

**ANALYSIS OF CONSUMERS' PREFERENCE FOR HONEY IN ODEDA LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA OF OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the consumers' preference for honey in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. Primary data were collected from 120 respondents with the use of a wellstructured questionnaire, using a multi-stage sampling procedure. The analysis was done using descriptive statistics and a probit regression model. The results revealed that the majority (56.7%) were female, 90% of them were married, with an age range between 41 and 50. About 91.7% of the respondents were aware of the health benefits of honey and thus consumed honey. Majority (85%) of the consumers preferred honey to other sweeteners, and local honey was commonly consumed. Supermarkets (58%) and local markets (42%) were the common points of purchase. The preferred attributes considered in the purchase of honey included quality of honey (40%), packaging (35%), and labeling (25%). Education, health benefits, monthly income, and sex were the major factors that influenced consumers' preference for honey. The study suggested that local honey processors and distributors should improve the quality, packaging, and labeling of honey in the study area.

Keywords: Honey, Preference, Packaging, Labeling, Ogun State, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Apiculture, commonly referred to as honey production, represents an underutilized agricultural resource capable of supporting economic growth, poverty alleviation, and improved livelihoods in Nigeria. It is defined as the science and art of beekeeping, involving the rearing and management of bees, crop pollination, the production and study of bee-derived products, and the breeding of bees for honey production. Whether practiced on a small or commercial scale, beekeeping has emerged as a lucrative agricultural enterprise in many countries, including Nigeria.

Honey is a natural product commonly used for its therapeutic properties. Reports indicate that it contains approximately 200 different components and has been utilized as antiquity for both nutritional and health-related purposes. (Adam *et al.*, 2023)

The demand for honey has been steadily increasing due to its perceived health benefits, cultural significance, and various culinary uses. Nigeria, with its diverse ecosystems and rich floral biodiversity, offers an ideal environment for honey production. However, there exists a significant gap in understanding consumers' preferences for honey and the factors that influence their preferences in the Nigerian market (Vapa-Tankosic *et al.*, 2020). The demand for honey is increasing globally due to its growing popularity as a natural sweetener and its potential health benefits. However, the supply of honey is not meeting the demand, resulting in a shortage of highquality honey in the market (Adeyemi *et al.*, 2019). In addition, the marketing channels for honey are often inefficient, leading to high transaction costs, low prices for beekeepers, and limited access to markets for processed honey products (Ogundele *et al.*, 2020). Honey is a special food because it contains all the nutritional elements necessary for the growth and development of organisms and human beings (amino acids, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, pollen, essential oils, enzymes, etc.) (Ćirić *et al.*, 2015 and Cianciosi *et al.*, 2018). Its properties are strictly linked to health gains and therapeutic gains (Cianciosi *et al.*, 2018, and Arawwawala *et al.*, 2015), thus making it a functional food (Zanchini *et al.*, 2022). Previous studies about consumer preferences investigated the influence that the communicated benefits of honey for human health have during the product purchasing process (Viscecchia *et al.*, 2019). A significant portion of the current literature has examined sense-based features related to consistency (creamy, liquid or crystallised honey), taste (sweet or bitter), aroma (fruity, floral or intense) and colour (Ghorab *et al.*, 2021) and how these impact consumer choice (Šedí *et al.*, 2018). Researchers and producers are also interested in investigating gastronomic pairings, as honey plays a culinary role in preserving traditional local culture (Zhang *et al.*, 2019) (it tends to pair well with fresh or aged cheeses, meat or other ingredients in recipes).

Objectives:

1. Describe the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents in the study area.
2. Determine the level of awareness of the health benefits of honey.
3. Examine the consumption pattern of honey in the study area.
4. Identify the point of purchase of honey.
5. Analyze the factors affecting consumer preference for honey in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. The sample is a representative of the entire population of people living in Odeda, which is estimated to be 109,449 as stated by the 2006 census, and it has an area of 1,560 km². Not only is Odeda local government situated in the North Central Region of Ogun state, but it is also one of the 20 local governments in the state, and its headquarters is situated at Odeda.

Data Collection and Sampling Procedure. The data were collected through a well-structured questionnaire. Random sampling techniques were employed in the selection of respondents. In the first stage, Odeda was randomly selected out of the twenty Local Governments in Ogun State. The second stage involved random selection of 6 communities in Odeda Local Government (Obantoko, Alabata, Osiele, Olodo, Alagbagba, Ilugun), while in the third stage, twenty (20) respondents were randomly selected in each community. Thus, a total of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents were sampled for the study.

