

DISCRIMINATION IN AMERICA:

FINAL SUMMARY

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



HARVARD
T.H. CHAN
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: DISCRIMINATION IN AMERICA

Survey Background

This report is part of a series titled “Discrimination in America.” The series is based on a survey conducted for National Public Radio, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. The survey was conducted January 26 – April 9, 2017, among a nationally representative, probability-based telephone (cell and landline) sample of 3,453 adults age 18 or older. The survey included nationally representative samples of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans, as well as white Americans; men and women, and LGBTQ adults. This report presents the results specifically for a nationally representative probability sample of 3,453 U.S. adults. Previous reports in the series analyze each group individually, while this final report discusses major highlights from the series.

Discrimination is a prominent and critically important matter in American life and throughout American history, with significant and harmful effects on health and well-being. While many surveys have explored Americans’ beliefs about discrimination, this survey asks people about their own personal experiences with discrimination.

The results show the widespread experiences of discrimination for many groups in America, across many areas of life. The findings also illustrate the significantly different manifestations and experiences of discrimination across different groups.

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Survey Overview

While many surveys have explored Americans' beliefs about discrimination, this survey asked 3,453 U.S. adults – including African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans, white Americans, men, women, and LGBTQ adults – about both their beliefs regarding and personal experiences with discrimination in America. The results show that there is significant variation across groups as to whether they report that they have personally experienced discrimination because of their race, gender, or LGBTQ identity.

People were asked whether they believe they have ever personally experienced various forms of both institutional and individual discrimination. In this series, the term “institutional discrimination” refers to forms of discrimination based on laws, policies, institutions, and the related behavior of individuals who work in or control those laws, policies, or institutions. The term “individual discrimination” refers to forms of discrimination based in individual people’s prejudicial beliefs, words, and behavior. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive; the distinction is used for organizing purposes.

In the context of institutional discrimination, people were asked about their experiences across seven different specific situations:

- When applying to jobs
- When it comes to being paid equally or considered for promotions
- When interacting with police
- When trying to vote or participate in politics
- When going to a doctor or health clinic
- When applying to college or while at college
- When trying to rent a room or apartment or buy a house

People were only asked about situations in which they had personal experience. For example, people were only asked if they had been discriminated against when applying to college if they had ever applied to college.

In addition to forms of institutional discrimination, people were asked about experiences of individual or interpersonal forms of discrimination, such as:

- Slurs or negative words
- Insensitive or offensive comments or negative assumptions
- People acting afraid of them
- Sexual harassment
- Threats or non-sexual harassment
- Violence

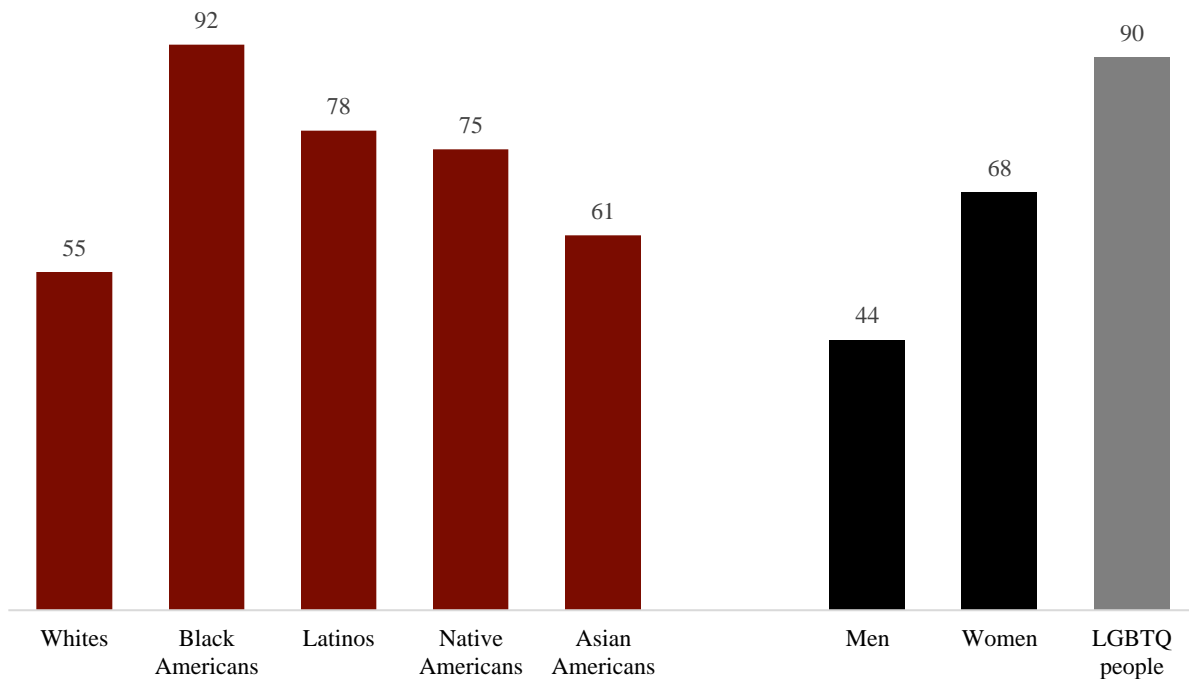
While this is not an exhaustive list of possible situations in which people may experience discrimination, it does provide a wide-angle lens of many areas of American life.

Belief in Discrimination

Majorities of nearly all groups believe that discrimination against their group generally exists

As shown in Figure 1, majorities of nearly all groups analyzed in this series say that, generally speaking, they believe discrimination against their own group exists in America today. For example, 92% of all Black Americans say that, generally speaking, they believe discrimination against Black people exists in America today. Fifty-five percent (55%) of white Americans say that they believe discrimination against white people exists in America today.

