

ENTREPRENEURIAL POTENTIALS ADOPTED BY FARMERS IN SNAIL MARKETING IN ENUGU STATE, SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study identified entrepreneurial potentials adopted by farmers and marketers in snail marketing in Enugu State, South East Nigeria. The study was guided by two specific purposes, two corresponding research questions were posed and one hypothesis was postulated for the study. The t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance with the help of SPSS version 20 to ensure accuracy in the analysis. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study was 180. Thirty (30) snail marketers from urban areas and thirty (30) snail markers from the rural areas were sampled using purposive Sampling method. The area of study is Enugu State. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher and titled; Entrepreneurial Potentials of Snail Marketing in Enugu State Questionnaire (EPOSMEQ). The instrument was face validated by three lecturers of entrepreneurship programme. Cronbach Alpha method was used to check the reliability of the instrument which yielded an overall reliability coefficient of 0.89. The researcher with the help of six research assistants distributed 60 questionnaires through direct contact and all were correctly filled and retrieved. Mean was used to answer and analyze data while standard deviation was used to check for closeness of the mean to each other. Real limit of numbers was used to take decision on the research question. The findings of the study revealed that 4 out of 15 identified entrepreneurial skills of place in marketing were practiced to great extent and all identified measures to promote acquisition of entrepreneurial potentials of marketing were required by snail farmers and sellers in Enugu State. The study concluded and recommended that Provision of snail market information and snail marketing advocacy should be prioritized by all stakeholders.

Keywords: Snail, Entrepreneurial potential, Entrepreneur, Marketing and Marketing place

Introduction

Snails are small, bilaterally symmetrical, exoskeleton, invertebrates, belonging to the phylum *molluscs* and class *gastropoda* usually protected by calcareous shells. Snail habitation could be terrestrial, marine or aquatic origin. It is found and consumed in most parts of the world. Snails are called various names in different languages, for instance; French word for snail is "Escargot", and Igbo word for snail is "Ejuna" (Cobbinah et al., 2008 & Okonta et al., 2021). Snails are of different species but the Archachatin Marginata specie is the most popular and profitable, due to its speedy growth rate and large meaty size (Okonta et al., 2021). Some products of snail are; snail caviar (egg), snail mucus (slime), snail meat and snail shell. Snail products has been found to be of great benefit, due to its high protein content, medicinal value, low in fat, rich in iron and ornamental importance of the shell among others (Pissia et al., 2021).

Snails are sourced from the wild, snail farmers and research institutes (Babatunde et al., 2019).

Traditional snails are seen and picked from cool damp places in the bushes during rainy season but undergo aestivation and hibernation in dry season, this is the major reason for its seasonal supply in the market and price fluctuation. The practice of solely picking snail from bushes could lead to extinction over time, therefore, there is need for snail farming known as "Heliculture", practiced in snail organized habitation called "Snailery". Heliculture is important as a source of: employment; increased income; providing enough quantity of snail for foreign trade; meat supply; waste conversion and raw materials for industries (Babatunde et al., 2019 & Ahmadu et al., 2021). Snail feed on leaves, fruits, tubers, flowers and household waste. Cobbinah et al., (2008) out listed a self-mix snail feed formula content in (kg) as follows; bone meal (1.2), fish meal (4), groundnut cake (10), maize (31.3), oyster shell (8.05), palm kernel cake (4.2), premix vitamin and minerals (0.25), soy bean meal (25) and wheat of fal (10). Snail can be marketed as prepared and

unprepared product. The unprepared package is snail sold in its raw state, most times alive. The prepared state of snail is processed and may be ready for table. Prepared snail could be smoked, dried, fried, frozen or canned (Cobbinah et al., 2008). Researchers identified that the greatest economic value of snail could be attributed to prepared snail although there is more demand for unprepared snail in the market. New innovations in marketing snails which is snail entrepreneurial potential adopted by farmers and marketers practiced worldwide is still in its infant stage. According to Okonta et al (2021) in the year 2000, it was estimated that there were 26 snail farms in Spain, however by 2018 this figure rose to 614.

Entrepreneurial potential of snail marketing is the capacity for snail enterprise practice and entrepreneurship inactive ability to produce and move product to end consumer. According to Zieba (2009), entrepreneurial potential is a set of knowledge, motive and attitudes that enables enterprise and/or entrepreneurship activity. Aparicio et al., (2021) defined entrepreneurial potentials as non-entrepreneurs with perceived necessary skills to engage in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial potential is attributed to persons who may act upon entrepreneurial activities in the future. Entrepreneurial potential is converted to entrepreneurial skill by an entrepreneur. Roy (2013) identified entrepreneurial skills as: accounting and law; basics of start-up finance; comfort with change and chaos; creativity and opportunity evaluation; evangelicalism; negotiation and motivation through influence and persuasion; oral and written communication; real-time strategy and decision making; selling and team work among others. A person who put entrepreneurial skills to work is known as an entrepreneur. According to Morselli (2019), entrepreneur is defined as an individual who must face uncertainty and volatility of business to generate profit especially for those people who are first starters. Abraham and Master (2021), defined entrepreneurs as dynamic individuals with innovative spirit that spurs research and development, which creates jobs. Entrepreneur is a person who develop and innovate a more profitable market for snail. Entrepreneurial farmer is an entrepreneur and a person who thinks of the farm as a business that has potential to grow, develop and diversify (Kahan, 2013). Entrepreneurial snail farmer produces snail for the market. The market provides litmus test for entrepreneurship produce.

