

Effects of Feeding Time on Survival Rates, Growth Performance and Feeding Behavior of Juvenile Catfish

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Abstract : The culture of *Clarias gariepinus* for fish production is becoming increasingly essential as the fish is contributing to the food abundance and nutritional benefit to family health, income generation, and employment opportunities. The effect of feeding frequency was investigated over a period of ten (10) weeks; the experiment was conducted to monitor survival rates, growth performance, and feeding behavior of juvenile catfish. The experimental fish were randomly assigned to five treatment groups; (i.e., with different feeding frequency intervals) of 100 fish each. Each treatment was replicated twice with 50 fish per replicate. All the groups were fed with floating fish feed (blue crown®). The five treatments (feeding frequency) were T1- once a day feeding of night hours only, T2- twice a day feeding time of morning and night hours, T3- trice a day feeding time of morning, evening and night hours, T-4 four times a day feeding of morning, afternoon, evening, and night hours, T-5 five times a day feeding at four hours interval. There were significant differences ($p > 0.05$) among treatments. Feed intake and weight gain improved significantly ($p < 0.05$) in T-4 and T-3. The best of the feeding time on weight gain, survival rate, and feed conversion ratio were obtained at three times a day feeding (T-3) compared to other treatments, especially those fed once and five times feeding a regiment. This might be attributed to the high level of dissolve oxygen and less stress. Feeding fish three times a day is therefore recommended for efficient catfish production to maximize profits as the feed represents more than 50% of aquaculture inputs, particularly in intensive farming systems.

Keywords : catfish, floating fish feed, dissolve oxygen, juvenile

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