Figure 1:
Percent of Each Group Saying That, Generally Speaking, They Believe
Discrimination Against Their Own Group Exists in America Today



Note: percentages shown reflect the percent of each group saying that, generally speaking, they believe discrimination exists in America today against their own racial or ethnic group (for racial or ethnic groups); against men or women (for men and women, respectively); or against LGBTQ people (for LGBTQ people). NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Discrimination in America*, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q1. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

Nearly seven in ten (68%) women say they believe that discrimination against women exists in America today, while 44% of men believe that discrimination against men exists (Figure 1).

Nine in ten (90%) LGBTQ people say that discrimination against LGBTQ people exists in America today (Figure 1).

Top 3 Experiences of Institutional Discrimination

Recall that people were asked about their experiences with institutional discrimination across seven different specific situations. These situations were: when applying to jobs; when it comes to being paid equally or considered for promotions; when interacting with police; when trying to vote or participate in politics; when going to a doctor or health clinic; when applying to college or while at college; and when trying to rent a room or apartment or buy a house.

Workplace discrimination is the most frequently reported experience within every group, but minority groups report far greater frequencies of this experience

Table 1 shows the top three most frequently reported experiences of institutional discrimination within each group, as well as the different magnitudes of reporting these experiences with each group.¹ For each group studied by this survey, the two most frequently reported experiences of institutional discrimination are in the workplace: when applying for jobs and when it comes to being paid equally or considered for promotions. This is further discussed in the following section.

Third-ranked issue illustrates how discrimination manifests differently for different groups

Table 1 also begins to illustrate how experiences of discrimination in America manifest differently across different groups: the third most frequently reported experience of institutional discrimination varies considerably across each group, in both issue and magnitude.

For example, the third most frequently reported experience of institutional discrimination for Black Americans is when interacting with the police: 50% of Black Americans say they have been personally discriminated against because of their race when interacting with the police. Police interactions are also the third most frequently reported experience of racial discrimination for Native Americans, 29% of whom report this experience (Table 1).

For Latinos and Asian Americans, however, the third most frequently reported experience of discrimination is when seeking housing: 31% of Latinos and 25% of Asian Americans say they have been personally discriminated against because of their race or ethnicity when trying to rent a room or apartment or to buy a house (Table 1).

The third most frequently reported experience of racial discrimination among white Americans is when applying to or while attending college. Eleven percent (11%) of white Americans say they have been racially discriminated against in this context (Table 1).

¹ In select cases, there are some “ties” within a group for frequency of reported experiences of discrimination.

**Table 1:
Workplace Discrimination is Most Frequently Reported Experience of Institutional Discrimination
Across All Groups (With Significant Variation in Frequency Across Groups),
But Third Ranked Issue Illustrates How Discrimination Manifests Differently Across Groups**

	Whites	Black Americans	Latinos	Native Americans	Asian Americans
#1	Applying for jobs 19%	Equal pay or promotion 57%	Applying for jobs 33%	Equal pay or promotion 33%	Applying for jobs 27%
#2	Equal pay or promotion 13%	Applying for jobs 56%	Equal pay or promotion 32%	Applying for jobs 31%	Equal pay or promotion 25%
#3	Applying to or while at college 11%	Interacting with police 50%	Seeking housing 31%	Interacting with police 29%	Seeking housing 25%

	Men	Women	LGBTQ people
#1	Equal pay or promotion 18%	Equal pay or promotion 41%	Equal pay or promotion 22%
#2	Applying for jobs 18%	Applying for jobs 31%	Seeking housing 22%
#3	Interacting with police 18%	Applying to or while at college 20%	Applying for jobs 20% Applying to or while at college 20%

Note: percentages shown reflect the percent of each group saying they have personally been discriminated against in each situation because of their race or ethnicity (for racial or ethnic groups); because of their gender (for men and women); or because of their LGBTQ identity (for LGBTQ people). In some cases within a group, there are ties in frequency of reporting. NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Discrimination in America*, January 26 – April 9, 2017. S5/Q13, S6/Q15, Q17, Q19, Q21, S7/Q23, S8/Q25; S5/Q27, S6/Q29, Q31, Q33, Q35, S7/Q37, S8/Q39; S5/Q42a/b, S6/Q45a/b, Q48a/b, Q51a/b, Q54a/b, S7/Q57a/b, S8/Q60a/b. Questions asked of half-samples. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

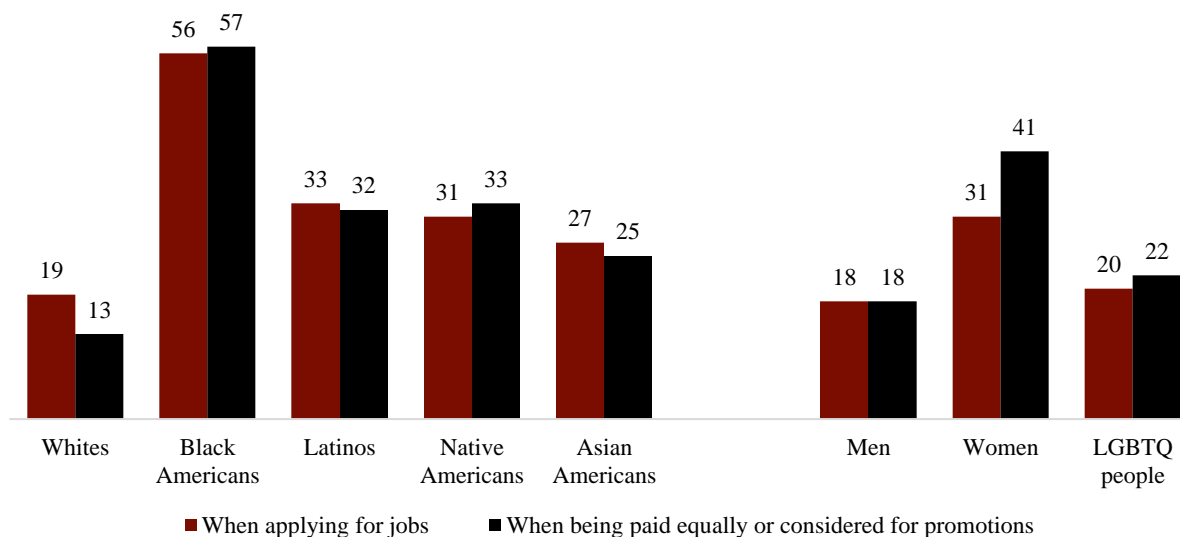
Employment

Workplace discrimination is the most frequently reported experience within every group, but minority groups report far greater frequencies of this experience

For each group studied by this survey, the two most frequently reported experiences of institutional discrimination are in the workplace: when applying for jobs and when it comes to being paid equally or considered for promotions. However, minority groups report these experiences at far greater frequencies. This is shown in Figure 2.

