

January 2015

An Exploratory Study of Client Culture, Meat Perceptions, Social Climate, and Information Preferences in Northwest Indiana Food Pantries

Amanda C. Gee
Purdue University

Follow this and additional works at: https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/open_access_theses

Recommended Citation

Gee, Amanda C., "An Exploratory Study of Client Culture, Meat Perceptions, Social Climate, and Information Preferences in Northwest Indiana Food Pantries" (2015). *Open Access Theses*. 1177.
https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/open_access_theses/1177

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

**PURDUE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL
Thesis/Dissertation Acceptance**

This is to certify that the thesis/dissertation prepared

By Amanda C. Gee

Entitled

An Exploratory Study of Client Culture, Meat Perceptions, Social Climate, and Information Preferences in Northwest Indiana Food Pantries

For the degree of Master of Science

Is approved by the final examining committee:

Abigail Borron

Co-chair

Mark A. Tucker

Co-chair

B. Allen Talbert

To the best of my knowledge and as understood by the student in the Thesis/Dissertation Agreement, Publication Delay, and Certification Disclaimer (Graduate School Form 32), this thesis/dissertation adheres to the provisions of Purdue University's "Policy of Integrity in Research" and the use of copyright material.

Approved by Major Professor(s): Mark A. Tucker

Approved by: Roger Tormoehlen

Head of the Departmental Graduate Program

7/13/2015

Date

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF CLIENT CULTURE, MEAT PERCEPTIONS,
SOCIAL CLIMATE, AND INFORMATION PREFERENCES
IN NORTHWEST INDIANA FOOD PANTRIES

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of

Purdue University

by

Amanda C. Gee

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Science

August 2015

Purdue University

West Lafayette, Indiana

For Grandma Erma.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of people have given me their support and encouragement along this journey. While I was only able to list a few individuals here, I want to be sure to express my sincere thanks to you all.

First and foremost, I want to thank my family. To Mom, Dad, Matt, and Grandma Erma, a heartfelt thank you for believing in me and encouraging me throughout this academic journey. (And, thank you to my dogs, Doc and Wyatt, for the snuggles and for making me smile.) Coming home has always helped me put things in perspective and remember what is important in life.

I would also like to thank my committee for their guidance in this process. To my co-advisors, Dr. Abigail Borron and Dr. Mark Tucker, thank you for assisting me in this arduous adventure into academic writing. I may not have always enjoyed it, but I can say now that I have mastered it. To Dr. B. Allen Talbert, thank you for serving on my committee; I appreciate your attention to detail and constructive feedback.

Thank you to the YDAE department for assisting me during my graduate studies. This opportunity, and others throughout the past year and a half, would not have been possible without your support. Also, thank you to my friends and fellow graduate students. You have been a big part of keeping me sane and focused during this academic journey.

Above all, I thank God, who has blessed me throughout my journey. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Romans 12:12

P.S. Grandma, you have said that you think I will write a book one day. Well, I am not sure this is exactly what you had in mind, but here goes. 😊

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABSTRACT	xii
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background and Setting	1
1.2 Problem Statement	7
1.3 Research Objectives	8
1.4 Significance of Study	8
1.5 Definition of Terms	10
1.6 Limitations	11
1.7 Basic Assumptions	12
CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	13
2.1 Introduction	13
2.1.1 Project Overview	13
2.1.2 Chapter Overview	13
2.2 Food Security	14
2.3 Food Pantries	18
2.3.1 History	18
2.3.2 Characteristics of Food Pantry Clients	20
2.3.3 Food at Food Pantries	22
2.4 Consumer Perception of Meat	24
2.5 Theory	26
2.5.1 Social Cognitive Theory	27

	Page
2.5.2 Means-end Chain Theory	30
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY.....	33
3.1 Introduction.....	33
3.1.1 Project Overview	33
3.1.2 Chapter Overview	33
3.2 Recruitment.....	34
3.2.1 Pantry Selection	36
3.2.2 Client Recruitment.....	37
3.2.3 Director Recruitment	39
3.2.4 Observation Recruitment	40
3.3 Instrumentation	41
3.3.1 Client Interview Questionnaire.....	41
3.3.2 Director Interview Questionnaire	43
3.3.3 Observation Guide	43
3.4 Field Testing	44
3.5 Research Approval.....	45
3.6 Data Collection	45
3.7 Data Organization	48
3.7.1 Analysis of Client Data.....	49
3.7.2 Analysis of Director Data	51
3.7.3 Analysis of Observations	51
3.8 Threats to Validity	52
3.9 Limitations	54
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS	56
4.1 Introduction.....	56
4.1.1 Project Overview	56
4.1.2 Chapter Overview	56
4.2 Food Pantry Clients.....	57
4.2.1 Client Demographics	58

	Page
4.2.2 Means-end Chain Analysis of Client Data	64
4.2.3 Clients' Values and Perceptions of Meat.....	68
4.2.3.1 Consumption and Perception of Meat	69
4.2.3.2 Meat Sources	72
4.2.3.3 Meat Preferences	72
4.2.3.4 Perception of Meat at Pantries.....	74
4.2.4 Perceptions of Other Foods at Pantries.....	79
4.2.5 Information Preferences Identified by Clients.....	82
4.2.6 Themes from Client Data.....	83
4.3 Food Pantry Directors	89
4.3.1 Themes from Director Data	90
4.4 Pantry Observations	102
4.4.1 Personal Statement about Observations.....	102
4.4.2 Observations at Stationary Pantries	102
4.4.3 Observations at Mobile Pantries	104
CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....	107
5.1 Introduction.....	107
5.1.1 Project Overview	107
5.1.2 Chapter Overview	108
5.2 Discussion	108
5.2.1 Client Culture and Perceptions	109
5.2.2 Climate of Food Pantries	113
5.2.3 Clients' Information Preferences	115
5.3 Recommendations.....	118
5.3.1 Define Protein in the Context of Agency	118
5.3.2 Examine Context-Dependent Agency	120
5.3.3 Critically Examine Avenues for Information Sharing.....	122
5.4 Conclusion	123
REFERENCES	126

	Page
APPENDICES	
Appendix A Initial contact email.....	136
Appendix B Emails with distribution manager	137
Appendix C Phone script.....	139
Appendix D Script for client recruitment	140
Appendix E Client consent form.....	141
Appendix F Follow-up email about director interviews	143
Appendix G Director consent form	144
Appendix H Follow-up email about observations	146
Appendix I Client interview questionnaire	147
Appendix J Director interview questionnaire.....	153
Appendix K Observation guide	155
Appendix L IRB approval - July 2014.....	156
Appendix M IRB approval - October 2014.....	157
Appendix N Naming document.....	158
Appendix O Means-end chain code table.....	159
NOTE.....	162
VITA.....	163

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
Table 1.1 Definitions of food security and insecurity.....	3
Table 4.1 Client characteristics by pantry.....	58
Table 4.2 Client residences	60
Table 4.3 Client frequency of pantry visits.....	61
Table 4.4 Weekly meat consumption habits	69
Table 4.5 Perceived importance of meat eaten on a daily basis	70
Table 4.6 Alternate sources of protein mentioned by clients.....	70
Table 4.7 Meat preferences.....	73
Table 4.8 Quality of meat and meat packaging available at food pantries	74
Table 4.9 Selected responses about taking meat from food pantries	76
Table 4.10 Selected concerns regarding meat from food pantries.....	77
Table 4.11 Selected responses regarding statement that pantry meat.....	79
Table 4.12 Selected responses about taking other foods available at food pantries	81
Table 4.13 Pantry director information.....	89

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
Figure 2.1 Bandura's (2001) triadic model of human behavior (p. 266)	27
Figure 2.2 Means-end chain ladderling progression model (Costa et al., 2004).	30
Figure 3.1 Qualitative coding scheme	50
Figure 4.1 Modified hierarchical value map.....	65

ABSTRACT

Gee, Amanda C. M.S., Purdue University, August 2015. An Exploratory Study of Client Culture, Meat Perceptions, Social Climate, and Information Preferences in Northwest Indiana Food Pantries. Major Professors: Abigail Borron and Mark Tucker.

Food insecurity has been an increasingly important, and troubling, issue across the nation and world in the last 20 years. Definitions of food insecurity vary, but the core idea is that food insecure people are unable to acquire enough food to have a healthy life. Lack of dependable access to healthy food can lead to additional concerns. Visiting hunger-relief organizations is one of the primary coping strategies used by the food insecure. In the U.S., approximately 46.5 million individuals, or 17.5 million households – more than 14 percent of the population – used the hunger-relief network Feeding America in 2013. This network includes food banks and food pantries, and individuals using these organizations are referred to as food pantry clients. Few studies have focused on food insecurity at the individual client and individual pantry level. The current exploratory research was designed to explore client culture, client perceptions of meat quality and packaging, social climate of pantries, and information preferences in a selected community of northwest Indiana food pantries. Specifically, the research objectives were to: 1) describe the culture of food pantry clients, especially clients' values and perceptions towards meat in the diet and meat donated to pantries; 2) describe the social climate of selected food pantries; and 3) investigate food pantry client

preferences for receiving information about food and learning food preparation techniques. The study used two theoretical perspectives, social cognitive theory and means-end chain theory, to investigate how and why clients make decisions about food. Three sources of qualitative data, client interviews, pantry director interviews, and pantry observations, were collected and analyzed. Findings revealed that, when planning a meal, clients valued good health, children's futures, and feeding themselves and their family. Most clients perceived meat to be important in their diets, and preferred chicken or beef to other meats. On average, they perceived the meat and meat packaging received through pantries to be adequate to good. Clients communicated a preference for more information on foods available at pantries. They also expressed a reliance on pantries, but the reliance involved a number of complex nuances. Recommendations for the selected food bank, food pantries, and future research include: 1) the need to define protein in the context of agency, 2) the need to examine context-dependent agency in the realm of pantries and available food choices, and 3) the need to critically examine avenues for information sharing.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Setting

Food insecurity is a pervasive problem throughout the world. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), approximately one in nine people across the world does not have sufficient amounts of food needed to maintain an active and healthy life (FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development, & World Food Programme, 2014). In 1995, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reported that approximately 11.9 million (of 100.2 million) American households experienced food insecurity in the previous year (Carlson, Andrews, & Bickel, 1999; Hamilton, Cook, Thompson, & Buron, 1997). In 2013, an estimated 17.5 million American households — more than 14 percent of the U.S. population — were food insecure and rely on food pantries to supplement their food supplies (Weinfield et al., 2014). According to the USDA (2015a), the prevalence of food insecurity in the U.S. varies from state to state. Food insecurity rates range from 8.7 percent in North Dakota to 21.2 percent in Arkansas. Indiana has a combined average food insecurity rate of 14.1 percent for data collected by the USDA in the years of 2011, 2012, and 2013 (USDA, 2015a). According to Feeding America (2015a), approximately one in seven people in Indiana (approximately 15 percent) deal with food insecurity, which the organization defines as struggling, at times,

with lack of access to and availability of food for themselves and/or household members to ensure active, healthy lives.

The term *food insecurity* originated in the early 1970s, and has been defined in a number of different ways over the years; some define food insecurity on a global or national level, others define it on a household or individual level, and still others prefer to define food security before defining food insecurity (Devereux & Maxwell, 2001). Through a search of relevant literature, many definitions were collected. Drawing inspiration from Devereux and Maxwell (2001), Table 1.1 was created to show definitions of food security and insecurity throughout the years.

In addition to emphasizing that food insecurity has elements of both the *availability* of enough food and the ability to *acquire* enough food, the World Bank (1986) further defined food security on the household level with two categories: chronic and transitory. In its report, World Bank defined *chronic food insecurity* as “a continuously inadequate diet caused by the inability to acquire food” and *transitory food insecurity* as “a temporary decline in a household’s access to enough food” (World Bank, 1986, p.1). USDA (2014a) currently categorizes food security (and food insecurity) into four levels: high food security (no food-access problems); marginal food security (few food-access problems; no or little changes in diet); low food security (reduced quality or variety of diet; no or little reduced food intake); and very low food security (interrupted patterns of eating and reduced food intake). The first two levels are further designated as food security, and the latter two as food insecurity; the USDA uses these levels when assessing household food security (USDA, 2014a).

Table 1.1 Definitions of food security and insecurity^a

Food security
“Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life” (World Bank, 1986, p. 1)
“Always have enough to eat” (Zipperer, 1987, p. 5)
“The key defining characteristic of household food security is secure access at all times to sufficient food” (Maxwell & Smith, 1992, p. 8)
“Assured access at all times to enough food for an active healthy life” (Carlson et al., 1999, p. 511S)
“Ensuring that all members of a population have access to a supply of food sufficient in quality and quantity, regardless of their social or economic status” (Lefin, 2009, p. 2)
“All people in a household having enough food for an active healthy life at all times” (Weinfield et al., 2014, p. 1)
Food insecurity
“Lack of access to enough food” (World Bank, 1986, p. 1)
“Whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain” (Anderson, 1990, pp. 1560).
“Inability to use traditional food acquisition and management means and use of an assortment of coping strategies” (Kempson, Keenan, Sadani, & Adler, 2003, p. 179)
“Uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food for all household members because they had insufficient money and other resources for food” (Coleman-Jensen, Nord, Andrews, & Carlson, 2011, p. 5)
“Lack(ing) secure access to safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development” (FAO et al., 2014, p. 50)
“Households experienced limited or uncertain access to adequate food including reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet” (Weinfield et al., 2014, p. 2)

^a This table is based on Maxwell’s (2001) Box 1.1 definitions of security and insecurity, 1975-1991, pp. 15-16, in Devereux and Maxwell (2001).

One of the most challenging aspects of food insecurity is that food-insecure individuals and families are often disadvantaged in other ways. For example, many may also have limited financial resources, lack regular employment or suffer from health or medical conditions, which can intensify the problem of food insecurity. Low-income individuals who are food insecure may also have inconsistent or poor housing accommodations and limited food storage (Wicks, Trevena, & Quine, 2006). Under these difficult circumstances, food-insecure individuals may bypass dietary and nutritional recommendations due to the added costs. According to Drewnowski (2009), proteins such as meats are among the first foods to be skipped because of their high cost relative to other food groups. When comparing food secure and food insecure households, Rose (1999) found that members of food insecure households consumed lower levels of several nutrients, including protein.

Protein has been an important part of the human diet for millenia. Proteins, carbohydrates, and fats are the three major sources of calories in the diet, and provide needed energy for the body. According to the latest dietary guidelines published by the USDA and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2010), protein supplies the body with amino acids, which are essential to build and maintain body muscle and tissues. Protein is found in a variety of animal- and plant-based foods. Animal-based protein includes meat, eggs, seafood, and milk, while plant sources include beans, nuts, seeds, and soy.

Food pantries in the U.S. belong to a larger hunger-relief network known as Feeding America. There are more than 200 food banks, 46,000 food pantries and 58,000 meal programs across the nation (Weinfield et al., 2014). Food banks are warehouse-type

facilities that serve as a collecting place for government commodities and donations from grocery stores and distribute those food items to pantries in their multiple county districts (Starkey, Gray-Donald, & Kuhnlein, 1999). Although there are varying levels of food insecurity in all 92 counties in Indiana, food insecurity tends to be intensified in more populated, urban areas. Nine food banks in the Feeding America hunger-relief network serve these 92 counties. The food bank in this study serves 16 northwest Indiana counties, with 86,450 food insecure people; more than one third of those people (29,550) reside in the county (Feeding America, 2015a) on which this study focuses.

Food pantries are commonly categorized in two ways: stationary or mobile. Stationary pantries are operated regularly in one location, while mobile pantries are operated periodically in varying area locations such as parking lots (Weinfield et al., 2014). Stationary pantries are usually operated by private organizations, such as churches or community groups. Mobile pantries are usually operated by food banks, but stationary pantries can also partner with food banks to sponsor mobile pantries. Stationary food pantries either pick food items at food banks or have food banks deliver items to their locations. For mobile pantries, food is transported to pantry locations in a box-type truck that is usually equipped with refrigeration units. While these are common pantry procedures, each pantry, stationary or mobile, has its own ways of operation and social climate. In subsequent references throughout the document, social climate may be referred to as climate. As Pretty (1990) posits, climate encompasses the current attitudes, standards, and social and environmental conditions of a group or place. Therefore, the climates that food pantry clients experience at individual pantries are unique.

But no matter the type of pantry or climate, food pantries offer food items such as grains, meat, dairy, vegetables, and fruits to food pantry clients. The pantries generally try to offer some sort of protein, varying from frozen packages of meat, canned meat, peanut butter, to beans. The goal is to offer needed nutrition that clients may need and not be able to get otherwise. However, what pantries are able to offer clients depends on their storage capabilities, what food banks receive from government commodities, and grocery store donations.

Although food banks and pantries have a goal of supplementing diets of individuals and families battling food insecurity, not all are able to provide refrigerated products, such as meat and cheese, due to a lack of refrigeration or lack of space. Pantries that are able to offer meat products receive the products from food banks, which acquired the items through grocery store donations and government commodities. Unfortunately, not all donated meat products find their way to clients' homes. By some estimates (J. Waddell, personal communication, 2013), up to 30 percent of the meat from food banks is lost from damage during transport to the food pantries or is left unselected by food pantry clients. Inadequate packaging, improper storage or faulty transportation procedures can damage fresh foods, such as meat, dairy and produce, causing them to deteriorate and shrink before consumers see the products (Kantor, Lipton, Manchester, & Oliveira, 1997). Such products may need to be discarded by food banks or pantries, based on food safety protocol, or they may simply be passed over by clients.

Clients may bypass meat products because of concerns over the quality of meat or meat packaging, or because they are unfamiliar with the type or cut of meat. Types and cuts of meat vary widely because donations from grocery stores vary from week-to-week.

If they are unfamiliar with items, clients may bypass them because they do not have access to information about what the item is or how to properly prepare it for a meal.

1.2 Problem Statement

A vast network of food pantries and other hunger-relief organizations exist to support food-insecure individuals and families throughout the U.S. The effort is supported by government agencies and private organizations, including faith- and community-based groups, which offer food and other essentials to low-income individuals and their households.

While food insecurity has been a frequent topic of social science research in recent decades, few studies have focused specifically on clients' perceptions of food pantry products and preferences for food available at pantries, including meat. Perceptions of various pantry offerings, as well as perceptions of general pantry climate, may be associated with product preferences and use of a particular pantry.

The current research addresses this need by investigating client culture on an individual basis as well as the climate of individual pantries. The researcher conducted interviews and observations at food pantries located in a northwest Indiana community of approximately 70,000 people. The community was located in a county with a population of approximately 180,000 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2014), of which approximately 17 percent (roughly 30,000) were food insecure (Weinfield et al., 2014).

The food bank servicing the pantries distributed more than 7.1 million pounds of goods in 2014 in partnership with more than 160 agencies, such as stationary food pantries and soup kitchens.¹ The study county had 28 stationary food pantries; the

number of mobile pantries varied depending on sponsorship and available food, but there are at least two each month.¹ For this project, research was conducted at two stationary pantries and three mobile pantries.

1.3 Research Objectives

This exploratory mixed-methods study was designed to gain insights into food pantry clients' perceptions and needs regarding meat products, with an added emphasis on the visual quality and packaging of the meat, made available to them through local pantries. The following objectives were formulated to guide the current research:

1. Describe the culture of food pantry clients, especially clients' values and perceptions toward meat in the diet and meat donated to pantries.
2. Describe the social climate of selected food pantries.
3. Investigate food pantry clients' preferences for receiving information about food and learning food preparation techniques.

Data collected to support these objectives were collected through personal interviews with food pantry clients and food pantry directors, as well as observations at food pantries. Collectively, these data addressed key concepts in this research, including culture of pantry clients, climate of food pantries, and clients' information preferences.

1.4 Significance of Study

There have been many research studies on food insecurity over the last few decades. Quantitative studies have been prevalent, especially in studies focusing on nutrition and the diet. Such studies have addressed ways of measuring food insecurity

(Webb et al., 2006), as well as examined food insecurity in terms of dietary consequences (Rose, 1999) and health concerns (Gundersen, 2013). Results of these studies have led to policy discussions and development of how food insecurity is measured and should be addressed by hunger-relief efforts (Webb et al., 2006). The results have also led to discussions about how to improve diets of food insecure populations (Rose, 1999). Qualitative studies have examined food insecurity on national and household levels examined food choices (Wiig & Smith, 2008), coping strategies (Kempson et al., 2003), and efforts to reduce food insecurity (Verpy, Smith, & Reicks, 2003).

There remains a significant opportunity and a critical need to delve deeper into the understanding of food insecurity at the individual level, specifically as it relates to the lived experiences of food pantry clients within a given community. Focusing on individual clients will help develop a working understanding of the clients themselves, including what brings them to pantries, their perceptions of pantries and pantry foods, and what their values are. By uncovering these pieces of information, then work can be done to evaluate if hunger-relief organizations such as food pantries are effectively meeting the needs of their clients as well as areas for improvement or modification of current programs. Research such as this will also help uncover foods that are important to clients, and the underlying values behind why those foods are important. Much research has focused on food insecurity in recent years, but little has focused tightly on food pantry clients and their experiences and preferences. This study will help fill that void by exploring why clients visit food pantries, what their experiences are at pantries, which foods they prefer/do not prefer, what kinds of information about food they prefer, and the values or reasons behind these pieces of information.

Based on the existing qualitative-based research on food insecurity, there remains an opportunity to explore more deeply the characteristics of climate of food pantries and the culture of food pantry clients using an exploratory, mixed-methods approach that incorporates dominantly qualitative, as well as basic quantitative, methods. Findings from this research will provide an entry point to more fully examine the current status of food insecurity at a given local level, as well as the pantries they visit to acquire food. This is specifically valuable as it relates to the culture of the food pantry clients, the overall structure and capability of the local food pantries, and the procurement and availability of necessary meat products.

1.5 Definition of Terms

In this research, numerous terms were used that could have various meanings, depending on context and audience. Those that are frequently used in this document are defined below to help provide clarity and specificity.

Climate, social climate: current attitudes, standards, and social and environmental conditions of a group or place (Pretty, 1990).

Culture: behaviors, beliefs, and ways of living of a particular social group (Maher, 2003).

Food bank: warehouse-type facility that functions as a central collection center for food, organizing and distributing food supplies from grocery stores, local donations, and government commodities to local food pantries (Starkey et al., 1999).

Food insecurity: inconsistent, irregular access to sufficient food needed to lead a successful, healthy life, including difficulties or inability to acquire food in traditional

ways, such as making purchases at a grocery store (Kempson et al., 2003; World Bank, 1986).

Food pantry: local resource that offers food to low-income residents, often operated by faith-based or community organizations (Weinfield et al., 2014).

Mobile food pantry: food pantry operated periodically in varying area locations, such as parking lots; may use a refrigerated truck to store and transport food (Weinfield et al., 2014).

Perceptions: personal understandings or interpretations of a given item, person, or place (Font-i-Furnols & Guerrero, 2014; Grunert, 1997).

Soup kitchen: local resource that offers soup or a hot meal to low-income residents on a regular basis (Online Highways LLC, 2015).

Stationary food pantry: food pantry operated on a regular basis in one location (Weinfield et al., 2014).

Values: personal views or standards of importance or usefulness of a given item (Grunert, 1995).

1.6 Limitations

1. Findings from this study may not be generalized beyond the study participants.
2. The timeframe of the study did not allow sufficient time to return to food pantries for follow-up questions and interviews, which could increase validity of the findings.

1.7 Basic Assumptions

1. Participation was voluntary.
2. Participants lived in the area served by the selected northwest Indiana food bank.
3. The northwest Indiana food pantries selected as interview sites offer meat and/or other sources of protein to food pantry clients.
4. Participants (food pantry clients) need the food items that they receive at food pantries.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Project Overview

This exploratory mixed-methods study explored the culture of food pantry clients, along with clients' perceptions of meat quality and packaging and their information preferences, and the climate of food pantries. The study's research objectives were to:

1. Describe the culture of food pantry clients, especially clients' values and perceptions toward meat in the diet and meat donated to pantries.
2. Describe the social climate of selected food pantries.
3. Investigate food pantry clients' preferences for receiving information about food and learning food preparation techniques.

2.1.2 Chapter Overview

This chapter serves as a review of the relevant literature regarding food insecurity, food pantries, meat and other foods at food pantries, and perceptions of those foods. After reviewing a variety of theoretical frameworks commonly associated with food and food perceptions, this exploratory study drew upon Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory of human behavior, as well as means-end chain theory (Costa, Dekker, & Jongen, 2004;

Grunert, 1995). Studies involving both of the theoretical perspectives were also added to the bank of literature. The bank of literature was built by searching online using specific terms in Google Scholar and Purdue Libraries. The following search terms and phrases provided initial guidance into exploring the existing literature related to food insecurity and the study's three objectives: food banks, food pantries, food insecurity in America, food pantry resources, qualitative food pantry study, food pantry clients, perceptions of meat, and meat at food pantries. After locating literature, citations were also reviewed and added to the bank of literature. Further searches were completed for literature on social cognitive theory and means-end chain theory. This enabled a broad bank of literature from which to draw.

The chapter is organized into four main sections. The first section reviews food insecurity and related research that has been conducted to investigate food insecure populations. The second section focuses on food pantries, including history, people who visit pantries, and foods at pantries. The third section reviews consumer perception of meat and related research. The fourth and final section examines the two theories that helped guide this research.

