

ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS REQUIRED BY PENSIONERS FOR ENTRY INTO GRASSCUTTER REARING OCCUPATION FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD IN ENUGU STATE

BY

ISIWU EDWARD CHUKWUKA AND ASOGWA VINCENT CHIJINDU

Department of Agricultural and Home Economics Education

Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike

edisiwu50@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study was designed to identify the entrepreneurial skills required by Pensioners for entry into grasscutter rearing occupation for sustainable livelihood. Four research questions and four null hypotheses guided the study. A structured questionnaire made up of 57 items was used to elicit response from 126 respondents comprising 83 registered grasscutter farmers and 43 Agricultural Extension workers in Enugu State. The instrument was validated by three experts and the reliability was established using Cronbach Alpha which yielded a coefficient of 0.89. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation (SD) to answer the research questions and t-test statistic for testing the null hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of probability and 182 degree of freedom. The findings of the study revealed that entrepreneurial skills are required by Pensioners on 17 items in Planning, 23 items in housing, 11 items in feeding and 6 items in marketing of grasscutter. Based on the finding, it was recommended that the identified skills should be incorporated into the curriculum of skill acquisition centres where it could be used for the training of Pensioners. It was also recommended that the identified skills should be taught to the managers of skill acquisition centres who in turn will train the Pensioners.

Key words: Entrepreneur, Occupation, Pensioner, Grasscutter, Skills, Rearing.

Introduction

Domestication of the grasscutter (also known as cane rat) is slowly becoming a success story in Africa and Nigeria in particular, where grasscutter farming has proven to be a profitable business. Because of its tasty meat appreciated by all, regardless of ethnic origin or religion- grasscutter have been hunted locally to the point of extinction. The meat of grasscutter is a good source of protein and normalises the cholesterol level in the body if consumed. In the opinion of Adu (2002) economically, grasscutters are traded locally in fresh or smoked form and the smoked grasscutters are exported to USA and Europe among others. This makes grasscutter a source of foreign

exchange earnings in Nigeria and a lucrative farm enterprise where vulnerable group in Nigerian society such as pensioners can gainfully be empowered and sustained. Grasscutter has high fecundity and so matures within three months. It gives income within a short period of time and the feeds are sourced within the “yard” environment. The production of the animal can be started with very little capital and it has high profit margin. The skills required in the production of grasscutter is low and it is less strenuous to manage. The low income investment in grasscutter production, high weight gain, great demand for the meat and low level of skill required for its maintenance are of great benefits to the pensioners. Owen

and Dike (2012) posited that the animal's meat is highly acceptable in South Eastern States in Nigeria as a good delicacy in most restaurants and hotels and because of its culinary properties with high protein, calcium, phosphorus and moisture contents. The author stated that developing techniques for domestication and rearing of grasscutter is a sensible way to produce protein-rich food for increasing human population.

Rearing in the view of Okereke (2012) is the bringing up and care of young animals until they are fully grown. The author posited that it is the act of taking care of and support of animals to maturity. In the view of Iwena (2008), rearing of grasscutter to market weight is grouped into three phases. These are from breeding to kidding, kidding to weaning and weaning to finishing (market weight). In this work, emphasis is laid on skills in rearing weaned grasscutter (kids) to market weight. Weaning is a stage in the life of an animal when it is been separated from the mother to stop sucking breast. The grasscutters are weaned within one month after birth. Adu (1999) suggested a weaning age of 6 weeks based on high post weaning mortality when animals are weaned at 4 weeks.

Grasscutter rearing is an entrepreneurial venture in grasscutter farming which can be properly managed by Pensioners in Enugu State to sustain their livelihood after retiring from active service. Entrepreneurship as viewed by Schumpeter (1989) is the capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make a profit. In the opinion of Rosenberg (2003) entrepreneurship is the process of identifying and starting a new business venture and sourcing and organizing the required resources while taking both the risks and rewards associated with the venture. In the view of Uduma in Dumbiri (2011), entrepreneurship is

the process by which individual combine human and material resources in order to provide goods and services desired by man. In this study, entrepreneurship is the combination of human and material resources efficiently by Pensioners in grasscutter rearing in order to sustain their livelihood. In order to be effective in rearing, these pensioners should be acquiring the requisite skills in rearing.