For example, Black Americans are more than four times more likely than whites to report racial discrimination when it comes to being paid equally or considered for promotions (57% of Black Americans vs. 13% of whites), and nearly three times more likely to report racial discrimination when applying for jobs (56% vs. 19%) (Figure 2).

Figure 2:
Percent of Each Group Saying They Have Been Personally Discriminated Against In the Workplace Because of Their Race or Ethnicity, Gender, or LGBTQ Identity



Note: percentages shown reflect the percent of each group saying they have personally been discriminated against in each situation because of their race or ethnicity (for racial or ethnic groups); because of their gender (for men and women); or because of their LGBTQ identity (for LGBTQ people). NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Discrimination in America*, January 26 – April 9, 2017. S5/Q13, S6/Q15, S5/Q27, S6/Q29, S5/Q42a/b, S6/Q45a/b. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

Similarly, women are more than twice as likely as men to report gender discrimination when it comes to equal pay or consideration for promotion (41% women vs. 18% men), and nearly twice as likely as men to report gender discrimination when applying for jobs (31% women vs. 18% men). Among LGBTQ people, 22% report personally experiencing discrimination because of their LGBTQ identity when it comes to being paid equally or considered for promotions (and when seeking housing), and 20% report discrimination when applying for jobs (Figure 2).

Police & The Legal System

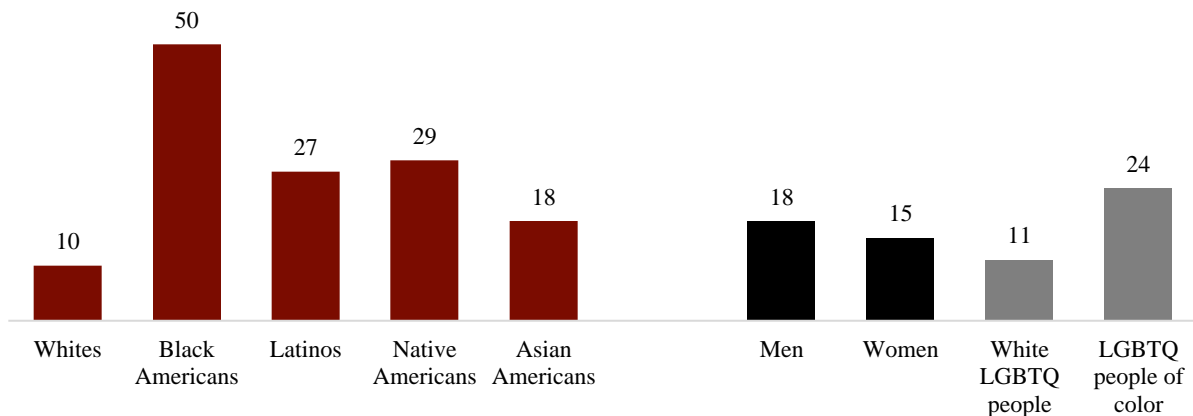
As shown in Table 1, discrimination when interacting with the police is the third most frequently reported experience of institutional discrimination for both Black Americans and Native Americans. Looking further at experiences with the legal system, the survey shows wide racial and ethnic disparities in reported discrimination at the hands of police and the courts.

Black Americans 5 times more likely than white Americans to report being personally discriminated against by police because of their race; Latinos and Native Americans nearly 3 times as likely, Asian Americans nearly twice as likely

Figure 3 shows that many Americans of color believe they have been personally discriminated against because of their race or ethnicity when interacting with the police.

Half (50%) of Black Americans say that they have personally experienced discrimination when interacting with police – *five times more likely* than white Americans (10%) to report this experience. Latinos (27%) and Native Americans (29%) are nearly three times as likely as white Americans to say they have experienced racial discrimination when interacting with police, and Asian Americans are nearly twice as likely (18%) as whites (Figure 3).

Figure 3:
Percent of Each Group Saying They Have Been Personally Discriminated Against When Interacting with Police Because of Their Race or Ethnicity, Gender, or LGBTQ Identity



Note: percentages shown reflect the percent of each group saying they have personally been discriminated against when interacting with police because of their race or ethnicity (for racial or ethnic groups); because of their gender (for men and women); or because of their LGBTQ identity (for LGBTQ people). NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Discrimination in America*, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q17, Q31, Q48a/b. Questions asked of half-sample. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

Figure 3 also shows that 18% of men and 15% of women say they believe they have been discriminated against when interacting with police because of their gender. Overall, 16% of LGBTQ people report discrimination from the police because of their LGBTQ identity. LGBTQ

