

FOR RELEASE APRIL 14, 2022

Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other

Many learn about ancestors, U.S. Black history from family

BY *Kiana Cox and Christine Tamir*

FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:

Kiana Cox, Research Associate, Race and Ethnicity Research
Khadijah Edwards, Research Associate, Race and Ethnicity Research
Tanya Ardit, Communications Manager
202.419.4372
www.pewresearch.org

RECOMMENDED CITATION

Pew Research Center, April 2022, "Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

About Pew Research Center

Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan, nonadvocacy fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping the world. It does not take policy positions. The Center conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, computational social science research and other data-driven research. It studies politics and policy; news habits and media; the internet and technology; religion; race and ethnicity; international affairs; social, demographic and economic trends; science; research methodology and data science; and immigration and migration. Pew Research Center is a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts, its primary funder.

© Pew Research Center 2023

How we did this

Pew Research Center conducted this analysis to understand the rich diversity of Black people in the United States and their views of Black identity. This in-depth, robust survey explores differences among Black Americans in views of identity such as between U.S.-born Black people and Black immigrants; Black people living in different regions of the country; and between Black people of different ethnicities, political party affiliations, ages and income levels. The analysis is the latest in the Center's [series](#) of in-depth surveys of public opinion among Black Americans (read the first, "[Faith Among Black Americans](#)").

The online survey of 3,912 Black U.S. adults was conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021. The survey includes 1,025 Black adults on Pew Research Center's [American Trends Panel \(ATP\)](#) and 2,887 Black adults on Ipsos' KnowledgePanel. Respondents on both panels are recruited through national, random sampling of residential addresses.

Recruiting panelists by phone or mail ensures that nearly all U.S. Black adults have a chance of selection. This gives us confidence that any sample can represent the whole population (see our [Methods 101 explainer](#) on random sampling). Here are the [questions](#) used for the survey of Black adults, along with its responses and [methodology](#).

Terminology

The terms “**Black Americans**”, “**Black people**” and “**Black adults**” are used interchangeably throughout this report to refer to U.S. adults who self-identify as Black, either alone or in combination with other races or Hispanic identity.

Throughout this report, “**Black, non-Hispanic**” respondents are those who identify as single-race Black and say they have no Hispanic background. “**Black Hispanic**” respondents are those who identify as Black and say they have Hispanic background. We use the terms “**Black Hispanic**” and “**Hispanic Black**” interchangeably. “**Multiracial**” respondents are those who indicate two or more racial backgrounds (one of which is Black) and say they are not Hispanic.

Respondents were asked a question about how important being Black was to how they think about themselves. In this report, we use the terms “**being Black**” and “**Blackness**” interchangeably when referencing responses to this question.

In this report, “**immigrant**” refers to people who were not U.S. citizens at birth – in other words, those born outside the U.S., Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories to parents who were not U.S. citizens. We use the terms “**immigrant**” and “**foreign-born**” interchangeably.

Throughout this report, “**Democrat and Democratic leaners**” refers to respondents who say in they identify politically with the Democratic Party or are independent but lean toward the Democratic Party. “**Republican and Republican leaners**” refers to respondents who identify politically with the Republican Party or are independent but lean toward the Republican Party.

To create the upper-, middle- and lower-income tiers, respondents’ 2020 family incomes were adjusted for differences in purchasing power by geographic region and household size. Respondents were then placed into income tiers: “**Middle income**” is defined as two-thirds to double the median annual income for the entire survey sample. “**Lower income**” falls below that range, and “**upper income**” lies above it. For more information about how the income tiers were created, read the [methodology](#).

Table of Contents

About Pew Research Center	1
How we did this	2
Terminology	3
Table of Contents	4
Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other	5
The importance of being Black for connections with other Black people	10
The importance of Blackness for knowing family history and U.S. Black history	11
Younger Black people are less likely to speak to relatives about ancestors	13
Black Americans differ by party on measures of identity and connection	15
Place is a key part of Black Americans' personal identities	16
1. Personal identity and intra-racial connections	18
The importance of race, ancestry and place to personal identity	18
The importance of gender and sexuality to personal identity	23
Black Americans and connectedness to other Black people	26
Intra-racial connections locally, nationally and globally	35
2. Family history, slavery and knowledge of Black history	40
How Black Americans learn about their family history	40
Most Black adults say their ancestors were enslaved, but some are not sure	44
Most Black adults are at least somewhat informed about U.S. Black history	48
3. Place and community	54
For many Black adults, where they live shapes how they think about themselves	54
Black adults are more likely to live in urban and suburban areas	56
Most Black adults rate the quality of their community as good or better	59
Violence, the economy and housing top the list of important community issues for Black Americans	63
Acknowledgments	68
Methodology	69
Topline questionnaire	77

Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other

Many learn about ancestors, U.S. Black history from family

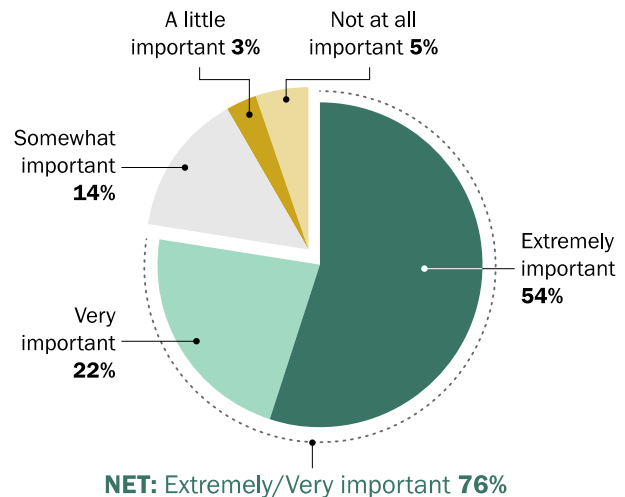
No matter where they are from, who they are, their economic circumstances or educational backgrounds, significant majorities of Black Americans say being Black is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves, with about three-quarters (76%) overall saying so.

A significant share of Black Americans also say that when something happens to Black people in their local communities, across the nation or around the globe, it affects what happens in their own lives, highlighting a sense of connectedness. Black Americans say this even as they have diverse experiences and come from an array of backgrounds.

Even so, Black adults who say being Black is important to their sense of self are more likely than other Black adults to feel connected to other groups of Black people. They are also more likely to feel that what happens to Black people inside and outside the United States affects what happens in their own lives. These findings emerge from an extensive new survey of Black U.S. adults conducted by Pew Research Center.

Most Black adults say being Black is very important to how they see themselves

% of Black adults who say being Black is ___ to how they think about themselves

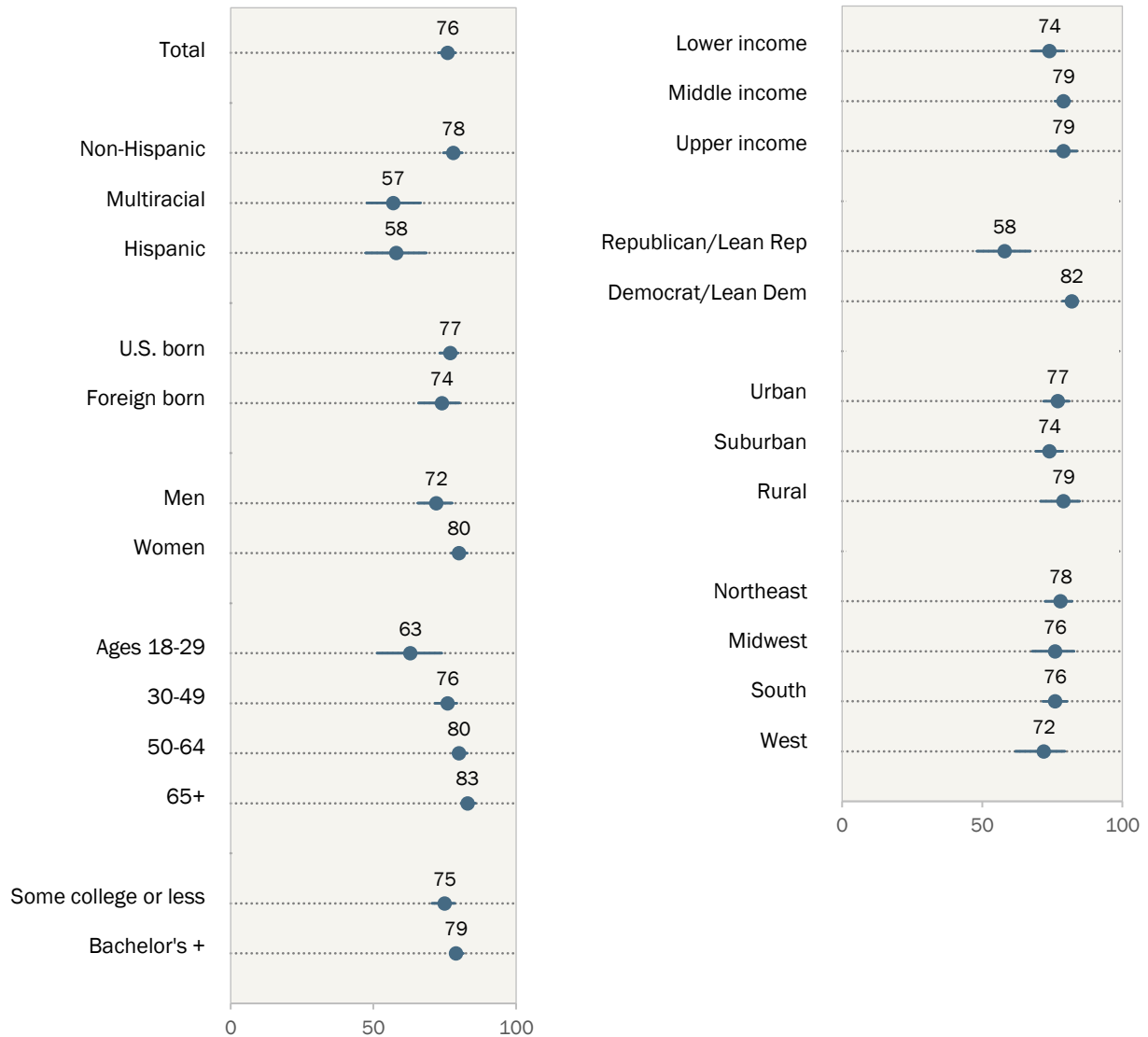


Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. No answer responses not shown. Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults. "Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Non-Hispanic Black adults most likely to say being Black is extremely or very important to how they see themselves

% of Black adults who say being Black is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

A majority of non-Hispanic Black Americans (78%) say being Black is very or extremely important to how they think about themselves. This racial group is the [largest among Black adults](#), accounting for 87% of the adult population, according to 2019 Census Bureau estimates. But among other Black Americans, roughly six-in-ten multiracial (57%) and Hispanic (58%) Black adults say this.

Black Americans also differ in key ways in their views about the importance of being Black to personal identity. While majorities of all age groups of Black people say being Black shapes how they think about themselves, younger Black Americans are less likely to say this – Black adults ages 50 and older are more likely than Black adults ages 18 to 29 to say that being Black is very or extremely important to how they think of themselves. Specifically, 76% of Black adults ages 30 to 49, 80% of those 50 to 64 and 83% of those 65 and older hold this view, while only 63% of those under 30 do.

Black adults who identify with or lean toward the Democratic Party are more likely than those who identify with or lean toward the Republican Party to say being Black is important to how they see themselves – 86% vs. 58%. And Black women (80%) are more likely than Black men (72%) to say being Black is important to how they see themselves.

Still, some subgroups of Black Americans are about as likely as others to say that being Black is very or extremely important to how they think about themselves. For example, U.S.-born and immigrant Black adults are about as likely to say being Black is important to how they see their identity. However, not all Black Americans feel the same about the importance of being Black to their identity – 14% say it is only somewhat important to how they see themselves while 9% say it has little or no impact on their personal identity, reflecting the diversity of views about identity among Black Americans.

Beyond the personal importance of Blackness – that is, the importance of being Black to personal identity – many Black Americans feel connected to each other. About five-in-ten (52%) say everything or most things that happen to Black people in the United States affect what happens in their own lives, with another 30% saying some things that happen nationally to Black people have a personal impact. And 43% say all or most things that happen to Black people in their local community affect what happens in their own lives, while another 35% say only some things in their lives are affected by these events. About four-in-ten Black adults in the U.S. (41%) say they feel their [fates are strongly linked](#) to Black people around the world, with 36% indicating that some things that happen to Black people around the world affect what happens in their own lives.

The survey also asked respondents how much they have in common with different groups of Black Americans. Some 17% of Black adults say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are immigrants. But this sense of commonality differs sharply by nativity: 14% of U.S.-born Black adults say they have everything or most things in common with Black immigrants, while 43% of Black immigrants say the same. Conversely, only about one-in-four Black immigrants (26%) say they have everything or most things in common with U.S.-born Black people, a share that rises to 56% among U.S.-born Black people themselves.

About one-third of Black Americans (34%) say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are poor, though smaller shares say the same about Black people who are wealthy (12%). Relatively few Black Americans (14%) say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ). However, a larger share of Black Americans (25%) say they have at least some things in common

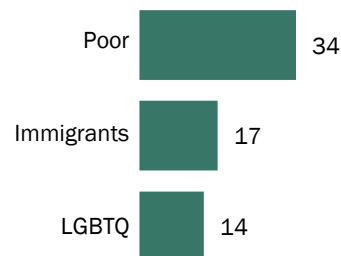
About half of Black adults say their fates are strongly linked with other Black people in the U.S.

% of Black adults who say that ...

Everything or most things that happen to the following affect their own life



They have everything or most things in common with Black people who are ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults. "Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

with Black people who identify as LGBTQ. All these findings highlight the diversity of the U.S. Black population and how much Black people feel connected to each other.

These are among the key findings from a recent Pew Research Center survey of 3,912 Black Americans conducted online Oct. 4-17, 2021. This report is the [latest in a series of Pew Research Center studies](#) focused on describing the rich diversity of Black people in the United States.

The nation's Black population stood at [47 million in 2020](#), making up 14% of the U.S. population – up from 13% in 2000. While the vast majority of Black Americans say their racial background is Black alone (88% in 2020), growing numbers are also multiracial or Hispanic. Most were born in the U.S. and trace their roots back several generations in the country, but a [growing share are immigrants](#) (12%) or the U.S.-born children of immigrant parents (9%). Geographically, while 56% of Black Americans [live in the nation's South](#), the national Black population has also dispersed widely across the country.

It is this diversity – among U.S.-born Black people and Black immigrants; between Black people who live in different regions; and across different ethnicities, party affiliations, ages and income levels – that this report explores. The survey also provides a robust opportunity to examine the importance of race to Black Americans' sense of self and their connections to other Black people.

The importance of being Black for connections with other Black people

The importance of being Black to personal identity is a significant factor in how connected Black Americans feel toward each other. Those who say that being Black is a very or extremely important part of their personal identity are more likely than those for whom Blackness is relatively less important to express a sense of common fate with Black people in their local communities (50% vs. 17%), in the United States overall (62% vs. 21%), and even around the world (48% vs. 18%).

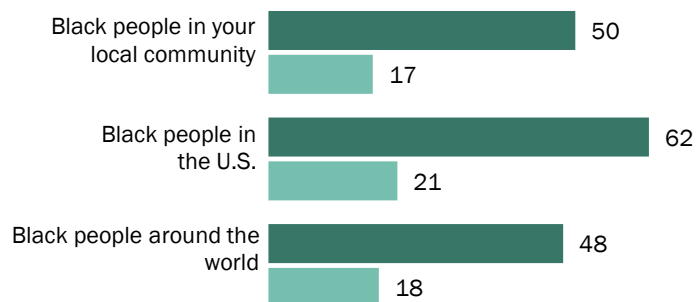
They are also more likely to say that they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are poor (37% vs. 23%) and Black immigrants (19% vs. 9%). Even so, fewer than half of Black Americans, no matter how important Blackness is to their personal identity, say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are poor, immigrants or LGBTQ.

Black Americans who say being Black is important to them are more likely to feel connected to other Black people

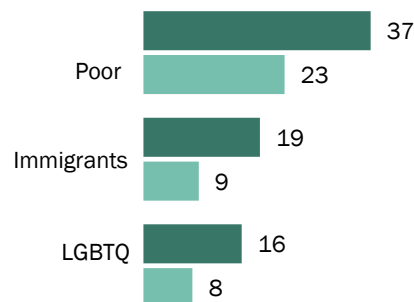
% of Black adults who say ...

- Being Black is very or extremely important to personal identity
- Being Black is somewhat, a little, or not important to personal identity

Everything or most things that happen to the following affect their own life



They have everything or most things in common with Black people who are ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

The importance of Blackness for knowing family history and U.S. Black history

The new survey also explores Black Americans' knowledge about their family histories and the history of Black people in the United States, with the importance of Blackness linked to greater knowledge.

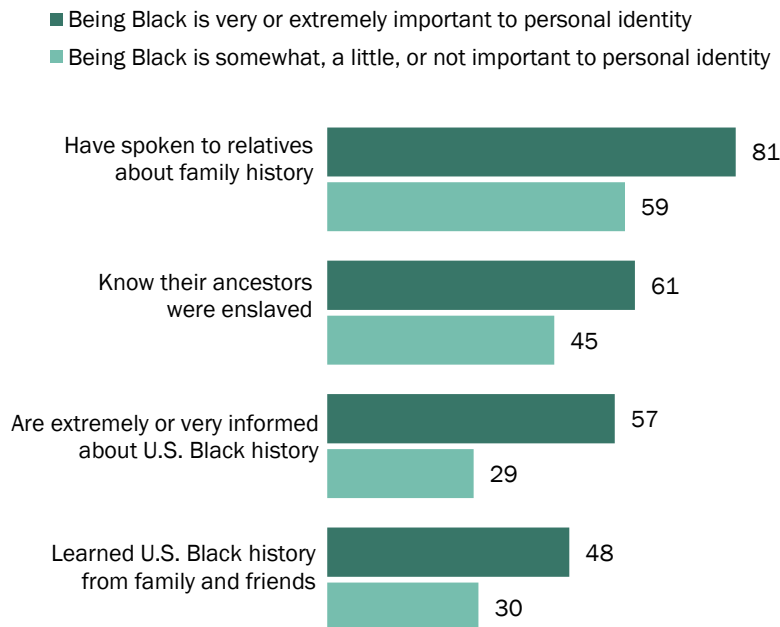
Nearly six-in-ten Black adults (57%) say their ancestors were enslaved either in the U.S. or another country, with nearly all who say so (52% of the Black adults surveyed) saying it was in the U.S., either in whole or in part. Black adults who say that being Black is a very or extremely important part of how they see themselves (61%) are more likely than those for whom being Black is less important (45%) to say that their ancestors were enslaved.

In fact, Black adults for whom Blackness is very or extremely important (31%) are less likely than their counterparts (42%) to say that they are not sure if their ancestors were enslaved at all.

When it comes to learning more about their family histories, Black adults for whom Blackness is very or extremely important (81%) are more likely than those for whom Blackness is less important (59%) to have spoken to their relatives. They are about as likely to have researched their family's history online (36% and 30%, respectively) and to have used a mail-in DNA service such as AncestryDNA or 23andMe (15% and 16%) to learn more about their ancestry.

Black adults who say being Black is important to them are more likely to learn about their ancestors from relatives

% of Black adults who say ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Only Black adults who say they were informed at least "a little" about U.S. Black history were asked if they learned about it from family and friends.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

The importance of Blackness also figures prominently into how informed Black Americans feel about U.S. Black history. Black adults who say Blackness is a significant part of their personal identity are more likely than those for whom Blackness is less important to say that they feel very or extremely informed about U.S. Black history (57% vs. 29%). Overall, about half of Black Americans say they feel very or extremely informed about the history of Black people in the United States.

Among Black adults who feel at least a little informed about U.S. Black history, the sources of their knowledge also differ by the importance of Blackness to personal identity. Nearly half of Black adults for whom Blackness is very or extremely important (48%) say they learned about Black history from their families and friends, making them more likely to say so than Black adults for whom Blackness is less important (30%). Similarly, those who say being Black is important to their identity are more likely than those who did not say this to have learned about Black history from nearly every source they were asked about, be it media (33% vs. 22%), the internet (30% vs. 18%) or college, if they attended (26% vs. 14%). The only source for which both groups were about equally likely to say they learned about Black history was their K-12 schools (24% and 21%, respectively).

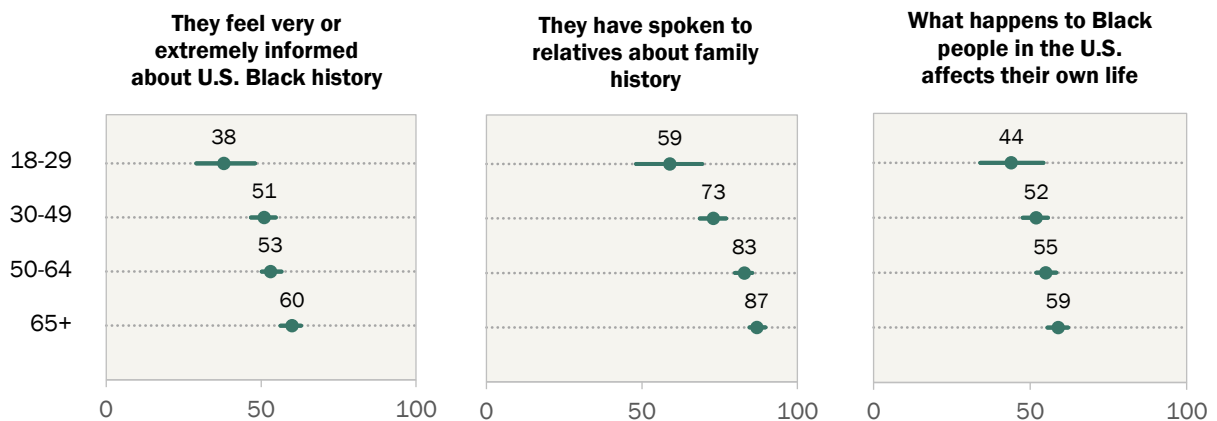
Overall, among Black Americans who feel at least a little informed about U.S. Black history, 43% say they learned about it from their relatives and friends, 30% say they learned about it from the media, 27% from the internet, and 24% from college (if they attended) and 23% from K-12 school.