Skill according to Osinem in Ugwuoke and Ejiofor (2010) is the ability to do something well. The authors posited that it is the ability to perform an act expertly. It is the expertness, practiced ability or proficiency displayed in the performance of a task. In the view of Okorie (2000) skills are a manual dexterity through repetitive performance of an operation. The author posited that skill is a well-established habit of doing something and involves the acquisition of performance capability. Ogwo and Oranu (2006) noted that when skills are carefully developed and fully learned, they become formed habit. For effective habits formation, the development and practices of skills should be a gradual process. In grasscutter rearing occupation, skills are needed in planning operations, selection of breeds to rear, housing, feeding, health management as well as marketing.

Grasscutter rearing has been recognized in many parts of the West Africa as a source of income. However, in Enugu State, the researchers have observed that grasscutter has not been well developed despite its numerous benefits. There is no training programme in the state that could provide the prerequisite knowledge and skills to pensioners who have retired from active service demanding to engage themselves in less strenuous occupation. If the skills in grasscutter rearing should be identified and used for training the Pensioners who may be interested in grasscutter rearing, It is better gotten from experts in the

occupation. The experts in this occupation are the practicing grasscutter farmers and agricultural extension agents who are knowledgeable in grasscutter rearing. When the skills are identified in grasscutter rearing, they could be used for the training of the Pensioners who lack the skills in grasscutter occupation in Enugu State. Most Pensioners are individuals with background in agricultural activities, who have disengaged from their initial employment after active service in an organization due to attainment of a specified age or years of service but are still able and willing to continue with their existence in any desirable occupation that is less strenuous. Most of these pensioners usually receive stipends which are irregular and most often not adequate for sustaining their livelihood and meeting the needs of the family such as education of children, care for extended family, social/financial responsibilities to community members, taking care of their health needs, among others. The pensioners therefore require additional financial sources to meet these obligations while on the other hand, their ability and physique are degenerating. They therefore require gentle skill work but high income yielding to enhance their income. They require activities that will be started with little capital involvement, carried out with less stress, acquired with low level of skill in operations and marketed at the farm gate without glut. They would engage in work activities that is less exhausting or sapping, less time consuming, marketable in terms of cost and will not take them too far from their home which can be realized through training and empowerment on grasscutter rearing occupation. Unfortunately, they lack the skills to engage in the enterprise hence the need for this study.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to identify entrepreneurial skills required for training Pensioners in grasscutter rearing occupations with a view to providing them opportunity to

earn money to sustain their livelihood after retirement. Specifically the study seeks to identify the:

1. Entrepreneurial skills required by the Pensioners for Planning for grasscutter rearing occupations
2. Entrepreneurial skills required by the Pensioners for the construction of hutches (house) for rearing grasscutter.
3. Entrepreneurial skills required by the Pensioners for feeding grasscutters
4. Entrepreneurial skills required by the Pensioners for marketing matured grasscutter.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the entrepreneurial skills required by the Pensioners for planning for grasscutter rearing occupation?
2. What are the entrepreneurial skills required by the Pensioners for construction of grasscutter house?
3. What are the entrepreneurial skills required by the Pensioners for feeding of grasscutters?
4. What are the entrepreneurial skills required by the Pensioners for Marketing matured grasscutter?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and are tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There was no significant difference in the mean responses of Agricultural Extension agents and Grasscutter farmers on the entrepreneurial skills required for planning for grasscutter rearing occupation.
2. There was no significant difference in the mean responses of Agricultural Extension agents and Grasscutter farmers on the entrepreneurial skills required by

pensioners for construction of house for grasscutter

3. There was no significant difference in the mean responses of Agricultural Extension agents and Grasscutter farmers on the entrepreneurial skills required for feeding grasscutters
4. There was no significant difference in the mean responses of Agricultural Extension agents and Grasscutter farmers on the entrepreneurial skills required in marketing of matured grasscutter.

Methodology

A survey design was adopted for the study. Survey research design in the views of Chohen, Manion and Marrison (2009) is a situation where by the researcher uses questionnaire to gather large scales data from a representative sample of the population by collecting and analyzing data from the group through the use of questionnaire. The design was considered suitable as the study solicited information from agricultural Extension Officers and registered Grasscutter Farmers with the use of questionnaire on the entrepreneurial skills required by Pensioners for entering into grasscutter rearing occupation.

The area of the study was Enugu State made up of six Agricultural Zones such as Agbani, Awgu, Enugu, Enugu-Ezike, Nsukka, and Udi. The state is naturally endowed with good ecological and environmental condition favourable for grasscutter production, for example, abundant green shrub, grasses, and conducive weather for livestock rearing.

