

Food Insecurity: A Hidden Barrier to Academic Success Among Undergraduate Students

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INTRODUCTION

- In the United States, 32.9% of college students struggle with food insecurity.
- First year college students have the highest rate of hunger and a decrease in academic performance.
- Food insecure students have nearly twice the risk of having a GPA under 3.0.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What percent of undergraduate students are struggling with food insecurity?
2. Is there a relationship between the level of self-reported food insecurity and academic performance among undergraduate students?
3. Is there a relationship between the frequency of self-reported food insecurity and academic performance among undergraduate students?

METHOD

- Non-experimental study - Survey
- 64 volunteer respondents at one school
- Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS)
- Spearman Rank Order Correlation ($\alpha = .05$)

RESULTS

RQ 1: 62.5 % of undergraduate students in this sample face self-reported moderate to severe food insecurity (Fig 1)

RQ 2: $r_s(62) = -0.32, p = .011$, meaning a statistically significant relationship between self-reported food insecurity and academic achievement was found and showed that students of color (Fig. 2), freshmen (Fig. 3), and male students (Fig. 4) were especially affected

RQ 3: $r_s(60) = -0.19, p = .140$, meaning no statistically significant relationship between self-reported frequency of food insecurity and academic achievement was found

DISCUSSION

- Food insecurity affects many undergraduate students.
- Severity differs with demographic characteristics.
- Food insecurity and solutions should be discussed more openly.
- On-campus food pantries can be used to support students.
- Student affairs professionals should pay attention to groups that are at greater risk for food insecurity.
- “Swipe banks” and “Swipe sharing” networks may also be helpful.

