



## ACCEPTABILITY AND CONSUMPTION OF DONKEY MEAT IN EBONYI STATE

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### ABSTRACT

The study was designed to investigate the acceptability and consumption of donkey meat in Ebonyi State. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. The populations for the study consist of men and women that consume donkey meat given rise to a total of 4, 550. Sample for the study was 150 people. The researcher developed structured questionnaire with twenty-nine items statements. The instrument was validated by three experts and Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument and was good enough (.76) to be used in the study. The instrument was administered to the respondent and was collected at the spot with the help of two research assistants. The data generated were analyzed using mean score and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The major findings were as follows: That donkey meat was one of the sources of meat within the study area. That donkey meat was popular, not scarce and available in all their local market. That many people buy the meat and eat the meat. There was no factor that hinders the acceptance and consumption of donkey meat. It was concluded that people should not fear from the donkey meat. Based on the findings it was recommended that livestock farmers should contribute in the rearing of the animal. Since, Donkey grows very fast, supply cheap and affordable meat to many people in Ebonyi State.

**KEY WORDS:** Accept, Consume, Donkey, Meat, Buyers, Sellers.

### INTRODUCTION

Acceptability according to Smith (2000) is to accept, to receive. Something offered, recognize, regard with favour or approval. This implies that acceptability has the element of willingness. In the same vein Eze, (2007) has given view that acceptability has to do with conviction, an appeal to sense and inner mind persuasion. However, acceptability in these contents is the willingness to accept donkey animals in a particular area in Ebonyi states. Since many people in Ebonyi state does not allow the donkey in their villages, communities or town. It has generated a lot of controversy, since, donkey animals are not allowed in some part of Ebonyi South, and Ebonyi Central, like Ikwo, Onueke, Afikpo among others. Therefore, when the Animals were shifted from Northern, Nigerian to South Eastern Nigeria. The first question is where is it accepted, and where is it consumed. This implies that consumption in this research work is referred to the people that eat donkey meat as their source of meat in their areas, villages, communities, LGA, Zone among others. The areas where the Fulani and Huasa pastoralist drop their Donkey is at Ezzamgbo in Ohaukwu and Ezillo in Ishielu. Then, dealers come to buy donkey animals and reveal where the animals are currently accepted, allowed, to be slaughtered. Then people come to buy the meat for consumption. This implies that acceptance of donkey in an area, is one thing and consumption of the meats is another, as a sources of meat that are allowed in the area. As a result of this uncertainty, research investigation become necessary since, the demand for protein intake from meat by individuals in Nigeria has reached an alarming rate and required an increase in livestock production as a positive alternative Ogba, (2005). The food and Agricultural organization F.A.O. (2006) was of the view that, the domestication of

various livestock within our environment will supply the needed protein intake from meat and enhance the living standard of our teeming population in Nigeria. Ogba, (2005) said that, donkey is one of the oldest animals domesticated in the world. Donkeys are reared in Nigeria particularly in the northern Nigeria by the Fulani and Hausa pastoralist. Donkey is kept for carrying load as work animals, transporting goods, ploughing and harrowing in Agricultural crop production in the Northern Nigeria.

The major aim of transporting donkey animal from Northern Nigeria to South Eastern Nigeria is for slaughtering them as meat for human consumption to meet up the protein requirement of individual Nigerian in Ebonyi State. By the period of the donkey was introduced in Ebonyi State, many people rejected the Donkey meat with the fear that the meat may kill them. In the same vein, Nwite (2005) described the meat as unfit for human consumption, Owo (2006) maintained that the meat has a taste of good quality and similar to other meat which depend on palatability and individual needs, not as taboo with other forms of livestock, (Willison 1995). Danga and Adaku, (2005) said that only Muslim that are prohibited from the eating of certain animal as a result of their religion, donkey is one of them but Christian in the South-Eastern Nigeria do not practice such religion and are not prohibited from eating donkey meat. Nweke (2007) sees Donkey as the key to bridge the supply and demand for protein gap. He stress that Donkey is yet to be established in the South -Eastern Nigeria. Odo (2003) stress that the potential for harnessing individual farmers, institutions and other private sectors for livestock production has not been established in Nigeria. He maintains that when the donkey is well organized, kept and managed along with

other livestock, they will bridge the gap of protein intake in Ebonyi State.

