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Assessing the factors influencing fish consumption frequency among households in Kibera informal settlement

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Abstract

Global food and nutrition insecurity has been increasing and hence making it difficult to manage the growing population, especially in urban areas. This urban growth has led to the rise of informal settlements, nutrition insecurity, poor sanitation and food shortage. Fish as an important source of animal proteins, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals necessary for normal body functioning has been proven to boost food security and reduce undernutrition among developing countries. Health concern over the consumption of red meat has been on the rise hence consumers are shifting to the consumption of white meat, including fish. This study assessed the factors influencing the frequency of consuming fish among households in informal settlements using the ordered logit model. A sample unit of 385 households was selected through a pre-tested structured questionnaire using a stratified random sampling technique. Consumption frequency was measured by the number of times fish was consumed in a month. Empirical results showed that the majority of households 40.78 %, consumed fish between 2–3 times a week, 26.75 % at less than once a week, 16.10 % at 4–6 times a week while 15.84 % consumed once a week. The least consumers at 0.52 % consumed once a day. Gender, education level, monthly income, occupation, migration, processed fish, price, neighbourhood effect, time taken to the nearest outlet and number of outlets within a 100-metre radius influenced the frequency of fish consumption. The frequency of consuming fish was seen to be low among the majority of the consumers since only 0.52 % of households were able to consume fish at least once a day compared to those who consumed fish between 2–3 times a week at 40.78 %. This implies that fish is relatively expensive since very few households can afford it daily. To increase the frequency of fish consumed in the informal settlements, there is a need to increase the availability of high-quality fish processed in the market and also increase the income sources since this increases the rate at which fish is consumed. There is also a need to increase awareness of the health benefits associated with fish consumption among consumers.

Keywords: Fish consumption, food security, frequency of fish consumption, informal settlements, Kibera- Kenya