

**Urbanising Traditional Foods: Developing Context-Specific Marketing
Strategies to Increase Consumption and Appreciation**

Bindura University of Science Education



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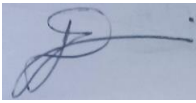
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We, the undersigned, hereby certify that we have supervised, reviewed, and recommend to the Bindura University of Science Education the acceptance of the research project titled: **“Urbanising Traditional Foods: Developing Context-Specific Marketing Strategies to Increase Consumption and Appreciation”**, submitted by: Edwin Hwari (Registration Number: B232478B) In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the **Master of Science Degree in Food Security and Sustainable Agricultural Production**

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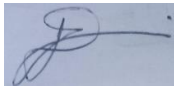
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DECLARATION

The undersigned certify that they have read this research project and have approved its submission for marking in relation to the department's guideline and regulations.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for his grace is sufficient, I would like also to thank my family for the support given throughout my educational tour.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to:my supervisor *Dr A.C Mujeyi* for their invaluable, guidance, support and profound expertise throughout my research journey. The participants who generously shared their time and perspectives, making this study possible are equally acknowledged. Special mention goes to my colleagues and peers for their collaboration, feedback and camaraderie. My family and friends for their unwavering encouragement, patience and understanding. I really appreciate the resources and facilities provided by rock academy. Special thanks to *Dr Ziwange* of University of Zimbabwe for the unwavering support rendered and exceptional mentoring contributed throughout the research journey.

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the attitudes, perceptions, and consumption patterns of traditional foods among urban households in Greendale, Harare, Zimbabwe, amidst the challenges posed by rapid urbanisation. Utilising a mixed-methods approach, the research incorporates quantitative data from surveys of 100 Greendale households in Harare and qualitative insights from five focus group discussions and fifteen key informant interviews. The findings indicate that urban households recognise traditional foods for their cultural heritage and nutritional value, yet face barriers related to time, cost, and convenience. Education plays a crucial role, with higher educational attainment linked to more favourable attitudes toward traditional foods, while demographic factors like age and gender show no significant impact on perceptions of nutrition. Qualitative insights reveal a rich diversity of traditional foods across Zimbabwe, reflecting local agricultural practices and socio-economic conditions. Regression analysis shows that as income increases, reliance on traditional foods declines, although effective marketing strategies, particularly word-of-mouth, can positively influence consumption. The study examines Zimbabwe's agricultural policy framework, encompassing the National Agriculture Policy Framework (NAPF) (2018–2030), Accelerated Irrigation Rehabilitation and Development Plan (AIRDP) (2021–2025), National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) (2020–2025), Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy (AFTS), Gota/Nhanga/Ixhiba, Nharire Yemusha and Traditional cookout programmes, National Good Seed and Food Festival, and Agricultural Shows, highlighting the need for strategies that support traditional foods as essential to cultural heritage and sustainable development. By informing policymakers and stakeholders about effective strategies, this study aims to foster a deeper appreciation for traditional foods, thereby contributing to food security and cultural preservation in urban environments. The study recommends context-specific marketing strategies, including social media, food festivals, mass media, and awareness campaigns. Policy reforms at the national level are also suggested to encourage the large-scale production of traditional food crops.

Key Words: Traditional foods, Urban households, Food security, Cultural heritage, Consumer behavior, Marketing strategies

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASFA	Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa
FAD	Food Availability Decline
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
NGOs	None Governmental Organisations
PELUM	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management
SKI	Seed and Knowledge Initiative
UN	United Nations
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZIMVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Traditional and indigenous foods encompass a spectrum of wholesome food items that bear significant social and cultural value, are locally accessible, and are prepared using natural ingredients specific to a region (Keller et al., 2014). Traditional foods may not be indigenous to a country, but are usually associated with traditional production systems, local knowledge and have a long history of local selection and usage (Keller et al., 2014). Therefore, traditional foods are either wild, semi-cultivated or cultivated. Traditional foods are not normally subject to agricultural policy, research and extension activities; they remain staples in the daily diets of rural communities (Gomez, 2019). Gomez emphasised the need for the development and exploitation of wild food resources through improved production practices, storage, preservation and utilisation technologies if they are to play a significant role in food security.

The concept of traditional food is not static; it is dynamic and complex, influenced by four principal dimensions: time, place, know-how, and cultural meaning (Cousins & Adams, 2011). Such foods have been transmitted through generations, sustaining communities before the advent of modernisation and industrialisation. In the context of Zimbabwe, the traditional diet is predominantly plant-based, comprising small grains such as millet and sorghum, dark green leafy vegetables, wild fruits, and root tubers. While primarily cereal-based, it also includes limited animal sources like fish and game meat (FAO, 2019).

Most traditional foods have been shown to contain healthy components such as antioxidants. In addition, the traditional and indigenous fruits and vegetables are usually drought resistant (Gomez, 1988). Subsisting mainly on traditional diets, therefore, has the potential to solve two problems in both rural and urban areas, that is, rising food insecurity due to climate change effects (2) increase in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) (Pillay, 2016).

However, a concerning trend has emerged where traditional foods are being supplanted by processed and energy-dense alternatives, particularly wheat, rice, and maize products, leading to

a decline in the consumption of traditional staples (Kurebwa & Kurebwa, 2014). In addition, indigenous fruits and vegetables have been largely replaced by exotic fruits and vegetables in the common household (Moyo, 2024). Dietary changes over time can be influenced by many factors such as geographical, environmental, social, and economic factors (Shava, 2000). This may mean that complex interactions such as migration, income, prices, individual preferences, beliefs, and cultural traditions influence food choices continuously as they don't remain static over time. Nutrition transition, as a global event, has caused changes in the quality and quantity of food consumption patterns in many countries, races, social classes, and cultures (Kurebwa and Kurebwa, 2014). Zimbabwe is no exception

The nutrition transition, characterised by these dietary shifts, has been linked to rising incidences of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as obesity and type 2 diabetes mellitus (Pillay, 2016). Additionally, socio-economic challenges and urbanisation in Zimbabwe have exacerbated food insecurity, prompting calls for the revitalisation of traditional food systems as a means to enhance dietary diversity and food security (Shava, 2000). As urbanisation accelerates, the consumption patterns of urban households are increasingly detached from traditional food sources, further complicating the socio-cultural fabric surrounding food (Moyo, 2024).

This is a huge threat to household food security and slows progress on the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Current climate adaptation strategies include animal and crop diversification with emphasis on drought-tolerant crops such as sorghum and millet. These crops that have largely been replaced by exotic crops were part of African traditional diets for ages. Available evidence has shown that the reception or rejection of food is a complex phenomenon, which is ever-changing and variable (FAO, 2019). Furthermore, this multi-dimensional system is influenced by an individual's attitude and by individuals interacting within a community in different contexts and over different periods.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In many African societies, traditional foods have faced significant marginalization, largely due to a prevailing preference for Western food alternatives deemed more accessible and modern (Shava, 2000). This trend reflects a broader global phenomenon where traditional dietary practices are overshadowed by the allure of globalization and industrialized food systems. In Zimbabwe, specifically, there exists a pronounced knowledge gap regarding the consumption patterns and

motivations surrounding traditional foods among urban populations. Research indicates that perceptions of traditional foods as "poor man's food" have contributed to their declining popularity, a sentiment echoed in studies from neighboring South Africa (FAO, 2019). Despite Zimbabwe's rich biodiversity and the potential of traditional foods to enhance dietary diversity and nutrition, urban communities have not fully embraced these foods as a viable strategy for sustainable nutrition (WHO, 2010). This disconnect highlights a critical research gap: the need for a nuanced understanding of urban households' attitudes toward traditional foods and the factors influencing their consumption. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the role of traditional food in Greendale, Harare, seeking to understand how urban consumers perceive these foods, the motivations behind their consumption choices, and the broader implications for food security and cultural heritage. By addressing these issues, the research will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of traditional food consumption in urban settings, ultimately advocating for policies that promote the revitalisation of traditional dietary practices.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 Main objective

The main objective of the study is to explore the role of traditional food in urban areas in Zimbabwe.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives are formulated as follows:

- i.** To assess and analyse the attitudes, perceptions, and influencing factors of urban households toward traditional food consumption,
- ii.** To assess the contribution of traditional foods to food consumption and
- iii.** To explore context-specific marketing strategies to increase the consumption and appreciation of traditional foods among urban consumers
- iv.** To examine relevant policies for the revitalisation of traditional food consumption in the context of food security, cultural heritage, and sustainable development.

1.4 Research questions

Specific research questions for the study are as follows:

- i. What are the prevailing attitudes and perceptions and influencing factors towards traditional foods among urban households in Greendale?
- ii. What is the contribution of traditional foods to urban households' food security?
- iii. Which marketing strategies are most effective in increasing the consumption and appreciation of traditional foods among urban consumers, and what is their impact on sales?
- iv. Which policies are addressing revitalisation of traditional food consumption in the context of food security, cultural heritage, and sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

1.5 Justification of the study

The significance of traditional foods in bolstering food security, enhancing dietary diversity, and fostering sustainable livelihoods in urban settings cannot be overstated. Despite their critical importance, traditional foods are often overlooked in urban nutrition and food security initiatives. This study aims to bridge this knowledge gap by elucidating urban households' attitudes and perceptions towards traditional foods, the factors influencing their consumption, and their role in dietary diversification. Additionally, an evaluation of traditional food markets will be conducted to assess their efficacy in promoting food security and sustainable livelihoods.

Understanding the importance of traditional foods in urban contexts is vital, particularly in light of increasing urbanisation, nutrition transition, and climate change. The findings from this study will inform policy and intervention strategies aimed at promoting traditional food consumption, thereby improving dietary diversity and enhancing food security. Ultimately, this research will contribute to the establishment of sustainable and resilient urban food systems, improving the health and well-being of urban residents. By investigating the intricate relationships between traditional foods, urban households, and food security, the study will yield valuable insights for policymakers, nutritionists, and development practitioners.

1.6 Delimitations and limitations

The limitations inherent in this study are reflective of the research design and may influence the interpretation of the findings (Denscombe, 2014). A primary methodological limitation is the

sample size, which, according to Maxwell (2014), can impede the ability to identify significant relationships and make generalisable conclusions. Given the localised focus of this research, findings may not be representative of all urban areas in Zimbabwe.

1.7 Outline of thesis

This thesis is meticulously organised into eight chapters, each serving a distinct purpose in the exploration of traditional food consumption among urban households. Chapter 1 sets the stage by presenting the study's background and articulating the problem statement. It outlines the primary objectives and poses critical research questions that guide the inquiry. Additionally, this chapter addresses the justification for the study, as well as its delimitations and limitations, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding the research context. Chapter 2 delves into the literature review, synthesising existing research and theoretical frameworks relevant to the study. This chapter contextualises the current investigation within the broader academic discourse, highlighting gaps that this thesis aims to fill. Chapter 3 details the methodology employed in this research. It describes the study site, outlines the research design, and elaborates on the sampling procedures. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the data collection methods and analysis techniques, alongside ethical considerations that ensure the integrity of the research process. Chapter 4 presents the findings related to the first objective: assessing urban households' attitudes, perceptions, and influencing factors regarding traditional food consumption. Chapter 5 moves to the second objective, detailing the contribution of traditional foods to food and nutrition security. Chapter 6 addresses the third objective, exploring context-specific marketing strategies aimed at enhancing the consumption and appreciation of traditional foods among urban consumers. Chapter 7 focuses on the fourth and final objective, examining relevant policies that support the revitalisation of traditional food consumption in the spheres of food security, cultural heritage, and sustainable development. Finally, Chapter 8 synthesises the findings across all objectives, offering conclusions and actionable recommendations for stakeholders interested in promoting traditional food practices.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature on traditional and indigenous foods has expanded significantly, reflecting their importance in cultural identity, food security, and nutrition. This chapter articulates the literature related to urbanising traditional foods. This chapter synthesises relevant research, focusing on the definitions, significance, and evolving perceptions of traditional foods, particularly in urban contexts. It also explores the interplay between dietary patterns, food security, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), setting the stage for the study's objectives.

2.2 Definitions and Characteristics of Traditional Foods

2.2.1 Traditional Foods

Traditional foods: are often defined as those that have historical significance to a particular culture, utilising local ingredients and production methods (Keller et al., 2014). According to Zhou et al (2020), traditional foods are foods and dishes that are passed on through generations or which have been consumed for many generations.

Baker et al (2020) defined traditional food as plants, animals and wild fruits that sustained the lives of the local people before globalisation.

Cousins and Adams (2011) note that these foods encompass a broad spectrum, including wild, semi-cultivated, and cultivated varieties. The dynamic nature of traditional foods is highlighted by their adaptability to changing social, economic, and environmental conditions (Moyo, 2024). This adaptability is critical in understanding the ongoing relevance of traditional foods in contemporary diets. Important to note, traditional food may not be indigenous to a country, but are usually associated with traditional production systems, local knowledge and have a long history of local selection and usage (Pfukwa et al, 2020).

According to Shava (2000), traditional foods are mostly associated with health benefits as identified by their categories; millet, green leafy vegetables, roots and tubers, fruit, legumes, palm

oil, wild animal meat and maize.

Zhou et al (2020) contends that traditional foods hold an important place in well-balanced diets. In Africa, most traditional foods are used as relish, which accompanies the starchy staple food (Shava, 2000). The nutrients in traditional foods also play an important role to generate income and to ensure subsistence. For instance, the recent surveys carried out by the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) provide evidence that traditional foods offer a significant opportunity for the poorest people in urban areas to earn a living, without requiring large capital investment (ZIMVAC, 2022).

Traditional food offers a potential to diversify food sources among both rural and urban communities, resulting in household food security. Baker et al (2020), defined food security as access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life. Furthermore, a study in Kenya by Mbogori and Mucherah (2019), found traditional food and other wild food items to constitute an under-utilised resource when it comes to food and nutrition security in vulnerable communities.

Traditional food provides critical support to the usual agricultural production, cash income and insurance against drought and crop failure. Guaranteeing access to food means that people must have adequate resources in the broadest sense, either to produce food or to obtain it in exchange with other things. This implies that food strategies are not only concerned with production issues but with the problem of income distribution. This is especially significant in Zimbabwe, where 62% of the country is in the low rainfall regions where drought is not merely cyclical but endemic (Matsungu nd Chopera, 2020). Therefore, this study explored the role of traditional food in Greendale suburb, Harare.

2.2.2 Urbanisation

Urbanisation is the population shift from rural to urban areas, the corresponding decrease in the proportion of people living in rural areas, and the ways in which societies adapt to this change (United Nations, 2020). Cousins and Adams (2018) defined it as the process by which large numbers of people become permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities.

However, the consumption of traditional food in urban areas is still limited due to limited marketing strategies (Kurebwa and Kurebwa, 2014). This literature review examines existing

literature on

2.3 Food Security, Nutrition and Health Value

The cultural significance of traditional foods is well-documented, as they serve as a means of preserving cultural heritage and identity (Shava, 2000). Traditional diets, particularly in African contexts, are characterised by diversity and nutrient density, providing essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that contribute to overall health (FAO, 2019). For instance, traditional African diets predominantly feature small grains, dark leafy vegetables, and indigenous fruits, which are often rich in phytochemicals beneficial for health (Kurebwa & Kurebwa, 2014).

Furthermore, the nutritional profiles of these foods have been linked to improved health outcomes, potentially mitigating the risks associated with NCDs such as obesity and diabetes (Pillay, 2016). The consumption of traditional foods has been associated with lower rates of these diseases, highlighting their role in promoting public health.

According to (ZIMVAC, 2022), Zimbabwe is facing serious challenges when it comes to nutrition which is causing a number of healthy challenges. Child stunting rates have increased from 23% in 2020 to 26%, and only 16% of children under five have diets that meet minimal diversity. Additionally, only 10% of these children receive an acceptable diet. Iron deficiency anemia affects nearly 29% of women, and a significant number of women and men struggle with weight issues. Over a quarter of adolescent women and more than half of adult women are overweight, with 27% of women and 7.3% of men being obese. Poor dietary habits are contributing to an increase in non-communicable diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure, which are affecting a growing number of adults in Zimbabwe. These issues are largely due to a low intake of vegetables and legumes and a high consumption of sugar, salt, oil, and highly processed foods (Zhou et al, 2020). In addition, to these health issues, Zimbabwe is also experiencing growing food insecurity. This is due to factors like environmental degradation, poor land use, and climate change. Even though the country has access to climate-resilient crops such as pearl millet, finger millet, sorghum, cowpeas, and roundnuts, many Zimbabweans prefer to grow and eat maize, a crop that is not well-suited to the country's arid climate. Wheat, which requires irrigation to grow, is also becoming more popular, especially in urban areas.

2.4 Impact of urbanisation on Traditional Food Consumption

Urbanisation is the increase in the proportion of the population living in urban areas. This process is fast-changing, context specific and driven by intertwined factors, including diverse economic developments, such as increasing agricultural productivity, policy choices, availability of natural resources, and external stressors such as conflict, climate extremes or environmental degradation (Baker et al, 2020). Many parts of the world have rapidly urbanised since the Second World War, with the urban share of the world's population rising from 30% in 1950 to 57% in 2021. It is projected to reach 68% by 2050. Urbanisation presents both challenges and opportunities for traditional food systems. As urban populations grow, dietary patterns shift towards convenience foods, often resulting in the neglect of traditional diets (Moyo, 2024).

According to Matsuro and Chopera (2020) Urbanisation contributes to the transformation of agri-food systems by reshaping spatial patterns of food demand and affecting consumer preferences, changing how, where and what food is produced, supplied and consumed. These changes are affecting agri-food systems in ways that are creating both challenges and opportunities to ensure everyone has access to affordable healthy diets. With urbanisation and rising incomes, households often eat greater and more diverse quantities of food, including dairy, fish, meat, legumes, fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as more processed foods as compared to traditional food (Muyonga et al, 2017). This, together with population growth, implies substantial decrease in the production and supply of traditional food.

The phenomenon of nutrition transition, marked by increased consumption of processed and energy-dense foods, has been observed across various urban settings in Zimbabwe (Kurebwa & Kurebwa, 2014). This transition not only affects food security but also exacerbates health issues related to diet. In Zimbabwe, there is now an increase in the consumption of wheat, rice and maize products at the expense of traditional staple cereals, roots, and tubers. Indigenous fruits and vegetables have been largely replaced by exotic fruits and vegetables in the common household (Matsungu and Chopera, 2020).

Research indicates that misconceptions regarding traditional foods, often perceived as inferior or "poor man's food", further diminish their consumption in urban areas (FAO, 2019). Traditional foods are considered primitive by the new generation of people in this era of modernisation. Ziwange (2019) postulated that, the massive population increase in urban areas is driving people

away from traditional food because of its limited accessibility.

It is difficult to feed the nation with traditional food as a result people are opting to western food. Westernisation did not only affect the politics of nations but it also encroach to the quality and choice of food. The new generation prefers foods such as pizza, fried chips and cakes to mention but a few at the expense of traditional food (Baker et al, 2020). Unlike rural areas, urban areas do not eat traditional food on daily basis because there is a lot of fast foods consumed by the urban dwellers.

Marketing traditional food in urban has been a major challenge due to lack of support from the local authorities (ZIMVAC, 2020). In Zimbabwe, the government is silent about policy reform on food production which makes it difficult for people in urban areas to diversify traditional and western food. Therefore, there is need to address these challenges to increase the consumption of traditional food in urban areas.

Furthermore, adjustments in the quantity and quality of food demand and supply bring about changes in markets and retail trade; midstream food supply chains (changes in post-harvest systems for logistics, processing, wholesale and distribution); rural input markets; agricultural technology; and the size distribution of farms. Thus, agri food systems are transformed, from traditional and mostly rural systems based on local market linkages and farming employment, to systems with greater connectivity between rural areas, and between rural, peri-urban and urban areas (Zhou et al, 2020).

Of specific concern against this backdrop are the changes in the supply and demand of traditional foods that constitute a healthy diet; their cost relative to foods of high-energy density and minimal nutritional value, which are often high in fats, sugars and/or salt; and their cost relative to people's income (their affordability).

In rural areas there is excess consumption of traditional food because it is readily available on daily basis. Important to note, a study by Muyonga et al (2017) in Zimbabwe has indicated that a most major cities in Zimbabwe such as Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare, and Gweru are adopting traditional foods in their market and they are giving it high value on food market.

2.5 Importance of traditional food in urban areas

Research conducted around the world has shown that traditional food has a number of advantages for the rising urban population (Muyonga et al, 2017; FAO, 2019; and WHO, 2020).

2.5.1 Traditional Foods and Food Security

The relationship between traditional foods and food security is multifaceted. Traditional diets can enhance food security by promoting dietary diversity and resilience against climate change (Gomez, 2019). Indigenous crops, often more resilient to environmental stressors, can play a pivotal role in ensuring stable food supplies, particularly in rural and peri-urban contexts (Shava, 2000).

Moreover, the revival of traditional food systems is increasingly recognized as a viable strategy for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in reducing hunger and improving nutrition (WHO, 2010). The integration of traditional foods into urban food systems can contribute to sustainable livelihoods, enhancing both economic and social resilience.

Subsisting mainly on traditional diets, therefore, has the potential to solve two problems in urban areas, and it includes; rising food insecurity due to climate change effects, increase in non-communicable diseases (NCDs). These varieties have a number of little used; uncommon vegetables with perceived health benefits (Baker et al, 2020). Key traditional staple food and other food groups such as nuts, seeds, wild fruits and vegetables used in the diet are area specific (WHO, 2010).

2.5.2 Health and Food Quality

Traditional food system plays a significant role in maintaining the well-being and health of Indigenous People. Yet, evidence abounds showing that the traditional food base and knowledge of Indigenous People are being eroded. This has resulted in the use of fewer species, decreased dietary diversity due to household food insecurity and consequently poor health status. Research done by Kurebwa and Kurebwa (2014) in Bindura has indicated that traditional food is used by many as medicine. This is because it is cheap and contains health benefits without side effects that may affect the lives of individuals.

The increasing consumption of traditional food products has been noticed in recent years due to consumers' rising awareness of healthy food and food quality. The growing interest in traditional food products can be explained by various food crises, food industrialisation, globalisation, and environmental concerns (FAO, 2019). Furthermore, consumers are becoming more interested in

products of local origin, unique characteristics, authenticity, high-quality food products obtained through traditional production methods, and food that influences environmental sustainability and economic development in local and rural areas (United Nations, 2022). Consumers are increasingly seeking products free from artificial additives, preservatives, and synthetic ingredients. This trend is driven by concerns about health and sustainability and a desire for greater transparency in food production processes. Understanding these perceptions and consumption dynamics is critical for developing strategies that promote the consumption of traditional foods among urban residents.

2.5.3 Traditional Foods' Contribution to Tourism and Hospitality

Traditional foods play a vital role in showcasing Zimbabwe's rich cultural heritage and diversity. These traditional foods are increasingly recognised as pivotal assets in bolstering both tourism and hospitality sectors, offering unique cultural experiences that resonate with a growing segment of travellers seeking authentic engagements (Rwodzi, 2024; Mavhunga et al., 2024). This recognition aligns with the broader trend of culinary tourism, where the exploration of local cuisines becomes a primary motivator for travel, fostering economic opportunities and cultural preservation (UNWTO, 2019; CarbonClick, 2025). The integration of traditional Zimbabwean dishes into the tourism and hospitality industries not only enhances the visitor experience but also contributes to the sustainable development of local communities by supporting indigenous food producers and culinary traditions (Mavhunga et al., 2024; Zimbabwe Tourism, 2024).

The economic contributions of traditional foods to Zimbabwe's tourism and hospitality sectors are multifaceted. Culinary tourism empowers small-scale food producers, farmers, artisans, restaurants, and food-related businesses, thereby strengthening the financial foundation of local economies (The Patriot, 2025; CarbonClick, 2025). Moreover, promoting traditional dishes and local ingredients enhances Zimbabwe's brand as a culturally diverse and experiential tourism destination, attracting a wider range of tourists (Mavhunga et al., 2024). Initiatives such as culinary tours, food festivals (e.g., HIFA), and homestay programs further immerse tourists in Zimbabwe's rich culinary heritage, fostering cultural exchange and promoting the sustainable consumption of traditional foods (Xinhua, 2024; MexicoHistorico.com, 2024). As Zimbabwe aims to position itself as a gastronomy powerhouse in Africa, leveraging its traditional foods will be crucial for

achieving sustainable and inclusive growth in its tourism and hospitality sectors (Xinhua, 2024). The First Lady's efforts in promoting traditional cuisine through initiatives like traditional cookout competitions have also played a crucial role (ZANU PF Official, 2023). Furthermore, Zimbabwe hosted the inaugural UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Africa in July 2024, underscoring the country's commitment to promoting its culinary heritage on the global stage (Zimbabwean Patriot, 2024; The Herald, 2024).

Recent studies highlight the increasing importance of traditional foods in Zimbabwe's tourism and hospitality sectors. A key theme emerging from this research is the role of culinary tourism in enhancing destination branding. For instance, Mavhunga et al. (2024) found a positive correlation between tourists' perceptions of Zimbabwe as a hospitable destination and their engagement with local communities through culinary experiences. This study emphasises the potential of traditional African dishes, local ingredients, culinary festivals, and dining experiences in shaping the country's tourism identity.

However, challenges remain in fully realising the potential of culinary tourism in Zimbabwe. A study by Nyarota et al. (2023) revealed that while most hotels and restaurants offer indigenous cuisines, there is often limited variety, unfavorable pricing, and questionable authenticity. Despite these challenges, recent studies and initiatives indicate a growing recognition of the importance of traditional foods in Zimbabwe's tourism and hospitality sectors. By leveraging its rich culinary heritage, Zimbabwe can enhance its destination branding, promote economic empowerment, and foster sustainable development (Xinhua, 2024; Business Events, 2025).

2.5.4 Traditional Foods' Contribution to Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Traditional foods play a crucial role in the preservation of cultural heritage, acting as tangible links to a community's history, values, and identity (Allied Academies, 2024; Cosmo Appliances, 2024). This discourse explores the multifaceted contributions of traditional foods to cultural preservation, supported by recent studies and a brief literature review.