Nwankwo (2006) maintain that Donkey meat is an excellent meat for human consumption, because it has the ability of depending on roughages, like rice staples, maize husk, grasses of any type, weather dry or wet and convert it to fast growth and give birth within the shortest period of time. He described the meat as palatable and less fat, and less in red meat. He maintained that Donkey meat as excellent for human consumption. He stress that the masses should be educated on the nutritive value of the meat and this means that the demand seems to be increasing, since no death has been recorded as a result of eating the meat. There are report in favour and many reports against the meat from the individual consumers. Based on this uncertainty with respect to Donkey meat then the need arise to investigate the situation. The worry of the researcher is to ascertain or assess the acceptability and consumption of Donkey meat in Ebonyi State. The main purpose of the study was to assess the extent of acceptances and consumption of the Donkey Meat in Ebonyi State to findout the acceptability of Donkey animal as a source of meat in the area, determine the factors hindering the consumption of Donkey Meat in the Study Area and findout the strategies for enhancing acceptability of donkey meat in the area.

**METHODOLOGY**

The area of the study is Ebonyi State of Nigeria. The design of the study was descriptive survey research. According to Olaitain Ali, and Oyo (2005) survey research design is the plan, structure, and strategy, the Investigator want to adopt in finding solution to the research problem. The population for the study was five thousand, six hundred and forty three people (5,643), while the sample for the study was one hundred and fifty people (150). Random Sampling technique was used in selecting the

sample for the study. The population comprises of all the Donkey meat consumers in Ebonyi State.

The Researcher Developed an Instrument called Acceptance and Consumption of Donkey Meat Questionnaire (ACDM). It has a total of twenty eight items (28). It was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed using cronback Alpha reliability coefficient, which was computed from the result of a pilot study conducted at Enugu State, which yielded 0.75. It was found good for data collection from the respondent. All the item were responded to by the subject using a four point rating scale of high extent (HE), moderate extent (ME), low extent (LE), very low extent (VLE) their scaling values were 4,3,2, and 1. The instrument was administered to the respondent by the researcher with the help of two research assistant. The researcher covered Ezzamgbo Ohaukwu. While the other two research assistant covered Ezzillo (Ishielu LGA) on the market day-at Donkey garage and was used for the study.

Means and standard deviation were used to answer the research question two and three. While research question one was analyzed using frequency and percentage. For decision to be reached. The mean of the scaling values was computed thus:-  $4+3+2+1/4= 2.50$  in other words. Mean of 2.50 and above were regarded as high extent and mean less than 2.50 were indicated as very low extent responses of the respondents. The table show detailed findings of the study. The data generated was analyzed.

**Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following Research Questions

1. What are the extents of donkey animal’s acceptance as sources of meat in the area?
2. What are the factors that restricted Donkey meat consumption in the study area?
3. What are the strategies that will enhance acceptability of Donkey Meat in the study area?

**TABLE 1:** Available sources of meant in the study area.

Common sources of meat	Item statement	Consumption frequency	Percentage proportion	Decision
Chicken	Chicken is demanded more in the township	2.84	0.22	Accepted
Beef	Beef is only supplied in the town for Government workers.	2.51	0.26	Accepted
Fish	Fish are popularly, available in river-rine areas.	2.59	0.24	Accepted
Bush meat	Bush meat are normally scares in relative to demand	2.50	0.20	Accepted
Snail	Snail are costly since they are not many in the market	2.34	0.27	Accepted
Donkey meat	Donkey meat are every way in the market	4.76	0.36	Accepted
Hare meat	Hare meat are normally scares because it runs fast	3.05	0.35	Accepted
Goat meat	Few goat are killed only on local festivals	3.05	.025	Accepted
Sheep meat	Only sick sheep are slaughtered by village people	3.80	0.21	Accepted
Dog meat	Their meat are very scares	2.53	0.28	Accepted
Pork meat	Pork meat are very unpopular	2.50	0.23	Accepted

