

## **Socio-Cultural Factors Determining Consumption and Utilization of Snails among Ethnic Groups in New Bussa, Niger State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

The study investigated the socio-cultural factors determining consumption and utilization of snails among ethnic groups in New Bussa, Niger State, Nigeria. Data were collected from the thirteen ethnic groups in New Bussa. One on one interview through the use of interview guide was conducted for ten respondents randomly selected from each ethnic group. Thus, 130 people were interviewed. Data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Chi-Square and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analyses. The results of the study showed that 67.7% of the respondents were male, 55.4% were within the age group of 20-30 years, 29.2% had no formal education, 27.7% had agriculture as their main occupation, 64:6% practice Islamic religion while 73.1 % had less than N5000.00 as their monthly

income. Also, 66 of the respondents consumed snails while 64 did not. Furthermore, 36 of those that practice Islam and 30 Christians consumed snails. 82.8% of the respondents not consuming snails stated personal dislikes for non-consumption of snails. 20.8% of them stated that there are taboos associated with consumption of snails. The study further showed that snails are being used by the various ethnic groups in the study area for medicinal and spiritual purposes; for cultural ceremonies and other uses (i.e. for consumption). Also, snails' shell, flesh, mucus, antennae and the whole body are applied for different uses including for love, cough, curing stroke location of distant objects and sexual boosting, Chi-Square analysis results showed that gender of the respondents does not have significant relationship ( $p > 0.05$ ) with snails' consumption while ethnic groups, education, occupation and religion have significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) with snails' consumption. The results of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation showed that age and income have no significant relationship ( $p > 0.05$ ) with snails' consumption. The study concluded that personal dislikes rather than cultural, religious beliefs and taboos are the major determining factors for non-consumption of snails in the study area.

**Keywords:**

Socio-cultural factors, snails, consumption, ethnic groups, New Bussa, Nigeria.