Younger Black people are less likely to speak to relatives about ancestors

Black adults under 30 years old differ significantly from older Black adults in their views on the importance of Blackness to their personal identity. However, Black adults also differ by age in how they pursue knowledge of family history, how informed they feel about U.S. Black history, and their sense of connectedness to other Black people.

Younger Black adults less likely than their elders to feel informed about U.S. Black history

% of Black adults who say ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Black adults under 30 (50%) are less likely than those 65 and older (64%) to say their ancestors were enslaved. In fact, 40% of Black adults under 30 say that they are not sure whether their ancestors were enslaved. Black adults in the youngest age group (59%) are less likely than the oldest (87%) to have spoken to their relatives about family history or to have used a mail-in DNA service to learn about their ancestors (11% vs. 21%). They are only slightly less likely to have conducted research on their families online (26% vs. 39%).

Black adults under 30 have the lowest share who say they feel very or extremely informed about the history of Black people in the United States (40%), compared with 60% of Black adults 65 and older and about half each of Black adults 50 to 64 (53%) and 30 to 49 (51%). In fact, Black adults under 30 are more likely than those 50 and older to say they feel a little or not at all informed about Black history. While Black adults are generally most likely to cite family and friends as their

source for learning about Black history, the share under 30 (38%) who also cite the internet as a source of information is higher than the shares ages 50 to 64 (22%) and 65 and older (14%) who say this.

These age differences persist in the sense of connectedness that Black Americans have with other Black people. Black adults under 30 are less likely than those 65 and older to say that everything or most things that happen to Black people in the United States will affect their own lives. This youngest group is also less likely than the oldest to have this sense of common fate with Black people in their local community. One exception to this pattern occurs when Black adults were asked how much they had in common with Black people who identify as LGBTQ. Black adults under 30 (21%) were considerably more likely than those 65 and older (10%) to say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who identify as LGBTQ.

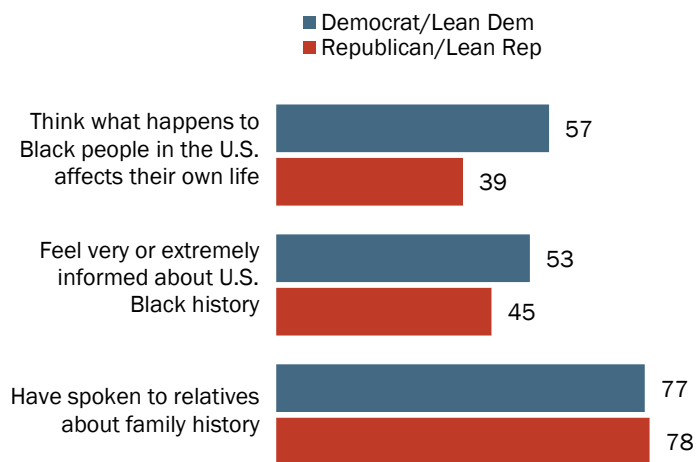
Black Americans differ by party on measures of identity and connection

Black Democrats and Republicans differ on how important Blackness is to their personal identities. However, there are also partisan gaps when it comes to their connectedness to other Black people.¹

Black Democrats and those who lean to the Democratic Party are more likely than Black Republicans and Republican leaners to say that everything or most things that happen to Black people in the United States (57% vs. 39%) and their local communities (46% vs. 30%) affect what happens in their own lives. However, Black Republicans (24%) are more likely than Black Democrats (14%) to say that they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are LGBTQ. They are also more likely than Black Democrats to say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are wealthy (25% vs. 11%).

Black Democrats more likely than Republicans to say what happens to other Black people in the U.S. will affect their own lives

% of Black adults who ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

When it comes to knowledge of family and racial histories, Black Democrats and Republicans do not differ. Democrats (59%) are just as likely as Republicans (54%) to know that their ancestors were enslaved. Nearly 80% of Black adults from both partisan coalitions say they have spoken to their relatives about their family history. Similar shares have also researched their family histories online and used mail-in DNA services.

¹ According to the survey, 80% of Black adults say they identify with or lean toward the Democratic Party, 10% say the same of the Republican Party and 10% did not answer the question or indicated that they did not affiliate with either party. Among Black registered voters, the survey finds 85% identify with or lean toward the Democratic Party, 10% identify with or lean toward the Republican Party and 5% did not answer the question or indicated that they did not affiliate with either party.

Black Democrats are also not significantly more likely than Black Republicans to say they feel very or extremely informed about U.S. Black history (53% vs. 45%). And among those who feel at least a little informed about U.S. Black history, Democrats and Republicans are about equally likely to say they learned it from family and friends (45% vs. 38%).

Place is a key part of Black Americans' personal identities

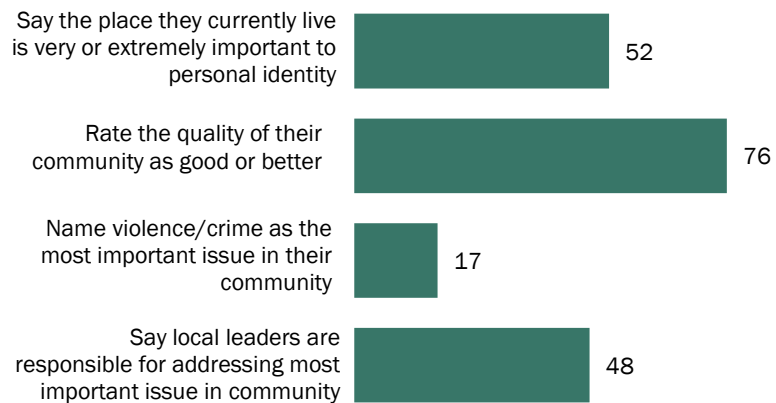
The majority of Black adults who live in the United States were born there, but an [increasing portion](#) of the population is comprised of immigrants. Of those immigrants, nearly 90% were born in the [Caribbean or Africa](#). Regardless of their region of birth, 58% of Black adults say the country they were born in is very or extremely important to how they think about themselves. A smaller share say the same about the places where they grew up (46%).

Black adults also feel strongly about their current communities. About half of Black adults (52%) say that where they currently live is very or extremely important to how they think about themselves. And when it comes to the quality of their neighborhoods, 76% of Black adults rate them as at least good places to live, including 41% who say the quality of their community is very good or excellent.

Still, Black adults say there are concerning issues in the communities they live in. When asked in an open-ended question to list the issue that was most important in their neighborhoods, nearly one-in-five Black adults listed issues related to violence or crime (17%). Smaller shares listed other points of concern such as economic issues like poverty and homelessness (11%), housing (7%),

Half of Black adults say where they currently live is an important part of their identity

% Black adults who ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Only Black adults who listed a community issue were asked a follow-up about who was responsible for addressing it.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

COVID-19 and public health (6%), or infrastructure issues such as the availability of public transportation and the conditions of roads (5%).

While nearly one-in-five Black Americans (17%) say that individual people like themselves should be responsible for solving these problems, they are most likely to say that local community leaders should address these issues (48%). Smaller shares say the U.S. Congress (12%), the U.S. president (8%) or civil rights organizations (2%) bear responsibility.

1. Personal identity and intra-racial connections

The personal identities of Black Americans are tied to many different characteristics, some of which are more important than others in shaping how they see themselves. In the new Pew Research Center survey, Black adults were asked about the importance of their racial background, ancestry, the place where they grew up, gender and sexuality to how they think about themselves. In addition to personal identity, the survey explored Black Americans' views of how much they have in common with Black people who are U.S. born, immigrants, wealthy, poor and LGBTQ. It also asked Black Americans about how much what happens to Black people locally, nationally and globally affects what happens in their own lives.

The importance of race, ancestry and place to personal identity

Race and personal identity

The majority of Black Americans identify as [Black alone and non-Hispanic](#). However, 8% of Black adults identify as [multiracial](#), that is Black and some other race, and 5% as [Black Hispanic](#). Between 2000 and 2019, the share of Black Americans who identified as either multiracial or Black Hispanic had grown by roughly 145%. To capture this growing complexity in Black racial identity, Black adults were asked both a general question about the importance of their racial background and a more specific question about the [importance of being Black](#).

About seven-in-ten Black Americans (71%) say their racial background is very or extremely important to how they think of themselves, according to the survey. While U.S.-born (71%) and immigrant (70%) Black Americans are equally likely to hold this view, there are differences among Black adults of different racial backgrounds and ethnicities. About seven-in-ten (73%) of those who identify solely as Black say their racial background is very or extremely important to how they think of themselves. Meanwhile, smaller shares of Black adults who identify as multiracial (53%) say the same.

Gender, age, education, income and party are also key points of departure among Black adults when it comes to the importance of their racial backgrounds to their personal identity. Black women (74%) are more likely than Black men (67%) to say their race is an important part of how they think of themselves. When it comes to age groups, 81% of Black adults 65 and older say this, while 73% of those who are 50 to 64, 68% of those 30 to 49 and 64% of those under 30 say this.

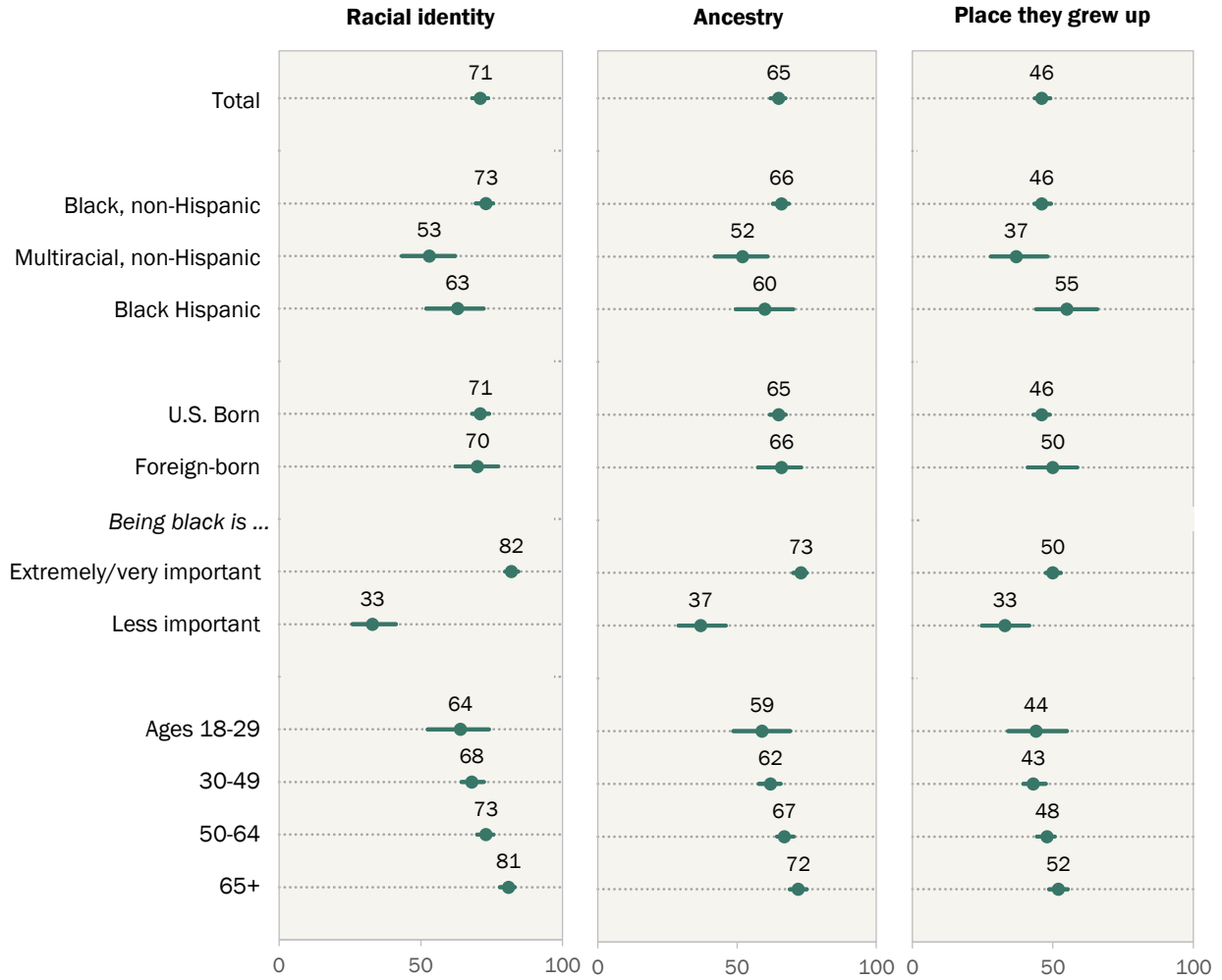
There are also some differences by level of educational attainment. Black adults with at least a bachelor's degree (76%) are more likely than those with lower levels of education (69%) to say that their racial identity is very or extremely important to them.

The importance of racial background to personal identity among Black Americans also differs by income.² Black adults with middle incomes (74%) and those with upper incomes (77%) are more likely than those with lower incomes (67%) to share this view.

² Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings. For more on how income tiers were defined, see the [Methodology](#).

Most Black adults say their racial background and ancestry are extremely or very important to how they see themselves

% of Black adults who say their ___ is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, “being Black is less important” indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

“Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Black Democrats and those who lean toward the Democratic Party (75%) are more likely than Black Republicans and Republican leaners (52%) to cite their racial identity as a very or extremely important part of how they think of themselves.

The survey also finds about three-quarters (76%) of Black adults say specifically that being Black is important to how they see themselves. This is a view widely shared across most major demographic subgroups of Black Americans, as clear majorities of each say being Black is a very or extremely important part of how they think of themselves.

Ancestry and personal identity

Like racial identity and the importance of being Black, the majority (65%) of Black Americans say their ancestry is an important part of how they think about themselves.

While U.S.-born (65%) and foreign-born (66%) Black adults hold similar views on this question, non-Hispanic

With few differences, a majority of Black adults say their ancestry is extremely or very important to them

% of Black adults who say their _____ is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves

	Racial background	Ancestry	Place they grew up
Total	71	65	46
Men	67	63	47
Women	74	67	46
Some college or less	69	65	47
Bachelor's degree+	76	65	45
Lower income	67	64	48
Middle income	74	64	43
Upper income	77	69	47
Rep/Lean Rep	52	66	48
Dem/Lean Dem	75	65	47
Urban	73	64	49
Suburban	71	65	45
Rural	68	65	46
Northeast	72	65	47
Midwest	74	67	51
South	70	65	44
West	69	62	47

Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings. Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Black adults (66%) are more likely than multiracial Black adults (52%) to say their ancestry is very or extremely important to their personal identity.

Black adults ages 65 and older (72%) are more likely than those who are 30 to 49 (62%) and slightly more likely than those under 30 (59%) to say that ancestry is very or extremely important to how they think about themselves. Meanwhile, the share of Black adults in the upper-income tier (69%) who hold this view is about the same as the shares of in the middle (64%) and lower tiers (64%). Looking at gender, nearly two-thirds of both Black women (67%) and Black men (63%) say that their ancestry is a very or extremely important part of their personal identity. There were no significant differences by education or by party affiliation among Black adults on this question.

The places where Black Americans grew up and personal identity

Black Americans were also asked how important the places where they grew up are to their personal identities. Nearly half of Black Americans (46%) say the location where they grew up is very or extremely important to how they think about themselves. Like racial identity and ancestry, this question differs somewhat for Black Americans of different ethnicities. Black Hispanic adults (55%) are more likely than multiracial Black adults (37%) to say that where they grew up is very or extremely important to their identity. Similar shares of Black Americans who were born in (46%) or outside (50%) of the United States hold this view.

There are only slight regional differences in the share of Black adults who say where they grew up is very or extremely important to their personal identity. While 51% of Black Americans who live in the Midwest say this, 47% of those living in the Northeast or West and 44% of those who live in the South say this. Black adults who live in urban (49%), suburban (45%) or rural (46%) areas are also about as likely to say that where they grew up is very or extremely important to their personal identity.

Black Americans differ only slightly by age in views on the importance of where they grew up. Black adults who are 65 and older (52%) are more likely than those 30 to 49 (43%) to say that the location where they grew up is a very or extremely important part of how they view themselves.

The importance of gender and sexuality to personal identity

Gender and sexuality are also important components of how Black Americans think about themselves.

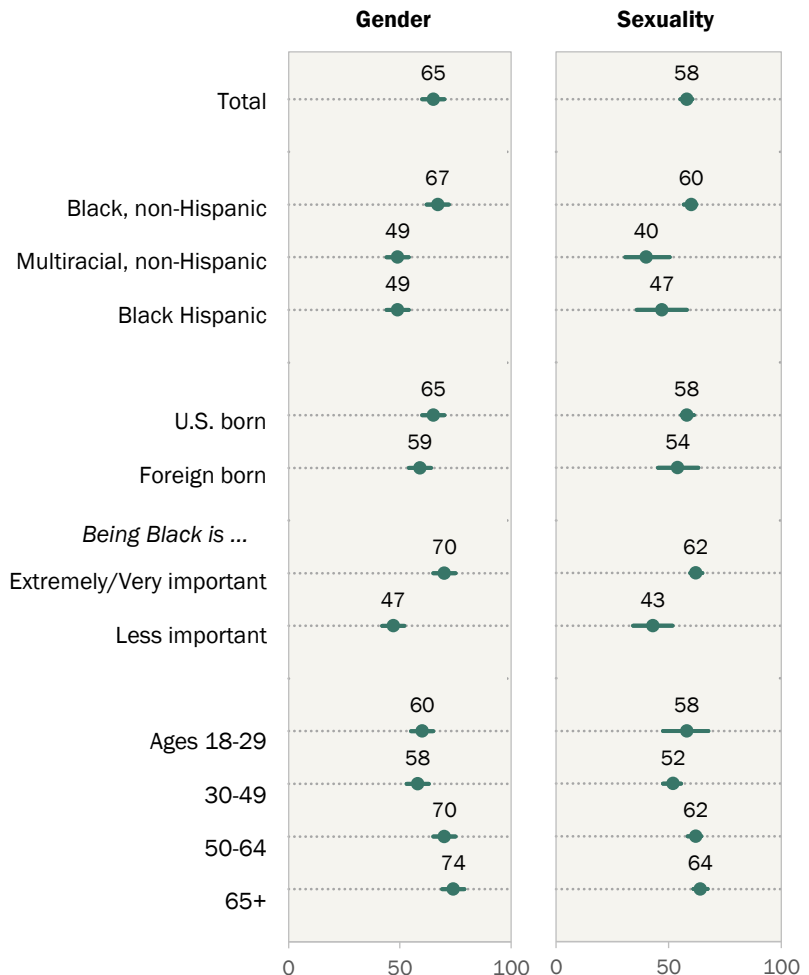
Nearly two-thirds (65%) of Black adults say their gender is a very or extremely important part of how they think of themselves. Black women (68%) are more likely than Black men (60%) to say this, though clear majorities of each do.

Older Black Americans are more likely than younger ones to hold this view as well. Black adults who are 65 and older (74%) are more likely than those under 30 (60%) to say that their gender is a very or extremely important part of their identity.

Although there are no significant differences in the share who say this among U.S.-born (65%) or immigrant (59%) Black adults, there are differences by race and ethnicity. Non-Hispanic Black adults (67%) are more likely

Majorities of Black adults say their gender and sexuality are very important to them

% of Black adults who say their ___ is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, "being Black is less important" indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

than multiracial Black adults (49%) or Black Hispanic adults (49%) to say their gender plays a significant role in how they think about themselves.

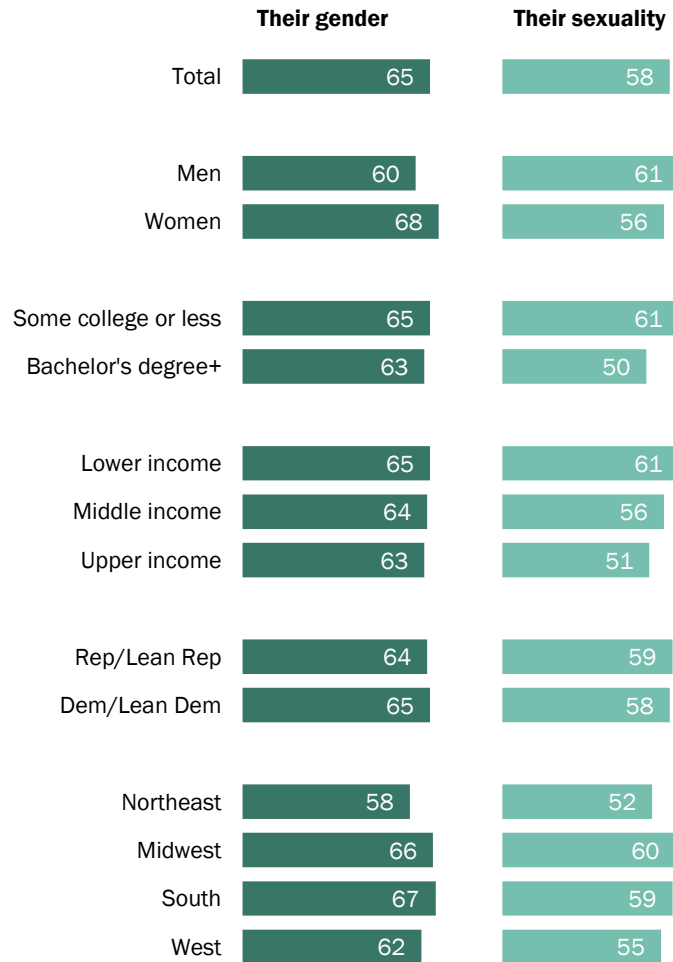
Black adults who say that being Black is a very or extremely important part of how they think about themselves (70%) are much more likely than those for whom being Black is less important (47%) to say their gender is an important part of their personal identity.

