

Anti-Racism and Ensuring the Right to Food:

Examining and Addressing the Impacts of Race and Ethnicity on Food Security

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Introduction

Hunger is not the same thing as food insecurity, but it is a symptom of food insecurity that every person can understand as everyone has at one point experienced the feeling of hunger. Hunger can be a means of oppression and throughout history, it has been weaponized to uphold divisions in society, and in recent years it has become clear that the prevalence and experiences of hunger and food insecurity across racial and ethnic identities are not equal. This paper sets out to explain the connections between race and ethnicity and food insecurity, looking to understand how identities contribute to disparities in food insecurity rates, and what the underlying social, economic, and systemic factors influencing these disparities are. The experiences of minority groups and individuals have long been ignored and dismissed in many aspects, including food insecurity. By investigating food insecurity across racial and ethnic identities, I hope to contribute to the conversation and encourage further discussion about addressing these disparities for and experiences of minority communities. Food insecurity and its prevalence in minority communities in the United States is a result of the socio-political marginalization of minority groups through a long history of racial oppression and underlying racial biases. Current strategies for fighting food insecurity are band-aid solutions, but further work should be done, focusing on addressing these systemic roots of food insecurity as an issue of racial injustices and subjugation, for a more concerted effort to minimize food insecurity in the United States.

Need for the Research

Food insecurity is an issue that impacts every community in the United States, every county across all states, and every congressional district. In 2020, the US Department of Agriculture found that 38 million people, 10.5 percent of the population, lived in food-insecure households (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2020, 4). Researchers and advocates fighting for universal food security have sought to explain the main causes of food insecurity. Public health researchers

VMT Reisig and A. Hobbiss (2000, 138) name inaccessibility, unavailability, unaffordability, and quality of food as determinants, while food security and nutrition researchers Mya Price and Tia Jeffery (2023, 1-2) list economic factors such as unemployment, inflation, lack of homeownership, income changes, lack of savings, limited education, tax burdens, health challenges, and social isolation. Feeding America, a non-profit organization with a network of nationwide food banks, has its own list, naming poverty, unemployment, and low income; lack of affordable housing; chronic health conditions and lack of access to healthcare; and systemic racism and racial discrimination as explanations for the causes of food insecurity (Feeding America n.d.b).

While nearly forty percent of the 38 million people experiencing food insecurity across the US are white, when food insecurity rates are normalized for population by race and ethnicity groups, the imbalance becomes clear, as Black, Native American, and Latinx individuals are two to three times as likely to experience food insecurity (Feeding America 2022). Disaggregating food insecurity rates by race and ethnicity shows the inequity, as twenty percent of African Americans, twenty percent of Native Americans, seventeen percent of Latinx, and seventeen percent of Pacific Islanders experience food insecurity, compared to seven percent of non-Hispanic whites and six percent of Asians (Hake et al. 2023, 16-21). Aside from the extreme differences in food insecurity rates, examining race as a root cause of food insecurity is important as race and discrimination can be a determining factor of the other causes listed by Reisig and Hobbiss, Price and Jeffery, and Feeding America, helping shed light on how those factors can impact food insecurity as well. To better address food insecurity as a society-wide issue it is important to understand the root factors, in this case race and ethnicity. Racial inequalities have been a point of focus across many aspects of society, but there has been limited discussion, data gathering, and analysis of food insecurity in minority groups. Without this

understanding there has been little motivation for the government to address this systemic issue that only further subjugates minority individuals, while the current solutions fail to address food insecurity overall fully and properly.

Research Findings

Though minority groups share many experiences, systemic racism and racial discrimination present in different ways for various groups. To understand the impact of race on food insecurity, it is necessary to examine minority groups' experiences separately. Available research provides insight into food insecurity for minority groups overall, but available disaggregated data and findings from previous studies tend to be limited to African Americans, Latinx, and Indigenous communities, while other identities, such as Pacific Islanders, fall under more generalized research, usually due to a lack of data.

African American Communities

Of the available research, the most extensive available data focuses on African American communities. Systemic oppression of African Americans in the United States is not a new issue and has developed as a result of stereotypes and discrimination arising from the history of slavery, segregation, and Jim Crow. Research suggests four key factors that influence the likelihood of Black households experiencing food insecurity: direct racial discrimination, economic disparities like income and wealth accumulation gaps, neighborhood segregation and homeownership status, and supermarket accessibility and residence in food deserts.

