TRACKING FOOD PRICES FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS IN GATESHEAD: A PROOF OF CONCEPT USING ROWLANDS GILL

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INTRODUCTION

Poor nutrition is closely linked to poorer health outcomes, particularly among low-income households [1].

- In Gateshead, food insecurity affects nearly one-third of residents, with rising food prices limiting access to healthy Options [2].
- This project applies principles of ONS's Consumer Price Index (CPI) methodology [3] to develop a food price index that reflects the real shopping habits of low-income households in various ports of Gateshead.
- By focusing on Rowlands Gill as a pilot, we aim to illustrate the use of the CPI method in a hyperlocal setting recognise its limitations and understand how the price of food varies in comparison to national averages.

OBJECTIVE

- Create a food basket recognisable by stakeholders as a reasonable model of a typical 'basket' for a low-income household in Gateshead
- Develop a food price index to monitor the rote of inflation in different areas of Gateshead.

METHODOLOGY

Step 1: Design questionnaire using items from ONS "basket of goods". Responses are collected from visitors in the community to our locality hubs via questionnaire'

Figure 1.

Step 2: Identify stores most used to purchase groceries in each area. Collect data on prices of over 160 food items from stores.

Figure 2.

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Step 3: Deriving a "representative" food basket price that serves as baseline for the index using R

Figure 3.

RESULTS

70 participants from seven Citizens Advice Gateshead locality hubs responded.

Most people buy their food from super chain grocery stores like Tesco, Lidl, Aldi and Morrisons compared to independents or corner shops like The Sun, etc.

Data from Rowlands Gill, a ward in West Gateshead, is being used to pilot test the CPI methodology before wider application to the rest of the dataset. The average grocery shopping spend at this hub was compared to national averages from Food Foundation [4].

- Total weekly spend on groceries in this word was lower at £36.70 a week (£146.81 monthly) than a national average £52.13 per week for women and £55.98 per week for men[4]- possibly explained by the store of choice(See Fig 4)

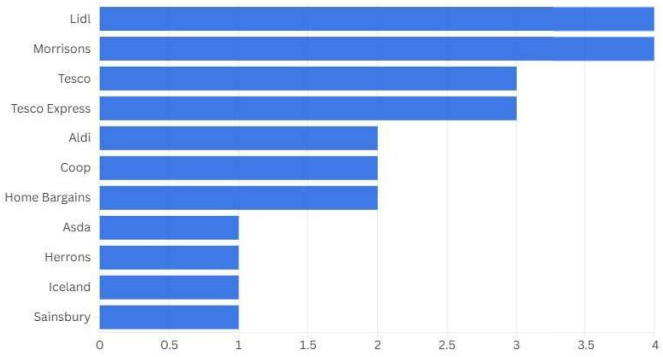
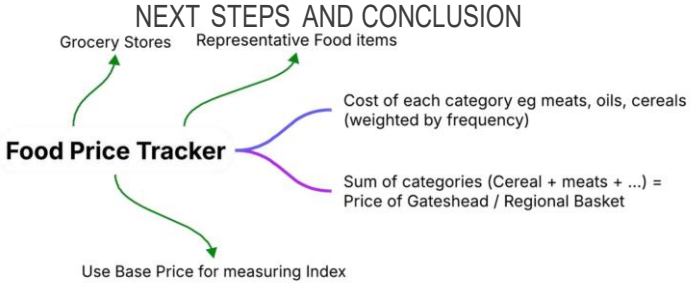


Figure 4. Grocery Stores Used by those in Rowlands GITI in Order of Frequency

NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSION



- Collect prices for LidI, Aldi, Morrisons over upcoming weeks

References
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