Relatedly, nearly six-in-ten Black Americans (58%) say their sexuality is very or extremely important to them. The majority of Black men (61%) and Black women (56%) share this view. Meanwhile, Black adults 65 and older (64%) and 50 to 64 (62%) are more likely than those 30 to 49 (51%) to say their sexuality is a very or extremely important part of how they think of themselves.

Six-in-ten non-Hispanic Black adults say their sexuality is a very or extremely important part of how they think about themselves, while 40% of multiracial Black adults and 47% of Black Hispanic adults to say this. Much like their views on gender, Black adults who say that being Black is very or extremely

Black women are more likely than Black men to say their gender is very important to them

% of Black adults who say ___ is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

important to them (62%) are more likely than those for whom being Black is less important (43%) to say their sexuality is a significant part of their personal identity.

Black Americans who have at least a bachelor's degree (50%) are less likely than those without one (61%) to say their sexuality is a very or extremely important part of how they think of themselves. And Black Americans with low incomes (61%) are more likely than those with higher incomes (51%) to hold this view.

Black Americans and connectedness to other Black people

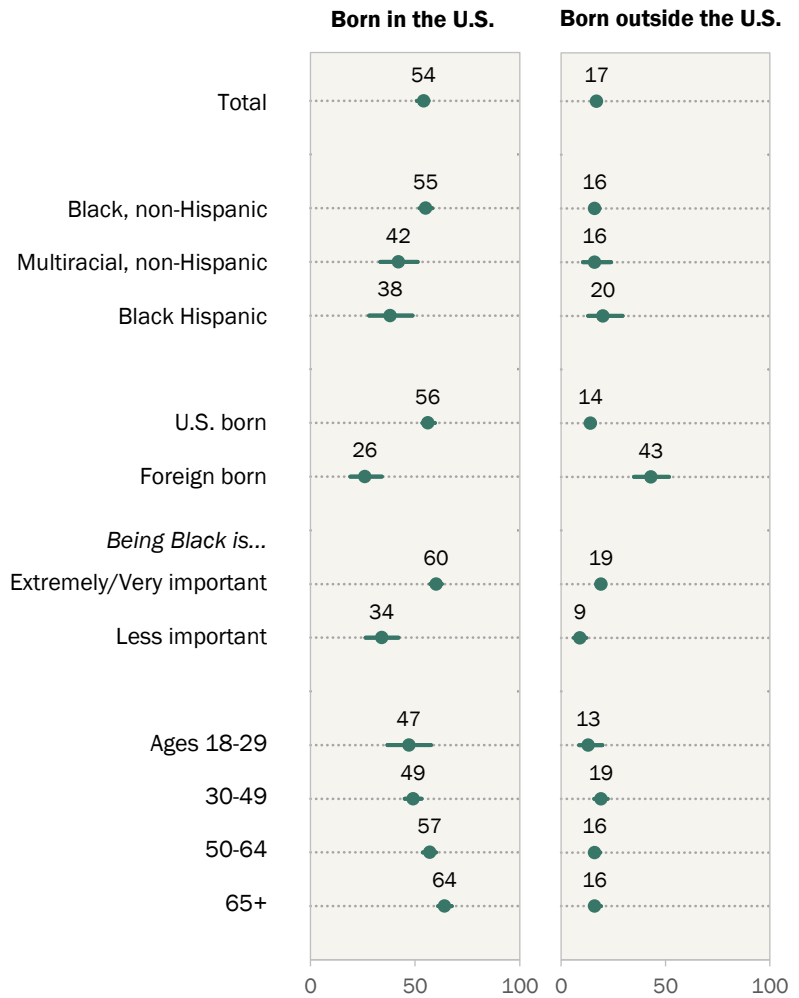
Aside from questions about personal identity, Black Americans were asked about how much they have in common with different groups of Black people. They were also asked about how much what happens to other Black people in their local communities, in the United States and around the world affects what happens in their own lives.

Commonality with U.S.-born Black people

The majority of Black adults say they have everything or most things in common with Black people born in the United States (54%). U.S.-born Black adults are more likely than immigrant Black adults to say they have everything or most things in common with Black people born in the U.S.³ Over half (56%) of U.S.-born Black adults say they have everything or most things in common with other Black

The importance of being Black affects how much Black adults say they have in common with Black immigrants

% of Black adults who say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, “being Black is less important” indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

“Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

³ Most Black adults are U.S. born. Some 91% in the survey say they were born in the United States while 8% were born in another country.

people born in the U.S, with about a quarter (23%) saying they have *everything* in common.

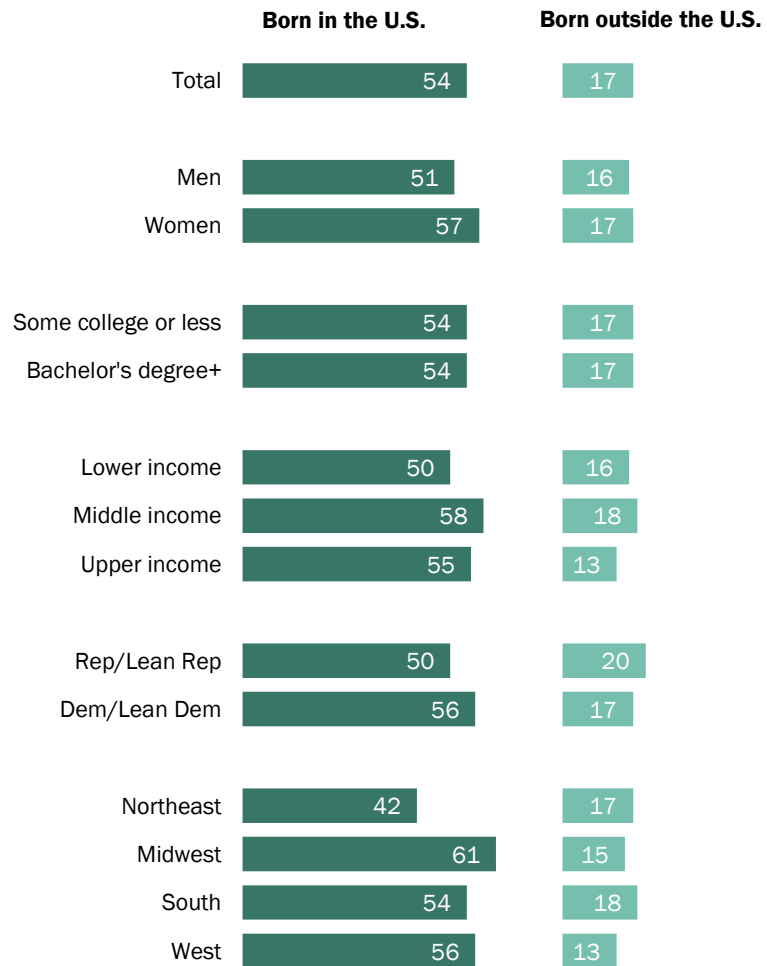
Conversely, only about a quarter (26%) of Black adults who were born outside the U.S. say they have everything or most things in common with Black people born in the U.S.; 43% say they only have some things in common and 31% say they have few things or nothing in common in Black people born in the U.S.

More than half of non-Hispanic Black adults (55%) say they have all or most things in common with U.S.-born Black people, including 23% who say they have everything in common. A smaller share of multiracial Black adults (42%) say they have everything or most things in common with U.S.-born Black people.

Black adults who say being Black is very or extremely important to them (60%) are more likely than those for whom being Black is less important (34%) to say they have everything or most things in common with Black people born in the United States.

Few differences by education, income or party in how much Black adults say they have in common with foreign-born Black people

% of Black adults who say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Commonality with Black immigrants

Black Americans also shared how much they felt they had in common with Black people who were born outside of the United States, [a group that makes up 12% of all Black Americans](#) and is growing. The nation's Black immigrant population is diverse, [with just under half tracing their roots to the Caribbean and just under half to Africa](#).

Overall, just 17% of all Black adults say they have everything or most things in common with Black immigrants. Instead, a greater share said that they have some things in common with them (39%), rather than everything (5%) or most things (11%). In fact, about a quarter (24%) of all Black Americans say they have few things in common and 19% say they have nothing in common with Black immigrants.

Black immigrants (43%) are more likely than U.S.-born Black adults (14%) to say they have everything or most things in common with other Black immigrants. Meanwhile, 39% of U.S.-born Black adults say they have some things in common with Black immigrants, and nearly half (46%) say they have few things or nothing in common.

Black Americans also differ on this question along identity and ethnic lines. Black adults for whom being Black is a significant part of their identity (19%) are more likely than those for whom being Black is less important (9%) to say they have everything or most things in common with Black immigrants. Meanwhile, nearly half of Black Hispanic adults (47%) say they have some things in common with Black immigrants. This is more than the shares of non-Hispanic (39%) or multiracial (32%) Black adults saying the same. In fact, non-Hispanic (43%) and multiracial (47%) Black Americans are most likely to say that they have few things or nothing in common with Black immigrants. According to the survey, Black Hispanic adults (29%) are significantly more likely than non-Hispanic (7%) and multiracial (5%) Black adults to be immigrants themselves.

Black Americans' sense of commonality with Black immigrants differs somewhat based on region, education and income. Though there are no significant differences in the shares who say they have everything or most things in common with Black immigrants, Black adults from the Midwest (50%) are more likely than those from the Northeast (38%) or South (42%) to say they have few things or nothing in common with Black immigrants.

When it comes to education and income, nearly half of Black adults with a bachelor's degree (46%) say they have some things in common with Black immigrants, compared with 36% of Black adults

with lower levels of education. Meanwhile, the share of Black adults in the upper-income tier (50%) who hold this view is higher than those in the middle- (40%) and lower-income tiers (36%).

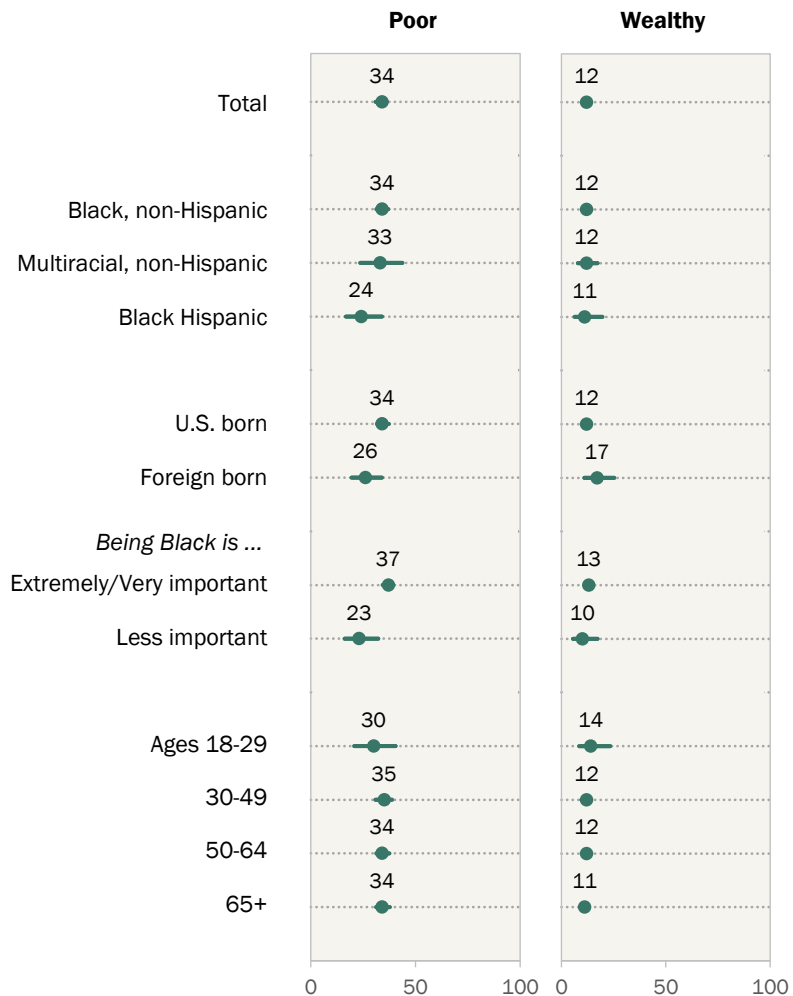
Commonality across social classes

About one-in-three Black Americans say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are poor (34%). Another 43% of Black Americans say they have some things in common with Black people who are poor, while 22% say they have few things or nothing in common.

Nearly four-in-ten Black adults with lower incomes (39%) say that they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are poor, more than the share of middle (30%) or upper (22%) earners who say the same. However, about half of middle- (46%) and upper-income earners (51%) say they have at least some things in

About one-in-three Black adults say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are poor

% of Black adults who say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, "being Black is less important" indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

common with Black people who are poor.

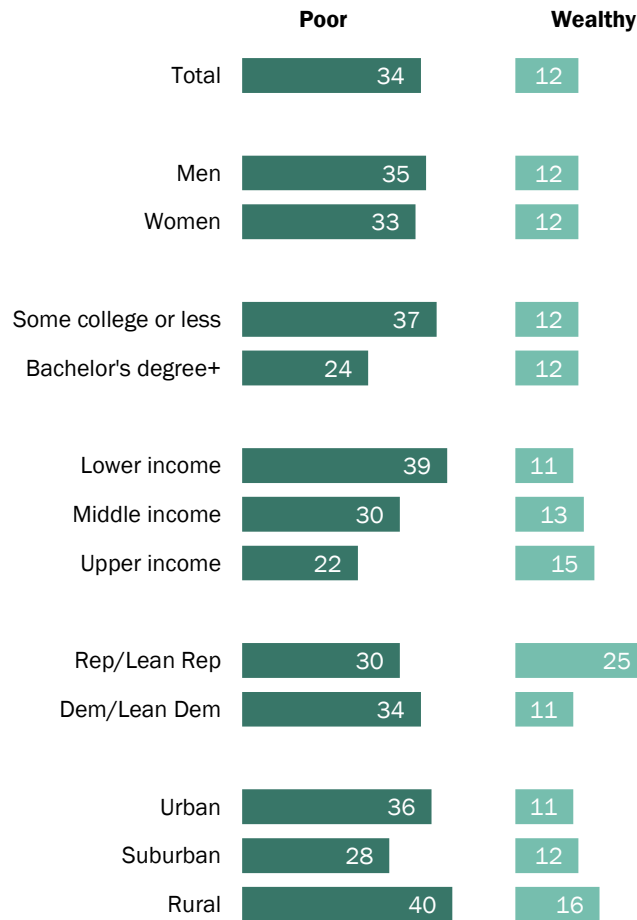
Likewise, Black adults who earned a bachelor's degree (24%) are less likely than those with lower levels of education (37%) to say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are poor. But half of Black college graduates (51%) say they have some things in common.

Black Americans who live in rural (40%) and urban (36%) areas are more likely than those who live in the suburbs (28%) to say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are poor. However, like the patterns above, about half of suburban Black people (47%) say they have some things in common.

When asked how much they have in common with Black people who are wealthy, few Black Americans say they have everything or most things in common (12%) with the group. Many more say they have some things in common (36%). However, half of Black Americans (50%) say they have few things or nothing in common with Black people who are wealthy.

Black adults with lower incomes more likely than those with higher incomes to say they have much in common with Black people who are poor

% of Black adults who say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

The shares of Black adults who say that they have few things or nothing in common with wealthy Black people vary based on education, income and community type. Only 12% of Black adults with or without a college degree say that they have much in common with Black people who are wealthy. Far more said the opposite. Black adults without a bachelor's degree (53%) are more likely to say they have few things or nothing in common with Black people who are wealthy than Black adults with at least a bachelor's degree (42%).

Few Black Americans with lower (11%), middle (13%) or even upper (15%) incomes indicate they have everything or most things in common with Black people who are wealthy. Conversely, about six-in-ten Black lower-income earners (59%) say they have few things or nothing in common with Black people who are wealthy. This makes them more likely than Black middle- (46%) and upper-income earners (32%) to say the same. Finally, Black adults who live in urban areas (54%) are more likely than those living in rural (46%) or suburban (48%) areas to say that they have few things or nothing in common with Black people who are wealthy.

Commonality with LGBTQ Black Americans

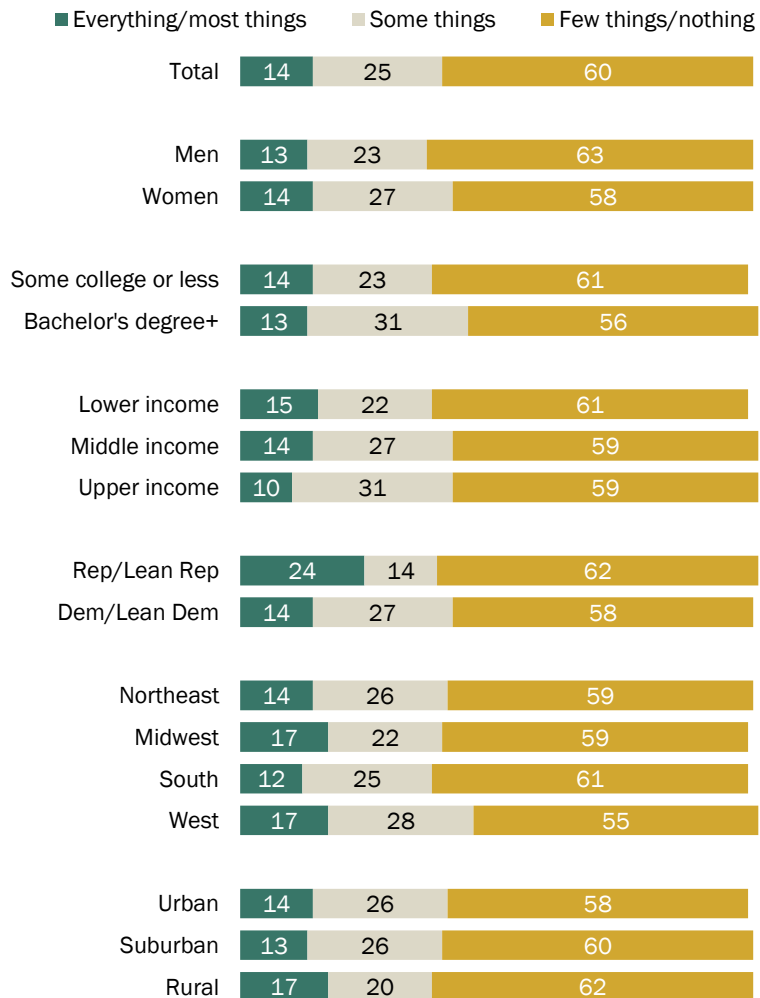
A small share (14%) of Black Americans say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ). The majority of Black Americans say they have few things or nothing in common (60%) with LGBTQ Black people.

Black Americans' sense of commonality with Black people who have LGBTQ identities vary by age, gender, ethnicity, education, income and party. Black adults who are under 30 (21%) and those ages 30 to 49 (14%) are more likely than those 65 and older (10%) to say they have everything or most things in common with Black people who have LGBTQ identities.

Conversely, Black adults who are 50 to 64 (63%) and 65 and older (65%) are more likely than those who are 30 to 49 (58%) to say that they have few things or nothing in common with Black people who identify as LGBTQ.

Few differences among Black adults about commonality with Black people who identify as LGBTQ

% of Black adults who say they have ___ in common with Black people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ)



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. No answer responses not shown. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings.