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Figure 1

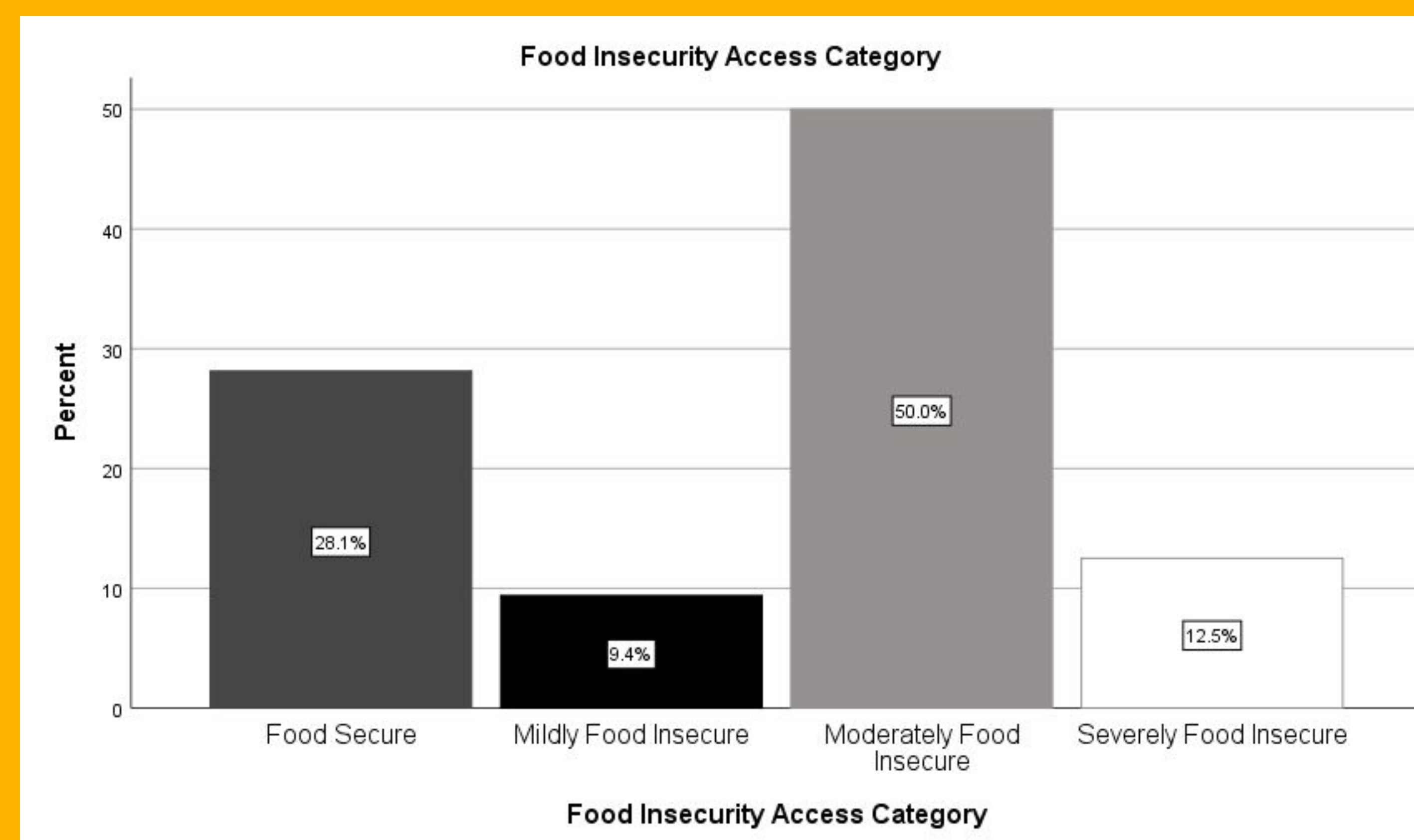


