

Coffee Production, Quality and Marketing In West Guji Zones, Southern Ethiopia

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Abstract

Coffee is one of perennial mild stimulant tropical cash crop, indigenous to Ethiopia which belongs to genus *Coffea*, in family *Rubiaceae*. Coffee is the major cash crop of the Zone, which is produced in the eight woredas namely, Bulehora, Abaya, Kerch, Galana, Malka Sodda, Dugda Dawa, B/Konjowa, H/Wamana which serves as a major means of cash income for the livelihood of coffee farming families. A number of scholars have been conducted a biological and agricultural aspects of Coffee as well as ethnographical and historical research about the people of Guji. However, there is no sufficient document on status of production, quality and marketing of coffee in the study areas so, objective of the study is (1) To reconstruct the change and continuities of coffee production quality and marketing of study area. (2) To assess the production, quality and marketing of coffee. (3) To identify the role of coffee as a medium of inter-ethnic interaction of the study area, (4) To assess whether coffee farmers were benefited from coffee or not. This study was carried out at west Guji zone South eastern Ethiopia. Eight purposively selected kebeles of two Districts (Bule Hora and Qarca) in west Guji zone were identified. A total of 80 informants were interviewed using Semi-structured interview; field observation and guided field walk. Secondary data was gathered from published and unpublished data sources like Articles, Books, reports and some other sources. The data were analyzed by using computer software SPSS v 16.0 as well as Excel 2010 spread sheet. The descriptive statistics shows production and marketing of coffee on the study area increases from time to time and the role of coffee production on inter-ethnic interaction is also high which is important for exchanging of different culture and work habit. But the benefit of farmer from coffee production on study area is low which may cause reduction on production of coffee in the future. So to solve this problem government should have to give attention to the growers to directly participate on market of their product and be benefited from coffee production.

Key words: Coffee arabica, quality, market

1. Introduction

Coffee is one of the important tropical beverage crops that grow in many countries, including Ethiopia (Fuad,2010). Coffee belongs in the Rubiaceae family. The two species of commercial interest are coffee Arabica (Arabica coffee) and *coffea canephora* (robusta) with arabica bean being the most grown and tastier of the two. Coffee is widely used as beverage and has stimulating effect derived from the alkaloid caffeine. Until recently, the origin of coffee was a matter of speculation. At present, however, Africa is considered the origin place for most of the species including the economically important species: *arabica*, *canephora* (*robusta*) and *liberica*. It is believed that Ethiopia is the origin place for the species *arabica* while the African Equatorial forest that stretches from Central Africa to West Africa and Liberia as the origin places for the species *canephora* and *liberica*, respectively (Wrigley, 1986; Mc Cann, 1995). The ideal growing conditions that is the presence of suitable land and ideal climate, and the presence of forest coffee trees in the high plateau of Ethiopia particularly in the southern region /Keffa/, were the rationale to consider Ethiopia as the center of origin and diversification for the *Arabica* species. Coffee is a primary cash crop that stands second to oil as an earner of foreign exchange in developing countries. About eighty countries are currently producing coffee. According to report of Food Agricultural and Organization (1994), South America contributes over 40% of the world production followed by Africa, Asia and Central America. Brazil and Colombia have been the leading countries in both area and production in the world, and Ethiopia Coffee production is the mainstay of millions of people worldwide, the majority of who are found in the poorest countries of the world. Ethiopia is the primary center of genetic diversity of coffee and among the top coffee growing countries in the world. Coffee Arabica is the reward of nature to Ethiopian and Ethiopia in its turn to the world. Researchers have again and again confirmed that Southwestern Ethiopia is the motherland and leading producer of coffee Arabica. Coffee professionals throughout the world are realizing that Guji, as a coffee region, is significantly different than its neighboring regions, Sidamo and Yirgacheffe. Guji Zone is one of coffee growing zones in the Oromia Regional State (GZARDO, 2020). Currently, the total area of land covered by coffee in the zone is about **114,000** hectares, which includes small-scale farmers' holdings as well as state and private owned plantations. Out of the 68 thousand tons of coffee annually produced in the Zone (GZARDO, 2020), about 47-50 thousand tons is sent to the central market, while the remaining is locally consumed (GZARDO, 2019). Coffee is the major cash crop of the Zone, which is produced in the eight woredas namely, *Bulehora*, *Abaya*, *Kerch*, *Galana*, *Malka Sodda*, *Dugda Dawa*, *B/Konjowa*, *H/Wamana* which serves as a major means of cash income for the livelihood of coffee