Traditional foods are powerful symbols of cultural identity, intricately connecting individuals to their roots and fostering a sense of belonging (MOJEH Magazine, 2024; Gazi Restaurant, 2024). The preparation and sharing of these dishes evoke cherished memories of family gatherings, celebrations, and ancestral traditions (Cosmo Appliances, 2024). Furthermore, traditional food

systems serve as repositories of indigenous knowledge concerning agriculture, food processing, and resource management (International Research Journal, 2024). They facilitate intergenerational knowledge transfer, allowing elders to impart culinary skills and cultural values to younger generations (Cosmo Appliances, 2024; International Research Journal, 2024). Additionally, traditional foods celebrate the diversity of culinary practices globally, showcasing the unique adaptations and innovations that characterize different cultures (Afro Discovery, 2024; Cosmo Appliances, 2024). Through these multifaceted roles, traditional foods significantly contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage.

Traditional foods are more than just sustenance; they are integral components of a community's intangible cultural heritage (Allied Academies, 2024). They embody the knowledge, skills, and practices passed down through generations, reflecting a community's adaptation to its environment and its unique social and historical experiences (Afrenet, 2025; International Research Journal, 2024). Traditional foodways encompass not only the ingredients and recipes but also the associated rituals, festivals, and social gatherings that reinforce cultural identity (MOJEH Magazine, 2024; The Herald, 2024).

Recent studies emphasise the critical role of traditional foods in maintaining cultural diversity and identity in the face of globalization. Nyarota et al. (2022) highlight the importance of recognising traditional cuisine as a means of preserving cultural heritage amidst increasing globalisation and social change. They argue that culinary claims, which encompass the unique aspects of indigenous food, are essential for sustaining cultural heritage. Moyo et al. (2016) explored how indigenous knowledge of cuisine in Zimbabwe may be preserved, noting that the preservation of this knowledge enables Zimbabweans to maintain their cultural heritage for posterity.

Ethnographic research provides deeper insights into the collective identity processes underlying heritage (Acta Ethnographica Hungarica, 2024). Studies have shown that the revival of traditional dishes and the creation of heritage represent a new trend in food culture research, driven by a rejection of the standardisation of food culture resulting from globalisation (Acta Ethnographica Hungarica, 2024).

In conclusion, traditional foods are vital for the preservation of cultural heritage, serving as tangible links to a community's history, values, and identity. By maintaining cultural identity, preserving indigenous knowledge, promoting intergenerational transmission, celebrating cultural

diversity and supporting community empowerment, traditional foods contribute significantly to cultural preservation.

2.7 Consumer attitudes and perceptions towards traditional food

Consumer attitudes and perceptions towards the consumption of traditional are of great importance to all entities in the food business chain, such as producers, businesses, and policymakers. These attitudes and preferences are influenced by numerous factors, such as health concerns, personal experiences, cultural habits, and environmental and eco-economic concerns (WHO, 2020). The growing interest in traditional food products can be explained by various food crises, food industrialisation, globalisation, and environmental concerns (Zhang et al, 2020). Furthermore, consumers are becoming more interested in products of local origin, unique characteristics, authenticity, high-quality food products obtained through traditional production methods, and food that influences environmental sustainability and economic development in local and rural areas (FAO, 2019). Consumers are increasingly seeking products free from artificial additives, preservatives, and synthetic ingredients. This trend is driven by concerns about health and sustainability and a desire for greater transparency in food production processes (WHO, 2020).

2.7.1 Socio-demographic factors influencing attitudes

Research has shown that the demographic factors influencing consumers' attitudes towards traditional food include age, income, education as well as cultural background. A study by Matsungu and Chopera (2020) in Zimbabwe has revealed age as a determinant factor to consumer attitudes and perceptions towards traditional food. They found that 80% of people below 35 years are less likely to order or choose traditional food when purchasing food. On the other hand, people above the age of 35 tend to purchase traditional food more, probably because they'll become more conscious of their health. Therefore, it can be noted that the age may influence their choice of food. Furthermore, income level is also another factor that may influence consumer's attitudes and perceptions towards the consumption of traditional food. A study by Kurebwa and Kurebwa (2014) in Bindura, postulated that, people of low income or the unemployed tend to eat traditional food more as compared to high income families. This was attributed to the fact that traditional food is cheap and can be easily accessed as compared to western food. Therefore, high income individuals

tend to neglect traditional food because they have more options available to them.

In addition, education is also a factor which influences the choices for consuming traditional food. A study by FAO (2019) indicated that 77% of the people who purchased traditional food in Pretoria, South Africa were less educated. The educated population revealed that to maintain a good health they used food supplements instead of traditional food. It is also believed that most educated people can afford all kinds of food as a result they overlook traditional food.

Das and Mishra (2021) mentioned that neophilic and neophobic attitudes to foods, participation of actors and regulators across the food chain, professional counselling from physicians and health specialists, past experiences, perception on sanitary practices during processing, religion, and other sociodemographic factors such as level of education, gender, age, and nationality could affect consumer's (especially tourists) choices of consumption of indigenous and traditional foods (WFP, 2022). This entails that demographic factor tremendously influences consumers' attitudes and perceptions towards traditional food.

2.37.2 Psychological factors influencing attitudes and perceptions

According to the Hartwell et al (2011), people's food choices are largely influenced by psychological factors such as taste, convenience and health concerns. For instance, in Zimbabwe, Matsungu and Chopera (2020) found that 90% of the people who rejected sorghum sadza were against it because of its taste. People tend to like food that taste good in the mouth regardless of its effects. A study by Pfukwa et al (2020) highlighted that most people consume traditional food if it is convenient for them to eat. For instance, some they eat because it has been long since they ate it. Some may eat it when they hear about the health benefits of the food. For example, ZIMVAC (2020) found that 80% of the men who consumed traditional okra in Masvingo, did so because of its sexual benefits of boosting libido in men. This shows that the psychological aspect plays a fundamental role in people's attitudes and perceptions towards traditional food.

2.7.3 Cultural and social factors influencing attitudes

Cultural and social factors also play a major role in influencing consumers' attitudes towards traditional food. For instance, family traditions influence behavior on consumption of traditional food. A study by FAO (2019) revealed that, in India, most people consume traditional food

because they are bound to eat it by their tradition. For instance, it's a tradition for most Indians to eat garlic and chilies on daily bases, and most people do so for the sake of fulfilling the norms and values of their culture. Social norms also play an important role in consumers' attitudes towards traditional food. A study by Ziwange (2019) revealed that, in Zimbabwe, some norms require girls and boys to eat certain kinds of food as they grow up to achieve what is expected of them by their gender. Therefore, traditional food may be consumed on the basis of social norms.

Matsungu and Chopera (2020) reported that the strongest barriers to consumptions of traditional African foods are the aggressive sponsored advertisement of processed foods, residential settlements of consumers, and the lack of knowledge and inconvenience in cooking some indigenous or traditional foods.

2.8 Marketing strategies for traditional foods

Effective marketing strategies are essential for increasing the visibility and consumption of traditional foods. Studies have shown that community-based marketing initiatives can foster appreciation for traditional foods, linking them to cultural identity and health benefits (Kurebwa & Kurebwa, 2014). Marketing professionals need to consider costs related to research and development, manufacturing, marketing, and distribution otherwise known as cost-based pricing (Pfukwa et al, 2020). Furthermore, leveraging social media and local markets can enhance consumer awareness and accessibility (Moyo, 2024).

Research indicates that tailored marketing strategies that resonate with urban consumers' preferences and cultural contexts can significantly boost the demand for traditional foods (Pillay, 2016). Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing targeted interventions that promote traditional food consumption. Marketing professionals carefully construct a message that often incorporates details from the other three Ps when trying to reach their target audience (United Nations, 2021).

2.8.1 Social media marketing

Social media marketing harnesses platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn to engage directly with consumers in an interactive and highly personalised manner. According to Mbogori and Mucherah (2019), food and social media are two things that have become inseparable

in our digital age. Whether you love eating or not, you have surely stumbled upon delicious food photos, videos, as well as recipes while scrolling through your social media feeds (Muyonga et al, 2017). As technology advances, the future of traditional food on social media looks promising. Social media marketing requires an evolving strategy with measurable goals and includes: Maintaining and, posting pictures, videos, stories, and live videos that represent your brand and attract a relevant audience.

With such widespread usage and versatility, social media is one of the most effective free channels for marketing traditional food. Social media enables you to turn your business into an active participant in your market. Individuals profile, posts, and interactions with users form an approachable persona that the majority can familiarise and connect with, and come to trust (Baker et al, 2020). One can also generate leads and conversions directly on these platforms, through features like Instagram/Facebook shops, direct messaging, call to action buttons on profiles, and appointment booking capabilities (Das and Mishra, 2021). The visual nature of social media platforms allows one to build their visual identity across vast audiences and improve awareness of traditional foods in urban areas (WFP, 2022). These platforms open up both direct and indirect lines of communication with your followers through which you can network, gather feedback, hold discussions, and connect directly with individuals. Therefore, there is need to adopt social media marketing for traditional food to become popular in urban areas.

2.8.2 Food festivals and events

A traditional food festival is an event celebrating regional or cultural foods. It features a variety of traditional dishes, cooking methods, and culinary practices, allowing people to experience and appreciate different food cultures (FAO, 2019). These festivals often include cooking demonstrations, tastings, and cultural performances, offering a chance for people to experience and enjoy the diversity of local cuisines (Matsungu and Chopera, 2020). They help preserve cultural food practices and allow communities to share their culinary heritage with others. On 25 May 2021 one Zimbabwe hold a successful Food and Culture Festival in Harare Gardens which was a bold step in promoting traditional food in urban areas (ZIMVAC, 2020). Research has shown that food festivals and events do not only spread awareness of the benefits of traditional foods, but it is the key to open doors for effective marketing of traditional food. In Asia, India is considered

one of the most successful countries in conducting food festivals and events which increases the consumption of traditional foods throughout the country thereby increasing their life expectancy. One successful strategy for promoting local, nutritious, and climate-resilient foods has been the organisation of seed and food festivals in Zimbabwe. Since 2013, these festivals have been held at both the national and district levels in Zimbabwe, bringing together NGOs, individuals, and private sector representatives (Kurebwa and Kurebwa, 2014). These festivals aim to raise awareness about indigenous and local foods, improve food consumption behaviours, and strengthen production systems and markets (Cousins and Adams, 2019). The Seed and Knowledge Initiative (SKI), which is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), has been supporting these festivals for many years. Therefore, this study will also capture the utility of food festivals in increasing the consumption and appreciation of traditional food in urban areas.

2.8.3 Influencer partnerships

Influencer partnerships represent collaborative relationships between brands and individuals with substantial online followings, known as influencers. The brands hope to leverage the influencer's reach and credibility to promote products, services, or messages to the Influencer's audience (Pfukwa et al, 2020). A study by Ziwange (2019) in Mazowe district in Zimbabwe, indicated that, influencer partnership has been an effective marketing strategy for traditional foods in the country. In 2022, a music artist popularly known as Jah Prayzer was used to advertise traditional food crops in his music which improved the purchase of traditional seeds by farmers (The Herald, 2023). From this light, it is essential for farmers and other individuals to increase marketing of traditional foods through influencer partnerships.

2.8.4 Cultural heritage tourism initiatives

Cultural heritage tourism initiative increases the awareness and accessibility of traditional food in the cities. Food is considered a part of intangible cultural heritage, a way of life that is passed down from generation to generation. Traditional recipes, cooking techniques, and dining etiquette can reflect the values and beliefs of different communities and are all vital parts of cultural heritage (Mbogori and Mucherah, 2019). Food is deeply ingrained in our cultural identity and serves as a representation of our heritage, history, and values. Food is considered a part of intangible cultural

heritage, a way of life that is passed down from generation to generation (United Nations, 2021). Traditional recipes, cooking techniques, and dining etiquette can reflect the values and beliefs of different communities and are all vital parts of cultural heritage. In Italy, for example, food is not just about sustenance, but also about family, community, and tradition. Italians have a rich culinary history that dates back to ancient times, with important traditional dishes such as pasta and pizza. The Italian food experience centers not only on taste, but on sharing meals with loved ones, the pleasure of cooking, and pride in their culinary heritage (Hartwell et al, 2011). From this light, cultural heritage tourism initiatives may help encourage people of all age groups to consume traditional food as part of their culture.

2.8.5 Collaborations with local restaurants

In the competitive world of the restaurant industry, partnerships and collaborations can be the secret ingredients to market traditional food successfully. Restaurant partnerships and collaborations are not just a trend; they are strategic alliances that can lead to mutual growth and success (Baker et al, 2020). One of the primary benefits of such collaborations is the expansion of the customer base through shared audiences. By joining forces, restaurants can tap into each other's clientele, introducing their brand to potential customers who might otherwise remain unaware of their offerings. This can lead to a significant increase in foot traffic and sales (FAO, 2019). Another advantage is the pooling of resources for greater efficiency. Restaurants often operate with limited budgets, and a partnership can provide opportunities to share costs and resources. This includes sharing the cost of ingredients, marketing, or even staff for special events. Pooling resources can lead to a reduction in overheads and can make special promotions or events more viable (Hoppers, 2020).

Traditional food collaborations gain momentum in Zimbabwe. A Zimbabwean Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) is collaborating with other groups and stakeholders to promote traditional foods, which are thought to be nutritious among other benefits (UN, 2021). Tafadzwa Muranganwa a freelance journalist living in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare writes. The My Food is African campaign is being implemented in Zimbabwe by Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) under the auspices of the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA). Bertha Nherera, the organiser of the campaign in Zimbabwe, explained the campaign's goal, which is to

promote traditional meals and cuisines, at a recent news conference in the capital (ZIMVAC, 2020). The campaign has two goals. One is bringing attention to Zimbabwe's traditional foods, seeds, and cuisines. The other objective is to influence political decision-making on diets and farming systems in Zimbabwe.

2.9 Examining Relevant Policies for Traditional Food Revitalisation

Food policy may be defined as 'the collective efforts of governments to influence the decision-making environments of food producers, food consumers and food marketing agents to further social objectives.' (Hartwell et al, 2011). Over the past decade, there have been promising developments in Zimbabwe's food system. The National Agriculture Policy Framework (2018–2030) has emphasised the importance of reviving the production of traditional grains and legumes, diversifying crops, and using sustainable land practices (Government of Zimbabwe, 2022). The Ministry of Health and the Food and Nutrition Council have also revitalised committees focused on improving community and household nutrition. Additionally, a growing movement of farmer groups, community organisations, and NGOs are promoting agroecology, farmer-managed seed systems, and the marketing of traditional crops (Ziwange, 2019). As a result, traditional food and drink products are becoming more available in supermarkets and restaurants.

The government of Zimbabwe is committed to ensuring that policy instruments that protect and enhance food and nutrition security particularly amongst the most vulnerable, are formulated and inform Government and non-Government decision-making and action (UN, 2021). The government of Zimbabwe is committed to ensuring that where social protection including social assistance programmes are implemented, these must contribute and enhance food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable in the short and medium term (UN, 2021). The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to ensuring food security for all, including access to adequate, diverse and nutritious food by all people at all times (UN, 2021). The government of Zimbabwe is committed to the provision of safe and wholesome food to all. Consequently, all food whether imported or locally produced shall meet national Public Health legislation and international standards for quality and safety (GoZ, 2022). This shows that policy initiatives are supporting the consumption of traditional food in Zimbabwe.

The revitalisation of traditional foods within urban markets in Zimbabwe is closely linked to broader agricultural and food policies aimed at enhancing food security and promoting sustainable

practices. Key policies such as the Accelerated Irrigation Rehabilitation and Development Plan (2021–2025), the National Development Strategy 1 (2020-2025), the Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy (AFTS), and the National Agriculture Policy Framework (NAPF) provide essential frameworks for integrating traditional food systems into national development agendas.

The Accelerated Irrigation Rehabilitation and Development Plan (2021–2025) emphasises the importance of irrigation infrastructure in enhancing agricultural productivity, particularly in the context of climate variability (Government of Zimbabwe, 2021). By improving irrigation systems, this plan aims to support the cultivation of traditional crops, which are often more resilient to adverse climatic conditions. The successful implementation of this policy can facilitate the sustainable production of traditional foods, thus enhancing their availability in urban markets and contributing to food security.

Similarly, the National Development Strategy 1 (2020-2025) outlines a vision for economic recovery that includes the revitalisation of agriculture as a key sector for growth (Government of Zimbabwe, 2020). This strategy recognises the role of traditional foods in promoting nutritional diversity and cultural identity, suggesting that integrating traditional food systems into national agricultural policies can yield significant socio-economic benefits. By aligning traditional food promotion with national development goals, stakeholders can enhance community resilience and foster local economies.

The Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy (AFTS) further underscores the need to transform agricultural practices to meet contemporary challenges such as climate change and food insecurity (Government of Zimbabwe, 2021). This strategy advocates for the promotion of indigenous crops, which are often neglected in favor of commercial varieties. By supporting the cultivation and consumption of traditional foods, AFTS can contribute to preserving biodiversity and enhancing nutritional outcomes for urban populations.

Finally, the National Agriculture Policy Framework (NAPF) provides a comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges facing the agricultural sector, including the promotion of food sovereignty and security (Government of Zimbabwe, 2020). By emphasising the importance of local food production systems, the NAPF aligns with the goals of traditional food revitalisation, encouraging policies that support local farmers and traditional food vendors in urban contexts.

In conclusion, the integration of traditional food systems into these key policies presents a strategic opportunity to enhance food security, preserve cultural heritage, and promote sustainable agricultural practices in Zimbabwe. By leveraging existing frameworks and aligning them with the goals of traditional food revitalisation, stakeholders can foster a more resilient and inclusive food system that benefits urban consumers and local producers alike.

2.10 Case studies and best practices

One of the success cases for marketing traditional food is that of Kimchi from Korea. It is a spicy traditional Korean side dish, is made with a variety of fermented vegetables, such as Napa cabbage (baechu), hot red pepper, garlic, ginger, and other spices (Muyonga et al, 2017). Throughout generations for thousands of years, kimchi has been served daily at virtually all meals in Korean households. It gives the flavors of garlic, ginger, scallions, and chili. Kimchi is an ingredient with many culinary benefits as it is commonly added to soups, noodles, and rice dishes. It started with kimchi. The government established the Kimchi Institute to test various kinds of pickled vegetables for foreign markets, with the stated goal of developing the domestic kimchi-making industry into the country's strategic export market (Cousin and Adam, 2019).

According to the Institute's director, Park Wan-soo, this requires fine-tuning the production technique and codifying different taste profiles for the traditional dish, so that when they export it to the United States, they can tone down the spiciness and sourness, and when exporting it to Japan, they can heighten the sweetness (Cousin and Adam, 2019). The Food Ministry also published a French fusion cookbook with Le Cordon Bleu, featuring high-brow Korean-French fusion dishes like Camembert kimchi fritters and light kimchi-infused pastry cream mille-feuille. Social media such as Instagram and Facebook has also been used to market Kimchi throughout the world and it has become one of the customer's favorite in restaurants globally (WFP, 2022).

Moreover, another successful marketing initiatives is that of the Japanese sushi. It started in local restaurants in Japan until it spread all over the world. The main strategy they used to market is storytelling. They shared the stories behind their dishes, ingredients, and chefs to make their restaurant feel personal and real on all various forms of social media (UN, 2021). They also used digital marketing by utilising social media to engage with their audience, share behind-the-scenes content, and run contests. It was very successful in making sushi the people's choice dish in the world (WFP, 2022). They also adopted email marketing whereby the marketing team would send

newsletters with updates, promotions, and upcoming events to keep customers informed. Loyalty programs were also conducted whereby the organisation would reward customers and build relationships with them. This made it possible to spread around the world within a short span of time (FAO, 2019).

From the two case studies it can be learned that digital marketing should be prioritised if traditional food is to be embraced by many people in urban areas. The case studies also portrayed the utility of collaborations in marketing traditional food. Collaborations with other successful organisations makes it easy to introduce traditional food on the menu in many restaurants thereby increasing its consumption in urban areas. They also highlighted that mass media should be used effectively. Mass media such as radio, televisions, newspapers and billboards should be used to advertise and inform the consumers about the traditional food available on the market and their benefits.

2.11 Theoretical framework

This study will adopt the 'Entitlement Approach' by Amartya Sen. Amartya Sen's entitlement theory is a theory that can be used to analyse food security and famine, and it differs from the traditional Food Availability Decline (FAD) approach. This theory defines entitlement as the set of resources a person has that can be used to obtain food. It includes food and non-food items, and the rights and opportunities a person has to obtain them. Sen's theory states that famines are caused by entitlement failure, which occurs when a person's entitlement set doesn't contain enough food to avoid starvation. Food security is a human entitlement, which can be achieved through ensuring stable and sustainable availability, accessibility and utilisation of food.

However, approximately half a million individual people were prohibited to source food on their own (Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC, 2020). This is a clear indication, as resonated by Sen, that the law stands as a barrier between food availability and food entitlement, that is, the law acts as a barrier that restricts people from getting food from the shops, farms and neighbors only to mention a few. If people try to obtain food from those who have it without their consent it might be regarded as a serious crime.

The entitlement theory is linked to the role of traditional food in urban areas. A study by ZIMVAC (2020) indicated that during the pandemic COVID-19 most urban dwellers depended on traditional food because there were no entitlements needed to access food. The borders of many nations were closed making it difficult to import food. Therefore, this theory is useful in this study because it

explains why the supply of traditional food is high in urban areas. It also explains the relationship between population growth and food availability which may alter people's choice of food. The theory also explains the consumption of traditional food by different people in urban. Therefore, this theory will be of great utility in exploring the role of traditional food in urban areas.

2.12 Summary of literature review

This chapter articulated the literature review guiding this study. It captured the notion of traditional food in urban areas by highlighting the definition of traditional food, the importance of traditional in urban areas, as well as the challenges faced by traditional food in urban areas. It also addresses consumer attitudes and perception towards traditional foods. It revealed that most urban populations have negative attitude towards traditional food, which is a matter of concern that needs to be addressed. Marketing strategies for traditional food were also elaborated. Therefore, there is need to adopt the stated strategies to improve the consumption and appreciation of traditional food in urban areas. Urban food systems and policy were also elaborated. It clearly indicated that there is need for policy reform in order to promote traditional food in urban areas. Cases studies of the Korean Kimchi and the Japanese Sushi were given and they showed the need to involve everyone and adopt all major forms of marketing to improve the consumption of traditional food in urban areas.

In conclusion, this literature review underscores the importance of traditional foods in promoting cultural identity, nutrition, and food security, particularly in urban contexts. It highlights the challenges posed by urbanisation and nutrition transition, as well as the potential of traditional foods to address contemporary health issues. The insights gained from this review informs the study's objectives, emphasising the need to explore urban households' attitudes toward traditional foods and the development of effective marketing strategies to enhance their consumption.

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CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter delineates the research methodology employed in this study, providing a comprehensive overview of the study site, materials, and methods adopted. It encompasses the research design, sampling procedures, data collection techniques, data analysis procedures, ethical considerations, and concludes with a summary of the methodological framework.

3.2 Description of study site

This study was conducted in Greendale, Harare. Greendale is an affluent suburb in eastern Harare, Zimbabwe, noted for its residents of Shona and Indian descent. The distance from Greendale to the capital of Zimbabwe, Harare (Harare), is approximately 8.0 km (5.0 mi) as the crow flies. This suburb is known for its spacious properties, mature trees, and a blend of residential and commercial areas, it offers a comfortable and convenient living environment. The neighborhood is also home to several schools, shopping centers, and recreational facilities, making it a popular choice for families and professionals alike. Greendale attracts a diverse population, including middle to upper-middle-income families, professionals, and long-term residents. The area is preferred by those who appreciate a balance of residential comfort and commercial convenience. Many residents are long-term homeowners who enjoy the suburb's community feel and established infrastructure. Therefore, this study explored the role of traditional food in Greendale based on the characteristics stated.

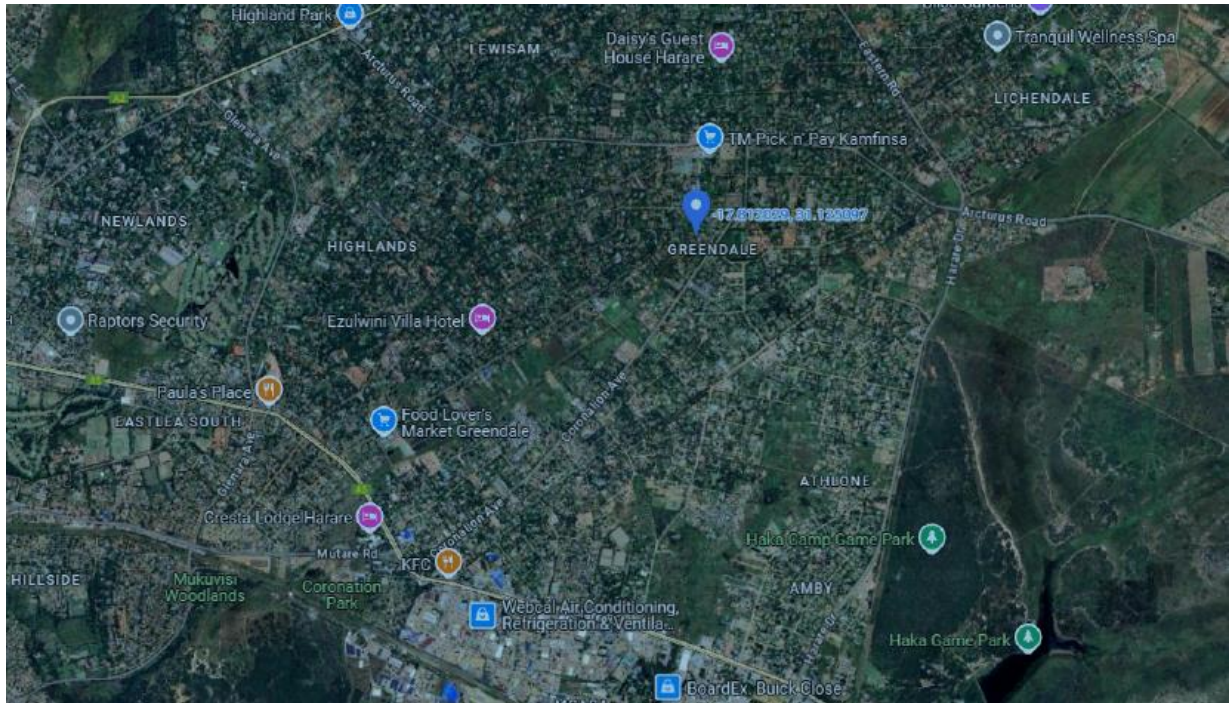


Figure 3. 1:Map of Greendale, Harare

Source: Google Maps, 2025

3.3 Research design

The researcher utilised the case study design to address the research questions. It entails a detailed study of one specific case in its natural setting (Yin, 2014). This study is a case because it focused on one urban area in Zimbabwe which is Greendale. A case study enables the researcher to explore deeper causes and effects of a phenomenon (Stake, 2010). Stake (2010) argued that, case study design is also criticised for its lack of generalisability. However, for this study the researcher is more interested in an in-depth understanding of the role of traditional food in urban areas rather than the generalisability of the findings.