The population of the study was 126 made up of 43 Agricultural Extension Officers and 83 registered grasscutter farmers drawn from the three Agricultural zones of Enugu state (Statistics Unit, ENADEP Office, Enugu 2012). As a result of the small population, the entire

population was used as sample for the study and therefore no sampling was involved.

A structured questionnaire was developed from literature and oral interview by the researchers and used for data collection. The questionnaire was structured on four-point response scale for the skill items and their corresponding scale values are as follows: Highly required (HR)- 4, Averagely required (AR)-3, Slightly required (SR)-2, and Not required (NR)-1.

The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts from the Department of Vocational Teacher Education and Animal Science department, Faculty of Agriculture, all in University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Each of these validates was served with a copy of the instrument for validation. Based on their constructive criticisms and suggestions amendments were made on the instruments before a copy was produced and used for the study.

The reliability of the research instrument was determined by administering a two times, copies of the questionnaire to a sample of 20 respondents made up of 10 Agricultural Extension Officers and 10 Grasscutter farmers in Ebonyi State.

The second administration of the instrument took place three weeks after the first administration. The data obtained were analysed using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r) and corrected by Spearman brown formula prophecy. The correlation (r) coefficient yielded a value of 0.89 for the entire instruments and 0.86, 0.89 0.87 and 0.91 for the sub scales.

A total of 225 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents personally by the researcher and three trained research assistants as follows: 135 copies were given to Grasscutter farmers out of which 112 were properly filled, returned and used for data

analysis. Also 90 copies were administered to Agricultural Extension Officers, out of which 72 copies were properly filled and returned and equally used for data analysis.

The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test statistic. The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance and 280 degree of freedom. The mean, standard deviation and t-test results are presented in the same table for each research question.

The decision for required or not required was based on the mean cut-off point of 2.50. Any skill item with a mean response of 2.50 was regarded as required while any skill item with a mean response of lower than 2.50 was regarded as not required.

Any item with a standard deviation between 0.00 and 1.96 revealed that the respondents were close to the mean and not too far from one another in their responses. The null hypothesis of no significance difference was accepted for any item whose t-calculated value was less than the t-value, while it was rejected for any item whose t-calculated value was greater than the t-table value.

Results of the Study

The results of the study are presented in Tables 1 to 4.

Table 1:

Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of the Responses of Agricultural extension Officers and Grasscutter Farmers on the Entrepreneurial Skills Required in Planning for rearing Grasscutter in Enugu State

S/N	Planning for Grasscutter Rearing	X1	Sd1	X2	Sd2	XG	Rem	t-cal	t-tab	Remark
1.	Formulate specific objectives for rearing grasscutter	3.25	1.15	3.03	1.80	3.08	Agree	0.71	1.96	HR
2.	Review the objectives of rearing grass-cutter as an enterprise periodically based on changes in market demand and supply	3.17	1.50	3.65	2.04	3.28	Agree	0.60	1.96	HR
3.	Draw a programme plan for grasscutter rearing Enterprise	3.19	1.16	3.15	2.01	3.56	Agree	0.75	1.96	HR
4.	Decide on the type (small, medium or large) of grass cutter to adopt	3.29	1.66	3.28	1.86	3.92	Agree	0.49	1.96	HR
5.	Identify sources of fund/credit for grass cutters rearing enterprise	3.26	1.20	3.45	1.25	3.58	Agree	1.37	1.96	HR
6.	Identify relevant materials inputs and their locations for rearing grasscutter	3.10	1.90	3.11	1.83	3.24	Agree	1.08	1.96	HR
7.	Decide on the number of skilled workers needed for rearing grasscutters	3.21	1.92	3.12	1.64	3.54	Agree	0.96	1.96	HR
8.	Identifying market for sales of the animals	3.23	1.76	3.22	1.38	3.27	Agree	0.63	1.96	HR
9.	Budget for grass cutter rearing enterprise	3.30	1.23	3.41	1.36	3.53	Agree	0.97	1.96	HR
10.	Plan all farm operations to make most efficient use of the available money	3.15	1.40	3.28	1.58	3.18	Agree	1.14	1.96	HR
11.	Provide relevant facilities for use in grass cutter rearing enterprise.	3.28	1.44	3.13	2.08	3.87	Agree	0.74	1.96	HR
12.	Keep relevant records for grasscutter rearing	3.14	1.20	3.94	2.11	3.59	Agree	0.26	1.96	HR
13.	Develop grasscutter rearing schedule of activities for the workers	3.21	1.41	3.46	1.32	3.27	Agree	0.77	1.96	HR

