

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS

RABBIT PRODUCTION FOR INCOME ENHANCEMENT

EZE, S. O. ²Mama, R. O. & ONU, F. M

Volume No.2 Issue No.2 June 2013

www.iresearcher.org

ISSN 227-7471

THE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL "INTERNATIONAL RESEACHERS"

www.iresearcher.org

© 2013 (individual papers), the author(s)

© 2013 (selection and editorial matter)

This publication is subject to that author (s) is (are) responsible for Plagiarism, the accuracy of citations, quotations, diagrams, tables and maps.

All rights reserved. Apart from fair dealing for the purposes of study, research, criticism or review as permitted under the applicable copyright legislation, no part of this work may be reproduced by any process without written permission from the publisher. For permissions and other inquiries, please contact

editor@iresearcher.org

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS is peer-reviewed, supported by rigorous processes of criterion-referenced article ranking and qualitative commentary, ensuring that only intellectual work of the greatest substance and highest significance is published.

RABBIT PRODUCTION FOR INCOME ENHANCEMENT

¹EZE, S. O. ²Mama, R. O. & ³ONU, F. M

¹SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF THE GAMBIA.

²DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA NSUKKA

(GAMBIA)

Email: Ominyieze@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study identified entrepreneurial skills that teachers of agriculture could utilize in rabbit production to enable them embark upon some business activities that could help them increase their income. Five research questions were developed and answered while five null hypotheses were formulated and tested. A 103 item structured questionnaire was developed from the literature reviewed and utilized in collecting data. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The sample for the study was 68 respondents made up of 43 extension agent and 25 farmers. The structured questionnaire was face-validated by 3 experts. The Cronbach alpha method was used to test the internal consistency of the items to obtain a co-efficient of 0.95. The questionnaire was administered on 68 respondents; 65 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and analysed. The weighted mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test statistic was used to test the hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that 98 skills were required for rabbit production. The study further found out that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the respondents on the 98 skill items required in rabbit production. It was therefore recommended that entrepreneurial skills identified by this study be packaged for teachers to enable them raise rabbit with the aim of increasing their income.

Keywords: Planning, Marketing, Breeding, Budget, Teacher.

1. INTRODUCTION

People everywhere require cheap sources of animal protein. This is mainly gained from cattle, goats, sheep, poultry and rabbits. Of all these Lukefahr (2000) sees rabbits as the cheapest source of animal protein, thanks to low initial establishment and operating costs. Sell (2009) reports that rabbits provide white meat that is fine-grained, highly palatable, high in protein and low in fibre and cholesterol content. Martins (1998) sees rabbit production adapted to any size of operation but finds it particularly appropriate for a village industry/craft project. The animals consume a large amount of forage which people do not eat and convert it into meat for human consumption. They are also prolific breeders; one doe can produce 4-6 litters of 6-8 young each per year. Lukefahr, Paschal and Ford (2009) see rabbit production being an enjoyable occupation as well as providing an opportunity for people to develop skills in nutrition, financial management and budgeting. Rabbits also have the advantage that they are quiet, odourless and docile animals that often go unnoticed by neighbours in residential areas. In order to breed, rear and market rabbits efficiently and profitably, an individual requires entrepreneurial skills. According to Hull (1991) skill is the habit of doing something well while an entrepreneurial skill is a group of skills that demands one's competence in managing production activities for success in the enterprise. Application of the said entrepreneurial skills to planning, breeding, rearing, health management and marketing of rabbit can become a support business to help increase the income of individuals. Lukefahr, Paschal and Ford (2009) stated that rabbit rearing can be an occupation engaged in as a hobby by many individuals, elderly, or any family member. That is, it can be a support business for housewives, civil servants, and teachers.\