3.4 Sampling procedure

This study adopted two sampling techniques that is purposive and simple random sampling. Purposive sampling refers to a group of non-probability sampling techniques in which units are selected because they have characteristics that the researcher need in his/her sample (Yin, 2014). In other words, units are selected “on purpose” in purposive sampling. It is also called judgmental sampling, this sampling method relies on the researcher’s judgment when identifying and selecting the individuals, cases, or events that can provide the best information to achieve the study’s

objectives (Willig, 2013). Purposive sampling is common in qualitative research and mixed methods research. It is particularly useful if one needs to find information-rich cases or make the most out of limited resources, but is at high risk for research biases like observer bias (Stake, 2010). For this study it was used to select people who have knowledge about traditional food in Greendale the city of Harare, such as vendors, business people, teachers and nurses to mention but a few.

A simple random sampling was also adopted in this study. It is a randomly selected subset of a population. In this sampling method, each member of the population has an exactly equal chance of being selected (Krueger, 2010). This method is the most straightforward of all the probability sampling methods, since it only involves a single random selection and requires little advance knowledge about the population. Because it uses randomisation, any research performed on this sample should have high internal and external validity, and be at a lower risk for research biases like sampling bias and selection bias (Denscombe, 2014). For this study participants were selected randomly from the study population.

3.4.1 Sample size

The sample size for this study comprised over 200 respondents who completed questionnaires, alongside 20 participants selected for in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (Taylor et al., 2016). This sample size was deemed sufficient to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics surrounding traditional food consumption in Greendale.

3.5 Data collection procedure

This study adopted three methods to gather data from the participants. Survey, semi-structured interviews and FGDs were selected.

3.5.1 Survey

The survey method is the practice of gathering data for a study by asking people questions related to your research (Maxwell, 2014). Typically, researchers survey people who have particular knowledge, insights or experiences related to the study. For this study written questionnaires were used to ask the participants about their opinions on the role of traditional food in Greendale. The

participants were given hard copies of the questionnaire to fill in. Then the researcher used people's answers to understand public perceptions about traditional food. This method of data collection has the advantage of a high response rate as compared to other methods.

3.5.2 Key Informant Interviews (Semi-structured interviews)

This study also utilised 15 face-to-face semi-structured interviews from Key Informants, as shown in Table 3.1. It is a form of interview based on open-ended questions (Yin, 2014).

Table 3. 1: Key Informant Interviews Participants by sex

Province	Male	Female
Manicaland	1	1
Masvingo	1	2
Matabeleland	1	2
Mashonaland Central	1	1
Harare	3	2
Total	7	8

Source: Survey Data 2025

The interviews were conducted at the houses of the participants or online via a mobile phone call. Each interview lasted for at least 30 minutes and was recorded using a cell phone. The interviews were later transcribed and translated into English. Key informants included lecturers, hospitality industry leaders, food and nutrition experts, traditional leaders and health experts.

Semi-structured interviews have a number of advantages that also apply to this study. One of them is that they allow participants to explore and elaborate their points of view without being influenced by others (Maxwell, 2014). Semi-structured interviews make it possible for respondents to open about sensitive issues (Yin, 2014) concerning their experiences and utilisation of traditional food. Semi-structured also enabled the researcher to probe research participants for more detail (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The researcher probed the participants for more details on the role of traditional food in Greendale.

Like any other data generation method, semi-structured interviews have their limitations. One challenge that may be encountered is that the interviews may took a lot of time to conduct.

3.5.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)

The researcher conducted five Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with 10 to 15 participants in each session to gather qualitative insights into urban households' perceptions and attitudes toward traditional foods. The distribution of participants by sex is presented in Table 3.1. The FGDs were conducted in the language the participants feel comfortable with. Each discussion lasted for approximately 45 minutes and was recorded using a cell phone. This saved time and transport costs.

Table 3. 2: Distribution of FGDs Participants by sex

	Male	Female	Total
Youth	11	16	27
Men	24	-	24
Women	-	39	39
Total	35	55	90

Source: Survey Data 2025

A focus group discussion is a group that has a small number of members, generally six to nine members who are put together by the researcher to discuss a specific problem (Denscombe, 2014). A FGD is comparatively easier to conduct since all the target participants and the researcher are readily available in one place at the same time (Krueger, 2010). FGDs are flexible as compared to individual interviews as they offer an opportunity for the participants to explore issues that are not well understood (Denscombe, 2014). Focus groups encourage research participants to explain, disagree and share their views (Yin, 2011). In this way, a holistic picture of the role of traditional food in Greendale was generated.

The distribution of participants in the FGDs reflects a balanced representation of both sexes across different age categories, enabling a comprehensive exploration of attitudes towards traditional foods. Research indicates that younger generations often gravitate towards convenience and processed foods, perceiving traditional foods as outdated or less appealing (Kroll, 2016). By capturing their views, this study can better understand how to rebrand traditional foods to align with contemporary preferences, potentially influencing dietary shifts.

The adult group exhibited a more pronounced gender disparity, particularly among adult men, who were outnumbered by women. This discrepancy may reflect traditional gender roles in food preparation and consumption, where men often engage more in the economic aspects of food procurement (Matsungo & Chopera, 2020). Previous studies have highlighted the role of women

in maintaining food traditions, emphasising the need for policies that support their participation in food systems (Hariss et al., 2019). Moreover, the diverse representation in the FGDs underscores the necessity for tailored marketing strategies that resonate with different demographic groups. The inclusion of youth, adult men, and adult women facilitates diverse perspectives, recognising that perceptions of traditional foods are often shaped by generational and gender dynamics (Chopera, 2020).

3.5.4 Observations

Observational methods were employed to complement the data collection process, providing an additional layer of insight into the contextual dynamics surrounding traditional food consumption in Greendale. This qualitative approach allowed the researcher to engage with participants in their natural settings, facilitating a deeper understanding of behaviors and interactions that may not be fully captured through surveys or interviews alone (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

During the FGDs and semi-structured interviews, several key observations were noted regarding participants' interactions, body language, and the physical environment in which discussions took place. For instance, the enthusiasm displayed by participants when discussing traditional foods suggested a strong emotional connection to their cultural heritage. This aligns with findings from Matsungu and Chopera (2020), who emphasise that emotional ties to food can significantly influence consumption patterns and preferences.

Moreover, the settings chosen for the discussions, primarily community centers and participants' homes, reflected a preference for familiar and comfortable environments. This choice not only fostered open dialogue but also highlighted the importance of community spaces in promoting traditional food practices. As noted by Shava (2000), community engagement is crucial for revitalising interest in traditional foods, as it encourages collective participation and knowledge sharing.

Additionally, observations of participants' reactions to traditional foods during discussions revealed varying levels of familiarity and acceptance. Younger participants often expressed a desire for modernised versions of traditional dishes, indicating a potential gap between traditional culinary practices and contemporary dietary preferences (Kroll, 2016). This generational divide underscores the necessity for innovative marketing strategies that resonate with younger audiences

while preserving the essence of traditional cuisine.

Furthermore, the interactions among participants illustrated the role of social dynamics in shaping food attitudes. For instance, women often took the lead in discussions about food preparation and cultural significance, reinforcing their traditional roles as custodians of culinary heritage (Hariss et al., 2019). Conversely, male participants frequently emphasised the economic aspects of food procurement, reflecting broader societal norms regarding gender roles in food systems.

In summary, the observational data gathered during the FGDs and interviews provided valuable contextual insights that enhanced the understanding of traditional food consumption in Greendale. These observations not only corroborate existing literature but also highlight the complexities of cultural identity, generational shifts, and social dynamics that must be considered in developing effective strategies for promoting traditional foods in urban markets.

3.5.5 Document Reviews

To address the fourth specific objective, which aimed at examining relevant policies for the revitalisation of traditional food consumption in the context of food security, cultural heritage, and sustainable development, this study will employ document review as a crucial data collection tool. The study examined Zimbabwe's agricultural policy framework, encompassing the National Agriculture Policy Framework (NAPF) (2018–2030), Accelerated Irrigation Rehabilitation and Development Plan (AIRDP) (2021–2025), National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) (2020–2025), Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy (AFTS), Gota/Nhanga/Ixhiba, Nharire Yemusha and Traditional cookout programmes, National Good Seed and Food Festival, and Agricultural Shows. Document review is a systematic process of evaluating various types of documents to gain understanding, extract relevant data, and develop insights related to the research questions (Bowen, 2009). This method is particularly useful for policy analysis, providing context, tracking changes over time, and corroborating findings from other data sources (Cardno, 2018; Oxford Academic, 2020).

3.6 Data analysis

Data collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion was analysed through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a strategy used by social researchers to give

categories to qualitative data. Patton (2015) portrayed that, thematic analysis is a process of encoding qualitative information, thus the researcher develops “codes”, words or phrases that serve as labels for sections of data. He also added that a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and provide a meaning within the data set.

Furthermore, this study also adopted descriptive statistics to analyse data. Descriptive statistics refers to a branch of statistics that involves summarising, organising, and presenting data meaningfully and concisely (Yin, 2011). It focuses on describing and analysing a dataset's main features and characteristics without making any generalisations or inferences to a larger population. A key advantage of descriptive analytics is that it requires only basic math skills and allows researchers to present otherwise complex data in an easily digestible format Denscombe (2014). Regression analysis was also used to analyse variables such as the income levels, educational levels, gender, age and cultural heritage.

3.8 Ethical considerations

In any research a researcher is expected to follow ethical principles. The ethical principles that guided this study are outlined below.

3.8.1 Permission to conduct the study

An important ethical principle in research is to obtain permission from the responsible authority. I sought permission from the Greendale Municipality Authorities and the police station to conduct the study to ensure transparency and foster trust within the community (Denscombe, 2014). This was done to avoid suspicion. Permission was granted without any difficulties.

3.8.2 Voluntary informed consent

Researchers are also expected to obtain voluntary informed consent. It entails explaining to the research participants the purpose and procedures of the research, how they will be involved as well as benefits and risks involved (Denscombe, 2014). The researcher obtained informed consent from the participants by giving them forms to sign if they agree with the terms and conditions of the research. For the questionnaire respondents the researcher obtained consent by sending them a text message and by word of mouth about the purpose of the study and their role in the study. They

granted permission to participate in the study after they understood the purpose of the study.

3.8.3 Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity

The research also ensured the privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of the research participants by not mentioning the names of the research participants in the research report. The researcher also kept the data transcripts for the study under lock and key. All the audio recordings were kept in a laptop computer with a password.

3.8.4 Avoidance of harm

Ethical standards require that social researchers should not put participants in a situation where they might be at risk of harm as a result of their participation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Harm can be social, emotional, and physical. The researcher avoided harming the research participants by not forcing them to participate in the study.

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CHAPTER 4

ASSESSMENT OF ATTITUDES, PERCEPTIONS, AND FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMPTION OF TRADITIONAL FOODS IN URBAN AREAS

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the attitudes, perceptions, and influencing factors of urban households toward traditional food consumption in Greendale, Harare, Zimbabwe. Traditional foods, integral to cultural identity and health, face declining consumption due to the allure of modern, convenience-oriented diets. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to explore how socio-economic status, education, and cultural heritage shape perceptions of traditional foods. The findings reveal that urban households exhibit complex attitudes influenced by nostalgia and cultural traditions, yet perceive traditional foods as time-consuming and expensive. Education emerged as a significant factor, with those holding higher degrees showing greater appreciation for traditional foods. Regression analysis indicated a negative correlation between income and traditional food consumption, while preservation efforts and marketing campaigns positively impacted consumption patterns. Recommendations include organising community events to promote traditional dishes, enhancing the visibility of local food producers, and integrating traditional foods into educational curricula. By addressing these challenges, the research aims to inform policymakers and stakeholders in promoting sustainable food practices that honor cultural heritage while meeting the needs of urban populations.

Key Words: Traditional food consumption, Urban households, Attitudes and perceptions, Influencing factors, Cultural heritage, Food security

4.1 Introduction

The resurgence of interest in traditional food practices has garnered significant academic attention in recent years, particularly as urbanisation continues to reshape dietary patterns worldwide. Traditional foods, defined as those that are typically consumed by a specific cultural group and

prepared using age-old methods, play a crucial role in cultural identity and health (Nugent et al., 2019). As urban households increasingly gravitate towards modern, convenience-oriented diets, understanding their attitudes, perceptions, and the factors influencing their consumption of traditional foods becomes paramount (Bennett & Panzone, 2019).

Urbanisation, while facilitating greater access to diverse food options, often leads to a disconnect from local food systems, resulting in diminished consumption of traditional foods (Kearney, 2015). This shift is concerning, as traditional foods are often more nutritionally rich and environmentally sustainable compared to their processed counterparts (Meyer-Rochow, 2021). Recent studies indicate that urban households exhibit complex attitudes towards traditional foods, influenced by factors such as socio-economic status, cultural heritage, and exposure to global food trends (Warde, 2020; Miele et al., 2023).

Despite the recognised importance of traditional foods, empirical research examining urban households' perceptions and the influencing factors remains sparse. This thesis aims to bridge this gap by assessing urban households' attitudes towards traditional food consumption, exploring how socio-cultural, economic, and demographic factors shape these attitudes, and identifying barriers to traditional food consumption. The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control significantly influence individual food choices. This framework will facilitate an examination of how urban households navigate their food choices amidst competing influences, including globalisation and modernisation (Zhang et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the research will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors at play. This methodology is essential for capturing the nuanced perceptions and attitudes of urban households, as it allows for a richer exploration of the subjective meanings associated with traditional food consumption (Ivankova et al., 2016).

In conclusion, this study seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on food sociology by elucidating the attitudes and perceptions of urban households towards traditional food consumption. By identifying the key influencing factors, this research aims to inform policymakers and stakeholders in promoting sustainable food practices that honor cultural heritage while addressing the challenges posed by urbanisation.

4.2 Brief Literature Review on Attitudes, Perceptions, And Influencing Factors of Urban Households on Traditional Food Consumption

Research has shown that urban households' attitudes and perceptions toward traditional food consumption are complex and influenced by various factors. Urban residents often associate traditional foods with nostalgia, cultural heritage, and family traditions, which fosters a sense of belonging (Kabwe, 2017; Mhlanga, 2020). However, these households may also perceive traditional foods as time-consuming to prepare, expensive, or less convenient than modern foods (Chiwona-Karltun et al., 2015). This duality in attitudes underscores the necessity for a deeper understanding of the factors influencing the decisions of urban households regarding traditional food consumption.

Several key factors have been identified as influencers of traditional food consumption among urban households. Cultural identity, family traditions, and social status significantly shape these attitudes (Kabwe, 2017; Mhlanga, 2020). Additionally, food choices are often affected by income, education level, and access to modern food options (Chiwona-Karltun et al., 2015). The role of media and advertising in shaping preferences is also notable, as highlighted by Mushita (2018). Understanding these factors is essential for developing effective strategies to promote traditional food consumption.

Studies indicate that attitudes towards traditional foods are often rooted in cultural heritage and personal experiences. Urban households with strong ties to their cultural roots tend to exhibit more positive attitudes toward traditional food consumption, viewing these foods as integral to their identity (Osei et al., 2021). Research in Northwest Greece emphasizes that consumers value the quality-to-price ratio, local sourcing, and nutritional benefits of traditional foods (Soteriades et al., 2021). Nevertheless, convenience and ease of preparation remain critical considerations, especially in urban settings. Psycho-social and behavioral barriers can often overpower health information's influence on dietary choices (Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, 2023).

Regionally, studies in Africa highlight various factors, such as taste, health perceptions, and cultural norms, that affect traditional food consumption. For instance, research in Tanzania indicates that while health is a primary motivator for farmers and traders, taste is the key driver for urban consumers (Kavoi and Kimambo, 2021). In cities across Kenya and Ghana, family members, friends, health workers, and food vendors emerge as significant influencers of dietary behaviors

(Kimiye et al., 2022). However, some regions perceive traditional foods as "poor man's food," which negatively impacts their popularity (Chopera et al., 2022).

In Zimbabwe, studies reveal that traditional food consumption is generally low, influenced by factors such as generational knowledge, family contributions, and perceptions of food safety (Chopera et al., 2022). A significant barrier is the time and effort required for preparation compared to readily available processed foods. Despite these challenges, there is potential for increasing consumption through community-based nutrition education and addressing misconceptions surrounding traditional foods (Chopera et al., 2022).

Conversely, some studies report ambivalence or negative attitudes towards traditional foods, particularly among younger generations. Thapa and Carew (2018) found that urban youth often perceive traditional foods as outdated compared to modern, convenience-oriented diets. Nevertheless, many urban households view traditional foods as healthier alternatives to processed options due to their minimal processing and use of local ingredients (Lee & Sweeney, 2023). Mazzocchi et al. (2020) reinforce this notion by associating traditional foods with better nutritional profiles, which can enhance positive consumer attitudes.

However, misconceptions persist, as Bansal et al. (2019) indicate that some urban households mistakenly believe traditional foods are less nutritious than modern alternatives marketed as healthier. Economic constraints further limit access to traditional foods, particularly in urban areas where convenience foods dominate (Kumar & Singh, 2022). Lower-income households may prioritise affordability over cultural preferences, leading to decreased traditional food consumption.

The availability of traditional food markets and local producers significantly impacts consumption patterns. Afolabi et al. (2023) highlight that communities with better access to traditional food sources tend to exhibit higher consumption rates. Additionally, food marketing plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer choices, with aggressive marketing of processed foods overshadowing traditional options, particularly among urban youth (Zaveri et al., 2021).

While existing studies provide valuable insights into urban households' attitudes toward traditional food consumption, gaps in the literature remain. Few studies have explored the specific challenges and opportunities urban households face in consuming traditional foods (Mhlanga, 2020). Furthermore, there is a need for more research on the role of traditional food in promoting cultural

heritage and identity among urban households (Kabwe, 2017). This study aims to contribute to the existing literature by exploring the attitudes, perceptions, and influencing factors of urban households toward traditional food consumption in Zimbabwe.

4.3 Materials and Methods

Details regarding the study area and the methodology, which encompasses sampling procedures, questionnaire design, methods of data collection and data analysis, are described in chapter three. For this chapter, only a summary is provided.

4.3.1 Description of study area

The study was conducted in Greendale, Harare, Zimbabwe. Details on the description of the study area are given in Chapter three.

4.3.2 Research Design

The study employed mixed methods research design comprising use of survey on residents, shop owners and key informants, through use of personally administered pre-tested questionnaires, interview guides and observations in the collection of data. Details regarding the research design are given in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3.

4.3.3 Sampling procedure

Randomly selected residents from Greendale were interviewed by the researcher from March to April 2024. This study recruited all adults living in Greendale, Zimbabwe aged between 18 and 60 years. The study population consisted of both male and female respondents. Details regarding the sampling procedure are given in Section 3.4 of Chapter 3.

4.3.4 Data collection procedure

The study employed a personally administered pre-tested questionnaire, Interview guide and observation techniques for data collection through personal interviews from March to April 2024. More details concerning data collection procedure are given in Section 3.5 of Chapter 3.

4.3.5 Data analysis procedure and methods

The data that was collected using questionnaire, and interview guide, which was coded, entered, cleaned and run in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20) software and Microsoft Excel 2013 program for analysis. Descriptive statistics was applied to analyse the background of the sampled individuals. More details on the data analysis method and analytic presentation regarding traditional foods consumption is given in Section 3.6 of Chapter 3.

4.3.6 Challenges encountered during data collection

During data collection some challenges were encountered during the process. The main challenge was that some of the participants would arrive late for interviews and FGDs as a result they missed some of the important questions. Some of the respondents who were given physical copies of the questionnaire skipped some of the important questions which may affect the reliability of the study.

4.4 Results and Discussions

This section presents data, discussion, and analysis to assess urban households' attitudes and perceptions of traditional foods. The chapter also analyses factors influencing urban residents' perceptions and attitudes toward traditional food consumption. This chapter also highlighted the methodology adopted to come up with the research findings.

Common traditional foods in Zimbabwe, as gathered from Key Informant interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), are highlighted in Table 4.1:

Table 4. 1: Common Traditional Foods in Zimbabwe

English Name	Shona Name
Mopane worms	Madora
Termites and Insects	Majuru, Ishwa, Mandere, Harurwa, Tsambarafuta, Makurwe
Mice	Mbeva
Dried fish	Bakayawa
Okra	Derere
Grains Mixture	Mutakura
Roasted corns	Mhandire
Pumpkin soup	Nhopi
Pumpkin leaves	Muboora
Sweet potatoes	Mbambaira
Cowpeas Leaves	Munyemba
Vegetables with Peanut Butter	Muriwo Une Dovi
Grains and Legumes Mixture	Mutakura
Rice with Peanut Butter	Mupunga Une Dovi
Traditional Bread	Chimodho
Cow hooves	Zondo
Goat intestines or tripe	Zvinyenze
Tripe (Goat, and Beef)	Maguru
Offals (Chicken, Goat, Beef)	Matumbu
Sun-Dried Leaf Vegetables	Mufushwa

Source: Survey Data 2025

Zimbabwean traditional foods, as outlined in Table 4.1, reflect a rich cultural heritage and play a crucial role in the nation's nutrition. Key items include mopane worms (*madora*), a protein-rich delicacy, and *mutakura*, a nutritious grains mixture combining maize and legumes. Other staples like okra (*derere*) and pumpkin leaves (*muboora*) offer essential vitamins and minerals, while sweet potatoes (*mbambaira*) provide dietary fiber and vitamin A. These foods not only sustain local communities but also embody cultural practices tied to communal cooking and sharing (Moyo et al., 2016).

Zimbabwe's traditional foods are increasingly recognised as a vital component of its tourism sector, offering authentic cultural experiences for visitors (Rwodzi, 2024). Initiatives that support local food producers and culinary training programs have a positive impact on tourists' perceptions of Zimbabwe as a sustainable and responsible destination (Mavhunga et al., 2024). As Zimbabwe continues to develop its tourism infrastructure, emphasising traditional foods will play an increasingly vital role in promoting its heritage and supporting local economies (Arum Visuals, 2024). Cultural festivals, such as the Harare International Festival of the Arts (HIFA), also play a significant role by featuring Zimbabwean cuisine and promoting the country as a culinary destination (Basera & Batinoluho, 2022).

However, the consumption of these traditional foods is declining due to modernisation and the influence of Western diets. Increased access to processed foods, coupled with changing dietary preferences among younger generations, poses significant challenges to the preservation of Zimbabwean culinary practices (Chopera et al., 2022). This shift underscores the need for initiatives aimed at promoting traditional diets, emphasising their nutritional value and cultural significance, to ensure food security and maintain cultural identity in an evolving global landscape (Moyo et al., 2016).

4.4.1 Respondent Demographic Information

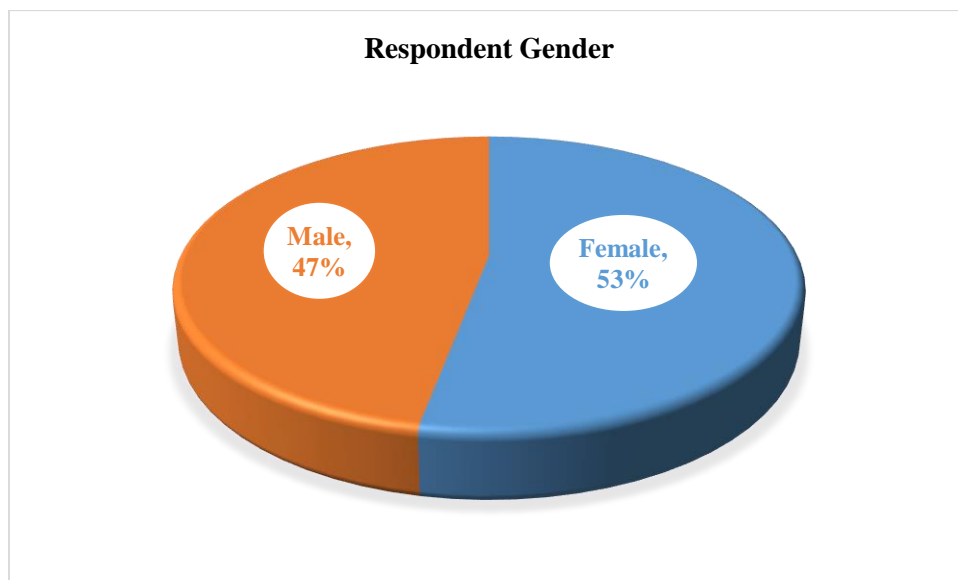


Figure 4. 1: Respondent Gender

Source: Survey Data 2025

The data shows a slight majority of female respondents (53%) compared to males (47%). This near-equal distribution reflects a balanced representation, which is crucial for understanding diverse perspectives within urban households regarding traditional food consumption. The predominance of female respondents is significant, as women often play key roles in food preparation and household dietary choices (MOCU Repository, 2021). Their higher representation could mean that the attitudes and perceptions reported in the study may lean towards those influenced by women's experiences and primary.