14. Source for fodders and concentrates for the source for the animals	3.20	1.43	3.65	1.28	3.33	Agree	1.54	1.96	HR
15. Make provision for regularly supply to the grass cutter farm	3.19	1.48	3.29	1.92		Agree	0.70	1.96	HR
16. Source for a veterinary personnel to care for the animals	3.15	1.74	3.89	1.41	3.49 3.05	Agree	1.02	1.96	HR
17. Develop rules and regulations to guide the operational activities in the farm.	3.16	1.35	3.76	1.78		Agree	0.85	1.96	HR
					3.32				

The two groups of respondents agreed that all the items are the necessary skills required for planning for grasscutter rearing occupation in the study area. The above table also revealed that the seventeen items had their t-calculated value ranged from 0.26 to 1.54 at probability

level of 0.05 and 280 degree of freedom which are lower than the table value of 1.96. This shows that there is no significance difference in the mean ratings of the two groups of respondents on the skills required in planning for grasscutter rearing occupation.

Table 2

Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of the Responses of Agricultural extension

S/N	Construction of house for grasscutter	X1	Sd1	X2	Sd2	XG	Rem	t-cal	t-tab	Remark
1.	Determine the purpose of production (small, medium or large)	3.18	1.24	3.22	1.64	3.14	Agree	0.59	1.96	HR
2.	Secure farm land to construct grass-cutter house	3.27	1.30	3.28	1.04	3.32	Agree	0.48	1.96	HR
3.	Get designs of house types to construct	3.11	1.26	3.11	2.01	3.28	Agree	0.57	1.96	HR
4.	Prepare an estimated cost of constructing the house	3.24	1.38	3.20	1.63	3.54	Agree	0.24	1.96	HR
5.	Clear the farm land ready for construction	3.18	1.34	3.43	1.15	3.67	Agree	1.34	1.96	HR
6.	Procure materials needed for constructing the house.	3.03	1.60	3.12	1.56	3.51	Agree	1.18	1.96	HR
7.	Hire artisans (builders) to build the house based on specifications	3.15	1.72	3.00	1.54	3.41	Agree	0.56	1.96	HR
8.	Submit a planned design to the builder	3.20	1.52	3.43	1.19	3.29	Agree	0.81	1.96	HR
9.	Guide the artisan on the specification to Follow	3.23	1.19	3.23	1.11	3.33	Agree	0.89	1.96	HR
10.	supervise the artisan regularly to avoid error in construction	3.22	1.39	3.56	1.48	3.42	Agree	1.28	1.96	HR
11.	Clean the house of rubbish						Agree		1.96	HR
		3.28	1.30	3.12	1.08	3.56		0.54		
12.	Disinfect the house to avoid diseases infestation						Agree		1.96	HR
		3.11	1.22	3.24	2.11	3.10		0.61		
13.	Stock the farm with grass cutters	3.31	1.43	3.65	1.32	3.57	Agree	0.55	1.96	HR
14.	Make provision for foot match at the entrance of the farm house	3.03	1.56	3.08	1.18	3.21	Agree	1.24	1.96	HR
15.	Put disinfectants on the foot match to avoid Individuals' from introducing diseases.	3.12	1.36	3.89	1.72	3.33			1.96	HR
							Agree	0.50		
16.	Provide beddings with hays for the Grasscutters to hibernate	3.15	1.67	3.56	1.49	3.15	Agree	1.11	1.96	HR

17. Provide watering and feeding troughs to the pens	3.26	1.32	3.29	1.68	3.43	Agree	1.96	HR
18. Guard the pens with rods and binding wires to provide security	3.29	1.81	3.40	1.83	3.21	Agree	0.41	1.96 HR
19. Hang tarpaulins or water proofs or the top of the wire nets to provide moderate room temperature to the house	3.67	1.71	3.21	1.55	3.38	Agree	0.43	1.96 HR
20. Remove the beddings when dirty with brooms to the waste bins or baskets	3.37	1.54	3.70	1.45	3.49	Agree	0.76	1.96 HR
21. Use packers to collect the remaining wastes mixed with sand to the waste bins	3.24	1.23	3.61	1.63	3.21	Agree	0.85	1.96 HR
22. Wash the floor with water, brush and detergents	3.45	1.41	3.48	1.32	3.45	Agree	0.91	1.96 HR
23. Disinfect the farm house against diseases and pests.	3.87	1.28	3.23	1.49	3.48	Agree	0.40	1.96 HR

Officers and Grasscutter Farmers on the Entrepreneurial Skills Required in Construction of House for Grasscutter.

