



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## EVALUATING THE DYNAMICS OF CONSUMER PREFERENCE, PERCEPTION, ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS MEAT CONSUMPTION IN AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE

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## ARTICLE DETAILS

## Article History:

Received 20 December 2023  
Revised 23 January 2024  
Accepted 22 February 2024  
Available online 26 February 2024

## ABSTRACT

An experiment was carried out to evaluate the dynamics of consumer preference, perception, attitude and behaviour towards meat consumption in Awka, Anambra State. 120 respondents were randomly selected through structured questionnaires. The data gathered was examined using tools for descriptive statistics. The results showed that marketing activities should be centered on females since women are the ones that purchase meat in most homes (61.71%). It was also shown that respondents eat beef the most (77.5%), but enjoyed chicken more (45.8%), while availability and taste were major factors that influenced the decision on the meat types of preference. Consumers preferred to shop their meats from abattoirs (64.2%). They also have preference for consuming meat in their homes more than outside. Beef is the most affordable, and most preferred at ceremonies. Chicken is most preferred for picnics. The research distinctly demonstrates the significance of meat to the participants in Awka, Anambra State.

## KEYWORDS

Chicken, Beef, Consumers, Meat

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sub-Saharan Africa's most populous country is Nigeria, where over 47% of people live in cities with three times the pace of population growth compared to rural areas (David, 2017). These figures and forecasts point to a sharply improving shift in the demand for food, particularly in cities. Nigeria's livestock business, according to Agboola and Balcilar, is small and developing slowly in comparison to the number of people who depend on it for meat, while some researchers noted that the country's increases in agricultural production have not kept pace with the rate of population growth (Agboola and Balcilar, 2012; Rahji et al., 2015). The pattern of food consumption is significantly influenced by the rising socioeconomic status of consumers in developing nations, especially in Nigeria (Leshi and Leshi 2017). According to Aromolaran, rising incomes, better technology, and an expanding population are the main drivers of the rise in household demand for meat and fish (Aromolaran, 2004).

Consumer preference for quality meat and fish is becoming evident with significant consequences for the transformation in the livestock industry (Nicholas et al., 2012). The most significant product parameters for meat and meat products are sensory, health-related, and nutritional (Richardson et al., 1994). For the majority of meat product consumers, the sensory qualities of the product—its taste and appearance—are the primary factors that influence their preference and decision to buy (Price and Schweigert, 1971). The food business values consumer preference research because they help to explain consumer decisions (Verbeke and Vackier, 2004) and should be taken into account when developing commercial policies (Diez, et al., 2006). In Awka, Anambra State, this study sought to assess the dynamics of consumer desire, perception, attitude, and behavior toward meat consumption.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Awka, Anambra State, in Nigeria 6.2220° N, 7.0821° E. It is the capital of the State. It has a mean daily maximum temperature of 27°C all over the year although it could reach 34°C in March and lowest during harmattan months of December and January. The mean annual rainfall according to a local Meteorology Station which has maintained record since 1978 reveals that a mean rainfall of about 1600mm with relative humidity of 80% at dawn (Ezenwaji et al., 2013). It is a commercial city with a major market, a university (Nnamdi Azikiwe University), private businesses and government parastatal. One hundred and twenty (120) respondents were sampled using simple random sampling techniques and interviewed through structural questionnaire and personal contact. The data collected included personal profile of the respondents, meat consumption levels of the respondents, relative importance of meat to the respondents, respondents' preference to various types of meat, their perception and expectations to various meat types. Data collected were analyzed through the use of descriptive statistical tools (SPSS, 2006) to generate tables, means and cumulative frequency while excel software package was used to generate the graphs.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

## 3.1 Personal Profile of the Respondent

The personal profile of the respondents is shown in Table 1. The report showed more females 69 (57.5%) responding to the questionnaire than males 51 (42.5%); 8.3% were married while 90.8% were not married and 0.8% were divorced. However, 1.7%, 51.7%, 39.2%, and 7.5% were between the ages of < 20, 20 - 25, 26 - 30, and 31 - 35 respectively. In their

