



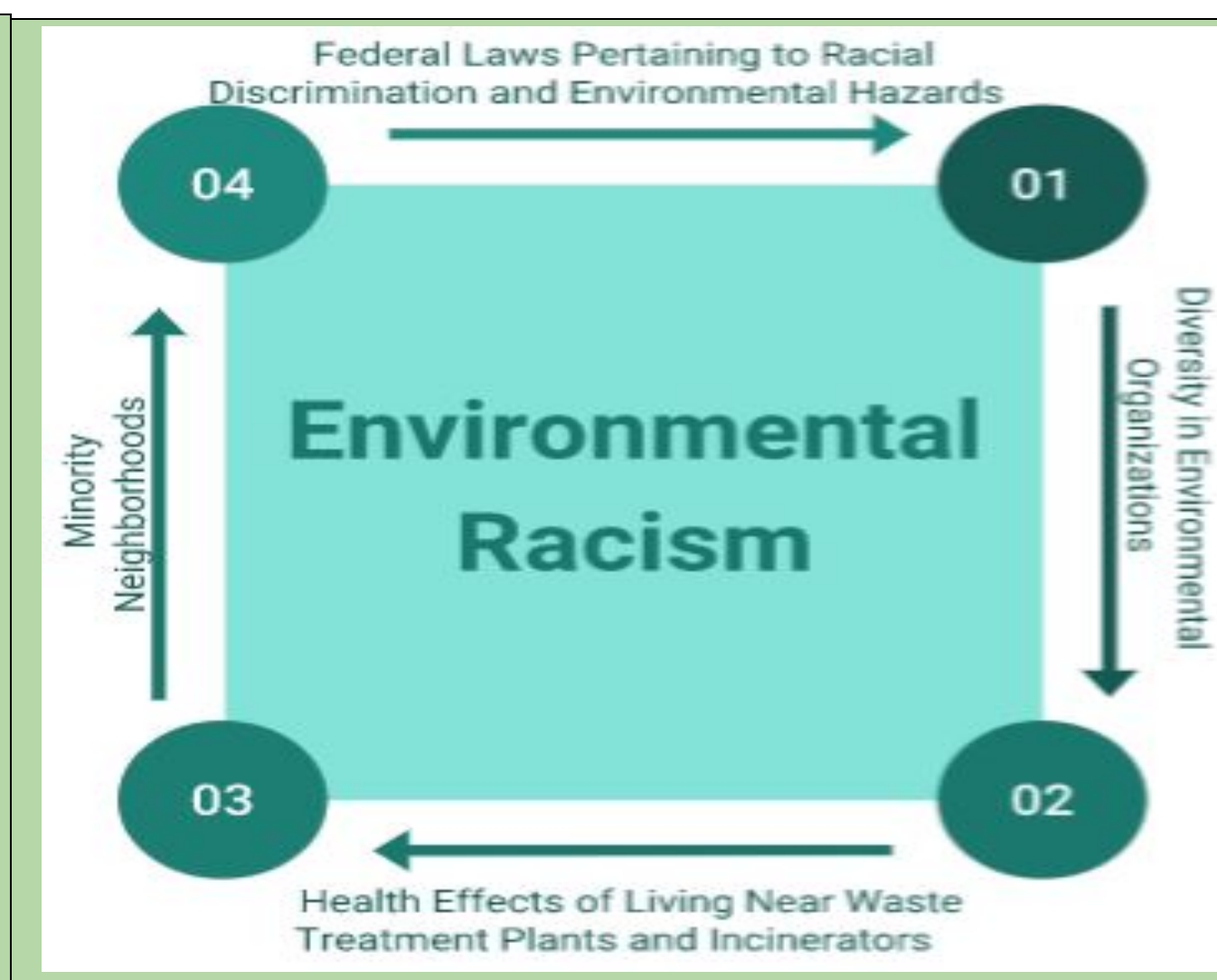
Lack of Protection for Minorities from Environmental Hazards

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INTRODUCTION

Environmental racism is about the deliberate placement of environmental hazards such as toxic waste and treatment plants for toxic waste in minority and low-income neighborhoods (EPA, April 2018). There is a problem with environmental racism in low-income minority neighborhoods across the United States, despite the anti-discrimination laws present within the United States.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES



I expected to have a mix of both qualitative and quantitative data. I used qualitative data because I used Phenomenological Research, which delves more into the lives of the people that the research is based on. I also used quantitative data because I needed statistics to strengthen my research as well as to express how big of an issue environmental racism is in society.