2.2 Food Security

Food insecurity has been described and defined in a number of ways (Table 1.1). This research study draws primarily on Kempson et al.'s (2003) definition involving coping strategies. Based on Anderson's (1990) work on nutritional states in low-income or difficult-to-sample populations, Kempson et al. (2003) defined food security in the United States as the "ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and an

assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways” (p. 179); therefore, food insecurity is the “inability to use traditional food acquisition and management means and use of an assortment of coping strategies” (p. 179). Americans who experience food insecurity use several coping strategies, including applying for food assistance programs, rationing food, using coupons, visiting soup kitchens for free meals, and utilizing food pantries (Kempson et al., 2003; Hoisington, Shultz & Butkus, 2002). In their study with limited resource individuals in New Jersey, Kempson et al. (2003) found that some in rural areas resorted to picking up roadkill and taking it home to cook and eat as a coping strategy. Through focus groups, Kempson et al. (2003) identified 95 coping strategies in the categories of: relying on resources offered in the community, interacting with informal support systems, supplementing financial resources, lowering food costs by using shopping strategies, managing food supply, and regulating eating patterns. During these focus groups, 10 new coping strategies for acquiring food emerged that were not previously known by nutrition and Extension educators. Those strategies included trusting in God to help them make it through tough times; cooking with others when they, as individuals, did not have enough food to make a meal; and getting general help from friends and family. While not generalizable to those who are food insecure throughout the U.S., Kempson et al. (2003) recommended further research into the new coping strategies. They also suggested exploring a quantitative assessment of strategies identified in New Jersey and elsewhere to understand and confirm ways in which food insecurity is addressed in food insecure communities. Coping strategies could help explain why some foods, especially meat products, are left unselected by food pantry clients or why low-

income individuals purchase certain food products over others, especially those with lower nutritional values (Drewnowski, 2009).

Food insecurity not only has detrimental nutritional consequences, but also household, familial, psychological, social, and cultural consequences (Hamelin, Habicht & Beaudry, 1999). In their study with French-speaking households in Quebec, Canada, Hamelin, Habicht and Beaudry (1999) found that food insecurity caused problems associated with hunger, illness, stress, and food acquisition at the household level. Food security also has social implications, which include loss of productivity, impaired or disrupted learning for both children and adults, feelings of powerlessness, and decreased constructive participation in communities and social life.

Communities and churches often try to reduce negative consequences by providing free food (and sometimes miscellaneous household items) at pantries or soup kitchens to aid community members who are struggling to make ends meet (Martin, Wu, Wolff, Colantonio, & Grady, 2013; Morton, Bitto, Oakland & Sand, 2008; Wicks et al., 2006). While food pantries have become widespread across the United States, little research has focused specifically on how effective these resources are in actually increasing food security. In the Martin et al. (2013) study, researchers compared outcomes between traditional food pantry clients and clients of a collaborative food pantry experience called Freshplace to see if pantry clients showed improvements in food security and diet quality in a one-year period. Freshplace was developed by three community agencies and the University of Connecticut, and differed from traditional food pantries in three ways: 1) Freshplace clients choose their food, from mainly fresh and perishable options; 2) Freshplace clients met with a project manager to develop a

plan and goals for becoming more food secure and self-sufficient; and 3) Freshplace clients were offered services to help reach their goals, such as a six-week cooking class (Martin et al., 2013). The researchers found that clients who participated in the Freshplace food pantry experience had increases in fruit and vegetable consumption compared to traditional food pantry clients, and they were less likely to experience low food security. Researchers could not determine exactly what contributed to these improvements.

However well-intentioned hunger-relief efforts may be, or how well the research approaches are designed, they do not always align with the perceived needs of the people they are attempting to help (Verpy et al., 2003). When Verpy et al. (2003) organized separate focus groups with clients and food pantry donors, clients expressed needs for “kid-friendly” (p. 13) and culturally appropriate foods, such as ethnic ingredients used in Asian and Hispanic meals, as well as money to buy perishable foods such as meat, milk, and vegetables. The donor focus groups revealed that donors are not always comfortable with providing money to clients. In response to the focus group findings, the authors suggested providing vouchers or means to enable clients to purchase perishable food items not available on food pantry shelves. Verpy et al. (2003) also recommended education or information for donors that was simple, brief, and in print form (e.g. flyer) to emphasize the need for donations of different ethnic foods, such as tortillas, pork-free items, Asian vegetables, and donations for nutritious foods that kids would enjoy.

It also may be difficult for donors or organizations to readily identify people in a community who are going hungry or are dealing with food insecurity (Fitchen, 1987). For example, food insecure individuals may be overweight and “may not ‘look’ like they are

hungry” (Kempson et al., 2003, p. 186). They may shop at popular neighborhood grocery stores using coupons, buying in bulk, and shopping for one month at a time in addition to visiting community food resources, such as pantries and kitchens when available. People who are food insecure also use other means of managing and coping with their limited amount of food, such as limiting food intake, having children eat with friends and family, and alternately paying monthly bills (Ahluwalia, Dodds, & Baligh, 1998). Further coping strategies exhibited by people experiencing food insecurity include sharing foods with others to create a complete meal, avoiding having guests over for meals, purchasing food and meat from private individuals, participating in federal food programs, and visiting locally sponsored food programs (Kempson et al., 2003). Some dealing with food insecurity may also resort to illegal activities, such as shoplifting, as a coping strategy when they believe they have no other way to acquire food (Kempson et al., 2003).

2.3 Food Pantries

2.3.1 History

The United States has a longtime policy of offering assistance and education about nutritious food, as well as attempting to offer access to adequate food supplies through hunger-relief efforts. Soup kitchens have been around the longest, dating back to 1929, the start of the Depression (Online Highways LLC, 2015). Soup kitchens and food pantries were brought to national attention in part by the adoption of federal food assistance programs, such as food stamps, in the mid-twentieth century (Bhattarai, Duffy, & Raymond, 2005).

The U.S. government has done much to help support Americans with low income and low food security. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA, 2015b), the first food stamp program was developed after the Depression and ran from 1939-1943 under the direction of Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace and the program's first administrator, Milo Perkins. The program provided two kinds of food stamps that were purchased to buy regular and surplus food, and provided a bridge between farm surpluses and undernourished, hungry Americans (USDA, 2015b). Although the first program lasted only four years, it was revived in the early 1960s when President Kennedy signed an executive order to pilot a food stamp program; the program was made permanent by President Johnson and Congress by the passage of the Food Stamp Act of 1964 (USDA, 2015b). The program underwent many changes such as qualification and reporting requirements in subsequent years, and the name was changed in 2008 to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (USDA, 2015b).

In addition to governmental programs, many other community organizations have offered food assistance to food insecure Americans. Early food pantries and soup kitchens were mostly private, independent entities before the introduction of food banks, which were designed to function as warehouses and distribution centers of food for an identified region of local food pantries. Cotunga and Beebe (2002) present a detailed history of how food banks emerged in the United States. In the 1960s, John Van Hengel, a volunteer at a soup kitchen in Arizona, started collecting food donations and set up a warehouse for those donations when they outgrew the kitchen's capacity. His "food bank" concept (p. 1386) of using a warehouse to collect and distribute food donations spread across the country in the following years, aided in part by federal grants assisting in

national programs and by the Tax Reform Act of 1976, which made it “more financially advantageous for companies to donate their products” (p. 1386).

America’s Second Harvest was formed in 1979 as a national hunger-relief network. In 2008, the organization was renamed Feeding America (Feeding America, 2015c). Food banks collect a maintenance fee from pantries and other organizations in exchange for large amounts of food. Food pantries, often operated by churches or other local community organizations, in turn, offer these food items to food-insecure clients. In addition to getting food from food banks, some food pantries also partner with programs and local growers to offer fresh fruits and vegetables; one such program is Ample Harvest, designed to connect backyard gardeners with food pantries to offer clients fresh produce (AmpleHarvest.org, 2015).

2.3.2 Characteristics of Food Pantry Clients

According to the latest *Hunger in America* report (Weinfield et al., 2014), the Feeding America network, which is made up of more than 46,000 agencies operating 58,000 food programs throughout the United States, serves 5.4 million individuals each week. These clients have limited resources and low incomes, with a median monthly household income of \$927. They also face underemployment, such as part-time, term, or seasonal work schedules, and in some cases, chronic unemployment. One-third of client households have a senior (60 years or older), and almost 40 percent of households have at least one child under 18. Clients often face many other problems. More than half of the client households served by the Feeding America network have a member with high blood pressure, compared to about one-third of all Americans (Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention [CDC], 2015b). Nearly a third of Feeding America client households have a member with diabetes, compared to a national rate of 9.3 percent (CDC, 2015a). As noted by Seligman, Laraia, and Kushel (2010), “diabetes may be more highly sensitive to diet” (p. 308), and diets of food insecure populations, especially diets that consist mainly of processed foods, may affect diabetes among other health problems.

In addition to increased rates of medical issues, clients are often faced with tough choices when trying to provide food for their households. At some point in the last year, 69 percent of the 5.4 million Feeding America clients had to choose between paying for food and utilities, 66 percent between food and medical care, 57 percent between food and housing, and 31 percent between food and education (Weinfield et al., 2014). The result of having to make a choice among various needs is clients employing coping strategies, such as purchasing inexpensive foods, receiving help from family and friends, and selling personal items. Weinfield et al. (2014) said that among clients served by the Feeding America network, 78.7 percent reported purchasing inexpensive, unhealthy food, 56.1 percent reported having eaten food past the expiration date, 52.5 percent reported receiving help from family or friends, 51.7 percent reported purchasing food in dented or damaged packaging, 40 percent reported watering down food or drinks, 34.9 percent reported selling or pawning personal property, and 22.7 percent reporting growing food in a garden.

Much of the literature shows that food pantry clients must often choose between food and other necessities in life. Nevertheless, when the choice can be food, such as when clients are able to visit food pantries, they have particular preferences of what they would like for themselves and/or their families. Many studies have been conducted to

identify the kinds of foods clients need and prefer. Clients dealing with food insufficiency often perceive meat to be “a central part of a meal” (Ahluwalia et al., 1998, p. 604). In a 2011 study asking clients about food preferences, Campbell, Hudson, Webb, and Crawford (2011) found that clients prefer to receive meat (including poultry and fish) more than any other food item on the list, with vegetables coming in second and fruits third. More than 90 percent of clients also indicated that meat, vegetables, fruit, eggs, and dairy items such as milk and cheese are important or very important to receive at food pantries.

2.3.3 Food at Food Pantries

In the United States, 200 food banks and more than 46,000 agencies belong to the Feeding America hunger-relief network (Weinfield et al., 2014). The food banks gather and distribute food to the agencies that operate food pantries, soup kitchens, and other food assistance programs in communities across the nation. Food pantries are usually operated by non-profit organizations such as churches and other community organizations. The food provided at food pantries and assistance programs varies based on a number of factors. Those factors include the pantry’s storage capabilities, such as whether there are refrigeration units, the amount and kinds of food donations received from community members and area grocery stores, and the items available at the food bank. In turn, the amount and kinds of foods available at food banks for food pantries to purchase at no or reduced costs depend on a number of different factors, such as the amount and kinds of food donated by retailers or received from government commodities. Food donated from government commodities such as the USDA’s TEFAP (The

Emergency Food Assistance Program) includes canned fruits and vegetables, soups, dried beans, peanut butter, pasta, rice, cereal, milk, eggs, dried egg products, fruit juice, and meat, including canned and frozen items (USDA, 2014b). Food collected from retailers includes those that are no longer deemed “sellable.” These include dented cans, crumpled boxes, and perishables such as meat, produce, and bakery items that are being displaced by new arrivals. Items that food banks purchase are offered to food pantries at reduced costs.

In order to provide resources to their clients, food pantries order food items from food banks. The pantries generally pay an amount ranging from \$0.10-\$0.50 for each pound of food items. This amount is a maintenance fee, which helps cover the food bank’s transportation, sorting and storing costs (Feeding America, 2015c). The pantries then have the option to have orders delivered based on the food bank’s delivery schedule, or food pantry workers can pick up the at the food bank on designated days and times.

While traditional food pantries are operated out of a stationary location on a regular basis, such as an area church or community center, mobile pantries may also be operated by food banks. The Feeding America network uses mobile pantries to supplement their other programs in high-need areas (Feeding America, 2015b). The food bank distributes food at mobile pantries using a truck with refrigeration units driven to various community locations, allowing the clients to choose what they want. Mobile pantries offer food banks another way to distribute more-perishable food items, such as donated grocery products like meat, produce, bread and baked goods.

2.4 Consumer Perception of Meat

Much research has been conducted on consumer perception of foods, including studies focusing specifically on meat. Meat, along with other protein products, is an important part of daily nutrition and diets around the world. However, the types and amounts of meat consumed vary depending on a number of factors, including socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, ethics or morals, tradition, and consumer behavior. In their 2014 study, Font-i-Furnols and Gurrero (2014) posited that three types of factors (psychological, sensory, and marketing) affect consumers' perceptions and purchasing behaviors regarding meat. They said that by kilogram per capita, "globally, pork is consumed the most, followed by poultry, beef, and finally sheep and goat meat" (p. 361). However, in the United States, by pounds per capita, poultry is consumed the most, followed by beef, pork, fish, and lamb (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Consumer perceptions and preferences for meat are also influenced by psychological factors such as beliefs, attitudes, and expectations; sensory factors of visual appearance, in-mouth texture, and flavor; and marketing factors of price and quality labeling (Font-i-Furnols & Gurrero, 2014).

In focus groups conducted across France, Germany, Spain, and the United Kingdom, Grunert (1997) found that consumers have many purchasing motives in common when buying beef, such as tradition, ability to use in a variety of dishes, acceptability to children and guests, and the social status associated with being able to afford it. Grunert (1997) also found that for consumers in these four countries, "the most important quality aspects of beef are that it tastes good, is tender, juicy, fresh, lean, healthy, and nutritious" (p. 157). In a more recent study, Grunert (2005) suggests that

future trends in meat consumption worldwide will depend increasingly on four extrinsic cues: (1) quality perception (such as pros and cons of eating red meat), (2) shopping fast/easy versus shopping in specialized stores (such as purchasing meat from a supermarket versus in a butcher shop), (3) convenience of preparation (such as purchasing processed foods and meals that already have meat in them to avoid blood or mess in kitchens), (4) and concerns about meat production (such as consumer concerns about how animals are produced and processed).

In their study of low-income women in Minnesota and their food choices when grocery shopping, Wiig and Smith (2008) found that meat was essential to their research participants, and they said it was a priority in breakfast and dinner meals. The authors noted that the population of low-income women they studied was willing to spend more money to purchase their meat supply for a month compared to other food supplies. When discussing how research participants prioritized their food choices, Wiig and Smith (2008) said:

Our qualitative data may elucidate some of the reasons why low-income families prefer meat and spend more money on it, including the mothers' upbringing, ethnic traditions, taste, the important status of meat in meals, and meat's versatility in meal preparation. We speculate that despite financial constraints, participants may still be willing to spend more of their food dollars on meat because it is considered a status food in American culture and may increase familial self-esteem. Meat consumption may, in essence, be part of participants' self-identities. (p. 1732)

2.5 Theory

Two theoretical perspectives, social cognitive theory and means-end chain theory, were used to guide this research. The selected theoretical perspectives were identified through a review of literature addressing food insecurity, food choices, food preferences, and nutrition. The literature revealed that many studies addressing individuals' food perceptions and choices do not explicitly cite a particular social or behavioral theory (Ellis & Tucker, 2009). However, social cognitive theory was a common choice among studies that did use a theoretical perspective. As described in the following section, social cognitive theory offers a unique perspective on individuals' food perceptions and choices because it addresses personal, environmental, and behavioral factors.

The second theoretical perspective, means-end chain theory, uses special interview techniques to attempt to identify personal values that underlie individuals' perceptions and behaviors. While not commonly used in research with low-income, food-insecure consumers, the means-end chain theoretical perspective was selected for use in the current research for its ability to explore and probe more deeply into the cognitive processes influencing pantry clients' food decision-making.

Each of the two theoretical perspectives is discussed in turn in the following sections.

2.5.1 Social Cognitive Theory

Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986; 2001), based in psychology, advances the notion that human behavior can be explained by a triadic interaction among personal factors, behavior, and environmental influences (Figure 2.1). In the current research, the perspective is used to gain insights into the ways people think about and make decisions.

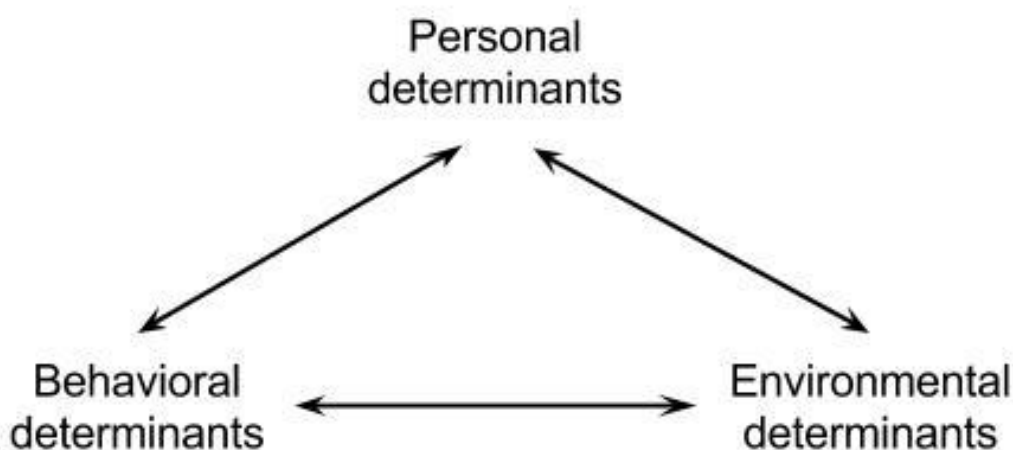


Figure 2.1 Bandura's (2001) triadic model of human behavior (p. 266).

Social cognitive theory (SCT) proposes that individuals have personal agency in their actions, decisions, and daily lives (Bandura, 1991; Bandura, 2001). Levels of personal agency, or the ability to control one's own decisions and actions, vary with the individual. In addition to personal agency, SCT also allows for proxy agency, where people have others act in their stead, and collective agency, where multiple people work together to accomplish a common goal (Bandura, 2002). Depending on societal and

cultural context, people can use all three types of agency in a single day or during various times in their lives.

Another tenet of SCT is that individuals are at times both self-reflecting and self-regulating. Self-reflection and self-regulation are among the distinguishing features of human beings. They possess the ability to reflect on decisions and actions, and regulate those by developing habits or standards of behavior (Bandura, 1991).

Because of its ability to explain and predict behavior, SCT has been widely used in a number of research fields, including culture (Bandura, 2002), nutrition (Dammann & Smith, 2009; Martin et al., 2013), and communication (Bandura, 2001). Dammann and Smith (2009) conducted focus groups with low-income women to investigate factors affecting food choice and perceived health impacts of their diets. Their research used SCT to help frame the questions they asked in focus groups because of its wide use in nutrition-related research and its ability to help conceptualize complex behaviors such as health habits. The researchers found that low-income families do not rely solely on food preferences to make food choices. Rather, they consider a number of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors when selecting foods, such as sensory appeal, price, health benefits, availability of food stamps and/or their food budget.

Martin et al. (2013) compared clients from traditional food pantries and those participating in a collaborative food pantry experience. Their research employed SCT as well as the Stages of Change Model to assess a person's ability to be an agent of change in their lives. SCT was used to gain insights into how food pantry clients perceive pantries and food available at those pantries. How a client perceives pantries and the food available at those pantries can be influenced by personal factors, environmental

influences, and behavior. In the current analysis, personal factors could involve clients' awareness of food pantries and food pantry procedures, as well as their perceived ability to locate desired food products at pantries for themselves or their families. Environmental factors refer to the settings in which individuals live and interact. Pantry clients have varying access to pantries; pantries also vary according to their facilities and the variety and quality of foods they offer. Finally, behavioral factors refer to the influence an individual's actions have on decision-making and future behaviors – people learn from their experiences and learn vicariously by observing others. In the case of food pantry clients, positive experiences at the food pantry would be expected to encourage increased pantry use, while less than positive experiences would be expected to discourage pantry use.

SCT was used to guide the research, in particular the development of interview questions used with pantry clients to investigate how they made decisions about food items, including meat. To address research objectives in this study, it was important to include questions addressing decision-making of food pantry clients.

2.5.2 Means-end Chain Theory

Means-end chain theory (MEC) dovetails with this study because, as SCT seeks to explain *how* individuals think about and make choices and decisions, MEC seeks to identify and understand *why* individuals make choices regarding certain items, and to uncover the underlying value behind those decisions. Means-end chain theory has its roots in market and consumer research (Zeithaml, 1988), and takes a user-oriented approach (Grunert, 1995). The premise of MEC is that users (or consumers) do not buy a product simply because they can – they buy a product for the benefits that “their consumption can provide” (Costa et al., 2004, p. 403). Essentially, a consumer selects and buys a product because it offers benefits or consequences a person values.

Researchers can elicit these product characteristics, consequences, and values through an iterative interview technique known as laddering (Costa et al., 2004; Grunert, 1995). Laddering (Figure 2.2) involves first asking the research participant to generate product characteristics, then asking participants to identify preferences among the characteristics, and why certain characteristics are preferred. These answers may lead to

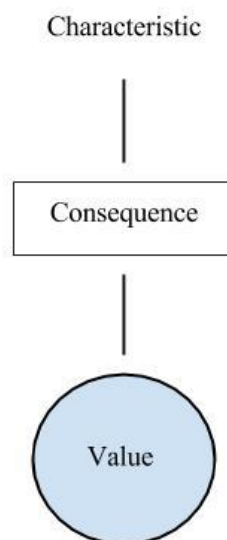


Figure 2.2 Means-end chain laddering progression model (Costa et al., 2004).

the participant verbalizing a consequence, referred to as benefits by some researchers (Grunert, 1995). The interviewer may then explore the response using probing questions such as, “Why is ____ important to you?” This probing continues with the goal of identifying a terminal value. Identification of values can be helpful in developing a more complete understanding of consumers. Results from laddering research are often used to develop targeted marketing and advertising campaigns for current and new products or programs (Costa et al., 2004).

Means-end chain theory is also used to assess consumer choice, behavior, and perceptions and to help elicit characteristics of food choice and meal planning (Costa, Schoolmeester, Dekker, & Jongen, 2007; Grunert, 1997). In the Costa et al. (2007) study with Dutch participants, researchers explored the motivations of choosing convenient meal options such as ready-made meals versus other meal solutions, and what attributes the participants used when differentiating between specific meal solutions.

Means-end chain theory has also been used to investigate motivations regarding foods among specific groups of consumers. Bonne and Verbeke (2006) used in-depth interviews with Muslims living in Belgium to: 1) investigate what attributes of meat were important, 2) depict their motivations to buy meat, and 3) assess whether meat consumption trends apply for Muslims. Their findings revealed that, when buying meat, Muslim consumers place importance on health, faith, family, enjoyment of life, and respect for animal welfare. The researchers emphasized the need for quantitative methods to validate their findings with other and larger consumer populations.

Means-end chain theory is relevant to the current research for its ability to help elicit food pantry clients’ motivations when preparing meals and to assess the perceived

importance of various products, including meat, in meal preparation and planning. The potential of means-end chain theory to identify clients' underlying values in food decision-making is of particular interest because values tend to be strongly held and lasting beliefs that may influence a broad range of attitudes and behaviors. Identifying pantry clients' values concerning food and meal preparation can assist in the development of policies that encourage recommended practices at the household level.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Project Overview

The research objectives in this exploratory mixed-methods study were:

1. Describe the culture of food pantry clients, especially clients' values and perceptions toward meat in the diet and meat donated to pantries.
2. Describe the social climate of selected food pantries.
3. Investigate food pantry clients' preferences for receiving information about food and learning food preparation techniques.

3.1.2 Chapter Overview

This research project used a combination of qualitative social scientific methods, such as in-depth interviews, observation, and field notes. This research project was funded through an AgSEED (Agricultural Science and Extension for Economic Development) grant from the College of Agriculture, Purdue University. AgSEED is a competitive grant program that awards funds to researchers that develop projects focused on agriculture or rural development in Indiana (Purdue Agriculture, 2015). The co-

principal investigator (co-PI) for this research project was also the advisor for the thesis project.

There were three components to data collection in this project: interviews with food pantry clients ($n = 36$), interviews with food pantry directors ($n = 3$), and observations/field notes at five local food pantries ($n = 5$). This chapter has several subsequent sections that report on the procedures used to meet the study objectives. The first section discusses how pantries, clients, and directors were recruited. The second section focuses on the instruments used in the study. The third discusses the field test of one instrument, the client interview questionnaire. The fourth section details Institutional Review Board approval. The fifth section provides details about data collection, and sixth section discusses how data was organized and analyzed. The final two sections discuss threats to validity and limitations, respectively.

3.2 Recruitment

In order to meet the study's three objectives, food pantries, clients, and directors had to be identified. Following initial contact by the co-PI with the director of operations at a northwest Indiana food bank serving 16 northwest Indiana counties (Benton, Carroll, Cass, Clinton, Fountain, Fulton, Howard, Jasper, Miami, Montgomery, Newton, Pulaski, Tippecanoe, Tipton, Warren, and White) in early summer 2014 to pre-identify local food pantries where possible data collection could take place.¹ The initial contact email can be seen in Appendix A; at that point, three counties, six pantries, and a goal of 60 client interviews were discussed. Later that summer, I followed up with the food bank and was referred to the distribution manager. My email conversations with him are in Appendix B.

The sample was narrowed to one county for convenience, and to adhere to budget, and also so that I could focus on the dynamics of both stationary and mobile pantries, rather than one or the other. I wanted to include both stationary and mobile pantries to explore pantry climates in the two types of pantries. In this document, subsequent references to stationary pantries are labeled as S1 and S2, while references to mobile pantries are labeled M1, M2, and M3.

