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Factors Affecting Efficient Processing of Cassava by Micro-Scale Cassava Processing Enterprises in Southwest Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
This study assessed the factors affecting efficient processing of cassava by Micro-Scale Cassava Processing Enterprises (MSCPEs) in Southwest Nigeria. Survey design was used for the study, and multi-stage sampling technique (purposive sampling and proportionate stratified sampling) was used to select respondents. Data were gathered from 292 respondents, with the help of structured questionnaire. The respondents comprised the MSCPEs that benefitted from the Presidential Cassava Transformation Initiative, in the study area. Data were analyzed with descriptive statistic, which included: percentage, mean score, standard deviation and mean ranking. The reliability test was carried out with Cronbach Alpha, while the validation of the research instrument was carried out by a senior lecturer in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, Federal University of Technology, Akure. The study revealed that, unavailability of adequate fund, high cost of diesel/petrol, and high cost of production, were the highest factors affecting the MSCPEs in the study area, while the least factors were high cost of charcoal, and unavailability of adequate cassava roots for processing. The paper recommends that, necessary policies should be enacted to help drive down the MSCPEs' cost of production, so that; the enterprises can compete in the national and the international markets. Also, infrastructural facilities and other enabling environment need be made available to the MSCPEs, especially constant electricity. This will drive down the high cost of diesel/petrol, being used by these MSCPEs, and further reduce their cost of production. Financial aid will also support their working capital and help them expand their businesses.
Keywords: Efficient; Processing; Micro-Scale; Cassava; Enterprises

INTRODUCTION

Introduced to Africa by the Portuguese, cassava is the most widely cultivated tuber in Sub-Sahara Africa. Cassava is one of the most essential crops for Nigerian farmers and the second most essential stable food in terms of per capita food energy consumed (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2005). Cassava provides food and income to above 30 million farmers, huge numbers of processors and traders. After rice, maize and wheat, cassava is rated the fourth amongst the food crops that have abundant economic potentials in developing countries (Oladunjoye, 2004). Also, at 54 million metric tonnes, Nigeria is the largest producer of cassava in the globe (Food and Agricultural Organization Statistics (FAOSTAT), 2015), yet Nigeria is unable to obtain a share in the global cassava market. In fact, Nigeria still imports cassava products for use as raw materials in Nigerian industries. Several authors have presented numerous factors that are posing constraint to the development of the cassava industry in Nigeria, and frustrating the Nigerian Governments' efforts towards the development of the industry.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) (2006), stated that, an examination of all the data available reveals that the main challenge being faced by the cassava sector in Nigeria, is low productivity, resulting from Nigeria's subsistence cassava farming culture. Also, the industry is inefficient, underdeveloped, and uncompetitive worldwide due to high ex-factory prices. Sanni (2005), Nigeriafirst.org (2005), Gamser, Appleton and Carter (1990), Babaleye (2004), Momoh (2005), Nweke (2003), Ezedinma, Lemchi, Okechukwu, Ogbe, Akoroda, Sanni, Okoro, llona, and Dixon (2007) and IITA (2003) listed inadequate back-up supply of cassava and lack of cassava processing equipment to process cassava to meet up with international standard as key factors militating against efficient cassava processing in Nigeria while IITA (2005) recognized the utmost limitation to processing cassava products in Nigeria as drying, especially during the rainy season. The objective of this study is to identify the factors affecting efficient processing of cassava by Micro-scale cassava processing enterprises in Southwest Nigeria?