Racial discrimination of any kind is going to have lasting impacts on anyone who experiences it, especially over a lifetime. A study from Burke et al. (2016, 283) examining the severity of food insecurity and lifetime racial discrimination among African American households in South Carolina found an association between insecurity and discrimination.

Through surveys, Burke et al. found that respondents with lifetime experiences of discrimination face greater severity of household food insecurity. Discrimination, they found, especially if stigmatizing or devaluing, occurring at work or school, and being threatening or aggressive, places African Americans at a greater risk of insecurity through disruptions in the quality and quantity of food security and availability (Burke et al. 2016, 282-285). There is not the only study to identify racial discrimination as an explanation for food insecurity in minorities, but their results expand and demonstrate “a direct association between racial discrimination and severity of food insecurity” (285). When looking at lifetime experiences, it becomes clear how cyclical experiences can damage a household’s capabilities to remain food secure, particularly when facing workplace or educational discrimination.

Employment and education are key factors in economic security and by extension food security. Discrimination in employment can present through lower wages or difficulties obtaining a job, while educational discrimination can be harder to pinpoint, but has been suggested as having negative consequences on academic achievement (Burke et al. 2016, 286). It is well established that good education and academic achievements can help secure better employment opportunities—people with college degrees are significantly less likely to be food insecure (Nam et al. 2015, 215). As such, the occurrence of discrimination in education can introduce a cyclical nature of generational insecurity, especially if discrimination occurs in early education and follows an individual throughout their lifetime, discouraging a person from pursuing further education. This can make it difficult to break the cycle, especially if facing higher chances of mental health struggles or traumatic events (Burke et al. 2016, 286), further compounding the difficulties of finding employment with sufficient income.

Like the impacts of discrimination occurring in a workplace setting, economic disparities including income and wealth accumulation gaps present another factor that can reduce food

security. Defining food security as an economic condition makes it clear that a lack of economic resources poses more difficulties in maintaining food security. Due to a long-standing history of systemic oppression in the obtainment of economic resources for Black communities, this lack of resources has contributed to community-wide experiences of food insecurity (Potorti 2014, 44). This comes down to a lack of financial resources to cover expenses, as people often face the decision to pay rent or purchase food. Economic disparities connect to employment, discrimination, homeownership, and possession of economic resources.

Neighborhood segregation and homeownership is another key factor of food security. Neighborhood segregation can be traced to the post-slavery years and time of the Great Migration, as well as the residential segregation and suburbanization throughout the 20th century (Logan et al. 2015, 18-19; Zenk et al. 2005, 660-61). Feeding America has broken down county-level food insecurity among Black individuals, and their map shows concentrations of higher insecurity across the South and in northern urban centers including New York City, Chicago, and Detroit (Feeding America n.d.a). Neighborhood segregation occurred throughout the twentieth century as white families left urban areas for the suburbs, leaving higher concentrations of minorities in urban communities, facing fewer employment opportunities and less neighborhood development (Zenk et al. 2005, 663-64). As this continued, alongside real-estate discrimination and lack of economic resources, causing lower rates of homeownership among Black communities, the connections between neighborhood segregation, homeownership, and food insecurity became more distinct. Homeownership can be seen as a sign of economic resources, and some research (Nam et al. 2015, 205, 217) suggests that owning a home or having a mortgage has been a sign of greater food security by acting as a form of financial stability.

Furthermore, neighborhood segregation can lead to the development of food deserts and worse access to quality food for minority communities, further impacted by a lack of

transportation, unavailability of supermarkets, and prevalence of convenience stores (Bower et al. 2014, 5-6). Food deserts are defined as areas lacking supermarkets and fresh, healthy food options. Food deserts tend to have more convenience stores and grocery stores as opposed to supermarkets, and these stores often stock food at higher prices, with more processed options (Walker et al. 2010, 880-81). Food deserts typically occur in neighborhoods dominated by minority groups, particularly Black neighborhoods, and when facing higher prices and less consistently healthy options, these individuals tend to suffer greater food insecurity.

Latinx Communities

The factors impacting the food security of Latinx individuals are similar to those faced by Black communities in many ways but have some variance. Like African Americans and the population of food insecure households as a whole, Latinx experiences of food insecurity are partially impacted by limited financial resources. However, other factors also include the inaccessibility of food welfare assistance and nativity status.

