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**TITLE: MARKET ACCESSIBILITY AND HOUSEHOLDS' FOOD SECURITY IN
ACHOLI SUB REGION-UGANDA**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish the effect of market accessibility on households' food security through farmers' organization for market access; road network to market, and ICT utilization for market access. The study undertook a cross-sectional research design with quantitative and qualitative research approaches grounded on pragmatism as a philosophical research orientation. Data was collected from 384 households using a structured questionnaire and a focused group discussion guide. A hierarchical regression model was used in analyzing quantitative data using SPSS, while qualitative results were generated through thematic content analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative findings indicated a positive and significant contribution of market accessibility to households' food security ($r=.424^{**}$). Moderation test findings further indicated a positive but insignificant effect. Findings on membership to farmer organization and households' food security indicated a positive and significant relationship between farmers' organizations and households' food security ($r=.215^{**}$, $P > 0.01$). Qualitative results revealed that though significant, the contribution of farmers' organization to household food security is still limited by inaccessibility of markets and market information, storage facilities, low production, and low financial support. Conversely, road network has a positive and significant relationship with household food security ($r=.246^{**}$, $P < 0.01$). Focused group discussions revealed that many of the roads are paved and accessible during dry seasons. However, they become inaccessible in the rainy season. Evidence further revealed a significant and positive correlation between ICT utilization and households' food security ($r=.424^{**}$, $P > 0.01$). Therefore, market accessibility, is significant in contributing to household food security.

The study concludes that market accessibility is important in improving household food security, and household income is significant in influencing the effect of market accessibility on household food security. Nevertheless, the contribution of market is weak in explaining household food security in Acholi sub region. The study makes recommendations for improvement in market accessibility spearheaded by the government through supporting farmers' organizations, upgrading paved road network to tarmac in rural areas, speeding up the rural infrastructural connection process to scale up the use of ICT tools, and directing resources towards improving household income in rural areas.