Barriers and Enablers to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation, Access, and Reach: A Systematic Review
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Background: Although the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the largest federal food assistance program, it remains underutilized. However, no studies have systematically examined the factors contributing to the varying levels of program eligibility, enrollment, and usage.

Objective: To synthesize evidence of barriers and enablers to the participation, access, and reach of SNAP and SNAP-related programs from the perspectives of participants, eligible non-participants, and stakeholders.

Study Design, Settings, Participants: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods studies that examined perspectives from participants, eligible non-participants, or stakeholders, based in the United States, peer-reviewed, and published between 2000 and 2021 were included. The following databases were searched in February 2021: MEDLINE (PubMed), PsycINFO (EBSCO), the Cochrane Library, Web of Science Core Collection, and Scopes. Forward and backward reference searches were completed subsequently. Screening and data extraction were conducted using Covidence. The Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool was used for quality assessment.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: SNAP-eligible individuals’ perceptions and characteristics related to program participation and access, and stakeholders’ perspectives on program reach were extracted and synthesized narratively.

Results: A total of 59 articles were included. Most studies focused on SNAP participation, benefit redemption at farmer’s markets and online, and implementation of SNAP-related programs. A major barrier to SNAP participation is related to the application process. Barriers to shopping at farmer’s markets include limited hours of operation and transportation challenges; enablers include a sense of community and high quality of produce. Barriers to accepting SNAP at farmer’s markets from stakeholders’ perspective include a lack of financial and staffing resources; enablers include increased sales and community support. Results on the implementation of SNAP-related programs varied widely and included implementing policy, systems, and environment programs, SNAP-Ed, and stocking standards at food outlets.

Conclusion: Barriers and enablers to SNAP vary substantially depending on the settings given its broad reach. The results could inform multi-level strategies to reduce the burden related to enrollment and to encourage SNAP participants to fully leverage the benefits they are qualified for.

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Changes in School Use of USDA Foods Program Funds Following Changes in School Meal Nutrition Standards
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Background: Updates in nutrition standards for USDA’s National School Lunch Program (NSLP) in 2012 required that meals include more fruit and vegetables. Most foods served in school meals come from commercial sources, but USDA also offers foods to schools through the USDA Foods Program. Through this program, states can use entitlement funds provided by USDA’s Food Nutrition Service (FNS) to obtain a wide range of foods including meat, poultry, cheese, fruits and vegetables (primarily canned or frozen), purchased on their behalf by USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) for use in the NSLP. States can also use these funds to acquire fresh fruit and vegetables distributed by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) under the USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (DoD Fresh).

Objective: To examine how State-level use of USDA Foods entitlement funds for AMS-purchased foods and DoD Fresh fruit and vegetables changed after changes in NSLP nutrition standards in 2012. We focus on how States making high/low use of DoD Fresh prior to revised nutrition standards changed afterwards.

Continued on page 35