

Food Security and Sustainability

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The global nutrition transition and climate change in the Philippines: A double burden phenomenon

Statement of the Problem: The challenge of globalization has led to dramatic changes in food security, most especially in much of the developing nations. Globalization has played a central role in altering the access and availability of foods in developing nations through liberalization of food markets and the dynamic of transnational food companies spanning across the world. This dynamic change has created a nutritional transition or a dietary shift in lifestyle leading to higher levels of food security but also adversely caused increased rates of nutritional deficiencies and childhood obesity. Furthermore, climate change has greatly affected food security in many low lying nations. Environmental changes have led to chronic risks of food production and supply. Macronutrient and micronutrient deficiency is widespread in many developing countries affected by climate change. This burden of nutrition transition and climate change has clear socioeconomic implications that threatens the survival of the cultural dietary values and status in the Philippines; where economic development and climate change has come together to present a unique phenomenon.

Methodology: Data from the Philippine government agencies (Philippine Statistical Authority and Food and Nutrition Research Institute) related to nutritional, agricultural output and poverty were obtained spanning from 1990-2015. Features of the data included but not limited to the following: demographic data (age, income, education, urban/rural), topographical data (coastal vs. inland), anthropometric measurements and nutritional survey (caloric density).

Conclusion & Significance: In the element of food security, the double burden of nutrition transition and climate change presents itself as a crossroad in the current challenges in the Philippines. The problems of obesity, malnutrition, declining quality of agricultural production create a difficult and volatile socioeconomic status that requires further assessment and careful national planning.

Biography

Francis R Samonte is an academic Pediatric and Adult Neurologist and Public Health Nutrition Specialist. From 1998 to 2010, he was a Clinical and Basic Neuroscience Fellow at Children's Hospital Boston and Harvard Medical School with special concentration on cognitive sciences and later as a Research Fellow in Human Brain Development in children with neuro-developmental disabilities. He has completed his Clinical Fellowship at Harvard institutions and inducted into Omicron Delta Kappa honor society at Johns Hopkins University where he studied Neurobiology and Regulatory Affairs. For the past 5 years, he has researched into food security, nutrigenomics and cognitive functional outcomes across the lifespan of diseases in the Philippines. He is currently on faculty at the University of the Philippines where his primary focus is on nutritional cognitive neurosciences and climate change/food security.

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