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Food Preference within Rural and Urban Household in Ondo State, Southwestern Nigeria

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Abstract

The general objective of this study was to investigate food preferences among rural household (RH) and urban household (UH) in Ondo state of Nigeria. Specifically the study determined socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and food preferences of different groups of people in the houshald (youths, adults and elderly) within rural and urban households. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 324 respondents for the study. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Data were analyzed using means, frequencies and percentage. ANOVA was used to test hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Findings show: preference for meat and dairy was low (59.0%) among RH, but high (53.2%) among UH. Preference for vegetables was high (57.9%) among UH but low among RH (59.0%). Consequently, food preference was higher among UH (54.7%) compared to RH (42.5%). There was a significant difference (t=2.333, p=0.022) in food preference between adult in rural and urban households. Also, there was significant difference in the level of food preference across the three generations in the urban areas (F=4.632, p=0.011). On the overall, there was significant difference in the level of food preference of respondents across the three generations (F=4.304, p=0.014). This implies that the food preference of the three categories differs. In conclusion, generations' food preference differs across the generation (youth, adults and elderly) in urban and rural households'. The study recommends that generations in rural households should be more educated on healthy food choices to achieve food security.

Keywords: Food, Preference, Youths, Adults, Elderly, Rural, Urban, Household.

Introduction

Food preference involves processes that are cultural dependent and different factors such as personal, emotional, economic and social factors influence individual preference for food. It is noteworthy that at youthful age, individuals are more selective of what they eat compared to when they were children. Eating is viewed as a

social act, hence social networks and family can influence preferences for different food items (Happel, 2013; Holms, 2016). Food is regarded as the basic necessity of life and it is important as a major means of survival. The quality and quantity of food taken by an individual is therefore a major determinant for a healthy and productive life and a balanced food intake is essential to ensured adequate nutrients (Awosan, Ibrahim, Essien, Yusuf and Okolo, 2013). Also, the knowledge to choose food that are healthy might influence eating habits, food preference and nutritional status (Gan, Mohammed, Zalilah, Hazizi, 2011).

Also, it is critical for youth to eat plenty of highly nutrient foods, especially those containing calcium, protein, and iron. Involvement in regular exercise by the youth also helps manage weight and stress and building up of new bone. Most adults and elderly tend to lose muscle mass as they age, which causes metabolism to slow down. Many become less active with age. Adults and elderly need the following nutrition daily; Fruits and vegetables, water, low-fat dairy products, leafy greens, and canned fish with soft bones that you eat provide needed calcium, protein. vitamin B12, (meat, fish, and dairy). Lastly processed foods like canned soups, lunchmeats, and frozen meals should be avoided.

Youths are prone to eating disorder. In boys, the disorder is due to their involvement in competitive sports which require low fat body weight, in girls, it is due to their body images which are susceptible to anorexia nervosa and bulimia (both of which are eating disorders) (Ehimigbais, Otakpor and Uwadiae, 2017). When activity decreases, it is very easy to gain weight. If interest in food remains high, the intake of high calorie foods may need to be restricted, avoidance of second helping and stoppage of frequent snacking may be a good check. On the other hand, there is the possibility that in the later years, interest in food may diminish and calorie may be inadequate. In this instance, frequent small feedings and inclusions of some high calorie food may be necessary. Nutrition in adult years emphasizes the importance of diet in maintaining wellness, preventing diseases and promoting health (Okeke, Onyelu&Ibeanu, 2011).

As regards protein requirement, the best supply of essential amino acid to supplement the proteins found in vegetables and cereals is from animal protein. Lack of proteins in the elderly can have serious consequence if the person must undergo an operation or suffers from bone injury because healing is prolonged. It may also cause an elderly person to be easily fatigued and more susceptible to infections, while it impairs growth in adolescent and youth. All nutrients must be available in meals for all ages; it is the quantity that varies. Nutritional requirement for youth/adolescent reaches the maximum during this period, only during pregnancy and