Statement of the Problem

Several factors have been adduced by numerous authors as causing inefficiency in the processing of cassava by Nigerian cassava processing enterprises. While Sanni, Onadipe, Ilona, Mussagy, Abass and Dixon (2009), Rahman and Awerije

(2016) and Nwajiuba, Nwosu and Onyeneke (2013) enumerated irregular power supply as one of the major factors affecting efficient processing of cassava in Nigeria, Muhammad-Lawal, Omotesho, and Oyedemi (2013), listed high transport cost, poor road network, insufficient capital, among others as the main factors affecting efficient processing of cassava in Nigeria. Rahman and Awerije (2016) also stated that, the utmost shortcoming to the growth of cassava sector in Nigeria is the provision of water meant for washing and processing cassava into gari, irrigation, and insufficient facilities for processing. Again, Nwajiuba *et al.,* (2013) itemized poor provision of water and telecommunication, high cost of fuel, and poor road network as causing inefficiency in the cassava enterprise. What factors are affecting efficient processing of cassava by Micro-scale cassava processing enterprises in Southwest Nigeria?

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Factors Militating against Efficient Production and processing of Cassava in Nigeria

Olagunju (2013) stated that the utmost problem to the growth in the cassava sector in Nigeria is low productivity, which is caused by weak modern technologies, little access to financial resources, and weak organizational structures also, low quality, low inputs availability, high wastage, insufficient infrastructure (energy), poor quality of primary products, marketing and distribution limitations. Cassava farmers have problems obtaining credit as a result of bureaucratic bottleneck and or lack of bank collateral (Agnet, 2004; Badiru, 2010; Okojie, Monye-Emina, Eghafona, Osaghae and Ehiakhamen, (2010). IITA (2003) and IITA (2005), recognized the utmost limitation to processing cassava products in Nigeria as drying. According to these IITA's studies, major cassava producing zones in Nigeria experience longer period of rainfall and as such solar radiation is somewhat low. This explains the need to use dryers extensively for cassava commercialization in the southern part of Nigeria. Nonetheless, dryers are costly and use a lot of energy.

Another limitation is unstable policies of government and absence of rolling plan. A critical study on the execution of policies and reforms policies over the years disclosed that "policy instability, policy inconsistency, lack of policy transparency, poor coordination of policies, bad governance as well as poor implementation and mismanagement of policy instruments, constitute major obstacles to the implementation and achievement of the goals and objectives of

these policies" (Olowa and Olowa, 2014).In respect to this, Kormawa (2004) opined that agriculture can only thrive in a country, where consistency in policies is a tradition, and not where policies change abruptly due to the change of a minister or a government. He further stated that, "if it is some policy of switch on and switch off, you can just forget about it". Also, Nweke (2003), opined that, Nigeria has a policy of not implementing intellectual property law, which is crucial to the Nigerian cassava industry's development.

Onwurafor and Enwelu (2013), on the other hand, affirmed that, several agro food processing machines are purchased with a lot of capital, which many women cassava processors cannot afford. This affects effectiveness in their operation, and has relegated their operation process to subsistence in nature. In agreement with Onwurafor and Enwelu (2013), Onwudinjo (2012) opined that "with the interventions of government, agriculture in Nigeria is still backward. Lack of fund, poor policy design, corruption, poor implementation, lack of political will, policies discontinuity, and misplaced priority, amongst others were given as the reasons why the interventions have not impacted much on agriculture". Processing and storage problems occur as a result of poor technology (Olagunju, 2013). Also, Adebayo, White and Diopelu (2003), disclosed that, the strategies used to enhance agricultural progression in the past failed because the programmes were not sufficiently founded on in-depth studies and realistic pilot surveys. However, Adebayo (2004), opined that the failure "could be attributed to lack of public participation in the design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies as well as limited implementation capacity within the sectorial ministries, and a poor understanding of the details and specifics of polices by implementers".

