



Introduction

According to a recent report issued by WHO and other organizations, an estimated 2 billion people in the world did not have regular access to safe and nutritious food in 2019 (1). Prior to COVID-19, food insecurity was already one of the growing concerns in the United States, with 10.5% of households being classified as food insecure, including 4.1% that had very low food security (2). Unfortunately, these numbers are predicted to double due to the pandemic. College students are at risk for food insecurity due to the increasing cost of higher education and the rising number of students from other countries and underserved communities (3). Research shows that students who reported food insecurity had lower GPAs and academic progress than students who did not report food insecurity (4).

Bowling Green State University (BGSU) is exploring the need to put a permanent food pantry on campus to improve current resources for students. Although food donations will be received from food banks and drives, the proposed food pantry will lack preferred resources for international students. Past focus groups have found that most canned goods found at food banks are not only unfamiliar to individuals from other countries, but it could impede them from seeking the assistance that they need (6).

Purpose

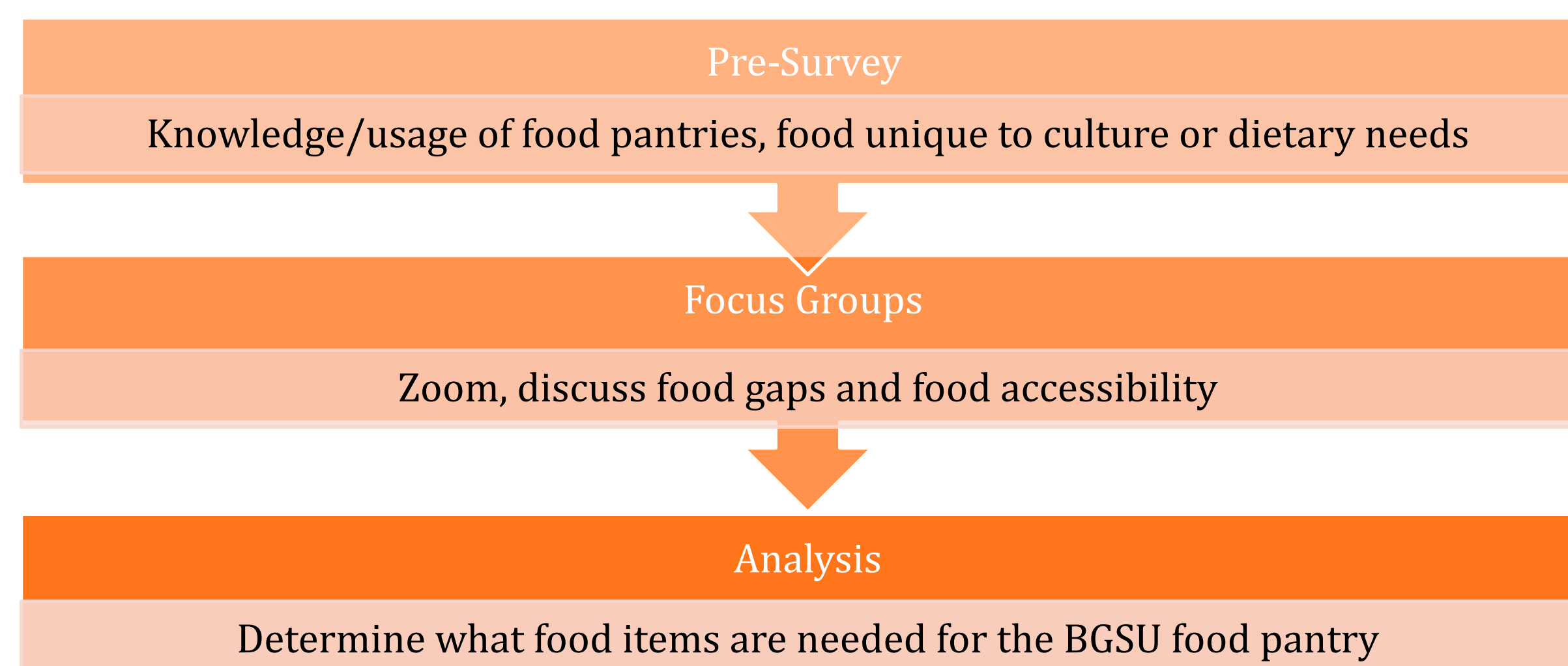
The purpose of our research was to determine food preferences of international students in order to stock food pantries with culturally appropriate items. When our research is complete, we hope to:

- Ensure safe and local access to appropriate food staples
- Alleviate student stress by reducing barriers International students may face when trying to access local resources
- Inspire students to give back to their own communities once leaving BGSU

Methods

Our experience designing this research involved working with BGSU faculty, the Center for Undergrad Research and Scholarships (CURS), the International Review Board (IRB), and numerous survey participants.

- Utilized Qualtrics to create a pre-survey
- Organized focus groups
- Analyzed data from surveys and focus groups
- Compensated participants



Results

Foods that are unique to culture include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yams Black beans, lentils Spanish rice Cabbage, corn Canned tuna Wheat flour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seaweed Ramyeon Kimchi Fire noodles Spam Plums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fresh vegetables Canned fish Cooking oil Aromatic ingredients Sesame oil Pita Bread
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Food items that are not readily available in the Bowling Green area that participants typically consume include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fufu Seafood, cod Meat, animal offal Spices Yam/cassava flour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shrimp paste Habanero Curry leaves Lemongrass Indian rice Asian Rice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bulgur Lentils Green leafy mustard Turnips Pita Bread
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Most participants (91%) reported that they would utilize an on-campus food pantry.

Discussion

We were able to determine specific staples in BGSU students' diets that the pantry should supply. We will carry this data into focus groups to gather more detailed information to prepare for a potential on-campus food pantry to best serve our campus community. This information will allow us to provide adequate and needed resources for students at the food pantry thereby providing nutritious foods that they will be familiar with and are safe to eat.



Implications

It would be beneficial to continue research of this topic. Although a small university, results from this study are representative of cultures from around the world. International students may need to utilize a food pantry just as any student would. Therefore, food pantries must contain culturally appropriate foods to obtain inclusivity.

Future steps include:

- Further research of international students and food preferences
- Research in diverse student groups' food preferences

Literature Cited

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2. USDA. U.S. Census. 2020.
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Acknowledgements

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