Figure 2

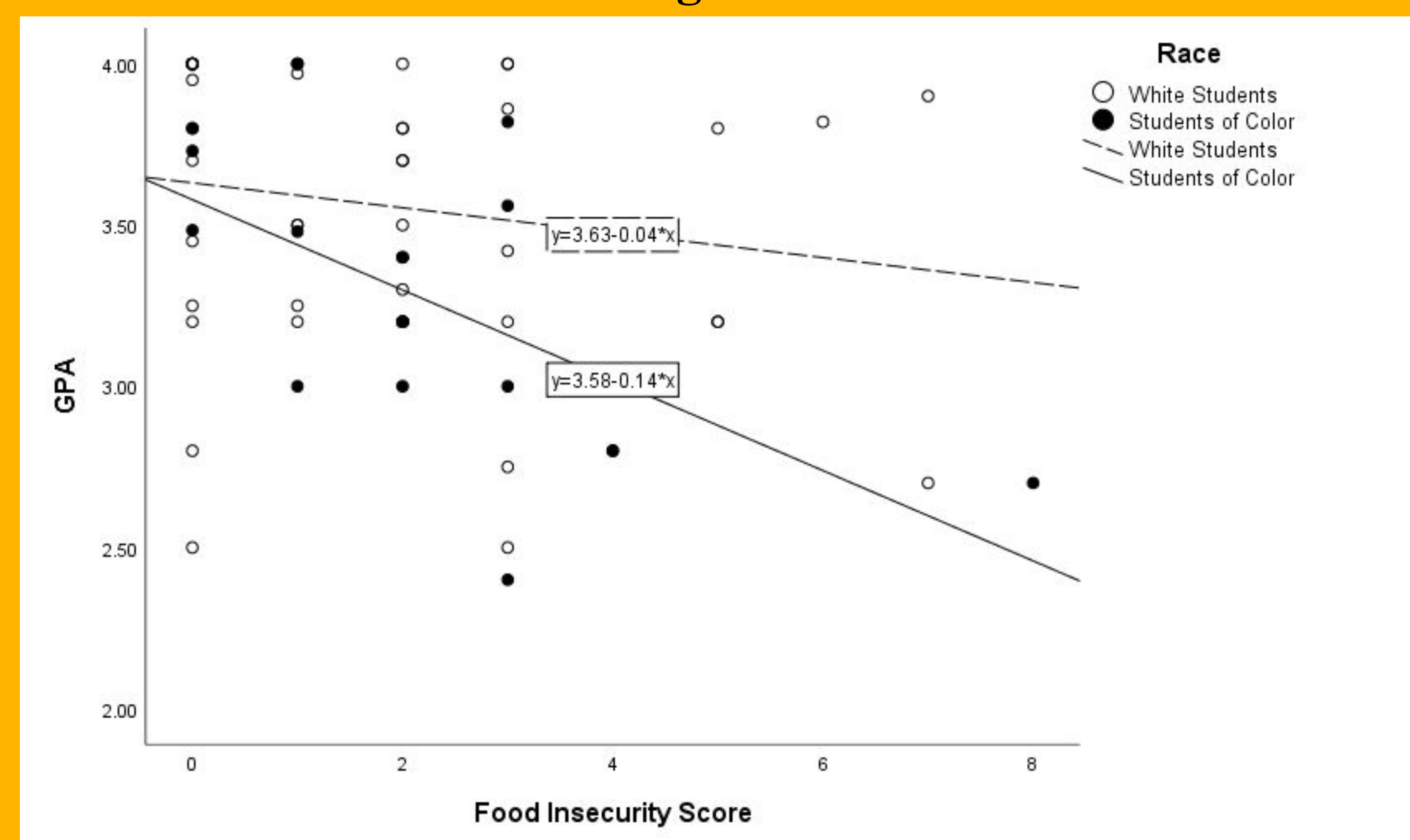


Figure 3

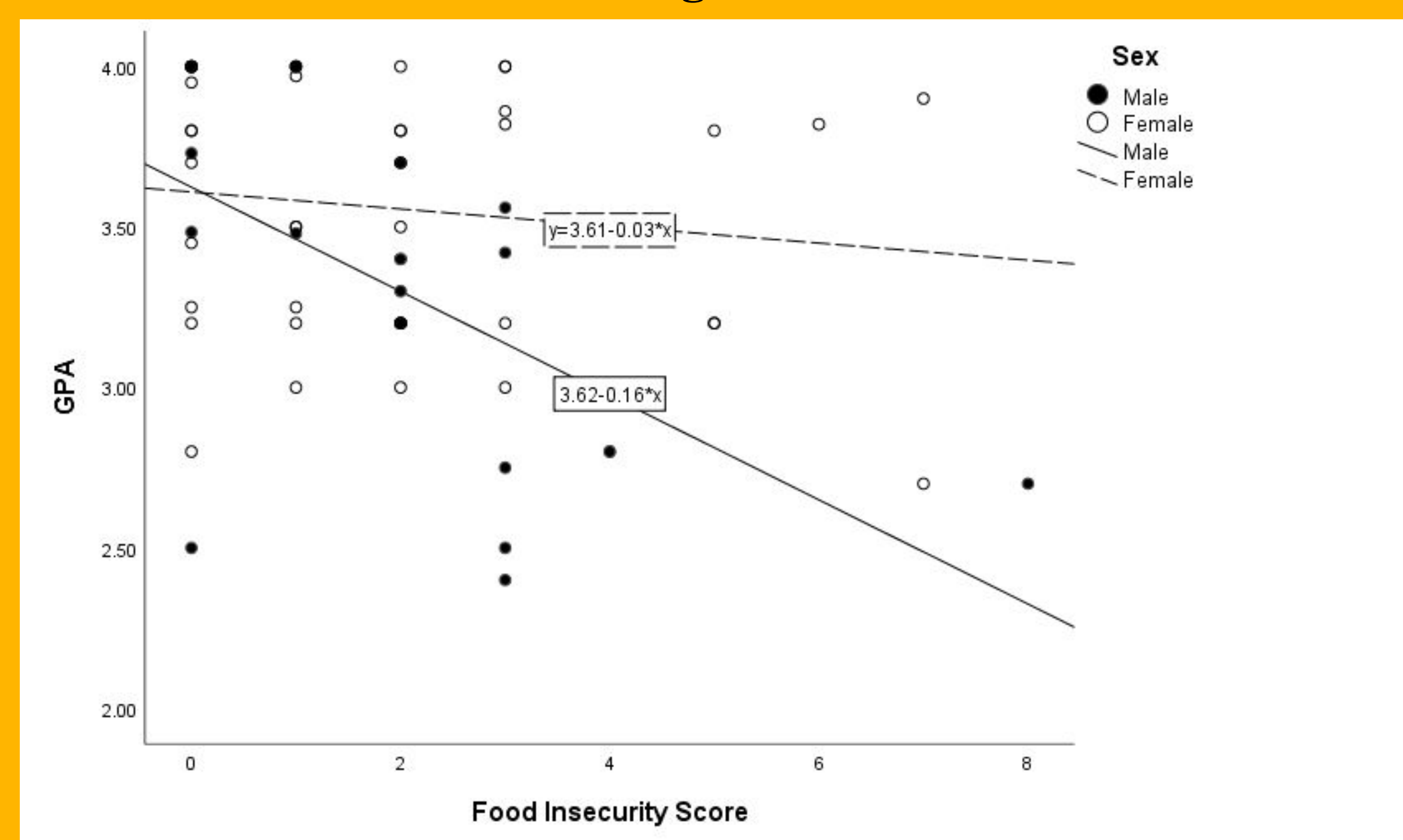


Figure 4