2. TEACHERS FINANCIAL NEEDS

In most West African countries including the Gambia, teachers receive low salary (often insufficient to care for their dependents) but fear to leave their teaching job for any other full-time employment. The low salaries of teachers has led to disputes between the teachers and various governments at state, regional or federal levels in some countries. In most cases it seems that Governments are not ready to lift teachers' salaries, due to inadequate money and the large numbers of teachers. Hakeen (2008) notes that the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) is pressing for the implementation of Teachers' Salary Structure which basically means more money but the Federal Government is adamant saying that a teacher's reward is in heaven. Golu (2009) said that the usual reply to teachers' demand is "there is no money to pay; the Governors are broke and cannot carry such responsibility now". Teachers in the Gambia suffer the same problem. Ofor (2009) notes that educators express frustration at government refusal to give them a pay increase. Hakeen (2008) reports that teachers cannot eat three meals a day and this hinders their performance in school. What can teachers do to make ends meet? Most teachers resort to engaging in small scale businesses like petty trading, for which they have no training. Most of them share their time between teaching and petty trading and this tends to make them in-effective in either. Very often the result is stress, frustration and ill-health, and loss of interest in both due to failure. Teachers of agriculture in either primary or secondary schools in the Gambia are not exempted from this problem. But teachers of agriculture were to engage in an entrepreneurial support programme in their field such as rabbit production, it might be better than engaging in a business for which they have received no training. This type of part-time, less stressful and income generating business might make them feel more fulfilled in addition to overcoming stress and frustration. If such teachers are trained in rabbit production they might more readily meet their financial responsibilities.

The purpose of the study reported here was to identify entrepreneurial skills which the teachers of agriculture could utilize in rabbit production as a support business for enhancing their income. Specifically the paper has identified entrepreneurial skills required in planning, breeding, rearing, health management and marketing of rabbit.

3. METHODS

Five research questions were developed for the study and five null hypotheses were formulated and tested. A 100 item structured questionnaire was developed from the literature and utilized in collecting data. The scale for the questionnaire was Highly Required (HR), Averagely Required (AR), Slightly Required (SR) and Not Required (NR) with values 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The population for the survey was 68; 43 agricultural extension agents and 25 livestock farmers. The structured questionnaire items were face-validated by three experts in micro livestock who are knowledgeable in rabbit production at National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), West Coast Region, Brikama. Cronbach's alpha technique was used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire and a coefficient of 0.90 was obtained. The questionnaire was given to 68 respondents; 65 copies were retrieved and used for analysis. Weighted means and standard deviations were calculated to answer the research questions while the t-test statistic was used to test the hypotheses. The arithmetic mean of the scale of the items was 2.50. An interval scale of 0.05 was used to determine the upper limit of the cutoff point (arithmetic mean) on which decision on each item was based; that is 2.55. Any item with a weighted mean value of 2.55 and above was regarded as an important entrepreneurial skill required for rabbit production while any item with a mean value below 2.55 was not regarded as an important skill required for rabbit production. The standard deviation was used to determine the closeness or otherwise of the responses of the respondents from the mean. Any item with a standard deviation of 1.96 and below showed that the respondents were close to the mean, indicating that the items were valid. Any item with a standard deviation above 1.96 indicated that the respondents were not close to the mean and therefore the item was less valid. The null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted for any item whose t-calculated value was less than the t-table value and rejected if on the contrary

4. RESULTS

. Results of the study were presented in table 1-5 below.

Research Question 1

What are the entrepreneurial skills required in **planning** for rabbit production?

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of extension agents and rabbit farmers on the entrepreneurial skills required in planning for rabbit production.

The data for research question1 are presented in Table 1

Table 1: **Mean Ratings and t-test Analysis of Entrepreneurial Skills Required in Planning for Rabbit Production.** N=65

SN	ITEM STATEMENT	X	SD	t-tal	t-cab	RMK
1	Get and read all available literature	3.45	0.61	0.81	1.98	*NS
2	Learn rabbits and how they respond to certain management conditions.	3.49	0.50	-1.20	1.98	*NS
3	Visit and discuss with established producers	2.74	0.83	1.40	1.98	*NS
4	Visit and discuss with extension agents.	3.53	0.50	-1.56	1.98	*NS
5	Formulate specific objectives	3.70	0.46	0.40	1.98	*NS
6	Decide on the specie of rabbits to raise	3.21	0.82	0.48	1.98	*NS
7	Identify good source of breeder stock	3.14	0.71	-0.01	1.98	*NS
8	Decide on the system of management.	2.66	0.90	1.72	1.98	*NS
9	Identify relevant farm input.	3.11	0.88	0.65	1.98	*NS
10	Identify market outlet for rabbit.	2.92	0.93	0.65	1.98	*NS
11	Identify relevant records to keep.	3.48	0.96	1.47	1.98	*NS
12	Make budget for the production.	3.52	0.63	0.02	1.98	*NS
13	Identify sources of fund.	3.54	0.66	-0.90	1.98	*NS
14	Start on a small scale of 5 does and 1 buck.	2.16	0.65	-1.21	1.98	*NS
15	Review the objectives periodically.	2.56	0.83	-0.77	1.98	*NS
16	Expand the business later.	2.66	0.90	1.72	1.98	*NS
17	Improve and develop original stock.	3.11	0.87	0.65	1.98	*NS