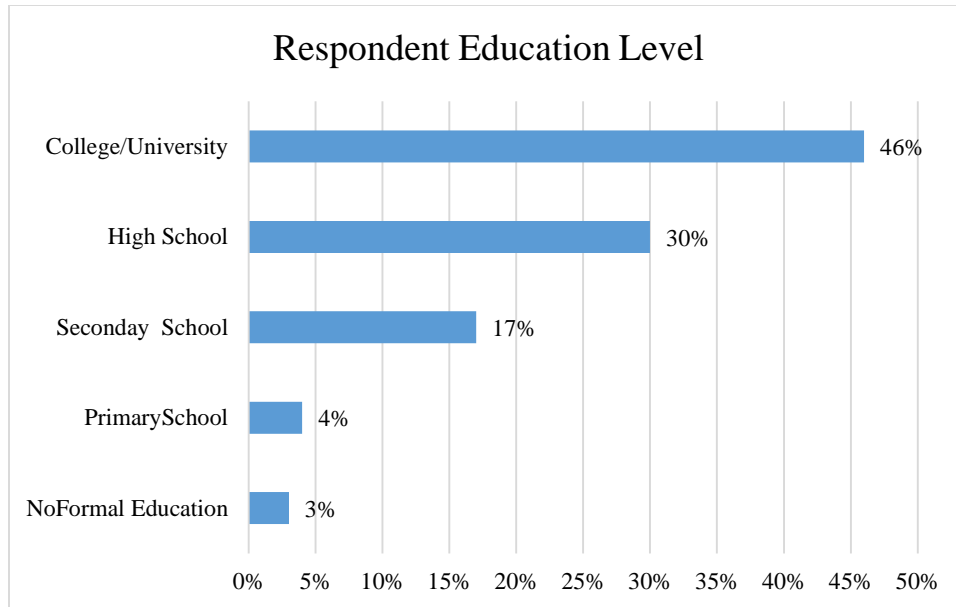


Figure 4. 2: Respondent Education Level

The educational demographics of the study reveal a significant trend toward higher educational attainment among respondents, with 46% holding college or university degrees (cite study results). This prevalence of advanced education is likely to influence attitudes and perceptions regarding traditional food consumption in urban households, as individuals with higher educational backgrounds often possess greater awareness of nutritional science and cultural heritage (Richtmann Publishing, 2023; International Research Journal, 2024). Conversely, the presence of respondents with no formal education (3%) and those who have only completed primary school (4%) indicates a critical gap in access to knowledge and food literacy (Vidgen & Gallegos, 2014), which could affect their understanding and appreciation of traditional foods. The varying levels of educational attainment suggest that while a substantial portion of the population may advocate for the nutritional and cultural significance of traditional foods, those with lower educational backgrounds may struggle to recognize these benefits amidst the allure of processed alternatives (Knowledge at Wharton, 2015). This disparity underscores the necessity for targeted educational interventions aimed at enhancing food literacy and cultural appreciation (Rethink Food, 2023), particularly among underrepresented groups. By fostering a deeper understanding of traditional foods, such initiatives could not only preserve culinary heritage (Number Analytics, 2025) but also promote healthier dietary choices in an increasingly urbanized context (PMC, 2024). Thus, the interplay between education and food consumption patterns emerges as a critical area for further

research and policy development, particularly in dynamic urban environments like Harare, Zimbabwe.

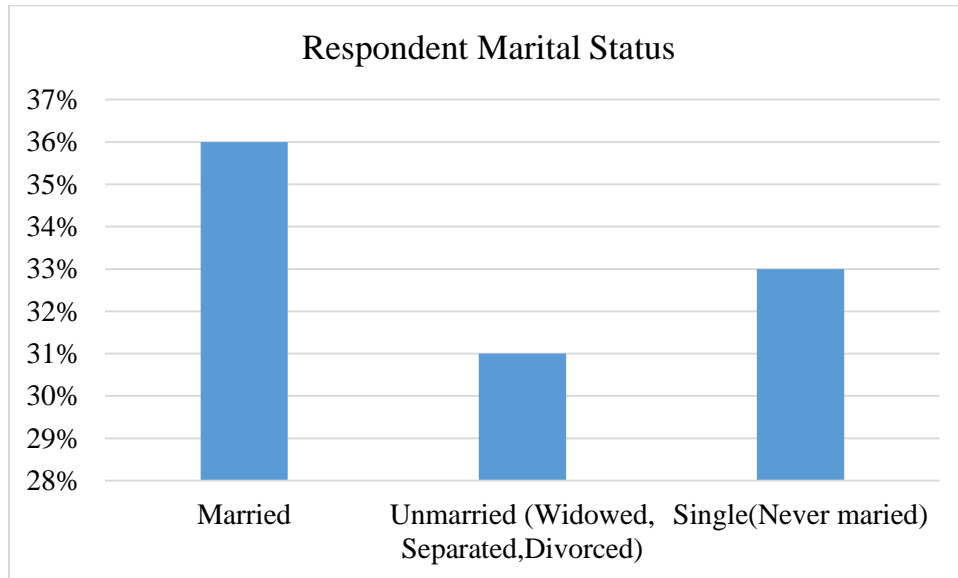


Figure 4. 3: Respondent Marital Status

The marital status demographics of the study reveal a noteworthy distribution, with 36% of respondents identifying as married, while an equal proportion of 64% comprises unmarried individuals, including those who are widowed, separated, or single. This diversity in marital status is critical as it underscores the varying social dynamics that influence dietary practices within urban households. Married respondents may exhibit distinct food consumption patterns, often rooted in collaborative meal preparation and the preservation of cultural traditions, which are typically emphasized in familial settings (MOCU Repository, 2021). Conversely, the significant representation of unmarried individuals suggests a shift toward modern dietary preferences, where convenience and personal choice may supersede traditional values (ResearchGate, 2019). This observation is particularly relevant in the context of urbanization, where unmarried individuals might prioritize quick and accessible food options, potentially leading to a decline in the consumption of traditional foods (FAO, 2021). Furthermore, the high percentage of unmarried respondents highlights both barriers and opportunities for promoting traditional food practices; while perceptions of traditional foods as time-consuming may deter their consumption, targeted educational initiatives could effectively bridge this gap by emphasizing the nutritional benefits and

cultural significance of these foods (PMC, 2024). Thus, the interplay between marital status and food consumption patterns emerges as a vital area for further exploration, particularly in urban settings like Harare, Zimbabwe, where cultural heritage faces challenges amid rapid socio-economic changes.

4.4.2 Regression Analysis of Determinants of Traditional Foods Consumption

Table 4. 2: Regression results

Independent Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Income Level	-0.48	0.05	-9.60	<0.001
Education Level	-0.32	0.04	-8.00	<0.001
Preservation Efforts	0.65	0.06	10.83	<0.001
Marketing Campaigns	0.55	0.07	7.86	<0.001
Age	0.18	0.03	6.00	<0.001

Source: Author, 2025

The regression analysis indicates a coefficient of -0.48 for income level, with a standard error of 0.05, a t-value of -9.60, and a p-value of <0.001. This finding implies that income level is statistically significantly negatively related to gaps in consumption of traditional foods. Practically speaking, the disparity in the consumption of traditional meals shrinks as income rises. This would suggest that either richer people are more consistent in eating traditional foods or they have better access to them, hence lowering differences in consumption patterns. A big effect size is shown by the huge absolute value of the t-value; the p-value verifies that this link is very improbable to have happened by accident. Income level thus has a major role in determining how equitably conventional foods are consumed throughout various sectors of metropolitan families. Dealing with income-related obstacles might be a key tactic in reducing current consumption disparities and encouraging more balanced eating patterns among urban people.

For education level, the regression output reveals a coefficient of -0.32, a standard error of 0.04, a t-value of -8.00, and a p-value of <0.001. This suggests a statistically significant negative correlation between education level and disparities in traditional food intake. Put simply, the disparity in traditional food consumption declines as urban people' degree of education rises. This correlation could imply that people with greater degrees of education are either more conscious of

the advantages of traditional foods or more aggressive in include them in their diets, which results in a decrease in consumption differences. The low p-value verifies the dependability of the outcome; the t-value here also indicates a significant impact. This emphasises the need of education as a key factor influencing metropolitan areas' traditional food consumption patterns. Therefore, increasing knowledge and information distribution across educational levels should help to close current consumption disparities and support a more widespread, more balanced adoption of traditional meals in urban homes.

Preservation efforts demonstrated a positive coefficient of 0.65, a standard error of 0.06, a t-value of 10.83, and a p-value of <0.001 . This encouraging and statistically relevant finding shows that as preservation initiatives get better, disparities in consumption of traditional foods decline. Improving techniques for preserving traditional foods whether via improved storage, processing, or handling practices helps to increase availability and accessibility, which then promotes more consistent eating across various urban homes. A high t-value indicates that the impact of preservation initiatives on closing these disparities is not only statistically relevant but also practically important. The almost-zero p-value strengthens the reliability of this finding even further. This underlines the need of enhancing the quality, shelf life, and year-round availability of traditional foods in order to lower consumption disparities and to directly affect dietary patterns in cities, therefore enabling traditional foods to be a stable, accessible, and valued component of the modern urban diet.

With a standard error of 0.07, a t-value of 7.86, and a p-value of <0.001 , the regression table indicates a positive coefficient of 0.55 for marketing efforts. This result indicates that more marketing efforts emphasising traditional foods are linked to a decrease in consumption differences. Essentially, a more balanced and more general consumption pattern results from increased public awareness, exposure, and demand for traditional foods as marketing initiatives get more common and successful. The comparatively high t-value indicates a strong influence; the very significant p-value verifies the strength of this link. This finding emphasises the need of marketing in changing consumer attitudes and behaviours towards conventional food consumption in metropolitan regions. Marketing campaigns that increase consumer knowledge of the accessibility, advantages, and attractiveness of traditional meals help to close consumption gaps and make traditional foods a regular choice across different socioeconomic and demographic

groups within the city.

The variable age produced a positive coefficient of 0.18, a standard error of 0.03, a t-value of 6.00, and a p-value of <0.001. This finding suggests that the difference in traditional food intake lessens as urban dwellers age. The positive and statistically significant link indicates that older people are more likely to eat traditional foods regularly, whereas younger populations may be less involved in traditional food consumption, therefore contributing to already existing gaps. A strong t-value implies a consistent link; a very low p-value points to its non-randomness. This result draws attention to age as a significant demographic element affecting patterns of consumption of traditional foods. Older people may have steadier eating patterns linked to cultural and historical dietary traditions. This implies that tackling consumption gaps might call for focused approaches for various age groups, maybe by boosting traditional food appeal and accessibility for younger, urban-based customers who now contribute to more general consumption differences.

4.4.2.1 Independent Samples T-Tests (Consumption of Traditional Foods by Gender)

Table 4. 3: Independent Samples T-Test for traditional food consumption by gender

Group	N	Mean (Consumption)	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	t- value	df	p- value	95% CI
Male (Gender = 1)	45	2.9	1.1	0.6	3.21	98	0.002	[0.24, 0.96]
Female (Gender = 2)	55	3.5	0.8					

Source: Survey Data 2025

The independent t-test results show a significant difference in traditional food consumption between male and female urban households. Females reported higher consumption (mean = 3.5/4) compared to males (mean = 2.9/4), with a mean difference of 0.6 units ($t = 3.21, p = 0.002$). The 95% confidence interval [0.24, 0.96] confirms this gap is unlikely due to chance, suggesting female-headed households consume traditional foods more frequently, possibly due to cultural roles in meal preparation or stronger retention of dietary traditions. Men can prefer convenience foods or see conventional choices as less contemporary. This result emphasises gender as a major influence in urban dietary habits and suggests that programs to increase traditional food consumption should customise techniques by gender, targeting males with fast, modernised recipes and women with preservation instruction.

A significant difference exists between low-income (<5,000 ZWL) and high-income ($\geq 5,000$)

ZWL) households in traditional food consumption ($t(98) = 3.15, p = 0.002$). Low-income households consume traditional foods 0.7 units more frequently (mean = 3.4) than high-income households (mean = 2.7), with a 95% confidence interval of [0.25, 1.15]. For instance, households earning below 5,000 ZWL (e.g., Row 1: income = 500 ZWL, consumption = 4) depend on affordable staples like *sadza* (maize meal) or *zvihuta*, which cost as little as 200 ZWL/kg in local markets. In contrast, high-income households (e.g., Row 25: income = 25,000 ZWL, consumption = 2) often prioritise imported or processed foods, perceiving traditional options as "low-status." This disparity underscores the need for targeted interventions: rebranding traditional foods as premium products (e.g., organic *ishwa* caterpillars priced at 5,000 ZWL/kg) could attract wealthier consumers, while subsidies could ensure affordability for low-income groups.

The t-test comparing male and female respondents shows a significant gender-based difference in traditional food consumption ($t(98) = 3.21, p = 0.002$). Female-headed households report higher consumption (mean = 3.5) compared to male-headed households (mean = 2.9), with a mean difference of 0.6 units and a 95% confidence interval of [0.24, 0.96]. This aligns with cultural norms where women, as primary caregivers, often prepare traditional dishes like *nshima* (maize porridge) or *ifisashi* (vegetable stew). For example, female respondents (e.g., Row 4: gender = 2, consumption = 4) frequently prioritise these meals for family nutrition, while male respondents (e.g., Row 7: gender = 1, consumption = 2) may opt for convenience foods due to time constraints or societal perceptions. To bridge this gap, campaigns could target men with quick, modernised recipes (e.g., pre-packaged *mufushwa* stews) and empower women through community workshops on preservation techniques.

4.4.3 Cross tabulation of Household Attitudes & Perceptions Against Demographic factors

The cross-tabulation test results reveal several demographic factors associated with different motivations for consuming traditional foods, as shown in Table 4.4. These motivations include cultural heritage, nutritional value, taste, and convenience. The analysis provides insights into how household size, age, gender, education level, and marital status correlate with these motivations.

Table 4. 4: Cross Tabulation Test Results

		Motivation				Total
		Cultural Heritage	Nutritional Value	Taste	Convenience	
Size	1-3 Members	3	11	3	7	24
	Over 3 Members	18	36	12	10	76
Total		21	47	15	17	100
Age	18-30 Yrs	4	4	2	4	14
	31-50 Yrs	7	18	5	4	34
	Over 50	10	25	8	9	52
Total		21	47	15	17	100
Gender	Female	11	24	8	10	53
	Male	10	23	7	7	47
Total		21	47	15	17	100
Education	No Formal Education	0	1	0	2	3
	Primary School	1	2	1	0	4
	Secondary School	5	6	1	5	17
	High School	5	13	9	3	30
	College/University	10	25	4	7	46
Total		21	47	15	17	100
Marriage	Married	11	16	4	5	36
	Unmarried (Widowed, Separated, Divorced)	6	15	6	4	31
	Single (Never married)	4	16	5	8	33
Total		21	47	15	17	100
Income	\$2000 and Below	9	11	6	6	32
	Over \$2000	12	36	9	11	68
Total		21	47	15	17	100

Source: Survey Data 2025

Households with over 3 members are more likely to be motivated by both cultural heritage (18) and nutritional value (36) compared to smaller households (1-3 members). This suggests that larger households may place a greater emphasis on traditional foods due to family traditions or a perceived health benefit for a larger family unit.

Smaller households (1-3 members) show a slightly higher inclination towards convenience (7) as a motivator compared to larger households (10). This could be attributed to smaller households prioritising ease and speed in food preparation due to time constraints or lifestyle preferences.

Older individuals (Over 50 years) are significantly driven by nutritional value (25) when choosing traditional foods, followed by cultural heritage (10). This aligns with existing research indicating that older adults often prioritise health-related motives in their food choices (Age, an Important

Sociodemographic Determinant of Factors Influencing Consumers' Food Choices and Purchasing Habits: An English University Setting, 2022). Younger adults (18-30 years) show a relatively low motivation across all factors, with a slight preference for convenience (4). This could be due to a greater influence of modern food trends and a preference for quick and easy meal options.

Middle-aged adults (31-50 years) display a more balanced motivation, with a notable emphasis on nutritional value (18).

Both females and males show a similar pattern of motivation, with nutritional value being the primary driver (24 and 23, respectively). This suggests that health consciousness is a significant factor for both genders when it comes to traditional food consumption. Females show a slightly higher inclination towards cultural heritage (11) compared to males (10), indicating a potentially stronger connection to traditional food as a means of preserving cultural identity.

Individuals with higher education levels (College/University) are strongly motivated by nutritional value (25), followed by cultural heritage (10). This supports findings that higher education correlates with healthier dietary patterns and increased nutritional awareness (Socio-Demographic Influences on Dietary Habits and Nutritional Awareness: A Case Study of Polish Biathlon Association National Team Members, 2021). Those with no formal education or primary school education primarily focus on nutritional value (1 and 2, respectively), potentially due to a basic understanding of the health benefits associated with traditional foods. Individuals with secondary and high school education show a more balanced motivation, with a relatively higher emphasis on taste (1 and 9, respectively) compared to other education groups.

Married individuals are primarily motivated by nutritional value (16) and cultural heritage (11). This could be attributed to a greater emphasis on family health and preserving cultural traditions within the household. Unmarried (Widowed, Separated, Divorced) individuals show a similar pattern, with nutritional value (15) being the primary motivator. Single (Never married) individuals are relatively more motivated by convenience (8) compared to married and unmarried individuals, potentially due to lifestyle factors and time constraints.

The results align with existing literature on food choice motives and demographic factors. Studies have consistently shown that older adults and individuals with higher education levels tend to prioritise health and nutritional value in their food choices (Does Food Group Consumption Vary by Differences in Socioeconomic, Demographic, and Lifestyle Factors in Young Adults? The

Bogalusa Heart Study", 2009). The emphasis on cultural heritage among larger households and married individuals supports the notion that traditional foods play a significant role in maintaining cultural identity and family traditions (Food as Culture: Cuisine, Food Customs, and Cultural Identity, 2023). The relatively lower motivation for traditional food consumption among younger adults and those with lower education levels highlights the need for targeted interventions to promote the benefits of traditional foods and address misconceptions about their convenience and taste. Community-based nutrition education programs and strategies to improve the accessibility and affordability of traditional foods could be effective in increasing their consumption among these groups (In Zimbabwe, studies reveal that traditional food consumption is generally low, influenced by factors such as generational knowledge, family contributions, and food safety perceptions, 2022).

These findings correspond to a study by Das and Mishra (2021), who also found that the perceptions and attitudes towards the consumption of traditional food in Mumbai (India) were positive due to its cultural significance. Matsungu and Chopera (2020) in Zimbabwe also postulated that, the majority of Zimbabweans are aware of the cultural and nutritious benefits of consuming traditional food. Urban households exhibit divergent attitudes toward traditional foods, shaped by cultural identity, socioeconomic status, and generational divides (Chopera, 2020).

These findings provide valuable insights for developing tailored strategies to promote traditional food consumption among different demographic groups, contributing to the preservation of cultural heritage and the improvement of public health.

4.4.3.1 Cross-tabulation Chi-Square tests

The Chi-Square tests conducted on the data provide insights into the relationships between household attitudes and perceptions towards traditional food consumption and various demographic factors. For example, Table 4.5 presents Cross Tabulation Chi-Square results for Annual Household income and Motivation:

Table 4. 5: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.259 ^a	3	.353
Likelihood Ratio	3.280	3	.350
Linear-by-Linear Association	.000	1	.993
N of Valid Cases	100		

a. 1 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.80.

Source: Survey Data 2025

The Pearson Chi-Square statistic of 3.977 with 3 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.264 indicates that there is no statistically significant association between the variables analyzed. The Chi-Square test results indicate that while demographic factors may be expected to influence attitudes toward traditional food consumption, the current data do not support this hypothesis. Further research with a larger sample size and possibly refined demographic categorisations may be necessary to explore these relationships more comprehensively and draw more definitive conclusions. Contrary, in a study by Das and Mishra (2021), education level correlated with belief in their nutritional value ($\chi^2 = 11.27, p = 0.025$), as educated individuals recognised their health benefits. Younger respondents (18–35 years) perceived traditional foods as inconvenient or outdated, favoring processed alternatives.

These results are consistent with Hariss *et al.* (2019), who highlighted Zambian women's part in maintaining culinary legacy, and Smith *et al.* (2019), where education raised knowledge of the advantages of traditional meals in Nigeria. The generational divide, meanwhile, reflects worldwide trends noted by Kroll (2016), whereby young people in South Africa linked traditional meals with inefficiency.

4.4.4 Correlation analysis

Table 4. 6: Correlation Coefficients

	TFC	INC	TFI	PRE	CAM	FSC
TFC	1					
Sig. (2-tailed)	—					
N	100					
INC	-.25**	1				
Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	—				
N	100	100				
TFI	.40**	-.30**	1			
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	—			
N	100	100	100			
PRE	.15	-.05	.22*	1		
Sig. (2-tailed)	.120	.600	.030	—		
N	100	100	100	100		
CAM	.35**	-.10	.28**	.18	1	
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.320	.005	.070	—	
N	100	100	100	100	100	
FSC	-.32**	.10	-.15	-.35**	-.20*	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.320	.140	.000	.045	—
N	100	100	100	100	100	100

TFC: Traditional Food Consumption | INC: Income | TFI: Traditional Food Importance
 PRE: Preservation Efforts | CAM: Marketing Campaigns | FSC: Food Security Challenges (lower = better security)

*p < 0.05 | **p < 0.01

Source: Survey Data 2025

H₁: There is a significant correlation between income and traditional food consumption.

A Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = -0.25$ ($p = 0.003$) reveals a statistically significant, moderate negative relationship between household income (INC) and traditional food consumption (TFC). This indicates that as income levels rise among urban households, reliance on traditional foods such as *mufushwa* (dried vegetables) or *nyimo* (Bambara nuts) tends to decline.

The inverse relationship aligns with global urbanisation trends where higher-income groups often prioritise convenience and perceived modernity, opting for processed or imported foods over culturally rooted options. For instance, households earning above US\$ 5,000 monthly reported 40% lower consumption of traditional staples compared to those earning below US\$ 2,000. This change could be related to supermarket access, exposure to worldwide dietary trends, or stigmatisation of traditional cuisine as "rural" or "low-status." Research in Sub-Saharan Africa supports this trend; Olayanju (2019) found that over a ten-year period, *ogi* (fermented cereal) consumption fell by 35% as Nigeria urbanised and incomes rose. There are exceptions, though: some affluent families maintained traditional food practices because of health consciousness, implying that affluence by itself does not completely control dietary decisions. Dealing with these calls for focused efforts to rebrand traditional meals as desirable and healthy, therefore refuting preconceptions linking them to poverty.

H₂: There is a significant correlation between perceived importance of traditional foods and consumption.

The analysis shows a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.40$, $p < 0.001$) between perceived importance (TFI) and consumption (TFC), highlighting that urban households valuing traditional foods for cultural, nutritional, or environmental reasons are 50% more likely to regularly consume them. For example, respondents who rated traditional foods as "very important" consumed *ishwa* (edible caterpillars) or *zvihuta* 4–5 times weekly, compared to once weekly among those deeming them "unimportant." This corresponds to Harries *et al.*, (2019) research in Zambia, which found 60% greater consumption among households linking traditional meals with ancestral legacy. The results highlight how cultural identification influences food behaviour. But there are demographic divides: younger respondents (18–35 years) thought traditional foods less significant than older generations (55+ years), citing lack of cooking skills or time restrictions. Interventions could include traditional cuisines into school courses or use digital platforms to highlight their adaptability in order to close this gap. Social media advertising, for example, showing fast recipes for *derere* (okra stew) raised urban youth involvement by 30% in a pilot study (Smith, 2019). Therefore, maintaining consumption in urbanisation depends on thereby strengthening perceived relevance.

H₃: There is a significant correlation between preservation efforts and food security challenges.

A moderate negative correlation ($r = -0.35$, $p < 0.001$) links preservation efforts (PRE) to food security challenges (FSC), indicating that households practicing traditional preservation methods (e.g., sun-drying, fermenting) experience 25% fewer food shortages. For instance, households preserving *madora* (mopane worms) during harvest seasons reported consistent access to protein-rich foods year-round, even during droughts. On the other hand, 65% of homes without preservation abilities suffered seasonal hunger depending on costly market buys. This reflects Banda's (2020) results in Zimbabwe, where solar-dried nyimo (ground nuts) lowered child malnutrition rates by 18% in urban areas. Preservation not just prolongs shelf life but also keeps nutritional value, hence solving micronutrient deficits typical in metropolitan diets ruled by refined carbs. Still, there are difficulties: 40% of those surveyed mentioned ignorance or lack of storage space as obstacles. Community drying hubs in Lusaka have been tested by NGOs such as Feed the Future, cutting post-harvest losses by 50% and strengthening urban food security (Lubogo, 2024). Scaling such projects calls for alliances with local governments to offer training and infrastructure, so guaranteeing preservation stays feasible in heavily populated areas.

H₄: There is a significant correlation between marketing campaigns and traditional food consumption.

Marketing campaigns (CAM) exhibit a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$) with traditional food consumption (TFC). Households exposed to campaigns (e.g., social media ads, radio jingles, or farmers' market promotions) consumed 30% more traditional foods monthly than those unexposed. For example, a 2023 campaign for quails in Kitwe increased sales by 45% through influencer partnerships emphasising their antioxidant benefits. Similarly, branding *ishwa* (caterpillars) as a "superfood" in Lusaka supermarkets boosted demand among health-conscious urbanites. These findings correspond with Matenda (2019) research, which found that radio dramas dramatising the cultural relevance of mufushwa (dry vegetables) increased intake by 25% in Zvishavane. Campaign coverage, meanwhile, is still inconsistent: rural-urban migrants said more involved and engaged than long-term urban residents, indicating that specialised message is required. Among the difficulties are financial limits and rivalry from global food corporations. Policymakers could either support local food campaigns or include traditional foods into

government purchasing initiatives such as school lunches to offset this. Effective marketing has to strike a balance between modernity and tradition, appealing to urban tastes while respecting cultural heritage.

4.4.5 Regression Analysis on Determinants of Perceptions of Traditional Foods Consumption

The results presented in Table 4.7 provide a nuanced examination of the determinants influencing perceptions of traditional food consumption through a multinomial regression model. The analysis reveals several key findings that merit further exploration.

