

Food Security for Food Sufficiency in the Family Households during Covid-19 Pandemic in Chanchaga Local Government Area, Niger State

Aminat Ladi, Akande & Angela Achebe PhD
Department of Home Economics,
Niger State College of Education, Minna

E-mail: aminatladiakande@gmail.com

Abstract

This research work identified the role of Home economics in ensuring food security, food sufficiency and nutritional attainment in Minna family household of Niger State. The study purposed of the study was made up of four and four research questions. The sample was made up of one hundred (100) people were Stratified random sampling to select household from four local government area. The data obtained was analyzed by using simple frequency distribution and percentage. The findings indicated that there no shortage of foods in family households with (85%) and (98%) agreed that there were no positive implications of food security on the health status of family households. Based on the findings amongst others the following recommendations were made that Niger State government should motivate and encourage teachers of home economics so as to enable them show much commitment to their assigned tasks. By providing all facilities and equipments needed in teaching home economics in the schools. Home economists should investigate whether housewives are able to effectively prepare, cook and serve foods in a way that retain nutrients through workshops.

Keywords: Home economics, ensuring, food, security, sufficiency, covid-19 pandemic.

Introduction

Food is a basic necessity of life, food is any substance consumed to provide nutritional support for the body. It is usually of plant or animal origin which contains essential nutrients, such as carbohydrate, fats, protein, vitamins or minerals. The substance is ingested by an; organism and assimilated by the organisms cell in an effort to produce energy, maintain life, or stimulate growth. Food and nutrition is a vital substance for healthy and productive life. Historically, people secured food through hunting, gathering and agriculture to ensure food security in the home. Food security is a measure of endured access to essential nutrition. It refers to a households or country's ability to provide future physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that fulfills the dietary needs and food preferences for living an active and healthy lifestyle. It is a measure of resilience to future disruption or unavailability of critical food supply due to various risk factors including covid-19, droughts, shipping disruptions, fuel shortages, economic instability, wars, etc. World Health organization (WHO, 2010) defines three facets of food security. Food availability, food access is having sufficient resources, both economic and physical, to obtain appropriate use based on knowledge of basic nutrition and care, as well as adequate water and sanitation. The food and

Agriculture organization (FAO 2010) added a fourth facet: the stability of the first three dimensions of food security over time.

Swindale, and Bilinsky, (2006) noted that food security means that all people at all times have physical and access to adequate amounts of nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate foods which are produced in an environmentally sustainable and socially linked to food choice. At the core of food access is closely linked to food supply, so food security is dependent on a healthy and sustainable food system. The food system includes the production, processing distribution, marketing, acquisition, and consumption of food. According to the Food security in the United States (2008) it connotes physical and economic access to adequate food for all household members, without risk of losing the access.

Household food is secure when there is year round access to the amount and variety of safe foods their members need to lead active and healthy lives. At the household level, food security refers to the ability of the household to secure either from its own production or through purchases adequate food for meeting the dietary needs of all members of the household during covid-19 pandemic. The nutritional status of each member of the household depends on several conditions being met: the food available to the household must be shared according to individual needs; the food must be of sufficient variety, quality and safety and each family members must have good health status in order to benefit from the food consumed. (Walsoft, 2008).

The Home Economist is concerned with the domestic wellbeing of individuals, the family and the community and the work entails the improvement of products and practices that affect almost everyone in our society. Home Economic offers a range of exciting career options related to foods, nutrition, housing and clothing. Most home economists teach in various types of educational institution some work closely with the media to promote products. Others conduct research in an area of personal interest in this field. Most home economists supervise at least one other employee depending on the employer or area of interest and much more other careers.

A home economist can handle food security as global concern, through providing people in rural and urban areas with adequate information, skills and motivation to procure and to consume appropriate diet. Such education should cover improvement of family food supplies and more efficient utilization of available food and economics resources to provide nutritious diet and better care for the most vulnerable groups. For those richer sectors of society where disease of affluence are taking in increasing toll, nutrition education should be directed to proper food selection, consumption and lifestyle. But in a global limited access to sufficient food as a result of inadequate financial capacity and other resources, beside with a global hunger in Nigeria and the possibility of the COVID-19 Pandemic increasing the aggregate number of the malnourished people in the country achieving food security for every Nigerian continues to be a challenge, despite the recent agricultural intervention policies.

The Covid-19 affects the health and well-being of the whole global population and poses a great threat to food security and nutrition. Many people have lost their jobs. Many have switched to lower paid job and many had no earnings. This economic turbulence

reduces physical and economic access to sufficient and nutrition foods, resulting in hunger, malnutrition related disorders around the world. Food insecurity has increased as a result of unemployment, lower income and greater poverty caused by Covid-19.

