

INTRODUCTION

- Inaccessibility to proper nutrition is a major factor to the 34 million Americans affected by food insecurity
- COVID-19 has increased accessibility to nutritious foods
- Many school districts, including PAUSD offer free or reduced programs
 - Although this program is effective, it is not sustainable for the students

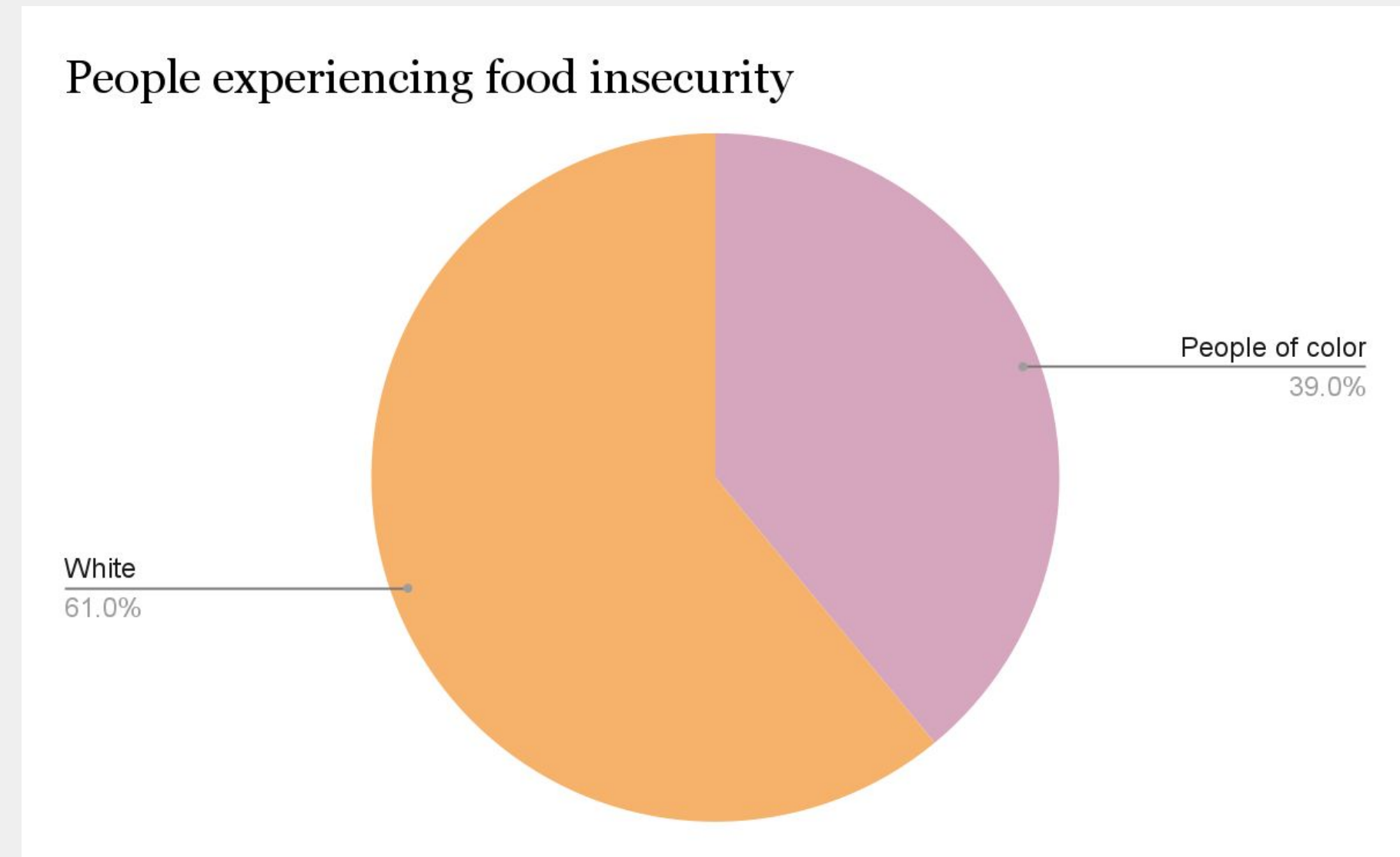


Figure 3: Comparing race to risk of food insecurity

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

- Using existing data
 - Statistics and general information on the effects of the COVID-19 on children and families
 - Background information on food insecurity and accessibility in California
- Correlation approach
 - Relationship between a student's accessibility to a basic need during times of need
- Historical research
 - Comparing "pre-COVID" to COVID-19 times
- Qualitative
- Secondary sources
- Various graphs, tables, and diagrams