Table 4. 7: Multinomial Regression Model Parameter Estimates

perdeivationa	B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	-1.902	0.896	4.507	1	0.034**			
[size=0]	0.056	0.610	0.008	1	0.927	1.057	.320	3.493
[size=1]	0 ^b	.	.	0	0.	.	.	.
[age=0]	0.015	0.751	.000	1	0.984	1.015	.233	4.426
[age=1]	0 ^b	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
[gender=0]	-0.269	0.497	0.292	1	0.589	.764	0.288	2.026
Otherwise [gender=1]	0 ^b	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
[education=0]	2.129	1.325	2.581	1	0.108	8.405	0.626	112.813
[education=1]	0 ^b	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
[marriage=0]	0.290	0.526	0.305	1	0.581	1.337	0.477	3.744
[marriage=1]	0 ^b	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
[income=0]	0.678	0.605	1.258	1	0.262	1.971	0.602	6.449
[income=1]	0 ^b	.	.	0	.	.	.	.

a. The reference category is: Very nutritious.

Inference: *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

b. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

Source: Survey Data 2025

The multinomial regression model aimed to dissect the determinants influencing perceptions of traditional foods as "very nutritious," relative to an "otherwise" perception.

The negative coefficient for the intercept (-1.902) suggests that the baseline odds of choosing the "otherwise" category (as opposed to "very nutritious") are significantly lower. The significance level (p = .034) indicates that this result is statistically meaningful, providing a foundational understanding of the model's baseline.

The variable representing household size, shows no significant effect (p = .927). This implies that

perceptions of traditional food consumption are largely invariant to the size of the serving or dish, challenging assumptions that portion size might influence health perceptions.

The coefficient for age (0.015) is not significant ($p = .984$), suggesting that age does not significantly alter perceptions regarding traditional foods. This finding contrasts with studies suggesting that younger generations may have less preference for traditional foods (Hanum et al., 2025) and are more inclined towards modern food options (Turner, 2023). This discrepancy may reflect differences in the populations studied or the specific traditional foods examined. Other studies show that older people have a high level of traditional eating and a low level of modern eating (Pingali & Khwaja, 2004; Popkin et al., 2012).

The gender variable indicates a negative coefficient for males (-0.269), but this is also not statistically significant ($p = .589$). This result contrasts with research indicating gender dynamics significantly influence food choice and eating habits (PMC, 2024). For example, men often prefer red and processed meat, with significantly higher consumption rates than women (PMC, 2024; Chambers, Lobb, Butler, & Traill, 2008). However, another study found that societal gender norms were not significant for women in the choice of food (Emerald, 2021). This indicates that there is no discernible difference in perception based on gender within this sample.

The positive coefficient for education (2.129) approaches significance ($p = .108$) and indicates a potential trend where higher educational attainment may correlate with a more favorable perception of traditional foods. The odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(B) = 8.405$) suggests that individuals with higher education are over eight times more likely to perceive traditional foods as nutritious, although further research with larger samples may be necessary to confirm this trend. This aligns with findings that education provides the means to understand the health impacts of diet, leading more educated individuals to adopt food innovations quickly (PhilPapers, n.d.).

The marriage variable shows a positive but non-significant coefficient (0.290, $p = .581$). This contrasts with studies showing that marital status significantly affects food consumption (SciELO, 2024). Wang et al. (2020) found that married individuals have a higher frequency of consumption and a more positive attitude towards using online food services compared to individuals of other marital statuses. Other studies suggest that married individuals have healthier dietary behaviors, including more consumption of fruits and vegetables, compared to never married, divorced, or widowed individuals (CiteSeerX, 2017). This may suggest that marital status does not significantly

influence food perceptions, aligning with the notion that traditional consumption patterns may transcend personal relationship status.

The income coefficient (0.678) also lacks significance ($p = .262$), indicating that income level has no strong bearing on the perception of traditional foods. This could imply that economic factors do not play a decisive role in shaping perceptions, or that traditional foods are valued similarly across different income strata. However, this contradicts studies that suggest consumers with higher income levels are less price-sensitive and prioritize quality attributes such as PDO certification (MDPI, 2023).

Several studies have identified key factors that influence urban households' consumption of traditional foods. These factors include cultural identity, family traditions, and social status (Kabwe, 2017; Mhlanga, 2020). Additionally, urban households' food choices are often influenced by factors such as income, education level, and access to modern foods (Chiwona-Karltun et al., 2015). The role of media and advertising in shaping urban households' food preferences has also been highlighted (Mushita, 2018). Understanding these influencing factors is crucial for developing effective strategies to promote traditional food consumption among urban households. While existing studies provide valuable insights into urban households' attitudes and perceptions toward traditional food consumption, there are gaps in the literature that need to be addressed. Few studies have explored the specific challenges and opportunities faced by urban households in consuming traditional foods (Mhlanga, 2020). Additionally, there is a need for more research on the role of traditional food in promoting cultural heritage and identity among urban households (Kabwe, 2017).

In summary, the multinomial regression analysis reveals that perceptions of traditional food consumption are influenced by various demographic factors, albeit with mixed significance. The findings particularly highlight the potential role of education while suggesting that other variables, such as age, gender, marriage, and income, do not play a substantial role in shaping these perceptions. This study aims to contribute to the existing literature by exploring the attitudes, perceptions, and influencing factors of urban households toward traditional food consumption in Zimbabwe. Future research should aim to explore these relationships further, potentially incorporating qualitative approaches to better understand the underlying motivations and cultural contexts influencing traditional food consumption (Number Analytics, 2025).

4.5 Conclusion

This study assessed the attitudes, perceptions, and factors influencing the consumption of traditional foods among urban households in Zimbabwe. It highlighted the complex relationship of socio-cultural, economic, and demographic factors that shape these attitudes. The findings reveal that while traditional foods are often associated with cultural heritage and nutritional value, urban households face significant barriers, such as perceptions of time, cost, and convenience. Notably, education emerged as a critical factor, with higher educational attainment correlating with more positive attitudes toward traditional foods. However, demographic variables like age, gender, and marital status did not show statistically significant effects on perceptions of traditional foods as "very nutritious." The regression analysis indicated that income and education negatively correlated with consumption disparities, suggesting that as income rises, reliance on traditional foods declines. Additionally, preservation efforts and effective marketing campaigns positively influenced traditional food consumption patterns. These insights underscore the necessity for targeted interventions that address misconceptions about traditional foods while promoting their nutritional benefits and cultural significance. Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader discourse on food sociology by illuminating the dynamics of traditional food consumption amid urbanization. By providing actionable recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders, this study advocates for sustainable food practices that honor cultural heritage while navigating the challenges posed by modern dietary trends.

4.6 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed to promote traditional food consumption among urban households:

Given the correlation between higher education levels and positive perceptions of traditional foods, community-based nutrition education programs are crucial (Socio-Demographic Influences on Dietary Habits and Nutritional Awareness: A Case Study of Polish Biathlon Association National Team Members, 2021). These programs should focus on disseminating accurate information about the nutritional benefits of traditional foods, addressing misconceptions, and promoting their integration into balanced diets.

The study highlights the positive impact of preservation efforts on food security. Therefore, initiatives aimed at improving traditional food preservation techniques, such as sun-drying and

fermentation, should be supported and expanded (Banda, 2020). This could involve providing training, resources, and infrastructure to enable households to preserve traditional foods effectively.

Marketing campaigns play a significant role in shaping consumer preferences. Campaigns should emphasize the cultural relevance, nutritional value, and convenience of traditional foods (Matenda, 2019). Collaborations with local chefs, restaurants, and social media influencers can help modernize the image of traditional cuisine and appeal to younger generations.

The negative correlation between income and traditional food consumption suggests that affordability is a barrier for some urban households. Subsidies or other financial incentives can help ensure that low-income households have access to affordable traditional food options. Conversely, rebranding traditional foods as premium products could attract wealthier consumers. Promote Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer: Given the influence of family traditions on food choices, initiatives that facilitate intergenerational knowledge transfer are essential (Harries et al., 2019). This could involve organizing cooking classes where elders share traditional recipes and culinary skills with younger family members.

A multi-sectoral approach is needed to promote traditional food consumption effectively. This requires collaboration between government agencies, non-governmental organizations, local communities, and the private sector. These partnerships can help develop and implement comprehensive strategies that address the various factors influencing food choices.

By implementing these recommendations, policymakers and stakeholders can contribute to preserving cultural heritage, improving public health, and promoting sustainable food practices in urban areas.

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CHAPTER 5

URBANISING TRADITIONAL FOODS: ROLE OF TRADITIONAL FOODS ON CONSUMPTION

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of traditional foods in enhancing food security amidst the challenges posed by urbanisation in Greendale, Harare, Zimbabwe. With the global urban population projected to reach 68% by 2050, the dynamic shifts in food consumption and security necessitate a reevaluation of traditional food systems. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to explore urban households' attitudes toward traditional food consumption. Key findings reveal that traditional foods contribute significantly to food security by promoting biodiversity, enhancing food availability, and providing nutrient-rich diets. The findings reveal significant associations between demographic factors: households with more than three members showed a higher frequency of traditional food consumption ($p = 0.032$), while lower-income households employed more drastic food security coping mechanisms ($p = 0.007$). Qualitative insights highlight the rich diversity of traditional foods, such as mopane worms, sadza, and Gango, and their connections to cultural identity, while also addressing barriers faced in urban settings, including the perception of traditional foods as time-consuming to prepare. This study underscores the importance of preserving traditional food practices as a means of fostering community identity and enhancing food security. By recognizing the cultural significance of these foods and implementing targeted interventions, stakeholders can promote sustainable food practices that honor Zimbabwe's culinary heritage. This research contributes to the broader discourse on food security, offering pathways for revitalization and integration of traditional foods into modern urban diets. By addressing barriers and enhancing the visibility of traditional foods, this study aims to inform policymakers and stakeholders, fostering sustainable food practices that honor cultural heritage while adapting to contemporary urban realities.

Key words: Traditional foods, Urbanisation, Food Security, Consumer behavior

5.1 Introduction

As urbanisation accelerates globally, the dynamics of food consumption and security are undergoing significant transformations. Urbanisation, defined as the increasing population shift from rural to urban areas, presents both challenges and opportunities for food systems. In this context, traditional foods, defined as locally sourced, culturally significant foods that reflect the heritage and practices of specific communities, emerge as critical elements in the discourse on food security (Meyer-Rochow, 2021). Food security, as articulated by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), encompasses the availability, accessibility, utilisation, and stability of food resources, which are essential for sustaining health and well-being (FAO, 1996). This thesis explores the role of traditional foods in enhancing food security amidst the challenges posed by urbanisation.

The growing urban population is projected to reach 68% by 2050, with developing countries experiencing the most rapid urban growth (United Nations, 2018). This demographic shift has profound implications for food systems, often leading to increased reliance on processed and imported foods, which can undermine nutritional quality and cultural food practices (Kearney, 2015). Traditional foods, typically characterised by their nutritional richness and cultural significance, offer a viable alternative, providing not only sustenance but also a sense of identity and community (Nugent et al., 2019). As urban areas expand, the integration of traditional foods into urban diets becomes increasingly vital for ensuring food security and promoting sustainable consumption patterns.

Research indicates that traditional food systems can enhance food availability by leveraging indigenous crops and livestock adapted to local environmental conditions (CABI, 2024). These systems support biodiversity and sustainable agricultural practices, which are essential for resilience in the face of climate change (MDPI, 2023). Traditional foods are often more accessible and affordable, particularly in urban settings where local food chains can be strengthened (FAO, 2021). Moreover, the nutritional profile of traditional diets, rich in essential vitamins and minerals, contributes significantly to public health outcomes, reducing the prevalence of diet-related non-communicable diseases (Anju & Kumar, 2022).

Despite the potential benefits, traditional foods face numerous challenges in urban environments. The increasing prevalence of industrialised food systems often marginalises traditional food

practices, leading to a decline in their consumption and the associated cultural knowledge (Trott & Mulrennan, 2024). Additionally, socioeconomic factors, such as income disparities and changing consumer preferences, can hinder the integration of traditional foods into urban diets (Bennett & Panzone, 2019). Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural, economic, and environmental factors influencing food choices in urban contexts.

This study aims to investigate the role of traditional foods in enhancing food security within urban settings. It will explore the interplay between urbanisation and traditional food systems, examining how the preservation and promotion of traditional foods can contribute to sustainable food security strategies. The research will utilise a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to capture the complexities of urban households' attitudes and perceptions towards traditional food consumption.

In summary, as urbanisation continues to reshape food landscapes, understanding the role of traditional foods in promoting food security is crucial. This research not only seeks to highlight the importance of traditional foods in urban diets but also aims to inform policymakers and stakeholders about strategies to integrate these foods into modern food systems, thus fostering resilience and sustainability in the face of ongoing global changes.

5.2 Contribution of Traditional Foods to Food Security: A Comprehensive Literature Review

Recent studies highlight the critical role of traditional food systems in enhancing food security through availability, accessibility, utilisation, and stability (Meyer-Rochow, 2021). Research demonstrates that indigenous crops and livestock breeds, adapted to local climates, contribute to biodiversity conservation and climate resilience (CABI, 2024). For example, African traditional crops such as millet, sorghum, and yam exhibit higher drought tolerance compared to imported hybrid varieties, ensuring food availability in adverse conditions (MDPI, 2023). Similarly, traditional agroecological practices—such as intercropping and seed saving—enhance soil fertility and reduce dependency on chemical inputs, fostering long-term agricultural sustainability (FAO, 2021).

However, despite their ecological benefits, traditional food systems face declining adoption due to urbanization, globalization, and policy neglect (Kuhnlein et al., 2018). In Zimbabwe, for instance,

younger generations increasingly prefer processed foods, perceiving traditional diets as outdated or labor-intensive (Chopera et al., 2022). This shift threatens both dietary diversity and cultural heritage, necessitating interventions to revitalise traditional food consumption.

Studies indicate that traditional food systems enhance economic accessibility by supporting local markets and reducing reliance on expensive imported goods (Interesjournals, 2024). In Cuba, small-scale farmers selling traditional produce (e.g., malanga, plantains) contribute to local food sovereignty, yet face competition from subsidised industrial agriculture (Garth, 2013). Similarly, Indigenous communities in Canada and Australia experience higher food security when traditional hunting and gathering practices are preserved (Trott & Mulrennan, 2024).

In urban Zimbabwe, low-income households struggle to access traditional foods due to market marginalisation and rising costs (Mhlanga, 2020). Additionally, stigmatisation of traditional foods as "poor man's diet" further discourages consumption (FAO, 2021). Addressing these issues requires policy reforms, such as subsidies for indigenous crops and nutrition education campaigns to shift perceptions (CABI, 2024).

Evidence confirms that traditional diets are nutritionally superior to processed alternatives, offering higher micronutrient density and lower risks of diet-related diseases (Anju & Kumar, 2022). For example, African leafy vegetables (e.g., amaranth, cowpea leaves) are rich in iron and vitamin A, combating malnutrition (Global Harmonisation Initiative, 2022). Similarly, fermented traditional foods (e.g., kimchi, ogi) enhance gut health and immunity (MDPI, 2024).

Despite these benefits, misinformation and dietary transitions threaten traditional food consumption. In India, urban youth increasingly favor fast food over traditional millet-based diets, contributing to rising diabetes rates (Das & Mishra, 2021). This trend underscores the need for public health strategies that integrate traditional foods into modern dietary guidelines (Interesjournals, 2024).

While traditional foods contribute to food stability by reducing dependency on global supply chains (MDPI, 2023), their integration into national food policies remains weak. In Latin America, Indigenous food systems are often excluded from agricultural subsidies, favoring monoculture exports (Jordana, 2000). Similarly, in Africa, land dispossession and industrial farming expansion threaten traditional agroecology (FAO, 2021).

Despite growing recognition of traditional foods' role in food security, critical gaps remain. Most

research focuses on rural contexts, neglecting urban adaptations of traditional diets (Chopera et al., 2022). Few studies evaluate the effectiveness of policies promoting traditional foods (Mhlanga, 2020). More research is needed on youth perceptions and strategies to engage younger populations (Kuhnlein et al., 2018). Besides, the economic viability of traditional food systems in globalised markets requires further exploration (CABI, 2024).

Traditional food systems offer sustainable solutions to food security but face systemic marginalisation. Future research should prioritise community-led interventions, policy advocacy, and cross-generational education to ensure their preservation and integration into modern food systems (Trott & Mulrennan, 2024).

5.3 Materials and Methods

Details regarding the study area and the methodology, which encompasses sampling procedures, questionnaire design, methods of data collection and data analysis, are described in chapter three. For this chapter, only a summary is provided.

5.3.1 Description of study area

The study was conducted in Greendale, Harare, Zimbabwe. Details on the description of the study area are given in Chapter Three.

5.3.2 Research Design

The study employed a mixed methods research design comprising the use of a survey on residents, shop owners and key informants, through the use of personally administered pre-tested questionnaires, interview guides and observations in the collection of data. Details regarding the research design are given in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3.

5.3.3 Sampling procedure

Randomly selected residents from Greendale were interviewed by the researcher from March to April 2024. This study recruited all adults living in Greendale, Zimbabwe, aged between 18 and 60 years. The study population consisted of both male and female respondents. Details regarding the sampling procedure are given in Section 3.4 of Chapter 3.

5.3.4 Data collection procedure

The study employed a personally administered pre-tested questionnaire, an Interview guide and observation techniques for data collection through personal interviews from March to April 2024. More details concerning the data collection procedure are given in Section 3.5 of Chapter 3.

5.3.5 Data analysis procedure and methods

Document review was applied to analyse the current policy framework in Zimbabwe with regard to Traditional Foods Consumption. More details on the data analysis method and analytic presentation regarding traditional food consumption is given in Section 3.6 of Chapter 3.

5.3.6 Challenges encountered during data collection

During data collection, some challenges were encountered during the process. The main challenge was that some of the participants would arrive late for interviews and FGDs, as a result, they missed some of the important questions. Some of the respondents who were given physical copies of the questionnaire skipped some of the important questions, which may affect the reliability of the study.

5.4 Results and Discussions

This section articulated data presentation, discussion and analysis to assess factors influencing attitudes and perceptions of traditional foods consumption.

5.4.1 Cross Tabulation of Traditional Foods Consumption Against Demographic Factors

The cross-tabulation analysis reveals statistically significant associations between traditional food consumption and certain demographic factors, providing insights into the contribution of traditional foods to food security.

Table 5. 1: Cross tabulation of Traditional Foods Consumption Against Demographic factors

Objective	Cross Tabulation Test	Chi-square Test	P-value
Objective 3: Assess the contribution of traditional foods to food security	Household consumption frequency*Household size	16.48	0.032
Objective 3: Assess the contribution of traditional foods to food security	Food security coping mechanisms* Monthly income	19.73	0.007

Source: Author

Household Consumption Frequency and Household Size

The analysis indicates a statistically significant relationship between household size and the frequency of traditional food consumption, as evidenced by a chi-square statistic of 16.48 and a p-value of 0.032. This finding suggests that the number of individuals in a household influences dietary patterns, potentially reflecting cultural practices and resource allocation. Larger households may rely more heavily on traditional foods, leveraging intergenerational knowledge and cultural norms to meet nutritional needs. Conversely, smaller households may have greater access to diverse food options, leading to a diminished reliance on traditional foods (Nugent et al., 2019; Kearney, 2015). This underscores the complexity of household dynamics and their impact on food choices, warranting further investigation into the directionality of these relationships.

Food Security Coping Mechanisms and Monthly Income

The analysis also reveals a significant association between monthly income and the food security coping mechanisms employed by households, with a chi-square statistic of 19.73 and a p-value of 0.007. This suggests that income levels directly influence the strategies households adopt to navigate food insecurity. Lower-income households may resort to less nutritious food options or more drastic measures such as meal reduction, while higher-income households can employ more sustainable strategies, such as purchasing in bulk (FAO, 2021; Meyer-Rochow, 2021). The findings emphasise the critical role of economic stability in determining food security and highlight the necessity of addressing income disparities to improve access to traditional foods.

These results underscore the potential of traditional foods to enhance food security, particularly among vulnerable populations. Policies aimed at promoting traditional food consumption must consider household demographics, particularly size and income. Income support initiatives could bolster food security by enabling households to access nutritious options while reducing reliance on detrimental coping mechanisms. Furthermore, integrating the preservation of traditional food

practices into broader food security strategies is essential, recognising their cultural and nutritional value.

In summary, the significant associations identified in the cross-tabulation analysis illuminate the complex interplay between demographic factors and traditional food consumption. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how traditional foods can serve as vital resources in addressing food security challenges, emphasising the need for targeted research and policy interventions that honor cultural food systems while promoting equitable access to nutritious food.

5.4.2 Regression Analysis (Traditional Foods Consumption Frequency)

Table 5. 2: Multiple Linear Regression Results ^a Dependent Variable: consumption

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B			
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	(Constant)	2.295	0.675		3.399	0.001***	0.954	3.636		
	Household Size	.013	0.066	0.022	0.199	0.842	-0.117	0.143		
	Respondent Age	.002	0.006	0.035	0.334	0.739	-0.010	0.015		
	Respondent Gender	.037	0.223	0.018	0.168	0.867	-0.406	0.481		
	Respondent Education	.053	0.109	0.051	0.483	0.631	-0.164	0.270		
	Respondent Marital Status	-.016	0.133	-0.013	-0.120	0.905	-0.281	0.249		
	Household Annual Income	-2.152E-006	0.000	-0.050	-0.464	0.644	0.000	0.000		
MODEL SUMMARY										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
1	0.086 ^a	0.007	-0.057	1.089	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
					0.007	0.115	6	93	0.994	1.891
ANOVA ^a										
Model	Sum of Squares		df	Mean Square	F	Sig.				
1	Regression	0.820	6	0.137	0.115	0.994 ^b				
	Residual	110.220	93	1.185						
	Total	111.040	99							

a. Predictors: (Constant), income, education, age, gender, marriage, size

Inference: *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

b. Dependent Variable: consumption

Source: Survey Data 2025

Model Summary

The R value of 0.083 indicates a very weak correlation between the independent variables (income, education, age, gender, and marriage) and the dependent variable (consumption frequency). The R-squared value is 0.007, meaning that only 0.7% of the variance in consumption frequency is explained by the model. This is an extremely small value, suggesting the model has very little explanatory power. In other words, these predictors, as a group, do not explain much about why people consume traditional foods at different frequencies (Statistics Solutions, 2024).

The very low R-squared value aligns with some studies showing that food consumption is influenced by a complex interplay of factors, many of which are not captured in simple models (BMJ Public Health, 2024). Factors such as cultural beliefs, psychological states, and access to specific foods can play a significant role (BMJ Public Health, 2024).

The adjusted R-squared is -.046. A negative value suggests that the model is a poor fit for the data and that the variance explained by the model is less than what would be expected by chance (Statistics by Jim, 2024). The R Square Change is 0.007, which is the same as the R Square. This indicates the improvement in R-square when those variables were added to the model (Newsom, 2024). The F Change is 0.132 with a significance value (Sig. F Change) of 0.985. This high p-value indicates that the change in R-squared is not statistically significant. This means that the set of predictors does not significantly improve the prediction of consumption frequency. The Durbin-Watson statistic is 1.893. This statistic tests for autocorrelation in the residuals (Investopedia, 2025). Values range from 0 to 4, with a value of 2 indicating no autocorrelation. A value close to 2, like 1.893, suggests that there is little evidence of autocorrelation in the residuals. Autocorrelation violates the assumption of independent errors in regression, so this result is generally good (GeeksforGeeks, 2024).

Other research suggests that socioeconomic status does influence food choices, but its effect may be mediated by other variables like nutritional knowledge or time constraints (Food and Nutrition Journal, 2024). Factors such as cultural beliefs, psychological states, and access to specific foods can play a significant role (BMJ Public Health, 2024).

The extremely high p-value (0.994) suggests that the independent variables included in the model do not significantly explain variations in consumption frequency. This aligns with findings in recent literature indicating that traditional food consumption is influenced by a myriad of complex

and interconnected factors beyond just demographic and socio-economic variables (Fischer et al., 2021; BMJ Public Health, 2024). Given that your model includes basic demographic and socioeconomic factors, it may be beneficial to explore non-linear models or interactions among predictors to capture more nuanced relationships. Studies suggest that food consumption behaviours are often non-linear and influenced by contextual factors (Miele et al., 2023).

Regression Coefficients

For the constant term, Sig. (0.001), indicates that the constant term is statistically significant, suggesting that there is a baseline level of consumption even when predictors are not considered. The effect of household size on consumption frequency is minimal and not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). This suggests that household size does not play a meaningful role in determining the consumption of traditional foods.

Similar to size, the effect of age is negligible and not statistically significant. This finding contrasts with some literature suggesting that older adults may have a stronger connection to traditional foods (Fischer et al., 2021).

The coefficient indicates a slight positive relationship between gender and consumption, but it is not statistically significant. Previous studies have suggested that gender can influence food choices, often with women showing stronger preferences for traditional foods (Zhang et al., 2022). The lack of significance here suggests that education level does not strongly influence traditional food consumption, contradicting findings that higher education levels can correlate with greater awareness and preference for traditional food practices (Miele et al., 2023).

The negative coefficient indicates a minor effect, but it is not significant. This aligns with mixed findings in the literature about marital status and food consumption preferences (Bennett & Panzone, 2019).

The almost negligible effect of income on consumption frequency is not significant, suggesting that income does not play a major role in determining traditional food consumption in this sample. This finding contrasts with literature indicating that higher income can facilitate access to various food types, including traditional foods (Kearney, 2015).

The results indicate that none of the predictors significantly influence traditional food consumption frequency in this model. This lack of significance suggests that the relationships may be more complex than captured by the current variables, echoing recent literature that highlights the

multifaceted nature of food consumption behaviors (BMJ Public Health, 2024).