Table 1 item 1 sort information on chicken as sources of meat. It show that chicken was demanded by many people both in the village and in the township, it has no restriction in demand. Item 2 is beef meat, it was supplied on demand in different areas, where people consume them in Hotels and restaurants. Item 3 is fish meat, which is popular cheap, and demanded by everybody both in villages and in towns. Item 5 is bush meat is always scares, many people like, the meat but not be supplied by the hunters because

they may not kill them. Item 5 is snail which is always costly, since, it has period on its natural condition, which made snail not to be available in all the market. Item 6 is donkey meat which is not in all the market in the state. But in the areas where they were accepted the meat was available in their local market like Ezamgbo, Ezillor, Agba, Okpoto, Ohaozara, Isu, Iboko, Onueke, Ezza North and South. They because consume the meat in the areas as of now. Item 7 is Hare meat which is scares because

hunter may not kill them always. But many people demand them. Item 8 is goat meat which is popular, available in all the market both in the township and villages. Item 9 is sheep meat is popular, available both in town and village market. Item 10 is Dog meat is available more in the village markets than in township; market and

many people consume them. Item 11 is pork meat is supplied on demand to areas where they are consumed in hotel, restaurant, and bars and on certain festival market days. Many people demand them on daily basis. The extent of donkey meat acceptances with others sources of meat was very high in the state.

**TABLE 2.** Factors Limiting the consumption of Donkey

S/N	Item statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	
1.	Culture of the people (taboo) restrict the eating of donkey meat	2.50	0.20	Accepted
2.	Religion forbid the eating of Donkey meat in Ebonyi	2.60	0.21	Accepted
3.	People dislike donkey meat because it carry even death people	2.81	0.22	Accepted
4.	People dislike donkey meat because it is more of read meat	2.53	0.22	Accepted
5.	People dislike donkey meat because it is not appealing to their taste.	2.50	0.20	Accepted
6.	Close relative forbid eating donkey meat in ones house when you eat donkey meat	2.52	0.23	Accepted
7.	People dislike donkey as Animal of its own nature	2.50	0.18	Accepted
8.	The meat may not be affordable	2.58	0.2	Accepted
9.	The meat may be costly	2.82	0.22	Accepted
10.	The meat is too soft	2.58	0.20	Accepted

Item 1 table 2 sort information on cultures how it influences donkey meat. It revealed that culture of Ebonyi people do not limit the acceptance of donkey meat. But not accepted in all part of Ebonyi and not consumed in all parts, because of culture, but fear of disease, death among other. Item 2 is religious which do not affect donkey meat consumption in the areas where the meat is accepted. Items 3 is dislike, which seriously affect acceptance in a particular areas of the state, many people dislike it and complain of being used in carrying death people. Diseased and disable and disable people in the area. Item 4 is taste for people that accepted the meat in their area do not complain of taste. Item 5 is red meat in nature. The meat is not rejected because of its colour but because of haterate. Item 6 sort information in the behavior of close relation, who may discover that you eat the meat, while they do not

accept the meat. In a case like these many relation normally abandon coming to their neighbors house to avoid drinking water, and their suspected food of donkey meat. Acceptance is one and consumption is another item y 7 dislike was the major problem of donkey meat, people infer what will be expected result when taken as meat. Item 8 sort information's on affordable. The meat is very cheap and many people that accepted to buy the meat. But people that do not accept the meat have money which can buy it but refuse to look at it. Item 9 sort information on costly nature. The case of donkey meat is not cost but on acceptance, people refuse to accept the meat. Item 10 sort information on softness. Which is not a problem to the acceptance and consumption for those that meat. There are no factors which limit the consumptions of Donkey meat in the state.

**TABLE 3:** Strategies for enhancing the acceptability of Donkey meat in Ebonyi State

S/N	Item statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Educating People on The Nutritive value Of Donkey Meat	3.42	0.27	Accepted
2.	Fulani/Hausa donkey distributors should supply quality animals to the slaughters	2.61	0.24	Accepted
3.	Reducing the price of a Donkey in order to reduce the meat price	2.52	0.23	Accepted
4.	The Donkey meat sellers, need to add flavours to the fried meat to attract people	2.62	0.25	Accepted
5.	Making the Donkey meat available in all the local market	2.59	0.24	Accepted
6.	Marking the meat affordable in the local market	2.60	0.23	Accepted
7.	Selling the donkey meat in the name of cow meat	2.63	0.75	Accepted
8.	Supplying, Donkey meat more in the local market	2.56	0.20	Accepted
	Grand mean	2.89		