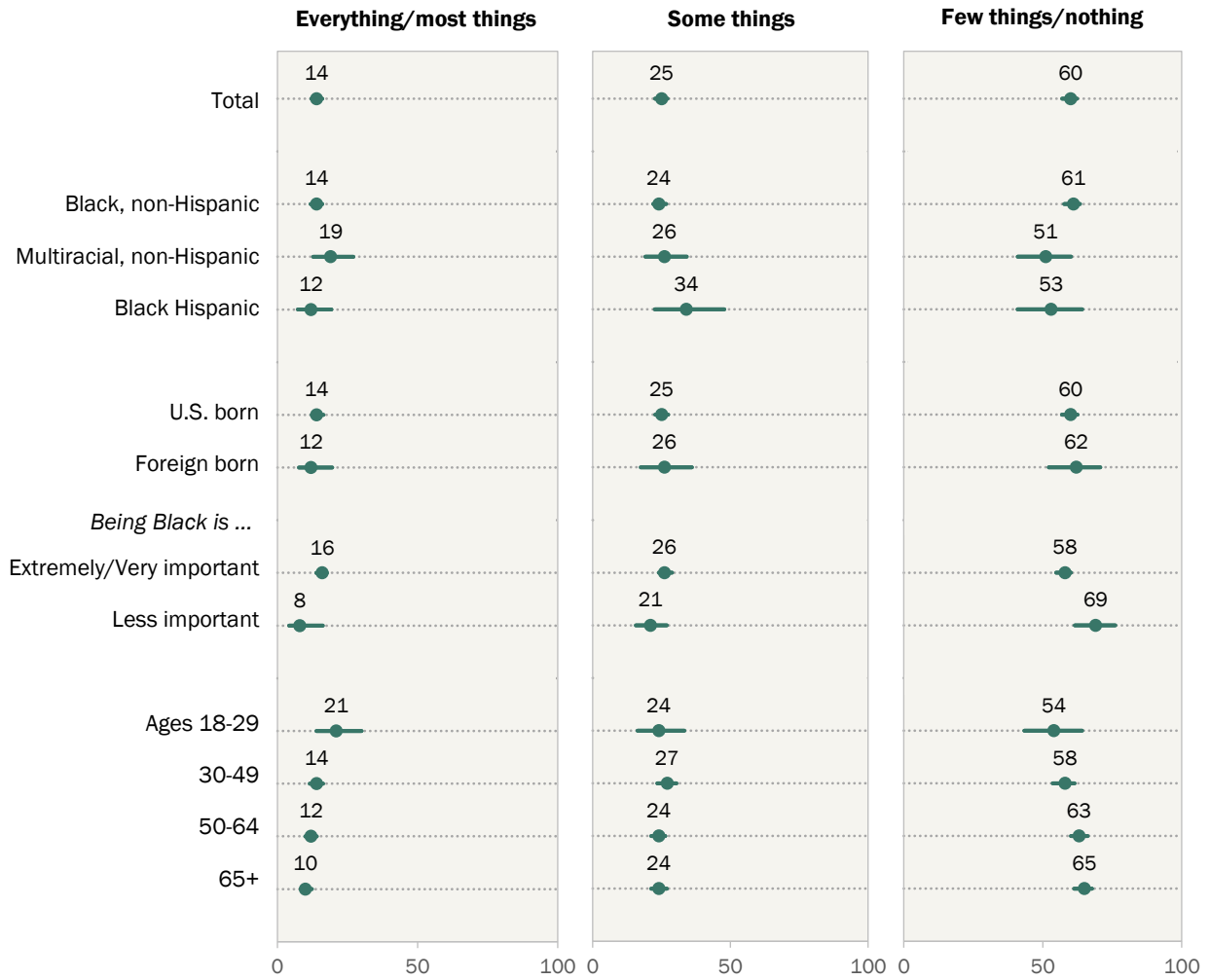
Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Black Americans who say being Black is important to them are more likely to feel commonality with Black people who are LGBTQ

% of Black adults who say they have ___ in common with Black people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ)



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, "being Black is less important" indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Equal shares of Black men (13%) and women (14%) say they have all or most things in common with Black people who identify as LGBTQ. However, Black men (42%) are more likely than Black women (34%) to say they have nothing in common. Small shares of non-Hispanic Black adults (14%), multiracial Black adults (19%), and Black Hispanic adults (12%) say they have all or most things in common with Black people who are LGBTQ. However, non-Hispanic Black adults (38%) are more likely than Black Hispanic adults (26%) to say that they have nothing in common.

Four-in-ten Black adults who have not attained a bachelor's degree (40%) say that they have nothing in common with Black people who are LGBTQ, compared with 28% of Black college graduates. Similarly, Black adults in the lower-income tier (40%) are more likely than those in the upper-income tier (31%) to hold this view. Among Black Republicans and those who lean toward the Republican Party, 44% say they have nothing in common with Black people who have LGBTQ identities – higher than the share of Black Democrats and leaners (35%) who say the same.

Intra-racial connections locally, nationally and globally

While many Black adults feel a sense of connection and common fate with other Black people, nearly as many do not. Overall, they were most likely to say that everything or most things that happen to Black people in the United States (52%), rather than those in their local communities (43%) or around the world (41%), affect what happens in their own lives.

Local intra-racial connections

Similar patterns hold when Black Americans were asked about how connected they felt to Black people in their local communities. Non-Hispanic Black adults (44%) are more likely than multiracial Black adults (29%) to say that what happens to Black people in their local communities affects what happens in their own lives. And Black adults who say that being Black is a very or extremely important part of their identity (50%) are far more likely than those for whom being Black is less important (17%) to hold this view.

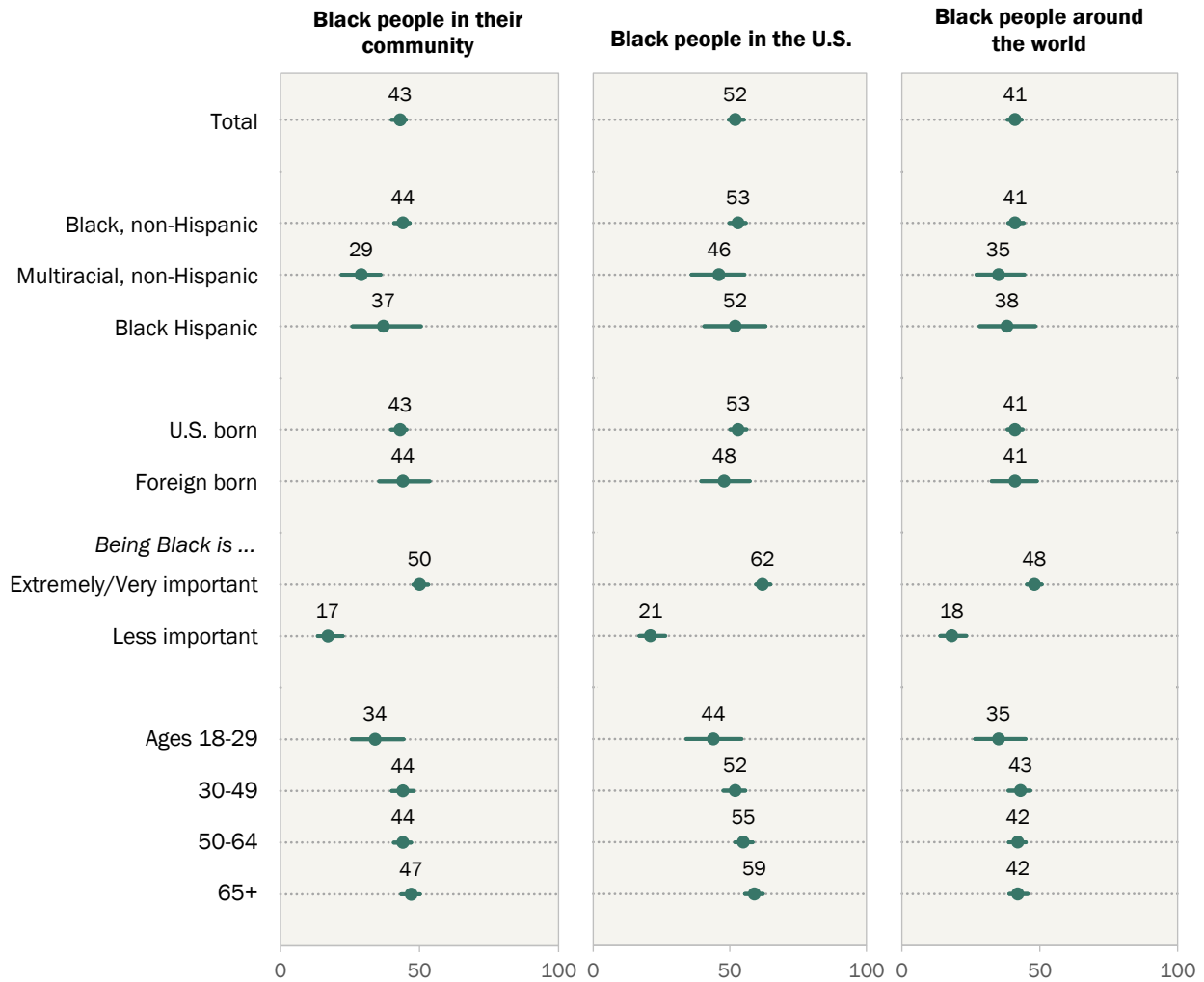
U.S.-born (43%) and immigrant (44%) Black adults are about as likely to say everything or most things that happen to Black people in their local areas impact their own lives. Black adults also do not differ by community type on this question. Those who live in urban (42%), suburban (41%) or rural (47%) areas are equally likely to say everything or most things that happen to Black people in their local communities affect their lives.

While nearly half of Black Americans ages 30 to 49 (44%), 50 to 64 (44%) and 65 and older (47%) say that everything or most things that happen to Black people in their communities impact them, Black young adults (34%) stand apart as being less likely than those 65 and older to say this. In fact, Black adults under 30 are more likely than all other age groups to say few things or nothing that happens to Black people in their local communities impacts their own lives. When it comes to education and income, Black Americans' views on this question are mixed. While 44% of Black college graduates say everything or most things that happen to Black people in their local communities impact their own lives, a similar share (42%) say that only some things affect them. Among Black adults without a college degree, 42% say everything or most things that happen to Black people in their communities affect them, and 32% say only some things would affect them.

About four-in-ten Black Americans across income groups say that everything or most things that happen to Black people in their local communities affect them. However, Black people in the middle- and upper-income tiers also say that some things affect them (37% and 41%, respectively), while 31% of those with lower incomes say this.

About half of Black adults say that most things that happen to Black people in the U.S. affect their own lives

% of Black adults who think everything or most things that happen to the following groups affect what happens in their own life



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, "being Black is less important" indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

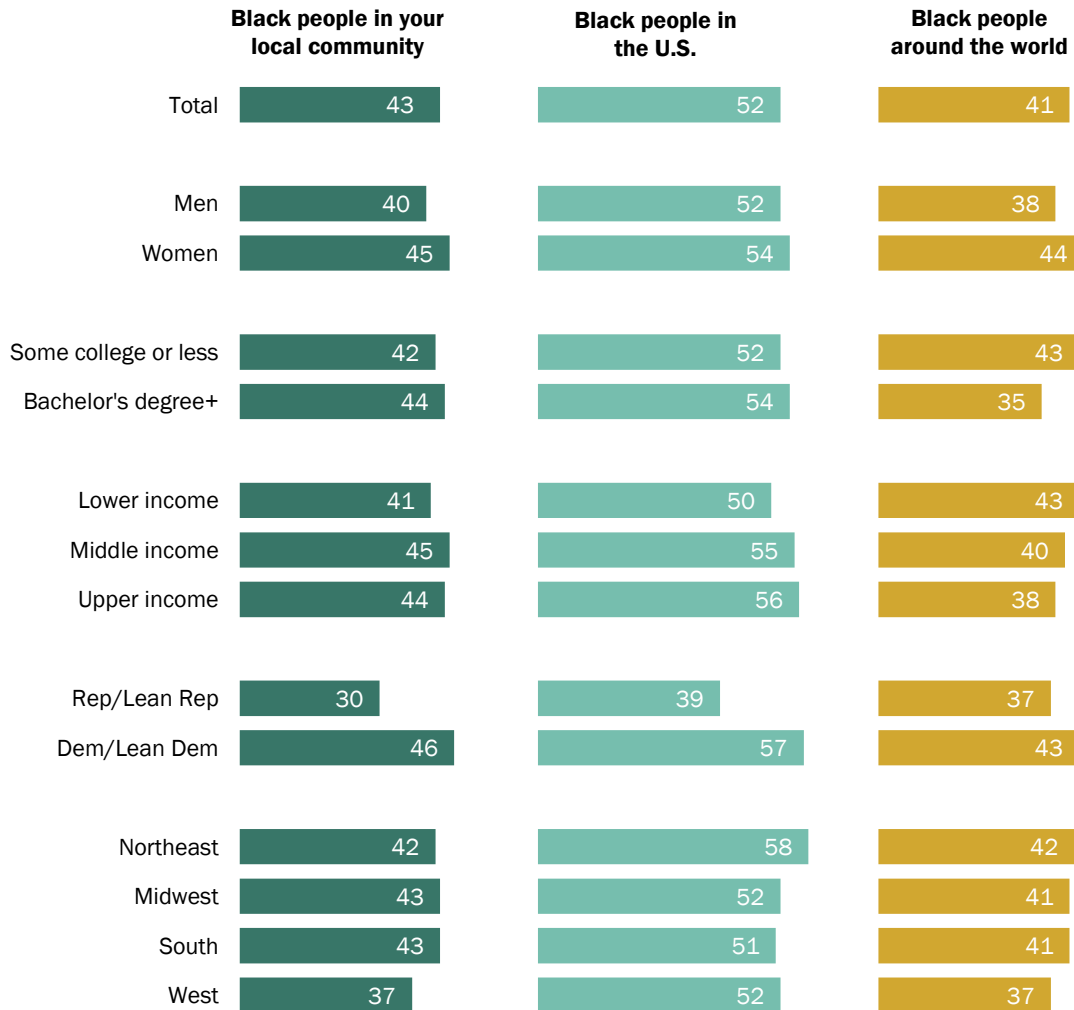
Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Black Democrats are more likely than Black Republicans to express linked fate with Black people in the U.S.

% of Black adults who say everything or most things that happen to the following groups affect what happens in their own life



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Black Americans differ by party on this question, with Black Democrats and Democratic leaners (46%) being more likely than Black Republicans and Republican leaners (30%) to say that everything or most things that happen to Black people in their local communities affect them.

National intra-racial connections

U.S.-born Black adults (53%) are no more likely than Black immigrants (48%) to say that everything or most things that happen to Black people in the United States affect what happens in their own lives. When it comes to ethnicity, non-Hispanic Black adults (53%), Black Hispanic adults (52%) and multiracial Black adults (46%) are all about as likely to say that everything or most things that happen to Black people in the U.S. affect them. However, Black Americans who say being Black is a very or extremely important part of their personal identity (62%) are far more likely than those for whom being Black is less important (21%) to say that what happens to other Black people in the U.S. affects them. Black adults who are 50 to 64 (55%) or 65 and older (59%) are more likely to hold this view than those under 30 (44%). Black adults under 30 are also more likely than any other age group to say that a few things or nothing that happens to Black people in the U.S. affects what happens in their own lives.

Black Americans also differ on this question by party. Black Democrats (59%) are more likely than Black Republicans (39%) to say everything or most things that happen to Black people in the United States would impact their own lives.

There are few differences among Black Americans on this question by gender and education. About half of Black men (52%), Black women (54%), Black college graduates (54%) and those with lower levels of education (52%) say everything or most things that happen to Black people in the U.S. affect them personally. Likewise, there are few differences by income, with around half of Black adults who are in the low- (50%), middle- (55%) and upper-income tiers (56%) sharing this view.

Global intra-racial connections

Finally, Black Americans were asked about how connected they felt to Black people around the world. About four-in-ten (41%) say everything or most things that happen to these Black people impact their own lives. Immigrant (41%) and U.S.-born (41%) Black adults are about as likely to hold this view. So are non-Hispanic (41%), multiracial (35%) and Hispanic (38%) Black adults. However, Black adults who say that being Black is very or extremely important to them (48%) are more than twice as likely as those for whom being Black is less important (18%) to say what happens to Black people around the world affects what happens in their own lives.

Black women (44%) are slightly more likely than Black men (38%) to say what happens to Black people around the world affects their own lives. There are few significant age differences, with nearly 40% of all age groups sharing this view. However, much like their views on Black people in the U.S. and in their local communities, Black adults under 30 are more likely than older age groups to say that few things or nothing that happens to Black people around the world impacts them.

Black adults differ by education and income on this question. Those with less than a bachelor's degree were more likely than those with a bachelor's degree or higher level of education to say that everything or most things that happen to Black people around the world affects them (43% vs. 35%). Black adults across income tiers were about as likely to share this view, with about 40% of each group saying so. Black adults differ by party in the share who say that a few things or nothing that happens to Black people around the world affects what happens in their lives. Black Democrats and Democratic leaners (19%) were less likely to say this than Black Republicans and GOP leaners (39%).

2. Family history, slavery and knowledge of Black history

Learning about family history can be [a challenge for Black Americans](#). Because of slavery, it is often difficult for them to trace their ancestry prior to the 1870 census. Records of the enslaved are often handwritten, poorly maintained, or simply lost of over time. In light of this, the survey asked Black Americans to share what they know of their family and ancestral histories. It also asked Black Americans about the ways they learned about their family's stories and backgrounds.

How Black Americans learn about their family history

Black Americans were asked if they had done any of the following to learn about their family history: speaking to their relatives, conducting research online, or using a mail-in DNA service such as AncestryDNA or 23andMe. Overall, 43% of Black adults used at least one of these methods, 25% used two, 11% used all three and 22% did not use any.

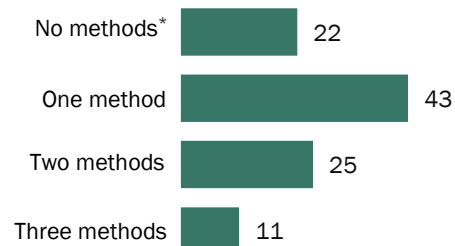
Black immigrants (31%) were about as likely as U.S.-born Black adults (36%) to have done two or more of these things to research their family history. Black adults for whom being Black is very or extremely important (37%) were also about as likely as those for whom Blackness is less important (31%) to have used two or more methods.

However, multiracial Black adults (51%) and Black Hispanic adults (47%) were more likely than non-Hispanic Black adults (34%) to say they had used two or more methods to research their family history. In fact, 44% of non-Hispanic Black adults only used one method.

Among non-Hispanic Black adults who only used one method, 96% spoke to relatives about their family's history. Of the three methods asked about, multiracial Black adults and Black Hispanic adults were also most likely to say they spoke to their families.

One-in-three Black adults have used multiple methods to research their family history

% of Black adults who used ____ in order to learn more about their family history



Two or more methods 36

*"Methods" refers to the following ways to learn about family history: talking to relatives, conducting research online or using a mail-in DNA service.

Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults. "Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

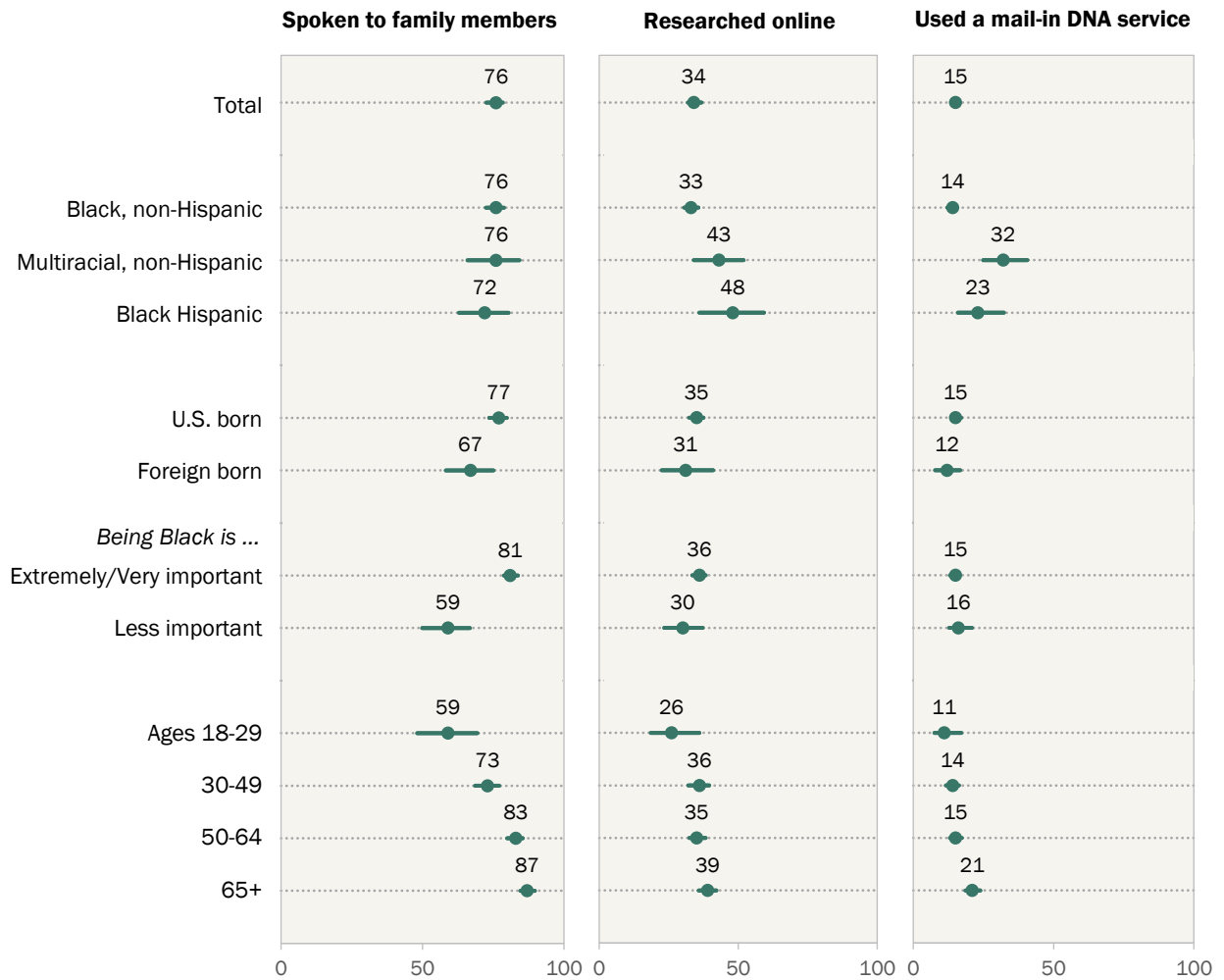
Speaking with relatives to learn about family history

Roughly three-quarters (76%) of Black Americans say they have spoken with their relatives to learn about their family history. Black adults who were born in the United States (77%) are more likely to say they have done this than those born outside the U.S. (67%). Meanwhile, Black adults who are non-Hispanic (76%), multiracial (76%) or Hispanic (72%) are all about as likely to speak to their families to learn about their family's history. Black adults for whom being Black is a significant part of their personal identity (81%) were more likely than those for whom being Black is less important (59%) to say they have spoken to their relatives about family history.

