

# Grocery Shopping Habits and Food Consumption: Venezuela

Martha B. Valadez, MSW Candidate 2011  
University of Michigan School of Social Work



## INTRODUCTION

### STUDY AIMS

1. Public opinion of the impact government food security programs (Mercial, PDVAL, Food Carts, and urban gardening) has on disparities in access to healthy food.
2. Public opinion of what healthy food means and what significance sustainability had in food choices.
3. Issues with access to healthy food.

My study took place in **Caracas, Venezuela** and various coastal regions. The research data was collected in the El Valle and Altamira areas while in Caracas and then in Ocumari, Chuao, and Choroní while in the **coastal regions**.

### Research Plan:

1. Make contact with: Why Hunger representatives, Venezuela Analysis employees, US Embassy, and the Venezuelan Embassy
2. Research: potential government departments to call and arrange meetings, universities to visit, food security programs, grassroots organizations, nonprofit organizations, and government programs
3. Informal interviews with students, professors, government officials, community social workers, community organizers, and community activists.
4. Visit communities and build relations in communities
5. Distribute and collect surveys
6. Visit grocery shopping locations

### Contacts:

The Afro descendent Network, Employees of CANIA (Child Nutritional Care Center in Antimano), professors/department directors/students of Sociology and Social Work at the Central University of Venezuela, Igualdad Animal (Animal Equality) representatives, and an Agro-Venezuela representative

## RESEARCH QUESTION

How have the grocery shopping habits of Families living in El Valle, Altamira, and in the coastal regions changed after the implementation of food security programs?

## OBJECTIVES

- Income Level
- Food Consumption details
- Opinion of food availability and quality before and after food security programs
- Food consumption Criteria
- Grocery shopping locations
- Health and Nutrition factors
- How food is consumed

## COMMUNITY DESCRIPTIONS

**ALTA MIRA:** This area was much more affluent, people were unwilling to answer the door, and the communities were gated or closed apartment complexes. There were many corner markets, super markets in driving distance, and trucks selling produce in the area.

**EL VALLE:** There were two Mercial's nearby, community had support for urban gardening on behalf of Agro-Venezuela, there was a fire department down the street with an urban garden. Issues mentioned in this area was that there were Mercial staff who were closing early, not considerate of pregnant or elderly community members, and there was poor supervision.

**COASTAL REGIONS:** The communities consume what they can produce. Socialist fishery, socialist cacao planting and processing, planting yucca-community participation played a role in what they consumed. Although there was a Mercial, there were issues with transporting the food to sell at a subsidized cost from the closest city called Maracay.



## TAKE-AWAYS

- Everyone has a political opinion
- Community Councils are still growing
- Even though you may think you are fluent in Spanish, your words will get lost in translation.
- Authenticity, patience, persistence, and a willingness to take risks were necessary for the completion of this project.
- Passion in politics is visible in all parties.
- Realizing that you are culturally incompetent and your perspective will automatically put you at a disadvantage where you do not know norms, slang, and will not be trusted or accepted easily

## APPLICATION OF EXPERIENCE

- First hand research experience
- Exposure to international food systems
- Processing, evaluating research results
- Develop a process paper to submit for publishing
- Develop a paper to present my results for publishing
- Exposure to the impact United States politics has in other countries

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