Covid-19 known as Corona virus diseases 2019 (Covid-19) is a communicable respiratory disease caused by a new strain of corona virus that causes illness in human. Scientist are still learning about the disease and think that the virus began in animals. At some point one or more human acquired infection from an animal and those infected human began transmitting infection to other humans.

Covid-19 pandemic has an impact on the food consumption in Nigeria. Food insecurity has been a challenge before the compound impact of COVID-19, there exist sparse empirical documentation of this dynamics. It is imperative to investigate the level of household foods security during the pandemic and the food security among them during COVID-19 pandemic.

Niger State of Nigeria is densely populated. The in-stay of the economy of the state is farming although there are modern establishments like banks, academic institutions, communication network offices etc. Most people are farmers; their food is mainly derived from the local farm produce. However, the local markets are never short of fresh foods like pepper tomato, grains like maize, beans, guinea corn, millet and rice in small quantity. Most rice available are imported rice. However, at the same time, beans are in large quantity and cheap to buy, while at other times it is scarce and expensive at other times of the year. Hence, some households may not be able to afford certain types of food at a particular period of the year. It can be considered as a form of food insecurity.

The researcher has observed that with all the food sufficiency family households are faced with food insecurity at certain period of the year. Some of the women in family household have no knowledge of the method of food preservation in which they can store food when it is plenty for sufficiency and nutritional attainment. Food are destroyed by insect due to lack of proper storage, this food can constitute health risk or lead to nutritional deficiencies in the family household. At worst, food contamination can lead to a whole household falling sick or leading to an epidemic breakdown. It is the interest of the researcher to find out whether, the people of Minna family household have food for sufficiency.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role of home economist in ensuring food security in Niger family household specifically the study sought to:

- i. Determine the types of food available in Minna family household.
- ii. To find out the periods of the year the foods are available in sufficiency and nutritional attainment in the family household.
- iii. Examine the nutritional adequacy of food in the family.
- iv. Determine the alternative means of securing food for sufficiency and nutritional attainment in the family household.

The result of the investigation will determine how secure food in Niger State when compared with food security indices is.

Research Question

The answers to the research question were specifically sought:

- i. What are the types of food available in the family households?
- ii. Is there period of the year the foods are in sufficiency within family households?
- iii. Is there nutritional adequacy of food in the family households?
- iv. Are there alternative means of securing food for sufficiency and nutritional attainment in the family households?

Methodology

• Research Design

The study was a survey research conducted in Chanchaga Local government Area of Niger State. This design was adopted because it provide the researchers the opportunities of sampling large representative. It geared toward thorough understanding of food security and sufficiency in family household.

• Area of study

The area of study was Chanchaga local government household in Minna Niger State. It include student and civil servant and non-working class household. The observed food in security has been a challenge before the compound impact of covid-19.

The area of the study was chosen because majority of the students, non and working class household came from this area and surrounding area.

• Population Size and Sampling Techniques

The population of the study consist of 3,850 households in Cchanchaga local government area. It is difficult if not impossible to issue questionnaire to all the people in Chanchaga local government. The sample used for these study was stratified random sampling, one hundred (100) people were randomly selected by balloting but spread over four major areas in Chanchaga local government area. Twenty five (25) household were selected from each of the four areas. Sampled area:

• Instrument for data collection

A structured questionnaire by the researcher were constructed and use for the collection of data for the study. The instrument was divided into two parts. Part one was used for personal information. While part two consists of twenty items with yes or no responses.

• Validation of Instrument

The instrument was first validated by the researcher and two other experts from school of vocational education in COE, Minna.

• Reliability of the Instrument

A pilot test to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument was carried out in chanchaga local government area. The response from the respondent was subjected to combach Alpha reliability method of establishing coefficient of 0.89. Therefore, the instrument was consider useful for the study.

- **Procedure for data collection**

The distribution and collection of the question for the study was done by the researchers. All the respondent copies of the questionnaire that was distributed to both male and female, literates and non-literates from Chanchaga local government area were collected.

- **Method of data analysis**

Analysis of data was done through tabulation using frequency counts and simple percentage. This was followed by description of table and inferences.

Data Presentation

Table 1: Grains and vegetable are in abundance in the Households.

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Many	85	85
Few	15	15
None	0	0
Total	100	100

Table I shows that (85%) agreed that grains and vegetable are in abundance in the Households, (15%) agreed on few, while (0%) do not. The table shows that most of the respondents agreed that grains and vegetables are in abundance in the household. The findings show that grain and vegetables are in abundance in the family households.

