Reviewer's report

Title: Perspectives on food insecurity from a remote First Nations community: "We go hunting or we ask family for food"

Version: 1 Date: 20 February 2013

Reviewer: Avita Usfar

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

General comment:
• The paper contributes to information on food security situation of indigenous people
• The authors should set the stage at the beginning part of the paper, to make it easier for the reader to follow throughout the rest of the paper. The authors should give complete background information and other information necessary for the reader to understand the community at the very beginning.
• The paper could be better structured, better information flow

Specific comments:
• Title. The title should give the reader general information of the paper. Maybe the authors can use other word than “First Nations” because it is not understandable globally – maybe indigenous population or tribe in Canada; specification of the place would be good. It may be better not to put the quote as the title, because it limits the perspective put forward by the authors.
• Terminology used. There are some points in the Background that should be defined. The authors used the term “Aboriginal people” at the beginning. However, the focus of the study is only on the “First Nations” community, as they are part of the Aborigin people. However, in the Methods section, the authors introduced the word “Cree people” and on p. 7 Question development, the authors mentioned “the off-reserve Canadian population”. I think the authors should make clear to the reader, the differences or similarities of all these groups; and which group that they are studying; why do you focus only on FN? Please keep in mind that the reader may originate from other parts of the world, who may not know the names of the indigenous population living in Canada, nor their situation.
• Background.
  o Comparison to the other aborigin/indigenous community in other parts of the world would be helpful to put perspectives on the importance to focus on these communities
  o The reader could also give more background information of the population group studied, e.g. the total number of the aborigin people, the proportion of FN?
How are they placed in the socio-economic and food security scale within Canada?

- Information on the community profile, geographical location in the Methods section can be moved to the Background section. How far is it from the capital? from the main market?

- Please describe on their typical living environment, food, daily activities, yearly routine; number of household member, how are they living? – nuclear or extended family, what is a community – is it several families together?

- P. 5 Background last paragraph. What is the standard instrument? The authors may want to state on the instrument used; especially if this instrument was used as the basis to develop the two research questions used for this study. Is it the HFSSM mentioned in the Methods section?

- P. 7 Question development, 1st paragraph.

- How is the result of the HFSSM? It would help if the authors share with the reader some of the important results, so that the reader understands the food insecurity situation of the FN or the off-reserve Canadian population. What was the sample size?

- It is not clear, are you interviewing all aboriginal for the qualitative interview or the food insecure ones only?

- P. 7 Question development, 3rd paragraph

- 1st sentence, “The intention of this study…. should be in the Background section.

- The authors should describe more of the development of the questions. What were the original 9 questions tested?

- How was the testing done, to how many people? What was the result? This is to support that the 3 selected questions were valid and cover all necessary information needed.

- P. 8. The final 3 questions should be written here, not referred to the table. The table can have other additional information such as probing used etc.

- P. 9. Was the interviews recorded using tape recorder?

- P. 9 Data Management and analysis; 1st paragraph can be reduced

- P. 10

- Paragraph 2 can be reduced. I don’t think the explanation “the lead author who has academic training and research experience … “ and subsequently “independent analyst who had advanced training …” are necessary.

- Paragraph 3. Not necessary to mention specifically that the lead author was sharing the result with the participants

- Number of people interviewed should be clear in the method; including number of male, female, their age groups can be mentioned in general. Specific information can be refered to the table.

- Results
1st paragraph. It would help to understand better the meaning of “salary” here, when the authors already described the type of work employed by FN at the beginning.

It is better to present the titles (no. 1, 2, 3) in the form of sentences, not as questions.

You do not need to write the sub-titles within the titles, just blend it into the result. The sub-titles do not correspond to the items mentioned in the 3 questions anyway, thus confuses the reader.

P. 12 bottom. The authors mentioned about “other employment”. It would help if the authors described more of the employment taken by some of the participants.

It may be good to mention the sex and age of the interviewee behind the quotes, not the interview number.

P. 13 no. 2. The authors mentioned traditional food acquisition and traditional food practices several times. It would help if the authors describe these two terms first at the beginning.

P. 15. What type of welfare is given, who were the recipients? How many of the interviewee were welfare recipients?

P. 17 & 18. How far is it to fly the food to the community? This information may be added to the background. How far is it to the southern stores, with or without the year-round road access?

P. 18. The store is too small for the size of the population. What is the population? What population do the authors mean? – FN, aborigin in general?

P. 18. How long could the green house supply the people? For how many people?

P. 19 & 24. There is no need to repeat the goal/objective of the study in the Discussion and the Conclusion sessions.

Discussion. The authors should compare their results to the results of other similar studies; not only discussing their particular study. They should also add other experiences (if any) in improving food security in other indigenous community globally.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'