Latinx individuals are often grouped together and considered one identity, despite food insecurity varying across the identity due to different characteristics, and much of the existing research on Latinx households and their experience with food insecurity focuses on the influence of immigrant status. For households with undocumented immigrants or with members of varying status, financial resources and limitations, welfare program ineligibility, language barriers, acculturation stress, or fear of discovery can all influence experiences with food insecurity.

While limited financial resources can be a reason for food insecurity across all racial and ethnic identities due to discrimination, it poses a greater risk to the food security of Latinx households, especially when factoring in immigration status (Myers and Painter 2017, 1420-22). These households can face limited financial resources because of immigration costs, lack of

employment opportunities or low wages, limited education, language barriers, and more, highlighting economic disparities. When considering immigrant households, there is also the factor of the extra burden for many to send remittances to their families in their home countries. While research on families who send remittances found that individuals would not send money home if it would put their household at greater risk of insecurity (Quandt et al. 2006, 2, 7), the stress and burden of it typically still leads to a greater risk of insecurity for these households.

While food assistance welfare programs are inaccessible to many facing food insecurity for a variety of reasons, as Feeding America found that 1 in 3 people facing hunger do not qualify (Hake et al. 2023, 8), there is the added consideration of inaccessibility of assistance for immigrant households, in particular. Depending on immigrant status, Latinx individuals may not be able to access welfare programs despite their evident need, and even if eligible, programs may remain inaccessible due to language barriers, lack of understanding, or fear of shame (Myers and Painter 2017, 1422; Quandt et al. 2006, 7). Even when looking at native Latinx households, achieving food security is not always aided by welfare programs, for more general reasons of ineligibility or difficulties accessing and applying (Hake et al. 2023, 8).

The lack of differentiation and research on native Latinx individuals is an issue, though it was also found that immigration and nativity status are not as influential as expected (Myers and Painter 2017, 1419), as immigrants can mitigate some factors of insecurity like the inaccessibility of welfare assistance, language barriers, and stress of acculturation by living in ethnic communities, in ways native households are not always able to. There is a need for more research overall to understand food insecurity in native Latinx communities.

Indigenous Communities

Though there is little exploration of the experiences of Indigenous individuals with food insecurity, Census data suggests that approximately twenty percent of Native Americans lived in food insecure households, while other research has suggested higher rates, such as an average rate of forty-six percent across studies, ranging from sixteen to eighty percent depending on the community, age group, and other characteristics (Hake et al. 2023, 21). These higher rates can be attributed to a history of settler colonialism, forced relocation to reservations, higher unemployment and poverty rates, and detrimental federal policies (Pine 2023, 248-49). When examining the influences on food insecurity for Indigenous communities, the largest factors were reservation residency, welfare assistance, and financial resources.

Reservations have often been discussed as being areas of greater poverty, with less access to supermarkets and higher pricing, so it would seem likely that living on a reservation would cause greater insecurity for Indigenous households. Research, however, shows the opposite (Jernigan et al. 2017, 5). For Indigenous households, living on the reservation tends to be better for food security than living off. Evidence shows that the community support and specialized food programs that exist on reservations mitigate some of the worst factors of food inaccessibility and economic struggles individuals can face on the reservation, while those living off, especially in urban areas, often must still contend with food deserts, in addition to a lack of community and specialized welfare programs (Jernigan et al. 2017a, 5-6).

Though the specific welfare programs that exist on reservations have often been accused of distributing heavily processed foods contributing to worse health and greater food insecurity, it has been shown that many individuals who cannot access these local programs will also struggle to access the general welfare programs (Jernigan et al. 2017a, 6; Jernigan et al. 2017b, 441-42). When faced with economic difficulties, limited healthcare access, employment

struggles, limited education, or social isolation, the inaccessibility of welfare will compound the existing factors and make gaining food security more difficult.

Financial resources, as with any group, are a factor that can impact the food security of Indigenous individuals, especially when the history of settler colonialism and government mistreatment are considered. Tracing the history and impact of the colonialism of early Americans, the forced migration, residential schools, and stripping of their cultures (Pine 2023, 248-49) that Indigenous communities have faced at the hands of Americans and the government highlights the ways Indigenous communities have been oppressed and how financial stability has been made harder to achieve. The treatment by federal and local governments and detrimental policies have made employment and education opportunities more difficult to access, reducing the capability to achieve financial stability and food security.

