

ANALYSIS OF INDIGENOUS FOOD CONSUMPTION AMONG TEENAGERS IN IFE EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

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The gradual rejection of indigenous foods particularly among teenagers could endanger the already poor nutritional status in Nigerian homes. The concern for the resuscitation of these foods prompted this study. The study was carried out in Ife East Local Government Area of Osun State, Nigeria. A well structured questionnaire was employed to elicit data from 120 respondents, using multiple sampling techniques. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data obtained. Findings from the study revealed that majority (60%) of the respondents were within the range of 14-16 years, 60% of them were females and 71.6% has spent 7-10 years in school. A little above half (58.3%) of the respondents had consumed indigenous foods prepared by their mothers and would like to discontinue eating the foods. Respondents hardly consume sako, sagidi, and aje-pass as they were ranked 9th, 10th, and 11th on the 5-point-likert-type-scale. Pearson product moment correlation analysis revealed that age ($r = 0.185$, $p = 0.044$), fathers level of education ($r = 0.301$, $p = 0.001$) and mothers level of education ($r = 0.220$, $p = 0.016$) were positively and significantly related to the respondents frequency of indigenous food consumption. The study concluded that there is a gradual decline in the consumption of indigenous foods among the Nigerian teenagers. This was due to the fact that the foods were sold by vendors who hardly maintain good hygiene and rarely cooked at homes and restaurants. The study therefore recommended the inclusion of indigenous food on the list of family menus and restaurants in order to stimulate the interest of young ones on the consumption of the foods.

Keywords: Analysis, Indigenous food, Teenagers, Consumption, Ife East

INTRODUCTION

Food could be defined as any substance consumed to provide nutritional support for the body (Anguilera and David, 1999). Food can be of either plant or animal origin, food generally can be grouped into six classes and these are carbohydrates, protein, fat and oil, vitamins, minerals and water. According to Maslow Hierarchy of needs, man cannot survive without having access to the physiological needs such as housing, clothing, food, water. These basic needs are fundamentally required for the continual growth and development of human species. The benefits of indigenous foods in the rural communities cannot be overemphasized. The fact that it is often cheap and affordable to the small scale resource, poor rural dwellers and the nutritional benefits it offers. Indigenous and traditional foods, if promoted among the younger generations of the rural dwellers could help to solve the global problem of poverty, hunger and malnutrition (Faber and Wenhold, 2007). In the rural communities of most of the developing countries (Nigeria inclusive) access to balance nutrition is gradually becoming a challenge as the influence of foreign or imported foodstuffs such as polished rice, noodles and other western foods have almost suppressed the consumption of indigenous foods which play important role in the lives of rural and urban population.

In the past years, rural household live essentially on natural foods cultivated and processed using traditional and indigenous methods, even the condiments used in cooking were sourced locally from indigenous plants materials for examples, *Iru* (dadawa or locust bean) and shea-butter are being replaced with maggi cubes and the likes. Examples of indigenous food in the Western Nigeria among others are *ekuru*, *abari*, *egbo*, *sako*, *adun*, *aje-pass*, *ojojo*, *sagidi* which serves as snacks or food in the rural settings. Invariably, these foods are gradually fading off and been replaced by the modern foods or snacks which may not even compare with the later in terms of nutritional benefits or value and affordability. However, it is important to note that what people eat or consumed is influenced by social factors, cultural practices and their ability to purchase the food items. According to Faber and Wenhold (2007), a decline in the use of indigenous foods results in nutritional deficiency especially among rural households. For example, In Nigeria, rice production is in the hands of small scale farmers who use traditional methods and lack the capacity to add value to what they produce. This situation could frustrate farmers to diversify production, reduce stocking to minimize losses and adopt other measures that are capable of undermining their initial production plan (Adefalu, *et al.*, 2013). This scenario is occasioned by the migration of the urban and rural people from local rice consumption which is often poorly finished to the imported polished

rice. The shift from consumption of indigenous rice and other grains to the imported ones has forced the country to go cap in hand running deficit budgets due to excessive spending on rice importation. Presently, Nigeria spends as much as 365 billion naira (2.27 billion dollars) on rice importation per year (Nnodi, 2012). This huge expenditure of food importation can be averted if the indigenous food consumption is promoted among the rural households who incidentally constitute 75% of the Nigerian population. The food shortage problem is an indication of high and excessive food import bills, consistent rise in domestic food price and high annual growth rate of food demand when compared with food supply and nutritional problems among others (Fawole and Oladele, 2007).

