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Topic: Food and nutrition security

Title: Household food security level as assessed by dietary intake and anthropometric indices of preschool children in cassava producing households Ohaji, Imo state, Nigeria

Presentation Type: Oral

Introduction

This study aims at determining the level of food security by dietary and anthropometric methods as well as socioeconomic status effect on 437 preschool children aged 0 - 5 years in 378 randomly selected farm households of cassava growing areas of Ohaji local Government Area .

Methods

National Centre of Health Statistics (WHO 2003) and FAO/WHO/UN (1985) were used to calculate the growth deviation (z-scores values) and adequacy of calorie intake of the children respectively. Socioeconomic data was obtained by interviewing the household heads. Significance of difference was determined by t-test.

Results

The dietary energy intake adequacy ratio of the preschool children was above 80 percent of the requirements accepted as the cut-off point for adequate food security. The preschool children were not underweight. The mean weight for age and weight for height z-scores of the preschool children were significantly lower ($p < 0.05$, t -ratio = -2.137; $p < 0.01$, t -ratio = -2.418, respectively) in males than in females. The socioeconomic factors examined such as female headed households and the mother's education affected the level of household food security positively (t -ratio = 2.150; t -ratio = -2.4551) for weight for age, respectively.

Conclusion

Food security and adequate nutrition are beneficial outcomes in themselves as well as important inputs to economic development