DATA AND FINDINGS

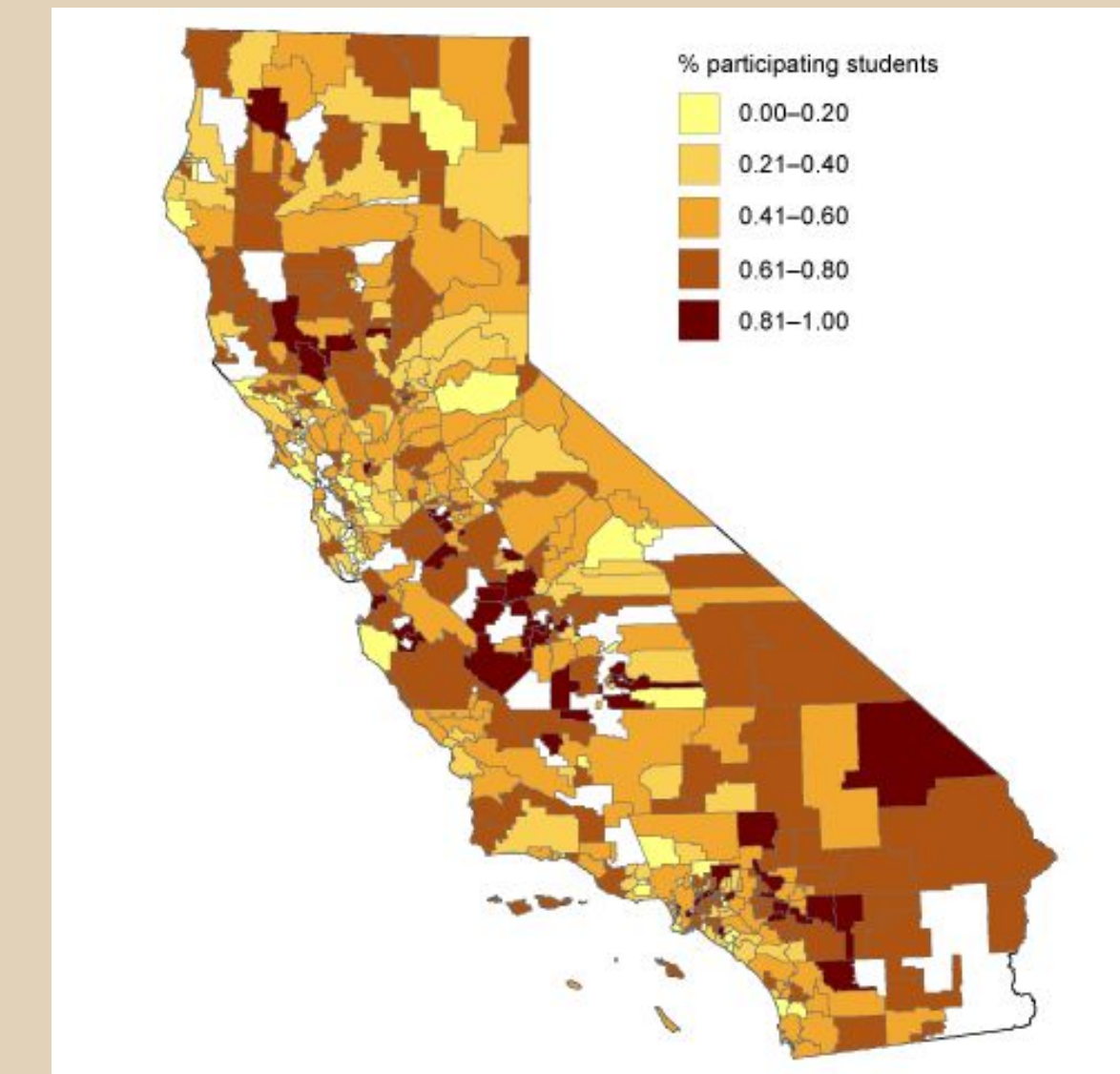


Figure 1: The percentage of students part of reduced or free lunch programs in schools across each county in California.

