

## Original Research

# Community Leadership Succession in Fish Farming Festivities for Agricultural Development in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State

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**ABSTRACT:** This study is on community leadership succession in fish farming festivities for Agricultural Development in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State. Three specific purposes of the study were stated and transformed into three research questions. Three null hypotheses were also formulated for the study. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 340 consisting 300 fish farmers and 40 community leaders. Simple random sampling technique was used to get the sample size of 211 using Taro Yamane's Formula, which consists of 171 fish farmers and all the 40 community leaders were used because of their manageable size. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: Community Leadership Succession in Fish Farming Festivities for Agricultural Development Questionnaire (CLSFFFADQ). This consists of 21 structured items statement. The instrument was validated by three validates. The instruments were subjected to trial-test using Cronbach Alpha with reliability coefficient of 0.85. The researcher with the help of two research assistants administered 211 copies of the questionnaire and retrieved all of them for analysis. The data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions and t-test for testing the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The finding indicates the respondents agreed with the community leadership style in fish farming festivities, provision of fishing skills to fish farmers, as well as supervision of fish farmers for agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State. Recommendations made include: Community Leaders to find a way of involving the government and other stake holders to come to their aids in improving fish farming in Ibi Local Government area, the fish festivities be organized in such a way that, it can attracts foreign investors to the area, for high productivity and enhancement of agricultural development.

**Keywords:** Community leaders, succession, fish farming, festivities

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## INTRODUCTION

In a community the leaders are the chief administrators, the managers and the chief executives. The leaders are supposed to be competent so as to coordinate the activities of both human and material resources. The leaders undertake all routine activities to accomplish numerous administrative tasks towards achieving the

community's objectives. Development of these leadership skills requires time, planning, and preparation (Perrenoud, 2012). The problem of succession in the community leadership in fish farming festivities for agricultural development, particularly in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State is lack of succession

planning for successors. Without effective leadership succession planning for successors, there cannot be continuity of the festivals which are being organized to boost agricultural development. Proper succession planning and training of successors leaders is inevitable duty that can affect the future of any fish farming festivities. Their survival is also critical, because succession training is a “Systematic, long-term process of determining goals, needs and roles within a fishing enterprise and preparing individual or groups for responsibilities relative to work needed within the fishing enterprise” (Onuoha, 2013). For the fishing festival to continue, it must proactively prepare her leadership transition and minimize the negative impact that correlates with leadership changes. Sambrook, (2005) looked at succession planning as an attempt to plan for the right number and quality of leaders and key-skilled employees to cover retirement, death, serious illness or promotion and any new positions which may be created in future organization plan. The typical community leadership succession in fish farming as indicated by Sobol et al. (2007) includes four phases:

- (a) Understand the vision of the community's future needs
- (b) Analyze and select the best candidate
- (c) Prepare a development plan for the candidate
- (d) Transition of individuals into new positions

The existence of numerous water body specifically, in Ibi Local Government offer great potentials for the development of fishing industries, couple with the type of soil and rainfall pattern in the area. Since aquatic resources are finite, very renewable efforts are geared towards increased fish production through improved resources management, resources conservation and skills development of the fish farmers as to increase agricultural development (Bolorundoro, 2001). Some measures have been put in place for many years by the community leaders in Ibi Local Government in fish farming not only serves as a source of income or food but also showcase the cultural festivities through Nwonyo Fishing Festival. Nwonyo fishing and cultural festival is said to be oldest of its kind in Africa. The festival started about 96 years ago and is usually held at the Nwonyo Lake, located some five kilometers North of Ibi town. The name “Nwonyo” in Jukun Language literally means “a hideout” for monstrous aquatic animals such as crocodiles and hippopotamus. This meaning was derived from the fact that the Nwonyo creek contains a variety of these aquatic animals.

However, there are two myths surrounding the actual meaning of the word Nwonyo. The first version says it means “under the locust bean tree” while the second version says, “abode of the snake” in Jukun Language.

The Nwonyolake is said to be the largest in West Africa, running a stretch of about 15 kilometers tributary to the River Benue. According to oral tradition, the lake was discovered by Bula (in Wurbo Language) a great descendant of the Jibu dynasty who was sent to Ibi to look after activities carried out by traders around the river. Bula discovered that the lake was more than a source of fish supply; he then transformed the large scale fishing activity into fishing festival by members of Ibi community. This transformation began in 1826. During the reign, communities living around Nwonyo Lake were invited to the lake to catch fish once in every year. The catch made was then divided into three portions; and because of his liberal nature, Bula would take one portion only and give the remaining two portions to the fishermen.