Marketing consist of different types of activities. According to Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) (2009) marketing is defined as a team effort

requiring the orchestration of various personalities, outlooks and skills. The author 'CIM' further stated that entrepreneurial marketing strategy is needed for managing change, as firms in this new age function in technological, legislative, corporate and market environment of rapid transition and change. Marketing in agriculture is a series of activities that enables farm produce to reach buyer (Kahan, 2013). Marketing is an act of creative interventions, exchanges and conversations to improve the quality of goods and services as well as to obtain some benefits (Gervase & Iwu, 2014). Marketing involves series of activities called marketing mix that require a combination of creativity and knowledge of a team to effectively manage and realize objectives. In other to achieve objectives, entrepreneurial marketer must understand and apply some or all the marketing mix through the concepts; Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process and Physical evidence. Customers has indicated in a survey carried out by Andriyanty (2020) that in choosing a supplier, delivery performance is one of the most important criteria considered. Babatunde (2019) stated that handling is an important aspect of snail marketing which has been abused by most marketers, through habits like starvation, poor storage facility in the market, perforation and packaging.

The concept of place in marketing, would involve all activities that has to do with distribution, storage and record keeping. Place in Marketing mean all the activities involved with moving produce from production site to end consumer. According to CIM (2009), marketing place mean ways of displaying your product to customer group, settings where customers buy product and the means of distributing the product/delivering it to the customer. Anawade and Sharma (2022) stated that market place is a spot where customers can get something or find help. Mir-Bernal and Sadaba (2022) defined market place as all the possible ways for the product to reach the end user, consumer. The market place is no longer limited to a physical location, the growth of virtual/online market has changed the scheme (CIM, 2009). The author further identified some conditions of market place as product must be available in the right place, right time, right quantity and right quality, storage cost, inventory and distribution cost must be at acceptable level. In other to achieve effective and efficient marketing place certain entrepreneurial skills are needed. Oboreh (2011) identified some entrepreneurial marketing skills to include ability to: sale product/service; keep sales record; keep stock record; transport goods; analyze demand; budget and forecast; capture and retain the

attention of customers, carry out effective marketing and information research; determine the extent to which a product can sell; promote and sell organizational products; determine and interpret factors which indicate extent and strength of competition; good knowledge of seasonal fluctuation of products and be self-reliant and tactful. Victor et al., (2020) identified skills necessary for entrepreneurial marketing as: networking skill, opportunity identification, product standardization, customer retention, strategic timely delivery and reliability of transaction.

Snail marketing is an evolving one yet to be maximally harnessed especially in Africa, Nigeria and Enugu State in particular. According to Pissia (2021), global market for edible snails is worth one billion pound which corresponds to about 300,000 tonnes annually. Sherlock-Presinal and Mcsweeny (2020) stated that marketing, production and consumption of snail is in largest quantity in France, followed by Spain and Morocco while in terms of snail cost, Switzerland records the highest, as global consumption of snail in 2019 reached 81k tonnes, even at these figure, there still exist a shortage of snail for sale annually in all of its growing market worldwide.

In the distribution of snail, Eze et al., (2006) stated that the channel of distribution for snail in the South East of Nigeria was from producer/hunter to retailer or direct to consumer. Victor et al., (2020) identified various channel of farm produce marketing as follows: selling the harvest at urban market, selling to collectors, selling to itinerate and taking their harvest to the closest spot market that is designated local market for sale. Over the years, the use of modern technology, especially the internet has proven to attract world wide networking. Modern technology identified by Bodnar (2022) as top marketing channels in 2022 are: social media, website/blog, Email marketing, content marketing, influencer marketing, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) marketing, virtual event, physical events and tradeshow. Bodnar (2022), further stated that short-form video content like Tik Toks and Instagram Reels are the most effective type of social media content while Instagram, YouTube and Facebook are the top three social media platforms marketers are using in 2022.

