

Examining the Relationship Between Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Participation and Food Security: A Scoping Review of Evidence

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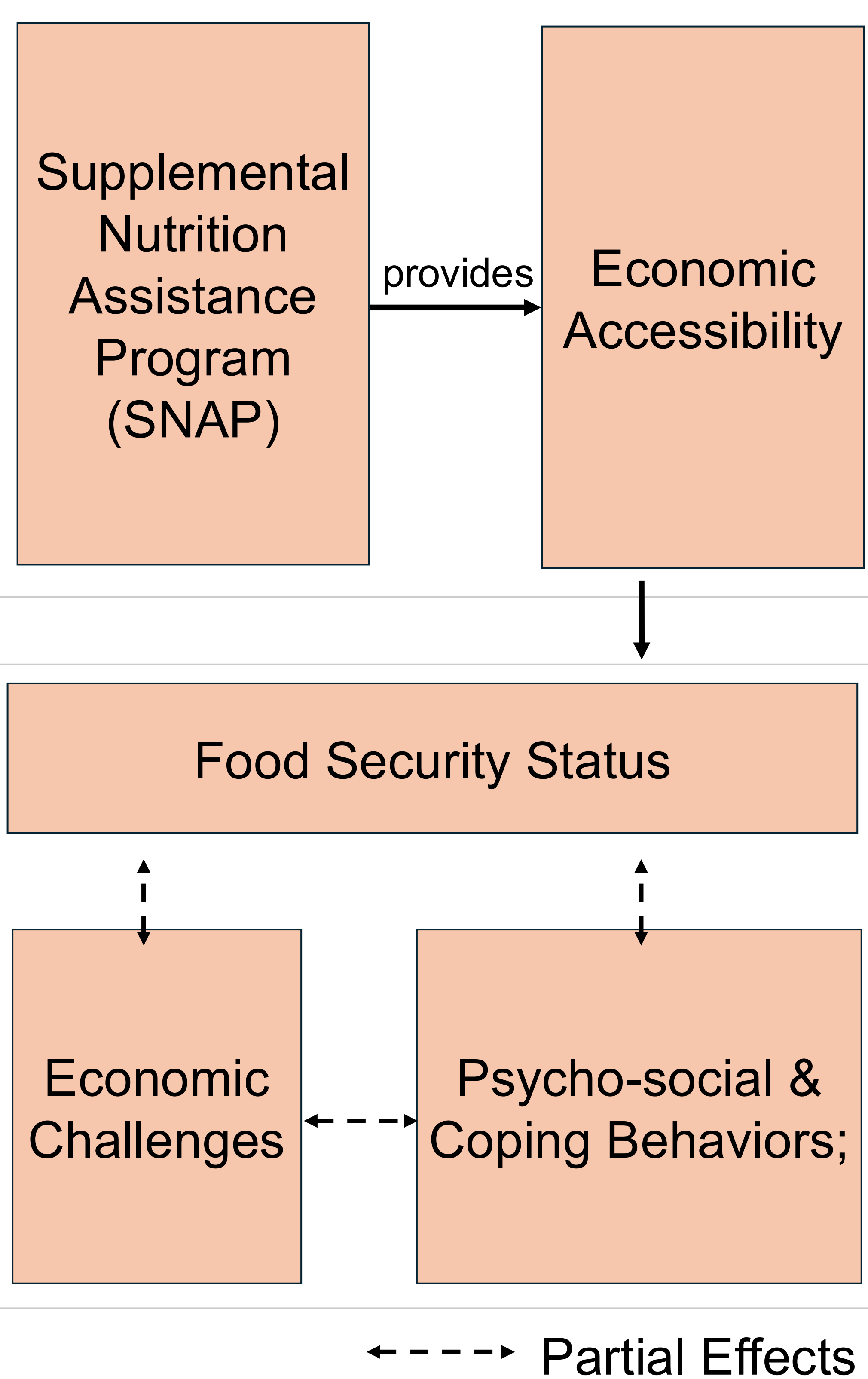
INTRODUCTION

- Food insecurity remains a persistent challenge in the U.S. despite decades of federal investment (Rabbitt et al., 2023).
- SNAP is the nation's largest food assistance program, designed to stabilize food access for low-income households.
- In 2021, 39.9% of SNAP households remained food insecure (Schanzenbach, 2023).