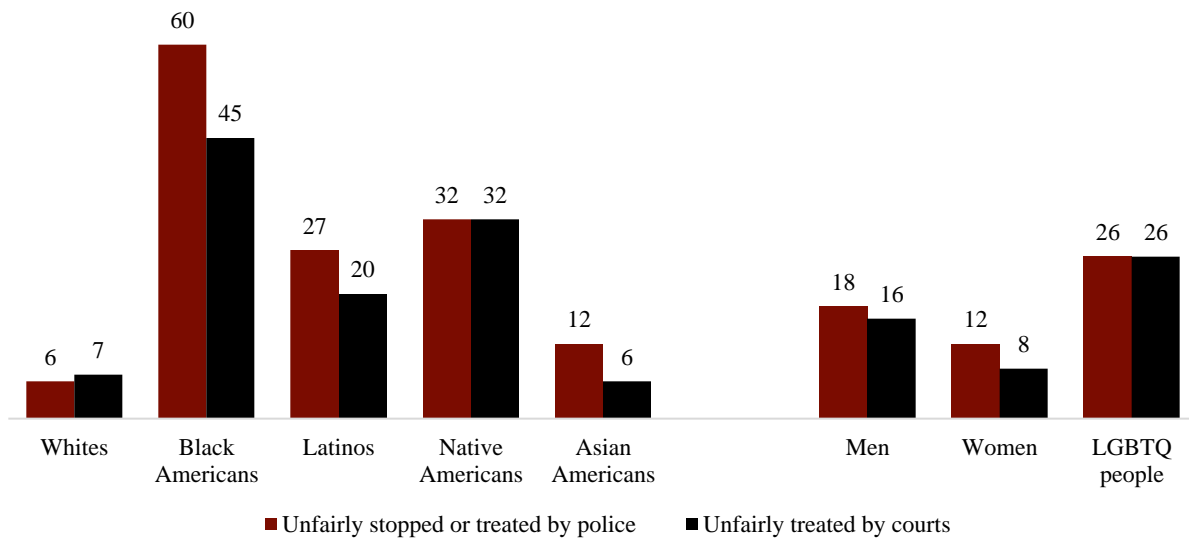
people of color are more than twice as likely (24%) as white LGBTQ people (11%) to say they have been discriminated against because of their LGBTQ identity (Figure 3).

Significant racial disparities in reported experiences of unfair treatment by the legal system

In a separate question, people were asked if they believe they or a family member have been unfairly stopped or treated by the police, or unfairly treated by the courts because of their race or ethnicity, gender, or LGBTQ identity.² This question referred to “unfair treatment,” rather than “discrimination,” to capture potential differences in perception of individuals’ experiences (i.e., people who might perceive an experience as unfair but would not call it discriminatory).

Figure 4 shows that Black Americans are *ten times more likely* than white Americans to say they or a family member have been unfairly stopped or treated by the police because of their race (60% vs. 6%). Native Americans are more than five times more likely than whites to report this experience (32% vs, 6%), and Latinos are more than four times more likely (27% vs. 6%).

Figure 4:
Percent of Each Group Saying They or a Family Member Have Been Unfairly Stopped or Treated by the Police or Unfairly Treated by the Courts Because of Their Race or Ethnicity, Gender, or LGBTQ Identity



Note: percentages shown reflect the percent of each group saying they or a family member have been unfairly treated by the police or courts because of their race or ethnicity (for racial or ethnic groups); because of their gender (for men and women); or because of their LGBTQ identity (for LGBTQ people). NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Discrimination in America*, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q91, Q92, Q93. Questions asked of half-sample. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

² Respondents may be less willing to answer sensitive questions about their personal experiences in these contexts, so family members’ experiences are included in the question wording to provide respondents an opportunity to indirectly disclose their own experiences, while also potentially capturing experiences of violence and discrimination in respondents’ immediate social network. For LGBTQ respondents, the question also included LGBTQ-identified friends, as it is generally less common to have multiple LGBTQ people in the same family, compared to having multiple family members of the same race or gender. See Roger Tourangeau and Ting Yan (2007), “Sensitive Questions in Surveys,” *Psychological Bulletin* 133(5): 859-883.

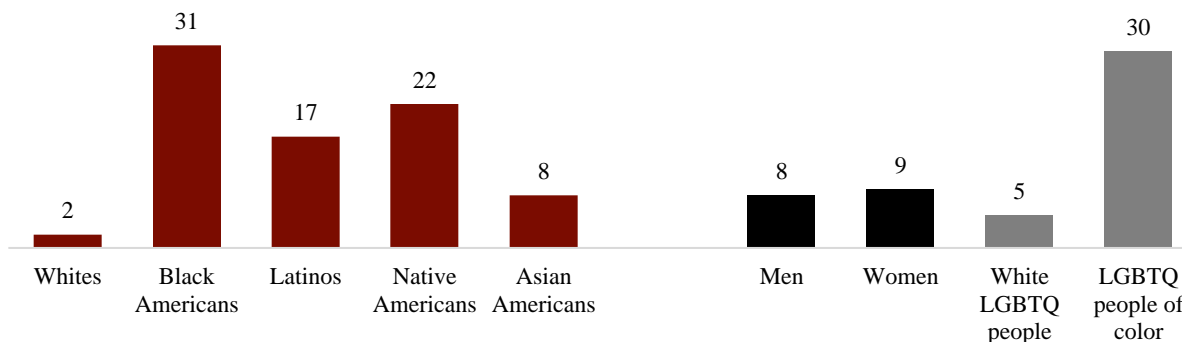
Figure 4 also shows reported experiences with the courts: Black Americans are more than six times more likely than white Americans to say they or a family member have been unfairly treated by the courts because of their race (45% of Black Americans vs. 7% of whites).

Additionally, more than one-quarter (26%) of LGBTQ people say that they or a friend or family member who is also LGBTQ have been unfairly treated by the courts or by the police because they are part of the LGBTQ community (Figure 4).

Many Americans avoid calling the police due to concern they will be discriminated against

Furthermore, as shown in Figure 5, nearly one-third (31%) of Black Americans, as well as 22% of Native Americans and 17% of Latinos, report that they have avoided calling the police or other authority figures, even when in need, out of concern that they would be discriminated against because of their race. Only 2% of whites report this behavior.

Figure 5:
Percent of Each Group Saying They Have Avoided Calling the Police When In Need Due To Concern They Would Be Discriminated Against Because of Their Race or Ethnicity, Gender, or LGBTQ Identity



Note: percentages shown reflect the percent of each group saying they have avoided calling the police out of concern they would be discriminated against because of their race or ethnicity (for racial or ethnic groups); because of their gender (for men and women); or because of their LGBTQ identity (for LGBTQ people).
NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Discrimination in America*, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q88. Question asked of half-sample. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

Overall, 15% of LGBTQ people say they have avoided calling the police out of concern they would be discriminated against because they are LGBTQ. However, LGBTQ people of color are six times more likely (30%) to say they have avoided calling the police out of concern for anti-LGBTQ discrimination, compared to white LGBTQ people (5%) (Figure 5).

