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“Filling gaps and removing traps
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Food Transition Across Rural-Urban Gradient of Bengaluru, Karnataka

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Abstract

Urbanisation and economic growth leading to life style changes are major factors responsible for food and nutrition transitions, a shift from indigenous traditional food to diversified global foods. The present study was undertaken to explore food transitions across rural-urban gradients of the South Indian mega city of Bengaluru covering a northern and a southern transect. From the geocoded localities 300 middle income households comprising of rural (n=100), transition (n=100) and urban area (n=100) were selected by purposive random sampling technique. Information pertaining to food habits, dietary diversity and food intake was elucidated through standardised questionnaire. The findings revealed, that quite all of urban respondents (99.0 %) had three meals per day, but in rural environment it was only 67%. Interestingly, majority of rural families were non-vegetarians (94.0 %) against transition (82.0 %) and urban (85.0 %). Statistically meal pattern and food habits were significant across the rural-urban gradient. Differences in inclusion of high value foods such as fruits, vegetables, processed foods, meat and eggs contributed to slight changes in household dietary diversity score from rural to urban. It was observed that consumption of cereals, oils and fats, and sugars, which are predominant sources of energy, was more than the recommended dietary allowances in all three study areas in both the transects. However, highest intake of cereals was observed in the most rural parts of both transects. Intake of oils, fats and sugars was comparatively higher in urban families. Interestingly, an increasing trend in consumption of milk and milk products was observed from rural to urban gradient, Its adequacy ranged from 57.57% (rural) to 77.92% (urban) in the north transect. However, in the southern transect it ranged from 53.90% to 70.07% among rural and urban, respectively. Consumption of vegetables was higher among all the study areas compared to roots, tubers and green leafy vegetables. Fruit consumption was comparatively higher among females in south transect compared to the north. These transitional changes in food consumption in the rural-urban food system were attributed to availability, accessibility and diversity in food across the rural-urban gradient which may impact on nutritional and health status of families.

Keywords: Dietary diversity, food intake, rural-urban gradient