DATA AND FINDINGS

Stance on Pipeline	Environmental Racism	Factors Pertaining to Environmental Racism
For Against	Yes No	Economy Government Involvement/ Persons Race Relief Effort Poverty Health Issues
Interview #1	Once again we want to have the ability to power our homes at a reasonable cost. We want to help reduce our reliance on foreign oil and so I think people need to think about that.	
Interview #2	It creates some temporary construction jobs while the pipeline is being constructed. Once that's done its roughly a few dozen at the most. It's ancestral homeland for, um, one of the Oglala Sioux tribe, it's their ancestral home, it's been never seeded, um, so I would argue that's takin.	
Interview #3	It's time to end the fossil fuel infrastructure. I mean, these people on this reservation, they don't have adequate infrastructure for their houses. infrastructure. And yet they're looking at a \$3.9 billion pipeline that will not help them. It will only help oil companies. And so that's why we're here. You know, we're here to protect this land. Eighty-five percent of the Navajo economy, for instance, is fossil fuel-based. About the same percentage of the Fort Berthold economy is fossil fuel-based.	
Interview #4	We have bottled water being handed out. We have filters being given out. We're continuing to test the water, but that's not enough. I know that you said that the president has declared an emergency and FEMA has come down. We have the National Guard there, but what we're dealing with now is still band-aids. It actually drops a child's IQ and you can't mitigate the impact of an irreversible neurotoxin. 40% of the people in Flint live in poverty.	
Interview #5	Is this a case of environmental racism? Absolutely not. Healthy Michigan was a whole Medicaid expansion and many of those people gaining the best benefit are people in Flint and such because they deserve medical care so many of these things are actions being taken.	

Figure 1. This is a selection of coded quotes from the conducted interviews.

DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION

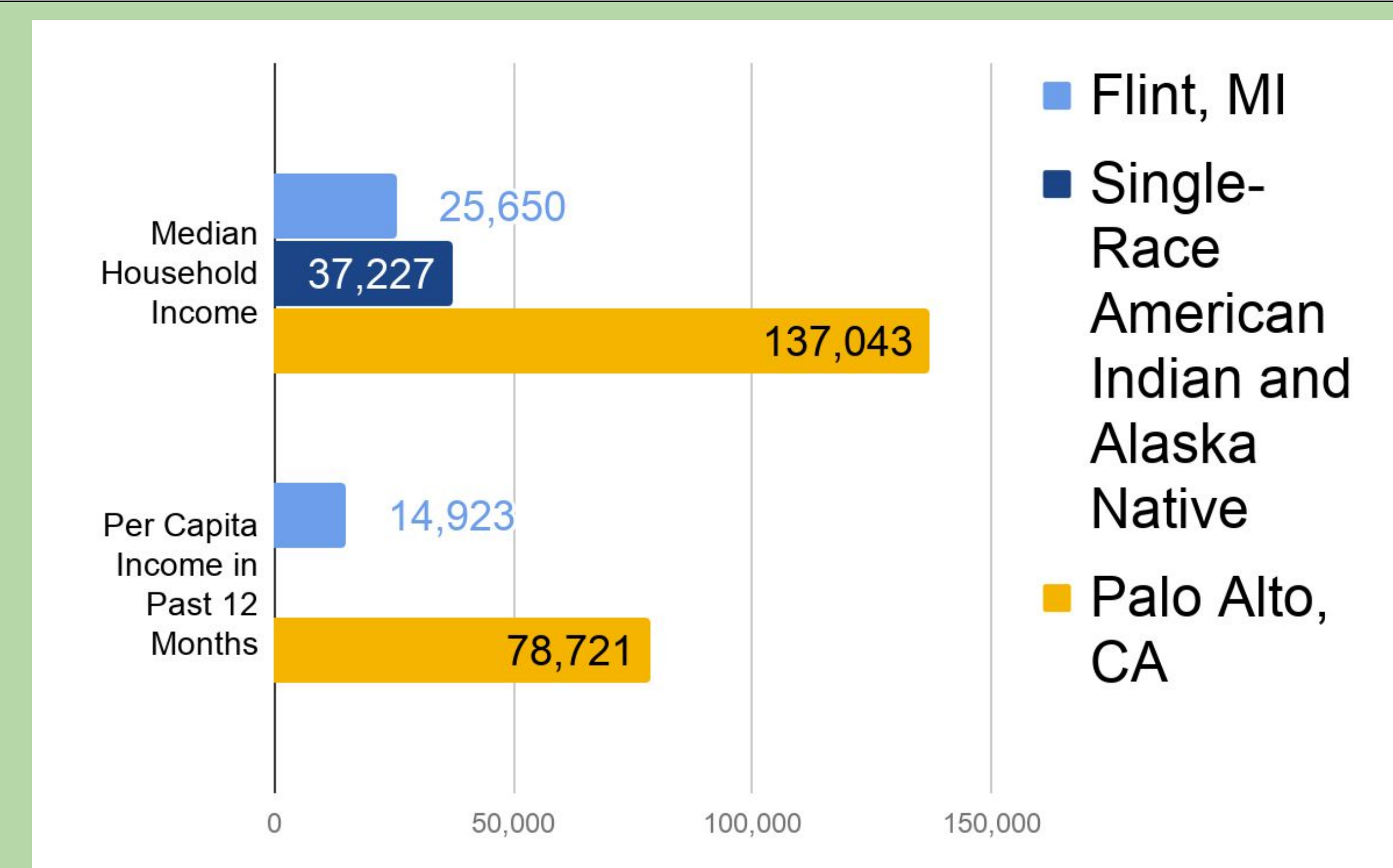


Figure 2. This is a comparison of Median Household Income and Per Capita Income for Palo Alto, CA, Flint, MI., and Native American populations. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Flint city, Michigan)

Income

• "It's a class issue as well, because we do have so many unemployed people, so we're looking at this as race and class. It cuts across the board. We believe that had this been a different, rich community, it wouldn't have taken so long for the people's voices to be heard." (Mayor Karen Weaver)

Poverty

- American Indians and Alaska Natives are the racial groups with the highest level of the poverty rates, with a 23.8% poverty rate (U.S. Census)
- 41.9% of people living in Flint, MI are in poverty
 - "The city doesn't even have a grocery store, so isn't it true that because the city doesn't have political clout, that is why this happened." (Mayor Karen Weaver).

