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Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Food Insecurity

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RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES ASSOCIATED WITH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

AFFILIATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Current research exists in regard to racial/ethnic disparities in food insecurity and **focuses mainly on public institutions.**

Little to no research exists focusing on racial/ethnic disparities in fruit and vegetable consumption among students at private universities.

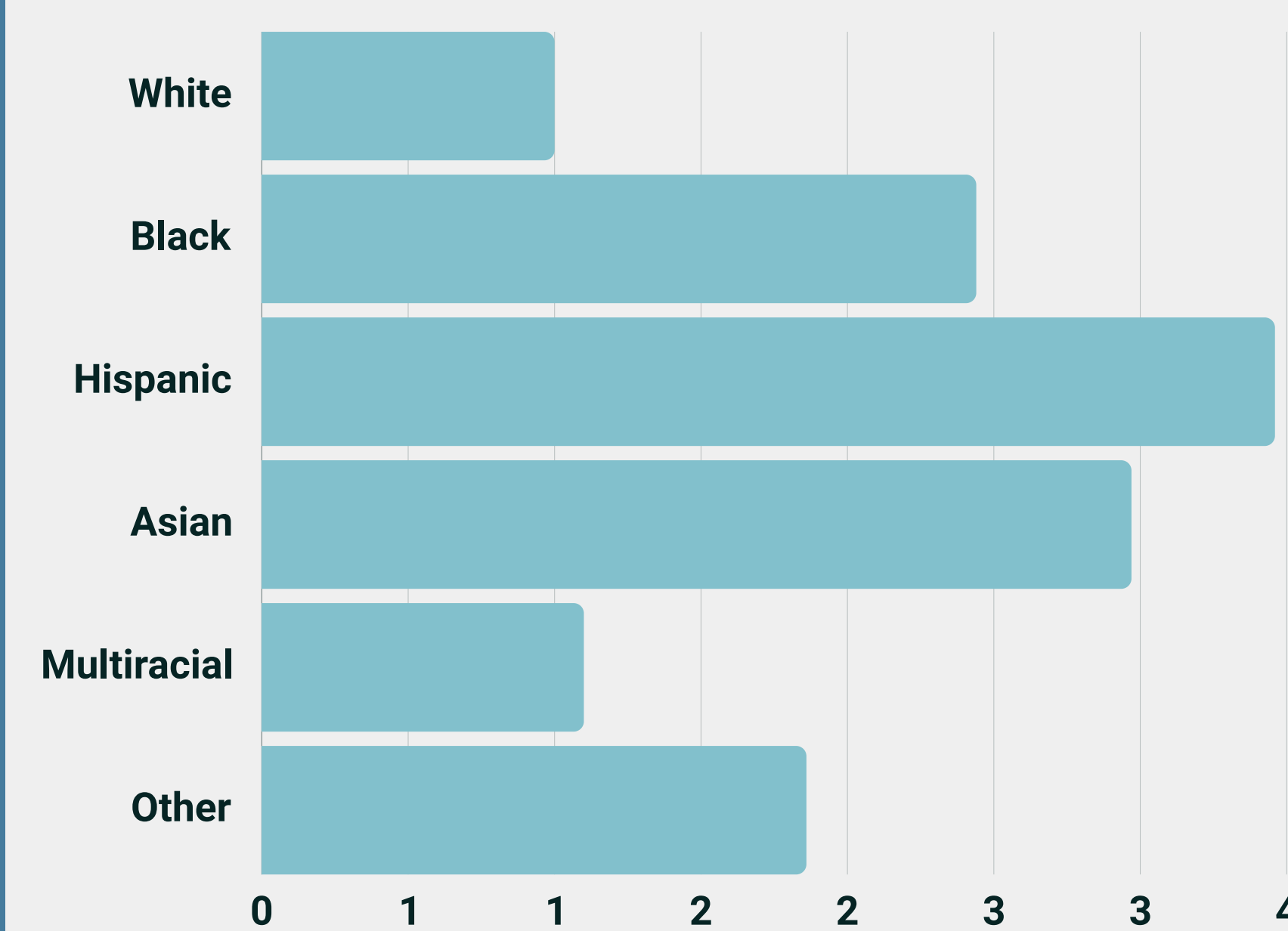
The goal of this study is to examine **racial/ethnic disparities in fruit and vegetable consumption among college students at a private university** in a small city in the northeast U.S.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