Key: X= mean, SD= Standard Deviation, t-cal= t calculated, t-tab=t-tabulated, Rem= Remark, *= required ** Not Required, NS= no significant difference, S= significant difference

The data presented in Table I revealed that 16 out of 17 items had their mean values ranged from 2.56-3.54. This suggested that the respondents agreed that 16 entrepreneurial skills were required in **planning** for rabbit production. However, one of the items (No. 14) had a mean value of 2.16 which is below 2.55. This showed that the respondents believed that the item was not an important entrepreneurial skill required in planning for rabbit production. The Table also revealed that the standard deviation (SD) of the items ranged from 0.46-0.93 which was below 1.96. This indicated that the respondents were not too far from the mean and from one another in their responses. This indicated that the items were valid. Furthermore, all the 16 items had their t-calculated values less than their t-table values. This indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the two groups of respondents on the entrepreneurial skills required in planning for rabbit production. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted for all the items

Research Question 2

What **skills** are required in breeding of rabbit?

Hypothesis 2

is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of extension agents and rabbit farmers on the skills There required in breeding of rabbit

The data answering the research question and testing the hypothesis are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Mean Ratings and t-test Analysis of Entrepreneurial Skills Required in Breeding Rabbit.
N=65**

SN	ITEM STATEMENT	X	SD	t-cal	t-tab	RMK
1	Provide (construct) the cage 30 x 30 x 28.	3.65	0.12	0.06	1.98	*NS
2	Provide artificial light during short days (of less than 14 hours).	3.70	0.23	0.53	1.98	*NS
3	Provide 40 watts bulbs for every 10ft for better conception	3.61	0.21	0.43	1.98	*NS
4	Select matured does (4-5 months) for breeding	3.61	0.32	0.22	1.98	*NS
5	Identify bucks (4-5monhs) for mating	3.86	0.24	0.06	1.98	*NS
6	Provide (construct) the cage 30 x 30 x 28.	3.65	0.12	0.53	1.98	*NS
7	Provide artificial light during short days (of less than 14 hours).	3.70	0.21	0.43	1.98	*NS
8	Provide 40 watts bulbs for every 10ft for better conception	3.61	0.32	0.22	1.98	*NS
9	Select matured does (4-5 months) for breeding.	3.61	0.24	0.16	1.98	*NS
10	Identify bucks (4-5monhs) for mating	3.52	0.33	0.14	1.98	*NS
11	Take the doe to duck's cage for mating	3.32	0.88	0.05	1.98	
12	Carry out mating at early morning or late afternoon	3.32	0.78	0.90	1.98	*NS
13	Watch them mating without disturbing	3.20	1.00	-0.04	1.98	*NS
14	Use buck once a day or 3 times a day for short period intervals.	3.57	0.49	0.03	1.98	*NS
15	Take the doe to a different buck if it did not mate within a few minutes	3.48	0.49	-0.03	1.98	*NS
16	Try force mating with a young buck before giving up	3.56	0.49	0.36	1.98	*NS
17	Take doe away from the buck's hutch if the buck shows no interest within the first few minutes	3.78	0.17	-0.03	1.98	*NS
18	Eliminate the doe/buck from the herd if it consistently gives a mating problem	3.61	0.32	0.03	1.98	*NS
19	Provide a nesting box in the maternity cage 4weeks after mating.	3.70	0.29	-0.36	1.98	*NS
20	Fill each box with clean hair or straw	3.49	0.75	-0.03	1.98	*NS
21	Add clean fur from other does' nest (if available) especially during cold weather	3.53	0.66	-0.14	1.98	*NS
22	Check the after birth and allow the doe to eat it	3.45	0.83	-0.17	1.98	*NS