Black women (82%) were more likely than Black men (69%) to speak with their families about their ancestors. Black adults ages 65 and older (87%) were the most likely of the age groups studied to have discussed this history with their families, while those under 30 were least likely to have done this, though more than half have done so. Moreover, the share of college-educated Black adults (88%) who have spoken to their families about this is higher than the share of Black adults with lower levels of education (71%). Black adults with middle (83%) and upper incomes (89%) are more likely to have had these discussions than those with lower incomes (67%).

Black adults most likely to learn about their ancestors from speaking to family

% of Black adults who say they have ever done the following to learn more about their family history



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, “being Black is less important” indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important

to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

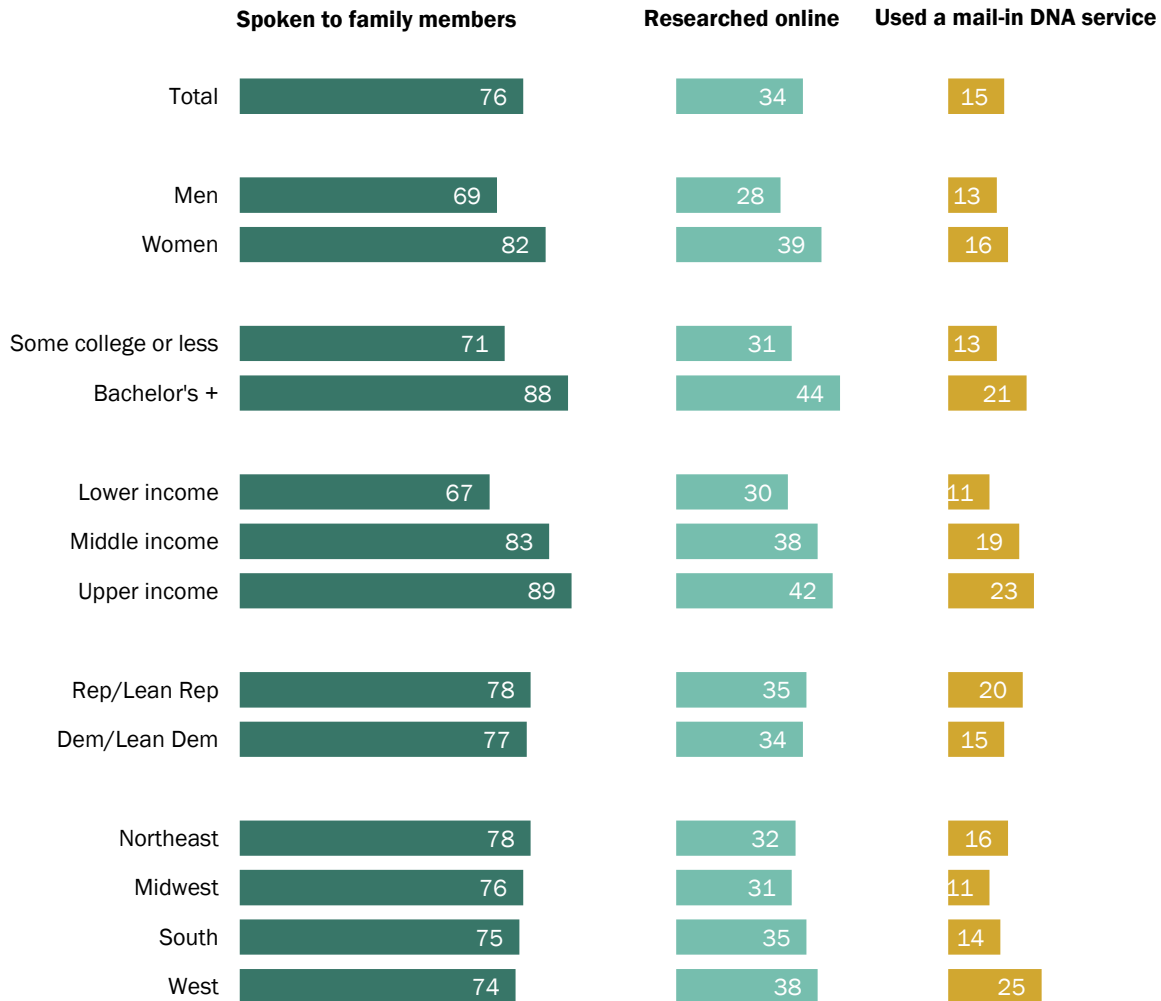
Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

“Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Black adults with bachelor's degrees more likely to seek information about their family history

% of Black adults who say they have ever done the following to learn more about their family history



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Going online or using a mail-in DNA service to learn about family history

Overall, Black adults are less likely to go online to research their family history or use a mail-in DNA service to learn about it than to talk with family. About a third of Black adults (34%) say they have gone online to conduct family history research, while just 15% say they have used a mail-in DNA service.

Many of the same groups that are more likely to talk with relatives about their family history are also more likely to have done online family history research or used a mail-in DNA service to learn about family history, but there are a few exceptions. U.S.-born (35%) and foreign-born Black adults (31%) are equally likely to have conducted family research online, a different pattern from that for speaking with family about family history.

In another departure, Black Hispanic adults (48%) are more likely than non-Hispanic Black adults (33%) to have gone online to do family history research. Meanwhile, Black adults who identify as multiracial (32%) are more likely than non-Hispanic Black adults (14%) to have used a mail-in DNA service to learn about their family's history. Black Hispanic adults were in between the two groups, with 23% reporting that they used a DNA service to explore family history.

Most Black adults say their ancestors were enslaved, but some are not sure

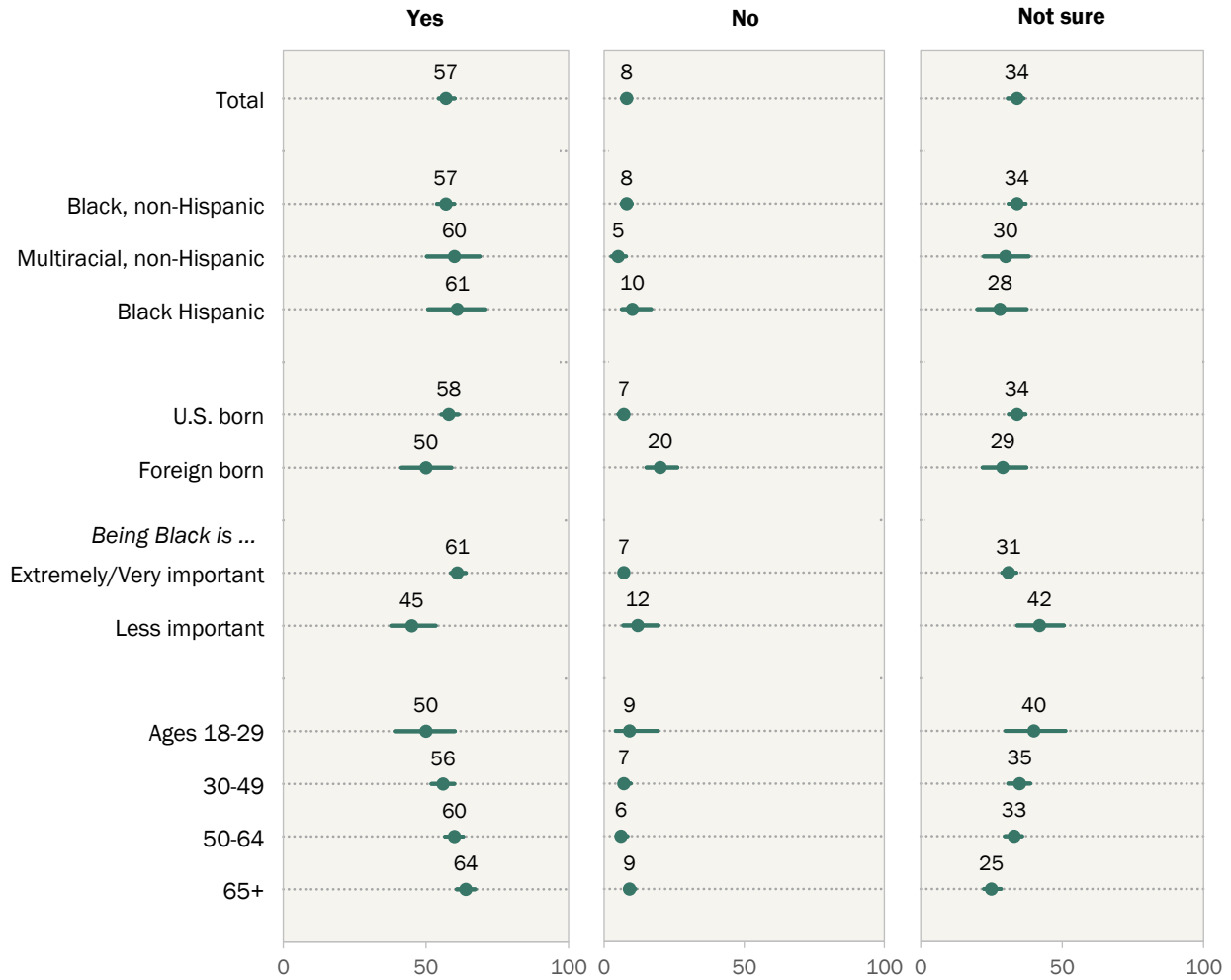
When it comes to knowledge of their family's history with slavery, nearly six-in-ten Black adults (57%) say their ancestors were enslaved. About four-in-ten (41%) report they were enslaved in the United States. Only 5% say their ancestors were solely enslaved outside the United States, while 11% say their ancestors were enslaved both in the U.S. and in another country.

However, not all Black Americans are sure whether their ancestors were enslaved, and some say their ancestors were not enslaved. About one-third (34%) say they are not sure if their ancestors were enslaved, while 8% say their ancestors were not enslaved. Black adults born in the United States (55%) are much more likely to say their ancestors were enslaved completely or partially in the U.S. than Black immigrants (21%).

Conversely, Black immigrants (29%) were much more likely than their U.S.-born counterparts (3%) to say their ancestors were only enslaved outside the U.S. About three-in-ten of both groups are unsure whether their ancestors were enslaved. And while just 7% of U.S.-born Black adults say their ancestors were not enslaved, 20% of immigrant Black adults say the same.

Majority of Black adults say their ancestors were enslaved, but one-third are unsure

When asked if any of their ancestors were enslaved in the U.S. or another country, % of Black adults who say ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, “being Black is less important” indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

“Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other”

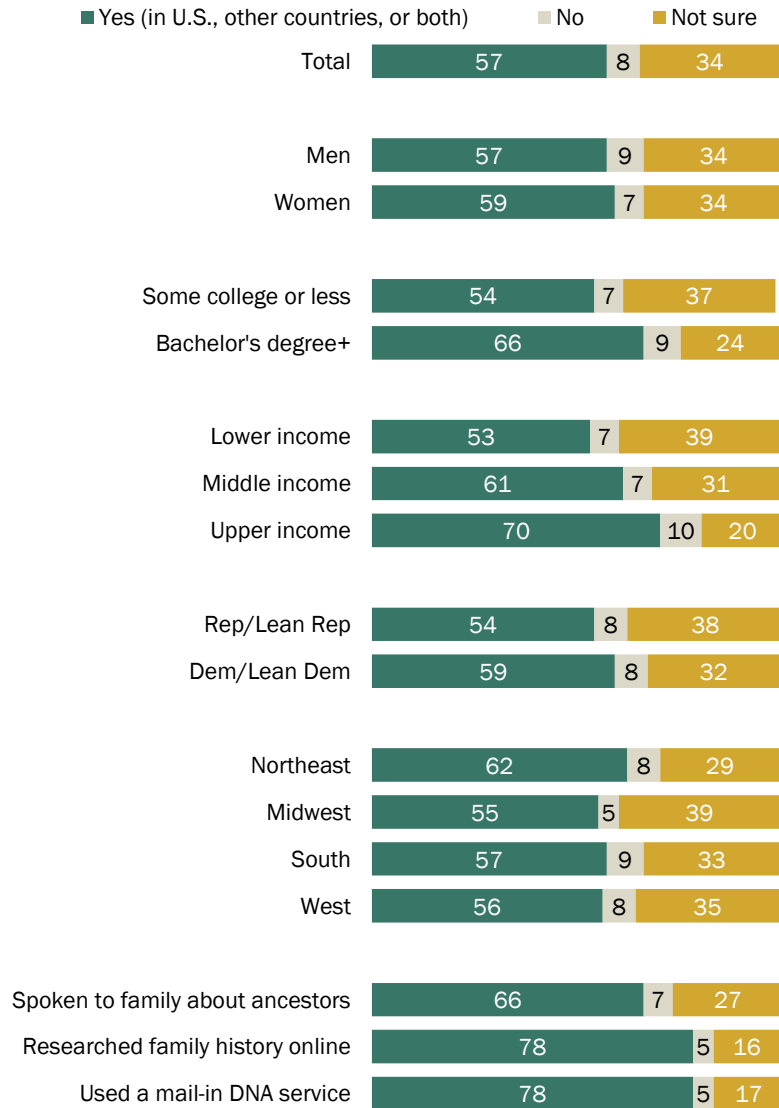
Black adults also differ on this question by ethnicity. Non-Hispanic (52%) and multiracial (57%) Black adults are more likely than Black Hispanic adults (36%) to say that their ancestors were enslaved in the United States, in whole or in part.

Meanwhile, Black Hispanic (25%) adults were more likely than non-Hispanic Black (4%) and multiracial (3%) Black adults to say their ancestors were enslaved in other countries. About 30% in each group report being unsure whether their ancestors were enslaved.

Black adults for whom being Black is a very or extremely important part of their personal identity (61%) are more likely than those for whom being Black is less important (46%) to say their ancestors were enslaved, regardless of geography. Those for whom being Black is very or extremely important are also less likely than their counterparts to report being unsure about this (31% vs. 42%).

Black adults differ by education and income in knowing if their ancestors were enslaved

% of Black adults who say their ancestors were enslaved in the U.S. or another country



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes those who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

As with many aspects of identity and connectedness, age is a key point of difference among Black Americans. Black adults ages 65 and older (64%) are more likely than those under 30 (50%) or those 30 to 49 (56%) to say their ancestors were enslaved (either in the U.S. or abroad). Those 65 and older are also less likely than every other age group to be unsure about their family's history with slavery.

Education and income also yield differences on this question. College-educated Black Americans (66%) are more likely than those with lower levels of education (54%) to report that their ancestors were enslaved. Among Black adults with less than a bachelor's degree, 37% say they are uncertain about whether their ancestors were enslaved. Black adults with upper incomes (70%) are more likely than those with middle (61%) and lower incomes (53%) to say their ancestors were enslaved. About four-in-ten Black adults with lower incomes (39%) report being unsure about this fact.

There are very few differences by region on this question. Black adults who live in the South (57%) are no more likely than those living in the Northeast (62%), Midwest (55%) or West (56%) to say their ancestors were enslaved. However, Black adults who live in the Northeast (13%) are more likely than those living in the South (4%), Midwest (3%) or West (5%) to say their ancestors had been enslaved outside of the United States. Black adults living in the Midwest (39%) are more likely than those living in the Northeast to say they are uncertain about whether their ancestors had been enslaved.

Black adults who had conducted online research (78%) or used a mail-in DNA service (78%) to learn about their family history were more likely than those who had spoken to their relatives for the same purpose (66%) to say their ancestors were enslaved. Among Black adults who had not used any of these methods to research their family history, only 26% say their ancestors were enslaved.

Most Black adults are at least somewhat informed about U.S. Black history

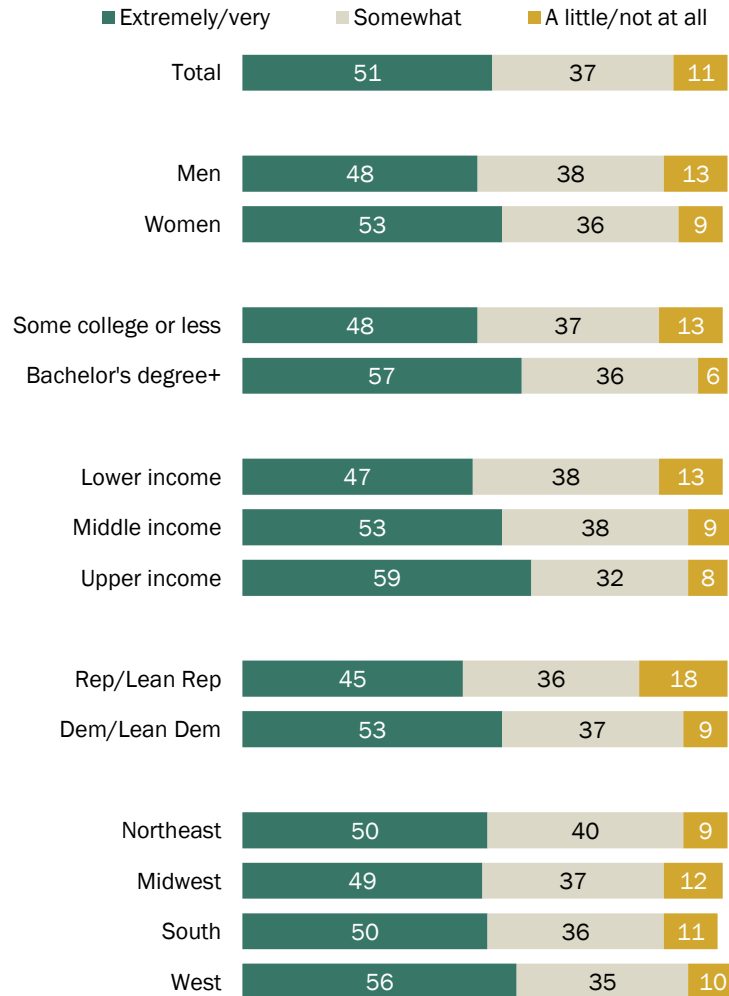
In addition to their family history, we asked Black Americans about their knowledge of racial history. Overall, about half (51%) of Black adults say they are very or extremely informed about the history of Black people in the United States, while 37% say they are somewhat informed. Only 11% say that they are a little informed or not informed at all.

Black adults who were born in the U.S. (51%) are no more likely than Black immigrants (50%) to say they are very or extremely informed. Similarly, Black adults no matter their ethnicity are just as likely to say they are very or extremely informed about Black history.

However, those who say being Black is a significant part of their personal identity (57%) are nearly twice as likely as those for whom being Black is less important (29%) to say they feel very or extremely informed about Black history.

Black adults with higher incomes or bachelor's degrees more likely to say they are informed about U.S. Black history

% of Black adults who say they are ___ informed about the history of Black people in the U.S.



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings. No answer responses not shown.

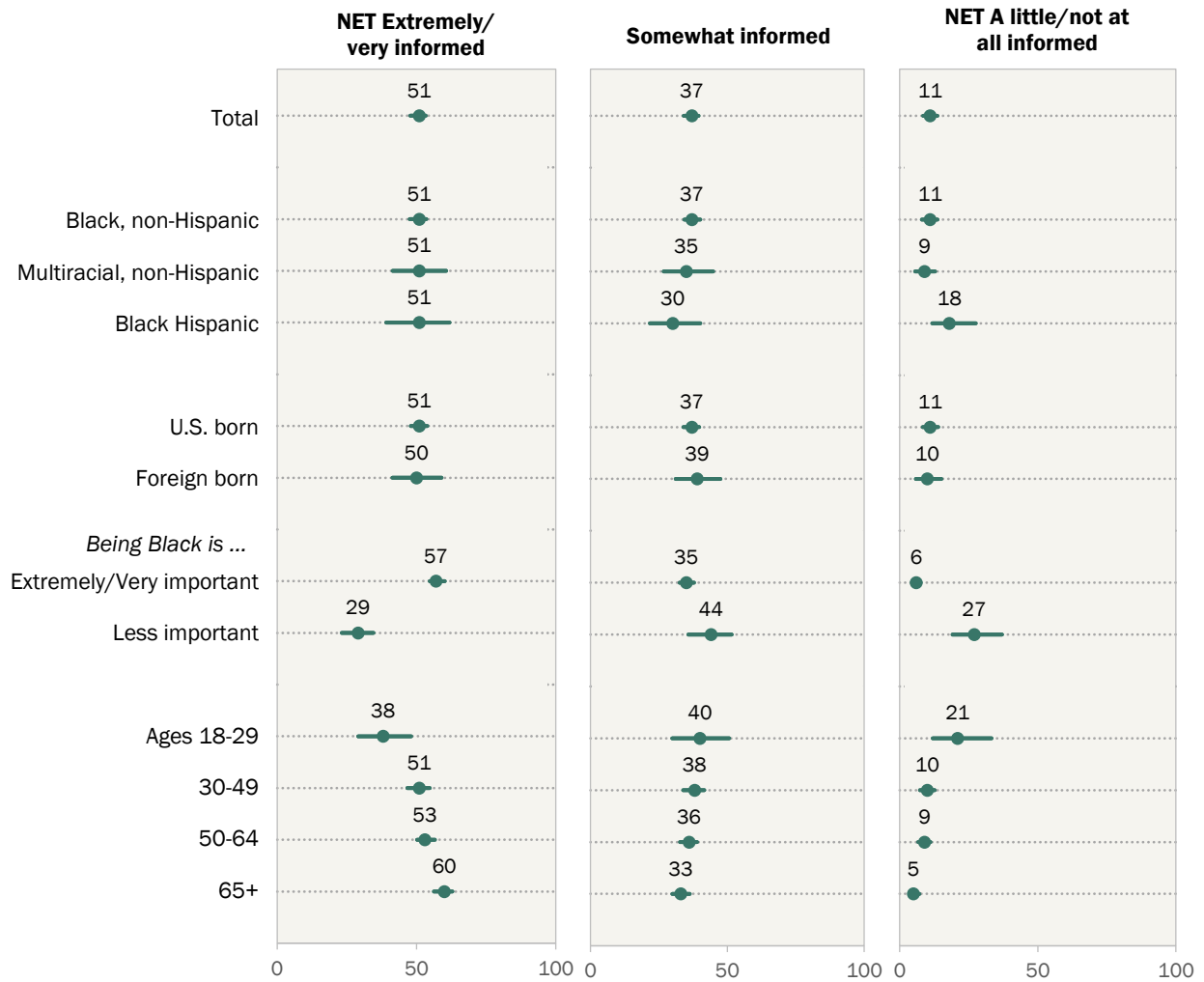
Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

About half of Black adults say they are extremely or very informed about Black history in the U.S.