lactation do females surpass their male counterparts' requirement. The most crucial nutrient for this age is protein, iron and calcium. Males require more carbohydrate than females for strength. According to Okeke*et al.*,(2011), once the body reaches physiologic maturity, the rate of catabolic or degenerative changes may become greater than the anabolic regeneration. The resultant loss of cells can lead to varying degrees of decreased efficiency and impaired function. These changes can be influenced by life events, illness, genetics, socio-economic and lifestyle factors. Lifestyle factors that seem to positively influence physiologic age are adequacy and regularity of sleep, frequency of consumption of well balance meals and sufficient physical activity. Cigarette smoking, excessive alcohol consumption and over-weight can negatively affect physiological age. The diet must be adequate for maintaining body tissues so that its integrity is not threatened, that means quality protein, mineral and vitamin with sufficient amount of carbohydrates and needed to maintain a desirable body weight.

The nutrient water is highly vital for kidney functionality in carrying wastes excreted by the kidneys. Generous drinking of water also alleviate constipation which is an ailment of later life. Some nutrients which are very important to the elderly people's health include vitamin in combination with calcium, vitamin B12, folic acid - folate (Olasunbo and Ayo, 2013). Good feeding habit for healthy individuals is to incorporate the following food into their diet; milk, two or more cups of milk (488g or 0.48 litres) daily, four or more daily servings of vegetables and fruits, one serving as a source of vitamin C and vitamin A. Meat group; two or more serving a day (16 to 23g without bone) of kidney, poultry and eggs, liver, fish and shell fish or meat alternates. One cup of cooked beans (250 to 260g), dry peas or lentils, bread; cereal group; all bread and whole grain cereals, four servings per day(118g to 127g) cooked cornmeal, rice, etc. Fats and oils of unsaturated fatty acid are recommended.

Food preference is vital to quality of life of an individual and has effects on the physical, mental and psychological development of individuals, particularly along gender categories and generation (youths, adults and elderly). Food preference is of great concern to individuals of different gender as addiction to unhealthy food preference leads to obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer later in life (Dimitrijevi, Popovi, Sabljak, and Škodri 2015).It is against this backdrop that this study investigated food preferences within rural and urban households in south western Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The general objective was to investigate food preferences of different groups of people in rural and urban household (youths, adults and

elderly) in Ondo state. Specifically, the study determined:

1. socio-economic characteristics of the respondents
2. food preferences of different groups of people in the household (youths, adults and elderly)

Research questions

1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of respondents in the study area?
2. What are the food preferences within the household members (youths, adults and elderly) within rural and urban households?

Hypotheses of the study

There is no significant difference between food preferences across the generations (youth, elderly and adult) within the rural and urban household members

Research Methodology

***Design of the study*:** Qualitative research design was adopted for the study

***Area of study*:** Ondo State was created in 1976 and it is usually called the Sunshine State with Akure as its capital. Ondo State is made up of 18 LGAs and the land mass is 14,789sqkm. The State is characterised by the tropical climate and it is bounded by Kogi and Ekiti States in the North, Edo state in the East, Ogun and Oyo State in the West and the Atlantic Ocean in the South. The primary occupation of most people in the state especially in the rural area is farming which is largely at the subsistence level. Ondo State is notable for cocoa production. Other crops grown in the State include; cocoyam, maize, orange, oil palm, cassava, plantain, yam and banana. Fishing is also prominent in some parts of the State and some are into trading. It is noteworthy that people in the State are elites.

***Population for the study*:** The population for this study is made up of all the households (rural and urban) in the area of the study - including parents, children – who included the youths, adults and elderly. From each house household, youths which are above 18 years of age, adults and elderly were sampled for the purpose of this study.