Ezedinma *et al*., (2007), Momoh (2005), Sanni (2005), IITA (2003), Nigeriafirst.org (2005), Gamser *et al.,*(1990), Babaleye (2004) and Nweke (2003), and agreed that the major constraints that cassava processors encounter in Nigeria are, inadequate back-up supply of cassava and lack of cassava processing equipment to process cassava to meet up with international standard. Momoh (2005), Sanni, (2005) agreed that no cassava industry in Nigeria is producing to capacity due to inadequate supply of fresh tubers. Momoh (2005), stated that the tenure system in the South-East works in contrast to mass cassava production. Most of the scholars above agreed that cassava production is currently concentrated in the hands of several small holder farmers with low purchasing power and as such do not have enough money to go into mechanized farming system, apply

enough herbicides, fertilizer and pesticides as required.

Other limitations to cassava processing in Nigeria are the absence of efficient dryers, peeling machines and pelletizers (IITA, 2003). Asenime (2004), agreed that traditional processing methods in Nigeria are often unhygienic and polluted with unwanted extraneous matter occasioning poor market value. A lot of Nigerian cassava processors depend on equipment that are fabricated locally because of the outrageous cost of imported ones. "Processing equipment have been fabricated by both public and private fabricators in Nigeria but a lot of them lack efficiency and effectiveness and in most cases, have to be re-modified before or after supply to cassava processing sectors to suit their processing specification" (Sanni, 2005). There is lack of strong market linkages, these results to high post-harvest losses and very small value-added processing (IITA, 2005). Cassava production exhibit high level of irregularity and cyclical gluts, mostly because the markets are unable to absorb supplies. Since access to market information is poor. There exist poor linkages between producers and buyers and this is important in order to take advantage of new value market opportunities (IITA, 2003). Smallholder producers and processors of cassava in Nigeria are increasingly being confronted with difficulties in accessing markets and creating interest in new market opportunities. Exploiting the new opportunities has been hindered in Nigeria due to low processing technology as well as poor linkage of farmers to cassava-based manufacturing industry.

Furthermore, Sanni *et al*., (2009), Olokunle (2016) and Oparinde, Abdoulaye, Manyong, Birol, Asare-Marfo, Kulakow and Ilona (2016), disclosed that, the costs of producing and processing cassava in Nigeria, are not competitive in the global markets. This situation made it problematic for Nigeria to continue to export chips to the Republic of China Sanni *et al*., (2009). As a result, Nigeria could only export its cassava products to China from 2005-2006 because, cassava chips were subsidized by the government (Elemo, 2013; Ohimain, 2015). There exists poor state of infrastructural facilities which hinder efficient and effective production and processing of cassava, and irregular power supply which makes SMEs result to using alternative energy (generators) to power their machines. These generators need to be powered with diesel or petrol. These add to the cost of production (Sanni *et al*., 2009). Olokunle (2016) opined that there is lack of mechanization, inadequate use of agro-chemicals, yield-enhancing technology, and investments in irrigation. When there is a change in Government, cassava production becomes stagnated. This is due to lack of continuity of administrative policies on the cassava

expansion program by the Nigerian Government (Nigerian Tribune, 2008). The arrival of a new government (2008–11) caused a contradiction on the existing policy. Importation ban on cassava and cassava products (chips and starch) was relaxed (Oparinde *et al*., 2016). There was a wide gap in the diffusion of information between farmers, processors and end-users, and information on market trends were deficient and not distributed on time (Sanni *et al*., 2009). This led to inequality between demand and supply, which led to scarcity or glut. Some of the projects that were established during the initiative were uncompleted, others were jettisoned (Ohimain, (2015). The transformation initiative was abandoned largely due to inadequate funding. Thus, developments achieved are being lost unless steps are taken to review and renew the programme (Anyanwu, Amoo, Odey and Adebayo (2011).

