

Meal Kit Intervention for Students with Food Insecurity: Exploring Students Experiences and Program Impacts

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INTRODUCTION

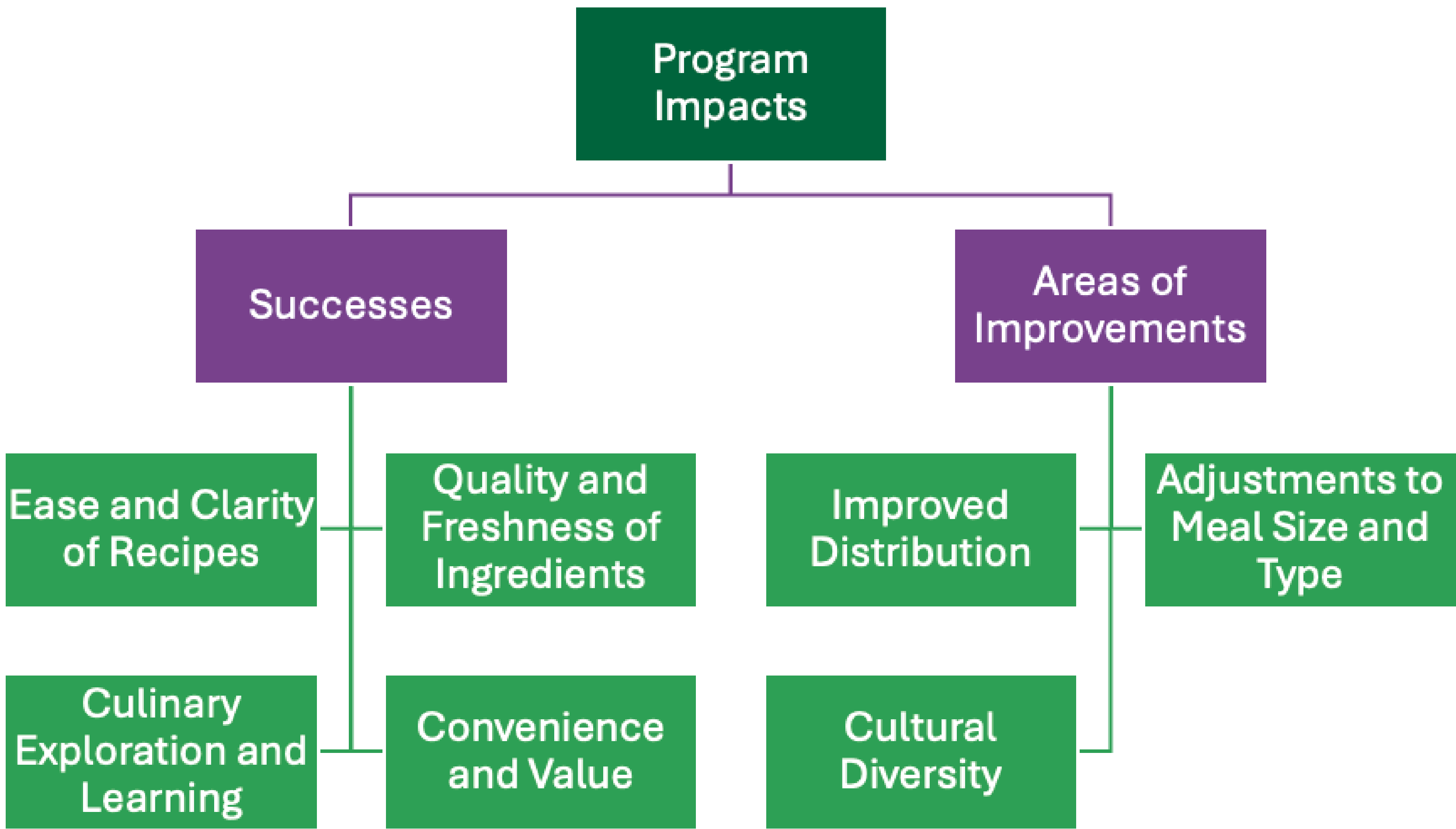
- Food insecurity affects 20–50% of college students, significantly higher than the national average of 12%¹.
- At CSULB, efforts like the Beach Pantry, CalFresh application assistance, and Beach Bites address this issue. However, many students continue to be food insecure.
- The CalFresh Healthy Living team launched a meal kit initiative in Fall 2024 pairing pantry staples with recipe cards, social media demos, and hands-on cooking support.
- This study evaluated the impact of these kits on students' cooking confidence, recipes satisfaction, meal kit distribution satisfaction, and overall program impacts.
- Over **200 meal kits** were distributed in the Fall 2024 semester.

METHODOLOGY

- Design: Cross-sectional descriptive survey via Qualtrics
- Participants: CSULB students (n=13) who received meal kits
- Recruitment: ASI Pantry email list following distribution in December 2024
- Data Collection:
 - 5-point Likert scale questions on skills, perception, accessibility, and impact
 - 2 open-ended questions for feedback
- Analysis: Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis for qualitative responses

RESULTS

 Cooking Confidence 62% felt more confident	 New Foods Tried 77% tried something new
 Pantry Comfort 77% felt more comfortable using pantry items	 Use of Herbs/Spices 38% increased their use of herbs/spices
 Cooking at Home 85% are more interested in cooking at home	 Would Recommend 85% would recommend meal kits to fellow students



“The ease and convenience of the recipes”

“More cultural food
More recipes...that don't require actual cooking”

“The instructions very easy to follow and had the measurements handy”



Photo 1: Meal kit distribution following CFHL cooking class
Photo 2: Sample CFHL meal kits with pantry ingredients

CONCLUSION

- CFHL meal kits **boosted** students' kitchen confidence and pantry use.
- Limitations due to small sample size and participants not answering all survey questions.
- The preliminary findings suggest that the meal kits may help with addressing barriers such as low cooking confidence, limited food resources, and time constraints.

REFERENCES



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