The selected food bank serves as a collecting place for food items received through retail donations, government commodities, and other food banks, as well as items the food bank may have purchased. In 2013, the food available at the selected northwest Indiana food bank came from a number of sources; specifically, 40 percent was from manufacturers and retailers, 23 percent was purchased (from retailers such as grocery stores), 20 percent was from government commodities, 12 percent was from other food banks, 3 percent was from local, individual farmers, and 2 percent was from local food drives.¹ The selected stationary food pantries order food online from the food bank and pay approximately \$0.19 per pound for most food items.¹ Other food items available at the food bank are donated to the food pantries; approximately 37 percent of food items are donated to food pantries.¹ The stationary pantries can pick up orders at the food bank or have them delivered on designated days and times. The selected mobile pantries are operated by the food bank. For the selected mobile pantries, the food bank distributes food items using a truck with refrigeration units. The selected food bank has operated a mobile pantry program since 2010, and received a truck through a grant from Feeding America in 2011 to help them reach areas in the community with no or little resources.¹

In addition to offering food items, some pantries offer informational or educational resources to clients, including handouts, recipe cards, pamphlets, and cooking lessons. One stationary pantry studied offered a monthly cooking lesson, the other offered information about local activities, such as church services and community cookouts. The mobile pantries studied were operated by the food bank; a list of all area food pantries was available at one mobile pantry.

3.2.1 Pantry Selection

The distribution manager provided me with a list of all food pantries in the local county affiliated with the food bank. As of September 2014, the list included 28 food pantries and/or soup kitchens. (Soup kitchens commonly offer a warm meal in addition to food; the current research focused solely on food pantries.) I worked with the distribution manager to identify at least four possible local food pantries, both stationary and mobile, in one northwest Indiana county. I wanted to identify at least four possible pantries so there would be a variety of clients included in the study. The distribution manager suggested four stationary pantries, and one mobile pantry that the food bank considered a “whistle-stop.” They defined a whistle-stop as a mobile pantry that occurs once a week, normally at same location, unlike other mobile pantries. I also signed up on the food banks’ email listserv to ensure I would receive emails about other mobile pantries throughout fall 2014.

I looked at the locations of the pantries the distribution manager recommended, as well as the hours of operation for the pantry. I selected two stationary pantries because they were in different parts of the community, and because they had varied hours of

operation. One pantry (S1) was open four days a week in the mornings, while the other pantry (S2) was open two afternoons and one evening per week.

I called the two stationary pantry directors. I introduced myself, explained my research project, and asked if I could have permission to conduct research at their facilities. The script for that phone call is provided in Appendix C. Both directors gave their permission. An employee of the selected food bank (subsequently referred to as Director M or director of mobile pantries) granted me permission via email to conduct research at three mobile pantries (M1, M2, and M3). I contacted three directors, and all three agreed to allow research to be conducted. In follow-up emails I sent to each director, we discussed possible dates and times to conduct the research. After talking with my advisory committee, I capped my sample at 40 clients because of the qualitative nature of the study, with a goal of collecting a maximum of 10 client interviews at each of the pantry locations or until data saturation was reached. Sample sizes needed for data saturation in qualitative research are variable because saturation is “the point at which no new information or themes are observed in the data” (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006, p. 59).

3.2.2 Client Recruitment

The next step in the methodology was to request and secure permission from the three pantry directors to conduct client interviews at the selected pantries. I contacted each food pantry director (Appendix C), requesting permission to conduct interviews at his/her facility. I secured permission to collect client data at all selected stationary and mobile food pantries. Also, I elicited a number of mutually agreeable dates and times to

collect client data at their facilities. The mobile pantry director gave me dates of mobile pantries that would be occurring in the next few months. After visiting a mobile pantry (M1 – also referred to as a whistle-stop by the food bank), I realized that I could not feasibly interview 10 clients in one visit because of the set-up and time restriction. For pantry M1, I was able to work around this potential problem because it took place at the same time and same location week-by-week; however, the other mobile pantries were operated during a specific time period on specific, separate days. Based on feedback from my supervising professor, I collected as many client interviews at pantries M2 and M3 as I could, with an ideal goal of 5 interviews per mobile pantry.

On the dates of client data collection at each of the five pantries in fall 2014, I arrived before the pantry officially opened to clients, and ensured an interview area was set up. Specifically, I conducted client interviews at stationary pantry S1 on October 3, 10, and 17, and pantry S2 on October 7, 8, and 15. I conducted client interviews at mobile pantry M1 on October 7 and 21, M2 on October 25, and M3 on November 8. In some cases, a table and chairs were provided by the individual pantry; on other occasions, I took a table and chairs with me to the pantry locations. At each pantry, I wanted to be sure the interview area was near the food pantry line so as not to inconvenience the interviewee by making him/her walk a long distance with the food they received from the pantry or take them too far from the line if they had yet to receive their food. Still, I needed to offer privacy for the interviews. At the stationary pantries, I conducted the interviews in separate, private rooms. At the mobile pantries, I conducted the interviews inside the end of an enclosed building (pantry M1) and outside at the end of parking lots

(pantries M2 and M3); in both cases, the interview areas were at the opposite end and/or side of where the food pantry was being operated.

After the interview area was set up, I approached individual pantry clients before or after they went through the pantry lines to ask if they would participate in an interview about their perceptions of meat at the food pantry. I used a script, which is provided in Appendix D. I introduced myself, explained the purpose of the research, and let them know that interviews would take approximately 30-60 minutes. If they were interested, I led each research participant (pantry client) to the interview area, explained the purpose of the interview. Then I reviewed and discussed the study consent form, including informing them that their identities would be kept confidential, and of the \$10 compensation that would be given for completing the interview. The client consent form is provided in Appendix E. If each participant agreed to continue, then I would begin the interview.

3.2.3 Director Recruitment

After I had made initial contact with the selected food pantries and the three directors and secured permission to conduct research at their facilities, I followed up with a request to interview the directors about their experiences at the pantries. This follow-up email is provided in Appendix F. Permissions from each director were secured to conduct the director interviews, and once again mutually agreeable dates and times were elicited. I interviewed the three directors on October 27 (S1), October 22 (S2), and November 3 (M1, M2, M3). For the interviews with the directors of the stationary pantries (S1 and S2), I met them at the pantry locations and conducted the interviews in private rooms. I met

the director of the mobile pantries at the local food bank and interviewed him in his private office. Before beginning each of the interviews, I reviewed the purpose of the research project and interview. I also reviewed the consent form, informing them that their identities would be kept confidential. The director consent form is provided in Appendix G. If they consented to the interview, I would then begin the interview.

3.2.4 Observation Recruitment

After making initial contact with the selected pantries and directors, I followed up with an additional request for permission to conduct observations at the food pantries. This additional request was an email, which is provided in Appendix H. The observations were to include details about the social climate of the pantries, including normal operating procedures, and available food, as well as my personal perceptions of the pantries. If the directors gave me permission, I asked for mutually agreeable dates and times to do the observations. All three directors gave their permission. I observed at the pantries on: October 24 (S1), October 22 (S2), October 28 (M1), October 25 (M2), and November 8 (M3). Ideally, I hoped to conduct the observations on separate days from the other forms of data collection (client and director interviews), but that was not possible for two of the mobile pantries (M2, M3) because the pantries happened only once in the specific locations. In those two cases, I made my observation notes before the pantry officially started, between client interviews, and during the set-up and tear-down of the pantries.

3.3 Instrumentation

I used three different instruments for the three parts of the study, a client interview questionnaire, director interview questionnaire, and observation guide. Each of which are individually discussed below.

3.3.1 Client Interview Questionnaire

For personal interviews with food pantry clients, a questionnaire was developed to meet the study objectives. The question route, provided in Appendix I, was developed based on a review of literature. The questionnaire contained 42 questions and was expected to take approximately 30 to 60 minutes to administer. Included were a number of close-ended as well as open-ended questions to allow flexibility to probe deeper into certain areas based on participant responses. Eating meat was a criterion for participation in the study; the first question on the questionnaire asked clients if they ate meat.

Overall, the instrument included questions on the amount of meat eaten weekly; meat preferences among chicken, beef, pork and fish; incidence of health issues that influenced diet; sources of meat; and protein sources consumed other than meat. A series of items focused on perceptions and behaviors regarding pantries and pantry foods, including meat. Pantry clients were questioned regarding frequency of food pantry use; the amount of time they had been using food pantries; perceived quality of pantry meat; personal impressions of pantry meat packaging; possible food safety concerns regarding pantry meat; and perceived value of information about cooking tips and meal ideas for pantry foods, including meat. The instrument concluded with several demographic items including gender; age; type of residence; and number of individuals in household.

Social cognitive theory guided development of the bulk of questionnaire items employed in the client interview instrument. The SCT theoretical perspective advances the idea that individuals' perceptions and use of food pantries and particular food items is based on a constant and complex interaction of personal, environmental, and behavioral factors. Specifically, individuals form perceptions and attitudes that may ultimately lead to particular behaviors based on their own knowledge and abilities, options available to them in their local communities and households, their past experiences and the perceptions formed by observing others in similar situations.

Means-end chain theory guided the development of a question set regarding a typical meal the client might prepare at home. The client was asked to identify things he or she would think about relative to the meal and the issues important to them in planning the meal. This interview questions was modeled after an item developed by Borron and Tucker (2010) in their research involving low-resource Indiana residents. After receiving a response to this question, I began with the most important considerations identified by the client and followed up with a series of probes asking, "Why are these things important to you?" and "What is your overall goal?" Through multiple follow-up questions of this nature, the goal was to elicit a response chain from each pantry client that could potentially lead to identification of an underlying value. This interview method was based on laddering techniques described by Costa et al. (2004) and Grunert (1995). The instrument concluded with several demographic items including gender; age; type of residence; and number of individuals in household.

3.3.2 Director Interview Questionnaire

The director interview questionnaire was developed using social cognitive theory, as well as the definition of climate described in chapter one. The questionnaire is located in Appendix J. It was semi-structured, and included 8 open-ended questions. The questions were about director duties, directors' perceptions of clientele, volunteer recruitment, interactions with volunteers and clients, meat supply and packaging, perceptions of challenges faced by clients, and informational and/or educational materials provided to clients. The interviews were expected to last approximately 30 to 60 minutes. Also, because director interviews were conducted after some of the client interviews and pantry observations, I carefully considered comments shared by participants during client interviews as well as pantry observations in real time. Then, I adjusted for each subsequent director interview by adding specific questions based on issues brought up during the data collection at their respective pantries to build upon emerging, frequent open codes. The semi-structured design allowed for these adjustments.

3.3.3 Observation Guide

In addition to client and director interviews, this research design included another qualitative data form, researcher observations. As noted by Denzin and Lincoln (2011), qualitative research is enriched by using a variety of methods, including observations, that "describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives" (p. 4). Qualitative research often makes use of a number of different forms of data and methods to gain a deeper, richer understanding of the phenomena being studied. Thus, I included field observations as another form of data collection in the research project. I

emailed the directors (Appendix H) to secure permission to conduct observations. I created a one-page guide, which is provided in Appendix K, for the field observations so that certain topics were sure to be included in observations from each pantry. It was important to use a guide for the visits so I could later compare the pantries, their normal operating procedures, and if there were informational needs, especially regarding available meat and client habits. The guide included basic pantry information, number of times clients could visit the pantry per month, volume of pantry foot traffic, volume of meat, types of meat, clients' meat selection process, as well as my personal perception of the meat. In addition to following the observation guide, I included my personal field notes specific to each pantry.

3.4 Field Testing

The field testing involved testing the client interview questionnaire. To test the client interview questionnaire, I conducted four pilot interviews at two local food pantries, one stationary and one mobile. After reviewing the pilot interviews, my advisor and I made minor revisions (e.g., numbering the question route). I also added a question that asked if clients had any health problems that would prevent them from eating certain foods, or meat, because the topic of health was brought up when explaining and adding detail to certain questions during two of the pilot interviews. I thought it was important to address health issues with a question because half of the clients in my pilot study brought the topic up themselves, and because health issues could affect clients' eating habits and preferences. After making the adjustments, I then began collecting interviews to include in the data set for this project.

3.5 Research Approval

Approval for human subjects study was granted from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Purdue University, initially in July 2014. This approval is provided in Appendix L. I submitted an amendment to the IRB for the addition of director interviews and pantry observations. IRB approved the amended study in October 2014, and this approval is provided in Appendix M.

3.6 Data Collection

Data collection at the selected pantries was separated into three areas: 1) interviews with food pantry clients, 2) interviews with food pantry directors, and 3) observations at food pantries.

Between October 3 and November 8, 2014, I collected 10 interviews at pantry S1, 10 interviews at pantry S2, eight interviews at pantry M1, three interviews at pantry M2, and five interviews at pantry M3. In total, 36 interviews were completed at food pantries in the selected county. The interviews were voluntary and expected to last approximately 30 to 60 minutes; the interviews ranged from approximately 15 to 40 minutes. I approached clients at the starting point of the line at each pantry using a script (Appendix D), introducing myself and describing my research. If clients agreed to do an interview, I then asked them if they would like to do the interview before or after they went through the line. If clients refused to do an interview, I asked the next client in line. If clients agreed to do an interview immediately, I then escorted them to the interview area. I explained the research and consent form, informing them that their identities would be kept confidential. They had to acknowledge and sign a consent form, which is provided

in Appendix E. If clients agreed to do an interview after they went through the line, I waited until they had went through the line (and in some cases, took food to their cars), then escorted them to the interview area, explained the research and the consent form. After I completed an interview, I returned to the starting point of the line until I had collected enough interviews, or until the pantry closed. I returned to pantry locations as needed to collect the remaining client interviews in the same manner.

Clients who chose to participate in the research were not expected to have risks or benefits from the study that were different from their everyday lives except for allowing them to share their opinions. After the completion of the interview, participants were compensated \$10 for their time. The clients signed a log affirming that they had received \$10. The log was turned into the Purdue business office after completing interviews. Also, all consent forms were separated from all instrumentation and filed in a locked drawer at the institution. No client names were kept.

With verbal permission from the participant, each interview was audio recorded, and subsequently transcribed verbatim. Participants were also informed they could stop the interview at any time. No interviewee declined to be recorded; all completed the interview in its entirety. In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, all participants were assigned a number and a pseudonym, and all materials associated with each participant—including written notes, audio files, and transcripts—were identified only through the associated number and/or pseudonym. All audio files were named according to participant number and transcribed verbatim, then deleted from the recording device.

Between October 22 and November 3, 2014, I interviewed three directors. Two directors oversaw operations at the two stationary pantries and were interviewed at their

respective pantry locations, and the third director oversaw all mobile pantries in the county and was interviewed at the food bank. Upon arrival the days of the interviews, I introduced myself, explained my search and reviewed the consent form. All consent forms were separated from all instrumentation and filed in a locked drawer at the institution. These interviews were also expected to last approximately 30 to 60 minutes; the range of interview times was approximately 25 to 50 minutes. They were recorded if permission was given from the directors. Directors were also informed they could stop the interview at any time. None of the directors refused to allow the recording; all completed the interview in its entirety. In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, each director was assigned a number and/or pseudonym that was used throughout the duration of the study. The audio files were also named according to pseudonym, transcribed verbatim, and subsequently deleted from the recorder.

Between October 22 and November 8, 2014, I performed a total of five observations at two stationary pantries and three mobile pantries. I arrived at the pantries at least 15 minutes prior to the start time, and stayed until each pantry closed. During each observation visit, I was in the pantry during the entire hours of operation. I moved around at each to ensure I could see all the available food, the client line, and the procedure for getting food at each pantry. I used the observation guide at each of the pantries, and also included personal observations and notes at each pantry. The observations served as ethnographic, qualitative field notes for each location. Because the notes were taken by hand, I typed up the notes and reflections after each pantry observation to mitigate potential confusion during data analysis.

3.7 Data Organization

In preparation for data analysis, I created a naming document for clients who were interviewed. The naming document is provided in Appendix N. It included the pantry location pseudonym, the number assigned to each interviewee at the time of data collection, and the pseudonym I assigned during organization. I wanted to be purposeful about assigning pseudonyms to the participants while still maintaining confidentiality. After some thought, I assigned pseudonyms to clients beginning with the first letter of the pantry where the interview was collected. I used Google searches and babble.com to compile lists of names beginning with the first letter of the pantries visited, and then selected the pseudonyms. Thus, when analyzing the data, I was able to quickly identify participants from the same pantry and make in-pantry comparisons about their results without having to consult the master list of audio files, interview notes, and naming data. Next, I formatted each transcription with a header that included the participant number, pseudonym, location of the interview, and page number to ensure the data did not get mixed up.

I included questions in the food pantry client interviews that could be quantified later (e.g., how many times per week do you eat meat?). Thus, I created a master data file in the statistical software package SPSS[®]. I created a variable in the file for each question on the client interview questionnaire.

For the director data, I assigned single letter pseudonyms also using the first letter of the pantry location to each participant to ensure anonymity (e.g., Director S). I also formatted each director transcription similarly to how I formatted the client transcriptions.

As mentioned previously, I typed up the observation notes. The observation notes were named according to pantry location (S1, S2, M1, M2, M3).

3.7.1 Analysis of Client Data

I analyzed the client data both qualitatively and quantitatively. First, I reviewed the question route and selected questions that could be quantitatively analyzed. I used SPSS® software to generate descriptive frequencies on those variables to find ranges, distributions, means, modes, and percentages. In some cases, the first part of a question lent itself to quantitative analysis, and the second part to qualitative analysis (e.g., why did you rank the meat a 4? Or, please explain why you gave that ranking). The majority of the client data was qualitative in nature, and therefore was analyzed through qualitative analysis. I employed two strategies for qualitative analysis.

First, I performed qualitative analysis on the remaining questions/variables collected in the client interviews using a specific coding scheme (Figure 3.1) based on Saldaña's (2013) *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. This coding scheme was used throughout the remaining qualitative data, including the rest of the client data, the director data, and the observations. For the first step in the qualitative analysis, also known as first-cycle coding, I used descriptive coding on each selected variable. Descriptive coding, as explained by Saldaña (2013), summarizes the main point or basic topic of a passage into a short phrase or even a single word. During this initial step, I also marked certain phrases or lines because they were potential representative quotes. By extracting the gist of an answer or passage, I was then able to look back over all of the answers and group similar descriptive codes within the individual variables, as well as

throughout the variables and data. Descriptive coding is also known to work well when there are many different forms of data, and I wanted to be able to use a similar coding strategy across all forms of data collection. As an initial step, descriptive coding allowed me to group main ideas of each of the variables.

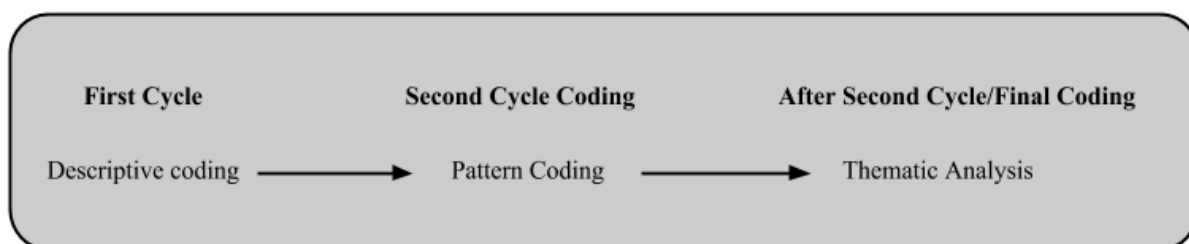


Figure 3.1 Qualitative coding scheme.

For the second cycle of coding, I selected pattern coding to complement the descriptive coding conducted in the first cycle. Pattern codes are explanatory in nature, meant to identify emerging themes or explanations, and “they pull together a lot of material into a more meaningful and parsimonious unit of analysis” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 69). I reviewed codes developed in the first cycle, grouping those further into patterns, described by a short phrase or representative quote. In this second cycle, I considered the codes both within individual variables (intra) and across the variables (inter), to see if patterns emerged across the data set. The second cycle resulted in a more comprehensive set of codes. However, I wanted to further explore relationships among the codes and the emerging themes, so I conducted a third cycle of coding.

For the third cycle of coding, I used thematic analysis. Thematic analysis involves looking at the emergent themes developed from pattern coding to see how (or if) they fit the data as a whole. As Boyatzis (1998) notes, thematic analysis is “a way of seeing” and

“a way of making sense out of seemingly unrelated material” (p. 4). Thematic analysis allowed me to continue to work through what continually showed up in various steps of the coding, and investigate the underlying, or “latent” (Boyatzis, 1998), phenomena at work in the data.

The second strategy of qualitative analysis addressed the means-end chain analysis. I created a new Word document and separated the section of questions that were devised using means-end chain theory. Using the master data file, I copied and pasted answers from those questions into a table in the new document. Then, I used the laddering technique of MEC theory (Costa et al., 2004; Grunert, 1995) to code the answers and create chain links between characteristics, consequences, and values. To ensure inter-rater reliability, I compared my codes with those of my advisor; we discussed, further refined the codes and chains, and then agreed upon final codes.

3.7.2 Analysis of Director Data

I used the same coding scheme (Figure 3.1) to analyze the director interviews. The director data were purely qualitative. There was no quantitative data from director interviews, thus no quantitative analysis was needed.

3.7.3 Analysis of Observations

For my first step in analyzing the observations, I employed the coding scheme described previously (Figure 3.1). I did find a few recurring descriptive codes in the observations (and noted those), but found no pattern codes or subsequent themes. I realized that because of the nature and purpose of the observations to serve as field notes,

the coding scheme I developed (Figure 3.1) did not wholly fit this part of data. While reviewing the observations, I noticed that I had analyzed my original handwritten notes as I was typing them up after comparing my handwritten notes and the electronic versions. I consulted with my advisor, and looked at the bank of literature to ensure my revised observations served as analysis. As Silverman (2006) posits that when researchers are making observational field notes, “one is not simply recording data but also analyzing them” (p. 92). Therefore, the electronic versions of the five observations served as the final analysis of the observations.

3.8 Threats to Validity

The research methods used to meet study objectives were qualitative in nature. Standards for achieving validity in qualitative research have been described by a number of authors in the literature (Denzin, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Four criteria were addressed in order to strengthen the validity: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Denzin, 2009; Miles et al., 2014).

In order to better understand the culture and perceptions of the food pantry clients as it relates to their personal experiences at the food pantry, it was critical to design a semi-structured question route that incorporated a number of open-ended questions, allowing each client to lead the discussion as he/she brought up important issues not previously identified by the researcher. This feature of research enhanced the credibility of the data, ensuring that the perspective of the client was captured, rather than the preconceived notions of the researcher.

Data for this research were collected at a select point in time (during fall 2014) and at a select location. While it is important to note that the interviews were conducted with food pantry clients and directors until a saturation of data was reached (Guest et al., 2006), the transferability of this data does not permit generalization to other communities. As a qualitative study with a relatively low number of participants, this project captures the current cultural and structural dynamics in this given location for these study participants. This study should be replicated in other locations for the purposes of better understanding cultural dynamics and implications as it relates to client perceptions. In addition, findings from this study can be incorporated into future research and instrumentation with low-resource populations.

The nature of the transferability in this project also directly affects the dependability. In order to establish validity, the instrumentation must be sound and well-detailed. Researchers must also be willing and able to account for changes and shifts in the structural and cultural dynamics of the food pantries and the clients. When the unexpected happened, such as limited or no meat being available at some food pantries during observations, I adjusted accordingly, simultaneously capturing these changes in the field notes.

Qualitative work itself relies heavily on interpretation, and therefore is subject to individual biases. In regard to confirmability, one method of trying to offset potential biases is to ask a colleague familiar with qualitative work and analysis to read through the data and develop analysis (codes in this case) and discuss (Burnard, 1991). To help account for any possible personal biases I held as the researcher, I asked my advisor, an

experienced qualitative researcher, to carefully review my analysis. This step also helped to ensure a sense of inter-rater reliability and ensure validity of my results.

I employed three modes of data collection methods to address each of the research objectives. The use of multiple data collection modes itself served as a strategy to help ensure validity. Use of various methods helped serve as a check of the data and in some cases allowed for triangulation of the data and emerging themes.

3.9 Limitations

Several limitations, listed below, were encountered in the procedures used to carry out this research:

1. The intent was to perform the three modes of data collection on separate days, but this was not feasible at mobile pantry locations M2 and M3. Those pantries occurred only one day (each). Thus, client interviews and observations were conducted on the same day at pantries M2 and M3.
2. The ideal cap for client interviews was $n = 40$, a maximum of $n = 10$ per pantry, or until data saturation was reached. However, only three interviews were able to be conducted at pantry M2, and five interviews at pantry M3. Because of the nature of pantries M2 and M3, there was no way to return to the specific pantries on future days to conduct more interviews.
3. Client interviews conducted at mobile pantries were not in ideal locations; ideally, interviews would have taken place in rooms separate from pantries

(as they did at S1 and S2) instead of at the opposite end of a building (M1) or parking lots (M2 and M3).

4. For the question in the client interview questionnaire that involved laddering techniques, some participants did not respond well to repeated similar questions. It was not possible to build value chains when participants did not provide sufficient answers to follow-up questions.
5. During pantry observations, limited amounts of meat (and in one case, no meat) were available for clients. The observation guide included a section about meat, so in these cases not all items on the guide were addressed.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Project Overview

The aims of this exploratory mixed-methods study were to explore the culture of food pantry clients and the social climate of selected northwest Indiana food pantries, along with clients' perceptions of meat quality, packaging and informational preferences. In-depth interviews and observational methods were employed to address the following research objectives:

1. Describe the culture of food pantry clients, especially clients' values and perceptions toward meat in the diet and meat donated to pantries.
2. Describe the social climate of selected food pantries.
3. Investigate food pantry clients' preferences for receiving information about food and learning food preparation techniques.

4.1.2 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents study findings for in-depth interviews and researcher observations conducted at five food pantries (two stationary pantries and three mobile pantries) in northwest Indiana. The two stationary pantries were affiliated with local

churches and had multiple days and times of operation. The three mobile pantries varied in terms of frequency, location, and food offered, but had a common thread: a truck from the local food bank provided the food offered at each of them. Two mobile pantries were operated on Saturdays in parking lots of area businesses while one was operated in a building at a local fairgrounds.

This chapter is organized by data sources. Section 4.2 presents the results and analysis of data collected during client interviews. This section is composed of six parts: (1) An overview of food pantry clients interviewed and where they were interviewed is given, which includes general demographics, and food preferences and practices; (2) the analysis of the means-end chain section of the questionnaire; (3) clients' values and perceptions of meat; (4) perceptions of other foods at pantries; (5) informational needs and preferences as identified by the clients; and, finally, (6) overall themes that emerged from the client data as they relate to open-ended questions regarding meat and general food perceptions.