The two groups of respondents agreed that all the items are the necessary skills required for the construction house (hutches) for grasscutter rearing occupation in the study area. The above table also revealed that the twenty three items had their t-calculated value ranged from 0.24 to

1.34 at probability level of 0.05 (two tail test) and 280 degree of freedom. This indicates that their t-calculated value were lower than the table value of 1.96 which shows that there is no significance difference in the mean ratings of the two groups of respondents on the items

Table 3

Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of the Responses of Agricultural extension Officers and Grasscutter Farmers on the Entrepreneurial Skills Required in Feeding Grasscutter.

S/N Feeding of Grasscutter	X1	Sd1	X2	Sd2	XG	Rem	t-cal	t-tab	Remark
1. Hire assistants to harvest in the grazing Field	3.72	1.11	3.87	1.24	3.48	Agree	0.45	1.96	HR
2. Feed the animals with fodder and concentrate	3.67	1.16	3.11	1.54	3.15	Agree	0.54	1.96	HR
3. Put foddors/concentrates in a store.	3.22	1.53	3.56	1.01	3.46	Agree	0.37	1.96	HR
4. Examine the foddors to ensure free from Decay	3.54	1.28	3.76	1.43	3.09	Agree	0.12	1.96	HR
5. Wash the foddors with water before feeding the animals	3.23	1.54	3.54	1.86	3.17	Agree	0.89	1.96	HR
6. Consider possible feed poisoning to the grasscutter	3.09	1.40	3.23	1.36	3.11	Agree	1.25	1.96	HR
7. Fumigate the house with disinfectant to avoid diseases and pests Infestation.	3.28	1.60	3.43	1.44	3.60	Agree	0.71	1.96	HR
8. Identify foddors free from pest (anphoids and caterpillars)	3.35	1.42	3.45	1.29	3.85	Agree	0.61	1.96	HR
9. Pour concentrates to the feeding troughs for the animals to eat.	3.12	1.28	3.90	1.38	3.53	Agree	0.19	1.96	HR
10. Pour water on the watering trough for the animals to take	3.45	1.31	3.18	1.86	3.33	Agree	1.37	1.96	HR
11. Feed the animals 3 times a day	3.76	1.34	3.29	1.43	3.17	Agree	0.42	1.96	HR

The two groups of respondents agreed that all the items are the necessary skills required for feeding grasscutter. The above table also revealed that the eleven items had their t-calculated value ranged from 0.12 to 1.37 at probability level of 0.05 (two tail test) and 280

degree of freedom. This indicates that their t-calculated value were lower than the table value of 1.96 which shows that there is no significance difference in the mean ratings of the two groups of respondents on the items.

Table 4

Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of the Responses of Agricultural extension Officers and Grasscutter Farmers on the Entrepreneurial Skills Required for Marketing of Matured Grasscutter in Enugu State

	Agricultural extension functions	X1	Sd1	X2	Sd2	XG	Rem	t-cal	t-tab	Remark
1.	Prepare to sell the reared grasscutter at 4-6 months.	3.44	1.28	3.54	1.24	3.21	Agree	0.33	1.96	HR
2.	Grade the grasscutters using size, weight or quality to determine price.	3.73	1.27	3.09	1.54	3.52	Agree	0.43	1.96	HR
3.	Fix prices to different sizes of grasscutter.	3.22	1.32	3.36	1.01	3.43	Agree	0.31	1.96	HR
4.	Advertise the reared grasscutter for attracting customers	3.44	1.21	3.48	1.43	3.09	Agree	0.55	1.96	HR
5.	Sell the reared grasscutter	3.11	1.37	3.67	1.86	3.33	Agree	0.21	1.96	HR
6.	Keep financial records of sales.	3.93	1.48	3.51	1.36	3.28	Agree	1.05	1.96	HR

The two groups of respondents agreed that all the items are the necessary skills required for marketing matured grasscutter. The above table also revealed that the eleven items had their t-calculated value ranged from 0.21 to 1.05 at probability level of 0.05 (two tail test) and 280 degree of freedom. This indicates that their t-calculated value were lower than the table value of 1.96 which shows that there is no significance difference in the mean ratings of the two groups of respondents on the items.