23	Wash hand before touching the young	3.49	0.66	0.05	1.98	*NS
24	Check the kindles for belies and dead ones	3.57	0.25	0.20	1.98	*NS
25	Provide adequate feed and drinking water after kindling	3.78	0.17	0.37	1.98	*NS
26	Remove the nest box 3weeks after kindling	3.74	0.19	0.11	1.98	*NS
27	Rebreed 3 days latter when a doe looses all her litters at kindling.	3.70	0.46	-0.06	1.98	*NS
28	Rebreed immediately if the doe losses all her litter several days after kindling.	3.62	0.57	-0.10	1.98	*NS
29	Replace unproductive doe or buck.	3.48	0.66	-0.07	1.98	*NS
32	Wean at about 4weeks	3.58	0.58	0.02	1.98	*NS
31	Mate doe again at 10 weeks after kindling	3.70	0.30	0.51	1.98	*NS

Key: X= mean, SD= Standard Deviation, t-cal= t calculated, t-tab=t-tabulated, Rem= Remark, *= required ** Not Required, NS= no significant difference, S= significant difference

The data presented in Table 2 revealed that all the items had their mean values above the cut off point of 2.55, indicating that the respondents agreed to the items as entrepreneurial skills required in breeding rabbit. The standard deviations of the items ranged from 0.12-1.00, i.e. below 1.96. This indicated that the respondents were not too far from the mean and from one another in their responses. This indicated that the mean values of the items were valid. Also, all the 31 items had their t-calculated values less than their t-table values.. This showed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the two groups of respondents on the entrepreneurial skills required in breeding rabbit. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted for all the items.

Research Question 3

What are the skills required in **housing and feeding** of rabbit?

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of extension agents and rabbit farmers on the entrepreneurial skills required in housing and breeding of rabbit

The data answering the research question and testing the hypothesis are presented in table 3

Table 3: Mean Ratings and t-test Analysis of the Entrepreneurial Skills required in housing and feeding of Rabbit. N=65

SN	ITEM STATEMENT	X	SD	t-cal	t-tab	RMK
	Housing					
1	Provide constructed cages of about 30"x30"x28"	3.29	0.62	0.17	1.98	*NS
2	Provide round hutch for the buck	3.48	0.25	-0.90	1.98	*NS
3	Provide feeding and drinking trough in the cage	3.61	0.56	-1.12	1.98	*NS
4	Induce the buck and doe to their separate cages	3.59	1.77	-1.88	1.98	*NS
5	Identify Bucks with letters A,B,C,D,E, or tattoo each	3.95	0.45	-0.34	1.98	*NS
6	Protect the rabbit from predators	3.14	0.57	-0.22	1.98	*NS
7	Cull the ones that bully the young at 2 nd kindling	3.09	0.69	1.16	1.98	*NS
8	Select replacement stock from mothers that produce the largest, fastest growing litters	3.29	0.41	-0.55	1.98	*NS
9	Identify the ones that are good for breeding purposes	3.20	1.08	0.65	1.98	*NS
10	Assign litter to any replaced doe or buck	3.19	0.56	-1.03	1.98	*NS
11	Keep replacement at the rate of one young doe/buck each month for every 12 working doe/buck	2.99	0.60	-1.37	1.98	*NS
	Feeding					
12	Plant green vegetables in the garden for the feeding of rabbit	3.39	0.44	1.75	1.98	*NS
13	Use a sound feeding program	3.09	0.49	1.40	1.98	*NS
14	Collect and wash green plant feeds before feeding them	3.29	0.61	0.79	1.98	*NS
15	Give young rabbits the best quality feed (cabbage, lettuce, stylo)	3.49	0.45	1.66	1.98	*NS
16	Provide clean drinking water in a bowl	3.40	0.44	1.39	1.98	*NS
17	Use automatic nipple-type waterer	3.59	0.24	1.45	1.98	*NS
18	Locate nipples near the middle of the cage and 8" above the floor	3.09	0.49	0.75	1.98	*NS
19	Provide salt as supplement	3.22	0.35	1.46	1.98	*NS
20	Feed a doe/buck with pelleted rabbit grain	3.19	0.77	0.52	1.98	*NS
21	Feed doe with hay to stop diarrhea after kindling	3.70	0.21	1.02	1.98	*NS
22	Feed a doe at 4-6oz each day until kindling	3.60	0.24	0.05	1.98	*NS
23	Feed 12-15oz for 3-5days after kindling and then give full feed until bunnies are weaned	3.49	0.45	0.52	1.98	*NS
24	Give fortified pellet feeds with additional vitamins during a heavy breeding schedule	3.19	0.36	1.67	1.98	*NS
25	Mix rabbit droppings with feed and feed them	2.11	0.25	0.22	1.98	**NS