***Sample for the study*:** Ondo state was purposively selected for this study. A multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted to select respondents for this study. At the first stage, Ondo State in the south west was purposively selected for this study. At the second stage, the LGAs in Ondo State were stratified into rural and urban. The number of rural and urban LGAs in Ondo State were 8 and 10 respectively. The third stage was simple random selection of 15% of LGAs in each of the stratum. Therefore, one (1) and two (2) in each of the respective stratum were sampled respectively. The fourth stage involved the selection of three (3) communities in each of the selected stratified local governments. Urban LGAs selected were Ondo West and the communities selected were Lotogbe, Olosan camp and Igbado; and Akure South, the communities selected were Awule, Igoba and

Oyetedo. Rural LGA selected was Ile-oluji/Okeigbo and the communities selected were Bamikemo, Olorunntele and Lipanu. At the fifth stage, from each of the communities sampled, proportionate sampling was used to select 10% of the households in each of these communities. This made a total of 324 respondents for rural and urban households

***Instrument for data collection*:** Qustionnaire was used to collect data. It served as interview schedule for those who were not literate. It was developed based on the specific objectives abd review of literature. It was validated by three expexts in nutrition. Split-half method was employed to determine the reliability of the instrument and a reliability coefficient of 0.83 was obtained which was adjudged acceptable for the study.

***Data collection method*:** A total of 324 copies of the questionnaire were distributed. The non-literate respondents were interviewed using the questionnaires as an interview schedule.

***Data analysis techniques*:** The data obtained were analysed with the aid of descriptive statistics (mean, frequency counts and percentages). Inferential statistics such as t-test and ANOVA were used for test of hypotheses.

A list of 30 food items categorized based on food groups were presented to the respondents (youths, adults and elderly) to tick the expression that best suits their food preferences on a five-point Likert scale. Respondents indicated whether their dislike for a particular food is to the extreme rate = 1, moderate =2, neither like nor dislike=3, moderate likeness=4 or extreme likeness=5. Respondent with the lowest food preference score had 52, while respondent with the highest food preference score had 173 and the mean was 133.43. Respondents were categorized using the mean value as the threshold. Respondents with high level of food preferences were those with scores from mean and above while respondents with low level of food preferences were those with scores below the mean score.

Results of the study

Socio-economic characteristics of respondents

The result shows that respondents in both rural and urban areas had an average age of 47.5±14.5 and 45.1±17.7 years respectively, this implies that the respondents were within the working age population, active and productive. It was further shown that on the average, rural dwellers earned income of ₦ 49,776±42,217.42 monthly. This amount of income earned portrayed the rural households as low-income earners and meeting food security might be difficult. For respondent in the urban areas, the average monthly earning was 73,941±55,182.05. Majority (75.4%) of the respondents in the rural areas and about half (53.2%) of urban households were married. About 35% of rural household had secondary education, while in urban areas, majority (63.7%) had tertiary education.

Food preference among youths

Table 1: Distribution of food preference among youths in rural and urban households

Food	Youth in rural household						Youth in urban household					
	DE	DM	NLD	LM	LE		DE	DM	NLD	LM	LE	
Classes of food	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	$\bar{X}$	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	$\bar{X}$
Cowpea	0.0	2.0	10.2	61.2	26.5	4.12	3.4	9.1	11.4	42.0	34.1	3.94
Rice	0.0	0.0	4.1	42.9	53.1	4.49	3.4	2.3	11.4	44.3	38.6	4.13
Yam	0.0	2.0	20.4	40.8	36.7	4.12	3.4	6.8	10.2	53.4	26.1	3.92
Sweet potatoes	0.0	0.0	32.7	61.2	6.1	3.73	5.7	6.8	20.5	45.5	21.6	3.70
Fish	0.0	2.0	10.2	49.0	38.8	4.24	0.0	4.5	5.7	44.3	45.5	4.31
Poultry	0.0	2.0	16.3	67.3	14.3	3.94	4.5	1.1	11.4	48.9	34.1	4.07
Banana	0.0	0.0	14.3	63.3	22.4	4.08	2.3	5.7	6.8	42.0	43.2	4.18
Citrus	0.0	2.0	18.4	38.8	40.8	4.18	3.4	5.7	11.4	47.7	31.8	3.99
Pepper	0.0	0.0	20.4	61.2	18.4	3.98	2.3	3.4	17.0	60.2	17.0	3.86
Tomatoes	0.0	0.0	20.4	40.8	38.8	4.18	2.3	1.1	10.2	52.3	34.1	4.14