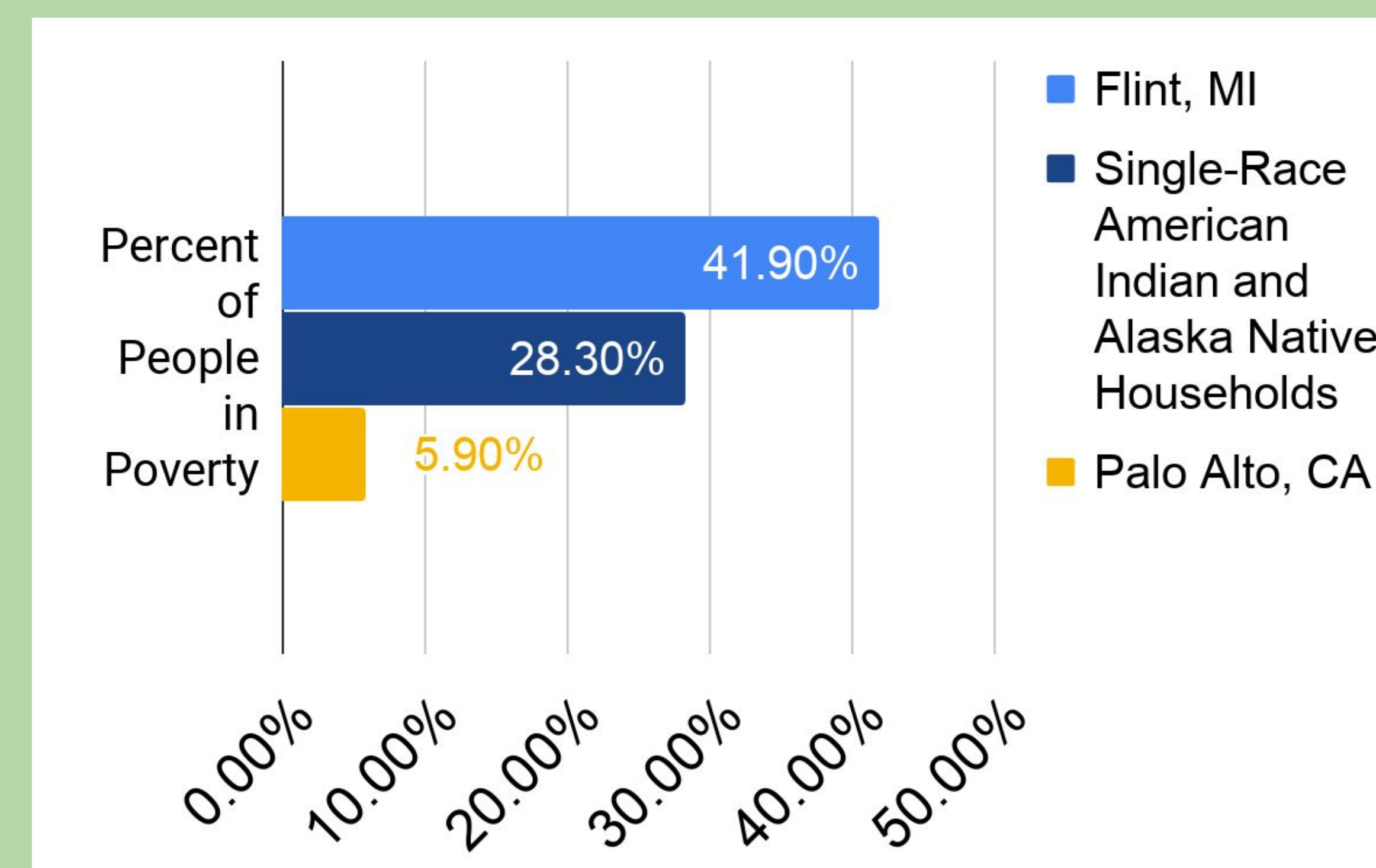


Figure 3. This is a comparison of poverty rates for Palo Alto, CA., Flint, MI., and Native American populations. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Flint city, Michigan & Native American Heritage Month)

Interviews

As seen in the interviews, those who were living in the area of impact argued that environmental racism was involved. In fact, a pattern that was prevalent is that people of high authority looked to the projects as a form of economic progress rather than a purposeful means of harming others, yet once the harm occurred, they refused to find a solution.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

