

Analysis of the Dietary Intake of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in Rural Communities of Imo State, Nigeria

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Abstract : Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) among rural dwellers depletes quality of agricultural labour, and reduces quality of life. Use of Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) has not significantly reduced consequences of infection, as the effort is being compromised by inadequate dietary intake. This study analysed the dietary intake of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in rural communities of Imo State, Nigeria. Data was collected from 114 PLWHA randomly selected from members of two rural support groups with high prevalence of HIV in Imo State using interview schedule. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product moment correlation, and t-test at $\alpha 0.05$. Level of involvement in agriculture was (mean 12.7) and reduced to 7.0 after infection. Extent of involvement in agriculture significantly reduced after infection in Imo ($t=8.1$). Health status of 42.1% of PLWHA was perceived as poor. Diet diversity score (4.3 ± 1.6) was low among majority (62.3%) of the PLWHA, with diet of 76.3% being inadequate. However, perceived health status had no significant correlation with dietary intake ($r=0.09$). The study concluded that diet of PLWHA in Imo State was inadequate, thus there is need for agricultural extension agents to collaborate with the health sector to develop nutritional guideline for PLWHA in rural communities.

Keywords : dietary intake, diet diversity, people living With HIV/AIDS, perceived health status

Conference Title : ICFSN 2017 : International Conference on Food Science and Nutrition

Conference Location : Madrid, Spain

Conference Dates : March 26-27, 2017