Section 4.3 provides an overview of themes that emerged from the food pantry directors who were interviewed in regard to their role, perception of food pantry clients, and the overall social climate of the food pantries. Section 4.4 presents data collected during researcher observations and field notes, and gives more information about each individual pantry studied.

4.2 Food Pantry Clients

Using the client interview questionnaire, a total of 36 client interviews took place between the dates of October 3 and November 8, 2014 at the five pantry locations. The

clientele varied at each location; those variations are detailed in the collected client demographic data and other subsequent chapter sections.

4.2.1 Client Demographics

Food pantry clients ($n = 36$) ranged in age from 22 to 77 years old, with a mean of 49.1 (standard deviation: 13.76), (Table 4.1). Data for client gender and number of people living in the household are provided in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Client characteristics by pantry ($n = 36$)

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	No. people living with client	No. children in household
Stationary pantry S1 ($n = 10$)				
Sean	Male	61	2	0
Sawyer	Male	48	0	0
Seth	Male	47	5	2
Stephanie	Female	32	7	6
Susan	Female	57	1	0
Shane	Male	47	0	0
Solomon	Male	60	0	0
Sarah	Female	28	4	2
Sophia	Female	44	2	2
Spencer	Male	56	0	0
Stationary pantry S2 ($n = 10$)				
Eva	Female	29	3	3
Emmett	Male	38	4	3
Ethan	Male	29	5	3
Evan	Male	27	2	0
Earl	Male	63	2	0
Elijah	Male	22	3	1
Ellen	Female	46	1	1
Eric	Male	35	2	0
Edward	Male	43	4	0
Elizabeth	Female	48	4	3

Table 4.1 continued

Mobile pantry M1 (<i>n</i> = 8)				
Tanya	Female	51	5	1
Tom	Male	67	0	0
Teresa	Female	52	0	0
Tara	Female	75	0	0
Travis	Male	58	2	0
Tiffany	Female	55	9	3
Trina	Female	36	3	2
Thelma	Female	77	1	0
Mobile pantry M2 (<i>n</i> = 3)				
Julie	Female	66	0	0
Jacquelyn	Female	39	8	4
Joy	Female	60	0	0
Mobile pantry M3 (<i>n</i> = 5)				
Mike	Male	55	3	3
Murphy	Male	54	0	0
Moses	Male	62	3	0
Mark	Male	44	2	1
Martha	Female	57	2	1

Roughly half of the clients (19, 52.8 percent) reported having health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and food allergies that would prevent them from eating certain foods or meat.

All of the food pantry clients interviewed at the five different pantry locations resided in the same county of northwestern Indiana. In order for clients to access and utilize the stationary pantries targeted in this study, clients were required to be residents of the county where the pantries were located; at the mobile pantries, clients were not required to be residents of the county where the mobile pantry was conducted. Clients

said they had lived in the area from three months to their entire lives (oldest client who said this was 67) at the time of client interviews (mean: 26.72, standard deviation: 19.09)

While all 36 clients interviewed were residents of the county where all five pantries operated, they did live in a variety of dwellings, including apartments, homes, and trailers. More than three-quarters of the clients interviewed said they lived in either apartments (47.2 percent) or homes (33.3 percent), while three were either in a transitional housing complex or homeless (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Client residences

Type of Residence	Frequency	Percent
Apartment	17	47.2
Home	12	33.3
Trailer	4	11.1
Homeless/Other	2	5.6
Transitional Housing Complex	1	2.8
Total	36	100.0

Clients were asked how often they visited a pantry (Table 4.3). Their answers were numerically coded (0 = less than once a month, 1 = once a month, 2 = 2-3 times per month, 3 = at least once a month, 4 = more than once a week) so the results could be statistically analyzed (mean: 2.19, standard deviation: 1.28). Nearly 70 percent (25 clients) said they visited a food pantry more frequently than two to three times a month. Clients were also asked when they started visiting a pantry; their answers varied widely, but ranged from less than a year to 40 years (mean: 6.73, standard deviation: 8.44). When

asked how many food pantries they visited, clients' answers ranged from one pantry to seven pantries (mean: 3.67, standard deviation: 1.77) in the selected community. Twenty clients mentioned visiting pantry S1, located downtown; 16 clients said they visited pantry S2, located northeast of downtown; 9 clients said they visited pantry M1, located south of downtown; 3 clients said they visited M2, located downtown; and 5 clients said they visited pantry M3, located south of downtown. They also mentioned visiting other area food pantries where research was not conducted. For stationary pantries, 24 clients said they visited one located west of downtown, 12 clients mentioned visiting one north of downtown, seven clients mentioned visiting one located southwest of downtown, six clients said they visited one downtown, five clients mentioned visiting a pantry south of town, and two clients said they visited one east of town. Six clients also mentioned visiting a combination soup kitchen/food pantry southwest of downtown. Five clients said they visited mobile truck pantries, which are located in varying parts of town.

Table 4.3 Client frequency of pantry visits

Frequency of Visits	Frequency	Percent
Less than once a month	4	11.1
Once a month	7	19.4
2-3 times per month	10	27.8
At least once a week	8	22.2
More than once a week	7	19.4
Total	36	99.9^a

^a The statistical software used for analysis rounds to one decimal, so computations do not always add up to 100.0 percent.

When asked why they started visiting a pantry or what circumstances brought them to a food pantry, clients voiced a variety of reasons, such as monetary problems, being hungry or homeless, and the loss of a job. Twenty-six clients (72.2 percent) mentioned financial problems, such as having a low or fixed income; Joy, who was interviewed at pantry M2, shared this:

Joy: Things like you've just got so much money, you do what you can do with and you can only get so much food stamps. You can only have it go so far. At food trucks like this sometimes and some places might give you laundry soap. You can't buy stuff like with your food stamps. If you don't have much money then you can't buy laundry soap, dish soap or anything like that. The third Sunday of the month they give out dish soap or laundry soap and I usually pick up the laundry soap. The first of the month I go and grab a bunch for \$1-something of laundry soap and I buy the big bottles and they last me about 3-4 months.

Interviewer: So it's nice to have those other things besides food?

Joy: Yeah. Toilet paper you need. Some food pantries give out toilet paper, bath soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, things you can't get usually with food stamps. If you get low paying all your bills and you've got less than \$100 to buy what else you need and it doesn't go very far.

Another client, Sophia, who was interviewed at pantry S1, said she has to decide between purchasing food for her household and other needed items such as prescriptions. She said:

Mainly I'm on a fixed income. I'm on disability and I've had some extra medical bills that I've had to try and figure out how to get those paid and having money to

pay for my new prescriptions and that so I don't always have the money. I have to kind of make a choice between filling prescriptions and getting food and now that I have my niece and nephew with me for a while, there are more people to feed.

The other 10 clients did not directly say they had financial problems, but shared that they were hungry, homeless, or did not have a job. Elijah (S2) simply said, "I was just hungry and didn't have anything. I had to do it."

Clients were also asked how it made them feel to visit a food pantry. Some clients mentioned feeling bad or nervous the first time they visited a pantry, but then feeling more comfortable during later visits. Many of them said that meeting and talking to other clients in line helped with any initial unease. Eric (S2) shared this:

Eric: At first it was really embarrassing and then it was like "Well, there is a lot of people that are without jobs who come to them," so it helps you get by.

Interviewer: Why did you feel embarrassed when you first came to a food pantry?

Eric: I think just because of the need and the help.

Interviewer: Then as you have been to them you felt more comfortable?

Eric: Yeah. The people make you feel comfortable.

Another client, Tom, who was interviewed at the M1 pantry, also said he became more comfortable the more he visited food pantries, sharing:

Tom: Well, there are people that have different ideas about feeling bad or feeling like they're embarrassed maybe.

Interviewer: Do you feel like that?

Tom: Well, at first I did, but I got to talking to the people and they're just like me or you; they're normal people. I got to where I don't feel bad about it. It's just an

every-day thing you're going to have. There shouldn't be any shame to it because you're just trying to live like everybody else.

4.2.2 Means-end Chain Analysis of Client Data

As noted previously in the Chapter 3, select questions in the survey instrument were designed using means-end chain theory (MEC). Grunert (1995) posited that in MEC, people perceive value in food items, and believe that consuming those foods will result in self-relevant consequences. Self-relevant consequences can include nutrition, health, survival, appeasing family and friends, and enjoyment of the food because of taste. Self-relevant consequences can be discovered by identifying and discussing product characteristics that people like and find important, usually by employing a laddering question strategy (Costa et al., 2004; Grunert, 1995; Leppard, Russell, & Cox, 2004). This approach was utilized in this study to examine and consider the issues identified as important to clients when putting together a typical meal, their overall goals with the meals, and the held values clients had in regard to meal preparation.

There were 10 complete chains, 19 partial chains, and 7 invalid chains ($n = 36$). The complete chains had a progression of characteristic, consequence, and value; the partial chains had links between either characteristics and consequences or consequences and unidentifiable final values, but were incomplete; and the chains classified as invalid did not exhibit a progression or link from characteristic to value, so they were unusable as chains. A table of means-end chain codes is provided in Appendix O.

The food pantry clients identified five different characteristics: food being well-done or cooked right, personal health, having a meat and vegetable in the main meal,

enough food for multiple meals or people, and that family eats and spends time together. Each of the ten chains started with one of these characteristics, then with further probing, these self-relevant consequences were elicited: avoid being sick, balanced meal and diet, and stretching food. From the consequences, the clients' underlying values were revealed, which were: good health, children's futures, and feeding the self and family.

A modified hierarchical value map was constructed using only the 10 complete chains, as seen below in Figure 4.1. The modified version used here organizes the MEC codes according to characteristics, consequences, and values, and shows the complete progression from characteristic to value. When constructing hierarchical value maps, there is no universal cut-off point, instead, the goal is to preserve information and provide clarity (Costa et al., 2004). Figure 4.1 is considered modified because it only shows complete chains; an earlier version included partial chains that did not fully identify links

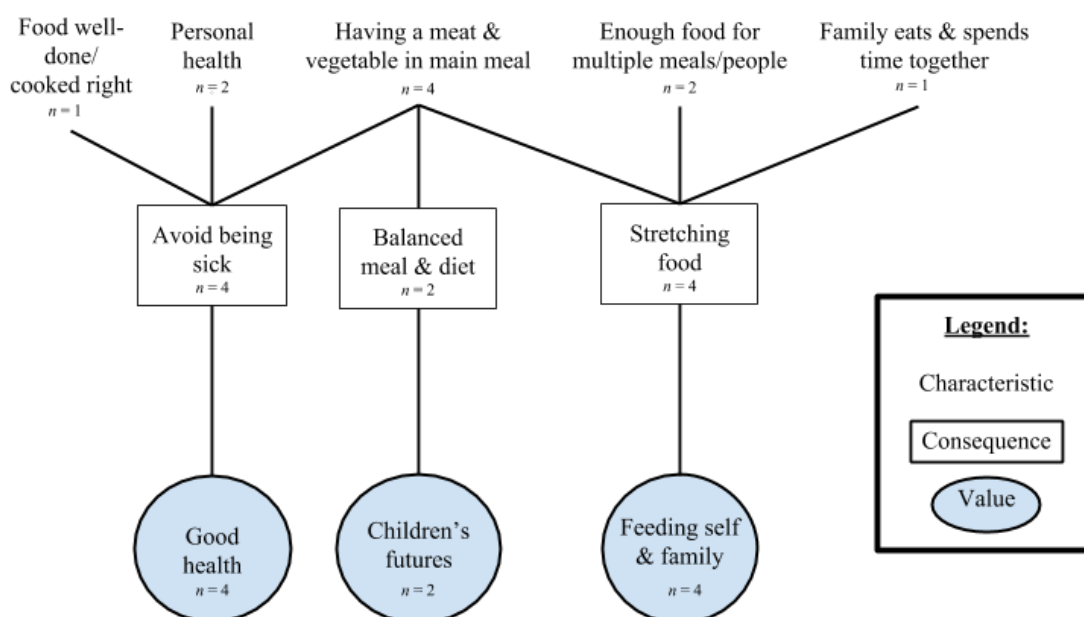


Figure 4.1 Modified hierarchical value map.

between consequences and identifiable values so they were cut off of the final modified hierarchical value map.

Not all of the complete chains followed the same characteristic-consequence-value sequence. One client progressed through the value chain by identifying the characteristic of “food being well-done or cooked right” to the consequence of “avoid being sick” to the final value of “good health.” Two different clients began with the characteristic of “personal health,” progressed to “avoid being sick,” and ended with “good health.” Another client began with the characteristic of “having a meat and vegetable in main meal,” moved to the consequence of “avoid being sick,” and then to the final value of “good health.” Maintaining the characteristic of “having a meat and vegetable in main meal,” two other clients progressed to “balanced meal and diet,” and ended in the final value of “children’s futures.” The fourth client started with “having a meat and vegetable in main meal,” then progressed to the consequence of “stretching food,” and ended with a final value of “feeding self and family.” During the MEC section, this client (Stephanie – S1) shared:

Interviewer: Think about a typical meal that you would make and describe that to me. What are some of the things you think about?

Stephanie: I try to think of nutrition. I try to think of vegetables, fruit, and a meat and then I think of what they’re going to eat. I try to make less of the noodles because I know they’ll devour them, but if there is less meat, if I know we only have half a piece for each person or a piece for each person, then I’ll make more of the noodles. They know that the rule is they don’t get seconds on anything like... the noodles are the first thing they want seconds on. They have to eat the

meat and vegetables, depending on how much is there. I worked in daycare for 4 ½ years and we had to do a nutrition...so I want them to have that but it's not always easy.

Interviewer: So the nutrition is probably the first thing you think about when making a meal?

Stephanie: Oh yeah. Well, it's there but it's also what's going to last? What are they going to eat? What is going to make it big enough? I made lasagna for the first time yesterday and I didn't buy the canned spaghetti sauce. I literally crushed tomatoes and had the...I was so proud of myself and it took two hours and then I was done. My patience was done when the kids got off the bus because it's literally constant until bedtime with homework and that.

Interviewer: So nutrition, but then what will go the farthest are kind of your biggest things.

Stephanie: Right.

Interviewer: Why are those two things the most important?

Stephanie: Well, the going further is because I don't want them to be hungry. I want to make enough and it sucks using a meal and then realizing... If you have McDonald's and then go to the dollar menu it's a waste of money because in two hours I'm hungry again. Going further, that's why that's important. I want them to be full but then nutrition-wise, I want them to get everything they need. Our 7-year-old boy is a brute. He's huge, not fat but really big and Leah's jeans around the waist, she really needs to be on a supplement because she's so skinny. With

her, the noodles, I have to watch it. She would eat all her chicken and then she didn't use many noodles because she was already full from the chicken.

Two of the ten clients who had complete chains began with the characteristic of “enough food for multiple meals or people,” moved to the consequence of “stretching food,” and ended with “feeding self and family.” During a portion of the MEC questions, one of those clients, Seth (S1), shared this:

Seth: Number one, to make sure everybody in the house is full and then whatever I have to work with, to make sure I can try to make it stretch.

Interviewer: Making sure that everyone is full and I assume that when you say stretch that it goes not just that meal but maybe another meal as well?

Seth: Yeah.

Interviewer: Why are those two things important to you?

Seth: Because I can't afford to buy stuff so to have leftovers that means somebody will have something to eat another point in time or another day.

The final client to form a complete chain began with a characteristic of “family eats and spends time together,” progressed to “stretching food,” and ended with the final value of “feeding self and family.”

4.2.3 Clients' Values and Perceptions of Meat

During the client interviews, they were asked a number of questions about their general food consumption habits, meat preferences, meat perceptions, and meat available at food pantries.

4.2.3.1 Consumption and Perception of Meat

All clients who participated in the interviews stated that they ate meat. Clients were asked if, in general, they ate meat and, if so, how often they ate it. Answer options were daily, 4-6 times per week, 2-3 times per week, 1 time per week, or none (Table 4.4). All clients stated that they ate meat; and all but one client stated that they ate meat two or more times per week. Slightly over half ($n = 19$) ate it daily, while the remaining clients varied from 4-6 times per week ($n = 9$) and 2-3 times per week ($n = 7$).

Table 4.4 Weekly meat consumption habits

Ranking	Frequency	Percent
Daily	19	54.3
4-6x/week	9	25.7
2-3x/week	7	20.0
1x/week	0	0.0
None	0	0.0
Total	35^a	100.0

^a One client, Sawyer (S1), said that he did eat meat, but when asked about his weekly consumption habits during the interview, said he had not had meat in three weeks. Since he did not answer in a way that would fit the ranking nature of the question, he was not included in this calculation.

For one question, clients were asked to consider the food and meals they eat on a daily basis and then rank (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being really important and 5 being never think about it), how important meat is to them. The mean was 2.14 with a standard deviation of 1.25, with two-thirds of the clients ranking meat as either important or really important (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Perceived importance of meat eaten on a daily basis

Ranking	Frequency	Percent
Really Important	15	41.7
Important	9	25.0
Somewhat Important	6	16.7
Not Important At All	4	11.1
Never Think About It	2	5.6
Total	36	100.1^a

^a The statistical software used for analysis rounds to one decimal, so computations do not always add up to 100.0 percent.

Clients were also asked what they would use as an alternate source of protein if they were unable to get meat. Answers varied (Table 4.6), with peanut butter and beans being mentioned by clients the most. Canned meats, including tuna, chicken, salmon, and beef stew were also mentioned, as well as fish. Other alternate sources included noodles, rice, eggs, and more.

Table 4.6 Alternate sources of protein mentioned by clients

Food item	No. clients (<i>n</i>) who mentioned item	Clients and pantry locations
Peanut butter	11	Earl (S2), Elizabeth (S2), Mike (M2), Murphy (M2), Seth (S1), Shane (S1), Spencer (S1), Solomon (S1), Tanya (M1), Tiffany (M1), Trina (M1)
Beans	9	Elizabeth (S2), Ellen (S2), Eric (S2), Mike (M3), Murphy (M3), Spencer (S1), Sophia (S1), Tiffany (M1), Tom (M1)

Table 4.6 continued

Canned meats (tuna, chicken, salmon, & beef stew mentioned)	6	Elijah (S2), Emmett (S2), Julie (M2), Martha (M3), Solomon (S1), Thelma (M1)
Noodles/Pasta	6	Emmett (S2), Ethan (S2), Evan, (S2), Mark (M3), Moses (M3), Seth (S1)
Rice	5	Jacquelyn (M2), Joy (M2), Sophia (S1), Tara (M1), Travis (M1)
Eggs	4	Edward (S2), Susan (S1), Stephanie (S1), Thelma (S1)
Vegetables	4	Emmett (S2), Ethan (S2), Sean (S1), Travis (M1)
Cereal	3	Martha (M3), Stephanie (S1), Teresa (M1)
Bread	2	Martha (M1), Sarah (S1)
Fruit	2	Elijah (S2), Teresa (M1)
Milk	2	Edward (S2), Teresa (M1)
Yogurt	2	Eric (S2), Travis (M1)
Donuts/cookies	1	Sawyer (S1)
Fish	1	Teresa (M1)
Pancakes	1	Stephanie (S1)
Peanuts	1	Elijah (S2)
Pizza	1	Moses (M3)
Potatoes	1	Jacquelyn (M2)
Salad	1	Stephanie (S1)
Spinach	1	Shane (S1)
Tofu	1	Tara (M1)

One client (Eva – S2) did not name specific food items as alternate sources of protein. Another client, Eric (S1), mentioned that he sometimes gets leftovers from a relative's catering service in addition to specific food items.

4.2.3.2 Meat Sources

The clients were asked where they get their meat, at a food pantry, grocery store, and/or another location; the answers were not mutually exclusive. Overall, 35 clients (97.2 percent) said they got meat at a food pantry, and 34 clients (94.4 percent) said they got meat at a grocery store, with one client clarifying that she gets meat at a Mexican grocery store. One client said he did not get meat at a food pantry, and two clients said they did not get meat at a grocery store. When asked which place they relied on the most to get their meat, clients were split fairly equally between food pantries and grocery stores. Specifically, 16 clients (44.4 percent) said they relied mostly on food pantries, 17 clients (47.2 percent) said they relied mostly on grocery stores, two said the reliance is equal, and one client did not answer.

4.2.3.3 Meat Preferences

Clients were asked to rank their meat preferences of chicken, beef, pork, fish and other from 1 to 5 (1 meaning 1st choice, 5 meaning 5th choice); they were also instructed not to rank meats they did not eat. Overall, the means (standard deviations) were as follows: chicken, 1.86 (0.81); beef, 1.94 (1.06); pork, 2.61 (1.12); fish, 3.17 (1.09); and other, 3.00 (1.94). Because a rank of 1 signified a higher preference, with a mean of 1.86,

chicken was most preferred meat overall. However, more people ranked beef as their first choice overall in individual rankings (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7 Meat preferences

	Beef		Chicken		Pork		Fish		Other	
Ranking	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1 st choice	16	44.4	13	36.1	7	19.4	3	8.3	3	8.3
2 nd choice	6	16.7	15	41.7	7	19.4	5	13.9	2	5.6
3 rd choice	8	22.2	6	16.7	12	33.3	7	19.4	0	0.0
4 th choice	3	8.3	1	2.8	6	16.7	14	38.9	0	0.0
5 th choice	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.8	1	2.8	4	11.1
Not ranked	3	8.3	1	2.8	3	8.3	6	16.7	27	75.0
Total	36	99.9 ^a	36	100.1 ^a	36	99.9 ^a	36	100.0	36	100.0

^a The statistical software used for analysis rounds to one decimal, so computations do not always add up to 100.0 percent.

Chicken and beef were never ranked as a 5th choice. Only nine clients (25 percent) ranked other as a meat preference; yet they listed a wide variety of other options. Deer (or venison) was the most popular other meat, with five clients mentioning that they enjoyed eating it. Others mentioned, as the clients explicitly recognized them, included raccoon, rabbit, squirrel, bear, turkey, steak, lamb, and lunchmeat. Two clients also mentioned receiving packages of alligator or crocodile meat at food pantries.

4.2.3.4 Perception of Meat at Pantries

When asked questions regarding meat acquired only at local food pantries, clients rated the quality of meat available at food pantries on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very poor and 5 being very good. The mean for their responses was 3.67 (standard deviation 1.04), so on average, clients thought the meat at food pantries was adequate to good (Table 4.7).

Clients were also asked to rate the quality of the packaging that meat comes in at food pantries using the same scale, with 1 being very poor and 5 being very good. The mean for their responses was 3.72 (standard deviation 0.78), so clients also thought the meat packaging at food pantries was adequate to good (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8 Quality of meat and meat packaging available at food pantries

	Quality of meat		Quality of meat packaging	
Ranking	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Very Poor	1	2.8	0	0.0
Poor	4	11.1	2	5.6
Adequate	9	25.0	11	30.6
Good	14	38.9	18	50.0
Very Good	8	22.2	5	13.9
Total	36	100.0	36	100.0

When asked if they ever opted not to take the meat at a food pantry, 17 clients (47.2 percent) said yes; 19 (52.8 percent) said no, they always take the meat available at food pantries. Selected responses can be seen in Table 4.9. One client, Sean, who was

interviewed at pantry S1, revealed that his decision to take or not to take meat offered at a food pantry depends on more than one factor.

Sean: There have been times that I've refused the meat.

Interviewer: Why is that?

Sean: I refused the meat because I don't want to eat meat that they've messed with or I just don't want meat. I'll just want the vegetables.

Many clients mentioned they relied on the meat's appearance to help make the decision on whether or not to take the meat from the pantry. A few clients revealed feeling obligated to take the meat that is offered at food pantries. Of the 19 clients (52.8 percent) who said they always take the meat available at a food pantry, they had a variety of explanations. Some said any meat was better than none; others mentioned re-gifting the meat to family and friends or others in need. Still others said while they take the meat offered at the pantry, they examined the meat more closely at home before deciding whether or not to use it.

Table 4.9 Selected responses about taking meat from food pantries

Question: Do you ever opt not to take the meat from the food pantry?
Response: Yes
Sean (S1): “I refused the meat because I don’t want meat that they’ve messed with, or I just don’t want meat.”
Eva (S2): “If it looks bad I won’t take it. If the meat is extremely brown, it’s probably not a good thing.”
Response: No
Evan (S2): “I’ll take it (meat) home to check it and if it’s not good, I’ll just throw it away.”
Mark (M3): “I’ll find something I can walk away with. It may not be the very best, but it’s still something.”

When asked if they ever have concerns about meat at the food pantry, 21 clients (58.3 percent) said no, stating that they feel they have been fortunate for what they are provided and that, in general, they have no concern. Fifteen clients (41.7 percent) said they do have concerns about the meat available at food pantries, and referenced a prior bad experience with the meat as the main reason for their concerns. Other clients mentioned they have concerns about how the meat available at the food pantry appears. Selected responses can be seen below in Table 4.10. Edward (S2) said he has concerns about how the meat is handled by places that donate meat to food pantries.

Edward: I just feel like it may be spoiled. It’s usually frozen so there is no way of telling until you open it up after you’ve thawed it out and smelled it to know if it’s going to be any good or not.

Interviewer: Have you ever had a bad experience with the meat from the food pantry?

Edward: We've never really taken any chances on it. If we look at it and it doesn't look good, it doesn't leave the pantry. It's a shame because I'm sure the businesses that donate the food mean well but meat is so tricky. It would be nice if they didn't display it the way they do and they just kept it frozen. That would actually be better. They have to display their meat and they want it to look good and if it's frozen it just doesn't look as good as when it's thawed out and sitting there. If they were able to keep it frozen then it wouldn't spoil.

