

MARKETING AND TRADE IN *Tectona grandis* (Teak) POLES IN ABEOKUTA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the marketing and trade in *Tectona grandis* (Teak) Poles in Abeokuta. This was to provide marketing information on forest especially teak poles which had hitherto been scarce and in most cases unavailable. Teak poles represent an important Non-Timber Forest Product (NTFP) whose availability in the market is now threatened. Hence the relevance of the study, data were collected through the use of structured questionnaire administered to the Teak poles traders in identified locations in Abeokuta metropolis comprising Abeokuta North and Abeokuta South Local Government Areas (LGAs). Data collected include socio-economic characteristics of Teak poles sellers, selling price, cost price, and transportation cost. The result shows that marketing and trade in this product is male dominated and involved people in their active age of 31-40 years (44%). Majority of the respondents were married and most of them had formal education at least up to secondary level. Most of the respondents were fulltime sellers and purchase their products direct from the forest and do not carry out any processing activity. The Dbh of the poles ranged from 22cm to 28cm while the length ranged from 7.93m to 8.53m. The selling price of the poles ranged from ₦2500- ₦3000 depending on the sizes. The poles were mostly used for low tension transmission of electricity to private houses and buildings. Majority of the respondent started the trade as apprentices. The analysis of cost and returns shows that the marketing of *Tectona grandis* (teak) poles is a very profitable venture among the respondents. For instance the Gross margin ranged from ₦47733.3 in Abeokuta north to ₦52453.8 in Abeokuta south. Net profit ranged from ₦47466.7 in Abeokuta north to ₦52061.5. The rate of returns on investment ranged from 49.3% in Abeokuta north market to 46.5% in Abeokuta south market. The marketing efficiency was greater than one in all the markets indicating that the marketing of *Tectona grandis* is efficient. The marketing efficiency ranged from 2.4 in Abeokuta north market to 2.6 in Abeokuta south market. The results of multiple linear regressions showed that cost price, transportation cost, labour cost, processing cost and tariff were the major factors by which selling price of poles can be explained and predicted; They were significant at $P < 0.05$. It can be concluded from this study that trade in *Tectona grandis* poles is a profitable venture and can provide fulltime employment. However, as the sellers depend on trees planted by government, they might soon run out of business when the plantations are exhausted. Informed suggestions were offered towards the sustainable management of forest plantation and continued availability of raw materials for sales.