Analytical Techniques. Analytical techniques employed in the study include: descriptive statistics (such as mean, frequency, tables, and percentages) and the Probit regression model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

The findings in Table 1 showed the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents in the study area. The Age distribution of respondents revealed that the majority of the respondents were in their economically active age, with a mean age of 48 years. Almost all (90%) of the respondents were married. Distribution according to the educational status revealed that 41.7% of the respondents had a tertiary education, 25.8% had a secondary education, 24.2% had a primary education, while 8.3% had no formal education. The mean household size was 6 persons, and the mean monthly income was ₦75,550.00. This revealed a low level of income in the study area.

Table 1: Description of the Respondents by Socioeconomic Characteristics

Variable	Frequency (120)	Percentage (100%)
Sex		
Male	52	43.3
Female	68	56.7
Total	120	100
Age (years)		
20-30	12	10.0
31-40	29	24.2
41-50	32	26.7
51-60	26	21.7
Above 61	21	17.5
Total	120	100
Religion		
Christianity	62	51.7
Islam	50	41.7
Traditional	8	6.6
Total	120	100
Marital Status		
Single	5	4.2
Married	108	90.0
Separated	6	5.0
Widowed	1	0.8
Total	120	100
Years of Education		
No Formal education	10	8.3
Primary education	29	24.2
Secondary education	31	25.8
Tertiary education	50	41.7
Total	120	100
Household Size		
1-2	7	5.8
3-4	15	12.5
5-6	56	46.7
7-8	42	35.0
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Awareness of the Health Benefits of Honey

According to Table 2, 91.7% of the respondents were aware of the health benefits of honey. This showed that the level of awareness of the health benefits of honey was high in the study area.

Table 2: Level of Awareness of Health Benefits of Honey

Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	110	91.7
No	10	8.3
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Consumption pattern of Honey in the study Area

Among the respondents who consumed honey, 15% of them consumed imported honey, while 85% consumed local honey. This indicated that local honey was highly consumed and there was high demand for it in the market.

Table 3: Consumption Pattern of Honey in the Study Area

Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Local	102	85.0
Imported	18	15.0
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Honey Point of Purchase

Respondents who purchased their honey from local markets were 91.7%, while 8.3% of them patronized supermarkets. This showed that more people preferred buying from local markets than visiting the supermarket. The result is, however, in line with Pocol and Bolboaca (2013) that honey consumers preferred to buy honey from a local producer in Romania.

Table 4: Honey Point of Purchase

Point of purchase	Frequency	Percentage
Local	110	91.7
Imported	10	8.3
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Factors Affecting Consumers' Preference for Honey

The results of the probit regression analysis (Table 8) revealed that the household income was significant and positive at 5%; therefore, with an increase in household income, consumer preference for honey increased. Additionally, the health benefit significantly influenced consumers' preference for honey in the study area ($p < 0.05$), implying that an increase in the respondents' health status led to increased honey consumption and preferences for honey. The probit regression results revealed that education positively and significantly influenced consumers' preference for honey consumption at the 1% significance level ($p < 0.01$). This implies that more educated respondents are more likely to prefer honey consumption than less educated respondents, possibly due to greater awareness of the nutritional and health benefits associated with honey. Sex is negatively significant at the 5% level in determining preference for honey consumption, which implies that gender plays an important role in determining consumers' preference for honey. Female respondents were more likely to prefer honey consumption than male respondents, depending on the coding of the variable.

Table 4: Factors Affecting Consumer Preference for Honey Consumption

Consumer preferences	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value
Sex	-.818**	.321	-2.55	.011
Monthly income	.348**	.142	2.44	.015
Age	-.243	.175	-1.39	.165
Marital status	-.4	.44	-0.91	.363
Household size	.323	.205	1.58	.115
Education	.31***	.094	3.28	.001
Health benefit	.891***	.33	2.70	.007
Member Farmers Association	.411	.376	1.09	.274
Constant	-.115	.899	-0.13	.898

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The result of the study showed that the awareness of the health benefits and consumption of honey was high. Local honey was commonly consumed, and the major points of purchase were markets. Most consumers preferred honey to other sweeteners, and the preferred honey attributes were quality, packaging, labeling, and price. The awareness of the health benefits, quality, and household size also significantly influenced consumers' preference for honey. Pest attacks, poor storage and processing facilities, and inadequate finance were also seen as the major constraints militating against bee honey marketing in the study area. As a result of this, the following recommendations are necessary.

1. Bee farmers can form a cooperative society, as this will bring about a large scale production. It will also broaden farmers' capital base for business expansion.
2. Policy should be made particularly as regards improving the educational status of the bee farmers in the study area.
3. Awareness of the health benefits of honey should also be intensified among the male population.

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