NEW SURVEY: Black and Latino Americans Face Greater Mental Health, Economic Challenges from COVID-19 Than White Americans

People of Color Are Faring Much Worse During the Pandemic as Existing Inequities Are Exacerbated

A new survey from the Commonwealth Fund reveals the disparate impacts of COVID-19 on Black and Latino people, women, and people with low incomes during the early months of the pandemic. The pandemic has shined a light on existing inequities in the United States and how quickly a crisis exacerbates them.

Among the findings:

- **Latino and Black adults have experienced economic hardship during COVID-19 at a rate between two and three times greater than white adults.** More than half of Latino and nearly half of Black survey respondents said they have struggled economically, and were unable to pay for basic necessities, or used up all their savings or borrowed money — a substantially greater proportion than the 21 percent of white respondents who reported the same.

Many Americans are facing substantial economic hardship during the pandemic. Latino and Black people experience these hardships at significantly higher rates than white people.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Percent of respondents who reported the following had happened because of the COVID-19 pandemic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Been unable to pay for basic necessities like food, heat, or rent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used up all or most of their savings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borrowed money or taken out a loan</td>
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<td>Suffered from any economic consequence</td>
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Latino and Black people, women, and people with low income are most at risk of mental health concerns because of the pandemic. Many Americans are experiencing mental health problems from COVID-19. But some groups report having stress, anxiety, or great sadness due to the pandemic at higher rates. Among them:

- Thirty-nine percent of women compared to 26 percent of men.
- Forty percent of Latino and 39 percent of Black people, compared to 29 percent of white people.
- Forty-four percent of people with lower income, compared to 26 percent of people with higher income.

Black Americans have a less favorable opinion of the government’s pandemic response. Fewer than half of Black, white, and Latino Americans have a positive opinion of how President Trump has handled the pandemic. However, Black adults’ views stood out from the rest. Only 10 percent of Black respondents thought the president was handling the pandemic well, compared to 38 percent of whites and 41 percent of Latinos.

Additionally, 35 percent of Blacks approved of state and local government leaders’ pandemic response, compared to 53 and 54 percent of Latinos and whites, respectively. The disproportionately negative impact of COVID-19 on Black communities, coupled with experiences and awareness of inequity, may have contributed to the low satisfaction with the government’s response.

People view health care providers’ response far more positively. The vast majority of Black, white, and Latino Americans believe that hospitals, doctors, and nurses have done a “good” or “very good” job of handling the pandemic.

The full report will be available after the embargo lifts at: https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/2020/sep/beyond-case-count-disparities-covid-19-united-states
HOW WE CONDUCTED THIS STUDY

The 2020 Commonwealth International Health Policy COVID-19 Supplement Survey was conducted by SSRS, a survey research firm, and country contractors, from March 30 to May 25, 2020. The COVID Supplement Survey was part of a larger survey that was in the field from February to June 2020, and was administered to a nationally representative sample of adults ages 18 and older in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This study limits the analysis to the U.S. population.

The U.S. sample size was 1,266. Black and Latino people were oversampled to stratify the analysis by race and ethnicity. Interviews were completed either online or using computer-assisted telephone interviews. The response rate in the U.S. was 14 percent. Data were weighted to ensure that the final outcome was representative of the adult population.

ADDITIONAL PERTINENT RESEARCH

COVID-19 More Prevalent, Deadlier in U.S. Counties with Higher Black Populations

How the Affordable Care Act Has Narrowed Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Access to Health Care


Do Americans Face Greater Mental Health and Economic Consequences from COVID-19? Comparing the U.S. with Other High-Income Countries

An Early Look at the Potential Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Health Insurance Coverage

The Invisible COVID Workforce: Direct Care Workers for Those with Disabilities