It could be said that over the years, the Nwonyo fishing festival has assumed a different dimension, incorporating various activities, such as: Boat racing, swimming, Boat regatta, Horse riding/racing, masquerade dances, traditional dances, and fish-catch competition which is the main event. The fish-catch competition is the main event of the festival. Masquerading, traditional dances, horse riding/racing, boat racing, swimming and boat regatta are the recreational/entertainment that take place during the festival.

The Chief of Ibi is the custodian of the festival, while the “SarkinRuwa” (Spiritual Head of the Nwonyo Lake) is the overseer of the lake. He patrol the lake with his guards on regular basis, in collaboration with other festive title holders such as SarkinJirgi (in charge of canoe), SarkinBirgi (in charge of trawl net) and SarkinTaru (in charge of drawn nets), because nobody is allowed to fish in the lake for a period of one year before the event and one week after the event. The lake is closed to fishermen to allow the fish in it grow and attained maturity for the next festival season.

The SarkinRuwa also performs certain traditional rites along with the custodian at the river before the commencement of every fishing competition. The Fishermen (competitors) can only go into the river when it has been declared open by him. Wide and big fishing nets are used for the fishing competition and most of the fishing efforts are in groups. The biggest catch is known as “GiwaniRuwa”. At the end of the festival, prizes are given to the first three persons with the biggest catch. The catches are in turn auctioned while others are sold to dignitaries, spectators and participants at the event.

### **Statement of the problem**

Community leadership succession in fish farming for Agricultural Development connotes the ability of the leaders to discharge appropriate administrations and training the same personnel on how to function well after them for purposeful agricultural development.

Such functions may include; facilitate cordial relationship between the fish farmers and the community as well as the leaders, exposing fish farmers to different training opportunities, regular supervision of the fish farmers for ultimate productivity among others. The researcher has observed however, that many fish farmers do not enjoy desired cooperation from the community, community leader not monitoring what fish farmers are doing and most of the fishing bits not good for the fishing. All these indicated community leadership ineffectiveness. The researcher also observed that many fish farmers lack professional skills in fishing and therefore affect the vocational satisfaction of fish farmers and Agricultural Development in Ibi Local Government area, Taraba State.

It is in the light of this worrisome situation that the researcher sought to empirically determine if the community leadership succession in fish farming activities could be a determinant for agricultural development in the study area.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to determine the community leadership succession in fish farming festivities for agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the community leadership styles in fish farming festivities for agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area of Taraba State.
2. Identify the importance of fishing skills to fish farmers in agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area of Taraba State.
3. Identify the importance of supervision to fish farmers for agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area of Taraba State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the community leadership styles in fish farming festivities for agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area of Taraba State?
2. What are the importance of fishing skills to fish farmers in agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area of Taraba State?
3. What are the importance of supervision to fish farmers in agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area of Taraba State?

### **Research Hypothesis**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested

at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of community leaders and fish farmers on the community leadership styles in fish farming festivities for agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area of Taraba State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of community leaders and fish farmers on the importance of fishing skills to fish farmers in Agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area of Taraba State.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of community leaders and fish farmers on the importance of supervision to fish farmers in Agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area of Taraba State.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted the survey research design. The area of the study is Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State. The population of the study was 340 which consist of 300 fish farmers and 40 community leaders. Simple random sampling technique was used to get the sample size of 211 by using Taro Yamane's formula, which consist of 171 fish farmers and all the 40 community leaders were used because of their manageable size. A structured questionnaire titled: Community Leadership Succession in Fish Farming Festivities for Agricultural Development Questionnaire (CLSFFFADQ) was used for data collection. The instruments were validated by three experts, twain the Department of Fishery and Aquaculture, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State and one in the Department of Agricultural Education, Joseph SarwuanTarka University Makurdi, Benue State. The questionnaire was trial-tested by using 15 fish farmers and 5 community leaders outside the main sample using Cronbach Alpha with reliability coefficient of 0.85 which indicated that the instrument were reliable to be used for the study. The data were collected and analyzed using mean and standard deviation for research questions and t-test for hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule used was that a mean of 2.50 and above was accepted and a mean below 2.50 was rejected and in testing the null hypotheses using t-test, where the p-value is greater than the Alpha value, the null hypothesis will be accepted but otherwise, it will be rejected.