Study Area

Southwest Nigeria, lies between longitude 2°311 and 6°001 East and Latitude 6°211 and 8° 371 North (Agboola, 1979). It is surrounded by Edo and Delta states in the East, Republic of Benin in the West, Gulf of Guinea in the south, and Kogi and Kwara states in the North. The area comprises 85 recognized forest reserves that covers 842,499 hectares, total land area of 77,818 km2, with total population of 27,581,992 (National Population Census (NPC), 2006). The area is made up of six states (Osun, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Lagos, and Ekiti), and it is the home of the Yoruba people (Ogundele, 2007). The study area's climate is tropical and it has wet and dry seasons. Its annual rainfall varies between 150 and 3000 mm, while the temperature varies between 21 and 34°C.(Agboola, 1979).Its climate favours the cultivation of crops like cassava, yam, maize, among others, and the people are mainly farmers (NPC), 2006).

Method

Sample for this study was drawn using multi-stage sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was first of all used to select Southwest zone in Nigeria, since the zone was listed among the cassava growing belts in Nigeria (FAO, 2005). Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti states, are the states within this zone. Secondly, the number of Micro-scale Cassava Processing enterprises that benefited from the Presidential Cassava Transformation Initiative were purposively selected from the list of the Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) (one of Nigeria Government's agricultural institutions that executed the

initiative, in the six states. 1,083 beneficiaries of the initiative (Oyo = 315, Ogun = 119, Osun = 226, Ekiti = 104, Ondo = 226, and Lagos = 93), formed the population of the study. 292 (27%) of the 1,083 MSCPEs, were selected for the study. Thirdly, 27% of the beneficiaries from each state were selected with the aid of proportionate stratified sampling technique (Oyo (85), Ogun (32), Osun (61), Ekiti (28), Ondo (61) and Lagos (25)). This was as a result of the disparities in the beneficiaries from the different states. Structured questionnaires were used to gather data from the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of structured questions. Copies of questionnaire were distributed to the 292 respondents, with the aid of youth leaders in the selected communities within the study area, and trained research assistants/extension agents. Only 251 (86%) questionnaires were retrieved. Descriptive statistic (percentage, mean score, standard deviation and mean ranking) was used to analyze collected data, with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 shows that 241 (96%) of the respondents were Nigerians, whereas 10 (4%) were none Nigerians. Also, 65 (25.9%) of the respondents were male, while 186 (74.1%) were female. This means that, the female respondents outnumbered the male respondents. This result is similar to that of Odunaya (2012), who disclosed that, cassava processing in Ewekoro, Ogun state, Nigeria, is mostly women's job. Also related to this finding is that of Onwudiwe, Akarakiri, Agbarajo, Onothoja, Agidi and Oyibo (2015) whose study revealed that, processing of cassava is one of the off-farm activities performed by the rural women in Delta Central Senatorial District of Nigeria. Also related to this study, is that of Abdulsalam-Saghir, Sanni, Siwoku, Adebayo, Martin and Westby (2012), whose study also found out that, women comprise the bulk of cassava Processors in Southwest, Nigeria.

Also revealed was that, 22 (8.8%) of the respondents were from Ekiti State, 24 (9.6%) from Lagos State, 26 (10.4%) from Ogun State, 60 (23.9%) from Ondo State, 49 (19.5%) from Osun State, and 70 (27.9%) were from Oyo State. This means that beneficiaries in the six states were well represented. In addition, 4 (1.6 %) of the beneficiaries, were between20 and 29 years, 20 (8.0%) were between, 30 and 39 years, 107 (42.6%) were between 40 and 49 years, 73 (29.1%) were between 50 and 59 years, while 47 (18.7%) were 60 years and

above. This implies that a lot of the beneficiaries were between 40 and 49 years. They are adult, who are within productive age. This finding is not far from that of Muhammad-Lawal *et al*., (2013), whose study revealed that a lot of cassava processors in Kwara State, Nigeria, were within the age range of 40-59 years. Also similar to this finding is that of Odediran and Ojebiyi (2017) who discovered that above 70 percent of cassava processors in Southwest Nigeria, were between 41 to 60 years.