DE= Dislike Extremely; DM = Dislike Moderately; NLD = Neither Like Not Dislike; LM = Like Moderately; LE = Like Extremely; F = Frequency; % = Percentage; $\bar{x}$ = Mean

Table 1 shows that youths in the rural and urban areas mostly preferred rice ($\bar{x}$=4.49; $\bar{x}$=4.12), cowpea ($\bar{x}$=4.12; $\bar{x}$=3.94), yam ($\bar{x}$=4.12; $\bar{x}$=3.92), fish ($\bar{x}$=4.24; $\bar{x}$=4.31) and poultry ($\bar{x}$=3.94; $\bar{x}$=4.07) respectively. Also, youth in rural areas mostly preferred oranges ($\bar{x}$=4.18), while youths in urban areas preferred banana ($\bar{x}$=4.18). In addition, tomatoes ($\bar{x}$=4.18;$\bar{x}$=4.14) was mostly preferred in rural and urban areas respectively.

Food preference among adults

Table 2: Distribution of food preference among adults in rural and urban households

Food	Adult in rural household						Adult in urban household					
	DE	DM	NLD	LM	LE		DE	DM	NLD	LM	LE	
Classes of food	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	$\bar{X}$	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	(F%)	$\bar{X}$
Beans	0.0	0.0	2.4	70.7	26.8	4.24	0.0	2.0	5.9	56.9	35.3	4.25
Rice	0.0	0.0	7.3	56.1	36.6	4.29	0.0	0.0	11.8	49.0	39.2	4.27
Yam	0.0	0.0	7.3	65.9	26.8	4.19	0.0	0.0	7.8	70.6	21.6	4.14
Garri	0.0	0.0	7.3	75.6	17.1	4.10	3.9	2.0	19.6	54.9	19.6	3.84
Fish	0.0	0.0	7.3	68.3	24.4	4.17	2.0	0.0	3.9	47.1	47.1	4.37
Milk	0.0	0.0	9.8	75.6	14.6	4.05	0.0	2.0	11.8	58.8	27.5	4.12
Tomatoes	0.0	0.0	9.8	56.1	34.1	4.24	2.0	0.0	2.0	58.8	37.3	4.29
Pineapple	0.0	0.0	7.3	58.5	34.1	4.27	0.0	0.0	5.9	54.9	39.2	4.33
Okra	0.0	0.0	4.9	82.9	12.2	4.07	2.3	3.4	17.0	60.2	29.4	4.18
Amaranths	2.4	0.0	14.6	58.5	24.4	4.02	2.0	2.0	13.7	49.0	4.10	

DE= Dislike Extremely; DM = Dislike Moderately; NLD = Neither Like Not Dislike; LM = Like Moderately; LE = Like Extremely; F = Frequency; % = Percentage; $\bar{x}$ = Mean

Table 2 reveals that adults in rural and urban areas mostly preferred rice ($\bar{x}$=4.29; $\bar{x}$=4.27), cowpea ($\bar{x}$=4.24; $\bar{x}$=4.25), yam ($\bar{x}$=4.20; $\bar{x}$=4.14), garri ($\bar{x}$=4.10; $\bar{x}$=3.84) and fish ($\bar{x}$ =4.17; $\bar{x}$=4.37) respectively. In rural areas the most preferred fruits was pineapple ($\bar{x}$=4.27) while adults in urban preferred oranges ($\bar{x}$= 4.33).

Food preference among elderly

Table 3: Distribution of elderly in rural household based on their food preference