% of Black adults who say they are ___ about the history of Black people in the U.S.



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, "being Black is less important" indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

And Black women (37%) are slightly more likely than Black men (30%) to say they are very informed.

Older Black adults are more informed than younger Black adults about Black History. Six-in-ten Black adults ages 65 and older say they are very or extremely informed about Black history, a share that falls to 53% among those ages 50 to 64 and 51% among those 30 to 49. Black adults under 30 (38%) are the least likely of the age groups to say they are very or extremely informed.

The share of Black college-educated adults who say they are very or extremely informed about Black history (57%) is larger than the share with lower levels of formal education (48%) who say this. Similarly, Black adults with middle (53%) and higher incomes (59%) are more likely to say they are very or extremely informed about Black history than those with lower incomes (47%). There are few differences among Black adults by party or region on this question.

Sources of information about Black history in the United States

A significant share of Black Americans feel very or extremely informed about U.S. Black history, and many turn to the people closest to them to learn about it. Those who feel at least a little informed about U.S. Black history are more likely to say they learned everything or most things they know about it from family and friends (43%) than from the media (30%), the internet (27%), K-12 schooling, (23%) or college, if they attended (24%). Overall, at least half of Black adults who say they are informed about U.S. Black history learned at least some of what they know about it from each of these sources.

Non-Hispanic Black adults (45%) are more likely than multiracial Black adults (32%) to say they learned everything or most things they know about Black history from friends and family. There are few differences between U.S.-born and foreign-born Black adults on this question, although about a quarter of those born outside the U.S. (27%) say they learned little or nothing of what they know about Black history from their families or friends.

Black adults without a college degree (45%) are more likely than those with a degree (38%) to have learned about Black history from family and friends. Relatedly, Black adults with middle incomes (44%) are more likely to have done this than those with upper incomes (37%).

Black adults without a college degree (32%) are also more likely than their degree-holding counterparts (26%) to say that they learned everything or most things they know about Black history from the media, and those with lower and middle incomes (both 31%) are more likely than those with higher incomes (23%) to say the same. More among Black immigrants (45%) than among U.S.-born Black adults (29%) learned everything or most things they know about Black history from the media. These patterns in education, income and nativity hold when it comes to the shares of Black adults who learned everything or most things they know about Black history from the internet.

Black adults under 30 (38%) are more likely than those ages 50 to 64 (22%) and 65 and older (14%) to have learned about Black history on the internet. These age patterns also apply when it comes to educational sources of information. Black adults under 30 (31%) and those 30 to 49 (25%) are both more likely than those ages 50 to 64 (20%) and 65 and older (17%) to say that they learned about Black history in K-12 school.

Much like the patterns above, the share of Black adults without a college degree (27%) who learned everything or most things they know about Black history in K-12 school is larger than the share of

Black adults most likely to learn about U.S. Black history from family and friends

% of Black adults who say they learned everything or most of what they know about the history of Black people in the U.S. from ...

	Family & friends	Media	Internet	College or university*	K-12 school
Total	43% (+/-2.8 pts)	30% (+/-2.4 pts)	27% (+/-2.5 pts)	24% (+/-2.2 pts)	23% (+/-2.4 pts)
Black non-Hispanic	45 (+/-3.0)	30 (+/-2.4)	27 (+/-2.6)	24 (+/-2.4)	23 (+/-2.6)
Multiracial, non-Hispanic	32 (+/-7.9)	34 (+/-10.4)	27 (+/-10.4)	24 (+/-7.3)	21 (+/-10.5)
Black Hispanic	35 (+/-10.3)	37 (+/-12.9)	36 (+/-12.9)	17 (+/-7.4)	33 (+/-10.6)
U.S. born	44 (+/-3.0)	29 (+/-2.4)	26 (+/-2.5)	24 (+/-2.3)	23 (+/-2.6)
Foreign born	36 (+/-8.4)	45 (+/-9.2)	40 (+/-9.5)	23 (+/-7.1)	25 (+/-8.2)
<i>Being Black is ...</i>					
Extremely/Very important	48 (+/-2.7)	33 (+/-2.5)	30 (+/-2.7)	26 (+/-2.6)	24 (+/-2.4)
Less important	30 (+/-8.4)	22 (+/-5.6)	18 (+/-5.3)	14 (+/-3.8)	21 (+/-7.4)
Men	39 (+/-5.4)	29 (+/-4.6)	29 (+/-5.0)	25 (+/-4.6)	24 (+/-4.9)
Women	47 (+/-2.8)	31 (+/-2.4)	26 (+/-2.3)	23 (+/-2.5)	23 (+/-2.4)
Ages 18-29	45 (+/-10.9)	27 (+/-8.2)	38 (+/-9.9)	26 (+/-10.3)	31 (+/-9.6)
30-49	40 (+/-3.9)	32 (+/-3.9)	31 (+/-3.8)	26 (+/-4.0)	25 (+/-3.6)
50-64	46 (+/-3.2)	30 (+/-2.9)	22 (+/-2.8)	21 (+/-3.2)	20 (+/-2.8)
65+	44 (+/-3.4)	31 (+/-3.2)	14 (+/-2.4)	21 (+/-3.4)	17 (+/-2.8)
Some college or less	45 (+/-3.7)	32 (+/-3.1)	29 (+/-3.3)	19 (+/-4.4)	27 (+/-3.2)
College graduate	38 (+/-2.8)	26 (+/-2.5)	22 (+/-2.4)	26 (+/-2.6)	15 (+/-2.4)

*Only respondents who have an associate degree or higher were asked if they learned about Black history at their college or university.

Note: Margin of error surrounding each estimate is shown in parentheses. Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, "being Black is less important" indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. This question was asked only of those who said they had at least "a little" knowledge of the history of Black people in the U.S. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

the college educated (15%). Likewise, Black adults with lower (28%) and middle incomes (19%) are more likely than those with upper incomes (14%) to point to their K-12 schooling as their source of their knowledge about U.S. Black history.

Among those who attended college, Black adults who completed a bachelor's degree (26%) are more likely than those who did not (19%) to say that this education taught them everything or most things they know about Black history.

3. Place and community

Black Americans live in different types of communities across the country. For about half of Black adults (52%), the location where they currently live is important to how they think about themselves. But overall, their ratings of the places where they live are mixed. Across communities, the same concerns are cited as the most important to address – violence or crime and economic issues such as poverty and homelessness. When asked who is responsible for addressing these issues, nearly half of Black adults (48%) say local leaders should address them.

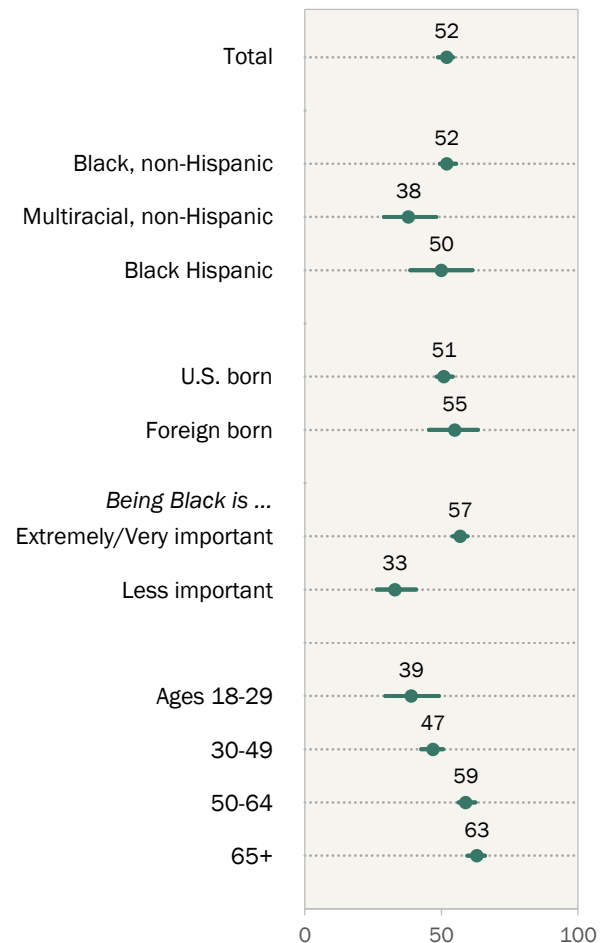
For many Black adults, where they live shapes how they think about themselves

About half (52%) of Black adults say the location where they currently live is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves. Roughly three-in-ten (29%) say where they currently live is somewhat important to their personal identity. And about one-in-five Black adults say where they live is a little or not at all important (19%) to how they think of themselves.

There are differences on this issue across some demographic subgroups. Roughly half of non-Hispanic Black adults (52%) say where they currently live is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves – making them more likely to say so than multiracial Black adults (38%). Black immigrants and U.S.-born Black adults are about equally likely to say the place where they currently live is extremely or very

Half of Black Americans say that where they live is important to their personal identity

% of Black adults who say where they currently live is extremely/very important to how they think about themselves



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, “being Black is less important” indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults. “Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

important to how they see their personal identity (55% and 51%, respectively).

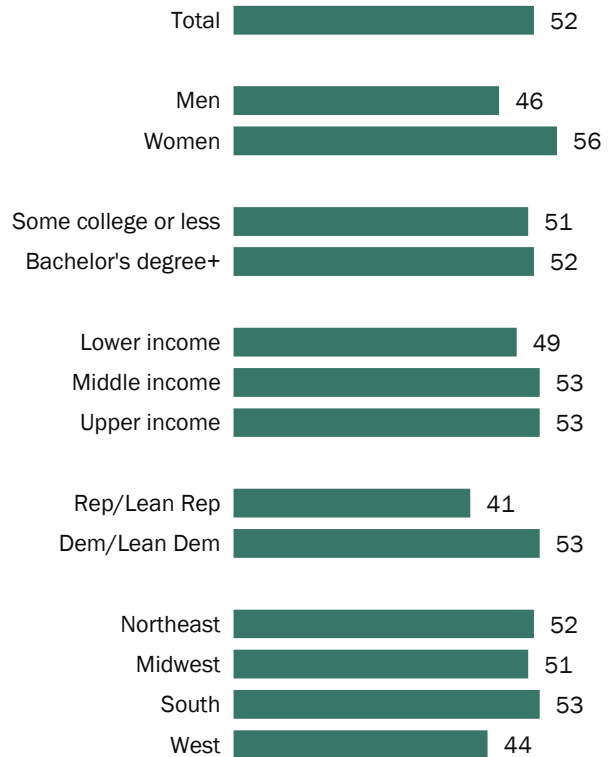
Among Black adults who say being Black is extremely or very important to their identity, 57% say the place where they live is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves. This is significantly higher than among those who say being Black is less important to them (33%).

There are other demographic differences, too. Black women are more likely than Black men to say where they currently live is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves (56% vs. 46%). When it comes to age, adults 50 and older are more likely than those under 50 to say that where they currently live is extremely or very important to their identity (61% vs. 44%). In addition, Black Democrats and Democratic leaners (53%) are more likely than Black Republicans and Republican leaners (41%) to say the place where they live is extremely or very important to their personal identity.

The general public's responses differ from the Black population on this measure. While about half (52%) of the Black adult population say that the location where they currently live is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves, 45% of all U.S. adults share the same view. And among the public overall, 31% say that where they currently live is somewhat important to how they think about themselves, while 23% say this is a little or not at all important.

Black women are more likely than Black men to say that where they live is important to their personal identity

% of Black adults who say where they currently live is extremely/very important to how they think about themselves



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults. "Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Black adults are more likely to live in urban and suburban areas

The U.S. Black population is dispersed across the country, though [over half lives in the nation's Southern region](#). And within each region of the United States, the Black population is spread across various types of communities.

Roughly equal shares of Black adults describe the community where they live as urban (41%) or suburban (40%), while almost two-in-ten (18%) describe their community as rural, according to the new Pew Research Center survey.

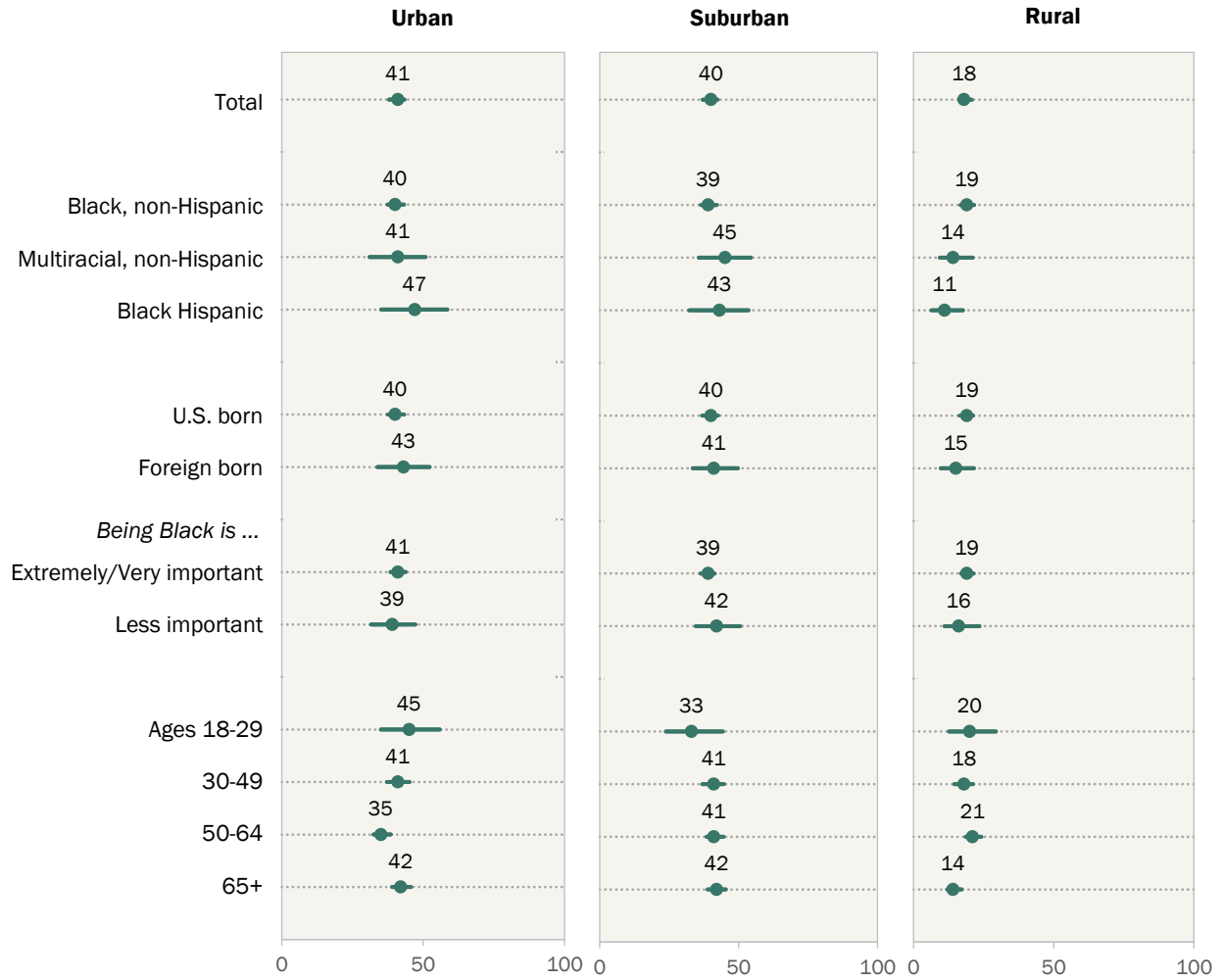
Though similar shares of the Black population say they live in suburban and urban areas, there are differences in community type among demographic groups. Non-Hispanic Black adults are similar in their distribution to the Black adult population overall: They are about as likely to say they live in suburban (39%) and urban areas (40%), while 19% say they live in rural areas.

But the distribution of community type is different for multiracial Black adults – 45% say they live in suburban communities, while 41% say they live in urban areas and 18% say they live in rural areas. And among Black Hispanics, 52% say they are in suburban places, 40% say they are in urban areas and 14% say they live in rural areas.

A slightly higher share of U.S.-born Black adults say they live in rural areas (19%) than the share of immigrant Black adults (15%) who say the same. Both groups are about as likely to be in urban and suburban areas.

About four-in-ten Black Americans say they live in urban or suburban areas

% of Black adults who describe their current community as ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, “being Black is less important” indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

“Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Among Black adults, men are more likely than women to describe the community they live in as urban (46% vs. 37%, respectively), while women (43%) are more likely than men (35%) to live in a suburban community.

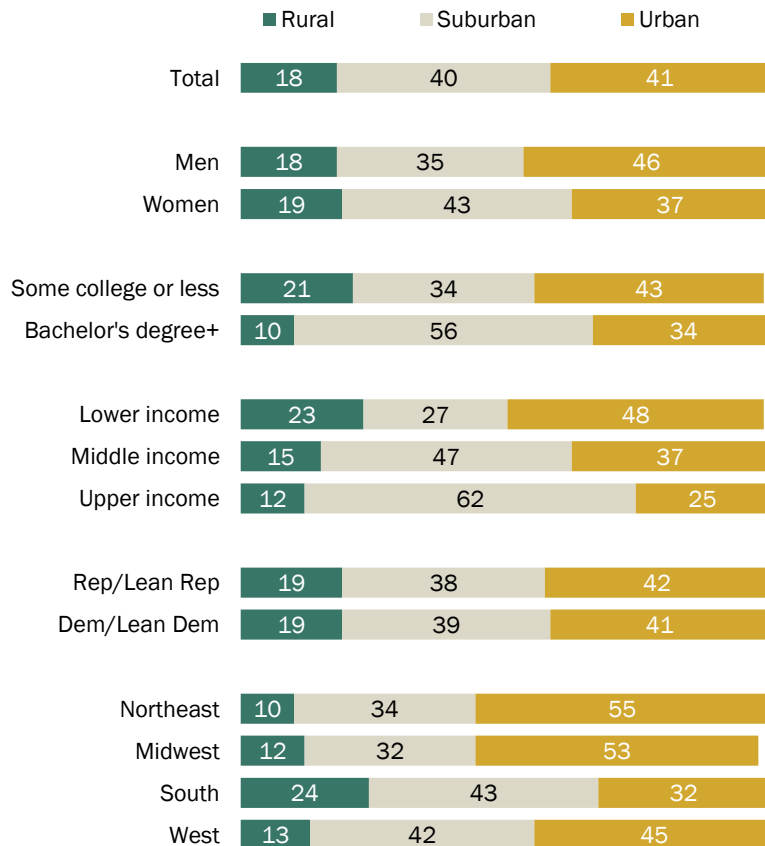
There are differences by region as well. Black adults in the South are more likely than those in the Northeast, Midwest and West to live in a community they describe as rural. Accordingly, Black people in the Northeast, Midwest and West are more likely than those in the South to live in communities they describe as urban.

Around four-in-ten Republican or Republican-leaning and Democratic or Democratic-leaning Black adults (38% and 39%, respectively) describe the community where they live as urban. A similar pattern emerges among Democrats (39%) and Republicans (38%) who describe their community as suburban. Equal shares of Black Democrats and Republicans describe their community as rural (19% each).

There are significant differences in self-described community type by education across the Black population. Adults with a college degree or higher are more likely to live in communities they

About one-in-five Black Americans say they live in a rural area

% of Black adults who describe their current community as ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

describe as suburban. Over half (56%) of Black adults with a college degree or higher say they live in a suburban community, while 34% of those who attended some college or less say the same.

There are similar differences by income level as well. Black adults with lower incomes are more likely to live in a self-described urban area than those in with upper incomes (48% vs. 25%). They are also more likely to live in rural communities than those with upper incomes (23% vs. 12%). Black adults with lower incomes are less likely than their those with upper incomes to describe their community as suburban (27% vs. 62%, respectively).

The Black population's self-described community type differs from that of the general public. Half of U.S. adults overall describe their current community as suburban, while roughly a quarter each of that population describe their current communities as urban (23%) or rural (27%).