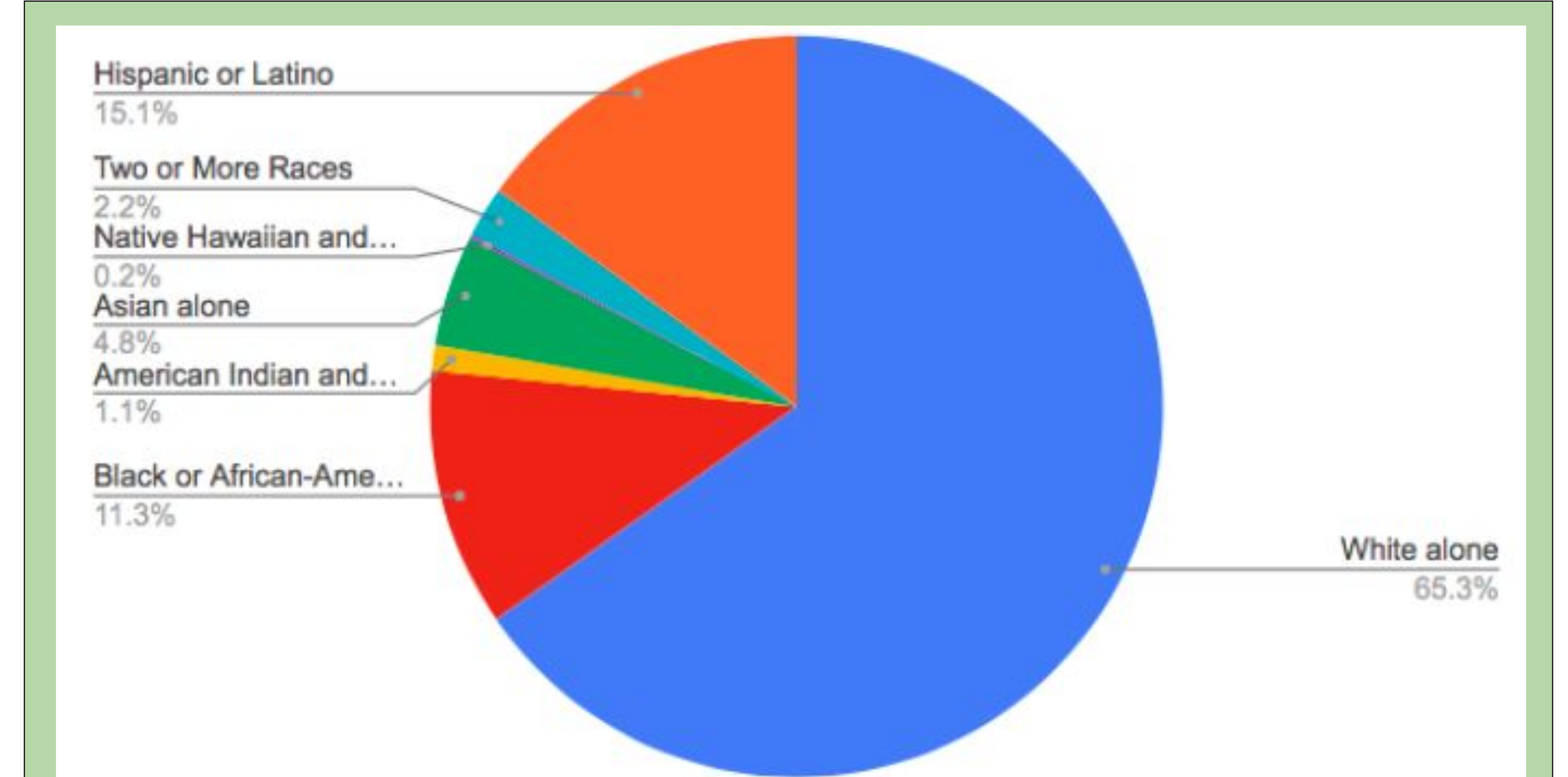


Figure 4. This is the racial/ ethnic composition of the United States. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, United States)

Importance

Environmental Justice is defined as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies" (EPA, April 2018). This research shows that Environmental Justice has not been reached and that Environmental Racism is still prevalent in American society. It is important to note that the Flint, Michigan Water Crisis and the Keystone XL Pipeline are only two out of many cases throughout history and the present time. Examples include Chester, Pennsylvania's various waste treatment plants and incinerators; New Orleans, Louisiana's lack of attention after Hurricane Katrina; and international examples like the Union Carbide leak in the Indian city of Bhopal.

Recommendation

As I did my research, I noticed improvements that still needed to be made in the field of Environmental Racism, such as a need for more unbiased research and an increase to research in affluent and majority-White neighborhoods to make better comparisons. Past research has been criticized "for being too narrow-minded," so more comparisons should be done and the disparity between the two will be emphasized.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

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