Image credit: FFESP

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

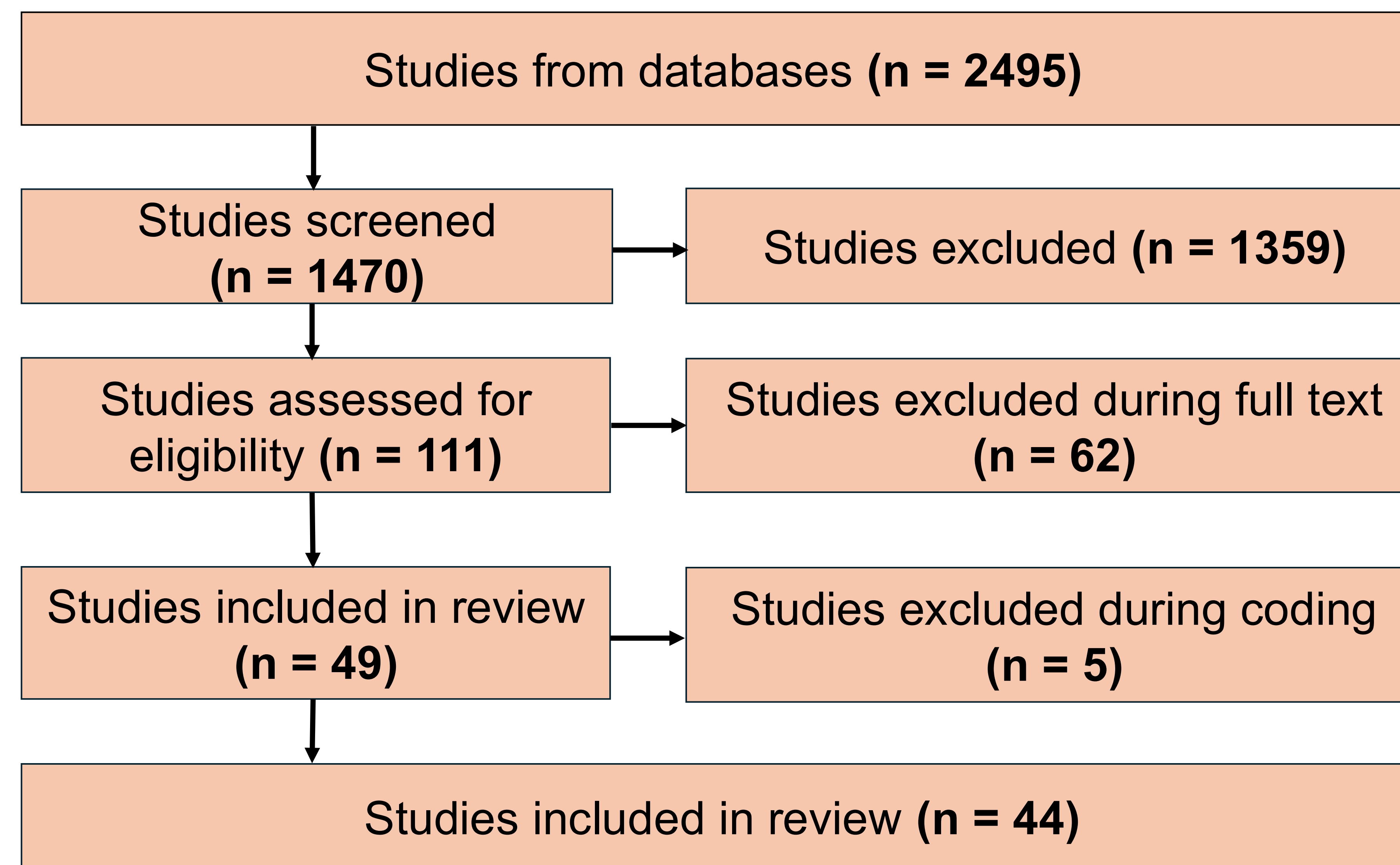


(Bickel et al., 2000; Hamilton et al., 1997)

METHODS

- Searched 5 databases; PubMed (n=915), FSTA (n=502), Web of Science (n=457), CAB Abstracts (n=379), AGRICOLA (n=242).
- Coding protocol: publication year, data types, Federal Poverty Level (FPL) thresholds, instruments, and food security outcomes categorized into food security status, economic constraints, and psychosocial factors.
- Inter-rater reliability 92.6%, resolved to 100% consensus.

