GILLNET SELECTIVITY OF *Clarias anguillaris* (CLARIDAE), *Hyperopisus bebe occidentalis* (MORMYRIDAE) AND *Tilapia melanopleura* (CICHLIDAE) IN KONTAGORA RESERVOIR, NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Studies on the selectivity of gillnet for three fish species namely *Clarias anguillaris* (Claridae), *Hyperopisus bebe occidentalis* (Family: Mormyridae) and *Tilapia melanopleura* (Family: Cichlidae) were conducted in Kontagora Reservoir, Niger State, Nigeria. A fleet of graded gillnets made up of nine multifilament mesh sizes (25.4, 38.1, 50.8, 63.5, 76.2, 88.9, 101.6, 127.0, 177.8 mm), were used for the study. Master selectivity curves were plotted for the fish species studied. Standard length of the fish caught was used for the estimation. The master selectivity curves of the gillnet that caught the fish species showed skewed distribution either to the left or right. *Hyperopisus bebe occidentalis* selected in three gillnet mesh sizes, with positive skewed distribution, has a narrow range than other species. The selection range of *Tilapia melanopleura* was widest when compared with that of other dominant species in the gillnet types. Gillnet with a higher modal and median length indicated that larger individual fish species were caught by the net.

**Keywords**: Kontagora reservoir, graded gillnets, gillnet selectivity, mesh size.

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