### **RESULTS**

#### **Research Question 1**

What are the community leadership styles in fish farming festivities for agricultural development in Ibi Local

**Table 1:** Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on Community Leadership styles in fish farming festivities for Agricultural Development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State (N = 211).

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	A leader must be flexible	3.33	0.76	A
2	Democratic leadership is good in the community	3.30	0.66	A
3	A leader is supposed to carry everyone along	3.19	0.78	A
4	A leader should have listening ear	3.23	0.74	A
5	A leader should creates a conducive environment in the community	3.25	0.73	A
6	A leader should use wisdom in taking decision	3.29	0.73	A
7	A leader should take decision based on the opinion of the members of the community	3.30	0.69	A

N = Number of respondents, SD = Standard Deviation, A = Accepted

**Table 2:** Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on fishing skills to fish farmers in agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State. (N = 211)

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Provision of fishing skills upgrades fish farmer's knowledge	3.39	0.74	A
2	Provision of fishing skills motivate fish farmers on the vocation	3.38	0.70	A
3	Provision of fishing skills increases fish farmers productivity	3.35	0.70	A
4	Provision of fishing skills gives fish farmers confidence in their chosen vocation	3.28	0.73	A
5	Provision of fishing skills equipped fish farmers with modern fishing methods	3.34	0.73	A
6	Provision of fishing skills increases fish farmers income	3.29	0.79	A
7	New fishing techniques enables fish farmers to avoid waste of time and resources in fishing	3.22	0.79	A

N = Number of respondents, SD = Standard Deviation, A = Accepted

**Table 3:** Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the importance of supervision to fish farmers in agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State (N = 211).

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Supervision helps fish farmers to develop competencies	3.41	0.69	A
2	Supervision enhances work performance	3.12	0.87	A
3	Supervision improves quality of fishing by fish farmers	3.27	0.84	A
4	Supervision helps fish farmers to solve their vocational problems	3.09	0.84	A
5	Supervision motivates fish farmers	2.83	1.15	A
6	Supervision enables fish farmers to identify their strength and weaknesses	3.24	0.82	A
7	Supervision encourages fish farmers to put in their best in their work	3.33	0.74	A

N = Number of respondents, SD = Standard Deviation, A = Accepted

### Government Area of Taraba State?

Data in (Table 1) revealed that all the 7 items had their mean values ranged from 3.19 to 3.33, which were within the real limit of accepted which is above the decision rule 2.50. This indicates that all the 7 items were agreed by the respondents that leadership style in fish farming festivities is a determining factor for agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State. The standard deviation ranged from 0.66 to 0.78 which indicates that the respondents were close to the mean and the opinion of one another in their responses on the leadership style in fish farming festivities for agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area, Taraba State.

### Research Question 2

What is the importance of fishing skills to fish farmers in agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State?

Data in (Table 2) revealed that all the 7 items had their mean values ranged from 3.22 to 3.39, which were within the real limit of accepted which is above the decision rule 2.50. This indicates that all the 7 items were agreed by the respondents that provision of fishing skills to fish farmers determine agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State. The standard deviation ranged from 0.70 to 0.79 which indicates that the respondents were close to the mean and the opinion of one another in their responses on importance of fishing skills to fish farmers in agricultural development in Ibi Local Government area of Taraba State.

### Research question 3

What are the importance of supervision to fish farmers in agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State?

Data in (Table 3) revealed that all the 7 items had their mean values ranged from 2.83 to 3.41, which were within

**Table 4:** t-test analysis of the mean rating of the responses of community leaders and fish farmers on community leadership style in fish farming festivities for Agricultural Development.

Status	N	Mean	Deviation	Mean	df	t-cal	Sig.	Remark
Community leaders	40	3.88	0.33	0.053	209	4.15	0.000	R
Fish farmers	171	3.40	0.70	0.053				

N = Number of respondents, Std = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom, t-cal = t-calculated, Sig. = Significant value,  $P \geq 0.05$ , S = Significant, R = Rejected

**Table 5:** t-test analysis of the mean rating of the responses of the community leaders and fish farmers on the importance of fishing skills to fish farmers in Agricultural development.