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10.26480/fabm.01.2024.19.23

educational levels, 86.7% have HND/BSc, 1.7% have SSCE, 1.7% have OND, 7.5% have MSc/MBA, 0.8% have first School Leaving certificate while 1.7% have other degrees/certificates. Table 1 clearly revealed that female respondents were predominantly receptive to the questionnaire than their male counterparts, this is in agreement with Diez et al. 2006 who reported more females in their research work 'Identifying market segments in beef: Breed, slaughter weight and aging time implications' but disagrees with the results of who reported more male respondents (56.8%) than female respondents (43.2%) in the study 'Consumer Perception and Preference for Meat Types in Ogbomoso area of Oyo State, Nigeria', Eyo who reported more male respondents (57.06%) than female (32.94%) in his study of consumer's preference for meat, and who conducted similar research work, and reported more males than females (Akinwumi et al., 2011; Eyo, 2007; Anyiro et al., 2013). The table also revealed that most of the respondents are single 90.8%, with just 8.3% married and 0.8% divorced. This is in direct disagreement with the submissions of whose submissions in their respective research works show that the majority of their respondents are married (Eyo, 2007; Akinwumi et al., 2011; Darma et al., 2016). The table also revealed that the majority of the respondents are from 20 - 25 years age brackets (51.7%), followed by 26 - 30 years age brackets (26 - 30), this could be a result of the digital questionnaire method used for this research as against the paper type used in the time past, indicating that younger generations are more technologically inclined than the older generation, this could also be a pointer that these age groups are capable of influencing the dynamics of consumer preference, perception, attitude and behavior towards meat consumption in Awka, Anambra State. Educational levels of the respondents show that almost all respondents are educated and hence should know much about the importance of meat consumption, this is in alignment with the research also agrees with the findings of (Akinwumi et al., 2011; Anyiro et al., 2013; Olagoke, 1983). The latter believes that educational level affects food consumption patterns and such effect depends more on the nutritive values attached to the food rather than on the social values.

**Table 1: Personal profile of the respondents**

S/N	Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	51	42.5
		Female	69	57.5
			120	100
2	Marital Status	Single	109	90.8
		Married	10	8.3
		Divorced	1	0.8
		Widowed	-	-
			120	100
3	Age	< 20	2	1.7
		20 - 25	62	51.7
		26 - 30	47	39.2
		31 - 35	9	7.5
		36 - 40	-	-
		41 - 45	-	-
		46 - 50	-	-
		> 50	-	-
		120	100	
4	Educational Level	First School Leaving Cert	1	0.8
		SSCE	2	1.7
		OND	2	1.7
		HND/BSc	104	86.7
		MSc/MBA	9	7.5
		Ph.D.	-	-
		Others	2	1.7
		120	100	

### 3.2 Meat Consumption Level of the Respondents

The complete study revealed that nearly all participants consume meat in some capacity, highlighting its indispensable nature and significance to

humanity. Table 2 showed the importance of meat in the study area. 46.7% of respondents showed that meat consumption is very important to them while 36.7% and 16.7% indicated somehow important and not so important respectively. This is in agreement with the opinions of who have all shown in their respective similar research that meat is the food with the highest status in the hierarchy of food and that it is the center of meal and Eyo, opined that meat is clearly preferred to fish because consumers perceive it as being richer in protein, more appetizing, nutritious and enjoyed more by children (Twigg, 1984; Douglas and Nicod, 1974; Eyo, 1995). It is therefore not incorrect to say that there is a ready market for meat.

**Table 2: Meat Importance in the study area**

How often do you eat meat in a day?	
Very Important	46.7%
Somehow Important	36.7%
Not so Important	16.7%

### 3.3 Respondents' Preference to Various Meat Types

Table 3 shows the Percentage distribution of respondents' preferences for different meat types. It shows that beef is the most consumed meat type by the respondents at 77.5% while port and grasscutter are the least consumed with 0.8% each with no response for mutton, rabbit, duck, quail, and guinea fowl. The chicken was ranked highest with 45.8% in terms of enjoyment (liked most) by the respondents, followed by turkey (21.7%), chevon (14.2%), beef (12.5%), and pork (4.2%) while grasscutter and mutton were the least enjoyed with a percentage of 0.8% each. 75.8% of the respondents indicated that beef was the most bought meat type while 40.8% of them indicated that beef was their family choice, closely followed by chicken (40.8%). 44.2% of them preferred to cook with chicken, this was followed by beef (27.5%). 56.7% showed that pork is the meat with the most unacceptable visible fat while 29.2% indicated that beef is the meat with the most acceptable visible fat which was followed by chicken at 25.8%. The highest percentage of meat with the most appealing color was found in chicken (37.5%) followed by beef at 29.2%. The easiest to cut meat is beef with 50% followed by Chicken (33.3%).