Table 4.10 Selected concerns regarding meat from food pantries

Question: Do you ever have concerns about the meat from the food pantry?
Response: Yes
Evan (S2): "Meat is sometimes good and sometimes not. I got sick one time."
Moses (M3): "Some of it doesn't look like it should be out there to be given away."
Martha (M3): "Some of it's not wrapped properly. One time I was looking for meat but I guess the package was ripped open, and the meat was exposed. That's why I don't get it sometimes."
Response: No
Sophia (S1): "I've never had any concerns about it."
Susan (S1): "We've been pretty fortunate to have some good meat."
Sean (S1): "No, because I'm a God's person and I put everything in God's hands to watch over me with my health and with my food so I give it to God. I pray about my food."

Clients were also posed a hypothetical question about whether a sticker or statement on a package of meat offered at the pantry saying the meat was frozen by the

sell-by date would be reassuring; selected responses are in Table 4.11. Twenty-two clients (61.1 percent) said yes, they would be reassured by such a statement, and when asked why, they cited a number of reasons, including Jacquelyn (M2), who said: “If it’s frozen it’s still good unless it’s frostbitten. Then you just have to cook it right away.” Some clients said they would trust the statement to tell the truth, or they would trust it because they would apply a similar label at home on their own. Murphy, who was interviewed at the M3 pantry, said in the past that he has consumed meat frozen by the sell-by date.

Murphy: Yeah I think I would (trust the statement). I’ve meat in the freezer for way past the date and it was still good. It was a little freezer burnt.

Interviewer: So your past experience would kind of sway you whether or not to trust the sticker?

Murphy: I’d still take it. I’d still use it.

One client who was interviewed said he would trust it, but only because he did not have other options to acquire meat. Fourteen clients (38.9 percent) said they would not be reassured of the meat’s quality and safety by such a statement. When asked to explain, a number of clients mentioned not wanting to take a chance with their health or their children’s health. A few clients also mentioned they would be leery of feeding the meat to their kids. Others said they would still rely on their own judgment before trusting such a statement.

Table 4.11 Selected responses regarding statement that pantry meat
was frozen by sell-by date

Question: If you saw the statement, “This meat was frozen by the sell-by date for your safety,” would you be reassured of its quality and safety?
Response: Yes
Sean (S1): “Because I think that sticker is going to tell me the truth about how long that meat had been kept and everything.”
Spencer (S1): “Yes, but it’s really not like I have much choice. If you’re hungry you will eat what they give you.”
Ellen (S2): “Well, because I would trust it and that’s exactly what I would do at home if I bought fresh meat.”
Response: No
Shane (S1): “No, I would still go on vision or what I see with my own eyes. It can say that and it doesn’t mean it’s always true.”
Trina (M1): “If the date is not a good date or something, then you don’t want to eat something outdated or bad. You wouldn’t want to feed it to your kid.”
Julie (M2): “Because if it’s got a date on it and it’s outdated, you don’t want to eat it because you’ll get sick.”

4.2.4 Perceptions of Other Foods at Pantries

Twenty-three (63.9 percent) clients said yes when asked if they had ever opted not to take other types of food from the food pantry. When asked which foods they opted not to take, many clients mentioned peanut butter, bread, produce, and damaged items. Several clients said they sometimes will not choose certain items because they have enough at home already. Sophia, who was interviewed at the S1 pantry, said this:

I don’t like the canned salmon and that kind of stuff and I don’t always take the peanut butter if I don’t need it. If it’s just me I don’t eat it as much as I do when I

have the kids and so if it's something that I don't need or already have like if I've got a lot of pasta the last time I was there, I might not take it the next time. I only try to take what I need.

Other clients shared her sentiments of taking only the food that they needed.

Travis, who was interviewed at the M1 pantry, said:

Well, yeah there are some things that are available that we could have multi-packs of but once again, I'm not going to take something that my family can't consume and somebody else can do without. I will take an adequate amount. If they say "you can have four," I may only take two because somebody else may need that later. I don't abuse the privilege. This is a privilege, not a right to be able to come here so I don't abuse the privilege.

The other 13 clients (36.1 percent) said no when asked if they ever decided not to take other types of food from pantries. Table 4.12 shows selected responses from clients.

Table 4.12 Selected responses about taking other foods available at food pantries

Question: Do you ever opt not to take other foods from the food pantry?
Response: Yes
Stephanie (S1): “Sometimes you’ll have an overstock of peanut butter. Sometimes we get overloaded on rice.”
Teresa (M1): “Why take it when I don’t need it and somebody else can use it? I’ll say ‘no’ and let somebody else take it.”
Martha (M3): “Yes, sometimes the vegetables, they’re not very good looking. Or the fruit. Sometimes you have to look at the yogurt and cottage cheese.”
Response: No
Seth (S1): “I’ve taken everything that’s been given to me.”
Ellen (S2): “I pretty much always take whatever is offered.”
Earl (S2): “No, I pretty much take the rest of it.”

When asked if they ever have concerns about other types of food from the food pantry, 24 clients (66.7 percent) said no, that they did not have concerns. Sawyer (S1) said he does not have concerns, because he lets food pantry volunteers know if there is ever a problem with a food item, and the item will not be given out.

Sawyer: No. I usually check my food over pretty good. If it’s ripped or something like that, the packaging, I won’t take it. I’ll let one of the volunteers know that it’s ripped open and to get rid of it because it’s been tampered with in some way or something has happened to it.

However, 12 clients (33.3 percent) did say they have had concerns about other foods at food pantries, such as moldy bread, overripe fruits and vegetables, expired milk,

and dented or damaged canned food items. A client at a mobile pantry (M1) said most of her concerns are with the bread offered at the pantry.

Tiffany: You've got to use the bread pretty quick. There has been times that I'll get it home and it will have a little mold spot or whatever. Some of the produce every once in a while will look like it's been frozen or something.

4.2.5 Information Preferences Identified by Clients

Clients were asked questions about their preferences for receiving information about food and learning food preparation techniques. Twenty-six (72.2 percent) said they would like to have someone at the food pantry provide cooking ideas or tips for some of the foods available at the pantry. When asked to explain, most clients who answered in the affirmative mentioned they would like to receive recipes, either in card form, handouts, or online. Tom (M1) said, "Just a recipe card would help out. That'd give you a lot of information." Murphy (M3) said, "If you get something at a pantry and somebody says, 'Hey, you can take that and do this or this (*sic*) with it,' it's like, 'Wow! I didn't know that,' and that would help." Some clients talked about the cooking class already offered by pantry S1. Joy, who was interviewed at the M2 pantry, said this: "At (pantry S1) on the third Wednesday of the month, they have a cooking class and it's a good help. They give you recipes and cook it (pantry food), and we just sit at a big table and talk." The 10 clients (27.8 percent) who said they did not prefer to have food pantries provide cooking ideas or tips referenced prior experience, age, and ability to ask friends or family when asked to explain their answer. Earl (S2) said, "I think I pretty much got that cooking business down. I've got family members or something that can give me advice."

When asked if it would helpful to have someone explain how to use certain types or cuts of meat, 23 clients (63.9 percent) said yes. Sophia (S1) said, “Yes, because there is (*sic*) some that I don’t take because I don’t know how to prepare it.” Clients who answered in the affirmative mentioned wanting more information on meat in general, but some clients mentioned specifics, and wanted information specifically on fish (especially tilapia), pork, crocodile, lamb, alligator, pork bones, chuck roast, beef, and steak. Tanya (M1) said, “Once in a while you get a hold of lamb at those places, and it’s like, ‘I’ve never fixed it, so I’m not sure how to fix it!’”

On the other hand, 13 clients (36.1 percent) said no, it would not be helpful to have someone explain how to use certain types or cuts of meat available at pantries. Edward (S2) said “I’m 43 years old and I’m familiar how (*sic*) to cook the meat and best to prepare it for tenderness and things like that.” Others had similar answers, including Tara (M1), who said, “I think I’ve probably experienced every type of meat that there is.” A few clients noted that if they personally did not know how to cook an item, they could find out from family, friends, or even other food pantry clients. Spencer (S1) said, “There again if I have a question, there is usually somebody in the line that would know. I’ve gotten like squash and eggplants and they explain to me how to cook them.”

4.2.6 Themes from Client Data

Throughout the client interviews, many topics were continually introduced to the conversation. During the analysis phase, the client transcripts were coded based on the coding scheme (Figure 3.1). Through descriptive and pattern coding, three themes emerged from the client data: personal and familial health, reliance on food pantries, and

conditional trust. Each of the sections below expand upon and provide details unique to each of the themes.

Personal and familial health

The first theme deals with clients' personal and familial health. This theme encompasses a number of different ideas that were found as pattern codes, but belong in the overall theme because of the repeated focus on personal health and the health of clients' families. Clients mentioned how meat is important to them because they or someone in their family have health problems. Others noted the importance of meat in the meal, and referenced how their parents regularly included meat in their meals growing up, so they try to do the same for their own children. Some clients said that while protein is an important part of their diet, it doesn't necessarily have to be meat, or meat from food pantries. Still other clients voiced food safety concerns that may affect their personal health or their children's health.

Clients talked about how meat is important because it helps with health problems, especially diabetes. Susan (S1) said, "Meat is important to a lot of people. Diabetic people have got to really watch it." A few clients mentioned eating meat as a preventative measure. Several clients emphasized the health and nutritional benefits of meat. "It's good for your bones and your body," said Teresa (M1). Elizabeth (S2) shared, "Protein is important to keep your body healthy, and to rebuild your body." One client who is 58 years old, Travis (M1), said, "Protein is one of the most neglected parts of the diet in our age bracket so we try to make sure we eat plenty of protein." Not all clients believed that meat was essential in their diets, instead placing importance on protein in general.

Murphy (M3) shared, “I don’t really think about it. As long as I get some kind of protein — it doesn’t have to be meat — but as long as I get some kind of protein.” Others mentioned knowing meat is important because they did not feel good or have energy when they went without meat. “If I go a while without eating it I’m pretty weak,” Spencer (S1) said. Shane, also interviewed at pantry S1, said, “It sounds funny, but it seems like when I don’t have meat in my diet I’m not as active and I lack energy and stuff.” Some clients mentioned that meat “fills you up” (Jacquelyn, M2), and keeps them feeling satisfied with their meals for a longer period of time.

Most clients also mentioned eating meat regularly, and some said that meat is an important, even essential, part of their meals. Sophia (S1) said, “We consider it the primary piece of the meal...it just doesn’t seem like a complete meal without meat.” Stephanie, also interviewed at pantry S1, said, “It’s almost like a necessity.” Two clients who were interviewed at the other stationary pantry (S2) shared similar thoughts. Elijah said, “It’s in everything I make, and Eva said, “It’s an important part of the meal. There has to be a piece of meat in every meal that I make.” Many clients said meat is important to them because it was also important to their parents, and they often had meat while growing up. Stephanie (S1) said, “It’s almost like I just expect it, I guess, even though you can find an alternate to it.” Eva (S2) stated, “My dad and mom used to be like that, like you have to have meat with everything you eat, even if it’s just a little.” Some clients are continuing the tradition; Julie (M2) said, “When I grew up meat was a main meal, and for my kids meat is a main meal.” Seth (S1) also considered meat to be important for his children’s health, saying, “It’s more important for me and my two boys than anything

else because I try to make sure they're taken care of before I ever eat, period. I want them to have what they need." Mark (M3) said, "It's got to be part of our child's growth."

Some clients had concerns about how meat available at food pantries might affect their children's' health, revealing the concern was rooted in food safety. Trina (M1) said, "You don't want to eat something outdated or bad. You wouldn't want to feed it to your kids." Eva (S2) who earlier revealed that she considers meat an important part of meals, said, "If it looks good, I'll get it (meat). If it doesn't and it looks kind of iffy, I'm not going to get it. I won't get my kids sick." One client, Edward (S2), was concerned for his personal health, saying, "Usually when you get fresh meat it's got a red tint to it, but the meat that I see at the food pantries are gray to a brownish color. I'm almost scared to take it home and eat it."

Reliance on food pantries

The second theme that emerged is the clients' reliance on the food pantries for the bulk of their food items, including meat. Some clients said they were grateful for the pantries, and said they trusted the pantries to provide them with good food items and choices. However, the reliance was not always viewed positively; some clients said they relied on pantries because they have little or no other options to get food.

One client, Jacquelyn (M2), said that she trusts the pantry she visits because of past positive experiences, sharing that "They make sure the meat's good." Some clients compared the meat available at pantries with meat they could buy at a grocery store. Travis (M1) said, "There is nothing I've received here that I could not walk in any market in this town and purchase." Another client, Sophia (S1), said she relies on the food pantry

to offer flexibility to use the meat immediately or later because it's frozen, saying, "I don't feel like I have to hurry up and cook it up right away. It gives me some flexibility as to when I can use the meat and then I can plan my meals better once I know what I'm getting." Others mentioned that they get to choose their meat at pantries, like Joy (M2) who said, "They put out enough volume of it where you can pick what you want." Tiffany (M1) also said that she gets more choice in meat at food pantries than what she can buy elsewhere, stating, "At times I'll tell my cousin that, 'we're eating better now than we have for years because we're getting things that normally I wouldn't be able to afford to buy.'"

Other clients said that they rely on food pantries because they have no other choice. Specifically, Spencer (S1) said, "It's not really like I have much choice. If you're hungry, you will eat what they give you." Stephanie, who was also interviewed at pantry S1, expressed a similar sentiment when explaining her ranking of the quality of meat available at a food pantry, saying, "I would say poor but I hate doing that because it's like beggars can't be choosy." Other clients offered similar thoughts, but did not expressly state that food pantries were the only places they had to get meat. Tom (M1) said simply, "It gets me by." Ellen (S2) said, "It serves its needs. It serves the purpose it's meant for and it makes food taste better than without." And Elizabeth, also interviewed at pantry S2, said the meat from food pantries was "better than not having any."

Conditional trust

The third theme centers on conditional trust, meaning that clients would trust pantries to provide good meat and other food items to them only if they met other

conditions. In many cases, clients mentioned trusting pantries and the food provided at those pantries only after they had checked the items over with their own eyes or hands. Others shared that the level of trust they placed in pantries depended on past personal experiences.

While many clients said they relied heavily on the pantries for meat and other food items, they also sometimes shared that they did trust the food they got at the food pantries without reservations. Instead, they mentioned trusting the meat or other food items from pantries and the labels on them after they had looked it over with their own eyes and other senses. Before using meat from a pantry, some clients double-check it, such as Eric (S2), who said, “I smell it first” and Thelma (M1), who said, “If it’s been frozen I’m not worried about it, but I do smell it when it thaws out.” Clients also expressed concern over expiration dates and labels on packages, especially meat, even if the pantry offered it to them as a frozen package. Specifically, Solomon said (S1), “Well, if it’s been frozen by the sell-by date and the sell-by date was say three months ago, who’s to say it didn’t thaw out and didn’t get refrozen and then thawed out, and refrozen after that?” Shane, also interviewed at pantry S1, shared this: “I would still go on vision or what I can see with my own eyes.” He continued, saying that he does not always trust labels on packages of food either, “It can say that and it doesn’t mean it’s always true.” This condition of using personal judgment before trusting the food from the pantry continued. When describing how he decided to take meat from the pantry, Earl (S2) said, “Well, I’d look at it and if I thought the color looked good, I’d trust it, but if it didn’t, I wouldn’t trust it.”

Other clients expressed conditional trust when describing personal experiences at pantries, like Martha (M3) who said, “Sometimes you can get good meat from there and sometimes you can’t. I would be tempted to take it if it had the seal on it and as long as it was wrapped properly.” In some cases, the level of trust in food pantries depended on the situation. When describing the quality of meat, Eva (S2) said, “It’s like poor, but then not because sometimes you get good meat. It just depends.” Evan, interviewed at the same pantry (S2), also expressed conditional trust in meat at food pantries when talking about meat, saying, “I’d say adequate because it’s half and half sometimes. I don’t know, I guess it just depends, because I’ve had some good ones.”

4.3 Food Pantry Directors

The three food pantry directors interviewed in this study were males. The directors were from the selected pantries where client data collection took place in this study (Table 4.13). As noted below, directors E and S were associated with the two stationary pantries, while Director M oversaw the three mobile pantries studied.

Table 4.13 Pantry director information

Pseudonym	Affiliated pantry	Start date as director
Director E	S2	2005
Director M	M1, M2, M3	September 2013
Director S	S1	August 2013

As noted in Chapter 3, these three directors were also interviewed about their perceptions of meat available at the pantries, as well as the clients and climate of the

pantry. The data collected during the interviews was qualitative, therefore it was analyzed using the coding scheme (Figure 3.1). Through the three cycles of coding, three main themes emerged through repeated codes, and are detailed below.

4.3.1 Themes from Director Data

While many topics were brought up during the director interviews, there were three core themes that emerged through the data. The themes were: obligatory and voluntary responsibilities, limitations affecting director responsibilities, and expectations of volunteers. Each theme is described in depth below.

Obligatory and voluntary responsibilities

The first and most prominent theme to emerge and reemerge during the analysis was the amalgamation of obligatory and voluntary responsibilities and duties involved with the job of pantry director. Each pantry director outlined official duties that were considered part of the job description and everyday labor, but they also talked about things they do regularly that are not included in their job descriptions. For instance, each director said that they acquire food from the food bank or donations as one of their obligatory duties. However, they also each touched on concerns they have about client experiences at their food pantries, and seemed to see these voluntary actions as a responsibility they had as part of their jobs. In describing responsibilities, directors mentioned similar duties, such as acquiring food for the pantries, as well as dealing with volunteers.

Because each pantry is slightly different, the division of duties and responsibilities also differed slightly. Director E (pantry S2) shares duties with a co-director; the co-director manages church social media accounts and, therefore, communicates pantry and volunteer needs via those channels. He shared:

I schedule the volunteers who work at our open times. I usually try to do that kind of a month at a time. We try to schedule out for the next month coming up. I am in charge of dealing with [the food bank] so we get a lot of our food through their programs there where we buy things plus we also get government commodities through [the food bank]. Each week I'll place an order, go pick up the food and bring it back to the building and stock our shelves, as well as just make decisions about the number of items that we can give away and the quantities of each based on family size. We try and communicate what's in need through our weekly newsletter or on Facebook so people are aware of what the needs are and they contribute to help stock the pantry that way.

Director S also counts acquiring food and community relations as part of his director duties, saying:

As director of the food pantry, I am paid for 15 hours a week and primary duty is making sure we have enough food available in the pantry. The second duty is to make sure we have enough volunteers. We do have a volunteer coordinator who does the scheduling for us. She's done that for like 25 years. I need to go out and recruit new volunteers so we have enough all the time. Also to do the PR and marketing for the food pantry, get the word out into the community.

Director M serves as distribution manager at a food bank in addition to serving as director at mobile pantries, so he has interactions with local food pantry directors. He said:

My job title is distribution manager, and essentially I am over two different programs. The first being the agency program which is just handling our entire agency partners, all of the food pantries that we serve. The second one would be handling all the mobile pantries that we have so coordinating the dates and making sure they all run smoothly.

Regardless of duties, each director admitted to having limited interactions with food pantry clients. The most common interaction they would have with a client is of a conversational nature, such as greetings, exchanging pleasantries, or asking how they are doing while the clients are waiting in line to receive food. Director M seemed to have the most direct contact of the three, saying that he goes to the mobile pantries and gathers household information, such as how many adults, children, and seniors live in one household. Directors M and S both said the clientele visiting the pantry have seemed consistent during their first year of duties. Director S shared that he thinks clients are using the pantry on a longer-term basis rather than for emergencies. He said:

It is such a mixed group of people. Since I've been here, which in only a year is not a very big perspective, but we've always had people who are on unemployment for example. Sometimes they look a little different than the rest of the crowd that is here, but I have not noticed a large difference. Food pantries are a necessity right now because the working poor are not making it on what they earn, and of course, food is one of the things that gets skipped. Rather than giving

out emergency food, I see the pantry as providing supplementary food for families not just on a short-term basis, but on a long-term basis.

Director E seemed to echo this view, saying that clients are often more chronically unemployed now than in years past. He shared:

When I first got involved it seemed like a majority of the families that would visit were older or maybe retired with fixed incomes. I think that's probably remained pretty constant but over time we have seen more and more families middle-aged, and younger adults with their kids — that segment has grown quite a bit. I think we're seeing people that are disabled or chronically unemployed — that segment has grown as well.

In addition to obligatory duties associated with their director positions, the three directors each detailed voluntary responsibilities they consider a part of their job. For instance, while not naming it as one of their primary duties, each director said they offer clients information on local resources, especially information about other food pantries. Director S at pantry S1 partners with a local Extension agent to offer a cooking class at the food pantry once a month. Director E at pantry S2 offers clients information on church activities, and invites them to an annual church picnic. Director M of mobile pantries M1, M2, and M3 tries to offer information about food stamps and employment, although he mentioned that the information is not always well-received. He said:

We try to give them (clients) as much information with food-related issues as possible, as far as food stamps and other food pantries in the area. We've tried to do other outreach services like employment; we're sort of hit and miss with that type of stuff. A lot of those clients, I'm sure, have already been through that

process of trying to get food stamps, welfare, and all that stuff. Sometimes when we try to really reach out to them, it is sort of not received too well just because they've heard it all before. It's just sort of hit-and-miss depending on when we're doing it and where we're doing it.

Each director also voiced concerns they have about clients or food that comes through the pantry. Director S said:

They (clients) obviously face issues of their pantries get low and they have nowhere to go but our pantry to shop from. I'm aware that there are many other needs that they have...I just don't know what they are. I just found today as I was going through our pantry log that a couple of customers have said they've gotten meat from us and it was bad. I hope they had the sense to throw it away and not eat it. That's a problematic thing. How long can you keep frozen meat? Can we guarantee that it's been frozen the whole time? Those questions...I know we're not responsible if somebody gets sick...we're not civilly liable, but I do feel responsible.

Director E expressed concern that clients may not want to visit the S2 pantry anymore because of the limits he places on food items to ensure there is enough for all clients. He shared:

We can't serve more people without increasing our food supply. What we've seen is while the demand is increasing, we're kind of giving out the same amount and so you get to a point where a few might decide that it's not worth coming here in some cases. We used to give out more food per family when we were serving smaller numbers.

Director M said that “probably the toughest thing as far as giving food out to clients is that either they don’t want to deal with it, or they just don’t know what it is.” He said they try to offer recipes if they suspect clients will not know what to do with a particular food item. He shared:

There have been sometimes with the commodities that we’ll get cases and cases of garbanzo beans, and it’s a thing where a lot of the clients don’t know how to cook or prepare those items. I would say that’s probably the biggest disconnect between some of the food that we get and some of the food that the pantries offer; there is that lack of knowing how to prepare it, knowing what it is and how it tastes. So when we get an item like that, we try to print recipes out or give them nutritional facts about the food and let them know how they can use it.

The directors also mentioned that sometimes clients avoid items such as fish and chicken livers, although it eventually gets taken home by someone. Director S said that he thinks some clients prefer canned meat, suggesting that they know what they are getting when taking the canned meat home, versus taking a chance on assorted frozen meat items. Director M said he has noticed that clients seem to prefer whole birds when they are available, especially around the holidays.

Limitations affecting director responsibilities

The second theme deals with limitations directors felt affected their director responsibilities, such as relying mostly on the local food bank and government commodities to provide stock food items and filling in by purchasing extra food from local grocery stores. The directors shared several limitations that, at times, can

complicate their jobs of ensuring clients have food. While each pantry differed slightly in how they acquire food to stock the shelves, each followed a basic guideline: get food from government commodities (distributed by the local food bank); purchase additional food from the local food bank; when there is not enough food at the local food bank, purchase food from stores and rely on donations. All three directors relied on government commodities as a first step in acquiring food for their pantries, and they each said they usually get suitable quantities of foods such as dry goods, canned meat, fruit, and vegetables, and other non-perishables from the commodities, which are distributed by the local food pantry. Director E mentioned that sometimes at pantry S2 they receive large quantities of food from commodities, and do not have enough freezer space to store it properly. In cases such as these, the local food bank allows the pantry to store the extra food in their freezers.

Directors S and E both said that they heavily rely on the local food bank for their meat supplies, and purchase up to the weekly limit each week. Director E said that it not always possible to get the full limit from the food bank each week.

Director E: We rely pretty much exclusively on [selected food bank] to provide meat. On a weekly basis when they have meat in their inventory, we get the limit.

Interviewer: What is that limit?

Director E: Right now, I think it's 200 pounds a week.

Interviewer: So you go every week then and get 200 pounds?

Director E: Yes. That's the hope but sometimes there isn't any to order. I was on the site last night trying to prepare for next week and they had no meat at all. I didn't place my order yet. I'm going to go back tonight and maybe they'll have

some. I know that when we don't have meat that people are disappointed and their expectations are not met, and they'll let us know. Our volunteers are really disappointed when that happens.

Director S shared that the limit has been insufficient during recent times, and he has had to purchase more from other places such as supermarkets to fill up the pantry. He said:

What I'm finding is that [the food bank] sometimes has a lot of one thing and then they go for a while and don't have it at all. The one thing that I'm disappointed in and I'm going to try and talk to somebody, but they limit us to 200 pounds of meat per week. I mean that sounds like a lot of meat, but we're open five days a week; spread over those five days, that's not a lot. We run out by the end of Tuesday. I'm trying to find out how we can get some more meat available to us. For the most part, I don't have a way to get it if [the food bank] doesn't have it. Our limit on the purchased food works out to be about \$300 a week, which has been insufficient this past year, so I've been spending like \$500-\$800 a week on purchased food, just to fill up our pantries. I do order [from the food bank] twice a week, Mondays and Wednesdays, and then we have volunteers go out and pick that food up and bring it in, and volunteers that put it on the shelf. It's just hard to plan because you never know what's going to come it. That's the frustrating side of it, making sure we have enough food.

All directors interviewed mentioned that money and their budgets can be tricky at times; they are having to purchase more and more food. Director M also mentioned that processing and/or sorting the meat received from local partners and government

commodities is time and labor intensive, and that meat is sometimes lumped in with assorted frozen items when they do not have enough volunteers to help sort. He shared:

I don't think getting the meat is the problem, it's just processing quickly enough to distribute over our partnering agencies as well as mobile pantries.

