



THE ECONOMICS OF FOOD CHOICES

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between socio-economic status and poor health is complicated. Their consumption has been linked to lower quality diets, lower diet costs and lower socio-economic status . There are many aspects to food poverty but three main barriers to eating a balanced healthy diet include cost, accessibility and knowledge. Factors influencing food choices are not only based upon individual preferences, but are constrained by circumstances that are social, cultural and economical

Keywords: Economics, Food, Status, Nutrient.

The relationship between socio-economic status and poor health is complicated. Few studies show, there are clear differences in social classes regarding food and nutrient intake. It is influenced by culture, environment, social community networks, individual lifestyle factors and health behaviours. Obesity in the world does not effect all segments of the population equally neither does malnutrition. It is more prevalent in deprived neighbourhood and among groups with lower education and incomes. Grains, added sugar and fats are inexpensive, good tasting and

convenient .Their consumption has been linked to lower quality diets, lower diet costs and lower socio-economic status. On the contrary, the healthier diets not only cost more but are consumed by more affluent groups. Financial disparities in access to healthier diets may help explain why the highest rated of obesity and diabetes are found among minorities and the working poor.

Various studies show that it is the socio-economic status that leads to food and nutrient intake differences. This leads to food both under nutrition and over nutrition depending on the age group,



gender and level of deprivation. The disadvantaged also develop chronic diseases at an earlier age compared with higher socio-economic groups. There are many aspects to food poverty but three main barriers to eating a balanced healthy diet include cost, accessibility and knowledge. These have led to the development of areas known as food deserts. A lack of proper cooking facilities in the home increases the need to eat convenience or takeaway food, that have a potentially higher energy density.

Factors influencing food choices are not only based upon individual preferences, but are constrained by circumstances that are social, cultural and economical.

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