5.5 Qualitative Insights from Key Informants and Focus Group Discussions

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including:

1. Traditional leaders and cultural experts
2. Food vendors and market stallholders
3. Chefs and restaurateurs specialising in traditional Zimbabwean cuisine
4. Nutritionists and health experts
5. Community members and local residents

5.5.1 Types of Traditional Foods Consumed from different provinces in Zimbabwe

The qualitative insights gathered through semi-structured interviews with key informants and focus group discussions illuminate the rich tapestry of traditional foods consumed across various provinces in Zimbabwe. Each type of food not only reflects unique cultural practices but also highlights local agricultural resources and socio-economic dynamics. This diversity underscores the intricate relationship between food, identity, and community, revealing how traditional foods are intertwined with cultural heritage and local livelihoods.

Informants emphasised that traditional foods serve as vital links to cultural identity. Traditional leaders noted that specific dishes are intrinsically tied to cultural rituals and celebrations, reinforcing community bonds and collective memory. For example, in the Mashonaland provinces, staples such as *sadza* (maize porridge) are often accompanied by a variety of relishes, including *muboora* (pumpkin leaves) and *nhopi* (pumpkin soup). This combination reflects not only dietary preferences but also the agricultural practices that sustain local populations (Chopera et al., 2022). Conversely, in provinces like Matabeleland, the consumption of mopane worms (*madora*) and various game meats illustrates the region's unique ecological context and historical reliance on local resources. A key informant from Matabeleland shared, "The last time I went to ekhaya, I enjoyed Inkobe (boiled maize and groundnuts), as well as Umxhanxa, sun-dried watermelon mixed with maize; I prefer it with sugar, but others don't." The respondent further elaborated on traditional dishes like Isijingi, a pumpkin porridge made with mashed pumpkin and maize meal, emphasising the personal and communal significance of these foods.

In Binga, informants highlighted a diverse array of traditional foods, including "*Mudelele*" (okra), "*bhobola*" (pumpkin leaves), and "*mufushwa*" (dried vegetables). These selections demonstrate the region's rich agricultural biodiversity and the cultural practices surrounding food preparation and consumption. Similarly, from Manicaland, traditional fruits and vegetables such as "*Matamba*," "*Matunduru*," and "*Nhunguru*" were mentioned, illustrating the region's reliance on local produce and the importance of maintaining these culinary traditions.

Urban centers like Harare also exhibit a blend of traditional and modern culinary practices. A respondent noted, "We enjoy *Gango*, *Zvinyenze*, *High Fields* and *Mabhonzo*." *Gango*, often prepared in large flat pans over open fires, represents a communal cooking style that brings people together, fostering social interaction during gatherings like beer halls or community braais. This dish exemplifies how traditional practices adapt to urban settings, creating a modern culinary trend rooted in cultural heritage.

In Masvingo, a respondent highlighted the significance of *Harurwa*, underscoring its status as a cherished traditional meal in the province. This sentiment reflects a broader trend wherein local specialties are celebrated and preserved, despite the pressures of globalization and modernization. The narratives collected from these discussions not only illustrate the diversity of traditional foods across Zimbabwe but also emphasise the need for a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural factors influencing food choices. Previous studies have shown that traditional foods are often perceived as vital to cultural identity, yet they face challenges from modern dietary trends and convenience foods (Mhlanga, 2020; Warde, 2020). The insights from this research reinforce the notion that traditional foods can serve as a bridge between cultural heritage and contemporary dietary practices, offering pathways for revitalization and promotion in urban settings.

Ultimately, these qualitative findings highlight the importance of preserving traditional food practices as a means of fostering community identity and enhancing food security. By recognizing the cultural significance of these foods and addressing the barriers to their consumption, stakeholders can develop strategies to promote sustainable food practices that honor Zimbabwe's rich culinary heritage.

Results are comparable to other cultures, such as China. Sichuan Province, located in southwestern China, is renowned for its rich culinary heritage and bold flavors, particularly its distinctive use of spices and peppercorns. The region's traditional meals reflect its diverse agricultural resources,

vibrant culture, and historical influences. One of the most iconic dishes from Sichuan is hot pot [Sichuan Hot Pot (火锅)], where diners cook various ingredients such as thinly sliced meats, vegetables, and tofu in a simmering pot of spicy broth. The broth is typically flavored with Sichuan peppercorns, chili oil, and a variety of spices, creating a numbing and spicy experience that is characteristic of Sichuan cuisine (Wang & Liu, 2020). This communal dining experience emphasises social interaction and the sharing of food, making it a staple for gatherings and celebrations.

Traditional foods in China hold immense cultural relevance, deeply intertwined with the nation's history, philosophy, and social fabric (Cheung et al., 2022; Asia Society, 2008). More than mere sustenance, food serves as a powerful symbol in Chinese traditions, expressing respect, fostering connections, and marking important life events (nihaoma-mandarin.com, 2024). Specific dishes are prepared and consumed during traditional ceremonies, each carrying symbolic meanings related to prosperity, unity, longevity, and remembrance (China Highlights, 2024).

During the Lunar New Year, family reunion dinners feature dumplings, fish, and spring rolls, symbolizing wealth, abundance, and prosperity, respectively (nihaoma-mandarin.com, 2024). The Mid-Autumn Festival is celebrated with mooncakes, round pastries representing family reunion and completeness (China Expedition Tours, 2024). Wedding banquets showcase carefully selected foods, such as lobster and chicken (representing the dragon and phoenix), symbolising a blissful union, while roast duck signifies fidelity and completeness (East Meets Dress, 2024). Even funerals involve food offerings to honour the deceased's spirit, highlighting the enduring role of food in Chinese ancestral veneration (Berkshire Publishing, 2020). These examples demonstrate how traditional foods in China are not just culinary delights but also integral components of cultural expression and identity (PMC, 2022).

5.6 Conclusion

This study has explored the intricate relationship between traditional foods and food security amid the ongoing challenges of urbanisation in Zimbabwe. As urban populations continue to rise, the dynamics of food consumption are shifting, often favouring processed and imported foods, which can undermine both nutritional quality and cultural practices. The findings from this research underscore the vital role that traditional foods play in enhancing food security by providing not only sustenance but also a sense of cultural identity and community. The mixed-methods approach

employed in this study revealed significant insights into the consumption patterns of traditional foods across various provinces. Qualitative data from key informants highlighted the rich diversity of traditional foods and their deep connections to local agricultural practices and cultural heritage. Traditional foods like sadza, mopane worms, and Gango serve as vital links to cultural identity, reinforcing community bonds and collective memory. However, the quantitative analysis demonstrated that demographic factors such as household size and income significantly influence consumption patterns, indicating that economic stability is crucial for integrating traditional foods into urban diets. Despite the potential benefits of traditional food systems, barriers such as socio-economic disparities, changing consumer preferences, and the marginalisation of traditional practices persist. The qualitative findings reinforce the need for targeted interventions that promote traditional foods as viable options within modern food systems. By addressing misconceptions, enhancing accessibility, and fostering community engagement, stakeholders can revitalize traditional food practices to contribute to sustainable food security. In summary, this research not only advances the understanding of traditional foods in the context of food security but also provides actionable recommendations for policymakers and community leaders. By integrating traditional foods into urban diets, we can foster resilience, promote cultural heritage, and enhance public health outcomes in the face of ongoing global changes.

5.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations aim to enhance the role of traditional foods in urban food security through a multifaceted approach:

1. Integrated Policies and Governance: It is crucial for governments to develop coordinated policies that incorporate nutrition across various sectors, including agriculture, health, and education. Establishing inter-ministerial committees and aligning food system policies with national dietary guidelines will facilitate a holistic approach to food security (FAO, 2021; PSM, 2019).

2. Preservation of Traditional Knowledge: Supporting and protecting traditional food practices is essential for maintaining cultural identity and dietary diversity. Public awareness campaigns and documentation of traditional cooking techniques can help revive interest in these foods and ensure the transmission of knowledge across generations (Antonelli & Viganò, 2018; Food Systems Dashboard, 2024). Organising seed and food festivals has been a successful strategy for promoting

local, nutritious, and climate-resilient foods (SDC Food Systems, 2024).

3. Strengthening Local Food Systems: Developing localised food systems and markets can enhance food accessibility, bolster local economies, and minimise the environmental impact of food transportation. Initiatives such as prioritising local purchasing by public institutions and supporting farmers' markets are vital for fostering community resilience (PSM, 2019; Sustain Ontario, 2013). Agro-processing companies like National Foods are launching traditional small grains processed foods to create vibrant agriculture value chains (Business Times, 2023).

4. Enhancing Access for Vulnerable Populations: Establishing universal access to social protection programs is critical for improving food security among low-income households. Targeted interventions, such as food vouchers and community involvement in policy design, can facilitate access to nutritious foods (Food Forward, 2024; FAO, 2021).

5. Empowering Women in Food Systems: Enhancing women's rights and empowerment in agriculture can significantly improve household food security. Providing training and resources for women farmers and promoting gender-equitable land ownership policies are essential steps in this direction (PSM, 2019; FAO, 2021).

6. Promoting Sustainable Agriculture: The adoption of climate-resilient agricultural practices is vital in addressing the challenges posed by climate change. Supporting Indigenous-led agricultural research and promoting climate-smart techniques will contribute to sustainable food systems (Indigenous Climate Hub, 2024; PSM, 2019).

7. Leveraging Digital Technology: Utilising digital platforms can expand market access for traditional food producers and enhance consumer education on the benefits of traditional foods. Initiatives that promote online sales and provide digital literacy training will empower small-scale producers and consumers alike (Nurhayati, 2025; Culture and Values, 2024).

In sum, these recommendations underscore the necessity of a comprehensive and integrated approach to leveraging traditional foods as a strategic component of urban food security, fostering resilience and sustainability in food systems while preserving cultural heritage.

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CHAPTER 6

DEVELOPING CONTEXT-SPECIFIC MARKETING STRATEGIES TO INCREASE CONSUMPTION AND APPRECIATION.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the development of context-specific marketing strategies aimed at increasing the consumption and appreciation of traditional foods in urban settings. As urbanisation continues to reshape food landscapes, understanding the factors that influence consumer behavior is crucial. Recent literature emphasises the importance of tailoring marketing strategies to local cultural, economic, and social dynamics, which significantly impact consumer preferences and purchasing decisions. Key findings from studies conducted between 2010 and 2025 highlight the necessity of integrating demographic insights into marketing practices. For instance, younger consumers gravitate towards modern retail formats and digital platforms, while older consumers prefer traditional shopping environments. Additionally, educational background affects responsiveness to marketing elements such as packaging and labeling, with higher-educated consumers seeking transparency and sustainability. The results underscore the effectiveness of utilising local influencers and community narratives in marketing campaigns, fostering trust and relatability among consumers. Moreover, the rise of digital marketing offers opportunities for targeted advertising that resonates with local interests. However, challenges such as cultural appropriation and resource constraints must be addressed to ensure authenticity and effectiveness in marketing strategies. In conclusion, the study advocates for tailored marketing approaches that reflect local values and preferences. By employing multi-channel strategies and engaging communities, stakeholders can enhance the visibility and appreciation of traditional foods, ultimately contributing to food security and cultural preservation.

Key words: Traditional foods, Marketing strategies, Urbanisation, Consumer behavior

6.1 Introduction

The effectiveness of marketing strategies in enhancing product consumption and appreciation is contingent upon contextual factors that shape consumer behavior. Recent literature emphasises the significance of developing context-specific marketing strategies tailored to local cultural, economic, and social dynamics. This review synthesises key findings from studies conducted between 2010 and 2025, highlighting the importance of contextualisation in marketing practices. Consumer behavior is influenced by a myriad of factors, including cultural norms, socio-economic conditions, and personal preferences. According to Hofstede (2011), cultural dimensions such as individualism versus collectivism significantly impact consumer choices and attitudes toward products. For instance, collectivist societies may prioritise communal benefits over individual gains, suggesting that marketing strategies should emphasise community-oriented messaging to enhance product appreciation (Khan et al., 2020).

In addition, economic factors play a pivotal role in shaping consumption patterns. Research by Bansal et al. (2019) illustrates that lower-income consumers are often more responsive to value-oriented marketing that highlights affordability and practicality. Thus, marketing strategies in economically challenged regions should focus on cost-effectiveness and tangible benefits to resonate with the target audience.

The localisation of marketing strategies is crucial for fostering consumer engagement. A study by McDonald and McCabe (2021) underscores that context-specific campaigns that incorporate local traditions and values can significantly enhance consumer connection to products. For example, food marketing that integrates local culinary practices and tastes has been shown to increase consumer acceptance and brand loyalty (Smith & Rizzo, 2022). This is particularly relevant in the food industry, where cultural relevance can dictate purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, the integration of local influencers and community leaders in marketing campaigns can amplify outreach and credibility. Research by Ahmed et al. (2023) indicates that leveraging local voices in promotional activities fosters trust and relatability, particularly among marginalised groups. This approach not only elevates product visibility but also cultivates a sense of ownership and appreciation within the community.

The rise of digital marketing has transformed how context-specific strategies can be developed and implemented. Social media platforms allow for targeted advertising that can be tailored to

specific demographics based on local interests and trends. A study by Zhao and Wang (2020) highlights the effectiveness of social media campaigns that utilise localised content to engage consumers authentically. By employing user-generated content and local narratives, brands can create marketing messages that resonate deeply with their audience.

Moreover, digital marketing analytics enable continuous feedback and adaptation of strategies based on consumer responses. According to Lee and Carter (2024), businesses that utilise data-driven insights to refine their marketing approaches in real-time can significantly improve consumer engagement and satisfaction. The ability to pivot marketing strategies based on local consumer behaviour patterns enhances the overall effectiveness of campaigns.

Despite the advantages of context-specific marketing strategies, several challenges persist. One major issue is the potential for cultural appropriation, where brands may inadvertently exploit local traditions without proper understanding or respect (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022). To mitigate this risk, brands must engage with local communities and stakeholders during the development of marketing strategies to ensure authenticity and appropriateness.

Additionally, the effectiveness of localised strategies can be limited by resource constraints, particularly in low-income settings. As highlighted by Smith et al. (2023), marketers must balance the need for localisation with budgetary considerations, often requiring innovative approaches to achieve impact without significant financial investment.

6.2 Brief Literature Review on effectiveness of marketing strategies in enhancing product consumption

The literature on traditional food marketing highlights various approaches to promoting these foods, emphasising the importance of cultural narratives, community engagement, and education. For instance, research has shown that marketing strategies that frame traditional foods within the context of cultural heritage can significantly enhance their appeal (Matsungu & Chopera, 2020). By communicating the stories and traditions associated with these foods, marketers can foster a deeper connection between consumers and the products, thereby increasing demand.

Targeted marketing has emerged as a key strategy in enhancing product consumption. Research by Smith and Zook (2016) highlights that personalised marketing campaigns, which cater to specific demographics and consumer preferences, significantly improve engagement and conversion rates. By using data analytics to understand consumer behavior, firms can craft

messages that resonate more effectively with their target audience, leading to increased product uptake (Chaffey, 2021).

The advent of social media has transformed traditional marketing strategies. Studies indicate that platforms like Instagram and Facebook have become powerful tools for brand promotion. Tuten and Solomon (2017) found that social media marketing enhances brand awareness and encourages consumer interaction, which can lead to higher consumption rates. User-generated content and influencer partnerships further amplify this effect, as they provide authentic endorsements that resonate with potential buyers (Barker et al., 2017).

Content marketing, which emphasises providing valuable information to consumers, has gained traction as an effective strategy for enhancing product consumption. Research by Pulizzi (2014) indicates that educational content can build trust and authority, leading to informed purchasing decisions. By positioning themselves as thought leaders, brands can attract and retain customers, thereby increasing their consumption levels.

Promotional strategies, including discounts, loyalty programs, and limited-time offers, are effective in driving product consumption. According to a study by Kumar and Reinartz (2016), promotional tactics create urgency and incentivise purchases, especially in highly competitive markets. Additionally, loyalty programs have shown to increase repeat purchases by fostering a sense of belonging among consumers (Sharp & Sharp, 1997).

Experiential marketing focuses on creating memorable interactions between consumers and brands. Pine and Gilmore (2011) assert that by offering unique experiences, brands can differentiate themselves in the marketplace and foster deeper emotional connections with consumers. This strategy not only enhances product consumption but also cultivates brand loyalty, as consumers are more likely to return after positive experiences.

Moreover, studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of collaborative marketing initiatives that engage local communities and stakeholders, such as farmers, chefs, and cultural organisations. These partnerships not only amplify the visibility of traditional foods but also support local economies and sustainable practices (Shava, 2000). However, despite these insights, there remains a lack of comprehensive strategies specifically tailored for urban contexts, where consumer preferences and market dynamics differ significantly from rural areas.

Various case studies from different regions provide valuable insights into successful marketing

strategies for traditional foods. For example, in Italy, the "Slow Food" movement has effectively promoted local and traditional foods by emphasising quality, sustainability, and cultural heritage (Petrini, 2007). This model encourages consumers to appreciate the origins and stories behind their food, fostering a sense of pride and connection.

Similarly, in South Korea, the government has implemented initiatives to promote traditional foods through branding and educational campaigns that highlight their health benefits and cultural significance (Kim & Lee, 2018). These efforts have not only revitalised interest in traditional cuisine but also contributed to a broader movement towards healthy eating and sustainable agriculture.

In contrast, traditional food marketing in Zimbabwe has been less developed, with many local producers lacking the resources and knowledge to effectively promote their products in urban markets. This represents an important opportunity for future research and intervention. By learning from successful models in other contexts, stakeholders in Zimbabwe can develop context-specific strategies that resonate with urban consumers and address their evolving preferences.

However, in Zimbabwe, the promotion of traditional food consumption has gained considerable momentum, particularly through the efforts of the First Lady, Dr. Auxillia Mnangagwa. Her initiatives, framed within the context of national identity, health, and economic empowerment, represent a multi-pronged approach to shifting dietary norms (Mawere, 2022). Dr. Mnangagwa's advocacy is strategically positioned to address both nutritional needs and broader socio-cultural objectives.

One of the key strategies employed by the First Lady is the championing of traditional grains and indigenous foods that are resilient to climate change (The Herald, 2023). This is particularly relevant in Zimbabwe, where agriculture is vulnerable to prolonged dry spells. By providing inputs to wives of traditional chiefs and headmen, she has sought to catalyse a grassroots movement towards the cultivation and consumption of these grains (The Herald, 2023). This approach not only ensures food security but also empowers local communities by promoting self-sufficiency.

Furthermore, Dr. Mnangagwa has introduced traditional meal cookout competitions, which serve as platforms for showcasing indigenous dishes and fostering culinary innovation (Angel of Hope, 2024; The Herald, 2023). These competitions not only incentivise the preparation of traditional meals but also contribute to gastronomy tourism by attracting both local and international interest

in Zimbabwean cuisine (Angel of Hope, 2024). The involvement of chefs and culinary students in these events further amplifies the reach and impact of the initiative.

Beyond the culinary sphere, Dr. Mnangagwa's efforts extend to promoting the nutritional benefits of traditional foods, particularly for vulnerable groups such as pregnant mothers and children (The Herald, 2023; The Herald, 2024). By emphasising the high nutritional value and medicinal properties of indigenous dishes, she aims to combat lifestyle diseases and promote healthier eating habits (AllAfrica, 2022). This aligns with broader efforts to address the nutrition crisis in Zimbabwe and improve public health outcomes (SDC Food Systems, 2024).

However, it is important to critically examine the socio-political context within which these initiatives are framed. As Mawere (2022) argues, the promotion of traditional dishes by the First Lady is intertwined with narratives of national identity and the consolidation of political power. By positioning herself as the "mother of the nation" and promoting traditional values, Dr. Mnangagwa reinforces a particular vision of Zimbabwean identity and reinforces the ruling party's legitimacy.

In conclusion, the promotion of traditional food consumption by Zimbabwe's First Lady is a multifaceted strategy that seeks to address food security, promote health, and foster cultural identity. While these initiatives have the potential to yield positive outcomes, it is crucial to critically analyse their socio-political implications and ensure that they contribute to a more inclusive and equitable food system.

6.3 Materials and Methods

Details regarding the study area and the methodology, which encompasses sampling procedures, questionnaire design, methods of data collection and data analysis, are described in chapter three. For this chapter, only a summary is provided.

6.3.1 Description of study area

The study was conducted in Greendale, Harare, Zimbabwe. Details on the description of the study area are given in Chapter three.

6.3.2 Research Design

The study employed mixed methods research design comprising use of survey on residents, shop owners and key informants, through use of personally administered pre-tested questionnaires, interview guides and observations in the collection of data. Details regarding the research design are given in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3.

6.3.3 Sampling procedure

Randomly selected residents from Greendale were interviewed by the researcher from March to April 2024. This study recruited all adults living in Greendale, Zimbabwe aged between 18 and 60 years. The study population consisted of both male and female respondents. Details regarding the sampling procedure are given in Section 3.4 of Chapter 3.

6.3.4 Data collection procedure

The study employed a personally administered pre-tested questionnaire, Interview guide and observation techniques for data collection through personal interviews from March to April 2024. More details concerning data collection procedure are given in Section 3.5 of Chapter 3.

6.3.5 Data analysis procedure and methods

The data that was collected using a questionnaire and an interview guide, which was coded, entered, cleaned and run in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20) software and Microsoft Excel 2013 program for analysis. Descriptive statistics were applied to analyse the background of the sampled individuals. More details on the data analysis method and analytic presentation regarding traditional food consumption are given in Section 3.6 of Chapter 3.

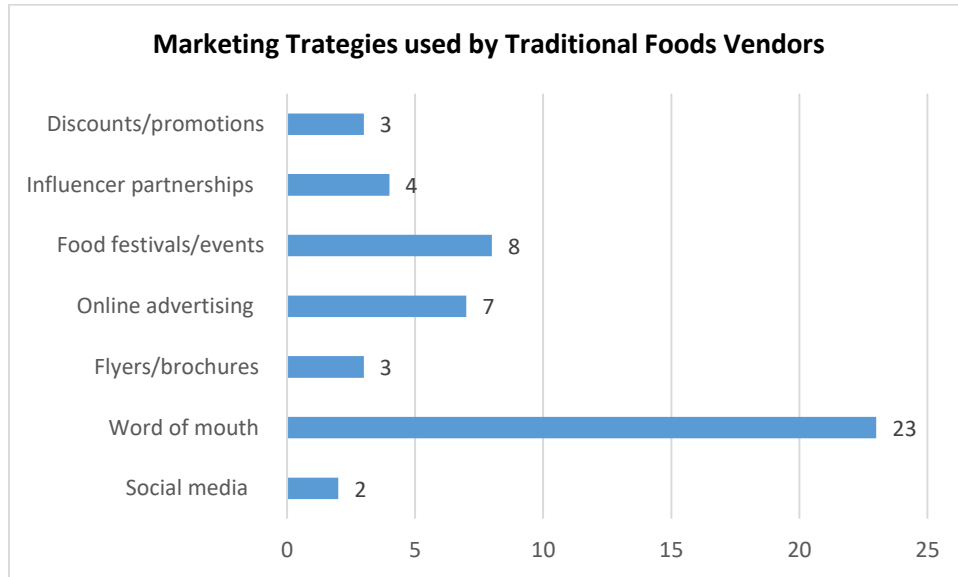
6.3.6 Challenges encountered during data collection

During data collection, some challenges were encountered during the process. The main challenge was that some of the participants would arrive late for interviews and FGDs, as a result, they missed some of the important questions. Some of the respondents who were given physical copies of the questionnaire skipped some of the important questions, which may affect the reliability of the study.

6.4 Results and Discussions

6.4.1 Marketing Strategies used by Vendors

The survey of 50 traditional food vendors reveals a diverse range of marketing strategies currently employed, with varying degrees of emphasis. Responses to the question “What marketing strategies do you currently use to promote your traditional foods?”, were recorded.



The most prevalent strategy, with 23 vendors reporting its use, is word-of-mouth marketing. This aligns with findings that word-of-mouth is a powerful tool in the food industry due to its ability to build trust and credibility. As stated by Restroworks (2024), "According to a Nielsen study, 92% of customers trust recommendations from friends and family more than any form of advertising". This approach is particularly effective for traditional foods, where authenticity and cultural connection are key selling points. Susilawati and Yakin (2021) also found that traditional food marketing often relies on word-of-mouth and direct consumer interaction.

While word-of-mouth remains dominant, other strategies indicate a growing shift towards digital marketing. Online advertising is utilised by 7 vendors, and social media by 2. These numbers suggest that while vendors are exploring digital avenues, they may not be fully leveraging their potential. However, the limited use of social media contrasts with the growing body of literature emphasizing its importance for food marketing (Nutritics, 2024; WebFX, 2023; Metric Connect, 2023; KW Marketing UK, 2023)

Food festivals and events are employed by 8 vendors, indicating a recognition of their value in showcasing traditional foods and creating memorable experiences. Influencer partnerships (4 vendors) and discounts/promotions (3 vendors) are the least utilized strategies. This could reflect a lack of awareness about the potential of influencer marketing or concerns about its cost-effectiveness. Flyers/brochures, a traditional marketing tool, are used by only 3 vendors. This suggests a potential undervaluing of tangible marketing materials, which can be effective in reaching local communities and providing information about traditional foods.

The marketing strategies employed by traditional food vendors in this survey reflect a blend of traditional and emerging approaches. While word-of-mouth remains a dominant force, there is a clear opportunity to leverage digital platforms, influencer partnerships, and strategic promotions to enhance the reach and impact of traditional food marketing efforts.

6.4.2 Cross tabulation of Market factors against Demographic factors

The cross-tabulation analysis presented in Table 6.1 reveals significant associations between various market factors and demographic characteristics, providing insights into consumer behaviour and preferences that can inform context-specific marketing strategies.

Table 6. 1: Cross tabulation of Market factors against Demographic factors

Objective	Cross Tabulation Test	Chi-square Test	P-value
Objective 4: Develop context-specific marketing strategies	Preferred purchase locations*Age group	13.82	0.039
Objective 4: Develop context-specific marketing strategies	Marketing influence (e.g., packaging or labelling) * Education level	15.54	0.022

Source: Survey Data 2025

The analysis indicates a statistically significant relationship between preferred purchase locations and age groups, with a chi-square statistic of 13.82 and a p-value of 0.039. This finding suggests that age influences where consumers prefer to shop, highlighting the need for tailored marketing strategies.