Roughly equal numbers of men (8%) and women (9%) report not calling the police out of concern for gender discrimination (Figure 5).

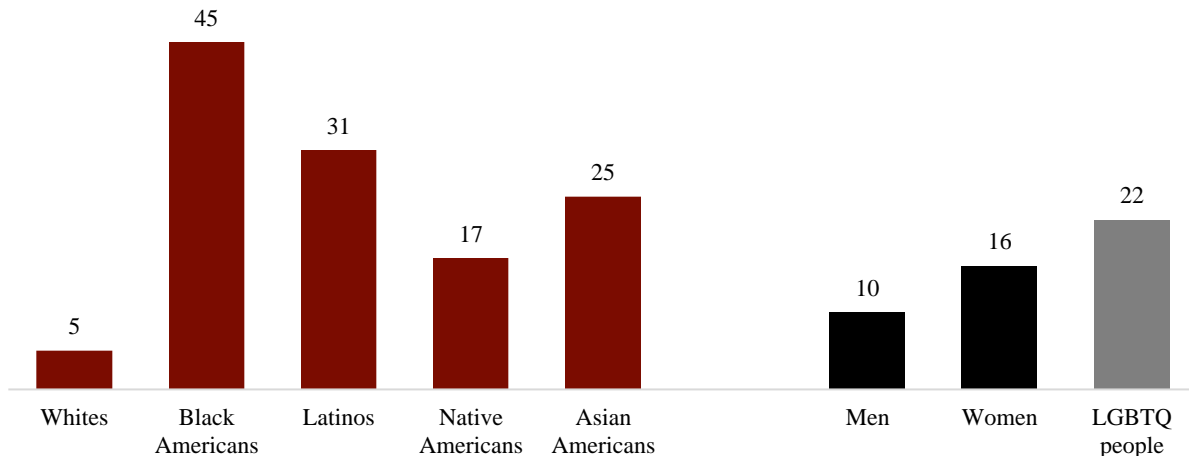
Housing

For both Latinos and Asian Americans, discrimination when trying to rent a room or apartment or to buy a house is the third most frequently reported experience of institutional discrimination. Housing discrimination is also tied with equal pay and promotion for most frequently reported experience of institutional discrimination among LGBTQ people (Table 1).

Many Americans of color report being discriminated against when seeking housing

Figure 6 shows that many people of color, as well as LGBTQ people, believe they have personally experienced discrimination when seeking housing. Nearly half (45%) of Black Americans, 31% of Latinos, and 25% of Asian Americans say they have personally experienced racial or ethnic discrimination when trying to rent a room or apartment or buy a house.

Figure 6:
Percent of Each Group Saying They Have Been
Personally Discriminated Against When Seeking Housing
Because of their Race or Ethnicity, Gender, or LGBTQ Identity



Note: percentages shown reflect the percent of each group saying they have been personally discriminated against when seeking housing because of their race or ethnicity (for racial or ethnic groups); because of their gender (for men and women); or because of their LGBTQ identity (for LGBTQ people). NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Discrimination in America*, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q25, Q39, Q60a/b. Questions asked of half-sample. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

Additionally, 16% of women report experiencing gender discrimination, and 22% of LGBTQ people report anti-LGBTQ discrimination when seeking housing (Figure 6).

Many Americans say they or a family member have been told or felt they would not be welcome in a neighborhood because of their identity

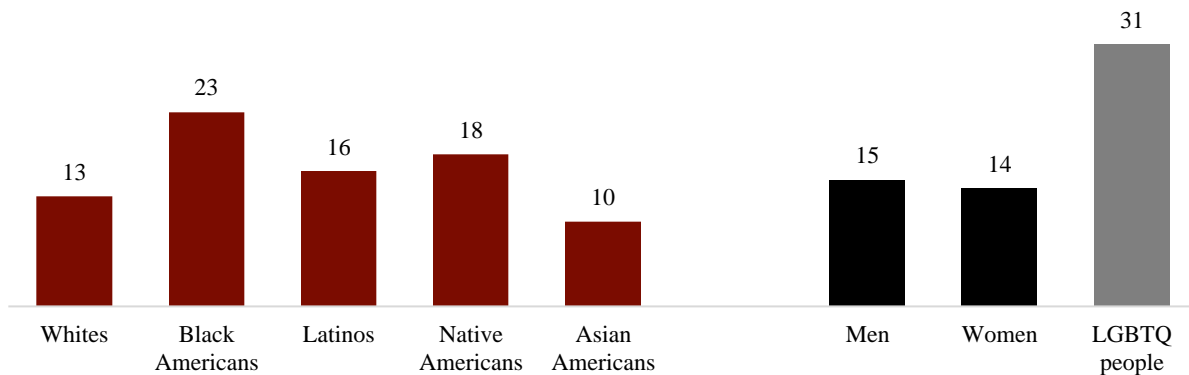
Roughly one-third of LGBTQ people (32%) say they or an LGBTQ friend or family member have been told or felt they would not be welcome in a neighborhood, building, or housing development they were interested in because of their LGBTQ identity.

More than one-third (36%) of Black Americans, as well as 23% of Native Americans and 21% of Latinos, say that they or a family member have been told or felt they would not be welcome in a neighborhood, building, or housing development they were interested in because of their race or ethnicity, compared to 11% of whites who report this experience. Similarly, 32% of LGBTQ people say they or an LGBTQ friend or family member have been told or felt they would not be welcome in a neighborhood or place to live because of their LGBTQ identity.

Roughly a third of LGBTQ people say they have considered moving because of discrimination

As shown in Figure 7, nearly one-third (31%) of LGBTQ people say they have thought about moving or relocating to another area because they have experienced discrimination or unequal treatment where they live.