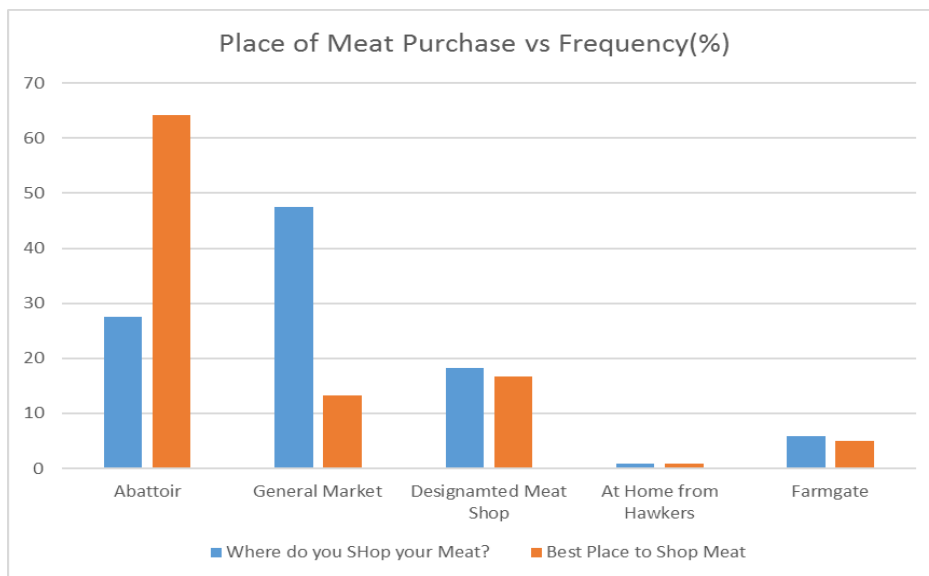
The observations in this study were similar to the report that beef is the most eaten in his similar research work (Anyiro et al., 2013). Some researchers also stated that beef is the most eaten, bought, and preferred by the family in their respective research (Akinwumi et al., 2011; Eyo, 2007). Ademsun affirmed this by stating that Nigerian's by nature are meat-eating people having high demand for beef, especially in the metropolis while also opined that this may be due to the fact that beef is the most affordable and available meat (Ademsun, 2000; Akinwumi et al., 2011). FAO supported that beef accounts for about 50% of the total meat consumption in Nigeria (FAO, 2006). From the table, mutton and rabbit are the least enjoyed meat type, followed by pork. This could be because mutton is low in the study area, and awareness needs to be created on rabbit consumption and its benefits as white meat in the study area. Lack of enjoyment for pork could be a result of the excessive fat in it as more than half of the respondents choose pork as the meat type with the most unacceptable visible fat, although most of researchers gave religious and socio-cultural taboos as factors that affect the consumption of pork (Nwakpu and Ugwu, 2004; Odo et al., 2004). It was however followed by beef, turkey, and chicken respectively as the most enjoyed (liked most) meat type. Respondents' preference for chicken as the meat type they like most could be because of its availability, taste, and its appearance which is in agreement with the opinions of Price and Schweigert, that for most consumers of meat products, the way the products taste and look (i.e., the sensory properties) are the most important motivators for preferring and purchasing a meat product (Schweigert, 1971). Respondents indicated that pig has the most unacceptable fat while mutton and duck have the highest. A group researcher demonstrated that increased levels of intra-muscular fat in meat could have a detrimental effect on meat acceptability by consumers (Ferradwz et al., 1999). Beef is the highest for easy-to-cut meat followed by chicken, this is in agreement and in disagreement with Eyo who reported goats as a consumer choice (Akinwumi et al., 2011; Eyo, 2007). However, in the study area consumer demand for beef is due to its accessibility and relatively inexpensive process.

Table 3: Percentage distribution of respondents' preferences to different meat types (%)												
S/N		Beef	Chevon	Mutton	Pork	Grasscutter	Rabbit	Turkey	Duck Meat	Chicken	Quail	Guinea fowl
1	Eat most	77.5	1.7	-	0.8	0.8	-	1.7	-	17.5	-	-
2	Like most	12.5	14.2	0.8	4.2	-	0.8	21.7	-	45.8	-	-
3	Buy most	75.8	3.3	-	2.5	-	0.8	3.3	-	14.2	-	-
4	Family preference	40.8	11.7	-	-	0.8	-	6.7	-	40	-	-
5	Prefer to cook with	27.5	10.8	-	1.7	0.8	-	15	-	44.2	-	-
6	Unacceptable visible fats	28.3	1.7	1.7	56.7	-	0.8	3.3	0.8	5.8	0.8	-
7	Acceptable visible fats	29.2	12.5	0.8	18.3	1.7	-	9.2	0.8	25.8	-	1.7
8	Most appealing colour	29.2	7.5	0.8	2.5	-	-	19.2	-	37.5	0.8	0.8
9	Easy to cut	50	5	-	3.3	-	0.8	5.8	-	33.3	0.8	0.8