Status	N	Mean	Deviation	Mean	df	t-cal	Sig.	Remark
Community leaders	40	3.58	0.71	0.11	209	2.80	0.006	R
Fish farmers	171	3.17	0.85	0.06				

N = Number of respondents, Std = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom, t-cal = t-calculated, Sig. = Significant Value,  $P \geq 0.05$ , S = Significant, R = Rejected.

**Table 6:** t-test analysis of the mean rating of the responses of the community leaders and fish farmers on the importance of supervision to fish farmers in Agricultural development.

Status	N	Mean	Deviation	Mean	df	t-cal	Sig.	Remark
Community leaders	40	3.60	0.63	0.10	209	2.50	0.013	R
Fish farmers	171	3.27	0.78	0.06				

N = Number of respondents, Std = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom, t-cal = t-calculated, Sig. = Significant Value,  $P \geq 0.05$ , S = Significant, NR = Not Rejected.

the real limit of Accepted, which is above the decision rule 2.50. This indicates that all the 7 items were agreed by the respondents that supervision determine agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State. The standard deviation ranged from .69 to 1.15 which indicate that the Respondents were close to the mean and the opinion of one another in their responses on the importance of supervision to fish farmers in agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State.

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significance difference between the mean responses of community leaders and fish farmers on the community leadership style in fish farming festivities for Agricultural development.

Table 4 shows a P-value of 0.000 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. This indicates that there was a statistical difference in the mean rating of the responses of community leaders and fish farmers on community leadership style in fish farming festivities for Agricultural development.

Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference for the two groups of respondents on community leadership style in fish farming festivities for Agricultural development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State was rejected.

### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of community leaders and fish farmers on the importance of fishing skills to fish farmers in agricultural development.

Table 5 shows a p-value of 0.006 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. This indicates that there is no statistical significant difference in the mean rating of the responses of community leaders and fish farmers on the importance of fishing skills to fish farmers in agricultural development. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant for the two groups of respondents on the importance of fishing skills to fish farmers in agricultural development was rejected.

### Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of community leaders and fish farmers on the importance supervision to fish farmers in agricultural development.

Table 6 shows a p-value of 0.013 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. This indicates that there was no statistical significant difference in the mean rating of the responses of community leaders and fish farmers on the importance of supervision to fish farmers in agricultural



development. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant differences for the two groups of respondents on the importance of supervision to fish farmers in agricultural development was accepted.

## DISCUSSION

Findings from the study shows that community leadership style is a determine factor in successful fish farming festivities for Agricultural Development in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State. The study also revealed that proper leadership style contributed highly, which leads to vocational achievements of fish farmers as well as the members of the entire community. This finding is also in line with the work of Muteswa (2016) whose opined that a success of any community depends on the manner in which the leaders operates. In other to make success the leaders have to adopt a variety of leadership style that will lead them to achieve their goal. The importance of fishing skills to the fish farmers was also found to be very vital in determining the agricultural development in the study area. Based on this finding, the study shows that fishing skills is significant in the acquisition of knowledge for improving fishing activities for agricultural development. This study supports the views of Jones and George (2006) who asserted that helping fish farmers with the required fishing skills can help them to perform their jobs effectively. The study also view fish farmers supervision as a skill and specialized services rendered to them, as to improve their skills and knowledge and enhance their chosen vocation for agricultural development. This result work is in conformity with the work of Oluwole (2007) who maintains that supervision helps fish farmers to solve the professional problems they encounter in their work. Supervision is therefore related to guiding and coordinating the work of fish farmers in such a way that high productivity is achieved for agricultural development.

## Conclusion

Based on the result of this study, conclusions were that community leaders device a means of proper leadership style that can carry everyone along, give modern skills to the fish farmers and as well monitor them from time to time and make them proud of their chosen vocation, this will go a long way leads to the development of Agriculture. The festival has placed the state on the tourism map with great potentials for attracting both local and foreign investors. And if fishing potentials are properly harnessed and organized by the state and federal government, Nwonyo will boost the state economy and enhanced National Development.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Community Leaders should find a way of involving the government and other stake holders to come to their aids in improving fish farming in Ibi Local Government, for economy development.
2. The fishing festivities should be organized in such a way that it can attract foreign investors to the area, for higher productivity and enhancement of Agricultural Development.

## Implication of the study

The findings of this study could help the leaders to discharge appropriate administration, it can facilitate cordial relationship between the fish farmers and the community leaders and the fish farmers can be exposed to different skills in fish farming for high productivity.

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