Generalizations Across All Minority Communities

Beyond the specific factors outlined faced by African American, Latinx, and Indigenous individuals, it is important to consider factors impacting all minority groups, especially when thinking about groups like Pacific Islanders and Asians where research is lacking. These factors include residence in urban versus rural locations, limitations of government programs, and the cyclical impact of insecurity in childhood. When looking at location, better security varies across minority groups sometimes, such as with better security occurring for Indigenous households in rural areas because of reservation residency, while immigrant households may fare better in urban locations where ethnic communities are available. While there is a higher likelihood of neighborhood segregation and resulting food deserts in urban locations, Feeding America found that nine out of ten counties with high food insecurity rates were rural, where there is a struggle to get fresh, healthy foods due to the distance, smaller population pockets, and fewer job opportunities (Hake et al. 2023, 9), potentially worsening insecurity as a result of other factors.

Feeding America also found that one in three people who are food insecure are unqualified for SNAP and other food assistance programs (Hake et al. 2023, 8). Research shows that many people find welfare programs inaccessible, discriminatory, and not lasting long enough (Hake et al. 2023, 25-26; Sparrow and Brock 2016, 6-7). Welfare availability differs by state and is based on household income. The varying requirements disqualify many households when comparing gross income and net income tests, or the addition of an asset test (Hake et al. 2023, 8). The inaccessibility of welfare furthers the cycle of insecurity as people are unable to catch a break and get ahead with their expenses. The limitations of welfare programs are further compounded by the evidence of public attitudes and stereotypes of welfare recipients' race and ethnic identities reducing welfare funding (Gilens 1995, 995), furthering the lack of assistance for minority individuals and insecurity experiences.

A final general impact that can worsen the experience of food insecurity for minority groups is the cyclical impact of experiencing insecurity in childhood. Like the evidence found by Burke et al.'s study (2016), children who experience discrimination at an early age are often put at a further disadvantage from being able to succeed and break a cycle of poverty. In our society children born into poverty may often face difficulties in breaking it in later years as it impacts education and employment opportunities, influencing their economic standing and resource base. Like the cycle of poverty, a cycle of insecurity beginning in childhood can prevent a child from being able to break out of it (Potorti 2014, 46). A hungry child is going to struggle to focus in school and this could lead to discrimination or poor academic performance that prevents them from reaching further academic achievements, greater employment opportunities, and better socio-economic standing that improves their chances of food security.

Examining the Evidence

Examining the evidence of research into the connections between race and ethnicity and food insecurity is critical. The research discussed demonstrates the systemic roots of food insecurity as an issue impacted by race and ethnicity, and that food insecurity is not an individual issue as often spouted by politicians and opponents of food welfare. Understanding this and the disproportionate insecurity faced by minority individuals as a result of historic inequalities that continue to oppress minority communities economically and socially, placing them at lower social positions, more prone to experiencing food insecurity will help policy and aid be better constructed for addressing the root causes.

Counterarguments and Rebuttals

Welfare and social programs designed to address issues of racial inequalities are not without opposition, typically from those who oppose the idea of “handouts” and government aid. Opponents and counterarguments to the proposal of addressing food insecurity as a society-wide issue tend to argue that hunger is an individual issue, resulting from individuals not working hard enough, being lazy, and so on. For the opposition, addressing hunger, and food insecurity, is not the government’s responsibility (Einenkel 2023), and for many, there is also an argument about not involving race in every issue. To argue this, however, ignores the history that has created an environment where individuals are struggling. As Alice Julier (2008, 494) put it, “to blame the individual for a lack of willpower is to ignore the ways in which work has increased, pay has decreased, and avenues for fulfillment are structurally constrained for women, people in poverty, and racial-ethnic groups,” explaining the societal conditions impacting individual circumstances.

Data shows that minority groups experience food insecurity at higher rates compared to whites, and it is equalized for economic and demographic factors and compares across similar stratifications. As such it is clear there are factors that cause minority groups to experience food insecurity at higher rates than if merely an individual issue. Race is inherent in society’s

structures, as this country was built on a system placing certain racial groups at higher standing. In recent years parts of society have been assessed for racial biases, but food insecurity remains underdiscussed. Food insecurity is a society-wide issue the government should be responsible for as it impacts people across every community, state, and county, especially as a government claiming to work “for the people.” Furthermore, addressing root causes will have greater impacts—it could eventually reduce insecurity overall, cutting the need for extensive welfare spending in the future, minimizing the need for this concern of many welfare opponents.