Figure 7:
Percent of Each Group Saying They Have Considered Moving or Relocating
Because They Have Experienced Discrimination Where They Live



NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Discrimination in America, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q84. Question asked of half-sample. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

Nearly one-quarter (23%) of Black Americans and nearly one in five Native Americans (18%) and Latinos (16%) also report this consideration (Figure 7).

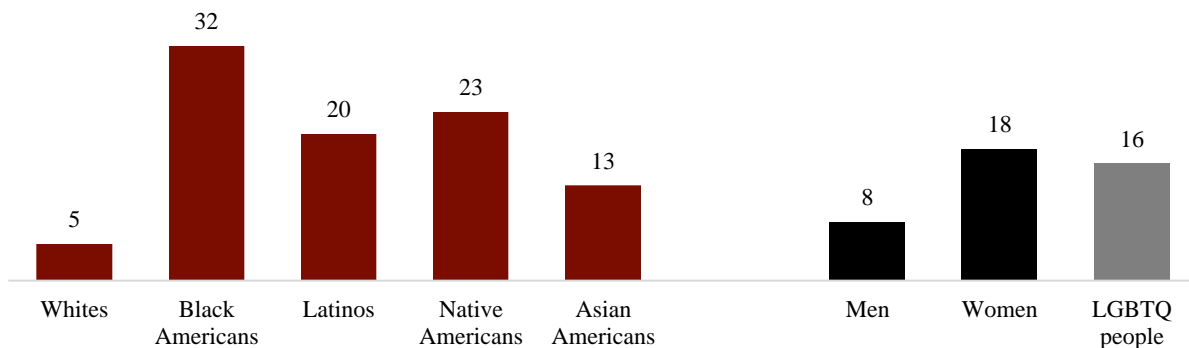
Health Care

While many people think that cost is the main barrier to health care, our survey shows that discrimination is also a major consideration for many Americans.

Many Americans report being discriminated against when going to a doctor or health clinic

Figure 8 shows that many Americans believe they have personally experienced discrimination when going to a doctor or health clinic because of their identity. Notably, nearly a third (32%) of Black Americans and at least one in five Native Americans (23%) and Latinos (20%) say they have experienced racial discrimination when going to a doctor or health clinic.

Figure 8:
Percent of Each Group Saying They Have Been Personally Discriminated Against When Going to A Doctor Or Health Clinic Because of their Race or Ethnicity, Gender, or LGBTQ Identity



Note: percentages shown reflect the percent of each group saying they have been personally discriminated against when going to a doctor or health clinic because of their race or ethnicity (for racial or ethnic groups); because of their gender (for men and women); or because of their LGBTQ identity (for LGBTQ people). NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Discrimination in America*, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q21, Q35, Q54a/b. Questions asked of half-sample. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

Similarly, 18% of women report experiencing gender discrimination, and 16% of LGBTQ people report anti-LGBTQ discrimination when seeking medical care (Figure 8).

Many Americans avoid medical care due to concern they will be discriminated against

Furthermore, 22% of Black Americans, 17% of Latinos, and 15% of Native Americans report that they have avoided seeking medical care for themselves or a member of their family out of concern that they would be discriminated against or treated poorly because of their race, compared to 9% of Asian Americans and only 3% of whites who report this behavior. Nearly one in five (18%) LGBTQ people say they have avoided seeking medical care due to concern they would be discriminated against because they are LGBTQ. Nine percent (9%) of women and 3% of men say they have avoided care out of concern for gender discrimination.

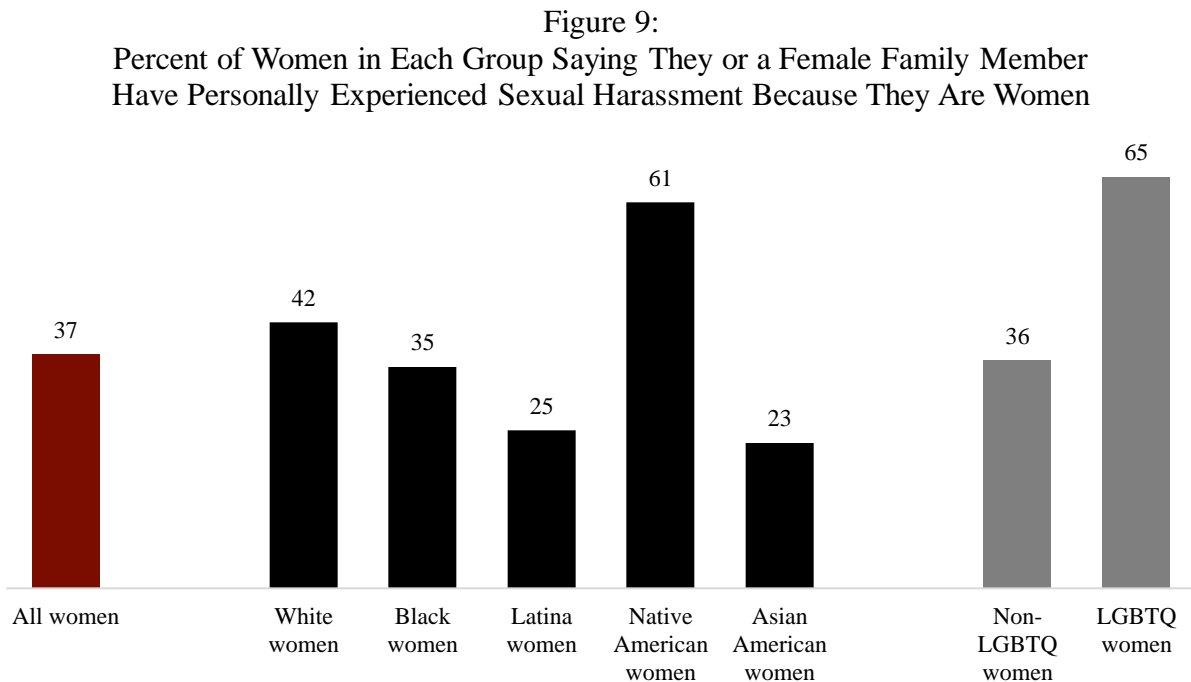
Harassment, Violence, & Slurs

In addition to forms of institutional discrimination, people were asked about experiences of individual forms of discrimination, such as sexual harassment, threats or non-sexual harassment, violence, slurs, insensitive or offensive comments, and more. The survey reveals the pervasive and persistent experience of harassment, slurs, violence, and other forms of individual or interpersonal discrimination in American life.

