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Assessment of food insecurity among Tehranian's households

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Objective: Food security is one of the important determinants of health status in human life. Food insecurity has emerged as a global crisis following the global economic meltdown. This study was undertaken to identify household's food insecurity status in Tehran, Iran.

Method: In this cross-sectional study, 630 households were selected randomly from ten health centers in five districts of Tehran. A self-reported questionnaire was completed by interviewing, including: demographic status and food security which was measured at the household level. Based on the HFIAS questionnaire scores, the households were grouped into four categories of food access insecurity: Secure (0-1), mildly food insecure (2-7), moderately food insecure (8-14), and severely food insecure (15-27).

Results: Most of women were housewives (92%) less than 35 years old (60%), their educational level were middle to diploma (54 %), and 42% of fathers had independent job. Findings from responses for each question of HFIAS showed that, the highest proportion of participants reported 'not going a whole day and night without eating (3.6%)', 18% of them were rarely 'unable to eat preferred foods', 16.3% of participants sometimes 'eat just a few kinds of food', and 4% of them often 'eat foods that they really do not want to eat'. Totally food security was observed in 56% of households. Mildly, moderately, and severely food insecure households were 29, 12, and 3%, respectively.

Conclusion: The findings showed that food insecurity is prevalent among households of Tehran. Therefore, policy makers should be aware and informed about the significant role that food security can play on the physical, social, and psychological status of members of Iranian households.

Biography

Fatemeh Esfarjani is a academic member of food and nutrition policy and planing research department, in national nutrition and food technology research institute, she has years of experience in research, evaluation, teaching and administration both in hospital and education institutions. Her field of interest is in nutrition & food safety, she published 25 papers in academic journals and more than 126 abstract presentations in congresses.

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