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Fish species composition, distribution and abundance and gillnet fisheries in Ikere Gorge, Nigeria

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Overfishing is a major problem in fisheries as fishermen without adequate knowledge of the composition, distribution and abundance of fish species continuously fish in water bodies using various fishing gears thereby depleting the stock. Here, we carried out the ecological study of Ikere Gorge between January 2004 and December 2005 to assess the fish resources of the Gorge and the gear commonly used by fish farmers in the Gorge. We collected data on fish composition, abundance and gear used from four sampling stations. 34 fish species belonging to 13 families were present in the Gorge. Our findings revealed that *Bagridae* (25.1%), *Cichlidae* (37.1%) and *Mormyridae* (14.5%) were most abundant families contributing 76.7% by number and 75% by weight of the total catch followed by *Characidae* (9.6%), *Cyprinidae* (7%) and *Centropomidae* (3%) constituting (19.6%) by number and 8.7% by weight. *Schilbeidae* (1.1%) *Clarridae* (0.8%), *Hepsetidae* (0.7%), *Mochokidae* (0.6%), *Channidae* (0.5%), *Icthyoboridae* (0.2%) and *Malapteruridae* (0.1%) were least represented. We found that commonly used gears were cast net, traps, bamboo stems, spears, gura net and gillnet was the major fishing gears in used. Also, the gillnet fisheries showed the sensitivity of experimental gillnets mesh sizes to different fish species. 78.4 mm, 112 mm, 67.2 mm mesh sizes were efficient in catching *Chrysichthys nigrodigitatus*, *Lates niloticus* and the cichlids respectively. The study contributed to baseline data on the fish composition, distribution and gear selectivity on fish catch; thus, aiding fisheries policy makers in the management of this water body.

Biography

Adeosun Festus Idowu has completed his PhD from Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. He has held different offices within and outside the institution. He has served as Head of Department (HOD) in the absence of the HOD. He has also served in different capacity of the Academic Staff Union of the university as Vice to the Chairman and then as Chairman among others. He is currently a member of Community Based Farmers Society (COBFAS). He has published more than 25 papers in reputed journals.

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