Most Black adults rate the quality of their community as good or better

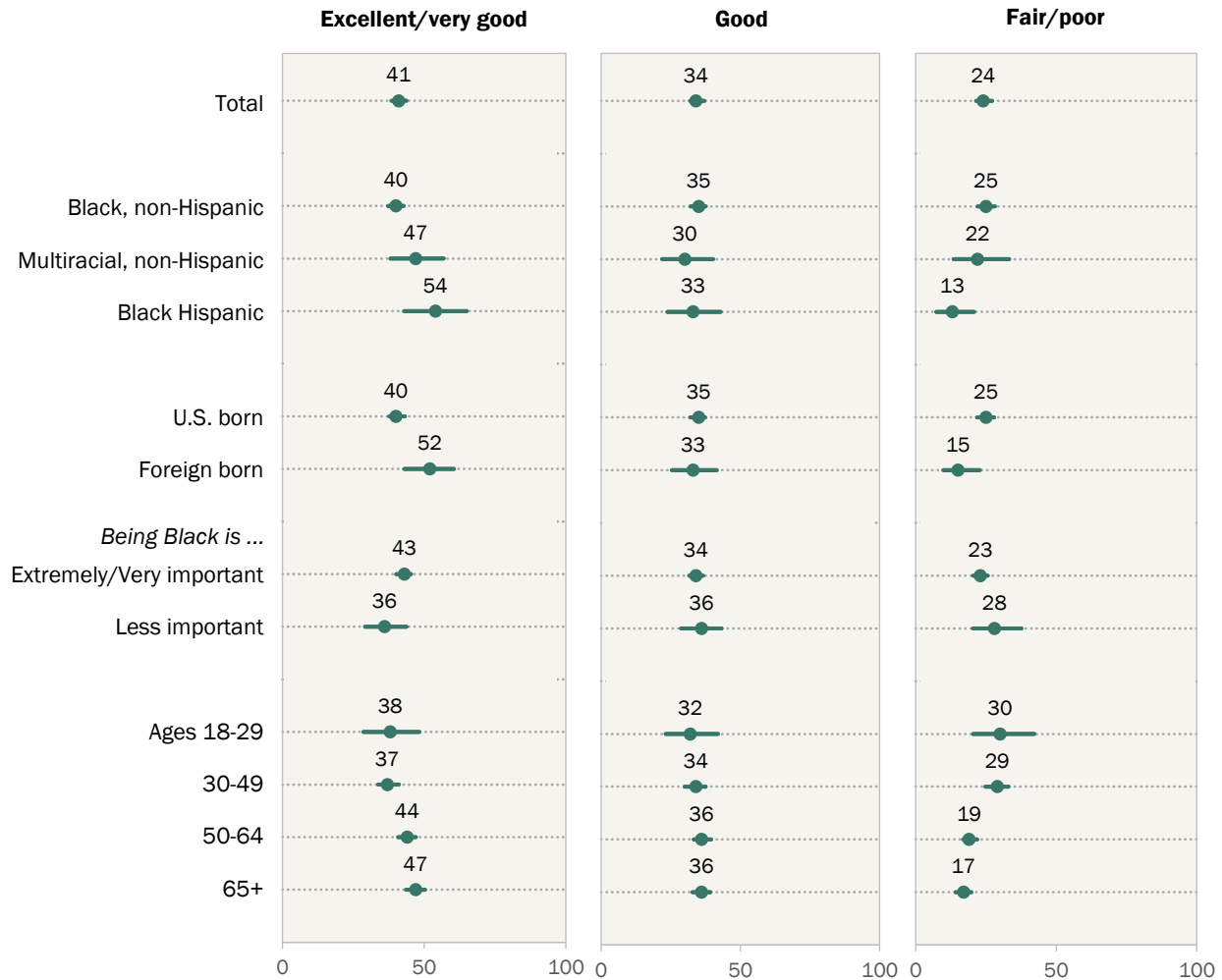
About four-in-ten Black Americans (41%) rate their community as an excellent or very good place to live, according to the new survey. About one-third (34%) rate their community as a good place to live, while about a quarter (24%) rate their community as fair or poor. Within the Black population, community ratings vary by demographic characteristics.

Black Hispanic adults (54%) are significantly more likely than non-Hispanic Black adults (40%) to rate their community as excellent or very good. Some 47% of multiracial Black adults say the same about their community. And while roughly half (52%) of immigrant Black adults say their community is an excellent or very good place to live, four-in-ten U.S.-born Black adults say the same.

Similar shares of Black women, Black men, Black Democrats and Black Republicans rate their communities positively – about four-in-ten for each group rate the communities where they live as excellent or very good.

About four-in-ten Black Americans rate their community as excellent or very good

When thinking about their community as a place to live, % of Black adults who rate it as ...



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. Here, "being Black is less important" indicates Black adults who said that being Black is somewhat, a little or not at all important to how they think about themselves. Lines surrounding data points represent the margin of error of each estimate.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

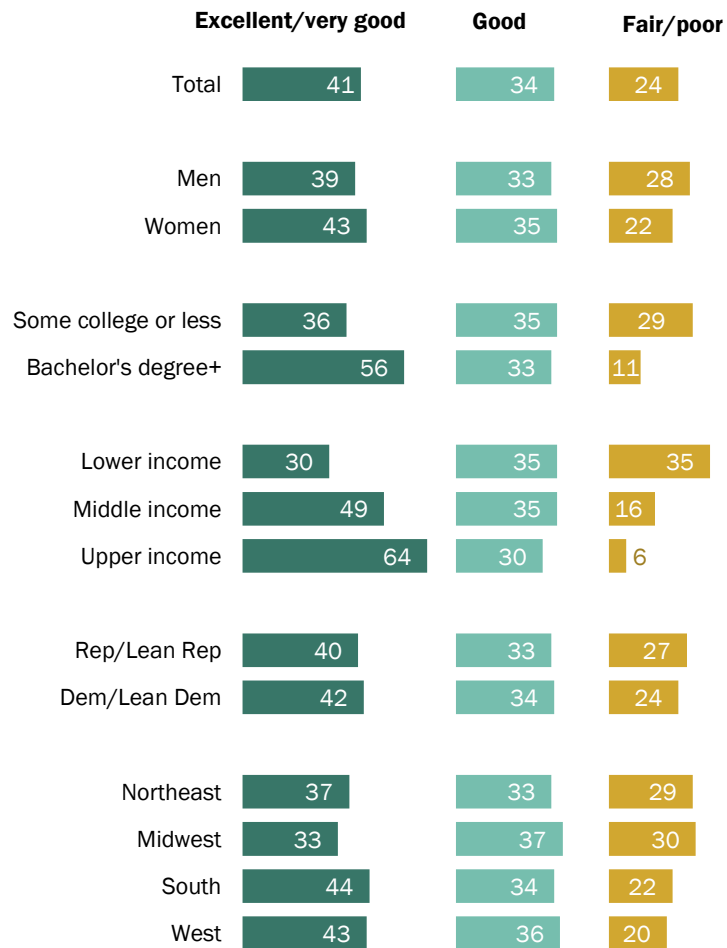
Community ratings also differ by education and income. Black adults with a college degree or higher are significantly more likely than Black adults without a college degree to rate their community as an excellent or very good place to live, (56% vs. 36%, respectively).

Black adults with higher incomes are 34 points more likely than those who earn lower incomes to say their community is an excellent or very good place to live (64% vs. 30%), while about half (49%) of those who are middle income share the same opinion.

Black adults who live in self-described urban areas are significantly more likely than their suburban and rural counterparts to rate the community where they live as fair or poor (35% vs. 11% and 27%, respectively). Roughly half (53%) of those in suburban communities rate their community as an excellent or very good place to live – significantly higher than the 29% who say the same in urban communities and the 42% in rural communities.

Black adults with college degrees or higher incomes more likely to rate their community as an excellent or very good as a place to live

% of Black adults who rate their community as ___ a place to live



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Some college or less" includes Black adults who have an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2020 earnings. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Oct 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

In general, Black adults rate their communities less positively than all U.S. adults. While roughly four-in-ten Black adults (41%) rate their community as excellent or very good, 58% of all U.S. adults say the same. Roughly three-in-ten U.S. adults (29%) rate their community as good, while 13% say their community is fair or poor.

Violence, the economy and housing top the list of important community issues for Black Americans

When asked in an open-ended question to identify the most important issue in the community they live in, the top issue was violence or crime (17%). This includes Black Americans who listed specific issues such as drug activity, shootings, or theft; but also those who simply listed “violence” or “crime” as the most pressing issues in their communities. Another 11% of Black adults said economic issues such as homelessness, poverty and taxes were most important.

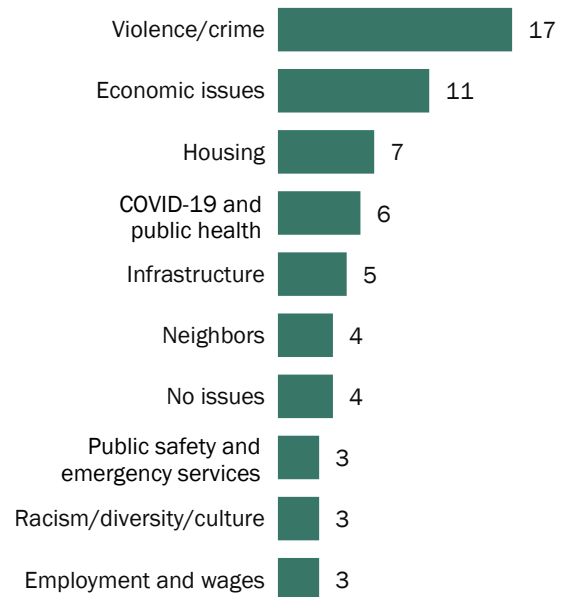
Other top issues include housing (7%), COVID-19 and public health (6%), infrastructure (5%), neighbors (4%), the availability of public safety and emergency services (3%), differences among neighbors due to racism, diversity or culture (3%), and employment and wages (3%). Some 4% did not name an issue.

The most important local issue named across demographic subgroups of Black Americans does vary. But notably, the same issues are often among the top three local issues mentioned for most groups – violence and crime, economic issues, and housing issues – even if their rankings may not be the same.

Violence or crime is the top issue for both non-Hispanic and Hispanic Black adults, but second for those who identify as multiracial. Meanwhile, multiracial Black adults mention an economy-related concern as the top issue in their community, while this ranks second among non-Hispanic and Hispanic Black adults. Housing was the third-most important community issue named by non-Hispanic and multiracial Black adults, but fifth among the Hispanic Black population.

Black adults name violence, economic issues and housing as top three issues in their communities

% of Black adults who say ___ is the most important issue facing the community they live in



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. “Violence/crime” includes mention of issues such as drug activity, shootings or theft. “Economic issues” includes mention of issues such as homelessness, poverty and taxes.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults. “Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Both U.S.-born and immigrant Black adults name violence or crime as the most important issue facing their community (17% and 15%, respectively), but the ranking of issues does not significantly differ between these two groups. Besides violence or crime, the other top issues among the U.S.-born Black population are economic issues (10%) and housing (7%). For the Black foreign-born population, the second-most mentioned issue is economic issues (11%), while COVID-19 and public health (7%) is the third-most mentioned issue.

Violence or crime is the most mentioned issue among both those who say being Black is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves (18%) and those who say being Black is not as important to how they think about themselves (13%). Economic issues are the second-most mentioned community issue for those who say being Black is very or extremely important to them (11%), but among those for whom being Black is less important, housing is the second-most mentioned issue (11%) and economic issues rank third (9%).

Views about the most important issue in their community varies by age among Black adults. Economic issues are the most mentioned among Black 18- to 29-year-old adults (15%), with violence or crime (12%) coming in second. However, those ages 18 to 29 (12%) are more likely than those ages 30 to 49 (5%) or 50 to 64 (6%) to say housing is the most important issue facing their community. The top issue for Black adults between the ages of 30 to 49, 50 to 64 and 65 and older is violence or crime (20%, 18% and 16%, respectively).

Black adults vary only slightly on this question by education and income. The top issue named by Black adults with and without a bachelor's degree is violence or crime (14% and 18% in each respective group name this), while the issue mentioned second-most often by both groups is economic issues (12% and 10%, respectively). Black adults with a college degree or higher are less

Top five community issues for Black adults by racial and ethnic group

% of Black adults who say ___ is the most important issue facing the community they live in

Rank	Non-Hispanic	Multiracial, non-Hispanic	Black Hispanic
1	Violence/crime	Economic issues	Violence/crime
2	Economic issues	Violence/crime	Economic issues
3	Housing	Housing	Racism/diversity/culture
4	COVID-19 and public health	Employment and wages	Infrastructure
5	Infrastructure	Racism/diversity/culture	Housing

Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. "Violence/crime" includes mention of issues such as drug activity, shootings or theft. "Economic issues" includes mention of issues such as homelessness, poverty and taxes. Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults. "Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

likely (14%) than those with lower educational attainment (18%) to say violence or crime is the most important issue in their community. Meanwhile, the top community issue mentioned among Black adults with lower or middle incomes is violence or crime (20% among lower income, 16% among middle income). COVID-19 and public health, violence or crime, and economic issues are tied as the issues mentioned most by Black adults with upper incomes (11% each).

There are differences by region as well. The top issue named by Black adults living in the Midwest, Northeast and South is violence or crime (24%, 20% and 15%, respectively), while economic issues and housing are the top two concerns cited by those in the West (20% and 18%, respectively). Black people in the South are also more likely than those in the other three regions to report infrastructure as the most important issue in their community.

The Black population's rating of the most important issue facing the community they live in is only slightly different from that of the general public. Americans overall name economic issues (15%), violence or crime (12%), and COVID-19 and public health (7%) as the most important issues in their community.

Nearly half of Black Americans who name an issue important to their community say local leaders are most responsible for addressing it

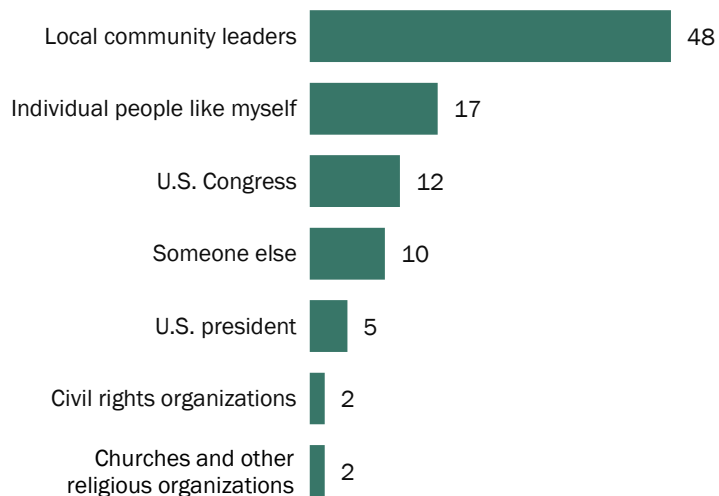
When asked who is most responsible for addressing their community's most important issue, almost half of Black adults who name such an issue say local community leaders (48%) are most responsible for addressing that issue. Smaller shares say individual people like themselves (17%), the U.S. Congress (12%), someone else (10%) or the U.S. president (5%) are responsible for solving pressing local issues.

Half of non-Hispanic Black adults (49%) point to local community leaders as the most responsible for solving the most important issue facing their community, with multiracial and Black Hispanic adults being about as likely to say the same. And roughly half (49%) of U.S.-born Black adults and four-in-ten Black immigrants who named a local issue say local leaders should be most responsible for addressing the most important issue in their community.

Answers did not vary much, if at all, based on how important Blackness was to each respondent. Of the adults who named a local issue, those who say being Black is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves are about as likely as those who say being Black is less important to how they think about themselves to say local community leaders are most responsible for addressing the most important issue in the community they live in (50% and 44%, respectively).

Roughly half of Black adults who named an issue say local community leaders should address that issue

Among Black adults who named the most important issue that the community they live in was facing, % who say ___ is most responsible for addressing that issue



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic, Black and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Black and Hispanic. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 4-17, 2021, among U.S. adults.

"Race Is Central to Identity for Black Americans and Affects How They Connect With Each Other"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

While four-in-ten or more of both Black Republicans and Republican leaners (40%) and Black Democrats and Democratic leaners (50%) say local community leaders should be most responsible, there are differences by party when it comes to naming civil rights organizations. Black Republicans are significantly more likely than Black Democrats to say civil rights organizations are most responsible for addressing the most important issue in their community (8% vs. 1%).

Somewhat similar shares of Black adults in self-described urban, suburban and rural communities name local community leaders as most responsible (46%, 50% and 52%, respectively). Black adults in rural communities are less likely than those in urban communities to name Congress as most responsible for addressing the most important issue in their community (8% vs. 14%).

Black adults in the South are more likely than those in the Midwest and West to say that local community leaders are most responsible for addressing this community issue (53% vs. 42% and 40%, respectively). Around half (49%) in the Northeast point to community leaders as most responsible as well. Black adults in the West and Northeast (23% and 16%, respectively) are more likely than those in the Midwest (8%) and South (9%) to say Congress is most responsible for addressing the most important issue in their community.

Answers to this question differ by education and income among the Black population. Black adults with a bachelor's degree or higher are more likely than those without a degree to say local community leaders are most responsible (54% vs. 46%). About half or more of Black adults in middle- and upper-income tiers say local community leaders should be most responsible for addressing this issue (52% and 56%, respectively), significantly more than those in the lower-income tier (44%).

Black Americans who named violence or crime, economic issues, or housing as the most important issue in their neighborhoods are still most likely to say that local leaders should be responsible for addressing those issues. However, among those who name economic issues as most important, almost three-in-ten (29%) say Congress is most responsible. And among those who name housing as the most important issue in their neighborhoods, roughly one-in-five say Congress (21%) should be responsible.

The general public and Black population's responses to this question are somewhat similar. Half of U.S. adults overall say that local community leaders should be most responsible for addressing the most important issue in their community, while 16% point to individual people, 13% point to Congress and 10% point to someone else as most responsible.

Acknowledgments

This report was written by Kiana Cox, Research Associate, and Christine Tamir, Research Analyst.

Editorial guidance was provided by Mark Hugo Lopez, Director, Race and Ethnicity Research; Khadijah Edwards, Research Associate; Kim Parker, Director, Social and Demographic Trends Research; Juliana Menasce Horowitz, Associate Director, Social and Demographic Trends Research; and Besheer Mohamed, Senior Researcher.

Methodological guidance was provided by Courtney Kennedy, Vice President, Methods and Data and Innovation and Ashley Amaya, Senior Survey Research Methodologist. Guidance on the communications strategy and outreach was provided by Tanya Ardit, Communications Manager.

The report was number checked by Mohamad Moslimani, Research Assistant. Shannon Greenwood, Digital Producer, produced the report. David Kent, Senior Copy Editor, copy edited the report. Charts were designed by Michael Keegan, Senior Information Graphics Designer; Peter Bell, Design Director; Tamir; and Cox.

Pew Research Center is grateful to a panel of expert advisers who gave advice on all stages of this report: Michael C. Dawson, John D. MacArthur Professor of Political Science and the College at the University of Chicago; Leah Wright Rigueur, SNF Agora Institute Associate Professor of History at Johns Hopkins University; C. Riley Snorton, Professor of English Language and Literature and the Center for Gender and Sexuality Studies at the University of Chicago; Mosi Adesina Ifatunji, Assistant Professor of Afro-American Studies and Sociology at the University of Wisconsin at Madison; and Charlene A. Carruthers, Founding National Director of Black Youth Project 100.

Find related reports online at <https://www.pewresearch.org/topic/race-ethnicity/racial-ethnic-groups/black-americans/>.

Methodology

The American Trends Panel survey methodology

Overview

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report is drawn from the panel wave conducted from Oct. 4 to Oct. 17, 2021. A total of 6,513 panelists responded out of 9,738 who were sampled, for a response rate of 68% (AAPOR RR3). This includes 3,626 respondents from the ATP and an oversample of 2,887 Black Americans from Ipsos' KnowledgePanel (KP). The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 2%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is 3%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 6,513 respondents is plus or minus 2.2 percentage points.

Panel recruitment

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 9,942 (50%) agreed to participate.

American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	1,604
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	939
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	470
Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018	ABS	9,396	8,778	4,433
Aug. 19 to Nov. 30, 2019	ABS	5,900	4,720	1,627
June 1 to July 19, 2020; Feb. 10 to March 31, 2021	ABS	3,197	2,812	1,699
May 29 to July 7, 2021	ABS	1,085	947	726
	Total	39,296	27,199	11,498

Note: Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel. The 2021 recruitment survey was ongoing at the time this survey was conducted. The counts reflect completed recruitment interviews up through July 7, 2021.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based recruitment. Invitations were sent to a stratified, random sample of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. Sampled households receive mailings asking a randomly selected adult to complete a survey online. A question at the end of the survey asks if the respondent is willing to join the ATP. Starting in 2020 another stage was added to the recruitment. Households that do not respond to the online survey are sent a paper version of the questionnaire, \$5 and a postage-paid return envelope. A subset of the adults returning the paper version of the survey are invited to join the ATP. This subset of adults receive a follow-up mailing with a \$10 pre-incentive and invitation to join the ATP.

Across the four address-based recruitments, a total of 19,578 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 17,257 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. In each household, the adult with the next birthday was asked to go online to complete a survey, at the end of which they were invited to join the panel. Of the 27,199 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 11,498 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.⁴ The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

About the Ipsos KnowledgePanel

The Ipsos KnowledgePanel is an online probability-based panel representative of the U.S. adult population. Households without internet connection are provided with a web-enabled device and free internet service. KnowledgePanel's recruitment process was originally based on a national RDD sampling methodology. In 2009, the panel switched to using an address-based sample (ABS) methodology. Additional information about the recruitment, sampling and weighting procedures for the Ipsos KnowledgePanel are available [here](#).

