COVID-19 Impact on the Financial and Food Situations of South Carolinians Participating in a SNAP-Ed Produce Box Intervention

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Background: COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic in March 2020. Although national measures were enacted aimed at mitigating financial and food hardships during the pandemic, more investigation is needed to understand how much and in what ways households were impacted.

Objective: The study explored if and how the financial and food situations of produce box customers in South Carolina (SC) changed during COVID-19.

Study Design, Settings, Participants: A convenience sample of 187 customers from FoodShare SC, a SNAP-Ed intervention, participated in this mixed methods study.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: Participants were asked separately to what degree COVID-19 changed their financial and food situations and the data were analyzed to determine proportions of the sample who affirmed each response option. An open-ended question asked respondents to explain their responses and the data were analyzed to apply sentiment coding and identify themes.

Results: Most commonly, respondents reported that COVID-19 did not change (25%) or greatly changed (30%) their financial situations. Responses for food situations were more equally distributed across response options ranging from somewhat (22%) as the most and a little (18%) as the least confirmed. Sentiment coding demonstrated negative financial and food situation impacts among more than half the sample (56% and 63%, respectively). A theme specific to financial impacts centered on employment and food impacts on availability, while health and safety and money were cross-cutting themes. For those that reported positive or unchanged financial (23%) or food (21%) situations, a cross-cutting theme was participation in assistance programs, including FoodShare.

Conclusion: Intentional community engagement has fostered greater trust and relationships between youth and elders as well as community and University partnerships. These deepened relationships resulted in greater sense of community and ability to address critical issues such as nutrition security and health equity in high poverty context.

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Exploring the Intention to Adopt Plant-Based Diets Among Young Korean Adults in Their 20s: Focusing on Barriers and Benefits

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Background: Transitioning to plant-based diets has gained substantial attention.

Objective: We aimed to explore young Korean adults’ intention to adopt plant-based diets, focusing on perceived barriers and benefits.

Study Design, Settings, Participants: An online survey was conducted during April 2022 among young Korean adults in their 20s and 1,478 responses were collected. A survey questionnaire was developed to include participants’ intention to adopt plant-based diets, perceived barriers and benefits, and socio-demographics.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: ANOVA and t-test were run to analyze differences in participants’ intention to adopt plant-based diets across socio-demographics. A logistic regression was conducted to determine the factors affecting such intention, focusing on barriers and benefits. SPSS was used for the analyses at $\alpha \leq 0.05$.

Results: Participants’ intention to adopt plant-based diets significantly differed across socio-demographics. Those who were female; employees; with education level above college/university graduation were more likely to have such intention, while those who had monthly income level below < USD 899 were less likely to do so. The averages of perceived barriers scored the highest in information barrier followed by well-being > convenience > personal belief > health barriers, while those of perceived benefits did the highest in health benefits followed by ethical > well-being > convenience and financial benefits. The result of logistic regression showed that the intention to adopt plant-based diets was significantly influenced by gender, BMI, perceived barrier (Well-Being barrier) and benefits (Health, Well-Being and Ethical benefits). Females were 2.02 times as likely as males, and those of overweight/obesity were 1.80 times as likely as those of underweight to have such intention. Those who highly perceived well-being barrier were less likely to have such intention (0.667 times), while those who highly perceived health, well-being and ethical benefits were more likely to do so (1.71, 1.42, and 1.31 times, respectively).

Conclusion: The results imply that health, well-being and ethical benefits and well-being barrier tend to signifi-