In Nigeria, poverty, poor nutrition and hunger are increasingly becoming a challenge which successive government administrations have not been able to tackle. This is so because the population of the people particularly those in the rural areas where the purchasing power is very low is increasing astronomically while agricultural productivity which is presumed to provide employment and eliminate hunger and poverty is increasing arithmetically. The increasing rate at which people abandon indigenous and traditional food in the rural communities spells doom for a nation whose population is predominantly rural based. The problem of hunger and malnutrition in the rural communities is not only associated with the non-availability of food but that of failure to leverage on the advantages indigenous food processing procedures offer. As a way of making food available to rural household, it becomes imperative that people begin to look inward for the consumption of more indigenous and traditionally processed food. In the light of the problems enumerated above, this study therefore sought to describe the socio economic characteristics of the respondents in the study area, identify the existing indigenous foods of items in the area, examine the frequency of consumption of the indigenous food items and examine the constraints militating against frequent consumption of the indigenous foods.

Definition of terms

The following terms have been operationally defined to ease the understanding of the indigenous foods captured in this study:

Ekuru: is made by soaking of beans for 5-10 mins after which it is peeled and grinded to form paste. The paste is packed in a mold which could be either leaf or empty tin of milk and steamed 30-14 mins inside the pot until it is cooked. It is taken with stew and could be consumed with solid pap.

Abari: is made of fresh maize and pepper grinded together to form paste, palm oil and other condiments are added to taste before it is collected and wrapped inside the leave of maize and put inside the pot to steam for about 45mins - 1 hour depending on the intensity of the temperature of the energy source.

Sako: is made of Bambara nut cooked overnight and leave it to cook well after which condiments are now been added to it, it is served with groundnut oil to taste.

Egbo: is made by peeling off the husk of the maize and cooked overnight to cook well and matched into porridge and served with shea-butter or ground-nut and is also served with beans.

Adun: is made of grinded maize and oil with salt and it is well mixed until it assumed the required taste and it is wrapped inside leaf.

Kangu: is made of grinded Bambara nut with pepper into paste but always grinded into coarse not fine and it is now fried with palm oil or groundnut oil as snacks or sometimes eaten with hot pap to be served. It has a longer storage potential.

Aje-pass: is made maize grounded into paste with addition of sugar and fried in ground oil to assume a finger shape. It came into being in the early the 1980s when Nigeria was basking with challenges imposed on them by austerity measure.

Ojojo: it is made of yam grounded into paste with pepper and other condiments and fried with oil palm or groundnut oil. It looks like akara after frying and could be eaten alone or combined with solid pap.

Beske: is made of grinded soya beans and the water in it is extracted overnight, then the condiments is added to it with pepper and onion and cooked until the paste is solidified and cut into square shape, then it is fried in groundnut oil. This product has been found to be highly proteinous.

Sagidi: is made of bambara-nut which is wholly cooked overnight until it softens and matched before saved with ground nut oil. It is important to add salt while it is on fire for it to taste nicely.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in Ife east a local government area in Osun State, Nigeria. Its headquarters is located in the town of Oke- ogbo, it has an area of 172 km² and a population of 188,087 (NPC, 2006). The local government is found within the co- ordinate of 7° 27'N 4° 36'E. The people of the local government are predominantly farmers while others engage in trading, artisan, civil service. The people of the local government speak Yoruba language and they are blessed with a number of indigenous foods. The population of the study comprised of all teenagers in Ife East Local Government, Osun state. A multiple sampling technique was employed for the

selection of respondents for the purpose of this study. The first stage involved the purposive selection of Ife-East out of the 16 Local government Areas in Osun State due to the prevalence of different types of indigenous foods in the area. The second stage of the selection involved the random selection of 6 secondary schools from the Local Government Area while the third stage of the selection was achieved by the random selection of 20 secondary school students who were within the age bracket of 13-19 years from each of the selected schools giving a sample size of 120. Structured questionnaire was used to elicit data from the respondents and the data obtained was analyzed using descriptive (frequency count, percentage, mean score, and ranking order) and inferential (Pearson product moment correlation) statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

