



Research Paper

Influence of Selected Socio-Economic Characteristics on the Consumption Pattern of Grasscutter (*Thryonomys swinderianus*) Meat in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The study examined the influence of selected socioeconomic variables on the consumption pattern of grasscutter meat within Ibadan Metropolis in Oyo State, Nigeria. A sample of 120 consumers was randomly selected from five (5) of the eleven (11) Local Government Areas (LGAs) that make up the Metropolis, but 115 copies of the administered questionnaire were analyzed. Descriptive statistics, Multiple Regression as well as Chi-square analyses were used in analyzing the data. Results showed the highest consumers of the meat are those with income of N 30,000 and above, representing 37.5%. Among these are the traders representing 31.3%. The result of the regression analysis showed that age, income, occupation and educational status had significant influence on the consumption pattern of grasscutter within the Metropolis.

Keywords: Grasscutter, Consumption pattern, Socioeconomic, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Introduction

Meat from wild animals is highly cherished by the people, both in rural and urban communities of West Africa. They provide an important source of meat for both rural and urban households, particularly for people living in rural areas who depend so much on forest resources for their sustenance^[1].

Forests and fallow fields provide the habitats for many consumed wild life species. Prominent among the consumed wildlife is grasscutter, also known as cane rat, with its scientific name as *Thryonomys swinderianus*. Grasscutter is a robust animal with short tails, small ears and stocky body and commonly found in wooded savannahs throughout the humid and sub-humid areas south of Sahara^[2] as well as in herbaceous vegetation where there is good cover^[3].

Grasscutter meat is a delicacy in Nigeria today and it's served in hotels, restaurants as well as some joints patronized by people in the middle and high classes. According to (Ajayi 1980)^[4], social acceptance studies among different ethnic groups of West Africa have shown that grasscutter meat is acceptable to all social classes both in rural and urban areas. People of different age groups, occupation as well as different varying income levels

cherish and consume grasscutter meat, both in the rural and urban settings. This study was therefore set out to identify the influence of selected socioeconomic variables on the consumption pattern of grasscutter meat as well as ascertain the relationship between different levels of selected socioeconomic variables and the consumption pattern of grasscutter within Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Material and Methods

Study Area: The study was carried out in Ibadan Metropolis, the capital city of Oyo State, Nigeria. Ibadan is located approximately on Longitude 3^o5' East of the Greenwich Meridian and Latitude 7^o23' north of the Equator. There are eleven Local Government Areas (LGAs) within Ibadan out of which five are urban while the remaining six are semi-urban LGAs^[5]. The urban are Ibadan North, Ibadan North East, Ibadan North West, Ibadan South East and Ibadan Southwest while the semi-urban are Akinyele, Egbeda, Iddo, Lagelu, Ona-Ara and Oluyole LGAs.

Data Collection: One hundred and twenty (120) copies of structured questionnaire and oral interview were used to elicit information for both pre-survey test and final information. But only one hundred and fifteen were found analyzable. At least twenty households per Local

Government Area (LGA) were randomly selected from five (5) of the eleven (11) LGAs that make up the Metropolis. One consumer per household was randomly selected. The five selected LGAs were Akinyele, Ibadan Northwest, Ibadan Southwest, Ibadan North and Iddo Local Government Areas.

Method Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequencies as well as inferential statistics such as Regression Analysis and Chi square were used in analyzing the data.

The general functional form for the Regression is given as:

$$Y = f(X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4, e)$$

X₁= Age of the consumer

X₂= Occupation of the consumer

X₃= Educational qualification of the consumer

X₄= Monthly income of the consumer

e = error term, and Chi-square equation is

$$\text{Chi Square}(X^2) = \sum (O-E/E)^2$$

Where O = Observed frequency

E = Expected frequency

∑ = Summation sign

Hypothesis: The null hypothesis (H₀) says there is no significant relationship between the socioeconomic characteristics (age, income, educational level, occupation) of consumers and their grasscutter consumption pattern

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the socioeconomic characteristics of consumers. It could be observed from this table that about 17% of the consumers were less than 30 years while about 43% of them were between 30 and 50 years of age and those that were 51 years and above accounted for about 41%.

This implies that the consumption of grasscutter meat has no age limit, it cuts across different age groups and most of the consumers were still within the working age group and can easily move around to source for the meat. From the educational distribution in Table 1, 18.3% of the consumers had no formal education, 10.4% had other forms of education like Arabic education.

