



CHANGING CONSUMPTION PATTERN OF RURAL PEOPLE IN THE LINES OF NEW ECONOMIC POLICY IN INDIA

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INTRODUCTION

The 66th round (2009-10) of NSSO reveals that percentage of food expenditure to total monthly per capita food expenditure in rural Assam (64.4 percent) is not only higher than that of urban Assam but also than that of the country as a whole (rural and urban). This percentage of food expenditure is the second highest among the states, next to Bihar. Also, percentage expenditure on food of both bottom and top percentile classes (68.9 percent 59.0 percent respectively) of rural Assam is higher than the corresponding classes of rural India (64.9 percent and 46.0 percent respectively). Contrary to this, per capita per day calorie intake in rural Assam (2120 kilocalories) is lower than that of urban Assam (2176 kilocalories) and rural India (2147 kilocalories) as well urban India (2123 kilocalories). As per various rounds of NSSO, rural Assam always (except 61th round, Table 1.1) shows a lower per capita calorie intake than that of rural India.

Estimated Per Capita Per Day Calorie Intake of Assam (Rural) and India (Rural)

Locati ons	1972- 1973	1983-84	1993-94	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10
Estimated per capita calorie intake (Kcal) per day in						

Comparison of Calorie Intake in Assam and India (in Two Rounds of NSSO)

Indicators related to food consumption		50th round (1993-94)		66th round (2009-10)	
		Assam (rural)	India (rural)	Assam (rural)	India (rural) *
Per consumer unit calorie intake (kcls)	Average	2406	2683	2579	2647
	Bottom 10%	1369	1700	1936	2007
	Top10%	3338	3985	3351	3591
Percentage of households with per consumer unit calorie intake below 80% of 2700 calories (in 1000 households)	Average	27.8	22.7	17.3	19.4
	Bottom 10%	100.0	82.7	70.4	62.3
	Top10%	0.0	2.7	0.1	2.4
Percentage of per consumer unit calorie intake from cereals	Average	76.4	71.0	70.0	60.4
	Bottom 10%	80.1	83.4	77.7	72.7
	Top10%	65.4	55.2	60.4	47.4
Per consumer unit protein intake (gram)	Average	66.2	73.1	60.2	75.0
	Bottom 10%	46.9	53.6	35.3	48.6
	Top10%	91.2	100.7	86.9	113.2
Per consumer unit fat intake (gram)	Average	25.5	31.4	34.8	53.1
	Bottom 10%	9.9	12.1	20.2	26.6
	Top10%	49.5	72.3	56.9	96.3

Source: respective NSSO rounds

These findings are often contrary to the level of self-reported hunger. Moreover, there has been found several reports of malfunctioning of the Public Distribution System in the state. Observations discussed above are basically based on secondary sources of information. In Assam, so far the available literature is concerned; there have not been found any research work exhibiting food security status of the rural households. Considering this gap, a study has been conducted as part of doctoral research. Basically

Assam (rural)	2074	2056	1983	1915	2067	2120
India (rural)	2266	2221	2153	2149	2047	2147

Source: NSSO reports (various rounds)

Moreover, diversity of diet is also found to be low as bulk of calorie intake comes from cereals only. Per capita intake of protein and fat are also found low. Two rounds of NSSO (taken without any prior assumption) clear the fact (Table 1). As Table 1 clears, per consumer unit calorie intake (of average, top and bottom percentile classes) of rural Assam increase in periods between 199394 and 2009-10. However, it still falls below the national average (rural) in both the periods. Again, in 2009-10, 70.4 percent of bottom percentile class in rural Assam is found with per consumer unit calorie intake less than 80% of the norm of 2700 kilocalories. This percentage is also higher than the national average (rural) of 62.3 percent. Per consumer unit intake of protein and fat in rural Assam are also found to be lower than that of rural India in both the rounds.

from economic accessibility of food, this micro level study tries to give an assessment of food security level of the people residing in Kamrup (rural) district of Assam. As per 2011 census, a high 85.92 percent of total population of the state lives in rural areas. It takes three community development blocks of the district as the study area. Kamrup (Rural) is the only rural district of the state comprising 90.64 percent rural population.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A detail account of the review of literature regarding the concept

along with associated issues has given in Chapter 2. The review is arranged in following three modules:

1. Individual perspectives on food security.
2. Issues related to household food security.
3. Globalization, liberalization of agriculture and food security.