Policy Discussion

Current Policies

As the situation stands, the current policies and strategies for addressing food insecurity are failing. Current policies, like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), operate as band-aid solutions to food insecurity, rather than addressing the root causes. SNAP is a food assistance program funded through the Farm Bill, where concerns tend to revolve around agricultural subsidies, rather than funding welfare. With the polarization and switching party control, SNAP and WIC have become programs with constantly fluctuating funding amounts and capability to help those in need (Bergh and Neuberger 2023). Particularly when public opinions are considered, the issue of race and welfare arise (Gilens 1995, 995), as stereotypes about welfare recipients as minority individuals who are lazy or not working hard enough often influence opinions to oppose sufficient welfare funding. Recent proposals, including the House Republican agriculture appropriations bill for 2024, attempt to make policy changes and funding cuts to WIC and SNAP, cutting benefits and reducing eligibility for millions, on the belief that such cuts are necessary for the nation’s budget (Bergh and Neuberger 2023). Continuing this pattern of aid will not ever solve the issue entirely, as it operates to help individuals get by.

While these are certainly still critical programs, they have become so limited in eligibility that there is little chance for individuals to get ahead enough to not continue to need aid or to not continue to be food insecure without it.

If policy were formulated to focus on addressing the roots, the benefits would trickle up into addressing the symptoms. Not acting, especially in the face of politicians continuing to strip existing aid, will only cause more widespread insecurity and a higher possibility for increases in related health issues, such as obesity. Food insecurity is a cyclical issue as well, as hunger in children causes difficulties in learning and development making socio-economic advancements more difficult, continuing the cycle of insecurity. In 1948, the United Nations declared access to adequate food a universal human right, and seventy-five years later, the US continues to resist declaring it as one (United Nations n.d.; United Nations 2021). To begin to address the root causes of food insecurity, first, a rights-based approach would need to be adopted (Chilton and Rose 2009, 1203). Adopting a rights-based approach would mean declaring food access a human right and would create active engagement with those experiencing insecurity to ensure policy addresses existing and actual needs.

Policy Proposals

In assessing similar policy shifts in other places to try to understand how policy should be reformulated, the way policy is structured needs to be discussed. Many places take strategies of community development, yet policymakers and aid workers tend to work independently from other sectors, including private industries and individuals in need (Reisig and Hobbiss 2000, 148). While addressing food insecurity and its causes of racism and discrimination will need to be a public issue, rather than relying on private solutions as has often been done with the reliance on private charities, a cooperative solution will likely be the best way to reach everyone affected,

incorporating aid options from the private sector, public policies and programs, as well as individual advocates and voices.

To better address food insecurity and its root causes, several policy strategies should be considered by policymakers and government agencies. These include transportation solutions, education and job training programs, equitable economic policies, anti-discrimination legislation, and regulations addressing racial gerrymandering and neighborhood segregation. Many of the issues with food insecurity connected to food deserts and the inability to access adequate food could be reduced by better transportation, and helping people get better access, especially for those without the resources to sustain personal transportation. Education and job training programs could focus on some of the stages of cyclical insecurity, helping people access better jobs and higher income brackets, improving financial standing, hopefully breaking the cycle of poverty and insecurity. Economic struggles are not solely the result of poor education or job options but should also be addressed through policies focused on creating equitable economic opportunities and reducing income inequalities based on individual characteristics. These policy changes could include increasing the minimum wage and promoting fair labor practices, confronting factors impacting the financial stability of minority communities. Equitable economic policies can go hand in hand with anti-discrimination legislation, especially in employment and financial services, but legislation should also eliminate housing and real-estate discrimination, helping reduce barriers to food security. Finally, policymakers must address racial gerrymandering and neighborhood segregation. Aside from the barriers neighborhood segregation poses on maintaining food security, racial gerrymandering reduces the power of the vote and voice for minority communities, preventing truly fair political representation. Reducing racial gerrymandering would hopefully create greater possibilities for fostering policies that better align with the needs and interests of minority communities.

Policy Implementation Challenges

With the way the nation's governments stand—both federal and local—there will be many challenges to implementing these policies, due to both structural limitations and resistance. These challenges include resistance from elected officials and the public; budget constraints; and implementation challenges due to policy fragmentation, lack of coordination, and contradicting priorities between government agencies, branches, and federal, state, and local organizations. Overcoming these challenges, however, is not impossible, and it is important to ensure these policies succeed in addressing the root causes of food insecurity, rather than forcing individuals to rely on unreliable aid programs. Public education campaigns have been useful in the past and could be used again to communicate the necessity, and by extension, encourage politicians to recognize the public support. Community engagement programs and discourse opportunities could also be useful tools in creating a greater understanding about the need for these programs while ensuring all voices and concerns are being heard.

