

Nutrition – college essay



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Nutrition is a process of acquiring the right category of food to ensure good health and growth. Nutrition is essential for growth and fitness of health because without good nutrition, one may develop a weak immune system. This may endanger one's life because the immune system will not fight effectively against attacks of bacteria and fungi when it is weak. Nutrition defines an investigation of the choice of diets that people prefer and explores the possibility of common diseases that come because of poor nutrition. Poor nutrition is subsequently associated with reduced fertility and the occurrence of malnutrition in the health of humans. In some countries, such as America, poor nutrition is a choice individuals make in their preference to take foods rich in carbohydrates and fats. This is because fast foods are easily accessible and affordable. In other countries, such as Haiti and other parts of Africa, poor nutrition is because of the poverty level or poor economic status, while in still other counties it is because of cultural practices and religious beliefs. A good nutrition consists of foods rich in carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, minerals, iron, and roughage (Nies & McEwen, 2011).

Community, Demographic, and Epidemiological Data

Gonaives is a small community based in the North Coast part of Haiti. It has plain land that is not entirely fertile for productive farming and contains a small percentage of the country's population. In the early centuries, most people preferred to live in Gonaives because of the coast access until natural disasters such as hurricanes destroyed the people's way of living, homes, hospitals, and schools. This incident left many people dead and homeless, reducing its population by 60%. Through the constant disasters and other

factors such as political violence, many people continued to lose their lives and livelihood until there was no hope for the community (Curnutte, 2011).

Eventually, the census reports also reduced to a small population who survived and were left homeless. In addition to this, poverty and hunger caused many deaths, which also changed the census reports. Despite the traumatizing experiences, these people still hope for improvement in their community. According to census reports, the population numbers go up before disasters and during census, but rapidly reduce after disasters strike. This means that hurricanes and earthquakes are major causes of the reduced population not just in the community of Gonaives but in the entire country of Haiti. In comparison to the statistic and city reports, Haiti is defined as a poor country that requires help and support of other foreign countries not just to survive but also to invest in ways that could boost their economic system (Curnutte, 2011).

National report does not state the conditions of the small communities that appear abandoned, such that when other highly populated communities receive relief food, small communities only access the food last when there is not sufficient food for everyone. For this reason, many people decide to find other means of survival, which is extreme, because the only available food for them is mud. Several women prepare and sell mud cookies to feed their children. This means that children can only access poor nutritional systems to stay alive. This way, families do not have to rely on relief food for survival. National data also state that small-scale farmers tried farming but, because of poverty and lack of resources, they are not able to achieve much in their tireless efforts (Curnutte, 2011).

Windshield Survey

According to several surveys, people of Gonaives community work hard during the day to collect mud and farm. Others prepare the mud cookies so that they can sell them in the afternoon to feed their children. It is not a profitable business since every mother is doing it to save her family from hunger. This means that whenever farmers plant and harvest successfully, people will only access one kind of food that they harvest and, once they finish it, they go back to making mud cookies. Mud cookies are not nutritious and so they cause children to be malnourished. Such children develop health problems such as kwashiorkor that do not allow them to live normal lives. Family houses were constructed of mats and sticks. Available schools were poorly structured using mud and mats (Curnutte, 2011).

Shaded trees also acted as classrooms before the construction of simple buildings after disasters. Even though there were a few schools, most children did not show up to school because they helped their parents prepare and sell mud cookies. Gonaives community only had one health care provider and few churches that professed their religion. Due to limited resources in the health care sector, reports of death increase every year, especially of children and expectant women. When other countries bring relief food, they distribute it in churches or schools. Most buildings are small structures made on much squeezed land to allow for farming space. However, many farmers try in-house farming in their small homes, which limits them because of the small space and insufficient facilities and funds. The major activity during weekdays and weekends is looking for food, but on most weekends people attend church (Curnutte, 2011).

Problem

The major problem in Haiti and Gonaives community is poverty and disasters, which caused poor nutrition or no nutrition at all. With the idea of in-house farming, people can produce their own food and not rely on outsiders for help. The government needs to offer its support to every community, whether big or small. In addition to this, since small-scale farmers cannot succeed because of earthquakes and hurricanes that keep destroying their plants, with properly structured houses, farmers will be able to practice their skills in a more productive environment. This way, many other people can get employment opportunities and be able to sustain their families, regardless of how little their income may be (Caroll, 2008).

Historical Significance

The historical significance of these problems is that, since the beginning, there has not been much improvement in the state of the communities and the country. Historically, Haiti has needed urgent intervention to experience change. Currently, the people of Gonaives community rely on relief food that is accessible only occasionally. This means that people have to find other means of survival until relief food reaches them. Due to constant natural disasters, reports of lost lives increased from 20% to 56%, most of whom were children and women not prepared for such incidences. Haitians are desperate for change to survive the many issues they face. On the other hand, the geographical features and economic state of Haiti may also play a key role in the nutrition of the people in that, if the economy is not stable,

there is bound to be a lack of enough food supply for every person (Curnutte, 2011).

For this reason, people start eating anything available, which in most cases is not healthy. All these are fundamental factors that contribute to the wellbeing of humans, which affects Haiti in various ways. While a huge percentage of economically stable countries embrace a wider range of foods from different parts of the world, Haiti still suffers from poor nutrition because of constant natural disasters. For this reason, people from communities in Haiti have health risks because they do not get access to a variety of foods that can enable them to have good nutrition. Poor nutrition also plays a key role in the normal growth and development of children and the society (Curnutte, 2011).

In conclusion, just like other fundamental factors such as economy, history, religion and culture that have massive effects on human lives, nutrition is a crucial element that has both negative and positive effects. Poor nutrition affects the growth and development of children and poses a health risk for adults, especially the elderly people. Haiti and many other poor countries need support from the government to improve people's livelihood. This way, small communities will also manage their small-scale farms skillfully and sustainably. A big percentage of Haitians are religious meaning they can earnestly pray for change.