Regarding of individual perspectives on food security, review has been done considering both the demand and supply aspects and multidimensional aspects. A detailed account of household food security along with various issues associated to it, are discussed in the second module. Ongoing globalization and liberalization of agriculture and its impact on food security, as per various scholars has been discussed in module three.

OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. An assessment of the level of food security. Level of food security of different sections of the society has been worked out.
2. Identification of the factors affecting the level of food security.
3. An assessment of functioning of public distribution system - the major social safety net programme of providing food security.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS/HYPOTHESIS:

The hypothesis taken up for testing in course of the study is:

"Government schemes have not been able to make much headway in alleviating food insecurity of the rural mass"

METHODOLOGY

Data Sources

The study is based on both secondary and primary data. The main sources of secondary data are the publications of government agencies such as National Sample Survey Office, Government of India, Office of the Census of India, Directorates of Food and Civil Supplies, Agriculture and the Economics and Statistics, Government of Assam and Government of India. Besides, considerable amount of unpublished statistics have been gathered from office of agriculture, Kamrup district; office of Development Blocks of Dimoria, Rani and Hajo; office of co-operative societies located in three blocks.

The micro level analysis is mainly based on primary data collected by carrying out field survey. The sample for this purpose has been selected through a process of mixed sampling. The details of sampling procedure have been outlined in section 5.3 of Chapter 5.

Methods:

A detailed account of various methods used by other scholars for measuring access dimension of food security (both for India and abroad) has been detailed (sections 5.1 and 5.2) in Chapter 5. The present study tries to find out the present level of food security from primary data sources. Two indicators have been used to assess the level of food security:

- a) Per Consumer unit Calorie Intake(PCCI)
- b) Household Dietary Diversity Score(HDDS)

For calculating PCCI, data on actual amount of food intake has been taken from the sampled households. Survey has been conducted as per the guideline prepared by Smith and Subandoro (2007) of International Food Policy Research Institute. Again, quality of diet of the surveyed households has been assessed from the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS). It is a simple sum score of the number of food items consumed by members of a household over a recall period. A detail account of the methods used has been given in section 5.4 of Chapter 5.

Analysis of Data

Data thus collected and were processed and tabulated and then analysed using statistical and econometric tools. For analysing the level of food security per consumer per day calorie intake has been calculated for each household, based on average nutritative value of Indian foods. Calculated per capita calorie intake, thus obtained, has been compared with the 2731 kilocalories; that is, with recommended calorie intake of an adult man doing moderate activity by Indian Council of Medical Research. Of course, final assessment of food security/insecurity status of a household has made by comparing with 2700 kilocalories; leaving 31 calories for the sake of comparison with the NSSO estimates. Households with intake above the recommended level have been taken as food secure and food insecure otherwise. In terms of diet quality, a household with index greater than 0.5 calculated from HDDS is considered as food secure and food insecure otherwise.

For identifying the factors affecting the level of food security linear regression analysis is run. Index calculated from the amount of per consumer unit calorie intake of the households has been taken as dependent variable. Various socio economic characteristics of the sample households are taken as explanatory variables.

For assessing efficacy of the Public Distribution System, information such as PDS coverage, share of PDS in total consumption, food security among different beneficiary groups, targeting etc.

CONCLUSION

The study suffers from inherent limitations of sampling procedure. Findings may vary if it is undertaken at different cross-sections of population of the State. Moreover, entire analysis is basically based on per consumer unit calorie intake and its comparison with certain recommended level. In fact, requirement of calorie itself varies from person to person depending on his/her age, sex body weight and activity level. It also varies even within the same individual at different time periods. In addition to these, the researcher feels inadequacy of taking subjective information from the respondents in assessing their food security status. Intra household issues of food security also have not been addressed. Still, it is hoped that the study will provide small area statistics for eliminating hunger and under nutrition of the region.