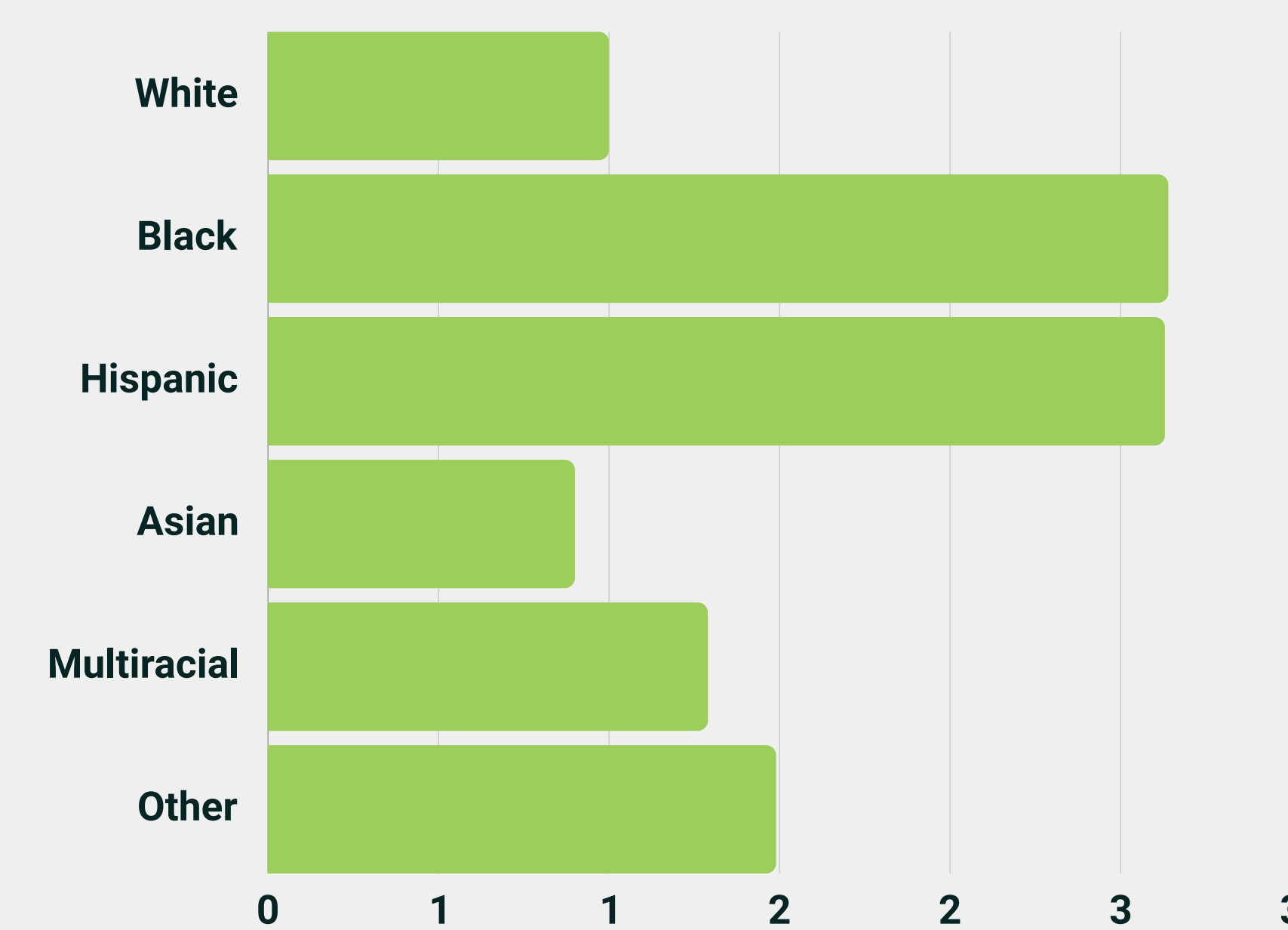
Among those surveyed, statistically significant racial and ethnic disparities were noted in the lack of recent fruit and vegetable consumption. Black, Hispanic, and Asian students were overrepresented among those with no fruit consumption. Black, Hispanic, and first-generation students were overrepresented among those with no vegetable consumption. Black and Hispanic students also had increased odds of no fruit and vegetable consumption during the previous 7 days relative to White students.

ODDS OF NO PAST WEEK FRUIT OR VEG. CONSUMPTION

No Past Week Fruit Consumption



No Past Week Veg. Consumption



**Controlled for S&G Identity, First Generation Student, Employment, On- or off-campus living, Social Ladder, and Age*

METHODOLOGY

Data were collected from n=575 students using a web-based, cross-sectional survey focusing on health behaviors, behavioral addictions, and mental health. This survey targeted full or part-time students aged 18+ years at a small private, non-profit university in the northeast U.S. who owned an iPhone and asked specific questions about the students' fruit and vegetable consumption during the previous 7 days.

DISCUSSION & IMPLICATIONS

Food insecurity and consumption of fruits and vegetables need to be addressed at institutional levels not just at public institutions but at private universities as well.

Effective strategies and **targeted messaging** are needed to address racial/ethnic disparities in fruit and vegetable consumption. Limited education and information is given to students about the importance of fruit and vegetable consumption, and there is almost no research on targeted strategies to impact consumption in minority students.

Programs are already in place at various universities including **food pantries, food scholarship/distribution, meal voucher programs, transportation to grocery stores, and food recovery programs** to minimize food waste and alleviate food insecurity.

These programs show promising results, but there is considerable room for advertisement and education about service utilization as well as institutional intervention. Further research is needed to understand how to effectively target these programs and develop interventions tailored to marginalized groups of students