Key: X= mean, SD= Standard Deviation, t-cal= t calculated, t-tab=t-tabulated, Rem= Remark, *= required ** Not Required, NS= no significant difference, S= significant difference

The data in Table 3 revealed that 24 of the items had their mean values ranged from 2.99-3.70, i.e. the means were above the cut off point of 2.55 indicating that the respondents agreed to the items as entrepreneurial skills required in **housing and feeding** rabbit. However, items (no 25) had a mean value of 2.11 which is below 2.55, indicating that the respondents disagreed that the item was an important entrepreneurial skill required in **feeding** rabbits. The table also revealed that the standard deviation (SD) of the items ranged from 0.21-1.77 which was below 1.96. This indicated that the respondents were not too far from the mean and from one another in their opinions. This indicated that the mean values of the items were valid; in addition, all the 25 items had their t-calculated values less than their t-table values. This indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the two groups of respondents on the entrepreneurial skills required in housing and feeding rabbit. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted for all the items.

Research Question 4

What are the entrepreneurial skills required in **health management** of rabbit?

Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of extension agents and rabbit farmers on the entrepreneurial skills required in health management of rabbit.

The data for answering the research question and testing the hypothesis are presented in table 4.

Table 4: Mean Ratings and t-test Analysis of the Entrepreneurial Skills Required in Health Management of Rabbit.
N=65

SN	ITEM STATEMENT	X	SD	t-cal	t-tab	RMK
1	Select appropriate breeding stock from reliable source	3.64	0.23	1.35	1.98	*NS
2	Stock at the required density	3.74	0.19	1.67	1.98	*NS
3	Handle rabbits in proper way	3.59	0.64	0.59	1.98	*NS
4	Determine the health status of the rabbit daily	3.30	0.60	1.53	1.98	*NS
5	Inspect the anus of rabbit to see if it is dirty	3.23	0.60	-1.16	1.98	*NS
6	Put them on the ground and let them jump to watch for irregular legs	3.14	0.62	0.94	1.98	*NS
7	Watch for sneezing rabbits	3.97	0.83	-1.64	1.98	*NS
8	Check and feel the stomach for smoothness spongy feeling indicates intestine troubles	2.84	0.87	0.23	1.98	*NS
9	Set aside extra cage for isolation of sick ones	3.13	0.74	0.42	1.98	*NS
10	Clean the cage every day	2.84	0.83	-0.76	1.98	*NS
11	Pack the manure and urine in the cage for use in the farm	3.04	0.56	0.74	1.98	*NS
12	Burn the cage with a hand touch or propane burner	3.36	0.84	0.82	1.98	*NS
13	Keep show animals away from breeding stock	3.19	0.85	2.24	1.98	*NS
14	Feed properly with nutritious plant parts	3.51	0.25	-1.85	1.98	*NS
15	Cull sick ones and watch them for 3weeks	3.31	0.49	-1.46	1.98	*NS
16	Consult veterinary doctor for advice and treatment of sick ones	3.30	0.60	1.52	1.98	*NS

Key: X= mean, SD= Standard Deviation, t-cal= t calculated, t-tab=t-tabulated, Rem= Remark, *= required ** Not Required, NS= no significant difference, S= significant difference

The data presented in Table 4 revealed that all the items had their mean values ranged from 2.84-3.97. This showed that the means were above the cut off point of 2.55 indicating that the respondents agreed to the items as entrepreneurial skills required in health management of rabbit. The table also revealed that the standard deviation (SD) of the items ranged from 0.19-0.87 which was below 1.96. This indicated that the respondents were not too far from the mean and from one another in their responses. This indicated that the items were valid. Furthermore, all the 31 items had their t-calculated values less than their t-table values. This indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the two groups of respondent on the entrepreneurial skills required in the health management of rabbit. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted for all the items.