Furthermore, 53 (21.1%) had 1-10 years of experience, 148 (59.0%) had 11-20 years of experience, 38 (34%) 21-30 years, 8 (3.2%) had 31-40 years and 4 (1.6%) had above 40 years of experience. This disclosed that the beneficiaries had enough experience to give valuable information on the trade. This result is not far from that obtained by Okpeke and Onyeagocha (2015), who discovered that, a lot of cassava processors in Isoko North Local Government Area of Delta State had 11 to 15 years' experience. In addition, 80 (31.9%) of the beneficiaries had Primary School Certificate, 45 (17.9%) had Secondary/O' Level, 20 (8%) had Vocational/Technical education, 18 (7.2%) had Polytechnic/University education, while 88 (35%) were not educated. This result revealed that, a large number of the respondents either had Primary School Certificate or were not educated. This finding is similar to that of Oluwasola (2010), disclosed that, 80% of cassava processors in Oyo State, did not obtain more than primary school level certificate.

Table 1: Distribution of Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Personal Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
NATIONALITY		
Nigeria	241	96
Others	10	4
GENDER		
Male	65	25.9
Female	186	74.1
LOCATION		
Ekiti	22	8.8
Lagos	24	9.6
Ogun	26	10.4
Ondo	60	23.9
Osun	49	19.5
Oyo	70	27.9
AGE		

20-29	4	1.6
30-39	20	8.0
40-49	107	42.6
50-59	73	29.1
Above 60	47	18.7
YEAR OF EXPERIENCE		
1-10	53	21.1
11-20	148	59.0
21-30	38	34
31-40	8	3.2
Above 40	4	1.6
EDUCATION		
Primary School Cert	80	31.9
Secondary/O' Level	45	17.9
Vocational/Technical	20	8
Polytechnic/University	18	7.2
Not Educated	88	35

Source: Field Work 2016

Factors affecting efficient Processing of Cassava by Micro-Scale Cassava Processing Enterprise in Southwest Nigeria

Table 2: Presents the distribution of the factors affecting efficient processing of cassava, as observed by the beneficiaries. Unavailability of adequate fund, with mean score of 3.43, and standard deviation of .866, and high cost of diesel/ petrol, with mean score of 3.43, and standard deviation of .950, were the highest rated factors. The next rated factor was high cost of production, with mean score, 3.41, and standard deviation .761, followed by unavailability of market for the products, mean score 3.39, and standard deviation .704). This result implies that, unavailability of adequate funds, and high cost of diesel or petrol to power generators, which maybe occasioned by epileptic power supply, largely affect the processing efficiency of the beneficiaries. Also scored high, were high cost of production which may result from lack of modern technology for processing, and unavailability of market for the products, due to their lack of competitiveness. These factors are similar to those listed by Sanni *et al*., (2009), in their study, successes and challenges of cassava enterprises in West Africa. They stated that, poor infrastructural facilities including irregular power supply, hinders efficient and effective production and processing of cassava,

this makes SMEs result to using alternative energy (generators) to power their machines. These generators need to be powered with diesel or petrol. These add to the cost of production. Olokunle (2016), in his study, Socio-Economic Determinants and Profitability of Cassava Production in Nigeria affirmed that, high production cost of processing cassava, has been aggravated by high transportation arising from poor condition of road to the farms of smallholder farmers and high cost of alternative source of energy (generating plant) arising from epileptic power supply in the country. Muhammad-Lawal *et al*., (2013), in their study, an assessment of the economics of cassava processing in Kwara State, Nigeria, also recorded high transport cost, poor road network, insufficient capital, hard work occasioned by poor access to equipment, and factors related to weather, such as, sun-drying of cassava products during rainy season as some of the problems of cassava processors in Kwara state. Regarding to infrastructural facilities, Rahman and Awerije (2016)'s study on exploring the potential of cassava in promoting agricultural growth in Nigeria, agreed that, the highest drawback to the growth of cassava sector in Nigeria is the provision of water meant for washing and processing cassava into gari, and for irrigation, followed by insufficient facilities for processing and provision of electricity. They further listed other primary limitations listed by farmers, processors and marketers, to include, poor market and marketing infrastructure, processing facilities, transportation, information on market prices, and unstable prices. Also, Nwajiuba *et al*., (2013)'s study on motivation, factors and constraints to growth of small scale food processing enterprises in Owerri Metropolis, Imo State, Nigeria, revealed that, unstable power supply, poor provision of water and telecommunication, high cost of fuel, and poor road network impede business activities in Owerri.