The result from the table 1 showed that less than 8.3% of the respondents were between the age 11 – 13 years, majority of the respondent (60%) were between the age of 14 – 16 years, 31.7% were between age range of 17 – 19 years. 40% of the respondent were male while majority (60%) were female. The table showed that 85% of the respondent was Christian while 15% were Islam. The respondent mothers occupation showed that 10% are farmers, majority (50%) of them were traders, 10% were artisan while 30% are civil servant. Father's occupation of the respondent showed that 5.0% were farmers, 30% were traders, 10% were artisan, 55% were civil servant.

In term of education, a little above half (56.7%) of the respondent fathers indicated secondary education, 31.6% of them had tertiary education, 10% of them had primary education while a few (1.7%) of them indicated no formal education. The result also showed that a little above half (53.3%) of the respondent mothers indicated secondary education, 28.3% of them indicated tertiary education, 11.7% of them had primary education while 6.7% of them indicated no formal education. Also, majority (85%) of the respondent had household size of 5 – 7, while 15% of them had 1 – 4. The result also showed that 71.6% of the respondent had 7 – 10 years of education, while 25.1% of them had 11 – 14 years of education, few (3.3%) of the respondent.

Table 1: socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

Socio economics variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	Socio economics variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean
Age				Fathers level of education			
<=13	10	8.3		No formal education	2	1.7	
14-16	72	60		Pri. Education	12	10	
17-19	38	31.7		Sec. education	68	56.7	
Total	120	100		Tertiary education	38	31.6	
Sex				Total	120	100	
Male	48	40		Mothers level of education			
Female	72	60		No formal education	8	6.7	
Total	120	100		Pri. Education	14	11.7	
Religion				Sec. education	64	53.3	
Christian	102	85		Tertiary education	34	28.3	
Islam	18	15		Total	120	100	
Total	120	100		Household size			
Mothers occupation				1-4	18	15	
Farming	12	10		5-7	102	85	
Trading	60	50		Total	120	100	6 persons
Artisan	12	10					
Civil servant	36	30		Respondents years of education			
Total	120	100		≤6	4	3.3	
Fathers occupation				7-10	86	71.6	
Farming	6	5		11-14	30	25.1	
Trading	36	30		Total	120	100	10 years
Artisan	12	10					
Civil servant	66	55					
Total	120	100					

Source: field survey, 2014

Awareness of respondents on indigenous food

Table 2 showed that 52% of the respondents were not aware of the indigenous food, while 48% of them were aware of the indigenous food in the study area. The table also indicated that 51.7% of the respondents do not eat the indigenous food, while 48.3% of them eat indigenous food in the study area. This showed that the people in

the area consumed indigenous foods but the fact that a significant proportion of them were not aware may be responsible for the low level of consumption of the foods.

Table 2: Awareness of respondents on indigenous foods

Knowledge of indigenous food in the study area	Frequency	Percentage
Awareness		
Yes	63	52.0
No	57	48.0
Total	120	100
Do you eat the indigenous food		
Yes	58	48.3
No	62	51.7
Total	120	100

Source: field survey, 2014

Availability of indigenous food items in the study area

According to the table 3, an over-whelming majority (98.3%) Of the respondents reported the availability of *Ekuru*, 95% said that *Beske* was available, 93.3% indicated the non-availability of *Aje-pass*, 91.7% also said *sagidi* was not available, 90% also said that *kangu* was not available, 81.7% indicated the non- availability of *Adun* in the area, 81.7% showed that *sako* was not also available, 80% indicated that the food was not also available, 73.3% of them said *Egbo* was not available, 63.3% also indicated the non – availability of the foods, while 51.7% of them said *Abari* was not available in the study area.