Research Question 5

What are the entrepreneurial skills required in **marketing** of rabbit?

Hypothesis 5

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of extension agents and rabbit farmers on the entrepreneurial skills required in marketing of rabbit.

The data for answering the research question and testing the hypothesis are presented in table 5.

Table 5: Mean Ratings and t-test Analysis of the Entrepreneurial Skills Required in Marketing of Rabbit. N=65

NS	Item Statement	X	SD	t-cal	t-tab	RMK
1	Identify rabbit buyers	3.69	0.29	0.87	1.98	*NS
2	Make market survey for acceptability	3.74	0.44	-1.20	1.98	*NS
3	Advertise rabbit for sale through media; phone calls, internet, etc.	3.48	0.42	1.30	1.98	*NS
4	Select only mature rabbit for market	3.30	0.71	1.56	1.98	*NS
5	Classify the selected ones into grades	3.52	0.25	0.40	1.98	*NS
6	Sell breeding stock to other buyers	3.69	0.21	-1.01	1.98	*NS
7	Fix price for each grade	3.69	0.21	1.72	1.98	*NS
8	Slaughter and sell as frozen or dried meat	3.73	0.20	0.65	1.98	*NS
9	Sell on the spot or transport to buyers	3.48	0.34	0.65	1.98	*NS
10	Receive payment at the selling spot	3.27	0.20	1.47	1.98	*NS
11	Continue to maintain the un sold ones	3.26	0.28	0.62	1.98	*NS
12	Take record of sold and un sold ones	3.56	0.33	0.91	1.98	*NS
13	Calculate the income and expenditure	3.09	0.78	0.56	1.98	*NS
14	Sell on credit where necessary	2.05	0.78	0.55	1.98	**NS

Key: X= mean, SD= Standard Deviation, t-cal= t calculated, t-tab=t-tabulated, Rem= Remark, *= required ** Not Required, NS= no significant difference, S= significant difference

Table 5 revealed that 13 of the items had their mean values ranged from 3.26-3.74. This showed that the means were above the cut-off point of 2.55, indicating that the respondents agreed that the items are entrepreneurial skills required in marketing of rabbit in the Gambia. However, one of the items (no 14) had a mean value of 2.16 which is below 2.55. This showed that the respondents discharged that the item was an important entrepreneurial skill required in marketing rabbit. The table also showed that the standard deviation (0.21-0.78) was less than 1.96, indicating that the respondents were not too far from the mean and from one another in their responses on the skills required in marketing of rabbit, indicating that the mean values of the items were valid. The Table further revealed that all the 14 items had their t-calculated values less than their t-table values. This indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the two groups of respondents on the skills required in marketing of rabbit in the country. The null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted for all the 14 items.

5. DISCUSSION

The study found that 16 entrepreneurial skills were required in planning, 31 in breeding, 24 in housing and feeding, 16 in health management and 13 in marketing for rabbit production. The findings in table 1 were in agreement with the view of Thomson and Sheldon (2001) who advised that a beginner in livestock enterprise should make contact with established producers to develop ideas in the planning stage. Schere (2004) stated that the use of local materials for hutches and other equipment is necessary to reduce cost. Lukefahr (2004) makes the important point that that market research should be completed before committing resources to production. If there is no market, one needs to be created even if production is only for family consumption. Olaitan and Mama (2001) add that planning activities for any project include formulation of specific objectives, a review of the objectives periodically and the drawing up of a program plan for the enterprise. Smith (1997) has said that anyone interested in raising rabbit for

the first time should get into the business with few animals and expand later. The respondents disagreed with this; they argued that it is good to aim high by starting on a fairly large scale. However, this view introduces risk especially for the inexperienced operator. The findings on Research Question 2 revealed that all the items are required in breeding rabbit. The findings were in agreement with the view of Schere (2004) that does should be bred at 4-5 months of age, mating should be carried out at cooler times of the day and the doe should always be taken to the bucks' hutch to avoid the doe from fighting the buck with the aim of defending its territory.

