = 3.46): Storage facilities recorded a mean score of 3.46, which is above the criterion mean of 3.00, making it a constraint. With 14 respondents agreeing and 11 remaining neutral, the lack of adequate storage facilities is a challenge. Poor storage leads to post-harvest losses, reduced product quality, and inability to take advantage of price fluctuations, all of which negatively impact profitability.

Security Challenges (Mean = 4.00): Security challenges had a mean score of 4.00, which is above the criterion mean of 3.00, indicating that it is a constraint. A total of 21 out of 30 respondents (70%) agreed or strongly agreed that security is a concern. Security issues such as theft, harassment, and civil unrest can disrupt marketing activities, increase operational costs, and reduce profitability.

The grand mean of 3.94 (total = 592) is well above the criterion mean of 3.00, indicating that, on average, the identified constraints are affecting garri marketing in Igwuruta.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results of the profitability analysis, the study concluded that garri marketing is a viable income-generating business in Igwuruta, Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. Also, the marketing channel is dominated by retailers and the constraints affecting the marketers were poor road network, price instability, access to credit, storage facilities and security challenges. The researcher

recommended Road infrastructure improvement to facilitate transportation and improved access to credit through microfinance and cooperative societies for garri marketers in Igwuruta, Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

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