

**HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY OF URBAN SLUM DWELLERS:  
A CASE STUDY IN *COLOMBO* MUNICIPALITY, SRI LANKA**

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Food is a basic right and food security is a priority concern to any nation. It is very critical to identify food security issues of vulnerable people to uplift their food security status. As urban slum dwellers are still considered as a neglected community, this study was conducted to identify the food security of urban slum dwellers in *Colombo* municipality. A total of 90 households from 9 slums were purposely selected for the survey from *Colombo* North and Central 2A administrative districts. Food Consumption Score (FCS) and the Household Food Insecurity Access Score (HFIAS) were used to determine the food security status of slum households. Multilinear regression was used to identify the determinants of food security. The study revealed that 90% of household heads were males with temporary occupations earning daily wages. About 57% of males were educated with the junior secondary level while 15% of females did not have a formal education. According to the Food Consumption Score, 37% of the respondents were in poor food consumption, while 39% and 24% were in borderline and acceptable food consumption levels respectively. According to the Household Food Insecurity Access Score, 28% of respondents were less food insecure, while 72% were highly food insecure. Education of household head, household size, monthly average income, monthly average expenditure on food and the number of working members in the family are the determinants of food security in the study area. The study indicates that the use of low-quality food, food on credit from grocery shops, and relying on less expensive food as the most widely used coping strategies. Therefore, there is a need to empower families economically specially women through establishing livelihood opportunities, encourage school education for children as well as promoting community gardening for the urban poor living in slums in the *Colombo* Municipality for achieving their household food security.

**Keywords:** Coping strategies, Household food security, Slums, Urban poverty