

Structural Analysis of Yam Markets in Southern Part of Taraba State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT The study analysed the structure of yam markets in southern part of Taraba state. It specifically identified the degree of product differentiation, market information dissemination and determined the concentration of yam sellers in the markets. A total of 205 respondents comprising of 95 retailers and 110 wholesalers were randomly sampled in 2007/2008 cropping season from three purposively selected yam markets namely, Wukari, Sarkin-Kudu, and Chanchanji yam markets. Simple descriptive statistics, Gini coefficient and Lorenz Curve were the analytical tools used. The common features used in yam differentiation were yam varieties and size or length and market information were disseminated by means of personal contact (verbal message) and telephone (GSM). The Gini coefficient of 0.56 and 0.52 were obtained for wholesaling and retailing respectively. The sellers' concentration was high with high income inequality in yam wholesaling than retailing in the area. The markets, therefore, exhibit features of imperfect markets of monopolistic competition. To reduce high concentration and income inequality among sellers especially in wholesale business, funds, security and physical market facilities should be provided to the yam marketers in the area.