Each of the three directors mentioned having seen or heard about problems in meat packaging. Director E said:

At times the Cellophane or the plastic wrap is broken but I think for the most part things are still safe. It's always frozen. It's never partly thawed or anything like that.

Director S also shared that pantry S1 has had problems with the meat packaging before, saying:

It seems that sometimes it (meat packaging) breaks open easily and I'm not sure why but once it breaks open, can you give it away? Not really. I don't know what they wrap it with but sometimes you just pick it up and you poke your finger through it, so that's a problem. From the government the past few months we got some turkey rolls and there are like two turkey rolls in this thing but we couldn't split them, so why in the world didn't they just package them individually? I don't know, but once we get it, we can't split it.

Director M said:

I mean the only thing I've ever seen, and it's pretty rare, is the plastic is easy to poke a hole in, but we try to let our volunteers know not to hand out anything like that or try to avoid sticking fingers through the plastic packaging.

Expectations of volunteers

For the third theme, directors placed importance on volunteers having specific duties, such as being welcoming, friendly, and respectful to food pantry clients. Each director was able to name specific qualities they expected from people who volunteer for their respective food pantries, and many overlapped. The three directors expect their volunteers to be respectful, professional, and polite when interacting with clients. They provide information on these basic expectations to volunteers, in the form of in-person trainings, speeches, or written material.

At the beginning of each mobile pantry, Director M informs volunteers of their duties, pantry guidelines, food safety rules, and answers questions volunteers may have. He said:

I expect them (volunteers) to be professional as far as dealing with the clients and not getting into arguments. I expect them to adhere to the food safety things that we talk about beforehand, so not putting anything on the ground, but just overall being polite and acting like they are working not only with [the food bank] but for [the food bank] and representing us.

Director E expects volunteers to guide clients through the food pantry room, and help them as they select food items.

Director E: The most important I think is that people are going to be here on time when they're scheduled or they'll have found a replacement. Beyond that we expect them to be welcoming to the people who come here, to treat them with respect, and to really serve them and feel valued.

Interviewer: How many people do you try to have per shift?

Director E: We try and have three. One person will kind of do the intake, so sit behind the desk, check people in, and then two in the room itself that are escorting families through as they select what they want.

Director S said he considers clients to be customers and is trying to broaden volunteers' responsibilities. He said:

I'm trying to change the perception of the volunteer not as just a person that hands out food through the window, we do it through the window, but that we have some responsibility to interact with customers. I try to call them customers rather than clients. If it's a client-choice pantry, they really are shoppers, therefore they are customers. Once you see a person as a customer, it changes the whole perception of the volunteer...community relations...interaction with the public in retail. It changes the whole dynamic of what the volunteer does though. That has some implications; for one thing, the food pantry is more than just giving out food. You need to be giving out hope in some way, however that happens. You need to be making sure people have access to all of the resources that they're entitled to.

The directors placed emphasis on making clients feel valued, and ensuring that volunteers were welcoming to clients. At Director S's pantry (S1), several clients also serve as volunteers, stocking the pantry or helping during open hours. He said:

Every once in a while we will have somebody (want to volunteer) and I'll give them a volunteer form and I follow up on it. What happens though, especially the very poor, their lives are so chaotic that they want to help but they can't – they can't commit to being there or they don't show up or something. I try if at all

possible to put people that ask to work. All of our stockers but one are clients.

They shop here, as well as come in twice a week and help us stock the shelves.

At pantry S2, Director E shared that they have had some interest in the past year from some clients who would like to help out at the pantry, but no clients volunteer currently. He said:

We're in the process of kind of putting together a volunteer expectations (document) that people would read and sign. I would say that about one-third indicated that they would like to (volunteer) if we were to have that as an option for them, which was good news to hear.

Director M, with pantries M1, M2, and M3, said he has allowed clients to volunteer in the past, but he is trying to move away from that because they have run into problems. He said:

Usually I'll have one or two clients offer to volunteer, but I usually try to sort of keep that from happening just because there are so many different things that can be perceived, as far as the other clients seeing somebody else stepping behind the line, just assuming they're setting things aside. I like to try and nip that in the bud and just let them know depending on what we have going on and that we have enough volunteers.

4.4 Pantry Observations

For each of the observations by location, notes were taken while at the pantries of how much and what kinds of meat were available at the beginning and end, as well as other items to help describe the climate of the selected pantries. Below, the observations are separated into two categories, stationary and mobile.

4.4.1 Personal Statement about Observations

Observations were completed at the five pantry locations studied in this research project. They were completed on separate days and times from other stages of data collection when possible (S1, S2, M1), and on the same day as client interviews (M2, M3). The data presented in the following subsections come from my field notes and subsequent write-up, not from the views of others. As noted by Silverman (2006), when making observational field notes, “one is not simply recording data but also analyzing them” (p. 92).

4.4.2 Observations at Stationary Pantries

At both of the stationary pantries studied, S1 and S2, clients waited in lines before the official open hours of the pantries. At S1, the clients waited indoors in an alcove near the pantry; at S2, the clients waited outside a door. Both stationary pantries had a table set up with a registration person who tracked the number of clients at the pantry, how many people were in each family, and if they had ever visited the pantry or visited the pantry within the same month. At the S1 pantry, clients were allowed to visit once per two weeks, and at the S2 pantry, once every four weeks (approximately once per month). The

two stationary pantries locations were similar in that they were both in a separate room and area of the affiliated church.

However, the organization of the pantry differed. At the S1 pantry, the client was separated from the food pantry by a serving window, and could approach the serving window only when his/her number (assigned at registration) was called. The serving window extended from about waist-height to a couple inches below the ceiling, so the clients could see most of the foods available at the pantry. Volunteers at the S1 pantry showcased what foods were available on any given day on a cart outside the serving window, in the meeting room where the registration table was located. After the pantry opened, food pantry clients waited in the meeting room for their number to be called to go up to the serving window. The volunteers also asked the client if he/she wanted each item before placing it on the serving window for the client to place in their own bag or a grocery bag provided by the pantry. On the day of observation, there was no fresh or frozen meat at the S1 pantry, although the pantry did offer those items on other days of data collection such as the client interviews. When observing, the only meat available at S1 was canned tuna, and almost all the clients chose to take the tuna; only one client passed on the tuna. Most clients left the S1 pantry immediately after getting their food. However, some waited on others as they went the line, and then left. A few clients waited inside the pantry location for a local bus.

At the S2 pantry, the registration table was set up in a hallway of the church that led to the outside door where clients waited for the pantry to open. Directly to the right of the table was the room that served as the food pantry. Two volunteers were inside the food pantry room, and guided food pantry clients around to the different food offerings.

Therefore, only two clients and their families (if they had family members with them) were allowed in the food pantry room at a time. On the day of observation at the S2 pantry, the only meat available was frozen packages of hotdogs. Every client took the hotdogs; however, a few asked if there was any other meat available before taking the hotdogs. The clients all left the food pantry room, and most left the building. A few clients waited at the end of the hallway near the door and said they were sharing a ride with another client.

4.4.3 Observations at Mobile Pantries

Observations were conducted at three mobile pantries: M1, M2, and M3. A box-type truck with refrigeration units from the local food bank provided the food items at each of the mobile pantries. The meat available at the mobile pantries varied by amount and kinds of donations the food bank received. The meat at all three of the mobile pantries remained in original store packaging.

At M1, the truck pulled in one end of a building at a fairgrounds, and tables were set up in a line to the north of the truck and the food items after they were unloaded from the truck. Clients were not allowed to enter the building until the open hours of the pantry. At the M1 pantry, the meat was in a larger, assorted frozen foods category that also included items such as frozen dinners, ice cream, and waffles. Every client took at least one item from the frozen foods section, and most selected a package of meat. When the pantry began, clients were allowed two items from the category; as the pantry progressed, the volunteers reduced that number to one item for the category at the direction of the truck driver to ensure there would be enough for the remainder of the clients in line. The

clients took a few minutes to sort through the frozen section, and a few asked for specific items such as beef, steak, and chicken breasts. Frozen shrimp and frozen sandwiches were the last items in this category to go, but at the end of the pantry, nothing was left in this category. At M1, the meat was at the beginning of the line. Most clients left after progressing through the line. A few clients left and then came back to get in line again at the end, as they were allowed to do so.

At the M2 and M3 pantries, the truck from the local food bank parked in an area parking lot, and clients lined up at the edges of the parking lots and on nearby streets. A list of all area pantries was available for clients at pantry M2. At both the M2 and M3 pantries, tables were set up on two sides of the truck, with similar food items and categories on each side. The main line of food pantry clients was divided into separate lines for the two sides of the truck as they drew closer to the front of the truck. The clients in line often carried laundry baskets, plastic totes, or reusable shopping bags. In fewer instances, clients had wheeled carts or coolers. The refrigeration units on the truck were located closer to the front, so the meat and other frozen items were always placed on the first tables on either side of the truck, meaning they were one of the first food items clients received.

At the M2 pantry, the meat available for clients included whole turkeys and assorted lunchmeats. Most clients toward the front half of the line left with turkeys, while clients later in line left with packages of frozen lunchmeat, such as ham or turkey. About half of the clients at the M2 pantry left after getting food; others waited for someone to pick them up or walked to a nearby bus station to wait. As the pantry progressed and about 20 minutes before the stated ending time, pantry volunteers closed one line so that

all clients went through the food line on the same side of the truck. At the M3 pantry, there was some confusion as to exactly when and where the pantry would be because the truck did not show up on time. Also, the first hour was supposed to be for military veterans only, and after that, open to the general public, but all the clients did not know this. The meat at the M3 pantry was also organized into an assorted frozen section that included Lean Cuisine meals. Most clients took an item from the assorted frozen section, but it was not always a package of meat. Most clients left after receiving food.

One unique distinction between the mobile and stationary pantries studied was the lack of client tracking associated with the mobile pantries. No names were collected or checked against a list, and the only tracking method at the mobile pantries was the recording of the number of people in each family.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Project Overview

Data for this research project were collected through client interviews, food pantry director interviews, and observations at five food pantries in northwest Indiana. The research objectives used to guide this exploratory mixed-methods study were as follows:

1. Describe the culture of food pantry clients, especially clients' values and perceptions toward meat in the diet and meat donated to pantries.
2. Describe the social climate of selected food pantries.
3. Investigate food pantry clients' preferences for receiving information about food and learning food preparation techniques.

Through these objectives focused on selected food pantries in a given area, study results reveal the complexity that is food insecurity, which involves the food pantries' capacity and ability to meet the needs of their clients, the specific and unique needs and barriers regularly faced by food pantry clients, and the personal perceptions and values of food as held by the clients themselves.

5.1.2 Chapter Overview

This chapter is divided into three main sections: discussion, recommendations, and conclusion. The first section focuses primarily on drawing linkages and developing a more in-depth understanding of food pantry issues across all three data sets; the discussion is organized by the research objectives. The second section focuses on recommendations for additional research needed as a result of this study, and consideration for praxis within the food bank and associated food pantries. The third and final section offers a conclusion of the current state of food insecurity and how studies such as this are necessary to better understand the future characteristics and potential trends that may take place as food insecurity continues to persist in the United States.

5.2 Discussion

This study was designed using a theoretical framework that involved Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1991; Bandura, 2001) and means-end chain theory (MEC) (Grunert, 1995; Costa et al., 2004). While there are other social psychological frameworks that could have been incorporated for the purposes of meeting the research objectives, SCT and MEC provided a necessary and unique inlet for examining culture, values and social climate, specifically in a qualitative study that places the emphasis on understanding the dynamic state of affairs in a targeted community at a given point in time.

5.2.1 Client Culture and Perceptions

For this study, the entry points for examining culture were the perception and consumption of meat by the clients and the provision of meat by the food pantries. As was repeatedly shown throughout the collected data, meat is important, even essential (Ahluwalia et al., 1998), to the food pantry clients. All 36 clients interviewed at the five selected pantries said they ate meat. Although their meat consumption habits varied, collectively clients said they ate meat at least two to three times per week, and two-thirds (24) of the clients perceived meat to be important or really important in their daily lives. Considering that food pantry clients often have to choose between food and other necessities (Weinfield et al., 2014), this is significant because meat is expensive relative to other food items (Drewnowski, 2009). Yet, clients are somehow ensuring, by use of pantries or other coping strategies, that they eat meat multiple times per week because of its importance in their diet.

The finding that meat is important to clients was supported by the values elicited through means-end chain analysis, which considered what factors were important in a typical meal. When considering the complete mean-end chains (Figure 4.1) generated by clients in interviews, the characteristic of “having a meat and vegetable in main meal” is seen to have contributed to all three of the final values, “good health,” “children’s futures,” and “feeding self and family.” No other characteristic verbalized by clients exerted this level of influence on the three intermediary consequences or the three final values. Explicitly stated, “having a meat and vegetable in main meal” is the only characteristic of a meal identified by clients that led to all three of the clients’ final identified held values.

In addition to sharing that meat and vegetables in main meals are a link to all three values in the means-end chain section of the interview, many clients also said that meat was an important part of their personal upbringings. Some clients shared that their parents prepared meat regularly during their childhood, and they continue that tradition with their own children today to help them grow and be successful. In many cases, meat was recognized to offer health benefits to clients and their children, including clients with existing medical conditions such as diabetes, as well as to those wishing to maintain their current level of health.

Keeping in mind that nearly half of the participating clients reported having health problems such as diabetes and high blood pressure, many identified protein as an important component in the diet for energy and overall health. However, because clients are sometimes unable to secure the meat that they need or want for daily or weekly consumption, they may sometimes defer to alternative sources of protein as a replacement (Table 4.6). Alternative sources of protein identified by the clients included low- or no-protein-source foods, such as noodles, rice, vegetables, cereal, fruit, and donuts/cookies. Twenty-three of the 36 participating clients identified at least one of these food items as alternative protein option. These data suggest two important areas to consider. One is the need to further test the interview instrument to ensure that the question did not lead participants to offer an answer that suggested such items were just an alternative food source, rather than an alternative protein source. If the question is deemed to be sound, such responses suggest a need to more carefully explore how clients understand and define protein, and appropriately understand alternative and adequate sources.

The interviews revealed that nearly three-fourths of the clients interviewed said that financial problems such as having a low or fixed income had caused them to visit a pantry. The director interviews confirmed this finding as directors stated that many pantry users are long-term clients who must rely on the pantries due to chronic unemployment or disabilities. Regardless of the reason for their reliance, clients reacted to the situation in a variety of ways. Some were very grateful, while others were ashamed and embarrassed about their reliance on pantries for assistance.

Nonetheless, the need remains for self-preservation and responsibility to their family when they are in need of food. Client interview findings revealed that there is a differentiating factor between clients and options for meat at the food pantries. Nearly half the clients stated that they would not take the meat offered to them at the pantry if it did not look good in quality and safety; the other half said that they would always take it out of gratitude and obligation. But, even with the added layer of gratitude and obligation, these clients also considered safety and the need to assist others. Clients mentioned concerns they have about meat and meat packaging available at pantries, such as discoloration of the meat and holes in packaging. Some of those clients shared that, at times, they have opted not to take meat at food pantries because of those concerns. Those clients who reported always taking the meat home said they would further inspect it at home. If it seemed unsafe to eat or prepare for their families, they would throw it away. Others reported they would take the meat from the pantry even if they did not need it for themselves because they would give to someone else in need. This is a significant finding because the benefits of providing meat products on behalf of the pantry may be overstated if, in fact, some who take the meat are actually throwing it away once they get

home. Even when asked if a frozen by sell-date sticker was added to a package of meat, while clients said it may help in their decision of whether to take the meat, they still said they had concerns and would conduct a visual evaluation.

This finding is supported by Bandura's social cognitive theory by way of examining agency of the clients themselves. The decision to not take meat from the pantry indicates that some of the clients control their own decisions and actions by publicly exhibiting levels of personal agency. However, others do not demonstrate agency until they are in the privacy of their own homes where, rather than in front of the food pantry workers, they will throw meat away if it is deemed unacceptable for themselves and their families. In this instance, the clients possess the ability to reflect on decisions and actions, and regulate those by developing habits or standards of behavior (Bandura, 1991).

At the moment the clients are faced with the decision to take or not take the meat from the pantry, there are additional layers of complexity. While they exhibit public or private agency by refusing or taking the meat, deciding to eat it, giving it to someone else, or throwing it away, they also consider a range of other factors regarding the meat. Such factors include past experience of getting sick from what they perceived was bad meat; packaging that is ripped, exposing the meat; and a visual evaluation, where gray or brown-colored meat is seen as undesirable.

This leads to the clients' practice of forming conditional trust in the available food and its source, which sometimes goes beyond the pantry and back to the original source, such as the grocery store. This finding suggests areas of shared understanding and common evaluation criteria on behalf of the clients. While a "Frozen by sell date" sticker

may offer reassurance to some clients, there are still many who will ultimately rely on the overall look and perceived quality of the meat. In addition, there exists the perceived suspicion that the meat may have been frozen multiple times prior to arriving at the pantry, which means once again, clients may rely primarily on the look of the meat when judging its desirability.

5.2.2 Climate of Food Pantries

In order to examine the social climate of food pantries, this study incorporated interviews with pantry directors and researcher observations of five local pantries. For the purposes of this study, social climate is defined as current attitudes, standards, and social and environmental conditions of a group or place (Pretty, 1990).

The three participating directors, who oversaw a total of five pantries, demonstrated through their respective interviews that they function as the liaison between the pantry clients and their needs, and the availability of food through the food pantry and other local food sources. Interestingly, as the pantry clients are concerned with the quality of the meat, so too are the directors, though indirectly. One of the directors mentioned he is aware that clients will report bad meat. While this bothers him, he is uncertain about what can be done. He shares some of their sentiments and concerns, but he also cannot guarantee that the meat has been frozen the entire time.

Aside from the quality of the meat, directors also struggle with the need and demand for meat. The stationary pantries are limited to 200 pounds per week from the food bank and, while at one time this was sufficient in relationship to the clients' needs, this is no longer true. During the course of director interviews and researcher

observations, it was clear that meat sources are not always available. Pantries that are capable of carrying meat because they have available freezers and refrigeration units are still sometimes unable to secure a supply of meat. This shortage of meat is significant, specifically in relationship to the clients' needs and preferences. Many clients, as indicated in their respective interviews, often rely on more than one food pantry to meet their monthly, weekly, and sometimes daily needs (in the case of soup kitchens). While clients can often offset limitations from one pantry by visiting another, there are restricting factors such as inadequate transportation available to the clients and lack of refrigeration units at many pantries.

In addition to these restricting factors, research observations at the five pantries suggested additional limitations. While both stationary and mobile pantries shared commonalities, each pantry location observed for this study had its own unique social climate. The stationary pantries each had set hours of operation, and both were operated out of rooms in area churches. Both stationary pantries tracked the number of times clients visited during a given time. In some cases, clients had to show proof of residency in the county. This raises the question of how such experiences affect clients' future behavior. Through observation alone, it was difficult to ascertain whether first-time pantry clients were familiar with the visitation protocol, such as needing to carry proof of residence with them. Clients who are turned away because they are unable to prove residency may or may not return to that pantry, or to the food pantry system as a whole. This also begs the question of where and how first-time clients would acquire food if they were unable to get it from these stationary pantries; they would have to resort to other coping strategies.

There were no limits on client visitation at the mobile pantries. As Director M mentioned, the only information asked of the clients was how many people are in the household and, occasionally, how many of those household members are children. Because the selected mobile pantries studied did not require proof of residency, in this study, mobile pantries are more accessible to clients, especially first-time clients.

Clients interviewed at each pantry location mentioned getting to know others who visited while waiting for the pantries to open or the line to progress through the pantries. Some clients mentioned that talking with other clients who visited pantries helped to alleviate the initial uneasiness they felt at pantries. One in particular said once he began talking with other clients, he realized they were people like him; as a result, he no longer felt bad or ashamed about visiting a pantry. This client's experience also speaks to the sense of camaraderie that existed among some of the clients at the food pantries.

5.2.3 Clients' Information Preferences

The majority of clients (72 percent) interviewed for this study expressed that they wanted more information from food pantries on cooking ideas or tips on using some of the foods available at the pantries, including types and cuts of meat. Information about food could help influence personal factors in regard to their food-making decisions. This is specifically the case when the food options they are presented with are limited and clients are forced to make a decision quickly at the moment they are offered choices when going through a food pantry line or standing at the serving window while the volunteer fills their bag. Of course, clients' food choices and options can change from visit to visit, depending on supplies received by the food bank, availability of government

commodities, or donations from grocery stores. Clients have the choice whether to take the food products, but they are selecting from a narrowed food range; they may encounter food products they are unfamiliar with or have never previously prepared.

The remainder of the clients indicated that they did not want additional information—they felt they knew enough to get them by, or they knew someone (such as a family member or friend) who could provide information they needed. The questions during the client interviews regarding available information were specifically focused on food and food preparation, but one of the directors explained that when it came to providing information to clients, it was sometimes not received well. While this information focused primarily on acquiring food stamps or employment, the director considered the possibility of such poor reception resulting from clients having already received such information many times. This varied reception for information warrants further study. For example, did clients simply tell the researcher what they thought she wanted to hear, or did they truly want tips and information regarding food over other forms of information that are intended to better their current circumstances? There is a need to examine the discursive spaces of such information. What are the perceptions of varied types of information provided to clients through the pantries? What determines why one type of information is preferred, while another is not?

The varied preference for information types also leads to the need to consider the role of conditional trust. Depending on the information (whether on food preparation or food stamps), perhaps family and friends are viewed as more trusted when it comes to providing traditional and culture-centered preparation ideas. Alternatively, is the food pantry seen as an unlikely or inappropriate source of information for a related topic such

as employment options? If so, attempting to provide this information to clients may reduce their credibility as a provider of all types of information.

According to Director S, pantry S1 offers a monthly cooking class, but does not always prepare an entrée or meat dish. The class and cooking demonstration are dependent on what foods the pantry has available, and what the instructor, a local Extension educator, decides to use. Information as well as ingredients to make the demonstrated dish are given to clients who attend the class, but not to clients unable to attend the class.

In addition to the cooking class mentioned by Director S as well as a few clients during interviews, Director M (M1, M2, M3) said that when providing items that may be unfamiliar to clients, the pantry tries to offer recipes or nutritional information. However, this highlights a potential disconnect between the director and clients, because how clients define unfamiliar items may be different than directors. Clients generally have less variety in their diets, consume more processed foods (Seligman et al., 2010) and fewer nutrients (Rose, 1999), and may skip purchasing meat because of its high cost relative to other food groups (Drewnowski, 2009). Therefore, clients may have a smaller number of familiar food items they regularly cook and a larger number of food items with which they are unfamiliar. Although Director M said that information is provided to clients at mobile pantries, during observations, the only information available to clients was a list of all area pantries at pantry M2. While information on area pantries is also important, it is not the same as providing nutritional information or cooking tips and recipes. The finding also suggests that directors may at times be unaware of information being made available to pantry clients.

5.3 Recommendations

It is imperative to recognize that clients face a plethora of obstacles and barriers to ensuring their family has the food it needs on a regular basis. They are sometimes forced to make difficult decisions about needed or desired items, including food, which must be skipped during a day, week, or month. Adding to these barriers are additional obstacles, such as health issues, physical disabilities, and/or job loss. Given these circumstances, a consideration of lived experiences and the culture of food pantry clients cannot take place in a sterile discussion. When a study uncovers unique characteristics of food insecurity in a selected targeted community, and a deeper understanding of the food pantry clients is gained and recognized as richly complex, it is imperative that recommendations for future research and praxis be carefully considered and fully based on study findings.

Findings from the current research suggest three recommendations for next steps in terms of research and further areas of consideration for activities within the pantries. Recommendations include the following: 1) the need to define protein in the context of agency, 2) the need to examine context-dependent agency in the realm of pantries and available food choices, and 3) the need to critically examine avenues for information sharing. Each recommendation is detailed below.

5.3.1 Define Protein in the Context of Agency

Further research is needed to examine the held meanings and subsequent sources of protein among food pantry clients. While it is recognized that protein is an essential nutrient in the daily diet, a feasible recommendation for further examination would be to request selected pantries to organize their available food via the MyPlate

recommendations of a daily diet (USDA Center for Nutrition Policy & Promotion, 2015). The MyPlate program organizes foods into five groups (protein, vegetables, fruits, grains, and dairy) and provides information on nutritional benefits of each group as well as suggested serving sizes for healthy diets (USDA Center for Nutrition Policy & Promotion, 2015). By organizing available foods in this fashion, food options are more readily seen in their respective categories as it relates to dietary recommendations. Repeated exposure to this information builds upon the familiarity of nutrition sources, as well as food categories. Also, ensuring that nutritional information and suggested serving sizes for foods and food groups are provided to clients builds familiarity with healthy eating and meal-planning practices.

Client concerns with the meat and meat packaging available at food pantries are also important, and warrant further research. Clients mentioned that, at times, they have opted not to take meat at pantries because of food safety concerns such as discoloration of the meat or holes in packaging. However, on average, clients rated meat and meat packaging as adequate to good when asked to consider a rating scale developed by the researcher. Understanding how clients define and rate the quality of meat and meat packaging, and ultimately how they decide to take or not take meat from the pantry can help shed light on personal and environmental factors of client behavior as described by Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory. This can lead to a more thorough analysis of how agency is played out in the context of food pantry clients when they are faced with limited options, some, of which, they question in terms of quality, safety, and familiarity.

This recommendation must involve more than just entering into the given culture of the clientele with the intent to correct the current trajectory of meaning and practice.

Rather, a two-pronged approach is required. One, of course, and still in the context of qualitative research, is to consider the role of the researcher as it relates to understanding ways in which effective engagement with pantry clientele can be achieved. The effort must be more than using a semi-structured question route that explores the issue from the informed point of view of the researcher; it must involve a commitment on behalf of the researcher to recognize protein consumption among clients as the entry point to client culture. Doing so will allow the researcher to more clearly see the connections of protein consumption with other influential, but unidentified variables in clients' lives. This approach requires a research design grounded in ethnography (Kaplan-Weinger & Ullman, 2014), which could more critically examine the practices of conditional trust as it plays out in the context of clients' daily lives, where they are forced to make many tough choices of what they can have and what they must go without.