Item 1 sort information on educating the people on the nutritional value of the meat which can only be achieved through the use of medical expert, otherwise those that reject the meat may do that in error. Item 2 sort information on the quality of animal slaughtered how to motivate those that do not allow the animal in the areas. Since it is an eye sore to see death donkey been sold to slaughters. Item 2, sort information, on meat price, which is not even a problem about the meat since it is not competitive. Item 4 sort information on the flavor nature, which is good for packaging fried meat for attraction and

appealing the senses. Item 5 sort information on availability of the meat in the local market in places where the animal is allowed, accepted and consumed so that people in need will buy them as when due. Item 6 sort information affordable which those that accept the meat can forward it, item 7 sort information on selling the meat in the name of cow meat. This is because most of the people come to buy meat demand cow meat and when donkey meat is mentioned. They will leave the entire meat area in that fear of contacting diseases. Item 8 sort information in where the meat can sell better. The donkey

meat may sell better in the village because, many people ascertain very well before they buy such meat in the town. Donkey meat can be enhanced by reducing the price and make them affordable. Educating the masses on the nutritive value of the meat.

## DISCUSSION

Table 1: The table shows that all the item statement was accepted by the respondent as sources of meat supply in the area including donkey meat. This indicate that many people accepted the meat and consume them in areas mentioned above while the donkey meat was rejected in many parts of the state not accepted and consumed. Those people that accepted the meat was in line with Ndem (2008) who maintained that donkey meat is fit for human consumption. But those who rejected the donkey meat was in line with Nwite (2008) who described the meat as unfit for human consumption Owo (2006) was in line with (Ndem 2008) who supported accepting and consumption of Donkey meat. It was discovered that the dirty work which donkey animal perform like carrying death people disabled, diseased people, and carry goods act as transport medium are a good pint for rejecting the meat for the fear of contacting diseases. This is in line with Ogba (2005) who outlined the functions of those animals in the Northern Nigeria as used by Fulani and Hausa pastoralist.

Table 2: Show that all the factors were accepted by the respondents. The respondents indicated that they dislike, the functions, which donkey animal performs that limit its consumption of the meat. The religion of Ebonyi people does not forbid the meat. It was discovered that people dislike donkey meat by rumor for not accepting and consuming it. It was discovered that the meat was affordable, not costly, and not soft, not odour and colour of the meat was not a restricted factor. This study will strengthen the domestication of donkey animal as requested by different authorities example, F.A.O, (2006) who stressed that various livestock need to be reared to meet up individual demand for protein intake to ensure their standard of living, it was observed that the meat was in the market and willing individual can buy within the areas of the meat acceptances not on forces. Table 3: All the items were accepted by the respondents as strategies for enhancing acceptance and consumption of Donkey meat. Especially, to educate the masses using medical expects for motivation in radio, explaining its nutritive value, of the meat stop fear of the meat and avoid death animals. The need to strengthen and encourage donkey productivity in the study area became necessary. Since many people demand them in a place where it is allowed accepted and consumed based on its nutritive value. It becomes imperatives to educated registered farmers in the areas, to keep them, organize it and manage them for human consumption. This is in line with Ogba (2005) who stressed that increase in livestock production, as the only positive alternative for providing the required protein meat intake in Nigeria.

### Major findings

- I. It was discovered that among all the meat sources in the state only donkey meat was restricted, not accepted and not consumed in all part of the state, except in the areas mentioned.
- II. It was discovered that culture, religion, tests, colour affordable, Available, cost were not the major reasons for rejecting the meat in may part of the state. Rather, the work which the donkey animal performs in the Northern Nigeria like carrying goods-transport medium, carrying death people diseased and disabled people expected.
- III. The danger of accepting and consuming the meat of such animals that perform such dirty work requires avoidance
- IV. To stop transmitting disease to them.
- V. It was found out that educating the masses can enhance the accepting and consuming of Donkey meat.

## CONCLUSION

In accordance to the major findings of this study Donkey meat were accepted, as a protein sources. There is need to educate the individual within Ebonyi State about the nutritious value of the meat: The Domestication should be encourage to increase its supply.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Donkey distributors Fulani and Hausa people should reduce the price for a donkey, so that the meat should be affordable to the people that need them. The need for Domestication of Donkey animals through the assistance of Government Agency to provide initial capital for procuring the Animals and establishing the padlock becomes necessary.

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