Food	Elderly in rural household						Elderly in urban household					
Classes of food	DE (F%)	DM (F%)	NLD (F%)	LM (F%)	LE (F%)	$\bar{X}$	DE (F%)	DM (F%)	NLD (F%)	LM (F%)	LE (F%)	$\bar{X}$
Beans/ Gnut	0.0	0.0	11.4	70.5	18.2	4.07	3.9	5.9	11.8	49.0	29.4	3.94
Rice	0.0	4.5	9.1	56.8	29.5	4.11	3.9	0.0	11.8	45.1	39.2	4.16
Yam	0.0	0.0	9.1	68.2	22.7	4.14	2.0	5.9	13.7	49.0	29.4	3.98
Gari	0.0	0.0	18.2	65.9	15.9	3.97	7.8	11.8	13.7	45.1	21.6	3.61
Fish	0.0	2.3	9.1	75.0	13.6	4.00	3.9	2.0	13.7	45.1	35.3	4.06
Milk	0.0	2.3	18.2	75.0	4.5	3.82	3.9	5.9	15.7	49.0	25.5	3.86
Mango/ Banana	0.0	9.1	20.5	63.6	6.8	3.68	5.9	7.8	19.6	45.1	21.6	3.96
Pineapple	0.0	2.3	6.8	65.9	25.0	4.14	3.9	7.8	11.8	49.0	27.5	3.88
Okro/ Bitterleaf	2.3	0.0	13.6	75.0	12.2	3.89	3.9	5.9	17.6	47.1	25.5	3.84
water leaf	0.0	0.0	18.2	72.7	9.1	3.91	11.8	0.0	13.7	47.1	27.5	3.78

DE= Dislike Extremely; DM = Dislike Moderately; NLD = Neither Like Not Dislike; LM = Like Moderately; LE = Like Extremely; F = Frequency; % = Percentage; $\bar{x}$ = Mean

Table 3 reveals that, elders in the rural and urban areas mostly preferred rice ($\bar{x}$=4.07; $\bar{x}$=4.56), yam ($\bar{x}$=4.14; $\bar{x}$=3.98), garri ($\bar{x}$=3.98; $\bar{x}$=3.61) fish ($\bar{x}$=4.00; $\bar{x}$=4.06) and milk ($\bar{x}$=3.86; $\bar{x}$=3.86) respectively. Also, elders in the rural areas mostly preferred pineapple ($\bar{x}$=4.14) while elders in urban preferred banana ($\bar{x}$=3.96). lastly, elders inboth rural and urban mostly preferred bitter leaf ($\bar{x}$=3.91; $\bar{x}$=3.84).

Table 4: Categorisation of respondents based on their food preference

Food groups	Rural		Urban					
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Cereals								
Low	62	46.3	85	44.7	5.00	25.00	19.14	2.89
High	72	53.7	105	55.3				
Root and tubers								
Low	60	44.8	100	52.6	5.00	25.00	18.17	3.02
High	74	55.2	90	47.4				
Meat and dairy								
Low	79	59.0	89	46.8	22.10	3.58	10.00	30.00
High	55	41.0	101	53.2				
Fruits								
Low	74	55.2	55	28.9	39.17	8.05	15.00	52.00
High	60	44.8	135	71.1				
Vegetables								
Low	79	59.0	80	42.1	36.86	5.70	10.00	50.00
High								
Overall preference	55	41.0	110	57.9				
Low	77	57.5	86	45.3	54.00	175.00	135.36	18.76
High	57	42.5	104	54.7				

F=Frequency, %=Percentage

Table 4 shows that the preference level of root and tubers was high in rural areas (55.2%), but low in urban (52.6%). There was low preference for meat among rural respondents (59.0%) which could be as a result of low income. However, preference for meat was high among the respondents in urban (53.2%). High preference for fruits was observed among urban respondents (55.3%), but it was low in rural (50.7%). Generally, food preference was low in rural (42.5%), while it was high in urban (54.7%).

Test of difference in food preferences between rural and urban

Table 5: Independent sample t-test between rural and urban food preferences

Food preferences	Group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean difference	t-value	p-value	Decision
Youth	Rural	49	134.90	14.28				
	Urban	88	131.00	19.36	3.90	1.234	0.219	Not Sig.
Adults	Rural	41	134.05	13.59				
	Urban	51	140.74	13.76	6.69	2.333	0.022	Significant
Elderly	Rural	44	129.75	13.79				
	Urban	51	131.59	23.03	1.84	0.462	0.645	Not Sig.
Overall	Rural	134	132.95	13.99				
	Urban	190	133.77	19.52	0.82	0.042	0.675	Not Sig.

