



Community Gardening and Food Security Among Urban Poor Families in South African Cities: A One-Year Consumption Survey

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Abstract

Urban poverty in South African cities is exacerbated by limited access to affordable food, prompting community-led initiatives such as community gardening programmes. A cross-sectional study design was employed using a structured questionnaire survey, conducted in three randomly selected low-income neighborhoods across two major South African cities. Participants provided detailed information about their dietary habits and expenditures. Vegetable consumption increased by an average of 20% among participants who engaged with the community gardening programme compared to those not involved, highlighting a significant positive impact on food security. The findings suggest that community gardening programmes can be effective in enhancing vegetable intake and thereby improving food security among urban poor families. Further research should explore the sustainability of these programmes over longer periods and their potential to integrate other forms of income-generating activities for long-term stability. Urban poverty, Food Security, Community Gardening, Vegetable Consumption

Keywords: *African Geography, Urban Poverty, Community Development, Food Security, Quantitative Research, Cross-Sectional Study, Sustainable Agriculture*

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