**3.4 Respondents' Preference for Meat Shopping**

Figure 1 showed the present place of meat shopping among the respondents. 47.5% of the respondents get their meat from the general market, 27.5% from abattoirs, 18.3% from designated meat shops, 5.8% from farmgate, and 0.8% At home from hawkers. The respondents gave a better place for shopping for meat where abattoir (64.2%) was ranked highest followed by designated meat shops (16.7%), and General Market (13.3%). At home from hawkers ranked the least (0.8%) closely followed

by Farmgate (5%). A drift from the conventional way of purchasing meat was indicated in Figure 2. Although the general market and abattoir are the major shopping points, consumers in the study area showed their preference in getting it more at the abattoir. This could be relatively cheap because it cuts out the effects of middlemen buying from the abattoir and selling to retailers at the general meat market and other buying points before it gets to the final consumer. Therefore, it can be concluded that buying meat from an abattoir in the study area is more economical.

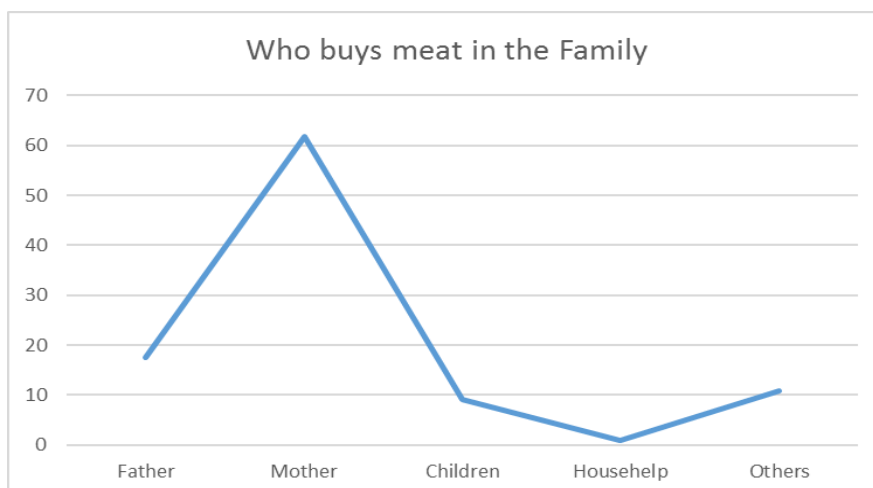


**Figure 1:** Meat shopping places in Awka as indicated by the respondents

**3.5 Purchase of Meat at Home**

Figure 2 indicated the respondents' reaction to the buyer of meat at home as house mothers, fathers, others, children, and house help in increasing

order. From Figure 2, as visibly shown, marketing strategies need to center on women (mothers) since they are the ones buying the meat for family consumption. The strategies to be adopted must be the ones that will attract women to purchase meat in the study area.

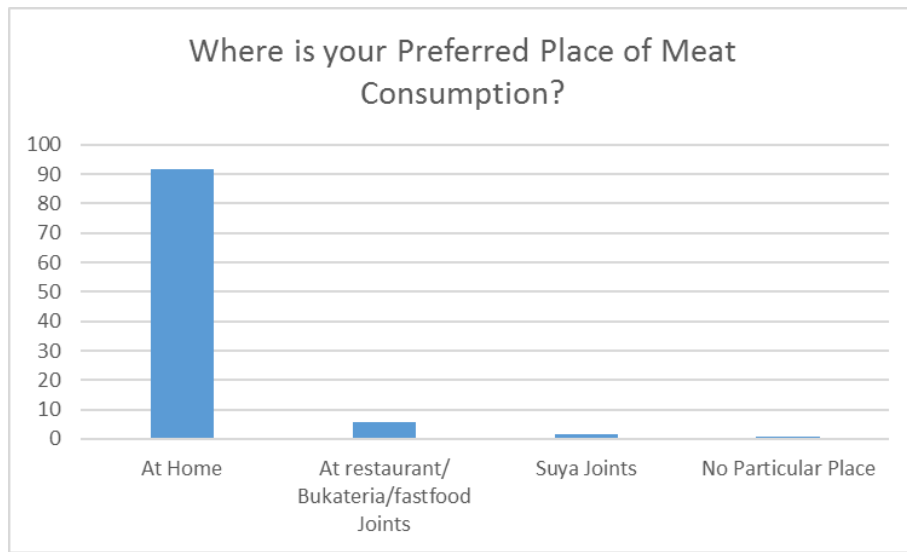


**Figure 2:** Buyers of meat in Awka as indicated by the respondents

### 3.6 Respondents' Preference for Places of Meat Consumption

Figure 3 showed consumption place for meat. Highest numbers of the respondents eat meat at home (91.7%) followed by those who eat at either restaurant or bukateria (5.8%). Greater number of the respondents

