The rural-urban linkage in the use of traditional foods by peri-urban households in Nompumelelo community in East London, Eastern Cape.

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to illustrate that micronutrients are a major challenge in South Africa; hence traditional foods have been identified as one of the strategies that can be employed towards lessening the problem in the community. The research addressed the availability of traditional foods in Nompumelelo, Eastern Cape Province.

It has been common practice for most rural people in South Africa to include traditional foods in their diets, to which Nompumelelo is no exception. This study explores the rural-urban linkage in the use of traditional foods by peri-urban households in the Xhosa community of Nompumelelo, East London in the Eastern Cape Province, comparing this to the use of traditional foods by similar communities in the broader community of South Africa and beyond. In addition, the study shows the potential future use of the traditional food knowledge in the community.

It is obvious that the traditional food being produced in this community would be accessible for the whole community, resulting in greater food sustainability. The fact is that many community members agree that there is a major concern that food accessibility needs to be addressed. The objective of this study was to identify the rural-urban linkage in the use of traditional foods by peri-urban households in Nompumelelo community, as well as households that consumed traditional foods and the acceptability of various traditional foods prepared from traditional food as an alternative food in a poor community like this. This study concludes that there is a rural-urban linkage in the use of traditional foods by peri-urban households in Nompumelelo community, which compares with that of similar peri-urban households elsewhere. The results and conclusion revealed that traditional foods are available and still used by the people of Nompumelelo. This study showed that people in the research community are still using traditional foods, despite living in a peri-urban area. There is no need to promote traditional foods use and related nutritional education, including proper cooking and preservation methods.

Key words: Traditional foods, Rural-urban, Community, Households