Table 3: Availability of indigenous food items in the study area

Food items	Frequency		Percentage –	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
<i>Ekuru</i>	118	2	98.3	1.7
<i>Abari</i>	62	58	51.7	48.3
<i>Sako</i>	22	98	18.3	81.7
<i>Egbo</i>	44	76	36.7	63.3
<i>Aje – pass</i>	8	112	6.7	93.3
<i>sagidi</i>	10	110	8.3	91.7
<i>Adun</i>	22	98	18.3	81.7
<i>Ojojo</i>	96	24	80	20
<i>Beske</i>	114	6	95.0	5
<i>Dodokwa</i>	32	88	26.7	73.3
<i>Kangu</i>	12	108	10.0	90.0

Source: field survey, 2014

Respondents' reasons for having preference for indigenous foods

The table 4 showed that the most important reasons indicated by the respondents on their preference for indigenous food was that it is processed locally and it's nutritious nature which both ranked 1st on the five-point-likert-type scale. Affordability and the tasty nature of indigenous foods ranked 3rd, longer storage ranked 5th while devoid of synthetic condiments and relatively available were the least reasons indicated for their preference for indigenous foods with the rank values of 6th.

Table 4: Respondents' reasons for having preference for indigenous foods

Reasons	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Rank
It is processed locally	62(51.7)	42(35.0)	6(5.0)	2(1.7)	8(6.7)	4.4	1 st
Devoid of synthetic condiments	48(40.0)	40(33.3)	8(6.7)	16(13.3)	8(6.7)	4.0	6 th
It stores longer	46(38.3)	58(48.3)	6(5.0)	4(3.3)	6(5.0)	4.1	5 th
It is affordable	64(53.3)	42(35.0)	4(3.3)	4(3.3)	6(5.0)	4.3	3 rd
It symbolizes culture	56(46.7)	46(38.3)	8(6.7)	6(5.0)	4(3.3)	4.2	
It is nutritious	66(55.0)	44(36.7)	4(3.3)	2(1.7)	4(3.3)	4.4	1 st
It is tasty	62(51.7)	40(33.4)	10(8.3)	4(3.3)	4(3.3)	4.3	3 rd
It is relatively available	50(41.7)	44(36.0)	6(5.0)	12(10.0)	8(6.7)	4.0	6 th

Source: field survey, 2014

Frequency of indigenous food consumption

According to table 5, the most frequently consumed indigenous food in the study area as indicated by the respondents was *beske* which ranked 1st with less than half (48.3%) of them consuming it on daily basis. The table showed further that other indigenous foods consumed were *adun* which ranked 2nd with 31.7% of the respondents indicating daily consumption and never had a taste of it, *ekuru* ranked 3rd with a little above half (58.3%) indicating occasional consumption. The table also showed that *egbo*, *ojojo*, *dodonkwa* and *abari*, *kangu*, *sako*, *sagidi* and *aje-pass* ranked 4th, 5th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th respectively. The implication of this result is that the consumption of indigenous foods like *sako*, *sagidi* and *aje-pass* was declining given the fact that 66.7%, 70.0% and 81.7% of the respondents have never tasted *sako*, *sagidi* and *aje-pass* respectively.

Table 5: Frequency of indigenous food consumption

Frequency	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Never	Mean	Ranking
<i>Ekuru</i>	10(8.3)	24(20.0)	16(13.3)	70(58.3)	0(0.0)	2.8	3 rd
<i>Abari</i>	6(5.0)	4(3.3)	16(13.3)	44(36.7)	50(41.7)	1.9	6 th
<i>Sako</i>	6(5.0)	10(8.3)	2(1.7)	22(18.3)	80(66.7)	1.7	9 th
<i>Egbo</i>	6(5.0)	26(21.7)	8(6.7)	38(31.7)	42(35.0)	2.3	4 th
<i>Adun</i>	38(31.7)	24(20.0)	6(5.0)	24(20.0)	38(31.7)	3.3	2 nd
<i>Ajepass</i>	4(3.3)	4(3.3)	6(5.0)	8(6.7)	98(81.7)	1.4	11 th
<i>Sagidi</i>	18(15.0)	0(0.0)	6(5.0)	12(10.0)	84(70.0)	1.8	8 th
<i>Kangu</i>	10(8.3)	26(21.7)	16(13.3)	30(25.0)	38(31.7)	1.6	10 th
<i>Beske</i>	58(48.3)	22(18.3)	0(0.0)	30(25.0)	10(8.3)	3.7	1 st
<i>Dodonkwa</i>	20(16.7)	2(1.7)	6(5.0)	6(5.0)	86(71.7)	1.9	6 th
<i>Ojojo</i>	14(11.7)	16(13.3)	10(8.3)	24(20.0)	56(46.7)	2.2	5 th