showed their preference in eating meat at home above others. That means they were bought in the market and cooked at home. Here, the marketing strategies to be adopted should be directed to fresh meat and not processed or cooked meat served at bukateria and suya / joints.



**Figure 3:** Places of meat consumption in Awka as revealed by the respondents

### 3.7 Respondents' Perception To Various Meat Types At The Study Area

Table 4 shows the perception of respondents to various meat types. Chicken ranked highest based on taste (29.8%) followed by Turkey (25.8%), Chevon (22.5%), Beef (10.8%), grasscutter (4.2%), pork (3.3%), and mutton (1.7%) while quail, rabbit and guinea fowl ranked the least in taste with a percentage of 0.8% each.

Beef was the most affordable meat (82.5%) while rabbit (0.8%) and mutton (0.8%) were found to be the least, majorly because of unavailability. The respondents however found chicken (31.7%), beef (20%), chevon (15%), rabbit (8.3%), quail (7.5%), turkey (6.7%), pork (3.3%), grasscutter (3.3%), mutton (2.5%), and guinea fowl (1.7%) to be nutritious in that order. Chicken was ranked highest as fast to cook

meat. Beef remained most preferred meat type at ceremonies and most convenient while chicken (57.5%) and Beef (19.2%) are most preferred for picnic. A group researcher agreed with these findings in his similar research where chicken was ranked highest as fast to cook meat and beef the most preferred meat type at ceremonies and most convenient (Akinwumi et al., 2011). Eyo reported that chevon was considered to be more nutritious, taste better, cooks faster even though less available, more costly and so not suitable for ceremonial cooking (Eyo, 2007). However, he also confirmed that beef was preferred to chevon because its products are perceived to be affordable, readily available and better for ceremonial use thus concluding that beef is clearly preferred to other meat types in terms of all the attributes considered. Beef meat is widely acceptable and readily available in the study area because of its relatively cheap price, availability and accessibility.

**Table 4:** Respondents' Perception to various Meat types (%).

S/N		Beef	Chevon	Mutton	Pork	Grasscutter	Rabbit	Turkey	Duck Meat	Chicken	Quail	Guinea fowl
1	Best Taste	10.8	22.5	1.7	3.3	4.2	0.8	25.8	-	29.8	0.8	0.8
2	Most Affordable	82.5	1.7	0.8	5.8	-	0.8	-	-	8.3	-	-
3	Moat Nutritious	20	15	2.5	3.3	3.3	8.3	6.7	-	31.7	7.5	1.7
4	Fast to Cook	37.5	3.3	2.5	-	-	0.8	7.5	-	47.5	-	0.8
5	Preferred at Ceremonies	68.3	1.7	-	-	-	-	3.3	-	26.7	-	-
6	Preferred at Picnic	19.2	3.3	0.8	1.7	-	-	17.5	-	57.5	-	-
7	Most convenient	50	5	0.8	1.7	-	-	5.8	0.8	35.8	-	-
8	Readily Available	85	-	-	-	-	-	2.5	-	12.5	-	-
9	Widely Acceptable	81.7	-	0.8	-	-	-	0.8	-	15.8	0.8	-

## 4. CONCLUSION

It could be concluded based on this study that beef remained most eaten, affordable, preferred at ceremony and the most convenient among others. Cattle trading and slaughter will be a good venture in the research location. However there is need for awareness and introduction of other meat types into the research location. Marketing activities should be centered more on women since they are mostly involved in the purchase and cooking of meat at home. Designated Modern meat shops should be constructed close to the abattoirs as the respondents had signified their growing expectation for shopping meats at abattoirs. Livestock producers should intensify production of cattle, poultry, goat and sheep in this area

since there are ready market for these animal products.

### DIRECTION OF FUTURE RESEARCH

Similar researches need to be conducted in other neighbouring towns in Awka and Eastern Nigeria to enable farmers understand meet the needs of the consumers.

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