farming families (GZARDO, 2019). Primarily, as the researchers investigate and consult many informants in the region, coffee production quality and marketing is not well studied. A number of scholars have been conducted a biological and agricultural aspects of Coffee as well as ethnographical and historical research about the people of Guji (Dejene, 2009). However, there is no sufficient document on status of production, quality and marketing of coffee in the study areas.

When we compare with other countries, the yield and production level of coffee in Ethiopia is extremely low. As the hindering factors are vary from area to areas the main hindering factors. so we have attempted to consider these production and marketing factors in the study areas. Objective of the study is (1) to reconstruct the change and continuities of coffee production quality and marketing of study area. (2) to assess the production, quality and marketing of coffee. (3) to identify the role of coffee as a medium of inter-ethnic interaction in the study area, (4) to assess whether coffee farmers were benefited from coffee or not.

2. Methodology

2.1. study area description

Guji is one of the Oromo sub-groups; inhabit the southern part of Ethiopia, predominantly in today's Borana and Guji Administrative Zones of Oromia Regional State. Guji land is bordered by the Borana Oromo in the south, Burji, Koyra and Gamo in the southwest, Arsi Oromo in the East and Gedeo, Sidama and Wolaita ethnic groups in the North (Negera 2005). On the basis of agro-ecological division, the four Guji sub-groups occupied three ecological zones. The lowland areas below 1500 meter above sea level were predominantly inhabited by the Alabdu who were in the past purely pastoralists. Uruga and some parts of Mati and Hoku occupied the middle altitude ranging from 1500-2500 meter above sea level. These groups were also engaged in pastoral activities with little agricultural practice (Negera 2005). The population is mainly by the Guji Oromo and few other nations and nationalities of Ethiopia for whom agriculture and pastoralism provides the major source of livelihood. Most of them are from both sides are Christians (protestant, orthodox and catholic) with small portion of Muslims at pocket areas of the zone (*Ibid*).

2.2. Sampling

The study sites were selected based on areas that have high production of coffee and those coffee production play economic and cultural roles. Information about the production of coffee from agricultural institutions of study zones was used. Based on the above selection criteria the study was conducted on two randomly

selected representative Districts (Bule Hora and Kercha) and four kebeles from each woredas from Bule Hora (Qillenso Mokonis, Qillenso Rassa, Russa Hanqu, Harcume Lema) and from kercha woreda (Kercha Insha, Abbayi Egu, Eela Ferda, Loya Kuni) with total eight purposively selected representative Kebeles based on their coffee growing potential. From each Kebele 10 households were selected bringing the total number of sampled households to 80 informants having different ethnic, religious, age and sex categories were interviewed. From the total informants, 64 were randomly selected general informants and 16 were purposively selected key informants who were very interested and those who were recommended by elders, local authorities and local farmers.

2.3. Data collection

Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. A combination of techniques was applied to collect the data required to assess coffee production, quality and marketing on study area. The primary data were collected through semi-structured interview and field observation. Secondary data were collected from different district offices and different written material.

2.4. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data obtained through questionnaire and guided field walk. The data was analyzed by entering it in to SPSS and excel spread sheet and summarized by doing means, standard deviations, ranges and other tools.

3. Results and Discussions

Out of the total interviewed households (N =80), (19%) were females and (61%) were males. Unequal pattern of gender distribution was observed in the specific study sites (Table 1). From the total respondents, 16 % of the household's heads younger less than 35 years old, while the household heads (42 %) were in age range between 35-50 and older than 50 years old. Females and teenagers have less knowledge about coffee production.