Sample design

The overall target population for this survey was non-institutionalized persons ages 18 and older, living in the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii. It featured a stratified random sample from the ATP in which panelists were assigned to the first matching stratum in the following order: Black Americans (including those who identify as Hispanic or Black in combination with another race), tablet households, foreign-born Hispanics, U.S.-born Hispanics, people not registered to vote,

⁴ AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. "[AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling](#)."

people with a high school education or less, foreign-born Asians, people ages 18 to 34, people who use the internet weekly or less, non-volunteers and a final stratum comprised of any remaining panelists not assigned to any of the above. Black ATP members were selected with certainty. The remaining strata were sampled at rates designed to ensure that the share of respondents in each stratum is proportional to its share of the U.S. adult population to the greatest extent possible. Respondent weights are adjusted to account for differential probabilities of selection as described in the [Weighting](#) section below.

The ATP was supplemented with an oversample from the KnowledgePanel in which all panelists who had previously identified as Black or African American (including those who identify as Hispanic or Black in combination with another race) were selected with certainty.

Questionnaire development and testing

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with Ipsos. The web program was rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the Ipsos project management team and Pew Research Center researchers. The Ipsos project management team also populated test data that was analyzed in SPSS to ensure the logic and randomizations were working as intended before launching the survey.

Incentives

All respondents were offered a post-paid incentive for their participation. Respondents could choose to receive the post-paid incentive in the form of a check or a gift code to Amazon.com or could choose to decline the incentive. Incentive amounts ranged from \$5 to \$20 depending on whether the respondent belongs to a part of the population that is harder or easier to reach. Differential incentive amounts were designed to increase panel survey participation among groups that traditionally have low survey response propensities.

Ipsos operates an ongoing modest incentive program for KnowledgePanel to encourage participation and create member loyalty. The incentive program includes special raffles and sweepstakes with both cash rewards and other prizes to be won. Typically, panel members are assigned no more than one survey per week. On average, panel members complete two to three surveys per month with durations of 10 to 15 minutes per survey. An additional incentive is usually provided for longer surveys. For this survey, KnowledgePanel members were offered 10,000 points (equivalent to \$10) in addition to the regular incentive program on Oct. 16, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. Eastern to those who hadn't responded yet in an attempt to boost the number of responses from KnowledgePanel members.

Data collection protocol

The data collection field period for this survey was Oct. 4 to Oct. 17, 2021. Postcard notifications were mailed to all ATP panelists with a known residential address on Oct. 4.

Invitations were sent out in two separate launches: Soft Launch and Full Launch. Sixty ATP panelists and 229 KnowledgePanel panelists were included in the soft launch, which began with an initial invitation sent on Oct. 4, 2021. The ATP panelists chosen for the initial soft launch were known responders who had completed previous ATP surveys within one day of receiving their invitation. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on Oct. 5.

All panelists with an email address received an email invitation and up to four email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. All ATP panelists that consented to SMS messages received an SMS invitation and up to four SMS reminders. The third and final reminders were sent to all KP sample and only to ATP sample that had previously identified as Black in the panel profile survey.

Invitation and reminder dates

	Soft Launch	Full Launch
Initial invitation	Oct. 4, 2021	Oct. 5, 2021
First reminder	Oct. 8, 2021	Oct. 8, 2021
Second reminder	Oct. 11, 2021	Oct. 11, 2021
Third reminder (for Black panelists only)	Oct. 13, 2021	Oct. 13, 2021
Final reminder (for Black panelists only)	Oct. 15, 2021	Oct. 15, 2021

Data quality checks

To ensure high-quality data, the Center's researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing clear patterns of satisficing. This includes checking for very high rates of leaving questions blank, as well as always selecting the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, three ATP and four KP respondents were removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis.

Weighting

The data was weighted in a multistep process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the survey process. First, each panelist begins with a

base weight that reflects their probability of selection for their initial recruitment survey. These weights were then adjusted to account for each panelist's probability of being sampled to participate in this wave.

Next, respondents were placed into one of three groups:

- 1) Black ATP respondents,
- 2) Black KnowledgePanel respondents, and 3) all remaining ATP respondents.

Within each group, the weights for each respondent were scaled to be proportional to that group's effective sample size. The groups were then recombined and the weights were poststratified so that the weighted proportion of Black adults matches that of the U.S. adult population.

The weights were then further calibrated to align with the population benchmarks identified in the accompanying table and trimmed at the 1st and 99th percentiles to reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights. In a final step, the trimmed weights were again poststratified to ensure that the share of Black adults exactly matches the U.S. population. Sampling errors and test of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

Some of the population benchmarks used for weighting come from surveys conducted prior to the coronavirus outbreak that began in February 2020. However, the weighting variables for ATP members recruited in 2021 were measured at the time they were recruited to the panel. Likewise, the profile variables for existing panelists were updated from panel surveys conducted in July or August 2021. For KnowledgePanel respondents, many of the weighting variables were measured on this wave.

Weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Age x Gender	2019 American Community Survey (ACS)
Education x Gender	
Education x Age	
Race/Ethnicity x Education	
Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Hispanics and Asian Americans	
Years lived in the U.S.	
Gender x Black or African American	
Age x Black or African American	
Education x Black or African American	
Census region x Metro/Non-metro	
Volunteerism	2021 American Trends Panel Annual Profile Survey
Voter registration	2018 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Voter registration x Black or African American	
Party affiliation	2021 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS)
Frequency of internet use	
Religious affiliation	

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on non-institutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total U.S. adult population.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

This does not pose a problem for most of the variables used in the weighting, which are quite stable at both the population and individual levels. However, volunteerism may have changed over the intervening period in ways that make their 2021 measurements incompatible with the available (pre-pandemic) benchmarks. To address this, volunteerism is weighted to an estimated benchmark that attempts to account for possible changes in behavior.

The weighting parameter is estimated using the volunteerism profile variable that was measured on the full American Trends Panel in 2021 but weighted using the profile variable that was measured in 2020. For all other weighting dimensions, the more recent panelist measurements were used. For ATP panelists recruited in 2021, the 2020 volunteerism measure was imputed using data from existing panelists with similar characteristics.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for each group in the survey.

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	6,513	2.2 percentage points
Black adults	3,912	2.8 percentage points

Note: This survey includes an oversample of Black respondents. Unweighted sample sizes do not account for the sample design or weighting and do not describe a group's contribution to weighted estimates. See the Sample design and Weighting sections above for details.

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Dispositions and response rates

Final dispositions	AAPOR code	ATP	KP	Total
Completed interview	1.1	3,626	2,887	6,513
Logged onto survey; broke off	2.12	25	171	196
Survey completed after close of the field period	2.27	0	3	3
Completed interview but was removed for data quality	2.3	3	4	7
Logged onto survey; did not complete any items	3.21	20	90	110
Never logged on (implicit refusal)	3.22	245	2,538	2,783
Screened out	4.7	0	126	126
Total panelists in the survey		3,919	5,819	9,738
Completed interviews	I	3,626	2,887	6,513
Refusals	R	28	175	203
Unknown if eligible adult	UO	265	2,628	2,893
Screen out	SO	0	126	126
Total		3,919	5,819	9,738
Est. eligibility rate among unscreened: $e = (I+R)/(I+R+SO)$		100%	96%	98%
AAPOR RR3 = $I / (I+R+[e*UO])$		93%	52%	68%

Cumulative response rate	ATP	KP	Total
Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys	12%	10%	11%
% of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited	69%	61%	64%
% of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 97	42%	37%	39%
Response rate to Wave 97 survey	93%	52%	68%
Cumulative response rate	3%	1%	2%

Adjusting income and defining income tiers

To create upper-, middle- and lower-income tiers, respondents' 2020 family incomes were adjusted for differences in purchasing power by geographic region and household size. "Middle-income" adults live in families with annual incomes that are two-thirds to double the median family income in the panel (after incomes have been adjusted for the local cost of living and household size). The middle-income range for the American Trends Panel is about \$42,000 to \$125,900 annually for an average family of three. Lower-income families have incomes less than

roughly \$42,000, and upper-income families have incomes greater than roughly \$125,900 (all figures expressed in 2020 dollars).

Based on these adjustments, 46% of Black respondents are lower income, 39% are middle income and 9% fall into the upper-income tier. An additional 5% either didn't offer a response to the income question or the household size question. Among all U.S adults, 29% are lower income, 47% are middle income and 18% fall into the upper-income tier. An additional 6% either didn't offer a response to the income question or the household size question.

For more information about how the income tiers were determined, please see [here](#).

© Pew Research Center, 2021

Topline questionnaire

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER
2021 SURVEY OF BLACK AMERICANS
Oct. 4-17, 2021
BLACK AMERICANS TOTAL N=3,912
GENERAL PUBLIC TOTAL N=6,513**

NOTE: ALL NUMBERS ARE PERCENTAGES. THE PERCENTAGES GREATER THAN ZERO BUT LESS THAN 0.5 ARE REPLACED BY AN ASTERISK (*). COLUMNS MAY NOT TOTAL 100% DUE TO ROUNDING. THIS TOPLINE SHOWS AGGREGATED DATA FOR RESPONDENTS FROM DIFFERENT SAMPLES. RESPONSES TO SOME QUESTIONS WERE COLLECTED IN PREVIOUS SURVEYS. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE DIFFERENT SAMPLES, SEE THE [METHODOLOGY](#).

ASK ALL:

LOCALRATING

How would you rate your community as a place to live?

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>		General public <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>
41	NET Excellent/Very good	58
11	Excellent	19
30	Very good	39
34	Good	29
24	NET Only fair/Poor	13
20	Only fair	11
4	Poor	2
*	No answer	*

ASK ALL:

COMTYPE2 **

How would you describe the community where you currently live? **[RANDOMLY DISPLAY ITEMS 1-3 OR 3-1]**

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>		General public <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>
41	Urban	23
40	Suburban	50
18	Rural	27
1	No answer	*

** This question was asked of all respondents, but was asked of the KP sample from Oct. 4-17, 2021, and asked of the ATP sample on Sept. 13-19, 2021.

ASK ALL:

COMMISSUE1

What is the most important issue facing the community you live in?

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>		General public <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>
17	Violence/crime	12
11	Economic issues	15
7	Housing	6
6	COVID-19 and public health	7
5	Infrastructure	5
4	Neighbors	6
4	No issues	2
3	Public safety and emergency services	2
3	Racism/diversity/culture	3
3	Employment and wages	5
3	Don't know/unsure/unaware	1
3	Other	3
3	Gentrification	4
3	Pedestrians and traffic	3
3	Goods and services	1
2	Community cleanliness and upkeep	1
2	Environmental issues	4
1	Education and schools	2
1	Politics	3
1	Issues about children/youth	*
1	Animals or vermin	*
*	Immigration	1
*	Everything/too many issues to name	*
14	No answer	14

ASK IF LISTED ISSUE (COMMISSUE1 ANSWERED):

COMMISSUE2

Who do you think should be MOST responsible for addressing this issue?

[RANDOMIZE 1-6, WITH 7 ALWAYS LAST]

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>		General public <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>
8	The President of the United States	7
12	U.S. Congress	13
48	Local community leaders	50
2	Civil rights organizations	1
2	Churches and other religious institutions	1
17	Individual people like you	16
10	Someone else [open end] [anchor]	10
2	No answer	1
n=3,468		n=5,771

OTHER QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

On another topic ...

ASK ALL:

ID_IMP

How important are each of these characteristics to how you think about yourself?

[RANDOMIZE]

a. Your religion

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021**59**

38

21

18**22**

7

14

*

NET Extremely/Very important

Extremely important

Very important

Somewhat important**NET A little/Not at all important**

A little important

Not at all important

No answerGeneral public
Oct. 4-17, 2021**44**

26

18

18**37**

12

25

1

b. Your gender

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021**65**

35

29

19**15**

4

11

1**NET Extremely/Very important**

Extremely important

Very important

Somewhat important**NET A little/Not at all important**

A little important

Not at all important

No answerGeneral public
Oct. 4-17, 2021**44**

20

25

26**29**

10

18

1

c. Your racial background

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021**71**

39

32

15**13**

5

8

1**NET Extremely/Very important**

Extremely important

Very important

Somewhat important**NET A little/Not at all important**

A little important

Not at all important

No answerGeneral public
Oct. 4-17, 2021**32**

14

18

24**43**

16

27

1

d. Your sexuality

Black Americans Oct. 4-17, 2021		General public Oct. 4-17, 2021
58	NET Extremely/Very important	38
30	Extremely important	17
28	Very important	22
20	Somewhat important	26
22	NET A little/Not at all important	35
6	A little important	12
16	Not at all important	23
*	No answer	1

e. Your ancestry

Black Americans Oct. 4-17, 2021		General public Oct. 4-17, 2021
65	NET Extremely/Very important	37
33	Extremely important	15
32	Very important	22
21	Somewhat important	29
14	NET A little/Not at all important	34
7	A little important	17
7	Not at all important	17
*	No answer	1

f. The country where you were born

Black Americans Oct. 4-17, 2021		General public Oct. 4-17, 2021
58	NET Extremely/Very important	55
30	Extremely important	27
28	Very important	28
24	Somewhat important	24
17	NET A little/Not at all important	21
7	A little important	10
10	Not at all important	12
1	No answer	1

g. The location where you grew up

Black Americans Oct. 4-17, 2021		General public Oct. 4-17, 2021
46	NET Extremely/Very important	35
19	Extremely important	10
28	Very important	25
31	Somewhat important	34
22	NET A little/Not at all important	30
10	A little important	14
12	Not at all important	16
*	No answer	*

h. The location where you currently live

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>		General public <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>
52	NET Extremely/Very important	45
22	Extremely important	14
30	Very important	31
29	Somewhat important	31
19	NET A little/Not at all important	23
10	A little important	13
9	Not at all important	11
*	No answer	1

OTHER QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK IF BLACK (RACEMOD=2):

BLKCOMMON How much, if anything, do you have in common with ... [RANDOMIZE]

a. Black people who are poor

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>	
34	NET Everything/Most things
12	Everything in common
21	Most things in common
43	Some things in common
22	NET Few things/Nothing
16	Few things in common
6	Nothing in common
2	No answer

b. Black people who are wealthy

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>	
12	NET Everything/Most things
4	Everything in common
8	Most things in common
36	Some things in common
50	NET Few things/Nothing
27	Few things in common
23	Nothing in common
1	No answer

c. Black people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ)

Black Americans

Oct. 4-17, 2021

14	NET Everything/Most things
4	Everything in common
10	Most things in common
25	Some things in common
60	NET Few things/Nothing
23	Few things in common
37	Nothing in common
1	No answer

d. Black people born outside the United States

Black Americans

Oct. 4-17, 2021

17	NET Everything/Most things
5	Everything in common
11	Most things in common
39	Some things in common
43	NET Few things/Nothing
24	Few things in common
19	Nothing in common
2	No answer

e. Black people born in the United States

Black Americans

Oct. 4-17, 2021

54	NET Everything/Most things
22	Everything in common
32	Most things in common
34	Some things in common
11	NET Few things/Nothing
7	Few things in common
4	Nothing in common
1	No answer

OTHER QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**ASK IF BLACK (RACEMOD=2):**

IDIMPORTMOD Previously you said you consider yourself Black or African American. How important is being Black to how you think about yourself?

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021

76	NET Extremely/Very important
54	Extremely important
22	Very important
14	Somewhat important
9	NET A little/not at all important
3	A little important
5	Not at all important
2	No answer

ASK IF BLACK (RACEMOD=2):

BLK_HIST When it comes to the history of Black people in the U.S., do you consider yourself ...

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021

51	NET Extremely/Very informed
16	Extremely informed
34	Very informed
37	Somewhat informed
11	NET A little/Not at all informed
9	A little informed
2	Not at all informed
2	No answer

ASK IF BLACK AND INFORMED (RACEMOD=2 AND BLK_HIST=1,2,3,4):

BLK_SOURCE How much of what you know about the history of Black people in the U.S. did you learn from ... **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]**

a. Family and friends

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021

43	NET Everything/Most of what I know
14	Everything I know
29	Most of what I know
38	Some of what I know
18	NET A little/none of what I know
13	A little of what I know
4	None of what I know
1	No answer

b. K-12 school

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021

23	NET Everything/Most of what I know
7	Everything I know
17	Most of what I know
31	Some of what I know
45	NET A little/None of what I know
29	A little of what I know
16	None of what I know
1	No answer

c. [IF XCOLLEGE=1] College or university

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021

24	NET Everything/Most of what I know
4	Everything I know
20	Most of what I know
40	Some of what I know
36	NET A little/None of what I know
24	A little of what I know
12	None of what I know
*	No answer

d. Media (television, movies, music, books, etc)

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021

30	NET Everything/Most of what I know
6	Everything I know
24	Most of what I know
43	Some of what I know
26	NET A little/None of what I know
19	A little of what I know
6	None of what I know
1	No answer

e. Internet (search engines, social media, etc)

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021

27	NET Everything/Most of what I know
6	Everything I know
21	Most of what I know
42	Some of what I know
30	NET A little/None of what I know
20	A little of what I know
10	None of what I know
1	No answer

ASK IF BLACK (RACEMOD=2):

ENSLAVE Were any of your ancestors enslaved in the U.S. or another country?

Black Americans

Oct. 4-17, 2021

57	NET U.S./Outside the U.S./Both U.S. and other countries
41	Yes, in the United States
5	Yes, in other countries outside the United States
11	Yes, both the United States and other countries
8	No, my ancestors were not enslaved
	[space]
34	Not sure
1	No answer

ASK IF BLACK (RACEMOD=2):FAMHIST Have you ever done any of the following in order to learn more about your family history? **[RANDOMIZE]**

- a. Used a mail-in DNA testing service from a company such as Ancestry DNA or 23andMe

Black Americans

Oct. 4-17, 2021

15	Yes, have done this
84	No, have not done this
1	No answer

- b. Researched your family history online

Black Americans

Oct. 4-17, 2021

34	Yes, have done this
65	No, have not done this
1	No answer

- c. Spoken to family members about your family's history

Black Americans

Oct. 4-17, 2021

76	Yes, have done this
23	No, have not done this
1	No answer

ASK IF BLACK (RACEMOD=2):

RACESURV25_MOD How much do you think what happens to each of the following groups overall affects what happens in your own life?

a. Black people in your local community

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021

43	NET Everything/Most things
20	Everything
22	Most things
35	Some things
21	NET A few things/Nothing
12	A few things
9	Nothing
2	No answer

b. Black people in the United States

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021

52	NET Everything/Most things
24	Everything
29	Most things
30	Some things
16	NET A few things/Nothing
8	A few things
8	Nothing
2	No answer

c. Black people around the world

Black Americans
Oct. 4-17, 2021

41	NET Everything/Most things
20	Everything
21	Most things
36	Some things
22	NET A few things/Nothing
13	A few things
9	Nothing
2	No answer

OTHER QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics today, do you consider yourself a...

ASK IF INDEP/SOMETHING ELSE OR REFUSED (PARTY=3,4,99):

PARTYSUM As of today do you lean more to...

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>		General public <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>
10	Republican/lean Republican	43
80	Democrat/lean Democrat	51
10	Independent/other/no answer	6

ASK ALL:IDEO In general, would you describe your political views as... **[RANDOMLY DISPLAY RESPONSES 1-5 OR 5-1]**

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>		General public <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>
5	Very conservative	8
11	Conservative	24
47	Moderate	39
21	Liberal	17
8	Very liberal	7
8	No answer	4

ASK ALL:

GENDER Do you describe yourself as a man, a woman, or in some other way?

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>		General public <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>
40	Man	47
57	Woman	52
1	Some other way	1
1	No answer	1

ASK ALL:

F_EDUCCAT What is the highest degree or level of school that you have completed?

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>		General public <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>
26	College graduate +	34
36	Some college	31
38	HS graduate or less	35
*	No answer	*

ASK ALL:

CITIZEN Are you a citizen of the United States, or not?

Black Americans <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>		General public <u>Oct. 4-17, 2021</u>
97	Yes	94
2	No	6
1	No answer	*

ASK ALL:
INCOME

Last year what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes?

Black Americans Oct. 4-17, 2021		General public Oct. 4-17, 2021
41	Less than \$30,000	22
12	\$30,000 to less than \$40,000	11
9	\$40,000 to less than \$50,000	9
8	\$50,000 to less than \$60,000	9
6	\$60,000 to less than \$70,000	7
5	\$70,000 to less than \$80,000	7
4	\$80,000 to less than \$90,000	7
3	\$90,000 to less than \$100,000	6
9	\$100,000 or more	22
5	No answer	5

ASK ALL:
BIRTHPLACE

Where were you born?

NOTE: COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN RECODED INTO MAJOR GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS

Black Americans Oct. 4-17, 2021		General public Oct. 4-17, 2021
86	U.S. (50 states and District of Columbia)	82
1	U.S. (Puerto Rico)	1
4	U.S. (other territory)	2
8	Another country	13
1	No answer	1

ASK ALL:
RELIG

What is your present religion, if any?

Black Americans Oct. 4-17, 2021		General public Oct. 4-17, 2021
70	NET Christian	64
64	Protestant	41
5	Roman Catholic	20
1	Other Christians	2
1	Non-Christian	4
23	Unaffiliated	29
4	Atheist/agnostic	11
19	Nothing in particular	18
6	No answer	4