

**Influence of Food Fallacies on Dietary Choices and Consumption Patterns Among Oje
Market Women in Ibadan North East Local Government, Oyo State**

**Toyosi Omowumi SAMUEL
LCU/PG/005271**

**Being a Thesis Submitted to the Department of Human Nutrition & Dietetics, Faculty of
Basic Medical & Applied Sciences, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria**

**In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of Masters of Science (MSc) in
Human Nutrition & Dietetics**

Certification

This is to certify that **Toyosi Omowumi SAMUEL** with Matriculation Number **LCU/PG/005271** carried out this research work titled “Influence of Food Fallacies on Dietary Choices and Consumption Patterns Amongst Oje Market Women in North East Local Government, Ibadan, Oyo State” in the Department of Human Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Biological Sciences, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State for the award of a Master of Science Degree (MSc) in Human Nutrition and Dietetics and this has not been previously submitted.

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Dr. Damilola A. Tanimowo

Supervisor

.....

Date

.....

Dr. Olanike O. Balogun *RDN*

Head of Department

.....

Date

Dedication

This research is dedicated to the Almighty God, the Giver and Sustainer of Life.

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Acknowledgement

My sincere gratitude goes to the entire Lead City University, Ibadan and school library for providing the necessary learning environment for me to partake in this program.

I am very grateful to my thesis supervisor, Dr. A. D. Tanimowo for carefully examining this research following accepted practices and for making outstanding contributions to this work.

I also give my humble appreciation to the Head of the Department Dr. O. O Balogun and the staff in the Department of Human Nutrition and Dietetics, Lead City University Ibadan, Oyo State. Mrs. I.O Bodunde, Mrs. O.B. Adekolujo, Miss A.O. Fawole, Mr. K.P. Owolabi, Mrs. O. Adesina and Mrs T. Akinleye for the immeasurable support and input during this work. The various contributions are all acknowledged and I pray God will bless you all beyond your expectations.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to Mrs. M. F. Abiola for the successful completion of this thesis; this wouldn't have been a success without you

Finally, my immense gratitude goes to my family and friends for the prayers, words of encouragement, and amazing assistance towards the completion of this work.

Even though the above-mentioned institutions and persons have assisted in the process of this research work, I alone stand responsible for the errors, if any, found in the work.

Abstract

Food fallacies are culturally transmitted beliefs about food lacking scientific basis and significantly influence dietary practices among market women in Nigeria. This study provided culturally relevant evidence to guide nutrition education and correct food-related misconceptions among women who are key influencers of household feeding practices, using a descriptive cross-sectional design. Data were collected using structured questionnaires administered to 420 market women selected through systematic random sampling. Statistical analysis using SPSS (version 25) included descriptive and inferential tests such as Chi-square at a 5% significance level. Findings revealed that 67.1% of respondents had heard of food fallacies, though only 12.5% could correctly define them as non-scientific beliefs. The most commonly known fallacies were that pregnant women should avoid snails (73.1%) and that pap with milk causes weight gain (74.0%). However, belief levels were lower (17.5–43.0%), suggesting partial resistance to misinformation. Parents, grandparents, and elders were the main sources of fallacy transmission (74.0%, 61.3%, and 55.0% respectively). Education level showed a significant inverse relationship with belief strength ($p < 0.001$), indicating that literacy promotes critical thinking against food myths. Education and religion were significantly associated with both knowledge ($\chi^2=80.934$, $p<0.001$; $\chi^2=12.250$, $p=0.016$) and belief in food fallacies ($\chi^2=60.659$, $p<0.001$; $\chi^2=17.141$, $p=0.009$). Weak positive correlations existed between knowledge and household food choices ($r_s=0.15$, $p<0.01$), while significant negative correlations were found between believing fallacies and personal food choices ($r_s=-0.43$, $p<0.001$). The study concludes that food fallacies remain deeply embedded in traditional knowledge systems despite exposure to formal education, necessitating culturally sensitive nutrition interventions that integrate traditional authority figures and address the social transmission mechanisms perpetuating these beliefs.

Keywords: Food fallacies, dietary choices, market women, nutrition beliefs, cultural practices.

Word count: 264

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List of Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
M.Sc.	Master of Science Degree.
LGA	Local Government Area.
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perceptions.
HBM	Health Belief Model.
SCT	Social Cognitive Theory.
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior.
ADAs	American Dietetic Association.