Assessment on size of land that respondents own indicate that majority of respondents own less than one hectare of land used for farming including the home-gardens and the maximum hector possessed by respondent was five. The size of COFFEE farm was found to be smaller than the pieces of land used for harvesting other crops. The largest recorded land cover of coffee was 2.5 hectare and on average 0.75 hectare of the land in a farm. The size of land is one of the factors that affect the production of coffee

Table 1 **Households Characteristic of study area**

Characteristics	Number of households	percentage of Households
Sex		
Female	29	36.25.0
Male	51	63.75
Total	80	100.0
Age		
<35	16	20.0
35-50	32	40.0
>50	32	40.0
Total		100.0
Size of land for COFFE production		
<1	50	62.5
1-2	20	25.0
>2	10	12.5

Similar to Teketay and Asseffa 1994; in study area major production system accounting for almost half of the coffee production is garden coffee production system. . Harvesting method and harvesting time can affect the quality and production of coffee. According to report of GZARDO, 2020 production of coffee increase from year to year as the year increase the production become decrease shows as the age of tree increase the productivity of the tree decreases.

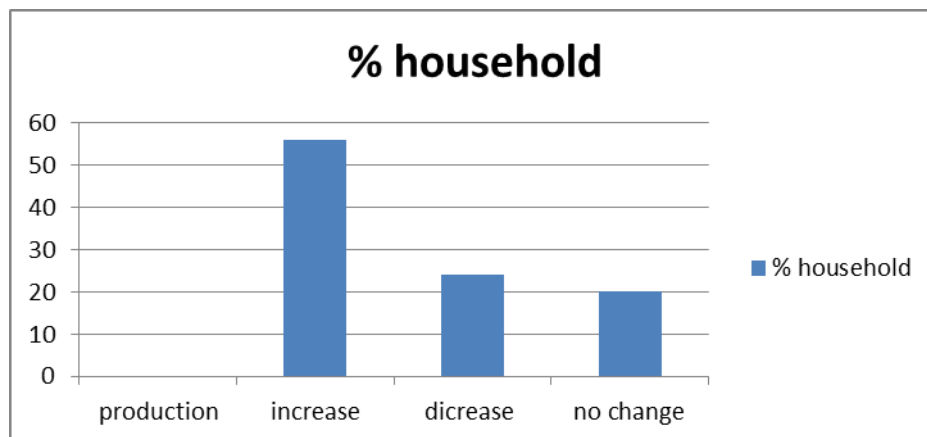


Figure 1 Farmers response on production status of coffee

Table 2. Report of Production status of coffee from 2008-2012 of west Guji zone

woredas	meas	Years				total
		2008	2009	2010	2011	
Qarca	ton.	18926	21947	10498.1	20826.53	90277.54
B/Hora	Ton.	15436	15745	10505.9	13882.13	72914.34
H/Wamana		8075	6942.6	8953.79	9528	46869.35
Abbaya	Ton.	2441.4	5143	2477.75	5183	20772.34
B/Kojowa	Ton.	0	9185.5	10370.5	9741.607	38500.8
Galaanaa	Ton.	3120	3218	2718.88	3676.354	15699.75
M/Sodda	Ton.	0	362.31	879.755	879.755	2991.391
D/Dawwa	Ton.	0	664.48	1093.07	726.4	2677.663
Total	Ton.	47,998	63,207	47,497.8	64,443.77	290,703.2

Source: report of GZARDO, 2020

Coffee growers in Ethiopia have been exposed to price fluctuations and impacts of unpredictable and uncontrollable shocks. At household level the impact

of depressed prices has been considerable, leading to distress sales of assets such as cattle, or to uprooting coffee plants and replacing them with annual food crops (Oxfam, 2002) or cash crops such as *Chat*. According to Kohl and Uhl (1980) Market performance is a complex notion and using a single market characteristic in its evaluation may lead to misleading conclusion and recommendation. As the report of west guji zone (table.2) the amount of the products supplied to market varies from woreda to woreda for example in qercha woreda it shows decreasing and in Bule Hora woreda it shows increasing and when we see the total market of coffee of the zone it show fluctuate from year to year this may be due to the above mentioned reasons.