5.3.2 Examine Context-Dependent Agency

As Bandura (2002) posits, people can demonstrate varying types of agency throughout the course of their daily lives. Personal agency refers to an individual's ability to influence or control his or her own decisions and actions; proxy agency refers to others acting on one's behalf; and collective agency involves multiple people working together to accomplish common goals (Bandura, 2002). As Bandura describes that all three forms of agency can be experienced in a single day by a single individual, the value of more closely examining agency in respect to food pantry clients is essential. In particular, it is important to be mindful of semantics when discussing agency, and to attempt to describe and disentangle causes and effects of various types of agency.

Agency is context-dependent; and when food pantry clients are forced to make choices between food and other daily needs because of lack of resources, the forms of agency can become blurred. Because many clients who were interviewed at the pantries mentioned the value of interacting with and getting to know other clients, there is value in exploring this further for the purposes of better understanding the social framework within which this interaction takes place. If clients are able to reduce the anxiety or stigma of having to rely on the food pantry by realizing that others in line share many similarities, or if they are able to see other clients as sources of information when faced with unfamiliar foods, there is a value in exploring the client-client relationships further, specifically as it relates to personal and collective agency. Potential research questions to consider include the following:

- Does relating in personal circumstances affect, change or enhance the varying types of agency as defined by Bandura? If so, how?
- What barriers do clients most readily identify that limit access to necessary food resources, and how are personal, proxy, and collective agency affected by such barriers?

Depending on findings uncovered through such research, various pilot programs could be designed to examine the varying degrees of agency and their impact given dynamic circumstances of overcoming social stigma for those who are newer to food pantries. In addition, the impact of personal agency could be examined as it relates to the layout of the food pantry, available food, and client-volunteer interaction.

Another opportunity for future qualitative research exists with immigrants who are also food pantry clients. Immigrant populations may have additional barriers to

accessing and acquiring food. Research on varying degrees of agency in immigrant populations could help pantries better understand and meet immigrant-specific needs. Ethnicity was not explored in this study because the focus was on clients' perceptions of pantries and available foods, and information they preferred about pantry foods. However, as noted by this research, the selected stationary pantries required clients to prove residency in the same county, and some individuals may not have documentation or proof of residency. The selected mobile pantries did not require residency information from clients, meaning anyone who wished could join the line and receive food. This finding provides an avenue for future research into context-dependent agency in immigrant populations.

5.3.3 Critically Examine Avenues for Information Sharing

Many of the clients indicated that they wanted additional information on how to prepare food made available to them through the food pantries. One stationary pantry in this study offers a monthly class that covers a variety of topics around food. While some clients view the class favorably, many cannot often access it due to the class time and location.

One director shared during his interview that the mobile pantry regularly provides information regarding food. However, during researcher observation at this particular pantry, the only information provided to the clients was a print-out of available pantries in the area. Another finding in this study revealed that, while many clients said they would like information provided to them, available information is often not seen very favorably.

Collectively, the study findings suggest a need to further examine the discursive spaces of information sharing. It would be valuable to conduct a form of information testing where clients are asked to evaluate a variety of materials, such as recipes, cooking tips, and cooking demonstrations, as well as information on food stamps and employment opportunities. The evaluation could also incorporate client perceptions of various information sources, including food pantries, the local Extension office, and fellow food pantry clients. Other study variables might include preferred frequency of information distribution, perceptions of stationary versus mobile pantries, and desired formats of information delivery.

5.4 Conclusion

Prior to this study, the claim was widely accepted that food pantries are important hunger-relief resources to clients, providing them and their families with ready access to food items on a week-to-week basis. Unfortunately, the demand for food banks and food pantries continues to rise, often outstripping demand in local areas. Nearly 70 percent (25 clients) of participants in the current study reported they visited a food pantry at least two to three times per month; 41.7 percent (15 clients) said they visit a pantry one or more times a week (Table 4.3). All participants eat meat at least one time per week, and they acknowledge the value of this protein source in their overall health and wellbeing. Unfortunately, they routinely struggle to get the protein they need, often deferring to less than ideal alternative protein sources. Aside from their reliance on food pantries in their community, they also have distinct and unique perceptions in the overall quality, safety and variety of foods available at the food pantries. They often are forced to negotiate and

decide among various needs they have in their lives. These results reveal the limitations we face in understanding a deeper sense of the cultural nuances that are claimed by those who are food insecure.

While empirical data such as that provided in the current research can provide richer understanding of this segment of the community, the researcher acknowledges that only a limited understanding was achieved through this work. It is imperative to understand that in the realm of social science research, a targeted audience labeled as low-income or designated as food pantry clients cannot be comprehensively described with generalized statements that create a neat and tightly woven explanation for culture, perceptions, and held values. These constructs are far too complex for simple description or generalization.

Through client interviews, director interviews, and food pantry observations, this exploratory research project has shown a snapshot of a selected northwest Indiana community at a given time (fall 2014). Through the use of social cognitive theory and means-end chain theory, client culture was examined in a way that enabled a deeper understanding of complexities that exist in clients' lives as they work daily and make tough choices to make ends meet. The two theoretical perspectives performed well, although participants sometimes struggled to provide answers to the iterative interview technique required by means-end chain theory. Adjustments to the interview technique or to the analysis of value-chain data should be considered when used with this population.

Results from this study mark a starting point for additional research and considerations for praxis with low-resource populations and food pantry users. Future research can build upon the current findings by addressing critical variables that are often

overlooked or not seen through traditional quantitative approaches for understanding food insecurity and food pantry clientele at the local level. Deeper exploration of such constructs as client culture and food pantry social climate is essential.

Recommendations for the selected food bank, food pantries, and future research include: 1) the need to define protein in the context of agency, 2) the need to examine context-dependent agency in the realm of pantries and available food choices, and 3) the need to critically examine avenues for information sharing. These recommendations were based on a qualitative analysis of pantry client culture, social climate of selected food pantries, and client's information preferences. The work should be replicated in other areas of the state and nation to build upon study findings and identify additional lines of promising research. Analysis of the current data revealed the complexity of clients' reliance on pantries and varying definitions of quality, meat and protein. Additional research can build upon and extend current findings. Future research could include client definitions of protein and quality, other values clients hold, and perception and use of food pantries by immigrant populations.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

- AmpleHarvest.org. (2015). *About AmpleHarvest.org*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.ampleharvest.org/about.php>
- Ahluwalia, I. B., Dodds, J. M., & Baligh, M. (1998). Social support and coping behaviors of low-income families experiencing food insufficiency in North Carolina. *Health Education & Behavior, 25*(5), 599-612.
- Anderson, S. A. (Ed.). (1990). Core indicators of nutritional state for difficult-to-sample populations. *Journal of Nutrition, 120*(11), 1555-1660.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1991). Social cognitive theory of self-regulation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50*(2), 248-287.
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory of mass communication. *Media Psychology, 3*(3), 265-299.
- Bandura, A. (2002). Social cognitive theory in cultural context. *Applied Psychology, 51*(2), 269-290.
- Bhattarai, G. R., Duffy, P. A., & Raymond, J. (2005). Use of food pantries and food stamps in low-income households in the United States. *Journal of Consumer Affairs, 39*(2), 276-298.

- Bonne, K., & Verbeke, W. (2006). Muslim consumer's motivations towards meat consumption in Belgium: Qualitative exploratory insights from means-end chain analysis. *Anthropology of Food*, 5. Retrieved from: <https://aof.revues.org/90>
- Borron, A., & Tucker, M. (2010, March). Enhancing food safety communication and education with high-risk audiences. Paper presented at Food Safety Education Conference, Atlanta, GA. PowerPoint presentation retrieved from: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/25e09f34-54fb-4a5e-9651-2118e4efe6e9/Slides_FSEC_ABorron_AtRisk.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=8b914963-932b-4e68-b076-c9279bfa3bf8
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Burnard, P. (1991). A method of analysing interview transcripts in qualitative research. *Nurse Education Today*, 11(6), 461-466.
- Campbell, E., Hudson, H., Webb, K., & Crawford, P. (2011). Food preferences of users of the emergency food system. *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition*, 6(2), 179-187.
- Carlson, S. J., Andrews, M. S., & Bickel, G. W. (1999). Measuring food insecurity and hunger in the United States: Development of a national benchmark measure and prevalence estimates. *Journal of Nutrition*, 129(2), 510S-516S.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015a). *2014 National diabetes statistics report*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/data/statistics/2014statisticsreport.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015b). *High blood pressure facts*.

Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/facts.htm>

Coleman-Jensen, A., Nord, M., Andrews, M., & Carlson, S. (2011). *Household food security in the United States in 2010*. Washington, DC: United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Report.

Costa, A. D. A., Dekker, M., & Jongen, W. M. F. (2004). An overview of means-end theory: Potential application in consumer-oriented food product design. *Trends in Food Science & Technology*, 15(7), 403-415.

Costa, A. D. A., Schoolmeester, D., Dekker, M., & Jongen, W. M. F. (2007). To cook or not to cook: A means-end study of motives for choice of meal solutions. *Food Quality and Preference*, 18(1), 77-88.

Cotunga, N., & Beebe, D. (2002). Food banking in the 21st century. *Journal of American Dietetic Association*, 102(10), 1386-1388.

Dammann, K. W., & Smith, C. (2009). Factors affecting low-income women's food choices and the perceived impact of dietary intake and socioeconomic status on their health and weight. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 41(4), 242-253.

Denzin, N. (2009). The elephant in the living room: Or extending the conversation about the politics of evidence. *Qualitative Research*, 9(2), 139-160.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Devereux, S., & Maxwell, S. (Eds.). (2001). *Food security in sub-Saharan Africa*. London: ITDG Publishing.

- Drewnowski, A. (2009). Obesity, diets, and social inequalities. *Nutrition Reviews*, 67, S36-S39.
- Ellis, J. D., & Tucker, M. (2009). Factors influencing consumer perception of food hazards. *CAB Reviews: Perspectives in Agriculture, Veterinary Science, Nutrition and Natural Resources*, 4(006), 1-8.
- Food and Agriculture Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development, & World Food Programme. (2014). *The state of food insecurity in the world 2014: Strengthening the enabling environment for food security and nutrition* (4th ed). Rome: Food and Agricultural Organization.
- Feeding America. (2015a). *Map the meal gap*. Retrieved from:
<http://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2013/overall>
- Feeding America. (2015b). *Mobile food pantry program*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.feedingamerica.org/about-us/we-feed-families/mobile-food-pantry-program/>
- Feeding America. (2015c). *Our history*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.feedingamerica.org/about-us/about-feeding-america/our-history/>
- Fitchen, J. (1987). Hunger, malnutrition, and poverty in the contemporary United States: Some observations on their social and cultural context, *Food and Foodways*, 2(1), 309-333.
- Font-i-Furnols, M., & Gurrero, L. (2014). Consumer preference, behavior and perception about meat and meat products: An overview. *Meat Science*, 98(3), 361-371.
- Grunert, K. (1995). Food quality: A means-end perspective. *Food Quality and Preference*, 6(3), 171-176.

- Grunert, K. (1997). What's in a steak? A cross-cultural study on the quality perception of beef. *Food Quality and Preference*, 8(3), 157-174.
- Grunert, K. (2005). Food quality and safety: Consumer perception and demand. *European Review of Agricultural Economics*, 32(3), 369-391.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59-82.
- Gundersen, C. (2013). Food insecurity is an ongoing national concern. *Advances in Nutrition: An International Review Journal*, 4(1), 36-41.
- Hamelin, A. M., Habicht, J. P., & Beaudry, M. (1999). Food insecurity: Consequences for the household and broader social implications. *Journal of Nutrition*, 129(2), 525S-528S.
- Hamilton, W. L., Cook, J. T., Thompson, W. W., & Buron, L. F. (1997). *Household food security in the United States in 1995: Summary report of the food security measurement project*. Alexandria, VA: USDA.
- Hoisington, A., Shultz, J. A., & Butkus, S. (2002). Coping strategies and nutrition education needs among food pantry users. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 34(6), 326-333.
- Kantor, L. S., Lipton, K., Manchester, A., & Oliveira, V. (1997). Estimating and addressing America's food losses. *Food Review*, 20(1), 2-12.
- Kaplan-Weinger, J. & Ullman, C. (2014). *Methods for the ethnography of communication: Language in use in schools and communities*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Kempson, K., Keenan, D. P., Sadani, P. S., & Adler, A. (2003). Maintaining food sufficiency: Coping strategies identified by limited-resource individuals versus nutrition educators. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 35(4), 179-188.
- Lefin, A. (2009). Food consumption and sustainable development: An introduction. *Institut pour un Développement Durable*. Retrieved from: http://consentsus-project.pbworks.com/f/SustFoodCons_patterns.pdf
- Leppard, P., Russell, C. G., & Cox, D. N. (2004). Improving means-end-chain studies by using a ranking method to construct hierarchical value maps. *Food Quality and Preference*, 15(5), 489-497.
- Maher, M. J. (2003). Individual beliefs and cultural immersion in service-learning: Examination of a reflection process. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 26(2), 88-96.
- Martin, K. S., Wu, R., Wolff, M., Colantonio, A. G., & Grady, J. (2013). A novel food pantry program: Food security, self-sufficiency, and diet-quality outcomes. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 45(5), 569-575.
- Maxwell, S., & Smith, M. (1992). Household food security: A conceptual review. In S. Maxwell & T. Frankenberger (Eds.), *Household food security: Concepts, indicators, measurements* (pp. 1-72). Rome and New York, NY: IFAD and UNICEF.
- Maxwell, S. (2001). The evolution of thinking about food security. In Devereux, S. & Maxwell, S. (Eds.), *Food security in sub-Saharan Africa*. London: ITDG Publishing.

- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Morton, L. W., Bitto, E. A., Oakland, M. J., & Sand, M. (2008). Accessing food resources: Rural and urban patterns of giving and getting food. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 25(1), 107-119.
- Online Highways, LLC. (2015). *Depression-era soup kitchens*. Retrieved from: <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1660.html>
- Pretty, G. M. (1990). Relating psychological sense of community to social climate characteristics. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 18(1), 60-65.
- Purdue Agriculture. (2015). *About AgSEED*. Retrieved from: <https://ag.purdue.edu/agseed/Pages/about.aspx>
- Rose, D. (1999). Economic determinants and dietary consequences of food insecurity in the United States. *Journal of Nutrition*, 129(2), 517S-520S.
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Seligman, H., Laraia, B., & Kushel, M. (2010). Food insecurity is associated with chronic disease among low-income NHANES participants. *Journal of Nutrition and Disease*, 140(2), 304-310.
- Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analyzing talk, text and interaction*. London: Sage.

Starkey, L. J., Gray-Donald, K., & Kuhnlein, H. V. (1999). Nutrient intake of food bank users is related to frequency of food bank use, household size, smoking, education and country of birth. *Journal of Nutrition*, 129(4), 883-889.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2012). *Table 217. Per capita consumption of meat of major food commodities: 1980 to 2009*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0217.pdf>

U.S. Census Bureau. (2014). *State and county quickfacts*. Retrieved from:

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/18/18157.html>

United States Department of Agriculture. (2014a). *Definitions of food security*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/definitions-of-food-security.aspx>

United States Department of Agriculture. (2014b). *Food and nutrition service nutrition program fact sheet: The emergency food assistance program*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/pfs-tefap.pdf>

United States Department of Agriculture. (2015a). *Key statistics and graphics*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics.aspx>

United States Department of Agriculture. (2015b). *Supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP): A short history of SNAP*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/short-history-snap>

United States Department of Agriculture Center for Nutrition Policy & Promotion. (2015).

ChooseMyPlate.gov. Retrieved from: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

- United States Department of Agriculture & United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2010). *Dietary guidelines for Americans: 2010* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved from: <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2010.asp>
- Verpy, H., Smith, C., & Reicks, M. (2003). Attitudes and behaviors of food donors and perceived needs and wants of food shelf clients. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 35(1), 6-15.
- Webb, P., Coates, J., Frongillo, E. A., Rogers, B. L., Swindale, A., & Bilinsky, P. (2006). Measuring household food insecurity: Why it's so important and yet so difficult to do. *Journal of Nutrition*, 136(5), 1404S-1408S.
- Weinfield, N., Mills, G., Borger, C., Gearing, M., Macaluso, T., Montaquila, J., & Zedlweski, S. (2014). *Hunger in America* (6th ed.). Chicago, IL: Feeding America. Retrieved from: <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/our-research/hunger-in-america/>
- Wicks, R., Trevena, L., & Quine, S. (2006). Experiences of food insecurity among urban soup kitchen consumers: Insights for improving nutrition and well-being. *Journal of American Dietetic Association*, 106(6), 921-924.
- Wiig, K., & Smith, C. (2008). The art of grocery shopping on a food stamp budget: Factors influencing the food choices of low-income women as they try to make ends meet. *Public Health Nutrition*, 12(10), 1726-1734.
- World Bank. (1986). *Poverty and hunger: A World Bank policy study*. Washington, DC: The International Bank.

- Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52(3), 2-22.
- Zipperer, S. (1987). *Food security: Agricultural policy and hunger*. Harare, Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production.

APPENDICES

Appendix A Initial contact email

Hello, [].

As I mentioned in my voicemail to you, I am sending you this follow-up email regarding the research project that Dr. Jolena Waddell and I discussed with you and [] in March of this year regarding food pantry clients and their perceptions about available meat products at local food pantries.

As we have previously discussed pantry locations where we can conduct in-depth interviews with food pantry clients, I want to (1) confirm with you that we still have permission to conduct these interviews with [selected food bank] as our entry point and access to food pantry clients; and (2) verify with you that the following pantries would be best to target in order to obtain a good representation of clients' attitudes and preferences toward available meat products and cooking practices, as well as specific barriers faced to implement recommended practices. We agreed that targeted pantries must have refrigeration units and, therefore, have the ability to offer meat products.

In [selected] County:

- [] mobile pantry (run by [selected] Food Bank)
- [] mobile pantry @ [] (run by [selected] Food Bank)
- [] mobile pantry @ [] (run by [selected] Food Bank)
- [] food pantry (run independently)

In [] County:

- [] Food Pantry (run independently)

In [] County

- [] Food Pantry (run independently)

For those pantries that are run directly by [selected] Food Bank, do I have your permission to conduct interviews at these locations on dates between July 31 and October 1 we collaboratively determine work best for us and the pantry schedule? And, for those pantries that are run independently, do I have your permission to contact them, explain to them the overall project and our partnership with [selected food bank] in data collection, and request their permission to conduct the same interviews with clients at those locations?

Our intent is to conduct a total of 60 interviews, providing each volunteer participant \$10 for completing the interview.

If I have your permission, please respond to this email, indicating that you are in agreement with our research intentions.

I appreciate your help with this and I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Abigail

Appendix B Emails with distribution manager

Hello [],

My name is Amanda Gee and I am a graduate student at Purdue working with Dr. Abigail Borron. I wanted to introduce myself and touch base with you in regards to the research project involving food pantry clients and their perceptions of available meat. [] at [selected food bank] said email would be the best way to get in touch this week.

First, thank you for agreeing to work with us on this research project! As you may have heard from Abigail, I will also be using the data collected during this project as my thesis research. My Master's committee recently met, and I have a few things I'd like to discuss with you and get your input on:

- I plan to stay in [selected] County for the research, and visit at least 2 mobile food pantries & 2 stationary food pantries to conduct interviews with food pantry clients. I have a possible list of [] Food pantry, [] (mobile) and [] (mobile). Do these still sound OK? What is your suggestion for another stationary food pantry to visit in [selected] County?
- I would like to conduct a small pilot study soon to test the question route for food pantry client interviews, and ensure it's feasible.
- I would also like to observe at the selected food pantries in order to describe the climate of each pantry. (These would be at a separate time from the client interviews.)
- I'm looking to include local food pantry statistics in my research, particularly which pantries offer meat and where they are located – do you have this information? Or could you recommend who to contact about it?

I am hoping to conduct my research (pilot study, client interviews, pantry observations) starting in the near future and finishing in November. I appreciate your willingness to work with us on this, and I look forward to discussing the project with you! Please feel free to give me a call on my cell at [], reply to this email, and/or give me possible times to call you.

Thank you and have a great evening.

Amanda

Hi Amanda,

[] forwarded me your email from the other day and thought since I work with our pantries and the mobiles, I might be the best person to answer some of your questions.

We currently no longer have the [] mobile pantry anymore but we still have our [] Mobile pantry every [] so that would still be a good option.

Your choice of the [] is a good choice for a pantry to visit. I would also suggest:

1. []
2. []

I've attached a spreadsheet with all of our [] Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens to this email along with the contact information for each pantry.

This might be helpful to you with regard to finding out about the selection of meat.
 We don't really have a good way of tracking that information.
 Email is the best way to reach me so feel free to ask me anything you need help with!
 [Distribution Manager]

Hi [Distribution manager],

Thank you for the spreadsheet and information about the two other food pantries, I appreciate it! I do have some follow-up questions...Do you know if [1 in above email] and [2 in above email] offer meat to food pantry clients? I can call and ask; I wasn't sure from your previous email if you keep track of pantries that do and do not offer meat, or if you were referring to tracking other information.

Also, do you have more information about mobile food pantries in [selected county]? Is the one at the [] the only one? Or is there a list? Abigail (my professor) had mentioned the possibility of a mobile pantry at []....I would like to identify at least 2 mobile pantries & 2 stationary pantries in the county that offer meat to clients.

Thanks again for your help. Have a good afternoon!

Amanda

Appendix C Phone script

Hello, [pantry directors].

My name is Amanda Gee. I am a graduate student in the Youth Development and Agricultural Education Department at Purdue University. I am calling you in regard to a research project that my supervising professor, Dr. Abigail Borron, and I are conducting in collaboration with [selected] Food Bank.

First, let me explain briefly the current issue that we are examining and our project design. We have come to understand that a large proportion (up to 30% per day) of fresh meat that comes through [selected food bank] is lost or rejected. This loss comes from package damage in the warehouse and client refusal at the food pantries. This project aims to decrease these losses and rejection, thus increasing the amount of protein consumed in low-income households in the [selected] area. Our overall project objective as it relates to me contacting you is the need to gain a deeper understanding of the culture of [selected food pantry] clients, as it relates to attitudes and preferences toward available meat products and cooking practices, as well as specific barriers faced to implement recommended practices.

I am currently in the process of establishing food pantry locations in the [selected] area that, not only offer meat, but also may be willing to allow two of us from the research team to come in and conduct interviews with food pantry clients.

My intent with data collection is interview pantry clients who would like to volunteer in the project—up to 10 clients at your pantry. Each interview would last 30-60 minutes; and each participant will receive \$10 at the completion of the interview.

My first question to you is whether you would be interested and willing to allow one of my graduate students and me to conduct client interviews at your facility. Would you give us permission to do that?

If so, are there days or times that you would prefer we visit your location between the dates of July 31 and October 1?

If I have your permission, I would like to request that you send me an email reply to a message I will send to you following our conversation containing the same information I just explained to you, indicating that you are in agreement with our research intentions. I appreciate your help with this and I look forward to working with you.

Appendix D Script for client recruitment

Hello, my name is [Abigail/Amanda], and I am a researcher from Purdue University. We are conducting a project that is interested in your perceptions of meat in your daily diet and the available meat through the food pantry. If you would be willing to participate, I will ask you several types of questions about your perceptions. There are no right or wrong answers – we are just interested in your opinion. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer, and you may stop this interview at any time. The interview can run from 30-60 minutes in length. If you choose to participate and complete the interview, you will be provided \$10 cash as a thank you for your time and opinion. If you have the time to spare right now, would you be willing to volunteer as a participant?

Appendix E Client consent form

Research Project Number _____

For IRB Office Use Only

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Increasing protein availability and consumption in low-income households of
the _____ area

Abigail Borron, Purdue University, Department of Youth Development & Ag Education

Purpose of Research - The purpose of this project is to consider the amount (up to 30% per day) of fresh meat that is damaged at the _____ or rejected by food pantry clients. This project aims to decrease these damages and rejections, and increase the amount of protein consumed in the households of food pantry clients.

Specific Procedures – The in-depth interviews will range from 30 to 60 minutes. You will discuss your meat preferences and eating/preparation habits. You will also discuss the challenges you face in getting the protein sources you need through the local food pantry. The interviews will be audiotaped. In addition, immediately after the interview, the two researchers will discuss the interviews, reflecting upon the key points made by each participant. In order to keep all participant identities confidential, a number will be assigned to each of the participants, and the audio recordings will be destroyed after each interview has been transcribed.

Duration of Participation – Your participation will be for 30 to 60 minutes.

Risks – This research poses very minimal risk for the participant which is no greater than everyday activities. While there is a risk that your identity could be made known in this research, safety measures are in place as listed in the confidentiality section.

Benefits – There are no direct benefits to you, except for the fact that you are given an opportunity to share your experiences in getting and eating meat products available through the local food pantry. Based on the problems and solutions you identify, we will offer recommendations that will be circulated through local food pantries that carry meat products.

Compensation – At the end of the interview, you will be given \$10.00 as a “Thank You” for your time and information.

Confidentiality – The word-for-word write up (also known as “Transcription”) of your interview will be saved as a Word document on a secure personal computer belonging to the lead researcher and only accessed by other pre-identified researchers. All the transcriptions shall remain confidential and anonymous and all identifiers will be removed from the data so that no information/responses can be traced back to you. Your responses might be used for other research in the future. The transcriptions will be stored for at least ten years from the date of research and then destroyed. Also, the project's research records may be reviewed by departments at Purdue University responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

Voluntary Nature of Participation – You do not have to participate in this research project. If you agree to participate you can withdraw your participation at any time without penalty.