About 71% of the consumers had formal education and at least primary education. Majority, 37.4%, of the consumers earned above N 30,000 monthly and only about 16% had their monthly income less than N10, 000, as shown in Table1. This implies that most of the consumers were within the high income group. From the findings, it was discovered that traders consumed grasscutter meat most.

They accounted for 31.3% of the consumers. This could be attributed to the fact they travel far and wide to buy and sell their goods during which they possibly come across the meat either displayed along roadsides or at their places of merchandize. This confirms the assertion by ^[6] that it was a common scene in many parts of Nigeria to find

bushmeat displayed for sale along roadsides and in specialized markets.

Table 1
Socioeconomic Characteristics of Consumers

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
<30	19	16.5
30-50	49	42.6
51-70	29	25.2
Above 70	18	15.7
Total	115	100

Educational level

No formal	21	18.3
Primary	27	23.5
Secondary	20	17.4
Post secondary	35	30.4
Others	12	10.4
Total	115	100

Occupation

Artisan	23	20
Civil servant	29	25.2
Farmer	11	9.6
Trader	36	31.3
Others	16	13.9
Total	115	100

Income (N)

<10,000	18	15.6
10,000-20,000	20	17.4
21,000-30,000	34	29.6
>30,000	43	37.4
Total	115	100

Table 2 shows the regression result of the factors that influence the consumption pattern of grasscutter meat by the respondents. From the result, it was discovered that age, occupation, education and income were statistically significant at 5% level of significance. This implies that age, occupation, education and income played significant role in determining how often the people in the study area consumed grasscutter meat.

The 0.94 value of the coefficient of determination shows that 94% of the variations observed in the consumption pattern of grasscutter meat were explained by age, occupation, education and income. Furthermore, the F-value of 86.429 was significant and shows that there is a significant linear relationship between the dependent variable (consumption pattern) and the independent

variables (age, occupation, education, income) put together.

Table 2
Regression result of Socioeconomic Variables affecting grasscutter consumption pattern

Variable	Coefficient	Standard error	t-value	R ²
Intercept	3.964	0.456	8.692	0.94
Age	**0.015	0.006	2.491	
Occupation	**0.121	0.054	2.221	
Education	**0.797	0.097	8.192	
Income	**2.2E-06	6.48E-06	3.331	

F-value: 86.429, **significant at 0.05 level

Table 3 shows Chi-square results for different levels of selected socioeconomic variables of grasscutter consumers and their relationship with grasscutter consumption. From the table, age was significant at 0.01 level p-value. This implies that there is a significant relationship between age of the consumers and their consumption of grasscutter and those that consumed the meat most were those within the 30-50 years age group, as shown in table 1. Likewise, income, educational level and occupation also had significant relationship with consumers' consumption pattern. It could therefore be said that those that consumed the meat most were those that earned above N 30,000 monthly incomes because they were able to afford the price of the meat. It could therefore be deduced that the higher the monthly income of the consumers, the greater the likelihood of consuming the meat. Also, consumers with post secondary education the meat more than those with lower level of education.

Table 3
Chi-square result for selected socioeconomic characteristics showing relationship with Grasscutter consumption of respondents

Variable	X ²	df	p-value	Decision
Age	21.591	3	0.001	Significant
Income	14.704	3	0.002	Significant
Educational level	12.783	4	0.012	Significant
Occupation	17.304	4	0.002	Significant

Source: Chi-square Analysis

This may be due to the fact that they were more enlightened and knowledgeable about the nutritive values

of grasscutter meat. In addition, the occupation of the consumers had significant relationships with their consumption status. In this regard, traders consumed the meat most, in the study area and it could be due to the fact that they had the money to afford the meat and also travelled far and wide to places where they could easily get the meat. Hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the selected socioeconomic variables and the consumption of grasscutter meat is therefore rejected.

Conclusion

The study has shown that the selected socioeconomic characteristics had significant influence and relationship with the consumption pattern of grasscutter meat among the consumers within Ibadan Metropolis, as revealed by the results of the Regression and Chi-square analyses. The regression result showed that age, income, occupation and educational status of the consumers had significant influence on the consumption pattern of grasscutter at 5% level of significance, while the Chi-square analysis showed that there was significant relationship between the consumption pattern of grasscutter meat and the different levels of age, income, occupation and education, with consumers between the age group of 30-50 years being the highest consumers of the meat, as well as those that had post secondary level of education.

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