Table 3 **Washed and dried coffee supplied to market from 2008-2012 of west Guji zone**

Woredas	measur ment	Marketing year					Total
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
Qarca	ton.	18638.19	16185.51	12733.7	15258.6	7328.276	70144.276
B/Hora	ton.	8034	11451.7	9578.423	12325.07	6495.395	47884.588
H/Wamana	ton.	2495.8	3833	4374.175	5412.73	4057.118	20172.823
Abbaya	ton.	1860	3113.29	3003.303	3202.92	834.814	12014.327
B/Kojowa	ton.	0	4144.6	2652.86	8544.33	1472.823	16814.613
Galana	ton.	1704	1764.39	1642.877	2323.78	821.425	8256.472
M/Soddaa	ton.	0	0	0	0	0	0
D/Dawwa	ton.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		32731.99	40492.49	33985.338	47067.43	21009.851	175287.1

Source: report of GZARDO, 2020

In the study area coffee production and marketing plays a pivotal role as medium of inter-ethnic interaction. Different activities starting from nursery management to marketing (Planting, cultural practices like (weeding manure application, cultivation etc.), Harvesting and marketing of coffee needs intensive man power. since all activities done manually so at that time different peoples from different ethnic group, religious and even from deferent nation and nationalities (eg. Guji, Gedio Sidama Burji koyira etc.) can participate and they can exchange their culture.

Table 4. The role of coffee on inter-ethnic interaction.

Enter ethnic interaction	Percentage of respondent	Interaction period	Advantage of interaction
High interaction role	60%	Planting, weeding, harvesting, grading, marketing,	To reduce work load To help financially week peoples
Medium interaction role	30%	Harvesting, marketing	To increase product quality
Low interaction role	6%	Harvesting	To safe time
No interaction role	4%	No	-

Coffee yield and quality is affected by different biotic and abiotic influences. Similar to Gole, 2015 on the study area the major constraints of coffee productivity and quality are disease and pest, limited use of improved technologies, aged of coffee tree and lack of extension support. In contrast to Decasy *et al.*, 2003 climate and soil condition of the study area are not the major problem the yield and quality of coffee production.

Table 5 Constraints of coffee production and quality

Constraints	Percentage of respondent
Disease and pest	35%
old age of coffee trees	20%
limited use of improved technologies	30%
Lack of support from government	10%
Weed infestation	5%

Similar to (EEA, 2006).The average smallholder of the study area cultivates less than one hectare of arable land, and consumes more than 65% of total production within the household, so market participation of

smallholder family farms is limited. Focus group discussions with farmers revealed that they are not more profited from coffee producing and Marketing of coffee. Their exertion is not balanced with the income they obtain from selling their coffee so, their income is even insufficient to satisfy the minimum consumption expenditure for food and basic non-food items. Almost all farmers of the study area have little capacity to process and sell their own coffee at regional, national and international market so they sold their coffee before processing with low price (the average price of wet berry 8-10 birr/ kg and dry berry 28-30 birr/ kg) and the benefited person from their coffee is the merchant. The economic condition of coffee farmers and their benefit from coffee production and Marketing are also not getting enough attention. They also don't have knowledge how to save their money after they sale their coffee. They become rich for 1-2 month after sale and drink beer and eat meat only for few months and even don't have what to eat after few months.

4. Conclusion

The exertion of the farmer of the study area is not balanced with the income they obtain from selling their coffee so, their income is even insufficient to satisfy the minimum consumption expenditure for food and basic non-food items. Almost all farmers of the study area have little capacity to process and sell their own coffee at regional, national and international market so they sold their coffee before processing with low price. so they need support from Government to give them attention and facilitate the system how they can direct participate on processing and marketing of their product and they need training on how to save their money after they sale their product.

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