Contact Information – If you have any questions about this research project, you can contact Dr. Abigail Borron: **Phone, (765) 494-8406; Fax, (765) 496-1117; Email, aborron@purdue.edu**. If you have concerns about the treatment of research participants, you can contact the Institutional Review Board at Purdue University, Ernest C. Young Hall, 10th floor- room 1032, 155 S. Grant Street West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114. The phone number for the Board's secretary is (765) 494-5942. The email address is irb@purdue.edu.

Research Project Number _____

Documentation of Informed Consent – I have had the opportunity to read this consent form and have the research study explained. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research project and my questions have been answered. I am prepared to participate in the research project described above. I will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

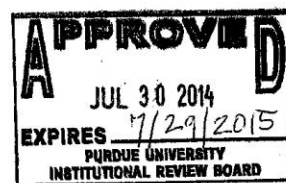
Participant's Signature

Date

Participant's Name

Researcher's Signature

Date



Appendix F Follow-up email about director interviews

Hello, [pantry directors].

My name is Amanda Gee. I am a graduate student in the Youth Development and Agricultural Education Department at Purdue University. I am calling you in regard to a research project that my supervising professor, Dr. Abigail Borron, and I are conducting in collaboration with [selected] Food Bank.

Our overall project objective as it relates to me contacting you is the need to gain a deeper understanding of the culture of [selected] clients, as it relates to attitudes and preferences toward available meat products and cooking practices, as well as specific barriers faced to implement recommended practices

I am currently in the process of establishing food pantry locations in the [selected] area that, not only offer meat, but also may be willing to allow me to conduct a 30-60 minute interview with the director of the food pantry.

My intent with data collection is to learn about experiences the director has had at the food pantry, and discuss challenges faced by food pantry clients in regard to available meat.

Would be interested and willing to allow me to conduct an interview with the director of your food pantry? Would you give me permission to do that?

If so, are there days or times that you would prefer I visit your location between the dates of September 24 and November 25?

If I have your permission, I would like to request that you send me an email reply to a message I will send to you following our conversation containing the same information I just explained to you, indicating that you are in agreement with our research intentions.

I appreciate your help with this and I look forward to working with you.

Amanda

Appendix G Director consent form

Research Project Number _____

For IRB Office Use Only

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM
 Increasing protein availability and consumption in low-income households of
 the _____ area
 Abigail Borron, Purdue University, Department of Youth Development & Ag Education

Purpose of Research – The purpose of this project is to consider the amount (up to 30% per day) of fresh meat that is damaged at the _____ or rejected by food pantry clients. This project aims to decrease these damages and rejections, and increase the amount of protein consumed in the households of food pantry clients. The project also aims to understand the how local food pantries work and challenges faced by clients.

Specific Procedures – The in-depth interviews will range from 30 to 60 minutes. You will discuss your duties and responsibilities at the local food pantry. You will also discuss the challenges you have seen food pantry clients face in getting the protein sources they need through the local food pantry, as well as challenges you have faced as director/organizer of the local food pantry. The interviews will be audiotaped. In addition, immediately after the interview, the two researchers will discuss the interviews, reflecting upon the key points made by each participant. In order to keep all participant identities confidential, a number will be assigned to each of the participants, and the audio recordings will be destroyed after each interview has been transcribed.

Duration of Participation – Your participation will be for 30 to 60 minutes.

Risks – This research poses very minimal risk for the participant which is no greater than everyday activities. While there is a risk that your identity could be made known in this research, safety measures are in place as listed in the confidentiality section.

Benefits – There are no direct benefits to you, except for the fact that you are given an opportunity to share your experiences in volunteering and running the local food pantry. Based on the problems and solutions you identify, we will offer recommendations that will be circulated through local food pantries that carry meat products.

Confidentiality – The word-for-word write up (also known as “Transcription”) of your interview will be saved as a Word document on a secure personal computer belonging to the lead researcher and only accessed by other pre-identified researchers. All the transcriptions shall remain confidential and anonymous and all identifiers will be removed from the data so that no information/responses can be traced back to you. Your responses might be used for other research in the future. The transcriptions will be stored for at least ten years from the date of research and then destroyed. Also, the project's research records may be reviewed by departments at Purdue University responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

Voluntary Nature of Participation – You do not have to participate in this research project. If you agree to participate you can withdraw your participation at any time without penalty.

Contact Information – If you have any questions about this research project, you can contact Dr. Abigail Borron: Phone, (765) 494-8406; Fax, (765) 496-1117; Email, aborron@purdue.edu. If you have concerns about the treatment of research participants, you can contact the Institutional Review Board at Purdue University, Ernest C. Young Hall, 10th floor- room 1032, 155 S. Grant Street West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114. The phone number for the Board's secretary is (765) 494-5942. The email address is irb@purdue.edu.

Documentation of Informed Consent – I have had the opportunity to read this consent form and have the research study explained. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research project and my questions have been answered. I am prepared to participate in the research project described above. I will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

Research Project Number _____

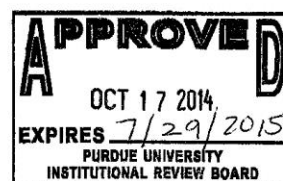
Participant's Signature

Date

Participant's Name

Researcher's Signature

Date



Appendix H Follow-up email about observations

Hello, [pantry directors].

This is Amanda Gee, a graduate student at Purdue University. As a brief reminder, our research project is focused on decreasing meat losses and rejections at local food pantries, and understanding the culture of food pantries and food pantry clients.

Also, as we recently discussed on the phone, we would also like to conduct observations at the [selected] food pantry. The observations would be at a separate time (one visit) from the client interviews and would help us understand and describe how the food pantry works and its culture. Would you give us permission to observe? If so, please reply to this email.

If you have any questions or items you'd like to discuss regarding this project, please feel free to email or call me []. I appreciate your consideration with this, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Amanda

Appendix I Client interview questionnaire

Date: __/__/__ Location: _____ Interviewer Initials: _____ Participant #: _____

QUESTION ROUTE
AgSEED Project – Purdue University
Increasing Protein Availability and Consumption in
Low-Income Households of the Greater Lafayette Area

Thank you for taking time to meet with me today. We are conducting a project that is interested in your perceptions of meat in your daily diet and the available meat through the food pantry. I will ask you several types of questions about your perceptions. There are no right or wrong answers – we are just interested in your opinion and your experiences. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to answer, and you may stop this interview at any time.

Please know that your participation in this interview and any information you share with me will not affect your eligibility to receive food from this food pantry or other food pantries you may use on a regular basis.

The interview can run from 30-60 minutes in length. If you choose to participate and complete the interview, you will be provided \$10 cash as a thank you for your time and opinion. If it's OK with you, we would like to record this interview to help us be accurate when we put your responses in written form later. The recordings will be destroyed after all the responses are typed up. Any answers you do give us will be summarized along with responses from other people – there will be no way to connect this information back to you. Do you have any questions about this process? *<Answer any questions and address any concerns. Record interview only if given permission.>*

Let's begin.

MEAT CONSUMPTION HABITS & PERCEPTIONS

1) Do you eat meat? Y N

<If “yes”> How much do you eat on a weekly basis?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ 4-6 x / week
- ☐ 2-3 x / week
- ☐ 1 x / week
- ☐ None

<If “no”> What do you eat in place of meat?

2) Meat preferences *<rank in order of consumption; strike out those not eaten>*:

_____ Chicken

- ____ Beef
 ____ Pork
 ____ Fish
 ____ Other: _____

3) What kind of cuts/types do you prefer?

4) When you consider the food and meals you eat on a daily basis, how important is meat to you?

- ☐ Really important
☐ Important
☐ Somewhat important
☐ Not important at all
☐ Never think about it

<Probe with Why?>

5) Do you have any health problems that prevent you from eating certain foods? Meat?

6) Please describe a typical meal you would have at home.

I would like you to think about the meal you just described. In general, what things do you think about and what issues are important to you when you plan a meal?

<List, then rank, items in order of importance.>

<Multiple laddering probes (start with most-important item)> “Why are these things important to you?” “What is your overall goal?” (Use negative laddering or other technique if necessary.)

7) Where do you get your meat? <Probe for all locations>

- ☐ Food Pantry
☐ Grocery store
☐ Other: _____

8) Which place do you rely on the most to get the meat you need?

9) Do you ever feel like you cannot get the meat you need each week?

<If yes> Why? And, how does that make you feel?

<If no> Explain

10) Describe the challenges, if any, that you face each week to get the meat you need.

11) How do you try to overcome those challenges? *<Probe for understanding of participant's personal agency in overcoming challenges>*

12) If you cannot get meat, what do you use instead (alternate sources of protein)?

USE OF FOOD PANTRIES

13) How often do you visit a food pantry?

14) Which pantries do you visit?

○ *<If listed more than one>* Which one do you prefer? Why?

○ *<If only identified one>* Why this one and not others?

15) When did you start visiting a pantry?

16) Why? What circumstances brought you to the pantry?***

17) Describe your experiences at the food pantry:***

18) How does it make you feel to come here?***

19) How much of your meat comes from the food pantry?

PERCEPTION OF MEAT FROM FOOD PANTRIES

20) What do you think of the meat available to you through the pantry?

21) How would you rate the quality of meat available? *<Be sure to have them explain their answer>*

- ☐ Very Poor
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Adequate
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Very Good

22) *<Perception>* What do you think about the packaging that it comes in? *<Be sure to have them explain their answer>*

- ☐ Very Poor
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Adequate
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Very Good

23) Do you ever opt not to take the meat from the food pantry? If so, why?

24) Do you ever opt not take other types of food from the food pantry? If so, which foods and why?

25) Do you ever have concerns about the meat from the food pantry? If so, explain.
<Probe, if necessary: Is it because of the “sell-by date”? The color or look of it?>

26) Do you ever have concerns about other types of food from the food pantry? If so, explain.
<Probe, if necessary: Is it because of the “sell-by date”? The color or look of it?>

27) If you saw the statement: “This meat was frozen by the sell-by date for your safety” would you be reassured of its quality and safety? Why or why not?

PREFERRED SOURCES OF INFORMATION

28) How have you learned how to prepare foods for your family?

29) Who or what sources have been important in teaching you these things?
Please explain <Address local vs. expert knowledge>

30) If you were looking for information about food, who or what sources do you trust?

<Probe>: Why?

31) How do you prefer to receive this information? <Probe if necessary:
Pamphlet, Internet, TV/radio, face-to-face conversation>

32) What kinds of media do you use most often?

33) Would you like to have someone at the pantry provide cooking ideas or tips on using some of the foods that are made available to you?

34) Would it be helpful to have someone explain how to use certain types or cuts of meat?

DEMOGRAPHICS

35) Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

36) Do you currently live in a:

- ☐ Home
- ☐ Apartment
- ☐ Trailer
- ☐ Transitional housing complex
- ☐ Shelter

37) In your/the *<answer from previous question>* how many people live specifically with you?

38) How many of those are children?

39) How long have you lived there?

40) How long have you lived in *<_____ area>*?

41) Where did you live before? *<Ask if applicable>*

42) What is your age?

Appendix J Director interview questionnaire

Date: _____ Location: _____ Interviewer Initials: _____ Director #: _____

Interview with Food Pantry Directors

1. What are your duties at the food pantry?
2. How long have you performed these duties?
 - a. Would you say that pantries or the clientele have changed during your time in this position? If so, how?
 - b. How would you describe the current climate of food pantries as it relates to:
 - i. The economy
 - ii. Local, regional, federal support
3. What kinds of interactions do you have with food pantry volunteers? Do you have particular expectations of them as volunteers?
 - a. Do you have many clients want to volunteer?

4. What kinds of interactions do you have with food pantry clients?
 - a. Do you offer educational materials to clients? If so, what?
 - b. Do you provide announcements or other communication-based material to clients? If so, what?
5. What kinds of challenges, if any, do you encounter when it comes to providing meat at your pantry?
6. What challenges have you seen food pantry clients face?
 - a. What challenges, if any, regarding available meat have you seen clients face?
 - b. What challenges, if any, regarding available meat have you seen clients face?
7. Do clients ask about or for certain types of meat?
 - a. Do you notice them avoiding meat? If so, how?
8. Do you have problems with meat packaging?

Appendix K Observation guide

Be there during prep (before) pantry starts

What are the parameters of visiting the pantry? (1/week? 1/month? Etc.)

Watch people lining up – My view of how people are behaving

What kind of interactions do food pantry workers/volunteers have with clients?

Try to count/keep track of # of people attending (or does pantry do this)

How fast/easy/efficient is line moving?

Extra:

Meat

How much meat is there?

How many people take the meat?

How long do they look/sort through before taking the meat?

What kinds of meat? Do they ask questions about the meat? Can I tell if they are looking for or bypassing certain types of meat?

Personal – What is my perception of the available meat?

Is there any meat leftover at the end?

After getting the meat, (& going through the pantry), do they immediately leave for home, or wait on bus, talk, etc.?

Extra:

Appendix L IRB approval - July 2014

HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARDS

To:	ABIGAIL BORRON AGAD
From:	JEANNIE DICLEMENTI, Chair Social Science IRB
Date:	07/30/2014
Committee Action:	Approval
IRB Action Date	07/30/2014
IRB Protocol #	1407015014
Study Title	Increasing protein availability and consumption in low-income households of the Greater Lafayette area
Expiration Date	07/29/2015

Following review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the above-referenced protocol has been approved. This approval permits you to recruit subjects up to the number indicated on the application form and to conduct the research as it is approved. The IRB-stamped and dated consent, assent, and/or information form(s) approved for this protocol are enclosed. Please make copies from these document(s) both for subjects to sign should they choose to enroll in your study and for subjects to keep for their records. Information forms should not be signed. Researchers should keep all consent/assent forms for a period no less than three (3) years following closure of the protocol.

Revisions/Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, please submit the requested changes to the IRB using the appropriate form. IRB approval must be obtained before implementing any changes unless the change is to remove an immediate hazard to subjects in which case the IRB should be immediately informed following the change.

Continuing Review: It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain continuing review and approval for this protocol prior to the expiration date noted above. Please allow sufficient time for continued review and approval. No research activity of any sort may continue beyond the expiration date. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in the approval's expiration on the expiration date. Data collected following the expiration date is unapproved research and cannot be used for research purposes including reporting or publishing as research data.

Unanticipated Problems/Adverse Events: Researchers must report unanticipated problems and/or adverse events to the IRB. If the problem/adverse event is serious, or is expected but occurs with unexpected severity or frequency, or the problem/event is unanticipated, it must be reported to the IRB within 48 hours of learning of the event and a written report submitted within five (5) business days. All other problems/events should be reported at the time of Continuing Review.

We wish you good luck with your work. Please retain copy of this letter for your records.

Appendix M IRB approval - October 2014

HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARDS

To:	ABIGAIL BORRON AGAD
From:	JEANNIE DICLEMENTI, Chair Social Science IRB
Date:	10/20/2014
Committee Action:	Amendment to Approved Protocol
IRB Action Date	10/17/2014
IRB Protocol #	1407015014
Study Title	Increasing protein availability and consumption in low-income households of the Greater Lafayette area
Expiration Date	07/29/2015

Following review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the above-referenced protocol has been approved. This approval permits you to recruit subjects up to the number indicated on the application form and to conduct the research as it is approved. The IRB-stamped and dated consent, assent, and/or information form(s) approved for this protocol are enclosed. Please make copies from these document(s) both for subjects to sign should they choose to enroll in your study and for subjects to keep for their records. Information forms should not be signed. Researchers should keep all consent/assent forms for a period no less than three (3) years following closure of the protocol.

Revisions/Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, please submit the requested changes to the IRB using the appropriate form. IRB approval must be obtained before implementing any changes unless the change is to remove an immediate hazard to subjects in which case the IRB should be immediately informed following the change.

Continuing Review: It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain continuing review and approval for this protocol prior to the expiration date noted above. Please allow sufficient time for continued review and approval. No research activity of any sort may continue beyond the expiration date. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in the approval's expiration on the expiration date. Data collected following the expiration date is unapproved research and cannot be used for research purposes including reporting or publishing as research data.

Unanticipated Problems/Adverse Events: Researchers must report unanticipated problems and/or adverse events to the IRB. If the problem/adverse event is serious, or is expected but occurs with unexpected severity or frequency, or the problem/event is unanticipated, it must be reported to the IRB within 48 hours of learning of the event and a written report submitted within five (5) business days. All other problems/events should be reported at the time of Continuing Review.

We wish you good luck with your work. Please retain copy of this letter for your records.

Appendix N Naming document

<u>Location Pseudonym</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Pseudonym</u>
S2	1_AG	Eva
S2	2_AG	Emmett
S2	3_AG	Ethan
S2	4_AG	Evan
S2	5_AG	Earl
S2	6_AG	Elijah
M1	7_AG	Tanya
M1	8_AG	Tom
M1	9_AG	Teresa
M1	10_AG	Tara
S2	11_AG	Ellen
S2	12_AG	Eric
S1	13_AG	Shane
S1	14_AG	Solomon
S1	15_AG	Sarah
S2	16_AG	Edward
S2	17_AG	Elizabeth
S1	18_AG	Sophia
S1	19_AG	Spencer
M1	20_AG	Travis
M1	21_AG	Tiffany
M1	22_AG	Trina
M1	23_AG	Thelma
M2	24_AG	Julie
M2	25_AG	Jacquelyn
M2	26_AG	Joy
M3	27_AG	Mike
M3	28_AG	Murphy
M3	29_AG	Moses
M3	30_AG	Mark
M3	31_AG	Martha
S1	1_AB	Sean
S1	2-AB	Sawyer
S1	3-AB	Seth
S1	4-AB	Stephanie
S1	5-AB	Susan

Appendix O Means-end chain code table

Chain Status - Complete ~ complete

P ~ partial

XXXXXX ~ invalid

ID	Characteristic	Consequence	Value	Chain Status
Sean	Personal health, diabetes	avoid sickness	GOOD HEALTH	Complete
Eva	need veggie & meat	(balance in meal?)	(health?)	P
Emmett		health		XXXXXX
Ethan	sterile/clean	food safety	(food safety?)	P
Evan	personal health	American way/avoid sickness	GOOD HEALTH	Complete
Seth	having enough for everyone, everyone's full	food stretches/have something to eat-leftovers	FEEDING FAMILY	Complete
Stephanie	meat + veg/nutrition to help make meal last	nutrition (kids) stretch/leftovers	FEEDING SELF & FAMILY	Complete
Susan	meat + potato + veggie	balance/not fatty	(nutrition?)	P
Evan	taste/seasonings	fight off bacteria	(health)	P
Earl	everything together	health/food poisoning	(food safety)	P
Elijah		cooks fast	?	XXXXXX
Tanya	meat + potato + veg	food/meal is done well	(nutrition?)	P
Tom	hungry digest	fulfill hunger health	(feeding self)	P
Teresa	(Healthy?)	Digestion/good for you	(health)	P

Tara	\$/what's available	fiber/digestion	(health)	P
Ellen	taste/want to eat it health/well-rounded	full/satisfied reduce dr. visits	(nutrition? or health?)	P
Eric	got on hand	something to eat	?	XXXXXX
Shane	food well-done, cooked right taste	avoid/prevent sickness healthy/texture	GOOD HEALTH ?	Complete
Solomon	enough for extra meals/leftovers	stretching food, making it last/filling self	FEEDING SELF (& HOUSEHOLD)	Complete
Sarah	family eats together, spends time together (connectivity?)	enough for leftovers/stretching food	FEEDING FAMILY	Complete
Edward	sanitation	food safety/prevent sickness	(food safety?)	P
Elizabeth	meat + veg + grain in meals	balance of meal/protein for kids' health	CHILDREN'S FUTURE	Complete
Sophia	balanced meal/healthy	filling/not tempted by unhealthy foods	(feeding self/filling?)	P
Spencer	balance/tradition	strength/energy	(health?)	P
Travis	protein/meat + carb + veg	sound nutrition to prevent/avoid sickness	GOOD HEALTH	Complete
Tiffany	balance/stay full longer	fill everybody up	(feeding family?)	P
Trina	taste	feed/nutrition	?	XXXXXX
Thelma	leftovers/stretch food	convenience/healthy	?	P
Julie	family likes it/offer	make it stretch	?	XXXXXX

	choices			
Jacquelyn	feed/stretch to 8 people	everybody eats/has a portion (stretch?)	(feeding family)	P
Joy	potato, meat	healthy	?	XXXXXX
Mike	taste/others enjoy	goal is to feed	(feeding family?)	P
Murphy	be full	longer life/life expectancy (parents died young)	(health?)	P
Moses	food's available	enough for everyone	(feeding family?)	P
Mark	meat + veg/balance for health	balance in meal (to help son grow)	CHILD'S FUTURE	Complete
Martha	portion food/limit starches	husband's health (diabetes)	(good health?)	P

NOTE

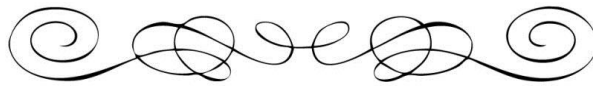
NOTE

1. The citation is omitted to protect the confidentiality of the selected food bank.

VITA

VITA

Amanda Gee



EDUCATION

Purdue University, College of Agriculture, West Lafayette, IN

Master of Science in Youth Development and Agricultural Education, August 2015, GPA: 3.97

Concentration in Agricultural Communication

Credit hours completed: 34 upon graduation

Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, December 2013, GPA: 3.68

Major: Agricultural Communication

Minor: Animal Science

Credit hours completed: 134

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Borron, A., Loizzo, J., & **Gee, A.** (2015; accepted for publication). The role of critical reflexive analysis in a service-learning course in agricultural communication. *North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA) Journal*.

Borron, A., & **Gee, A.** (2015; oral presentation). Enriching student engagement through critical reflexive analysis. North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA) conference, June 16-20, 2015, Athens, GA.

Loizzo, J., Borron, A., **Gee, A.**, & Ertmer, P.A. (2015; submitted for publication). Teaching convergence in 21st century undergraduate agricultural communication: A pilot study of backpack multimedia kits in a blended, project-based learning course. *The Journal of Applied Communication*.

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Alpha Zeta Agricultural Honor Society, 2012-2013
- Biotech University, March 2014
 - Sponsored by Indiana Soybean Alliance to attend one-day seminar in Phoenix, Ariz.
 - Won \$1,500 graduate scholarship in Biotech U multimedia contest
- Gamma Sigma Delta Agricultural Honor Society, 2012-2013
- Jennings County High School FFA, 2006-2012 and Purdue FFA Chapter, 2011-2012
 - Earned American FFA Degree, 2012
- International Stockmen Educational Foundation, student fellow, March 2015
 - Won a travel fellowship (6 awarded domestically, 6 internationally) to the International Livestock Congress in Houston, Texas
- Office of Dean of Students Ambassador, 2011-2013
 - Outstanding ODOS Ambassador, 2012
- Outstanding Senior in Agricultural Communication, February 2013
- Townsend Writing Excellence Competition, 2013-present
 - Third place scholarship winner, 2013
 - Judge, 2014-present

COMMUNICATION WORK EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Assistant, Youth Development and Ag Education, West Lafayette, IN

January 2014-present

- Prepare literature reviews on critical reflexive analysis, culture-centered communication, and cross-cultural engagement
- Conduct research interviews; transcribe, code and analyze quantitative & qualitative data
- Develop research questions centered on perceptions of available meat in food pantries
- Organize entries for the Townsend Outstanding Communicator in Agriculture Program
- Assist in teaching a prep course for summer study abroad partnership with Heifer Romania

Writer, *Ag Answers*, Purdue Dept. of Agricultural Communication, West Lafayette, IN

August 2012-December 2013

- Developed story ideas and wrote production agriculture news releases
- Interviewed Extension specialists and professors about research, findings and workshops
- Wrote stories for other Purdue Ag publications, including *Connections* and *Agricultures*

Marketing Intern, Indiana Wine Grape Council, West Lafayette, IN

May 2013-August 2013

- Created engaging posts for Indiana Wines and Vintage Indiana social media sites
- Interviewed Indiana winery and vineyard owners; Wrote blog posts about Indiana wineries
- Interacted and discussed Indiana wine industry with consumers at Indiana State Fair booth

Editorial Intern, *North Vernon Plain Dealer and Sun*, North Vernon, IN

June 2012-August 2012

- Gained writing experience in both feature and news stories
- Planned stories, photos and interviews

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Study Abroad in England, Ireland and Wales, Maymester 2012
 - Topic: An Overview of the Horse Industry in Europe
- Study Abroad in Romania, Maymester 2014
 - Topic: A Culture-Centered Service-Learning Program in Agricultural Communication
- Traveled Independently to Germany and France, June 2014

LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT), 2011-present
- Ag Task Force, Media Team, 2012-2013
- Emerging Leaders Program, 2010-2012
- Friends of the Jennings County Public Library, media volunteer, 2012-2013
- Generate NYC app and mobile development conference, attendee, 2015
- Indiana 4-H & FFA events volunteer, 2014-present
 - Meat & Dairy Judging CDEs room facilitator, spring 2014
 - FFA Agriscience Fair, judge, summer 2014
 - 4-H Roundup, photographer & session helper, summer 2014, summer 2015
 - 4-H Science Workshop, Ag Communication session volunteer, summer 2015
- Managing Editor, *Destination Purdue* (YDAE460 class, Ag Comm. publication), September 2012-April 2013
 - Wrote and edited stories, designed page layouts, advised peers on writing
 - Suggested and executed editing decisions to improve publication
- Oral English Proficiency Program, volunteer, 2010-2011
- Purdue Media & Marketing Student Advisory Board, 2011

- Purdue Trap & Skeet Club, 2010-2012
 - Community Service Chair, 2011
- St. Ann's Soup Kitchen, Lafayette, Ind., volunteer, 2014
- YDAE Online Learning Group, 2014-present
 - Created staff introductory videos for summer scavenger hunt
 - Co-created and presented on Google Apps & Tools, November 2014
 - Created and presented on An Update in Web, Apps, & Mobile in Agriculture, May 2015