

Assessment of Household Food Security Among Market Traders in Jos North, Plateau State

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ABSTRACT

In many developing countries including Nigeria, household food security is still of the utmost importance as access to sufficient and healthy food is influenced by many kinds of socioeconomic factors. Contrary to popular beliefs that market traders who are important in the distribution food always have access to it, this might not be the case as problems with food accessibility, affordability and availability may arise in their households. This study was aimed at assessing the components of household food security which included access, availability and utilization of food as well as factors influencing household food security among market traders in Jos north, Plateau state. This study was a cross-sectional descriptive study using a multistage sampling technique. A self-administered questionnaire and focused group discussions (FGD) were conducted for quantitative and qualitative data collection respectively. The study involved 267 participants, 148 (55.5%) were male while, 119 (44.6%) were female. About half of the participants 130 (48.7%) were food secure, 7 (2.6%) were mildly food secure, 30 (11.2%) were severely food insecure, and about 100 (37.5%) did not fit into any of these categories. Results for food utilization showed that 233 (87.3%) have good carbohydrate utilization, 114 (42.7%) have good protein utilization and 248 (92.9%) have good fruit and fiber utilization. Majority of respondents have moderate food availability 264 (98.9%). Test of association between household food insecurity access prevalence and factors affecting food security showed statistical significance occupation (χ^2 (2, N=267) = 52.474, $p < 0.001$), for level of education (χ^2 (2, N=267) = 41.581, $p = 0.014$), average monthly income (χ^2 (2, N=267) = 47.286, $p < 0.001$), accommodation (χ^2 (2, N=267) = 8.783, $p = 0.032$), difficulties (χ^2 (2, N=267) = 50.404, $p < 0.001$). Test of association between household food availability and factors affecting food security showed statistical significance occupation (χ^2 (2, N=267) = 26.279, $p < 0.001$), for level of education (χ^2 (2, N=267) = 32.962, $p < 0.001$), accommodation (χ^2 (2, N=267) = 10.248, $p = 0.001$), difficulties (χ^2 (2, N=267) = 15.404, $p = 0.001$). Test of association between household fruit and fibers and factors affecting food security showed statistical significance source of income (χ^2 (2, N=267) = 41.581, $p = 0.014$) Findings revealed that about half of the respondents were food secure and majority of respondents reported moderate food availability and good food utilization. The factors found to have influenced food security were occupation of household head, level of education of breadwinner, average monthly income and difficulties faced by the household like hike in food prices and insecurity.