Significant at 0.05%

Table 5 shows that there was a significant difference (t=2.333, p=0.022) in food preference between adult in rural and urban households. The mean scores shows that adult food preference in urban ($\bar{x}$=140.74) was higher relative to rural ($\bar{x}$=134.05) with a mean difference of 6.69.

Table 6: ANOVA test of difference in food preferences of respondents across the three generations

Rural	Sum of square	df	Mean of square	F	p-value	decision
Between Groups	685.99	2	343.00			
Within Groups	25348.64	131	193.50			
Total	26034.63	133		1.770	0.174	Not. Sig
Urban						
Between Groups	3399.23	2	1699.62			
Within Groups	68610.04	187	366.90			
Total	72009.27	189		4.632	0.011	Significant
Overall						
Between Groups	2561.63	2	1280.815			
Within Groups	95535.88	321	297.620			
Total	98097.51		323	4.304	0.014	Significant

Significant at 0.05%

Table 6 shows that there was significant difference in the level of food preference across the three generations in the urban areas (F=4.632, p=0.011). and in overall, there was significant difference in the level of food preference of respondents across the three generations (F=4.304, p=0.014).

Discussion of findings

The results of the study show that respondents in both rural and urban areas had an average age of 47.5±14.5 and 45.1±17.7 years respectively, depicting that the respondents were within the working age population. The result further shows that on the average, rural dwellers earned ₦ 49,776±42,217.42 monthly. This amount portrayed them as low income earners and meeting food security might be difficult. For respondent in the urban areas, the average monthly earning was 73,941±55,182.05. This amount may be fairer when compared to their rural counterparts. Hence, urban respondents might still have challenges with being food secure as it was discovered by Bashir, Naeem & Niazi (2010) that individual income influences their food security status. Majority (75.4%) of the respondents in the rural areas and about half (53.2%) of urban households were married. It is instructive to state that with this status there will be pulling of economic resources by the couple in a bid to attain healthy lifestyle in the households. In rural area, few (35%) had secondary education and 25.4% had tertiary education, while in urban areas only 16.8% had secondary education and majority (63.7%) had

tertiary education. The finding of this study aligns with Adegboye (2016) that the proportion of rural dwellers with no formal education is higher when compared to that of urban dwellers.

More so, the result shows that youths in both rural and urban areas mostly preferred rice ($\bar{x}$=4.49; $\bar{x}$=4.12) and cowpea ($\bar{x}$=4.12; $\bar{x}$=3.94) respectively for cereals and legumes. The ratings of these food crops as most preferred could be because these crops were mostly produced in the study area and they were notable as the crops that were mostly consumed by the respondents. International Food Information Council (2012) noted that food preferences are strongly associated with food eaten. Also, youths in rural and urban areas mostly preferred yam ($\bar{x}$=4.12; $\bar{x}$=3.92). More so, fish ($\bar{x}$=4.24; $\bar{x}$=4.31), poultry ($\bar{x}$=3.94; ($\bar{x}$=4.07) and tomatoes ($\bar{x}$=4.18;$\bar{x}$=4.15) were mostly preferred food among youths in the rural and urban areas respectively. The preference of these fruits may be because of their health benefits. This agrees with the study ofOtuneye, Ahmed, Abdulkarim, Aluko & Shatima (2017) where it was stated that the difference in the nutritional habits among adolescents can be caused by economic and educational factors.

However, it was revealed that adults in rural and urban areas mostly preferred rice ($\bar{x}$=4.29; $\bar{x}$=4.27), cowpea ($\bar{x}$=4.24; $\bar{x}$=4.25),yam ($\bar{x}$=4.20;$\bar{x}$=4.14) and garri ($\bar{x}$=4.10;$\bar{x}$=3.84) respectively. This preference could be attributed to the fact that they were the major staple food families rely on for household feeding. It is plausible to state that the preference of these items could be because they are produced in this agro ecological zone. However, adults in both rural and urban areas mostly preferred fish ($\bar{x}$ =4.17; $\bar{x}$=4.37). Adults in rural area mostly preferred pineapple ($\bar{x}$=4.27), while adults in urban preferred oranges ($\bar{x}$= 4.33). It has been observed that people with limited income flow lack financial capacity to eat balance diet and this usually result in low intake of essential nutrients needed by the body (Msambichaka, Eze, Abdul, Abdulla, Klaster, Tanner & Probst, 2018). Furthermore, adults in rural areas mostly preferred okra ($\bar{x}$= 4.07) and amaranths ($\bar{x}$= 4.02). However, it was observed that pepper ($\bar{x}$=4.18), amaranths ($\bar{x}$= 4.10) and water leaf ($\bar{x}$= 4.00) were most preferred in the urban.

