

## REVIEWER'S REPORT

**Manuscript No.: IJAR-55112**

**Title: FOOD SECURITY AMONG YOUNG BENINESE FEMALE HANDBALL PLAYERS : CONTRIBUTION OF A NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM.**

### Recommendation:

Accept as it is .....

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision .....

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	✓			
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance		✓		

**Reviewer Name: Abdul Hameed Shah**

### Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

The manuscript explores a timely and relatively under-examined issue—the food security and nutritional well-being of young female athletes in Benin—and demonstrates that a targeted nutrition education program can produce measurable improvements. The study's aim is clearly articulated, focusing on how educational interventions influence dietary diversity and Food Consumption Scores among adolescent handball players, a population seldom represented in sports nutrition research within low-income contexts. The introduction is well framed, linking national food insecurity trends to their implications for athletic performance, and it provides an appropriate justification for choosing this specific group. While the methodology is thorough, several descriptions are dense and could be streamlined for better readability, and abbreviations should be defined earlier to avoid confusion. The results are presented in an organized fashion, showing clear improvements in dietary diversity and a transition from borderline to acceptable food security, although additional statistical indicators such as p-values or confidence intervals would strengthen claims of significant change. The discussion appropriately situates the findings within economic and cultural realities, addresses implications for sports performance, and connects the results to broader public health concerns; however, some interpretations lean toward causal inference despite the small sample size and absence of a control group, and the authors may want to adopt a more cautious tone. The study offers several notable strengths, including its focus on a vulnerable and understudied demographic, the application of a standardized food security measure, and the integration of practical,

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contextually relevant educational tools like SMS reminders and menu design activities. Nonetheless, limitations such as the small sample, short follow-up period, potential observer bias, lack of intake quantity measurement, and missing statistical details reduce the generalizability and strength of the conclusions. The manuscript's conclusion is consistent with the findings, emphasizing that nutrition education can improve food security, though it should also underscore the need for longitudinal and controlled studies to confirm lasting impact. Overall, the study contributes valuable insights to sports nutrition and public health in low-resource settings, and with minor revisions focused on clarity, methodological transparency, and slight expansion of the discussion to include international comparisons, it holds promise as a meaningful and relevant addition to the literature. The paper is recommended for acceptance with minor revisions.