

Effects of COVID-19 on Food Insecurity Among Low-Income Households Across the U.S

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Background

- ❖ Data from Urban Institute reports that 41.5% of adults have lost their jobs due to the pandemic, leading to serious financial repercussions such as unpaid bills and reduced food expenditure [1].
- ❖ In 2019, an estimated 13.7 million households (10.5% of all U.S households), experienced food insecurity at one point [2].
- ❖ Prior to the pandemic, households with children were nearly 1.5 times more likely to experience food insecurity than households without children. The pandemic exacerbated these issues [2].
- ❖ On a monthly basis, an estimated 20 million families with children are receiving and relying on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to afford adequate meals [4].

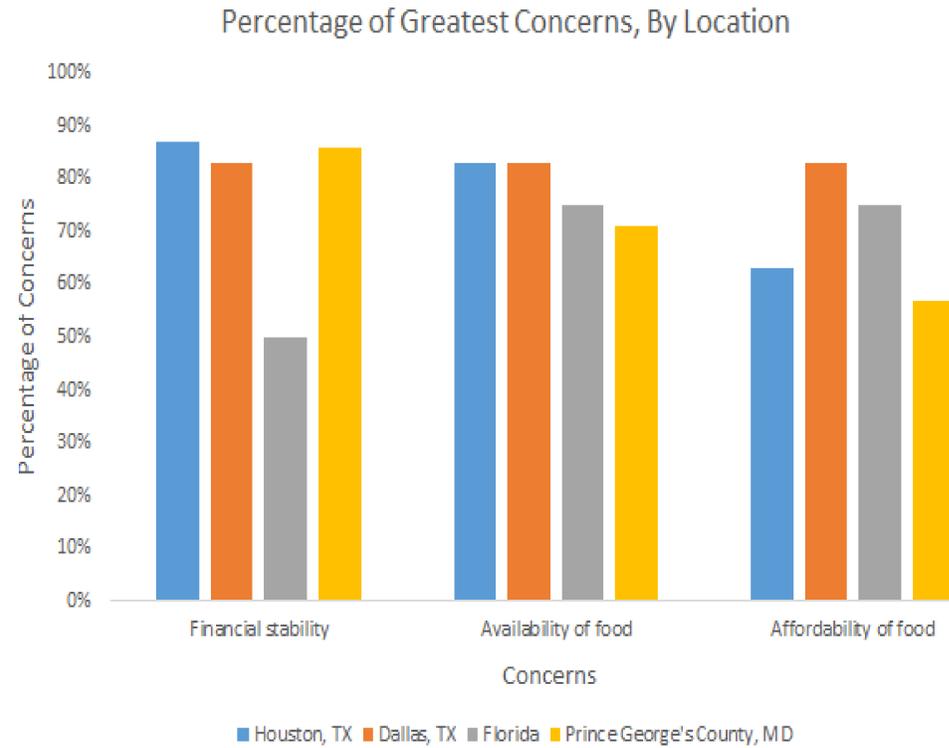
Objective

- ❖ To determine the greatest basic needs-related concerns among low-income households with children due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methods

- ❖ We conducted a secondary data analysis of the high-risk families (n=71) from the April 2020 “COVID-19 Response Form” collected by Brighter Bites administered across Houston, Dallas, Washington DC, and Southwest Florida.
- ❖ The 30-item self-report survey was administered electronically via Formsite in English and in Spanish.
- ❖ We conducted a bivariate analysis to examine the greatest basic-need related concerns among the high-risk families.

Results



84.5% (n=60) families were concerned about financial stability

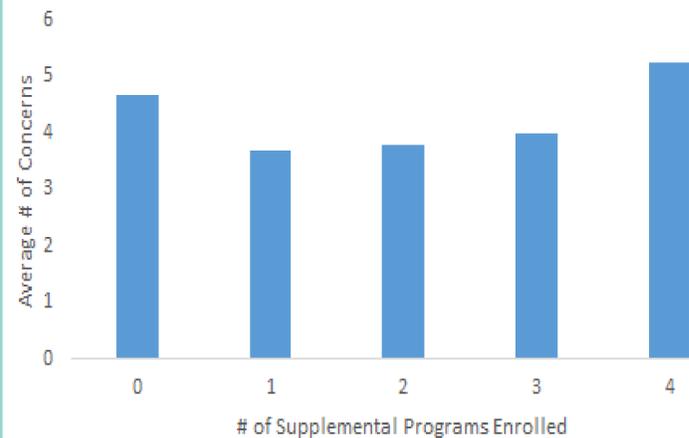


81.6% (n=58) families were concerned about food availability

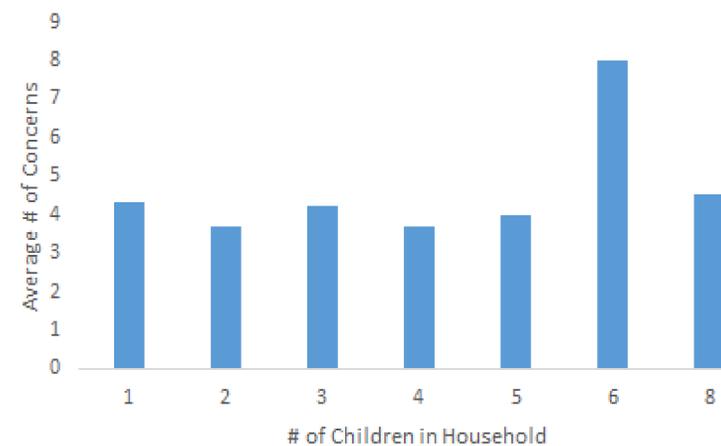


64.7% (n=46) families were concerned about food affordability

Correlation of Programs Enrolled to Concerns



Correlation of # of Children in Household to Concerns



Conclusion

- ❖ The greatest emerging concerns among low-income families with children were financial stability, food availability, and food affordability.
- ❖ This study has highlighted how difficult the coronavirus has been on low-income families with children and emphasizes the need for organizations to respond effectively and provide assistance during difficult times.
- ❖ Moving forward, future research should focus on providing resources for low-income families to address food insecurity and basic needs during natural disasters.



Policy Implications

- ❖ To effectively combat food insecurity, families should try enrolling in government assistance programs such as the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) and school districts should implement meal distribution strategies.

References

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2. *Key Statistics & Graphics*. USDA ERS - Key Statistics & Graphics. (n.d.). <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics.aspx>.
3. McLoughlin GM, McCarthy JA, McGuirt JT, Singleton CR, Dunn CG, Gadhoke P. Addressing Food Insecurity through a Health Equity Lens: A Case Study of Large Urban School Districts during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *J Urban Health*. 2020;97(6):759-775. doi:10.1007/s11524-020-00476-0
4. *SNAP Helps Millions of Children*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2017, April 26).