Also similar to these findings are those of Ohimain, (2015), on Presidential Intervention on Cassava in Nigeria; the Successes and Challenges and Olagunju (2013), on the impact of credit access on value chain activities of agro-processing industries in Oyo State, Nigeria. These studies listed some of the utmost problems to the growth in the cassava sector in Nigeria, as: little access to financial resources, and slow disbursement where credit is available, high cost of production occasioned by low level of mechanization and low yield. In support of these findings, Osuala (1995) in his book, Principles and practice of business management in Nigeria, confirmed that, the initial capital investment of majority of small-scale enterprises in Nigeria, are often from

personal savings of the owners. This capital he said is utterly insufficient to start, run and expand a small-scale food processing enterprise. Similarly, Okpeke and Onyeagocha (2015) in their study, analysis of processing cassava tubers into garri in Isoko North Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria, ranked insufficient funds and capital with mean score 2.28, as one of the highest constraints of cassava processors, followed by lack of enhanced technology with mean score 2.12, then inadequate storage and processing facilities with mean score of 1.92. Also, small sized enterprises with low earnings with mean score of 1.87, and poor markets characterized by low pricing of products with mean value of 1.47. Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) (2011)'s report on cassava value chain analysis in the Niger Delta, itemized poor access to credit, poor availability of input supplies, weak extension services and disjointed marketing, as some of the problems being encountered by cassava processors in Niger Delta. Again, Ayoade and Adeola (2009), in their study, constraints to domestic industrialization of cassava in Osun State Nigeria, confirmed that high costs of processing, insufficient processing equipment, and ineffective linkages between farmers and processors were the utmost factors limiting cassava production in Osun state. In addition, Nwosu and Munonye (2016)'s study on survival approaches of small-scale food processing enterprises in Imo State, Nigeria disclosed that, insufficient capital (95.8%), poor infrastructural facilities (83.3%), seasonal scarcity and high cost of raw materials (81.7%) were some of the factors rated by the processors in Imo state. They further stated that, approximately 54.2% of the small-scale food processors listed high cost of capital or high interest rate, and poor access to loan as constraints to their growth. Other factors included lack of direct government support and underestimation of competition. On the other hand, IITA (2005) recognized the utmost limitation to processing cassava products in Nigeria as drying which takes up to 4 days to complete, and poor feeder roads, which makes transportation of people and goods problematic, especially during the rainy season when a lot of locations in the rural areas are inaccessible.

The factor with the least score was high cost of charcoal, with mean score of 2.42, and standard deviation of .713, and the next lowest rated factor was unavailability of adequate cassava roots for processing, with mean score, 2.45, and standard deviation of 1.142 and inability to produce good quality products with mean score, 2.45, and standard deviation, .657; followed by unavailability of adequate marketing information, with mean score, 2.63, and standard

deviation, .939. This result reveals that, for the beneficiaries who use charcoal for processing, their cost of purchasing charcoal is not high. Meanwhile, the result also shows that, the beneficiaries were able to produce good quality products, and were equipped with adequate marketing information. The reasons for this may not be far from the opinion of Sanni *et al*., (2009), who disclosed that, during the Federal Government of Nigeria's Cassava Transformation Initiative, the Government, through its research institutions like the Federal Institute of Industrial Research Oshodi (FIIRO) and other research institutes including IITA, assisted in training cassava small and micro scale cassava processors in the production and innovation of cassava added-value products, market information were disseminated, and cassava tubers production was raised. This helped to improve the quality of the processors' products, increased availability of cassava tubers and increased the marketing of their products. However, in contrary to this finding, Momoh (2005), listed lack of cassava processing equipment to process cassava to meet up with international standard, as one of the major factors affecting efficient processing of cassava in Nigeria.