Discussion

The data generated and analyzed from the research questions and hypotheses from the Agricultural Extension Officers and Grasscutter farmers confirmed that all the skill items are required in the four areas of grasscutter rearing occupation identified by the study. The findings on the planning for grasscutter rearing occupation, reveals that the objectives for rearing grasscutter should be clearly stated and reviewed with time, a programme plan should

be drawn in line with the objectives, decisions on the type of animal species to be stocked should be considered, sources of funds and materials inputs for rearing the animal are also necessary, farm records keeping, availability of skilled workers and the rules and regulations guiding the farm operations among others were skills for planning for grasscutter rearing. The result of the agreed with the findings of Ibrahim (2009) in a study carried out to determine the entrepreneurial skills required by secondary school graduates for success in rice production enterprise in Kwara state, where it was founded that eleven (11) skills were required in planning for rice production. These include decide on the location to site the farm, decide on the type of farming practice to adopt, identify sources of fund among others. The result of this study is also in line with Ayodele (1988), findings on the entrepreneurial skills required by retirees in pineapple processing in Enugu State. The result of his study also revealed that 10 skills were

required for planning for the processing of pineapple. The

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required skills include formulating objectives, review of the formulated objectives, and source for funds among others.

On skills required in housing of grasscutter, result revealed that skills identified like the ability of the Pensioners to secure farm land for the construction, get designs of different temperature to the house among others are required by Pensioners. The result of this study agreed with that of Ugwoke and Osinem (2011) in a study carried out to determine the housing and feeding competencies required by retirees for success in snail production in Nsukka and Obollo-Afor Educational Zones of Enugu State where it was founded that 16 competencies were required by Retirees in constructing house for snail production. The required competencies include provide escape-proof in snail houses, provide enough space to avoid overcrowding, protect the house from insects, predators and poachers, Fit wire and mosquito nets on top of the rearing drums, fence the pens when using outdoor snail farming and so on.

Result on table 3, revealed that the skills identified in feeding the grasscutter like hire assistants to harvest fodders at the grazing fields, feed the animals with fodder and concentrates, examine the fodders to ensure free from decay, wash the fodders with water before feeding the animal, fumigate the house with disinfectants to avoid diseases and pests infestations, identify fodders free from anphoids and caterpillars, pour concentrates on feeding troughs for the animal to feed on, pour water on watering trough for the animal to drink, feed the animal ad-libitum and so on are required by Pensioners for feeding grasscutter. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Ugwoke and Osinem (2011) on competencies required by retirees in feeding and housing snail in Nsukka Zone which

hutches to construct, prepare an estimated cost of the construction, clean the farm of rubbish, hire labour for the construction, provide materials for the building, disinfect the house to avoid diseases, provide beddings with hays for the animals to hibernate, hang tarpaulin to provide moderate

revealed that 13 competency items are required by retirees in feeding snails. It includes the ability of the retirees to: feed the snail with cocoyam leaves, feed snails with tender leaves and shoots, feed them with fruits of pawpaw, mango, oil palm, tomato among others, feed snails with tubers of cocoyam, cassava, potato, among others. In his support, Ado (1999) noted that grasscutter are known to eat leguminous and fibrous leaves, cassava tubers, fresh rice husks, maize stalks and concentrates like maize, rice brans, and potato and so on.

The result of the study in table 4 showed that 6 skill items such as prepare to sell the reared grasscutter at 4-6 months old, grade the grasscutter using size, weight or quality to determine price, fix prices to different sizes of grasscutter, advertise the reared grasscutter for attracting customers, sell the reared grasscutter and keep financial records of sale were skills required by Pensioners for marketing grasscutter products. The findings of this study were also in conformity with the findings of Baptist and Mensah (1986) who carried out a similar study on entrepreneurial skills required by secondary school graduates in rice production enterprise in Kwara State and out of the skills itemized for marketing, two skills such as selling to buyers and keeping financial records were in line with the skills items for marketing grasscutter products. The result of the hypotheses tested showed that there were no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the agricultural extension officers

and grasscutter farmers on planning, housing, feeding and marketing of grasscutter.

Summary and Recommendations

There is need for mass production of grasscutter because they can be reared both on small scale and large scale in a yard environment without stress. Similarly the amount of capital required for the establishment of grasscutter farm is small and the practice require little labour for Pensioners for their sustenance.

It was therefore recommended that:

1. The identified entrepreneurial skills should be incorporated into the curriculum of skill acquisition centres for training of pensioners in grasscutter production.
2. The identified skills should be infused into secondary education curriculum to enable the students the opportunity of entering into grasscutter production occupation after graduation.

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