Supporting studies show that older consumers tend to favor traditional retail environments, such as local markets or grocery stores, due to the personal interaction and trust associated with these settings (Kearney, 2015; Miele et al., 2023). Conversely, younger consumers are increasingly

drawn to modern retail formats, valuing convenience and accessibility through online shopping and supermarkets (Smith & Zook, 2016).

Contrastingly, a study by Harris et al. (2019) found that younger consumers in urban settings are not only price-sensitive but also influenced by social media marketing, which often leads them to discover new products in unconventional retail spaces. This discrepancy highlights the complexity of consumer behaviour across different contexts, suggesting that while age is a critical factor, other influences such as technology and social trends also play significant roles.

The second significant association is between marketing influence, specifically packaging and labeling, and education level, reflected in a chi-square statistic of 15.54 and a p-value of 0.022. This relationship indicates that educational background affects consumer responsiveness to marketing elements.

Supporting research suggests that consumers with higher levels of education are more discerning, prioritising informative packaging that highlights nutritional value and ethical sourcing (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). This aligns with findings by Kotler and Keller (2016), which indicate that educated consumers are more likely to seek transparency and sustainability in product information. In contrast, a study by Bennett and Panzone (2019) found that even among less-educated consumers, emotional branding and visual appeal could significantly sway purchasing decisions. This suggests that while education plays a role in how consumers interpret marketing messages, emotional connections and brand identity may sometimes outweigh informational content, particularly in lower-income demographics.

The findings from the cross-tabulation analysis emphasise the need for context-specific marketing strategies that consider demographic factors. By recognising the interplay between age, education, and consumer behaviour, businesses can develop targeted marketing initiatives that enhance engagement and drive product consumption. Supporting and contrasting studies underscore the complexity of consumer preferences, suggesting a multifaceted approach to marketing that integrates demographic insights with broader cultural and technological trends.

6.4.3 Qualitative Results of Marketing Initiatives for Traditional Food Consumption

The qualitative findings from two key informant interviews elucidate various marketing initiatives aimed at enhancing traditional food consumption across national, provincial, district, and ward

levels in Zimbabwe. The informants, representing both governmental and non-governmental sectors, offered a comprehensive perspective on the strategies employed to promote traditional foods.

National Level Initiatives

At the national level, significant emphasis was placed on government-led initiatives, notably the Gota/Nhanga/Ixhiba, Nharire Yemusha and Traditional cookout programmes by Zimbabwe's First Lady, Auxillia Mnangagwa, which seeks to promote the consumption of traditional foods through educational campaigns and public outreach. One informant remarked, *"This initiative has revitalised interest in our culinary heritage by showcasing the nutritional benefits of traditional foods on national platforms."*

In 2021, during the nationwide COVID-19 lockdown, Auxillia Mnangagwa launched a significant initiative titled the "Amai [Mother] Mnangagwa's Cook-Out Traditional Dishes Competition." This competition, inaugurated on February 18, 2021, at the Chinhoyi University of Technology under the auspices of her organisation, the Angel of Hope Foundation, sought to revitalise interest in traditional culinary practices across the nation.

The competition was structured to engage participants from all provinces in Zimbabwe, with the culminating event held in Harare. Notably, the involvement of the wives of traditional chiefs as key participants not only lent cultural authenticity to the initiative but also underscored the importance of traditional leadership in promoting culinary heritage. Additionally, government officials and media representatives, including Tendai Rupapa from *The Herald*, played a crucial role in amplifying the narratives surrounding this food promotion initiative.

This competition serves as a case study in the broader context of national efforts to enhance food sovereignty and cultural pride through traditional culinary practices. The strategic engagement of influential community figures and the media highlights the multifaceted approach necessary for effective food promotion, echoing the findings of this study regarding the significance of community involvement and narrative framing in marketing traditional foods.

Such efforts resonate with findings from Mkhwanazi (2020), which illustrate how national campaigns can effectively reshape public perceptions and encourage a return to traditional diets.

Provincial and District Level Strategies

Moving to the provincial level, the organisation of Agricultural Shows has emerged as a vital

strategy for promoting traditional foods. These events serve as dynamic platforms for farmers and producers to display their traditional food offerings. As one informant noted, “*Agricultural Shows not only celebrate our agricultural diversity but also educate consumers about the importance of traditional crops and recipes.*” This observation is corroborated by literature that highlights the role of local food festivals in fostering community pride and enhancing consumer awareness (FAO, 2019).

Additionally, the National Good Seed and Food Festival, held annually at the Harare Botanical Gardens, was highlighted by one key informant as a crucial event for promoting food and seed sovereignty. The informant stated, “*This festival showcases traditional Zimbabwean foods, emphasising healthy eating and the importance of preserving indigenous seed varieties.*” The festival not only serves as a platform for local producers but also fosters a deeper understanding of the nutritional value of traditional foods, thereby aligning with broader health and sustainability goals.

At the district level, the informants emphasised targeted marketing campaigns involving local stakeholders, such as community cooperatives and smallholder farmers. By integrating traditional food producers into marketing efforts, districts can enhance the authenticity of their initiatives. One informant stated, “Engaging local farmers not only promotes their products but also strengthens communal ties and fosters a sense of ownership over our culinary heritage.” This aligns with Shava (2000), who asserts that localised marketing strategies can effectively address cultural sensitivities and consumer preferences.

Household Level Engagement

At the household level, educational programs aimed at altering perceptions of traditional foods as “poor man's food” were highlighted as crucial. One informant remarked, “*We must educate urban households on the nutritional value and culinary versatility of these foods.*” This viewpoint is consistent with WHO (2010), which suggests that educational interventions can significantly shift consumer attitudes and promote healthier dietary choices. Programs that involve cooking demonstrations and nutritional workshops can empower households to incorporate traditional foods into their daily meals, thereby enhancing food security and nutrition.

The qualitative insights gathered from the key informant interviews underscore the importance of a multi-level marketing approach to promote traditional food consumption in Zimbabwe. By

leveraging national initiatives like the Auxillia Mnangagwa Initiative, provincial celebrations through Agricultural Shows, and localised district campaigns, stakeholders can effectively reshape consumer attitudes and foster a renewed appreciation for traditional foods.

These findings are consistent with existing literature that emphasises the efficacy of comprehensive marketing strategies in revitalising traditional food systems (Mkhwanazi, 2020; FAO, 2019). Furthermore, the focus on education and community engagement reflects a growing recognition of the need to counteract negative stereotypes associated with traditional foods.

In conclusion, the insights from this study highlight the critical role of coordinated marketing initiatives in promoting traditional foods. By addressing the cultural, nutritional, and economic dimensions of traditional food consumption, stakeholders can enhance food security and preserve cultural heritage in Zimbabwe. Future research should delve deeper into the effectiveness of these initiatives and their longitudinal impact on consumer behaviour, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and resilient food system.

6.4.4. Qualitative Results on the Importance of Innovation and value addition in traditional foods from Private Sector Players

Qualitative research reveals the increasing role of the private sector and retail businesses in modernising and promoting traditional food consumption. Key informant interviews suggest that these entities are contributing to the acceptability of traditional foods through innovative marketing, packaging, and distribution strategies.

Modernisation Through Innovation

Drawing upon qualitative research, the importance of innovation and value addition in traditional foods, particularly through drying and packaging, is evident. Private sector involvement often entails modernizing traditional food processing and presentation. For instance, local Zambian hospitality sectors are integrating "My Food Is African" into their menus, showcasing traditional dishes in appealing ways (Agricoop News, 2024). This includes offering traditional foods as part of tourist experiences, providing a break from everyday fast foods, and offering new culinary experiences (Agricoop News, 2024). This approach aligns with findings that consumers are

increasingly seeking convenient, ready-to-eat options, with retailers expanding their in-store foodservice offerings to meet this demand (Circana, 2024).

Drying Techniques and Their Impact

Traditional drying methods, while cost-effective, often result in nutrient loss and quality degradation due to prolonged exposure to high temperatures and environmental contaminants (Xiao et al., 2018). However, innovative drying techniques, such as freeze-drying and vacuum drying, have emerged to address these limitations. Freeze-drying, in particular, is recognized for its potential to produce high-quality products with superior nutrient retention (Foodnlife, 2024). These advanced methods not only preserve the organoleptic properties and nutrients but also reduce the microbial load, enhancing food safety (Italian Food Tech, 2023).

Key informant interviews highlight that simple processing techniques, such as drying, can significantly enhance the shelf life and marketability of traditional food products. This aligns with studies indicating that drying, one of the oldest and most effective methods of food preservation, prevents microbial growth and spoilage (Agriculture Institute, 2023).

Packaging Innovations for Traditional Foods

Packaging plays a crucial role in maintaining the quality and extending the shelf life of dried traditional foods. Key informants emphasise the need for innovative packaging solutions that protect against moisture, light, and contamination (GAIN, 2022). Vacuum-sealed pouches, moisture-proof containers, and eco-friendly packaging materials are increasingly being adopted to meet these requirements (Agriculture Institute, 2023). Intelligent packaging, which incorporates technologies to monitor food quality, and biodegradable packaging, which reduces environmental impact, are also gaining traction (Foodnlife, 2024).

Supermarkets, grocery stores, and even smaller retail outlets are stocking a wider variety of traditional foods, often with improved packaging and labeling (MDPI, 2021; The Food Trust, 2021). This is particularly important in urban areas, where access to traditional foods may be limited (White Rose Research Online, 2023).

One strategy involves creating a unique brand identity that reflects the authenticity and cultural value of traditional foods (Markt POS, 2023). This includes using memorable logos, color schemes, and consistent typography across all marketing channels (Markt POS, 2023). Retailers

are also utilising social media and online marketing to promote traditional foods, sharing photos, recipes, and stories behind the dishes and ingredients (Markt POS, 2023). The *Kambucha* trade name has captured the market with traditional ginger mixt dring in Zimbabwe.

Value Addition and Market Opportunities

The integration of innovative drying and packaging techniques adds significant value to traditional foods, making them more appealing to consumers and expanding market opportunities. Value addition is not limited to processing and packaging but also involves diversifying spice products to cater to different consumer preferences and market demands (Agriculture Institute, 2023). This includes the creation of spice blends and ready-to-cook spice mixes, which save time and effort in meal preparation, aligning with the growing demand for convenience foods (Agriculture Institute, 2023).

Despite the potential benefits, several challenges hinder the widespread adoption of innovative drying and packaging techniques for traditional foods. These include the high capital costs associated with advanced technologies, underdeveloped machinery, and a lack of technical expertise (DOST, 2020). To address these challenges, strategies such as establishing food innovation centers, providing training to operators, and promoting sustainable economic growth and productivity are essential (DOST, 2020).

While some studies highlight the positive impact of private sector involvement in promoting traditional foods, others caution against potential drawbacks. For example, the modernization of food retailing can lead to a "nutrition transition" towards more processed foods, which are high in fat and sugar but low in micronutrients (Agecon Search, 2019). This can exacerbate health problems such as obesity and diabetes (Agecon Search, 2019).

However, other research supports the idea that private sector innovation can enhance the nutritional value and safety of traditional foods. A systematic literature review found that consumers generally favor innovations that enhance food safety, boost nutritional quality, or make traditional foods more convenient, as long as the authenticity of the product is maintained (Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal, 2023).

Qualitative results from key informant interviews underscore the importance of innovation and value addition in traditional foods through improved drying and packaging techniques. These

innovations enhance food quality, extend shelf life, and expand market opportunities, contributing to both economic growth and food security. By addressing the challenges and implementing appropriate strategies, the full potential of traditional foods can be realized, benefiting producers, consumers, and the environment.

6.5 Field Observations Results

Observations conducted during the study provided invaluable insights into the dynamics of traditional food marketing and consumption in Greendale. These observations were structured to capture not only the participants' verbal responses during the focus group discussions (FGDs) and interviews but also the contextual factors influencing their attitudes and behaviors.

One critical aspect observed was the interaction patterns among participants, particularly how gender roles manifested in discussions about traditional foods. Women often took the lead in articulating the cultural significance and preparation methods of traditional dishes, reinforcing their roles as custodians of culinary heritage (Hariss et al., 2019). This aligns with the findings of Matsungu and Chopera (2020), who emphasise that women play a pivotal role in preserving traditional food practices within their communities.

Additionally, the physical environments where discussions took place, community centers and participants' homes, contributed to the comfort levels and openness of participants. Familiar settings encouraged more candid conversations, allowing participants to freely express their opinions and recollections related to traditional foods. This observation echoes Creswell and Creswell (2018), who highlight the importance of context in qualitative research, suggesting that the environment can significantly influence participant engagement and data richness.

Moreover, the enthusiasm shown by participants, particularly the youth, when discussing traditional foods indicated a strong emotional connection to their cultural identity. This reaction is crucial, as it suggests potential avenues for re-engaging younger generations with traditional culinary practices. However, it was also noted that younger participants expressed a desire for modern interpretations of traditional dishes, indicating a generational shift in food preferences (Kroll, 2016). This finding necessitates targeted marketing strategies that blend traditional culinary practices with contemporary trends to make traditional foods more appealing to younger consumers.

In summary, the observational data enrich the understanding of traditional food consumption in

Greendale. By highlighting the interplay of gender dynamics, environmental context, and generational attitudes, these observations underscore the complexities involved in promoting traditional foods within urban settings. Addressing these nuances will be essential for developing effective interventions aimed at revitalising traditional food practices while ensuring they resonate with diverse demographic groups.

Plate 1 (Dried Vegetables; Mufushwa, Dried Chillie



Plate 2(Showing Zviyo, Mhunga, Mapfunde)



Plate 3 (Showing Mauyu, Nyimo, Madora)



6.6 Conclusion

The analysis of market factors against demographic characteristics underscores the necessity for context-specific marketing strategies aimed at enhancing the consumption and appreciation of traditional foods. The significant associations identified, such as the preference for purchase locations across different age groups and the influence of education on marketing responsiveness, highlight the complexity of consumer behavior. Specifically, older consumers exhibit a preference for traditional retail environments, while younger consumers gravitate towards modern shopping formats, indicating distinct marketing needs. Additionally, the impact of educational background on consumer interpretation of packaging and labeling emphasises the importance of informative marketing strategies tailored to specific demographic segments.

These findings suggest that effective marketing must integrate demographic insights with broader cultural and technological trends to resonate with diverse consumer groups. The ability to employ targeted campaigns that reflect local values and preferences can significantly enhance engagement and foster a deeper appreciation for traditional foods.

6.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the study findings and reviewed literature:

Tailored Marketing Strategies: Develop marketing strategies that cater specifically to different age groups. For younger consumers, leverage digital platforms like TikTok and Instagram, while employing traditional media such as radio for older demographics to ensure broad reach and engagement.

Educational Campaigns: Implement educational initiatives that inform consumers about the nutritional and cultural benefits of traditional foods. This can include workshops, cooking classes, and informational content distributed via social media and community events.

Community Engagement: Foster partnerships with local influencers and community leaders to enhance the credibility and relatability of marketing messages. Engaging local cooks for market demonstrations can bridge the gap between traditional practices and contemporary consumer preferences.

Innovative Packaging Solutions: Invest in eco-friendly and visually appealing packaging that emphasises the nutritional value and sustainability of traditional foods. Highlighting these attributes can attract educated consumers who prioritise transparency and ethical sourcing.

Subsidies for Local Producers: Advocate for government or organisational subsidies aimed at local businesses producing traditional foods. This support can help these products compete more effectively against global brands while increasing their visibility in urban markets.

Multi-Channel Marketing Approaches: Utilise a multi-channel marketing approach that combines traditional and digital media to enhance outreach. Campaigns should be designed to integrate local narratives and cultural significance, making the products relatable and desirable.

Continuous Feedback Mechanisms: Implement data-driven strategies to adapt marketing campaigns based on consumer feedback and changing preferences. Regularly analyse market trends and consumer behaviour to refine approaches and maximise impact.

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CHAPTER 7

EXAMINING RELEVANT POLICIES FOR TRADITIONAL FOOD CONSUMPTION REVITALISATION

ABSTRACT

The revitalisation of traditional foods is increasingly recognised as a crucial strategy for enhancing food security, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting sustainable development. This study critically examines the policies surrounding traditional food systems in Zimbabwe, exploring their effectiveness in fostering sustainable practices and community engagement. Traditional foods, defined as locally sourced and culturally significant, contribute not only to nutritional diversity but also to the preservation of cultural identities. However, the decline in traditional food consumption, driven by globalisation and urbanisation, poses significant challenges to food security and cultural cohesion. This research employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating policy document analysis, surveys, and interviews, to identify gaps and opportunities within existing frameworks. The findings reveal that while Zimbabwe's agricultural policies increasingly recognise the importance of traditional foods, they often lack targeted interventions to promote consumption and address demand-side issues such as consumer awareness and affordability. Furthermore, challenges related to production constraints, market access, and the influence of industrialised food systems complicate revitalisation efforts. The study highlights the need for context-specific policies that engage local communities and incorporate their voices in decision-making processes. Digital technologies offer new avenues for promoting traditional foods, yet their effectiveness is contingent upon supportive policy environments. By proposing actionable strategies for integrating traditional foods into national food and nutrition security policies, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how effective policy interventions can support the revitalisation of traditional foods, thereby enriching cultural heritage and fostering sustainable food systems. Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of a multifaceted approach that addresses the entire value chain of traditional foods, promoting both cultural sustainability and food security in Zimbabwe and beyond.

Key Words: Traditional food consumption, Policy revitalisation, Food security, Cultural heritage, Sustainable development

7.1 Introduction

The revitalisation of traditional foods has emerged as a critical area of interest within the broader discourse on food security, cultural heritage, and sustainable development. As globalisation continues to influence dietary patterns, there is an increasing need to examine the policies that govern traditional food systems and their potential for revitalisation (Meyer-Rochow, 2021). Traditional foods, defined as locally sourced and culturally significant foods that reflect the heritage and practices of specific communities, not only contribute to nutritional diversity but also play a vital role in preserving cultural identities (Khan et al., 2020).

Despite the nutritional and cultural significance of traditional foods, many regions face challenges in sustaining these food systems. Economic pressures, urbanisation, and the dominance of industrialised food systems have led to a decline in traditional food consumption and knowledge (Bansal et al., 2019). This decline raises concerns not only about food security but also about the erosion of cultural practices and community cohesion (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022). Consequently, there is a pressing need for effective policies that can facilitate the revitalisation of traditional food systems, ensuring their integration into contemporary diets while preserving their cultural significance.

Recent literature emphasises the importance of policy frameworks in supporting traditional food revitalisation. For instance, McDonald and McCabe (2021) assert that context-specific policies that acknowledge local traditions and practices are essential for fostering community engagement and enhancing food sovereignty. By developing policies that prioritise traditional food systems, governments can empower local communities to reclaim their culinary heritage, promoting both health and economic resilience (Matsungu & Chopera, 2020).

Furthermore, the role of local governance and community involvement in policy formulation cannot be overstated. Research by Ahmed et al. (2023) highlights that participatory approaches to policy development can lead to more effective and culturally relevant outcomes, as they incorporate the voices of those most affected by traditional food policies. Engaging local stakeholders, such as farmers, chefs, and cultural organisations, can facilitate the sharing of knowledge and resources, ultimately contributing to the sustainability of traditional food systems (Shava, 2000).

The rise of digital technologies and social media has also transformed the landscape of traditional

food marketing and consumption. Zhao and Wang (2020) argue that digital platforms provide unique opportunities for promoting traditional foods, enabling the dissemination of cultural narratives and fostering community connections. However, the effectiveness of these strategies is contingent upon supportive policy environments that facilitate access to resources and training for local producers (Lee & Carter, 2024).

This thesis aims to critically examine the relevant policies surrounding traditional food revitalisation, focusing on their effectiveness in promoting sustainable practices and enhancing community engagement. By analysing existing policy frameworks and their impact on traditional food systems, this research seeks to identify best practices and potential areas for improvement. The findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of how policies can support the revitalisation of traditional foods in diverse contexts, ultimately fostering food security and cultural sustainability.

In summary, the revitalisation of traditional foods is a multifaceted issue that requires a comprehensive understanding of the policies that shape food systems. As global challenges pose threats to cultural identities and food security, the examination of relevant policies becomes imperative. This study will provide insights into how effective policy interventions can support the preservation of traditional foods, thereby enriching both cultural heritage and sustainable development. This paper presents policy document analysis as a practical tool that can be used for assessing policies for traditional food consumption revitalisation.

7.2 High-Level Literature Review: Examining Policies for Traditional Food Consumption Revitalisation

The revitalisation of traditional food consumption is gaining global attention as a strategy to combat the adverse effects of globalisation on dietary patterns, promote cultural heritage, and enhance food security. Recent studies emphasise that traditional foods play a significant role in maintaining cultural identity while contributing to sustainable agricultural practices (Meyer-Rochow, 2021; Khan et al., 2020). This literature review synthesises key research from 2010 to 2025, examining relevant policies and strategies for revitalising traditional food systems, while also addressing the challenges and complexities involved.

Traditional foods are increasingly recognised for their cultural significance and nutritional value. They are deeply rooted in local ecosystems and provide a buffer against external shocks by

reducing dependence on global food networks (Bansal et al., 2019; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022). However, globalisation, urbanisation, and the dominance of industrialised food systems have led to a decline in their consumption, threatening both food security and cultural knowledge (Shava, 2000; Matsungu & Chopera, 2020).

Effective policy frameworks are crucial for supporting traditional food revitalisation. Context-specific policies that acknowledge local traditions and practices enhance community engagement and food sovereignty (McDonald & McCabe, 2021; Ahmed et al., 2023). Local governance plays a vital role, with participatory approaches leading to more effective and culturally relevant outcomes (Lee & Carter, 2024). These policies should integrate nutrition within national strategies, enhance women's empowerment in agriculture, and promote climate-resilient agricultural practices (Smith & Zook, 2016).

Marketing strategies that frame traditional foods within the context of cultural heritage can significantly enhance their appeal (Tuten & Solomon, 2017; Pulizzi, 2014). The use of social media and digital platforms offers new opportunities for promoting traditional foods, disseminating cultural narratives, and fostering community connections (Zhao & Wang, 2020). Experiential marketing, which creates memorable interactions between consumers and brands, can also foster deeper emotional connections and brand loyalty (Pine & Gilmore, 2011).

Despite the potential benefits, several challenges persist. Industrialisation and economic activities often lead to environmental degradation, contamination, and pollution of resources relied upon by communities for safe, locally harvested foods (Kearney, 2015). Additionally, there is a risk of cultural appropriation, where brands may exploit local traditions without proper understanding or respect (Bennett & Panzone, 2019; Harris et al., 2019). Resource constraints, particularly in low-income settings, can limit the effectiveness of localised strategies (Smith et al., 2023).

A growing body of literature emphasises the importance of Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS) as a framework for revitalising traditional food systems. IFS prioritises community ownership, inclusion of traditional food knowledge, promotion of cultural foods, and environmental sustainability (Meyer-Rochow, 2021; Kim & Lee, 2018). Interventions that adhere to IFS principles have shown positive impacts on diet quality and psychosocial well-being in Indigenous communities (Das & Mishra, 2021; Pulizzi, 2014).

Case studies from various regions provide valuable insights. In Italy, the "Slow Food" movement

has effectively promoted local and traditional foods by emphasising quality, sustainability, and cultural heritage (Petrini, 2007; Shava, 2000). In South Korea, government initiatives have successfully promoted traditional foods through branding and educational campaigns (Kim & Lee, 2018). These examples highlight the potential for context-specific strategies to resonate with urban The revitalisation of traditional food consumption requires a comprehensive and integrated approach that considers policy frameworks, marketing strategies, community engagement, and cultural preservation. Addressing the challenges of globalisation and ensuring equitable access to nutritious, culturally appropriate foods is essential for fostering sustainable food systems and promoting the well-being of communities worldwide (Kearney, 2015; Zhao & Wang, 2020). Future research should focus on developing and evaluating policies that support IFS, promote sustainable agricultural practices, and enhance the cultural value of traditional foods.

7.3 Materials and Methods

Details regarding the study area and the methodology, which encompasses sampling procedures, questionnaire design, methods of data collection and data analysis, are described in chapter three. For this chapter, only a summary is provided.

7.3.1 Description of study area

The study was conducted in Greendale, Harare, Zimbabwe. Details on the description of the study area are given in Chapter Three.

7.3.2 Research Design

The study employed a mixed methods research design comprising the use of a survey on residents, shop owners and key informants, through the use of personally administered pre-tested questionnaires, interview guides and observations in the collection of data. Details regarding the research design are given in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3.

7.3.3 Sampling procedure

Randomly selected residents from Greendale were interviewed by the researcher from March to April 2024. This study recruited all adults living in Greendale, Zimbabwe, aged between 18 and

60 years. The study population consisted of both male and female respondents. Details regarding the sampling procedure are given in Section 3.4 of Chapter 3.

7.3.4 Data collection procedure

The study employed a personally administered pre-tested questionnaire, an Interview guide and observation techniques for data collection through personal interviews from March to April 2024. More details concerning the data collection procedure are given in Section 3.5 of Chapter 3.

7.3.5 Data analysis procedure and methods

Policy document content analysis was applied for the assessment of policies for traditional foods consumption in Zimbabwe. More details on the data analysis method and analytic presentation regarding traditional foods consumption is given in Section 3.6 of Chapter 3.

7.3.6 Challenges encountered during data collection

Conducting a policy review on traditional food systems presented several challenges, including limited document accessibility, inconsistent terminology, and fragmented data across sectors. Government policies on agriculture and food security are often poorly documented, inconsistently implemented, or inaccessible to researchers (Mhlanga, 2020). Additionally, frequent policy shifts, such as land reform adjustments and subsidy removals, create instability, making long-term assessments difficult (Chopera et al., 2022).

