

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Socio-economic and Demographic Determinants of Food Security in Households with Children Aged 6-59 Months in Siaya, Kenya

Amos Odiwuor¹ Asenath Sigot² Lucy Mutuli³

^{1,2,3}Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, P.O. Box 190-50100, Kakamega, Kenya
<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-7324-8314>; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2478-3751>; asigot@mmust.ac.ke
(+254 722 612 160); <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-8430-8591>; lmutuli@mmust.ac.ke (+254 721 441 183)

Corresponding Authors Email: ongirooms@gmail.com

Abstract

Food insecurity is a major issue in Siaya County, arising from insufficient food supply over a long time. Moreover, there is no conclusive study that examines the relationship between socio-economic and demographic factors and food insecurity in the county. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the influence of socio-economic and demographic factors affecting food security in households with children aged 6-59 months in Siaya County, Kenya. Using a cross-sectional study design, we interviewed 356 households utilizing the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS), a tool developed by FANTA/USAID to measure food access. We identified the households using purposive, multistage, and systematic random sampling methods. Results showed 97.2% of the caregivers had formal education, with 78.4% of the households earning less than Kshs. 10,000 per month. The main economic activity was agriculture at 36.5%, followed by trade at 27.3%, while the average household size was six. Household food insecurity stood high at 60.4%. We also established significant associations between food security and caregivers' income ($\chi^2 = 32.281$; p-value = 0.000), caregivers' educational level ($\chi^2 = 32.184$; p-value = 0.000), and household size ($\chi^2 = 13.293$, p-value = 0.038). The findings reveal a low socio-economic status and high levels of food insecurity. Household size, caregivers' education, and income are some of the influencers known to affect food security. Economic empowerment programs and government incentives that improve households' productivity in agriculture and trade are suggested to address issues of low socio-economic status and food insecurity. Further study is encouraged to assess other factors that influence food security at the household level, while looking at the household as a unit.

Keywords: Determinants, Food Security, Households, Siaya