Notwithstanding, the improvement in snail marketing place has been marginally efficient and this could be attributed to the problems of marketing such as excessive price fluctuations and storage (Eze et al., 2006). Difficulty of small-scale farmers to have access to high-value market, in terms of import regulations, hygienic and health requirement (Antwi & Seahlodi,

2017). Difficulties in transportation, taxation, security, storage, loading and off-loading and handling charges (Okonta et al., 2021). lack/inadequate extension visits, poor access to information, relating to snail farming, effect of harsh weather condition, insufficient knowledge of credit source, lack of stable market for snail produce, religious or cultural belief against snail consumption, transportation difficulty and low technical know-how in handling snail product (Adewale and Belewu, 2022). The study of Victor et al., (2020) concluded that there is entrepreneurial skill practice gap in the sector of snail farming. There is need for worldwide market place scope for more profitability. Consequently, there is the need to assess entrepreneurial potentials of snail marketing in Enugu State South East Nigeria. It is against these background that this paper intends to identify entrepreneurial skills of snail marketing place and the measures to promote acquisition of entrepreneurial potentials of marketing by snail marketers in Enugu State. Enugu State is located in South East Nigeria, with a dominant population of urban and rural communities who eat snail. Although, some people in Enugu State do not eat snail due to cultural believe.

Snail marketing is a seasonal business in Enugu State with huge potentials to create job and wealth. Babatunde et al., (2019) stated that snail marketing could be high income yielding if properly handled until product gets to end consumer. However, due to ignorance in snail marketing practices among farmers and sellers, snail markets are traditional, crude and small with a great hidden potential. In the face of present economic difficulty in Nigeria, there seems to be dearth of literatures adequately addressing this issue in Enugu State. There is therefore the need to examine and address this issue through research which would provide snail farmers, entrepreneurs, educationist and government with empirical information on entrepreneurial potentials of snail marketing in Enugu State. More so, the result of this study published will spur more people to venture in snail marketing as fulltime or part-time practice. Hence, the study seeks to identify the entrepreneurial potentials / skill adopted by snail farmers and marketers in Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to identify entrepreneurial potentials adopted by farmers and marketers in snail marketing in Enugu State, South East Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Identify entrepreneurial potentials / skill practiced by snail farmers and marketers in marketing of snail in Enugu State.
2. Identify measures to promote acquisition of entrepreneurial potentials of snail farmers and marketers in marketing of snails in Enugu State.

Research Questions

1. what are the entrepreneurial potentials / skill practiced by snail farmers and marketers in marketing of snail in Enugu State?
2. What are measures that will promote acquisition of entrepreneurial potentials of snail farmers and marketers in marketing of snail in Enugu State?

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the responses of urban and rural snail farmers and marketers on entrepreneurial potentials / skill practiced by farmers and marketers in marketing of snail in Enugu State, South East Nigeria.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the clusters were analyzed using mean to answer the research questions while standard deviation was used to check for closeness of the mean to each other. Real limits of numbers were used to take decision on the research questions. Thus, 2.50 and above is agreed/great extent while 0-2.49 disagreed or low extent. t-test statistic was used to test null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The analysis was done with the use of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences SPSS version 20, to ensure accuracy in the analysis. Hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted when the probability value was greater than or equal to 0.05 level of significance. However, where the probability value was less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. When this happens, the result is said to be statistically significant.

Results

Research Question 1: what are the entrepreneurial potentials / skill practiced by snail farmers and marketers in marketing of snail in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean ratings of the responses of urban and rural snail farmers and marketers on the extent to which entrepreneurial potentials / skill of marketing are practiced by snail farmers and marketers in Enugu State.

S/N	Items	X _G	SD	Rem
1	Spot opportunity market for snail	2.95	0.88	GE
2	Keep documentary records of snail sales	1.82	0.89	LE
3	Carry out effective marketing and research	2.89	0.87	GE
4	Sale produce in farm/closest market	3.60	0.50	GE
5	Use modern technology for loading and off loading	1.00	0.00	LE
6	Network with snail sellers in my community	1.20	0.41	LE
7	Network with snail sellers and buyers all around the world	1.30	0.47	LE
8	Sell snail via internet technology	1.30	0.47	LE
9	Use social media to identify new customers	1.50	0.51	LE
10	Access fund from government for snail marketing	1.00	0.00	LE
11	Sell live snail	1.00	0.00	LE
12	Sell already processed snail	1.90	0.85	LE
13	Export snail product for sale abroad	3.10	0.96	GE
14	Able to stock and sell snails year round	1.10	0.31	LE
15	Able to determine factor that indicate the strength and weakness of competitors in snail marketing	1.50	0.51	LE
	Grand total	1.81	0.51	LE

Note: X=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, VGE= Very Great Extent, GE= Great Extent, LE= Low Extent, VLE= Very Low Extent.

Table 1 revealed that out of the fifteen (15) entrepreneurial potentials / skills of marketing listed, 1, 3, 4 and 13 were practiced to great extent while, items 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14 and 15 were practiced to less

extend by snail farmers and marketers in Enugu State. The standard deviation of 0.00 to 0.96 indicates that the responses of the respondents were far from each other, this could be as a result of difference in location.