- The findings of the study on housing and feeding were in line with the suggestions made by Martins (1998) that nursing does and fryers should be fed moderately with cabbage, lettuce and grain. The author further stated that nest boxes should be provided in the cages of 30"x 30 x 28" to help the doe in nursing the young.. However, the finding of this study disagreed with the view of Elom and Azuku (2008) who said that the feed should be mixed with droppings to raise palatability. Perhaps the view of the authors should be upheld but the practice should be carried out by operators with more experience in rabbit farmers, not novices.
- The finding of the study on health management of rabbit are in line with the view of Schere (2004) who said that appropriate hygiene should be maintained by regularly determining the health status of the animals. However the finding disagreed with the view of Smith (1998) who said that it is necessary to install a good solid waste removal system that will automatically remove the wastes. The researcher thinks that the view of the author should be upheld but not immediately because the teachers are not buoyant enough to purchase automatic disposal system at the start of the business.
- The finding on marketing are in line with the opinion of Sell (2009) who said that accurate record keeping allows for objective management decisions and proper identification of the performance of the animals.

The study found that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the extension agents and rabbit farmers on all the entrepreneurial skills required in rabbit production. The implication of this finding is that the professional and occupational experiences of the respondents did not significantly influence their responses on the identified items. This implies that the identified entrepreneurial skills could be utilised by the teachers of agriculture to help provide satisfactory economic benefits to them.

6. CONCLUSION

It is the wish of teachers in the country to have enhanced income through part-time businesses that are not strenuous but yield a quick turnover. It is recommended that the 100 entrepreneurial skills identified by this study be packaged and given to teachers of agriculture in the country to utilize for establishment of rabbit production enterprise as a part-time business with the aim of enhancing their income.

REFERENCES

- Elom O & Azunku F.N (2008): "Entrepreneurial Skills in Rabbit Keeping for Improving the Economic Survival of Retirees in Ebonyi State", *Journal of Educational Foundations*. 5 (2) pp23-29.
- Golu Timothy (2009). Nigeria: "Teachers' Strike- Why Governors Cannot Implement TSS-DG", All African Global Media Retrieved from www.google on 14 December 2009
- Hakeen Babalola (2008): "Heaven Awaits Nigerian Teachers", Retrieved from www.google on 14 March 2009.
- Hornby, S.A (2006): Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Hull, H.S (1991): Method and Problem in Apprenticeship System, Century Publishers, New York
- Lukefahr S.D (2007): "Strategies for the Development of Small and Medium Scale Rabbit Farming in South East Asia", Texas. USAS-lukefahr@tamuk.edu. pg1
- Lukefahr S.D, Paschal J.C & Ford J.E (2009): "Benefits of Backyard Rabbit Production", www.google on 14 March 2012
- Martins L.P (1998): "Rabbit Production in the Tropics", Echo Technical Note. echo@net.org.
- Ofor Chinedu (2009): "Nigerian Teachers' Strike Enters Second Week", VOANews.com/News. Retrieved from www.google on 26 March 2009
- Oforma G,C (2002): Curriculum Theory and Planning. Family Circle Publishers, Enugu
- Olaitan S.O and Mama, R.O (2001): 'Principles of School Farm Management', Cape Publishers, Owerri.
- Sell Randy (2009): "Rabbit" www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/al-agrabbith.htm
- Schere J.B(2004): "Backyard Rabbit Farming in the Tropics" Netherland. Digigrafi pg3 retrieved from www.google on 14 March 2010
- Smith (1997): "Starting Rabbit Production", Mississippi, <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/poultry/pub>..
- Spencer Robert (2006): "Guidelines for Entry into Meat Rabbit Production", pg1 PDF Retrieved from www.google on 26 June 201
- Thomson, Rebecca and Sheldon, Chency (2001): "Raising Snails", www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/AFSIC_pubs/srb96-05.htm.p39
- Wikipedia (2009): "The Free Encyclopaedia", www.org/wiki/Homemaker retrieved from www.google on 3rd January 2013