Table 2: Distribution of factors influencing efficient processing of cassava, in Southwest Nigeria, as rated by the beneficiaries of the initiative

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mini Mum	Maxi Mum	Mean Ranking
Unavailability of adequate cassava roots for processing	251	2.45	1.142	1	4	14
Unaffordability of efficient processing equipment	251	3.13	.929	1	5	6
Inability to produce good quality products	251	2.45	.657	1	4	14
Unavailability of adequate electricity	251	2.86	.968	1	5	9
Unavailability of adequate water for processing	251	2.74	1.044	1	5	12
Unavailability of adequate fund	251	3.43	.866	1	5	1
Lack of skilled labour	251	3.22	.697	1	4	5
Unavailability of adequate marketing information	251	2.63	.939	1	5	13
Unavailability of market for the products	251	3.39	.704	1	5	3
High cost of production	251	3.41	.761	2	5	2

High Cost of Diesel / Petrol	251	3.43	.950	1	5	1
High Cost of Charcoal	251	2.42	.713	1	5	15
High Cost of Fryers	251	2.85	.881	1	5	10
High Cost of Dryers	251	3.25	1.030	1	5	4
Cost of Firewood	251	2.80	.908	1	5	11
Effect of Heat from Fire	251	2.90	.937	1	5	8
Inability to obtain loan from banks	251	2.98	.883	1	5	7

Source: Field Work 2016

Mean Rank: 1 - Very Low Extent, 2 – Low Extent, 3 – Moderate Extent, 4 – High Extent, 5 – Very High Extent

Reliability Test on Questions used to Identify the Factors affecting efficient Processing of Cassava by Micro-Scale Cassava Processing Enterprises in the Study Area

Table 4.17 reveals that, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient on the reliability test carried out on questions used to identify the factors affecting efficient processing of cassava by Micro-Scale cassava processing enterprises in the study area is 0.807. This shows that, the reliability of the research instrument, is higher than 0.7. This result is high and appropriate for social science.

Table 3: Result of the reliability test on questions used to identify the factors influencing efficient processing of cassava by Micro-Scale cassava processing enterprises in the study area

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	.807

Source: Field Work 2016

CONCLUSION

It can be inferred from the findings above that, unavailability of adequate fund, and high cost of diesel/petrol, were the highest rated factors affecting the micro-scale cassava processing enterprises in Southwest Nigeria. These factors were followed by high cost of production, unavailability of market for the products. This result shows that, the micro scale cassava processors in the study area are

not adequately funded, they do not have access to adequate supply of electricity, therefore, they spend a lot of money on the purchase of diesel/petrol, their cost of production is high, and their products are not competitive enough to attract a lot of demand. The least factor affecting the MSCPEs was high cost of charcoal, followed by unavailability of adequate cassava roots for processing, inability to produce good quality products and unavailability of adequate marketing information. This implies that, the MSCPEs had access to affordable charcoal for processing when needed, adequate cassava roots for processing their products, adequate marketing information, and were able to produce good quality of products. This products are mainly local food, which are not very difficult to produce, and do not undergo rigorous quality control system.

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that those necessary policies that will help to drive down the cost of production of the enterprises, so that their selling prices go down and become in a position to compete in the national and the international market. Also, infrastructural facilities and other enabling environment should be made available to the MSCPEs, especially constant electricity. This will drive down the high cost of diesel/petrol, being used by these MSCPEs, reduce their cost of production, make their products to be more and increase the sales and income of the MSCPEs. Financial aid should be given to the beneficiaries to support their working capital and help them expand their businesses.

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