Table 2: Animals meats such as cow and fish are less expensive and are preserved by freezing and roasting method in the home

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	82	82
NO	18	18
Total	100	100
Many households takes fruit such as oranges, carrots pineapples and garden eggs which are rich in Vitamin and are secure by freezing band canning method		
Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	82	82
NO	18	18
Total	100	100

Table 2 shows that (82%) agreed that animal meats such as cow and fish are less expensive and are preserved by freezing and roasting method, while (18%) do not. The table above shows that most respondents agree that animals' meat and fish are less expensive and are preserved by freezing and roasting method in the home. The finding shows that meat and fish are less expensive and are preserved by freezing and roasting method. The table2 also shows that (82%) takes fruits which mare rich in vitamin and are secure by freezing and canning method, while (18%) do not. The table above shows that most respondents takes fruits. The finding shows that many household takes fruit.

Table 3: Many families eat food that are very rich in vitamins and minerals

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Many	54	54
Few	36	36
All	10	10
None	0	0
Total	100	100

Carbohydrate foods are mostly consumed on daily basis among family household

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	98	98
NO	2	2
Total	100	100

Table 3 above shows that 54 eat fruit that are very rich in vitamin and minerals, (36%) agreed on few eat fruit that are very rich in vitamins and 10% agreed on all eat fruit that very rich in vitamin, while (0%) do not. The table above show that most of the respondent eats food that are very in vitamin and minerals. The table above shows that (98%) consumed carbohydrate foods mostly on daily basis, while (2%) do not. The above shows that most of the respondent consumes carbohydrate foods on daily basis. The finding show that the family household consumed carbohydrate foods on daily basis.

Table 4: At what period of the year of household faced with food insufficiency

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
April, May June	72	72
January, February March	10	10
July, August and September	0	0
October, November and December	18	18
Total	100	100

Table 4 shows that (72%) of the respondents agree that household faced with insufficient food during April, May and June. (10%) of the respondents agree that household faced with insufficient food during January, February March andwhile (18%) of the respondents agree that household faced with insufficient food during October, November and December. The table above shows that household hold faced food insufficient. April, May and June.

Discussion

From the analysis it shows that respondents heard and learnt that food security through the home economist who work as an extension service worker in the rural areas in conjunction with the national youth service corps (N.Y.S.C) being able to educate the people concerning food security and health role. This can lead to improvement of food security and ensuring food sufficient and nutritional attainment in the community. It was also discovered that households in the study area do not have interest in securing food for sufficiency in their homes. This can lead to food scarcity when food are not in

season. This study agrees with Hilmers, Cullen, Moore, & O'Connor, (2012) that relationship between food security and parenting practices related to children's fruit and vegetable consumption. In this sample of predominantly Hispanic mothers, a trend towards a decrease in Parental Self Efficacy to make fruit and vegetables available for households was observed in the food-insecure group. This finding is supported by a recent study examining characteristics of the physical and social environment on the home availability and accessibility of fruit and vegetables among low-income Hispanic families. A positive association between food insecurity and home availability and accessibility of fruit and vegetables.³⁸ However, when home and parental factors that promote fruit and vegetable intake were added to their final model, this association was no longer significant, suggesting that parental factors may play a role mediating the effect of food insecurity on home availability and accessibility of fruit and vegetables. This method was chosen so that many variables could be appropriately represented. Twenty five (25) persons were selected from each of the groups the total subjects were one hundred (100). Through appropriate review of literature, relevant information, were gathered about the studies related to the study. This helped a lot towards stream lining and guiding the focus of the study. The instrument was the researcher's questionnaire. It was validated by the supervisor and distributed to one hundred sample subjects. The researcher adopted the use of direct delivery system or on-the-spot method.

Conclusion

Conclusively, the study has revealed the role of an home economist in ensuring food security. It has been discovered that there is effective food security in the family households and also attain high nutritional status as result of effective food security. There are no seasons or period family households witness death due to insufficiency of foods. However lack of interest, knowledge, awareness of the method of food – preservation, and Covid-19 pandemic contributed to food insufficiency in some period of the years in Minna Niger state family household.

Recommendations

From the result of this study the following recommendations were made:

- i. Niger State government should motivate and encourage teachers of home economics so as to enable them show much commitment to their assigned tasks. One way of doing this is to provide all the facilities and equipment needed in teaching home economics in the school.
- ii. Home economists should investigate whether many housewives are able to effectively prepare, cook and serve foods in a way that retain nutrients
- iii. Seminar and conference should be sponsored by the government in Nigeria
- iv. The home economist should work as an extension service worker in the rural area by training, enlightening, encouraging woman on how they can preserve food for sufficiency.

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