Importantly, this survey was conducted January 26 – April 9, 2017, prior to the country’s widespread and ongoing discussions beginning in the fall of 2017 regarding sexual assault and harassment. These national conversations may have affected how people viewed or responded to their own experiences, or their willingness to disclose these experiences in a survey.

Sexual harassment reporting varies significantly across different groups of women

People were asked whether they or a family member had ever experienced sexual harassment. Overall, 37% of women said that they or a female family member had been sexually harassed, while 8% of men said they or a male family member had been sexually harassed. Figure 9 shows the percent of women across different groups that, at the time of the survey, reported they or a female family member had ever experienced sexual harassment because they are women.



NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Discrimination in America, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q92. Question asked of half-sample. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

As Figure 9 demonstrates, there are significant differences in rates of reporting among different groups. Sixty-one percent (61%) of Native American women say that they or a female family member have been sexually harassed, the highest reporting among any racial or ethnic group in

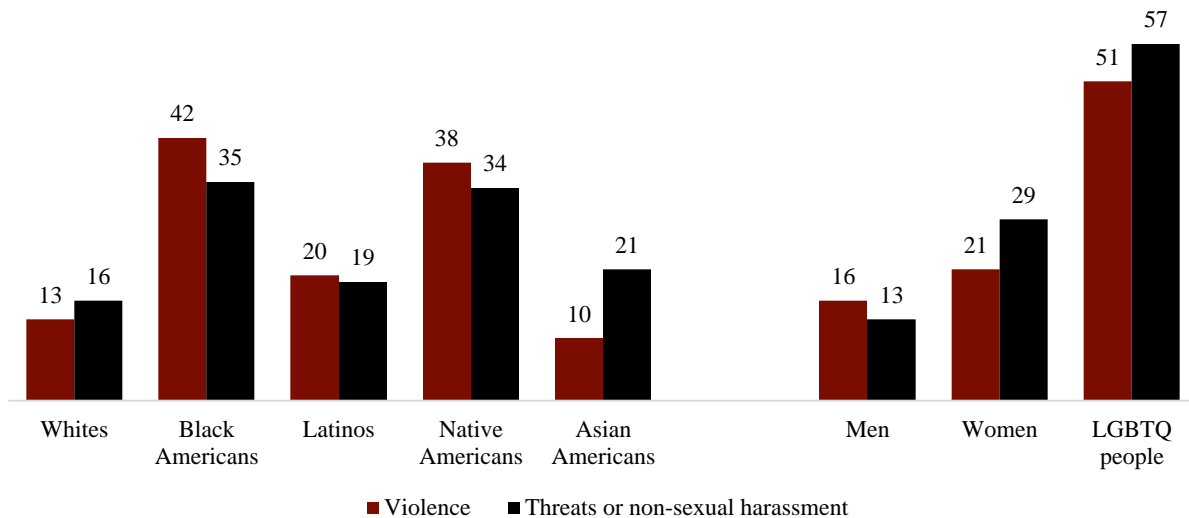
this survey. Additionally, nearly two-thirds of LGBTQ women (65%) say they or a female family member have experienced sexual harassment, compared to 36% of non-LGBTQ women.³

Majority of LGBTQ people and more than a third of Black and Native Americans say they or a family member have been threatened, harassed, or experienced violence because of their identity

People were also asked if they or a family member who shared their identity had experienced violence, threats or non-sexual harassment, or sexual harassment related to that identity. For example, women were asked if they or a female family member had experienced violence because they are women.

Figure 10 shows that experiences of violence and harassment are widespread among many communities. Notably, a majority of all LGBTQ people say that they or an LGBTQ friend or family member have been threatened or non-sexually harassed (57%) or have experienced violence (51%) because they are LGBTQ.

Figure 10:
Percent of Each Group Saying They or a Family Member Have Personally Experienced Violence or Threats or Non-Sexual Harassment Because of Their Race or Ethnicity, Gender, or LGBTQ Identity



Note: numbers shown reflect the percent of each group saying they or a family member have personally experienced violence or threats or non-sexual harassment specifically because of their racial or ethnic identity (for racial or ethnic groups); because they are men or women (for men and women, self-identified); or because of their LGBTQ identity (for LGBTQ people). NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Discrimination in America*, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q91, Q92, Q93. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

Figure 10 also shows widespread experiences of racial violence and harassment: four in ten Black Americans (42%) and Native Americans (38%) say they or a family member have experienced violence because of their race. Over a third of Black Americans (35%) and Native Americans (34%) say that they or a family member have experienced threats or non-sexual

³ “Non-LGBTQ” refers to people who are both heterosexual and cisgender. The word “cisgender” refers to people who do not identify as transgender, but rather identify as the sex they were assumed to be at birth.

harassment because of their race. One in five Latinos report experiences of violence (20%), and 21% of Asian Americans report experiences of threats or non-sexual harassment.