Research Question 2: What are measures that will promote acquisition of entrepreneurial potentials / skill of snail farmers and marketers in marketing of snail in Enugu State?

Table 2: Mean Ratings of the responses on the measures that will promote acquisition of entrepreneurial potentials/skill of snail farmers and marketers in marketing of snail in Enugu State?

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Rem
1	Stake holders should design training/ seminar programme for snail marketer	3.70	0.47	SD
2	Objective of snail training/ seminar programme should be well defined to snail marketer	3.65	0.46	SD
3	Adequate number of qualified extension workers should be made available for snail marketer by the government	3.75	0.48	SD
4	Establishing snail marketers organization	3.60	0.49	SD
5	Government should ensure effective distribution of funds to snail marketers	3.50	0.51	SD
6	Extension workers should ensure practical instructions on the use of internet technologies for snail marketers	3.60	0.48	SD
7	Extension workers should emphasize the need for export snail market.	3.70	0.46	SD
8	Extension workers should ensure passing instructions on enforcing snail health and hygienic standards	3.60	0.49	SD
9	Government should assist on quality assurance of snail in the market	3.75	0.48	SD
10	Provision of market and snail market information by the government.	3.65	0.50	SD
11	Grand Total	3.65	0.48	SD

Note: X=Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree. A= Agree.

Table 2 revealed that out of the ten (10) item statement on measures that will promote acquisition of entrepreneurial potentials / skill of snail marketing, the snail farmers and marketers in Enugu State accepted all the ten (10) items with mean ranging from 3.50 to 3.75, this is because the mean score of 10 items are above 2.50 which is cut-off point for decision rule.

H_{01} There is no significant difference in the responses of urban and rural snail farmers and marketers on entrepreneurial potentials / skill of marketing practiced by snail farmers and marketers in marketing of snail in Enugu State, South East Nigeria.

Table 3: t-test Analysis of mean differences of urban and rural responses on the entrepreneurial potentials/skill of marketing practiced by snail farmers and marketers in marketing of snail in Enugu State does not differ significantly

Location	N	X	SD	Df	Sig	P-value	Decision
Urban	30	1.81	0.48	58	0.05	0.257	NS
Rural	30	1.80	0.47				

Table 3 shows a summary of the t-test analysis of the difference in the mean responses of urban and rural snail farmers and marketers on the entrepreneurial potentials / skill of marketing required by snail sellers in Enugu State. Since the calculated probability value (p-value) (0.257) is greater than alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the responses of urban and rural snail

farmers on entrepreneurial potentials / skill of marketing place required by snail sellers in Enugu State, South East Nigeria does not differ significantly is therefore retained. These similar practice by urban and rural farmers must be on the grounds that the snail farmers and sellers share same marketing place competency level.

Discussions

The findings of the study presented in table 1 revealed that 4 out of 15 identified entrepreneurial potentials/skill of marketing were practiced to great extent by snail farmers and marketers in Enugu State. The four skills are ability to spot opportunity market for snail, ability to carry out effective marketing and information research and ability to sale produce in farm/closest market. This finding aligned with the discovery of Amaewhule and Wolugbom (2018) whose study revealed that entrepreneurship marketing skills were needed by potential business individuals. This is in agreement with the findings of Onah et al., (2021), who discovered some entrepreneurial skill of entrepreneurs in Enugu State as; identifying potential markets, identifying snail with good market weight and size, handling and transportation among others. These earlier findings confirm credibility of the findings of this study on entrepreneurial potentials / skill of place in marketing practiced by snail farmers and marketers. The findings of this study presented in table 2 revealed that all identified measures to promote acquisition of entrepreneurial potentials of marketing were required by snail farmer and marketers in Enugu State. This is because these measures will help snail farmers and seller achieve profitable employment. This agrees with Amaewhule and Wolugbom (2018) whose study revealed that attending seminars and workshops that

are skill oriented, ensuring practical instructions among others will promote acquisition of entrepreneurial skills. Andriyanty (2020) also revealed that farmers have low marketing skill which should be developed through introducing new technology, enhancing the role of local agricultural instructors among others. These improvements would have positive effect on sales and profits.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It could be concluded that entrepreneurial skills of marketing practiced by urban and rural snail farmers and sellers showed no significant difference, which means that urbanization has little or no influence in respondent marketing potentials / skills. This could be addressed by implementing all the measures agreed to great extent by respondents as strategies that would improve acquisition of entrepreneurial potentials of snail marketing. Based on the findings the following recommendations were drawn:

1. Snail farmers / marketers should be empowered with market report and internet skills for wider customer outreach through training.
2. Advocacy on snail marketing should be encouraged by stakeholders to ensure conservation of snail.

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