Source: field survey, 2014

Constraints militating against frequent consumption of indigenous foods

The table 6 showed the important constraints as expressed by the respondents was indigenous food is meant for older people which ranked 1st, low palatability ranked 2nd, while indigenous food are not sold in the city restaurants ranked 3rd. The table showed further that producers poor hygiene, indigenous food takes longer time to cook, poor packaging, indigenous food have cultural affiliation, indigenous food does not appeal to eyes, indigenous food are not readily available, it is sold by food vendors and indigenous foods cannot be cooked on a small scale ranked 4th, 5th, 7th, 9th, 10th, and 11th respectively.

Table 6: Constraints militating against frequent consumption of indigenous foods

Constraints	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Rank
Poor packaging	16(13.3)	22(18.3)	0(0.0)	60(50.0)	22(18.3)	2.58	5 th
Producers poor sanitary practices	14(11.7)	20(16.7)	8(6.7)	60(50.0)	18(15.0)	2.60	4 th
Takes longer time to cook	6(5.0)	32(26.7)	4(3.3)	62(51.7)	16(13.3)	2.58	5 th
Cultural affiliation	6(5.0)	26(21.7)	14(11.7)	58(48.3)	16(13.3)	2.57	7 th
It cannot be cooked on a small scale	4(3.3)	28(23.3)	6(5.0)	60(50.0)	22(18.3)	2.43	11 th
Not readily available	4(3.3)	26(21.7)	22(18.3)	48(40.1)	20(16.7)	2.55	9 th
Low palatability	20(16.7)	50(41.7)	10(8.3)	14(11.7)	26(21.7)	3.20	2 nd
It does not appeal to the eyes	14(11.7)	20(16.7)	8(6.7)	56(46.7)	22(18.3)	2.57	7 th
It is meant for old people	4(3.3)	10(8.3)	6(5.0)	62(51.7)	38(31.7)	4.00	1 st
Not sold in city restaurant	24(20.7)	34(28.3)	6(5.0)	28(23.3)	28(23.3)	2.98	3 rd
Sold by food vendors	10(8.3)	14(11.7)	36(30.0)	30(25.0)	30(25.0)	2.53	10 th

Source: field survey, 2014

Hypothesis testing

H₀: There is no significant relationship between some selected socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and their frequency of indigenous food consumption.

According to table 8, only 3 out of the selected socio-economic characteristics of the respondents were positively related to their frequency of consumption of indigenous foods. The variables that are significant and positively related to the indigenous food consumption are age ($r = 0.185$, $p = 0.044$), fathers level of educational attainment ($r = 0.301$, $p = 0.001$) and mothers level of educational attainment ($r = 0.220$, $p = 0.016$). This implies that the older the respondent grows in age the higher the tendency to consume indigenous foods. Furthermore, the higher

the level of educational attainment of respondents parents, the more their level their awareness of the benefits inherent in indigenous food and the higher the chances of consumption of the food by their children.

Table 7: Result of the tested hypothesis

Variable	Co-efficient	p-value	remark
Age	0.185	0.044	significant
Sex	0.054	0.577	Not significant
Education	0.140	0.128	Not significant
Religion	0.103	0.265	Not significant
Household size	0.052	0.577	Not significant
Fathers level of education	0.301	0.001	Significant
Mothers level of education	0.220	0.016	Significant

Source: field survey, 2014

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that there is gradual decline in the consumption of indigenous foods among younger generation of the Nigeria populace. This was partly due to the fact that most of the indigenous foods are sold by food vendors and not found in the restaurants, neither are they prepared at household level and this could make prospective consumers to be suspicious of the level of hygiene employed in the production process. In addition, indigenous food has been found only to be cooked by older people at household level and the younger ones were not been encouraged to learn the required cooking skills. This scenario poses a great danger to the sustainability of indigenous foods among families in Nigerian homes. The study therefore recommended that extension agents should organize seminars and workshops as a matter of urgency on indigenous foods for food vendors in order to train them on how to maintain personal hygiene during food production and improved packaging to make their products attractive to the members of the public. Furthermore, restaurants and house wives are also encouraged to include indigenous foods in their list of menu so as to stimulate the interest of the young ones.

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