Comparing median household income to various regions:

- Overall negative trendline as the region gets broader
- Palo Alto has one of the the highest median household incomes in the county
- Comparing Palo Alto to the United States, Palo Alto has over double the median household income
- Although Palo Alto is among the highest median incomes, many families and students were impacted by COVID-19 on food accessibility

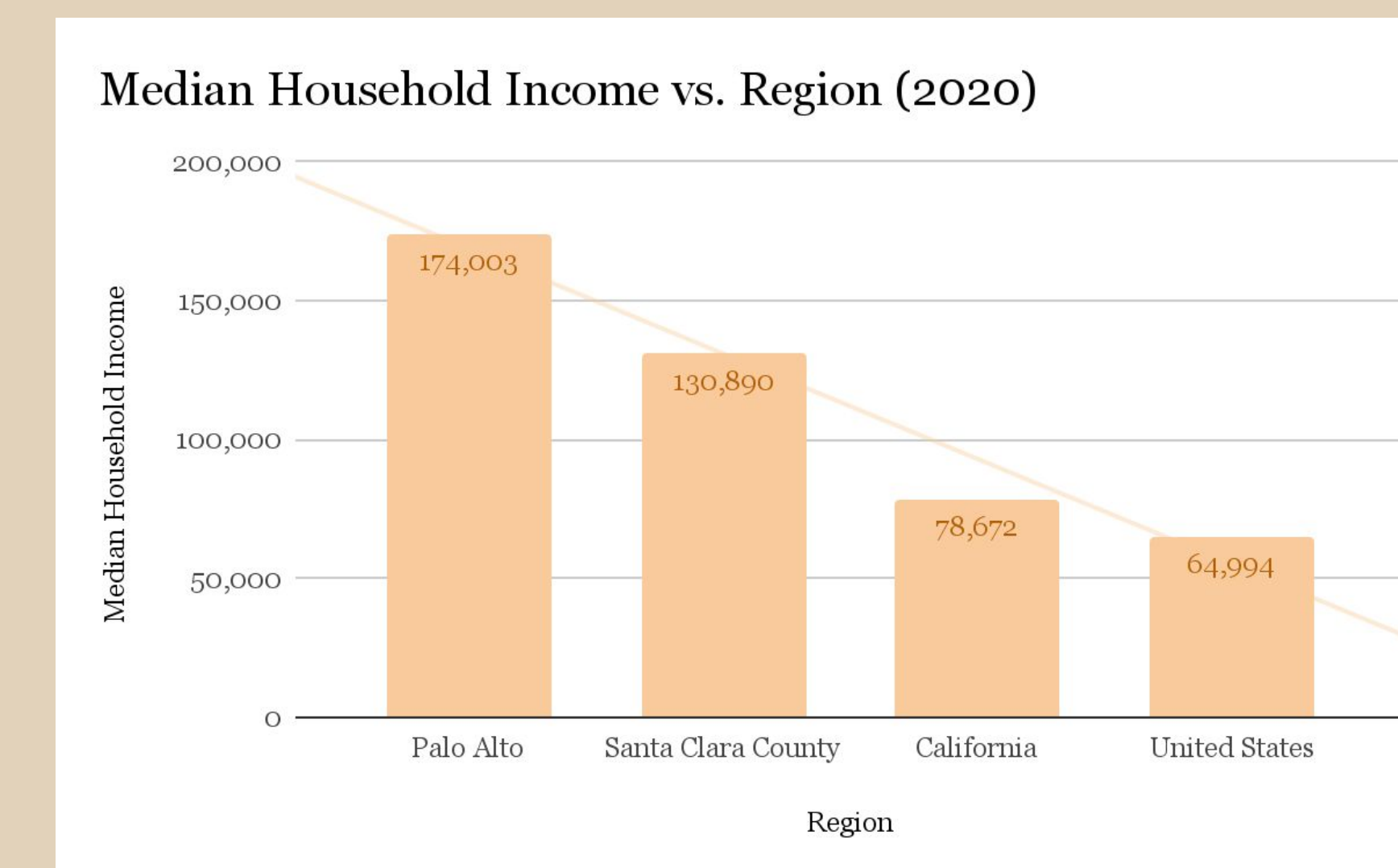


Figure 2: Comparison of various regions and their median household

CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS

- Job loss, down 23% during the pandemic affects food accessibility and security among families and individuals
- The pandemic has cause the use of food assistance programs to significantly increase
 - Food banks and pantry use has almost doubled
- Limited free/reduced lunch programs at school that would deliver/offer on site pickup during online learning period
- Unlike current school provided meals, sometimes menus were not offered to fit dietary restrictions
- 37% of meal sites offered over the summer
- Almost 60% of students in California qualified for free/reduced meals
- Hispanics were most likely to experience food insecurity
- It is likely that there is a direct relationship between food insecurity, mental health, and academic performance

IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- Goal: to create a system that makes food accessible to students and families, regardless of age or socioeconomic status
 - Create menus to fit dietary needs that provide proper nutrients to students
 - Improve academic performance and mental health among elementary school students
 - Provide basic needs for elementary students
 - Establish communities (geographic, social) that allow for collaboration and provide aid to ones that need it

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

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