

Voices and perspectives of rural Hispanic households on food insecurity in west Texas: a qualitative study

By

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Abstract

This qualitative study explored factors associated with causes of food insecurity including cultural factors and coping strategies among rural Hispanic population in west Texas. A sample of 20 participants from low-income households participated. Coding and analysis of the key themes were done by four independent coders. Four overarching themes emerged: (1) food insecurity is a well-kept secret and is a cultural aspect, (2) behavioral and environmental elements are major causes of food insecurity, (3) coping strategies and the price of staying food secure, and (4) strategies for plausible interventions to food insecurity. Positive coping strategies included buying in bulk, buying when items are on sale, and cooking and eating at home, while increasing the volume of food by making food soupy, buying starchy inexpensive food and only eating beans and rice might compromise the nutritional value of the diet. This study underscores the importance of studying the cultural aspect of food to inform interventions addressing food insecurity.

KEYWORDS: Coping strategies, culture, food security, Hispanics, safety nets

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