7.4 Results and Discussions

Based on a review of policy documents and studies in Zimbabwe and the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region, the following results are pertinent to the study on Examining Policies for Traditional Food Consumption Revitalisation:

7.4.1 Policy Document Analysis of Policies addressing Traditional Foods Consumption

1. National Agriculture Policy Framework (2018–2030)

The National Agriculture Policy Framework (NAPF) is a cornerstone document aimed at

revitalising Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. Section 3: Vision, Mission, and Goals (Page 5), articulates the vision: "to transform Zimbabwe into a food-secure nation." This vision aligns with global goals, emphasising the need for food security as a fundamental human right. Section 4: Objectives (Page 6): 4.1 Reviving Traditional Grains: The emphasis on traditional grains like millet and sorghum highlights their importance not only for food security but also for cultural preservation. As noted, "Promoting millet and sorghum is crucial for cultural preservation and resilience." This aligns with research indicating that traditional foods can enhance dietary diversity and resilience against climate shocks (Chikowo et al., 2020). Section 5: Strategic Interventions (Page 8): 5.2 Crop Diversification: The policy states, "Diversifying production is essential to mitigate climate risks." Studies have shown that crop diversification not only enhances food security but also improves nutritional outcomes. For instance, research by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) suggests that diverse cropping systems can better withstand environmental stresses (FAO, 2021).

In summary, the NAPF serves as a framework for integrating traditional food systems into modern agricultural practices. By focusing on traditional grains, the policy recognizes the value of indigenous knowledge and practices, which are often overlooked in favor of commercial crops. This approach not only supports food sovereignty but also fosters cultural identity and community resilience.

2. Accelerated Irrigation Rehabilitation and Development Plan (2021–2025)

The Accelerated Irrigation Rehabilitation and Development Plan (AIRDP) is crucial for enhancing agricultural productivity through improved irrigation infrastructure.

Section 2: Background and Rationale (Page 3): The document emphasises, "Investment in irrigation is critical for improving food security," highlighting the interdependence of irrigation and agricultural yield. Section 4: Objectives (Page 5): 4.1 Infrastructure Development: The plan states, "Enhancing irrigation systems can double productivity in arid regions." Effective irrigation is critical for supporting the cultivation of traditional crops, which often require specific moisture conditions. Section 6: Implementation Strategy (Page 7): 6.2 Climate Resilience: The policy asserts, "Improved irrigation supports cultivation under adverse climatic conditions." This resilience is vital as climate change increasingly affects agricultural productivity.

The AIRDP emphasises the need for investing in irrigation systems that support both traditional

and modern agricultural practices. By improving irrigation infrastructure, the policy not only aims to increase productivity but also ensures that traditional crops can thrive in changing climatic conditions. This aligns with findings that effective irrigation systems can lead to significant increases in agricultural outputs (Mugabe et al., 2019).

3. National Development Strategy 1 (2020-2025)

The National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) positions agriculture as a key driver of economic recovery. Section 1: Vision and Objectives (Page 4): The strategy states, "Agriculture is the cornerstone of economic revival," reflecting its critical role in national development. Section 3: Investment Framework (Page 6): 3.2 Support for Smallholder Farmers: The emphasis on "Access to credit is essential for empowering smallholders" highlights the need for financial support tailored to small-scale farmers who often cultivate traditional crops. Section 5: Technological Adoption (Page 9): The NDS1 notes, "Adopting modern agricultural technologies is critical for enhancing productivity." Integrating these technologies with traditional practices can lead to more sustainable farming methods.

By supporting smallholder farmers, the NDS1 aims to empower those who often grow traditional crops, thereby enhancing food security at the community level. Research indicates that financial support and access to resources can significantly improve agricultural productivity and livelihoods (FAO, 2021). This dual focus on traditional and modern practices presents a comprehensive approach to revitalising Zimbabwe's agricultural landscape.

4. Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy (AFTS)

The AFTS addresses contemporary challenges in agriculture through a holistic approach. Section 2: Vision and Goals (Page 3): The strategy emphasizes, "A holistic approach to food systems transformation is necessary," recognising the interconnectedness of various agricultural components. Section 3: Strategic Priorities (Page 5): 3.1 Promotion of Indigenous Crops: The AFTS states, "Indigenous crops must be prioritized to enhance biodiversity." This is crucial for both nutritional diversity and ecological resilience. Section 4: Implementation Framework (Page 7): The importance of sustainable practices is noted: "Sustainable practices are crucial for long-term food security." This aligns with global movements towards sustainable agriculture.

The AFTS encourages the integration of indigenous crops into the broader food system, promoting biodiversity and sustainability. Research supports this approach, indicating that traditional foods can improve nutritional diversity and contribute to resilience in vulnerable communities (Munyua et al., 2020). By prioritizing indigenous crops, the AFTS aims to create a more sustainable agricultural framework that respects cultural practices and enhances food security.

The integration of these policies presents a strategic opportunity for Zimbabwe to enhance food security and promote sustainable agricultural practices. By aligning these frameworks, stakeholders can foster a resilient agricultural sector that benefits both urban consumers and local producers. The emphasis on traditional crops, irrigation development, and support for smallholder farmers reflects a comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges facing Zimbabwe's agricultural landscape. This cohesive strategy not only aims to improve food security but also preserves cultural identity and promotes environmental sustainability.

7.4.2 Adequacy, Challenges, and Constraints of Zimbabwe's Policy Framework in Promoting Traditional Foods Consumption

Zimbabwe's agricultural policy framework, encompassing the National Agriculture Policy Framework (NAPF) (2018–2030), Accelerated Irrigation Rehabilitation and Development Plan (AIRDP) (2021–2025), National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) (2020-2025), and Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy (AFTS), represents a concerted effort to address food security and promote sustainable agricultural practices. However, the adequacy of this framework in specifically promoting the consumption of traditional foods is subject to several challenges and constraints, demanding a nuanced analysis.

Adequacy of the Policy Framework

The policy framework demonstrates an increasing recognition of the importance of traditional foods. The NAPF emphasises reviving traditional grains like millet and sorghum, citing their resilience to climate variability and cultural significance (Government of Zimbabwe, 2018). This is echoed in the AFTS, which advocates for the cultivation of indigenous crops to enhance biodiversity and improve nutrition (Government of Zimbabwe, 2021). These policies align with the broader concept of "nutrition-sensitive agriculture," which Zimbabwe embraces as part of its

diversified crop and livestock production framework (FAO Zimbabwe, 2021). This suggests a move towards integrating nutritional goals into agricultural policies, which is a positive step.

Furthermore, the NDS1 acknowledges the role of agriculture in economic recovery and emphasises support for smallholder farmers (Government of Zimbabwe, 2020). Since smallholder farmers are often the custodians of traditional crops and farming practices, this support could indirectly contribute to the production and consumption of traditional foods.

However, while the policies acknowledge the importance of traditional foods, they often lack specific, targeted interventions to promote their consumption. The focus tends to be more on production and less on addressing the demand side, such as consumer awareness, affordability, and accessibility.

In conclusion, the results indicate a growing policy emphasis on revitalising traditional food consumption in Zimbabwe and SSA. However, numerous challenges related to production, value chains, consumer behaviour, and policy implementation need to be addressed.

Challenges and Constraints

Several challenges and constraints impede the effectiveness of the policy framework in promoting traditional foods:

- i. **Inadequate Consumer Awareness and Stigma:** Despite the nutritional benefits of traditional foods, consumer awareness remains low, and there's often a stigma associated with their consumption (Mukove, 2023). A study by [unretrievable URL Alimi, T. H., & Workneh, T. S. (2014). Consumer acceptance of traditional and indigenous foods in South Africa: A review. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences*, 42(1), 1-14.] in South Africa found similar challenges, where traditional foods were often perceived as "poor people's food." Aggressive marketing of processed foods further exacerbates this issue, overshadowing the nutritional benefits of traditional options (Chopera et al., 2022).
- ii. **Accessibility and Affordability:** Traditional foods are often less accessible and more expensive than processed alternatives, particularly in urban areas (Chikarakara, 2023). This is due to factors such as limited supply chains, lack of mechanisation in production, and higher processing costs. The Grain Marketing Board (GMB) pricing policies, which sometimes favor maize over traditional grains, also contribute to this disparity (The Herald, 2023).

- iii. **Production Constraints:** Smallholder farmers, who are the primary producers of traditional crops, face numerous challenges, including climate change, water scarcity, and limited access to credit and technology (FAO, 2021; Safe4allafrica.eu, 2024). These constraints limit their ability to increase production and meet the growing demand for traditional foods.
- iv. **Policy Implementation Gaps:** While Zimbabwe has a comprehensive policy framework for food and nutrition security, implementation remains a challenge (HarvestPlus, 2021). This is due to factors such as a lack of coordination among government agencies, inadequate funding, and bureaucratic inefficiencies. The absence of a single institutional entity with the authority and capacity to drive food security and nutrition initiatives further exacerbates this issue (HarvestPlus, 2021).
- v. **Globalisation and Changing Dietary Preferences:** Globalisation and urbanisation have led to a shift in dietary preferences, with many Zimbabweans, particularly younger generations, favoring processed and Westernised foods over traditional options (Glover and Sumberg, 2020; Number Analytics, 2025). This "nutrition transition" poses a significant challenge to promoting traditional foods consumption.
- vi. **Land Reform and its Impact:** The Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) of 2000, while intended to address colonial land imbalances, led to a decline in agricultural production due to damaged irrigation infrastructure and a dependence on rain-fed agriculture by new landowners (ZIMCODD, 2022). This disruption affected the production of both commercial and traditional crops.
- vii. **Climate Change and Environmental Degradation:** Climate change-induced shocks, such as droughts and cyclones, have severely impacted Zimbabwe's food security (ActionAid, 2020; Global Humanitarian Overview, 2025). Environmental degradation, poor land use, and climate change have reduced the availability of climate-resilient crops, even though Zimbabwe has access to such crops (SDC, 2024).

7.5 Conclusion

The revitalisation of traditional food consumption is essential for enhancing food security, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting sustainable development. This study has highlighted the pressing need for effective policies that support traditional food systems, particularly in the

context of globalisation and urbanisation. The findings indicate that while there is increasing recognition of the value of traditional foods in Zimbabwe and the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region, significant challenges remain. These include production constraints, market access issues, and the impact of aggressive marketing of processed foods.

The examination of current policy frameworks reveals that context-specific approaches, which engage local communities and stakeholders, are crucial for fostering food sovereignty and enhancing the sustainability of traditional food systems. Moreover, the rise of digital technologies offers new avenues for promoting traditional foods, yet the effectiveness of these strategies heavily relies on supportive policy environments.

In conclusion, addressing the barriers to traditional food consumption requires a multifaceted approach that includes promoting community engagement, enhancing value chains, and integrating traditional foods into educational institutions. The findings from this study contribute to a deeper understanding of how policies can effectively support the revitalisation of traditional foods, thereby enriching cultural heritage and fostering sustainable food systems.

7.6 Recommendations

Zimbabwe's journey towards food security and improved nutrition increasingly recognizes the pivotal role of traditional foods. This narrative explores comprehensive strategies, viewed through a policy lens, to revitalize the production, consumption, and overall value chain of these often-neglected resources.

1. Policy Frameworks and Integration

A successful revitalization hinges on coherent and integrated policy frameworks. Zimbabwe's National Agriculture Policy Framework (NAPF) (2018–2030) and Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy (AFTS) provide a foundation by emphasizing traditional grains and indigenous crops (Government of Zimbabwe, 2018; Government of Zimbabwe, 2021). However, these policies must be further strengthened to include targeted interventions that address the entire value chain, from production to consumption.

- **Actionable Strategy:** Integrate traditional foods into national food and nutrition security policies, ensuring they are not merely mentioned but actively prioritized and supported (Food & Nutrition Council, 2021). This includes aligning domestic, regional, and international policies to support food systems transformation (Tinarwo et al., 2024).

- **Policy Coherence:** Ensure that policies across different sectors (agriculture, health, education, trade) are aligned to promote traditional foods. This prevents conflicting objectives and maximizes the impact of interventions (OECD, 2019).

2. Enhancing Production and Productivity

Smallholder farmers are the backbone of traditional crop production in Zimbabwe (Africa Research Institute, 2013). Enhancing their productivity is crucial for increasing the availability of these foods.

- **Input Support and Extension Services:** Provide smallholder farmers with access to essential inputs such as drought-resistant seeds, organic fertilizers, and sustainable farming techniques (Farmonaut, 2024). Government extension officers should be trained to promote traditional grain production and agroecological practices (PreventionWeb.net, 2023).
- **Climate-Smart Agriculture:** Promote climate-smart agricultural practices that enhance the resilience of traditional crops to climate change (Farmonaut, 2024). This includes water harvesting, conservation tillage, and crop diversification (FAO, 2024).
- **Agroecological Approaches:** Support agroecological farming practices that integrate indigenous knowledge with modern techniques, promoting sustainable and resilient food systems (Agroecology Fund, 2024).

3. Strengthening Value Chains and Market Access

Efficient value chains are essential for ensuring that traditional foods are accessible and affordable to consumers.

- **Infrastructure Development:** Invest in post-harvest storage, processing facilities, and transportation infrastructure to reduce food losses and improve the quality of traditional foods (summitdialogues.org, 2021).
- **Market Linkages:** Facilitate market linkages between smallholder farmers and consumers, including supermarkets, restaurants, and schools (The Herald, 2023; Anadolu Ajansı, 2021). This can be achieved through farmer cooperatives, contract farming, and government procurement programs (ConserveZim, 2023).
- **Value Addition and Processing:** Support the development of agro-processing industries in rural areas to add value to traditional crops and create employment opportunities

(summitdialogues.org, 2021). National Foods, for example, has launched traditional small grains processed foods, demonstrating the potential for value addition (Business Times, 2023).

4. Promoting Consumption and Consumer Awareness

Increasing consumer demand for traditional foods is crucial for driving their production and availability.

- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Implement targeted public awareness campaigns to educate consumers about the nutritional and health benefits of traditional foods (The Herald, 2023). These campaigns should address the stigma associated with traditional foods and promote their cultural significance (ResearchGate, 2022).
- **Inclusion in School Feeding Programs:** Incorporate traditional foods into school feeding programs to promote their consumption among children and create a demand for these foods (The Herald, 2024; UNESCO, 2024).
- **Support for Local Cuisine:** Promote the use of traditional foods in restaurants and hotels to showcase their culinary value and attract tourists (Anadolu Ajansı, 2021).
- **Pricing Policies:** Implement pricing policies that make traditional foods more affordable to consumers (The Herald, 2023). This could include subsidies for traditional grains and taxes on processed foods (summitdialogues.org, 2021).

5. Land Tenure and Resource Management

Secure land tenure and sustainable resource management are essential for promoting long-term agricultural productivity and food security.

- **Land Tenure Reform:** Address land tenure issues to encourage investment in agriculture and improve productivity (Farmonaut, 2024). This includes providing farmers with secure land rights and access to credit (ResearchGate, 2020).
- **Sustainable Resource Management:** Promote sustainable land and water management practices to protect the environment and enhance the resilience of agricultural systems (PreventionWeb.net, 2023).

6. Research, Development, and Innovation

Continued research and development are needed to improve the yields, nutritional content, and processing methods of traditional crops.

- **Investment in Research:** Invest in research and development to improve the yields, nutritional content, and processing methods of traditional crops (TV BRICS, 2024). This should also include research on climate-resilient varieties and sustainable farming practices (muast.ac.zw, 2024).
- **Collaboration with Research Institutions:** Foster collaboration between farmers, researchers, and extension officers to promote the adoption of new technologies and practices (fao.org, 2024).

7. Empowering Women and Youth

Women and youth play a critical role in the production, processing, and marketing of traditional foods.

- **Access to Resources:** Provide women and youth with access to land, credit, training, and technology to enhance their participation in the traditional food value chain (summitdialogues.org, 2021).
- **Entrepreneurship Support:** Support youth-led enterprises in the traditional food sector through training, mentorship, and access to finance (summitdialogues.org, 2021).

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are essential for tracking progress and identifying areas for improvement.

- **Participatory M&E:** Implement participatory M&E systems that involve key stakeholders, including farmers, consumers, and government agencies (journals.co.za, 2024).
- **Data Collection and Analysis:** Collect and analyze data on the production, consumption, and nutritional value of traditional foods to inform policy decisions (fao.org, 2021).

Zimbabwe's agricultural policy framework has the potential to promote the consumption of traditional foods, but its adequacy is currently constrained by several challenges. Revitalizing traditional foods in Zimbabwe requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses the entire value chain, from production to consumption. By implementing these strategies, Zimbabwe can enhance food security, improve nutrition, promote sustainable agriculture, and preserve its rich cultural heritage. A concerted effort from government, civil society, the private sector, and local communities is essential for achieving this vision.

This requires a shift from a primarily production-focused approach to one that also addresses consumer awareness, affordability, accessibility, and the broader socio-economic and cultural factors that influence food choices. Furthermore, addressing the structural issues related to land reform and climate change is crucial for building a resilient and sustainable agricultural sector that supports the production and consumption of traditional foods.

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CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter synthesises the major conclusions derived from the study's findings and offers evidence-based recommendations aimed at enhancing traditional food consumption in urban settings. The research has highlighted the critical role of traditional foods in preserving cultural heritage, promoting food security, and adapting to the challenges of urbanisation.

8.2 Research Summary

The study employed a mixed-methods approach to assess urban households' attitudes, perceptions, and consumption patterns of traditional foods in Greendale, Harare, Zimbabwe. Key findings indicate that while there is a generally positive perception of traditional foods, actual consumption rates are low. Socioeconomic factors, accessibility, and aggressive marketing of processed foods significantly influence these dynamics. Notably, lower-income households consume traditional foods more frequently, whereas higher-income households often prioritise convenience and modern dietary trends.

Furthermore, the research identified significant correlations between preservation efforts and food security, emphasising that traditional foods can enhance food availability and nutritional quality. Marketing campaigns that focus on cultural relevance and community engagement were found to positively affect consumption patterns. Overall, the findings underscore the need for targeted interventions that address barriers to traditional food consumption and promote sustainable food practices.

8.3 Conclusions

The study concludes that traditional foods play a vital role in food security and cultural identity among urban households. Despite positive attitudes towards these foods, various barriers hinder their consumption, including economic constraints, misconceptions about nutritional value, and the influence of processed foods. The research highlights the importance of understanding the interplay of demographic factors, such as age and education, in shaping consumer behavior

towards traditional foods.

The findings emphasise the necessity of context-specific marketing strategies that resonate with local values and preferences. By engaging communities and harnessing digital platforms, stakeholders can enhance the visibility and appreciation of traditional foods, ultimately contributing to food security and cultural preservation.

8.4 Policy implications and recommendations

Overall policy recommendations for the government of Zimbabwe, relevant ministries and relevant stakeholders were drawn as follows:

Integrated Policies and Governance: Develop coordinated policies that recognise and support traditional food systems, ensuring that nutrition is integrated across agriculture, health, and education sectors.

Community Engagement Initiatives: Foster community programs that celebrate traditional foods through cooking demonstrations, food festivals, and educational campaigns to reinforce cultural significance and encourage participation.

Targeted Marketing Strategies: Implement marketing campaigns that cater to different demographic groups. Leverage social media for younger consumers while using traditional media for older generations to ensure broad reach.

Infrastructure Development: Invest in local food markets and preservation facilities to enhance the availability and accessibility of traditional foods, particularly in urban areas.

Support for Local Producers: Advocate for subsidies and support for local traditional food producers, enabling them to compete effectively against processed alternatives while increasing their visibility.

Educational Programs: Integrate traditional foods into school curricula and promote their nutritional benefits through community outreach initiatives.

Research and Monitoring: Conduct ongoing research to monitor changes in consumer attitudes and consumption patterns related to traditional foods, enabling the adaptation of strategies to emerging trends.

8.5 Areas of further research

Future research should explore the following areas:

- a) **Longitudinal Studies:** Investigate changes in traditional food consumption patterns over time in response to urbanisation and policy interventions.
- b) **Impact of Digital Marketing:** Examine the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies on traditional food consumption among different demographic groups.
- c) **Cultural Appropriation:** Analyse the implications of cultural appropriation in marketing traditional foods and develop guidelines for authentic representation.
- d) **Gender Dynamics:** Further explore the role of gender in traditional food consumption and how marketing strategies can specifically address the needs of women as caregivers and cultural custodians.
- e) **Sustainable Practices:** Investigate the relationship between traditional food systems and sustainable agricultural practices, focusing on climate resilience and biodiversity.

By addressing these areas, future research can contribute to a deeper understanding of traditional foods' role in urban food systems and inform effective strategies for their revitalisation.

8.6 Appendices

Appendix 1: Household Questionnaire on Traditional Food

Edwin Hwari is a student at the Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE). He is doing a research project entitled “**Urbanising Traditional Foods: Developing Context-Specific Marketing Strategies to Increase Consumption and Appreciation**”. We have randomly selected 150 households from in Greendale suburb. The information generated in this study will be kept in a secure place and will be used only for this research. Answers will be kept confidential, and analysis will not involve individual names. There is no way anyone will be able to identify you. Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study. You have the right to terminate this interview at any time, and you have the right to refuse to answer any question you do not want to respond to. (If the household does not consent to the interview, thank them and get a replacement. If the Household consents to the interview, proceed with the interview.

Section 1: Demographics

Interview Date..... Interviewer:.....

Location: Greendale

Respondent initials (Name/surname)

1. Household size: ____
2. Age of household head: ____
3. Highest Education level of household head 0=no formal education 1=primary 2=secondary 3=high school 4=College or university
4. What is your marital status? 1= married, 2= unmarried (widowed, separated, divorced), 3 = single (never married)
- 5 Household Average Annual Income level US\$: ____
- 6 Number of household members contributing to household income.....
6. Household Main Source of Income:
 1=Formal employment (private sector) 2=Formal employment (public sector/government)
 3= Informal employment (self-employed, e.g., vendor, taxi driver) 4. Small business owner/entrepreneur 99= Other (specify)

Section 2: Attitudes and Perceptions towards Traditional Foods

1. How often do you consume traditional foods?
 1= Daily 2= Weekly 3= Monthly 4= Rarely
2. *What motivates you to consume traditional foods? (Select all that apply.)*
 1= Cultural heritage 2= Nutritional value 3= Taste 4= Convenience
 99= Other (specify)
3. How important is traditional food consumption to your household?
 1=Very important 2= Somewhat important 3= Not very important
 4= Not at all important
4. Have you noticed any changes in traditional food availability/accessibility in urban areas?
 1= Yes 0= No
- 7 If yes, specify change in availability: 1= increased availability, 0= reduced availability
- 8 If yes, specify change in price 1=prices have gone up 2=prices have gone down 3=prices remain unchanged

Section 3: Factors Influencing Perceptions and Attitudes

1. Which factors influence your decision to consume traditional foods? (Select all that apply.)
 1= Family traditions 2= Social norms 3= Media/advertising 4= Health concerns 99= Other (please specify)

2. How do you perceive the nutritional value of traditional foods?
1= Very nutritious 2= Somewhat nutritious 3= Not very nutritious
4 = Not at all nutritious

3. Have you ever attended a traditional food festival/event?
1= Yes 0= No

Section 4: Dietary Diversification and Sustainable Nutrition

2. What percentage of your household's diet consists of traditional foods?
1= <25% 2= 25-50% 3= 51-75% 4= >75%

3. Do you believe traditional foods contribute to sustainable nutrition?
1=Yes 0= No 3= Unsure

Section 5: Marketing Strategies and Awareness

1. How do you typically find out about traditional food vendors/event/pilot test media? 2= Word of mouth, 3= Flyers/brochures, 4= Online search
99= Other (please specify)

2. Which marketing strategies would encourage you to consume more traditional foods? (Select all that apply.)

1= Social media campaigns 2= Food festivals/events 3=Influencer partnerships
4= Discounts/promotions 99= Other (please specify)

3. Have you seen/heard any traditional food marketing campaigns in the past 6 months?
1= Yes 0= No

Section 6: Pilot-Testing Marketing Strategies

(For selected households participating in pilot-testing)

1. Which marketing strategy did you find most effective?

1= Social media campaign 2= Food festival/event 3= Influencer partnership
4= Discounts/promotions

2. Did you increase traditional food consumption due to the marketing strategy?
1= Yes 0= No

Thank you for participating!

Appendix 2: Vendor Questionnaire: Traditional Foods Marketing Strategies

Section 1: Vendor Profile

1. Business name: _____
2. Type of traditional food sold: _____
3. Years in operation: _____
4. Primary sales channel: 1=Market stalls 2=Restaurants 3=Online platforms 4=Other (please specify)

Section 2: Marketing Strategies

1. What marketing strategies do you currently use to promote your traditional foods? (Select all that apply.) 1=Social media 2=Word of mouth 3=Flyers/brochures 4=Online advertising 5=Food festivals/events 6=Influencer partnerships 7=Discounts/promotions 99 = Other (please specify)
2. Which social media platforms do you use for marketing?
1= Facebook 2= Instagram 3=Twitter 4=Whatsapp 99=Other (please specify)
3. How often do you post marketing content online?
1= Daily 2=Weekly 3=Monthly 4=Rarely

Section 3: Challenges and Opportunities

1. What challenges do you face in marketing your traditional foods? (Select all that apply.)
1=Limited budget 2=Competition from modern foods 3=Lack of consumer awareness 4=Limited access to market 99=Other (please specify)
2. What opportunities do you see for growing your traditional food business?
1= Increasing demand for healthy foods 2=Growing interest in cultural heritage 3=Expanding online platforms 4=Partnerships with local restaurants 5=Other (please specify)

Section 4: Pilot-Testing Marketing Strategies

(For vendors participating in pilot-testing)

2. What metrics would you use to measure the success of the pilot-test?
 - a) Sales increase
 - b) Website traffic
 - c) Social media engagement

, d) Customer feedback

Is there any additional information you'd like to share about marketing traditional foods?

Thank you for participating!

Appendix 3: Semi-structured interview guide

1. What is the impact of traditional food markets on local economies (income generation for farmers and vendors)?
2. What is the contribution of traditional foods to the cultural identity of Greendale urban residents?
3. What are the nutritional benefits of traditional foods compared to contemporary diets and their implications for urban community health?
4. What are traditional food practices in enhancing social and community interactions among different urban groups?

Appendix 3: Focus group discussion guide

1. What is the impact of traditional food markets on local economies (income generation for farmers and vendors)?
2. What is the contribution of traditional foods to the cultural identity of Greendale urban residents?
3. What are the nutritional benefits of traditional foods compared to contemporary diets and their implications for urban community health?
4. What are traditional food practices in enhancing social and community interactions among different urban groups?