Figure 1. Prisma Flow



KEY FINDINGS

Study Characteristics

- 75% of studies used secondary datasets; Current Population Survey - Food Security Supplement (CPS-FSS) used frequently (36.36%).
- Food security measured primarily using USDA's Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM) tools such as 18-item (n=12; 27.27%), 10-item (n=9; 20.45%), Core Food Security Module (CSFM) (n=6; 13.64%), and 6-item module (n=5; 11.36%).

Figure 3. FPL Thresholds

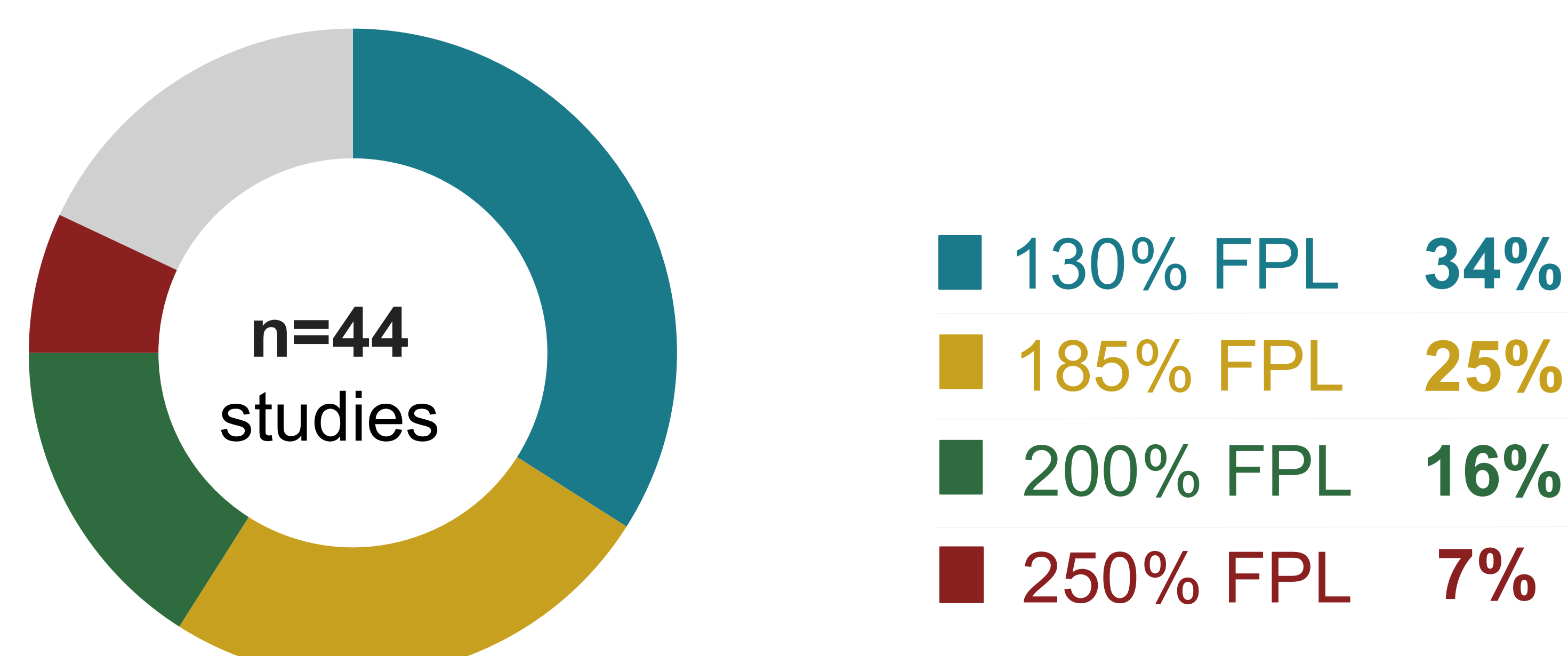
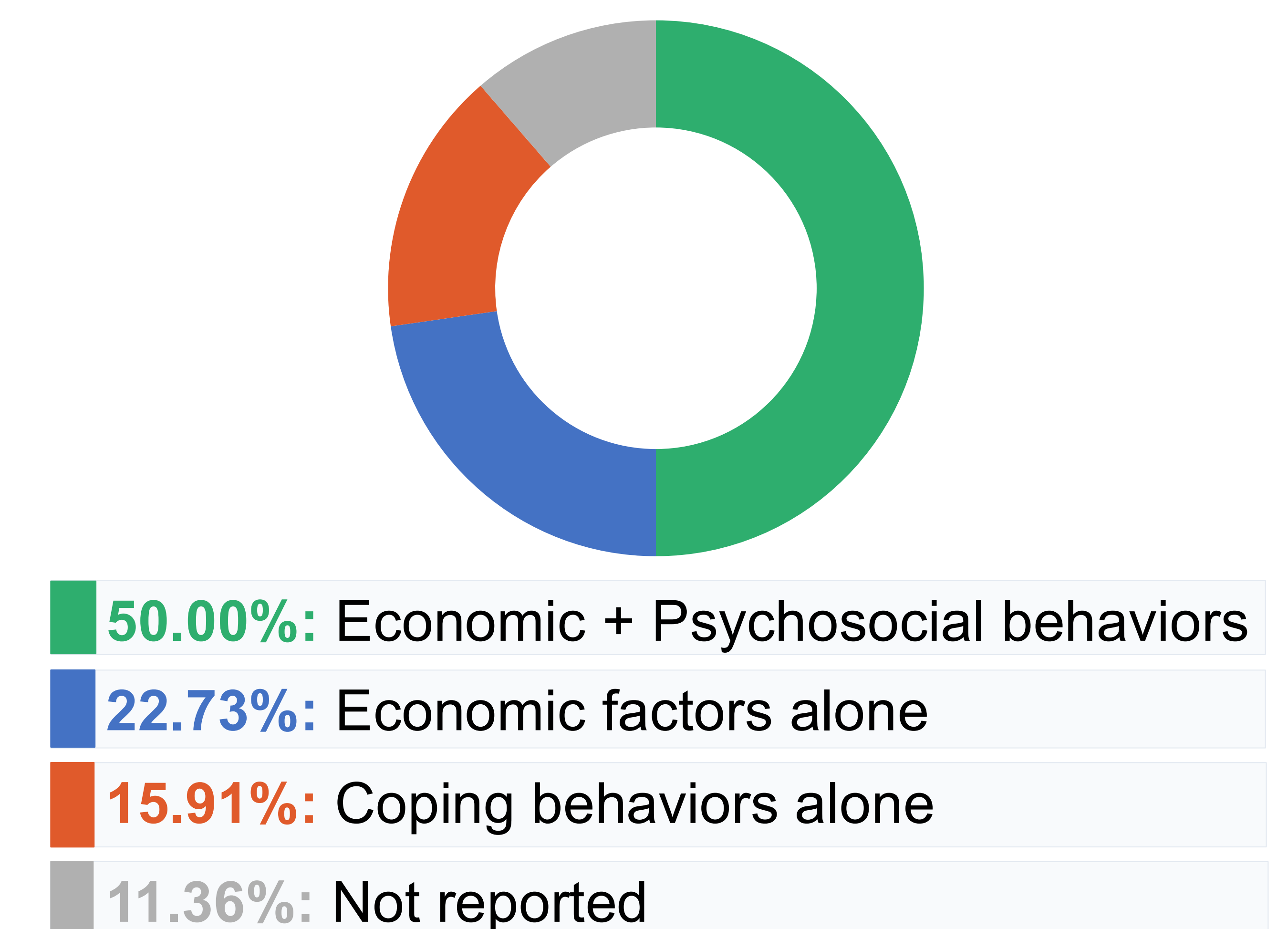


Table 1. Food Security Outcome

Outcome Measures	n	%
Mixed outcomes	20	45.5%
% Reduction in food insecurity	11	25.0%
Improved USDA FS levels	9	20.5%
Change in food security score	3	6.8%

34.09% and 20.45% of studies reported improvements in very low & low and very low food security levels respectively.

Figure 4. Economic & Psychosocial Behavior



CONCLUSIONS

- SNAP serves as a stabilizing safety net
- SNAP outcomes shaped by interaction of economic constraints and psychological stress /coping behaviors not fully captured by food security measures.

IMPLICATIONS

- **Policymakers:** Standardize food security measurement in SNAP evaluations. Disaggregate by USDA level to capture impact on most vulnerable households.
- **Educators & Extension:** Evidence affirms SNAP as a meaningful safety net. Support outreach around enrollment, benefits, and addressing persistent inequities

ABSTRACT & REFERENCES