In addition, the result of the findings shows that, elders in the rural area mostly preferred rice and beans ($\bar{x}$=4.07) under cereals and legumes component, while elders in urban preferred rice ($\bar{x}$=4.56) and groundnut ($\bar{x}$=3.94).More so, elders in rural and urban areas preferred yam ($\bar{x}$=4.14; $\bar{x}$=3.98) and garri ($\bar{x}$=3.98; $\bar{x}$=3.61) respectively. Also, elders in rural areas mostly preferred fish ($\bar{x}$=4.00) and milk ($\bar{x}$=3.86) More so, for the elders in the urban, fish ($\bar{x}$=4.06) and milk ($\bar{x}$=3.86) were mostly preferred. The preference of these food items could be partially attributed to the provision of sufficient nutrients to the respondents at a relatively cheap price. The views expressed aligns with Majabadi, Solhi,

Montazeri, Shojaizadeh, Nejat, Farahani &Djazayeri, (2016) that factors affecting food choices were convenience taste, weight, cost and nutrition. The preference level of root and tubers was high in rural (55.2%), but low in urban (52.6%). There was low preference for meat among rural respondents (59.0%) which could be as a result of low income. However, preference for meat was high among the respondents in urban (53.2%). High preference for fruits was observed among urban respondents (55.3%), but it was low in rural (50.7%). This is in line with Mayen *et al* (2011) and Boylan *et al* (2011) where it was reported that fruits and vegetables intake is related to income, occupation and education level and that individual with high higher socio economic status tends to consume more fruits and vegetables. It is noteworthy that because most food crops were usually transported to the urban areas, the level of food preference attained by urban households could be attributed to their capability to purchase these food items which is largely dependent on their income. Generally, food preference was low in rural (42.5%), while it was high in urban (54.7%).

There was a significant difference (t=2.333, p=0.022) in the food preferences between adult in rural and urban households. The mean scores shows that adult food preference in urban ($\bar{x}$=140.74) was higher relative to rural ($\bar{x}$=134.05) with a mean difference of 6.69. This implies that increased knowledge of adults in urban areas on food nutrition might have aided their food preferences coupled with enhanced financial status compared to adults in rural areas with low socio-economic status. This agrees with the study carried out in 2000 by David, Fiona, Cumming and Judith that the difference between rural and urban cognition of food, dietary patterns and physical activities are due to different lifestyles. There was significant difference in the level of food preference across the three generations in the urban areas (F=4.632, p=0.011). This implies that the food preference of the three categories of generation differs. This could be as a result of the fact that there are different preference options in the urban centres such as fast food joints and super markets which provides the people with different options. This is in agreement with the finding of Westenhoefer (2005) that pleasantness usually motivates the choice of food across generation, so food preference across generation differs.

Conclusion

There was significant difference in the level of food preference across the three generations in the urban areas. Also, there was significant difference in the level of food preference of respondents across the three generations on the overall. Food preferences of the youth were better compared to adult and the elderly in rural household. Adult's food preference was higher with an obvious margin compared to elderly and the

youth in urban. On the overall, adult's food preference was the highest with an obvious difference compared to youth and the elderly. The study established that food preferences of rural households significantly differed from urban households.

Recommendation

The study recommended the following:

1. Adults in rural households need more enlightenment on the food preferences most especially preference for fruits and vegetables to keep them healthy and to help their immune system to prevent diseases.
2. Governmental and Non-governmental interventions are required in the area of empowerments to increase rural households' level of income and introduction of adult literacy education to improve on their level education for better food preferences.

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