

**MARKETING OF *Irvingia gabonensis* LINN. SEEDS (OGBONO), A NON-TIMBER FOREST
PRODUCT IN ABEOKUTA METROPOLIS, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to investigate the marketing of *Irvingia gabonensis* seeds in different market locations in Abeokuta. This was to provide marketing information on *I. gabonensis* seeds, an important Non Timber Forest Product (NTFP), used as food condiments, popularly known as 'Ogbono' by 'Igbos' and 'Apon' by 'Yoruba' ethnic groups of Nigeria. The data were collected through the use of structured and pretested questionnaire administered to the *Irvingia gabonensis* seed traders in selected market places in Abeokuta metropolis. The markets covered includes Omida, Lafenwa, Kuto, Itoku and Adatan. The questionnaires were 30 in number i.e. six (6) in each market for uniformity. Data collected includes socio-economic characteristics of *Irvingia gabonensis* seed traders, and marketing variables such as transportation cost, rent, labour cost, selling price, tax and cost price. The result showed that a large percentage i.e 60% of the respondents sold the *Irvingia* seeds in both wholesale and retail quantities. The results also revealed that the marketing of *Irvingia gabonensis* is gender sensitive as 93.3% respondents were female. Majority of the respondents are married and source their start-off funds credit mostly through personal savings. The modal educational level was secondary school accounting for 83% of the total. The analysis of cost and returns indicated that marketing of *I. gabonensis* seed is a profitable venture among the respondents. For instance, the Gross Profit ranged from N1312 in Omida market to N1768 in Itoku market: the Net Profit ranged from 707 in Omida market to 1220 in kuto market. The result of the multiple linear regression showed that variables such as labour cost, rent, transport cost and tariff, are the major determinant of selling price of *I. gabonensis* seeds, especially in Itoku market. The variables tested for the other markets had no significant relationship with the selling price of *I. gabonensis* seeds. Although other variables not included in the model might be contributing to the selling price in the other markets. The marketing efficiency was greater 1 in all the markets indicating that the marketing of *I. gabonensis* were efficient. The marketing efficiency ranged from 1.10 in Adatan market to 1.47 in Omida market. It can be concluded from this study that trade and sale of *I. gabonensis* seeds is a profitable venture and capable of providing permanent employment to the people. Hence, the mass cultivation of the *I. gabonensis* tree should be advocated.