To ensure longevity of policies and programs it is important that an interdisciplinary approach is taken to crafting holistic policies and programs so there is consideration of the concerns and needs of politics, health, sociology, and economics. The sustainability of the policies would also be boosted by outlining the long-term vision guiding the policies and programs, so they last beyond political cycles, emphasizing the persistent need. It is also important for longevity to prepare from the beginning for the risk of attempts to dismantle or defund the programs or impacts that could arise because of external challenges or changing circumstances. Having outlined crisis response plans and greater flexibility of policies would be useful for navigating these potential developments.

Conclusion

Limitations

Research and data have demonstrated that food insecurity in minority communities reflects the historic and structural racial oppression of minority groups and underlying attitudes and stereotypes that shape opinions and policies. The current solutions to food insecurity, like WIC and SNAP, act as temporary fixes, but to fully tackle food insecurity addressing the systemic roots is critical. Though existing research highlights the importance and provides a better understanding of this issue, this topic, and discussions of it, are not without limitations, most especially the limited availability of research. This topic is heavily under-discussed and under-researched, making it difficult to understand the full scope of the issue. This is further compounded by the fact that this is a complex issue, and race and ethnicity are difficult to isolate as a sole cause because of its intersections with other factors. In the way that understanding race and ethnicity can help shed light on other factors, it can also be argued that the other factors could be substantial enough to make it difficult to understand if the cause is truly race and ethnicity, and focusing solely on the impact of race and ethnicity without this caveat may oversimplify the issue.

As with the overall availability of existing research, research on this topic is limited by the availability and quality of data. The limited and uneven availability of data about food insecurity across different groups, such as the nonexistence of information on the experiences of Pacific Islander and Asian communities, may hinder a truly comprehensive analysis. Additionally, much of the research is location and community specific and it can be difficult to generalize findings because of variations in policy and environmental factors. This same variability of policy is a limitation of its own for this topic, as the variability can affect the comparability of studies, with different policy environments contributing to diverse experiences of food insecurity. A final limitation that was important to consider through the research process

was the inconsistencies of measurements and definitions across studies, as the potential discrepancies in findings and different assessment criteria can also affect the comparability.

Future Research and Other Considerations

Overall, the limitations of existing research made it difficult to get a full understanding of the connections between food insecurity and race and ethnicity and existing research had gaps I wish I could have understood more about. There were areas I wish I could have examined and hope future researchers investigate, especially as some gain increased relevance. One such case is the impacts of environmental justice and climate change. Climate change disproportionately affects communities of color and minority groups (Lorenzen and Drew 2023, 105), and there has been a rising interest in policies focused on environmental justice. With these considerations, and the impacts climate change will have on agriculture and food availability, it is an area that will also highlight racial discrepancies and should be explored. Along similar lines, another area of interest for future research is the influence of mental health and service accessibility. Especially considering the role food insecurity can play in leading to greater mental health struggles for minority communities (Burke et al. 2016, 286) that also tend to have difficulties in accessing services, this could have implications on future policy. A third area of interest I was unable to explore is the role of the food industry and lobbying. The food industry has a significant role in influencing food policy (Nestle 2013, 53), especially on things like the Farm Bill and its agricultural subsidies that can reduce welfare funding, so it would be interesting for research to examine the impact these industry lobbyists have on the food security of minority communities. Finally, a topic that was difficult to find any research on but could be useful in understanding beneficial policies would be global comparisons. While it is difficult to equalize existing policies and environmental factors for communities across different countries, it could be useful for

policy ideas and understanding this connection between race and food insecurity across international borders.

This topic is important, and more research should occur, especially on a larger scale, to understand this issue nationwide. In recent years, there has been a greater focus on the influences of race across social issues, and a greater focus on food insecurity as it occurred at greater prevalence throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. As researchers and policymakers look at topics for future investigation, more work explaining the racial inequalities in food insecurity is necessary for understanding how policy should be framed to address these connections and root causes. Particularly with the expected growth of minority communities in the US population (Frey 2018), addressing these issues is critical. The US cannot continue to conscionably call itself one of the greatest nations if half of the population is at a higher risk of food insecurity while the government sits back, doing nothing.

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