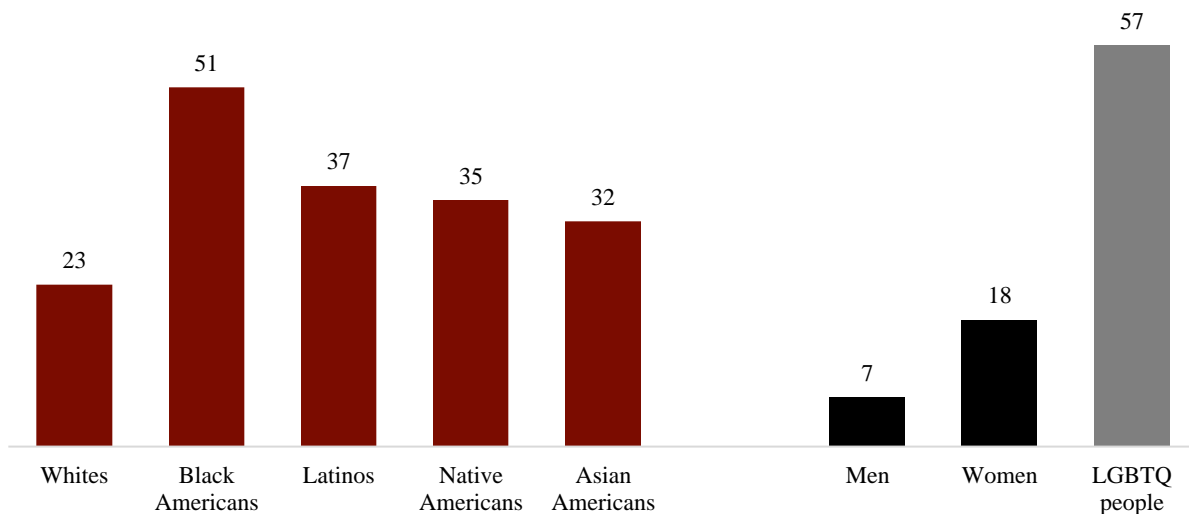
34% of LGBTQ people report verbal harassment in bathrooms

In a separate question, 34% of all LGBTQ people say that they or an LGBTQ friend or family member have been verbally harassed in the bathroom when entering or while using a bathroom, or been told or asked if they were using the wrong bathroom.⁴

Majority of Black, LGBTQ Americans report personally experiencing slurs about their identity

People were asked if they had ever personally experienced slurs, insensitive or offensive comments or negative assumptions, and whether people had ever acted afraid of them because of their race or ethnicity, gender, or LGBTQ identity.⁵ Figure 11 shows the results for experiences of slurs specifically related to race, gender, or LGBTQ identity. For example, 51% of Black Americans say they have personally experienced racial slurs, and 57% of LGBTQ Americans say they have personally experienced slurs about their LGBTQ identity.

Figure 11:
Percent of Each Group Saying They Have Personally Experienced Slurs About Their Race or Ethnicity, Gender, or LGBTQ Identity



Note: numbers shown reflect the percent of each group saying they have personally experienced slurs specifically about their race or ethnicity (for racial or ethnic groups); their gender or gender identity (net) (for men and women); or their gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation (net) (for LGBTQ people). NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Discrimination in America, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q63a/b. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

Findings on other forms of individual discrimination are available in each individual report.

⁴ Due to split sampling of this question, there are too few transgender respondents to analyze separately.

⁵ Multiple responses were allowed; respondents could answer that these occurrences were about their race or ethnicity, their gender, their gender identity, their sexual orientation, and/or some other reason.

Education & Income

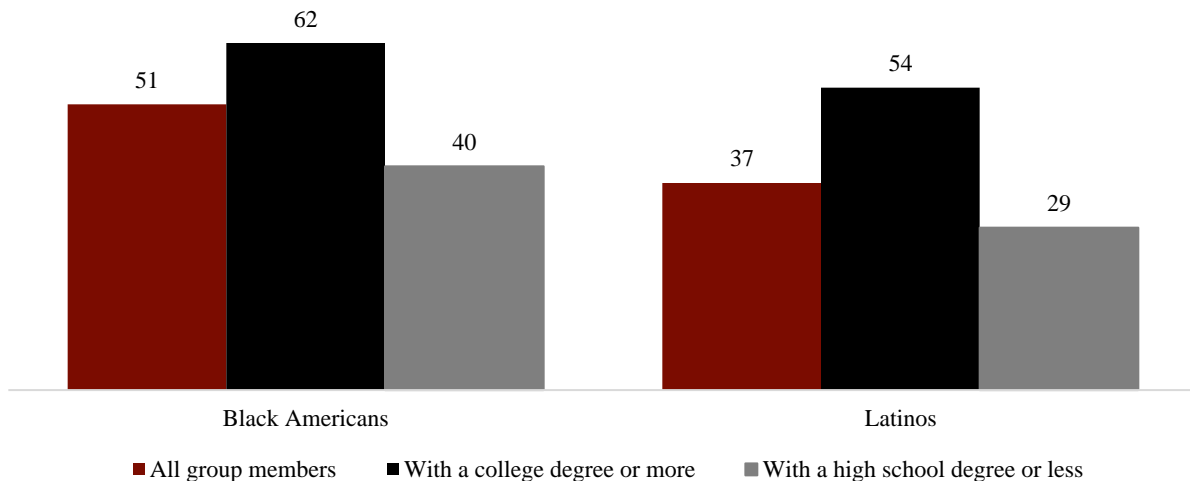
While some might expect that more educational experience or higher incomes might act as shields from discrimination, this survey demonstrates clearly that this is not the case for many Americans. For many minority groups, individuals with higher education and income are *more likely* to report various forms of individual discrimination, with few if any differences in reporting institutional forms of discrimination.⁶

Minority group members with more education or income are more likely to report experiencing individual discrimination

In the context of individual or interpersonal discrimination, income and education differences do result in different life experiences – however, the survey shows that individuals with more education or higher income are actually *more likely* to report experiences of discrimination.

Figure 12 shows that Black Americans and Latinos with a college degree are significantly more likely to report experiencing racial or ethnic slurs, compared to Black people or Latinos with a high school degree or less.⁷ The same findings occur when examining differences in personal income. Minority group members with high incomes (those earning \$75,000 or more per year) are significantly more likely than their lower income counterparts (those earning less than \$25,000 per year) to say that they have personally experienced racial or ethnic slurs.

Figure 12:
Percent of Each Group, By Education, Saying They Have Personally Experienced Slurs About Their Race or Ethnicity



NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Discrimination in America*, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q63a/Q64a. Question asked of half-sample. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

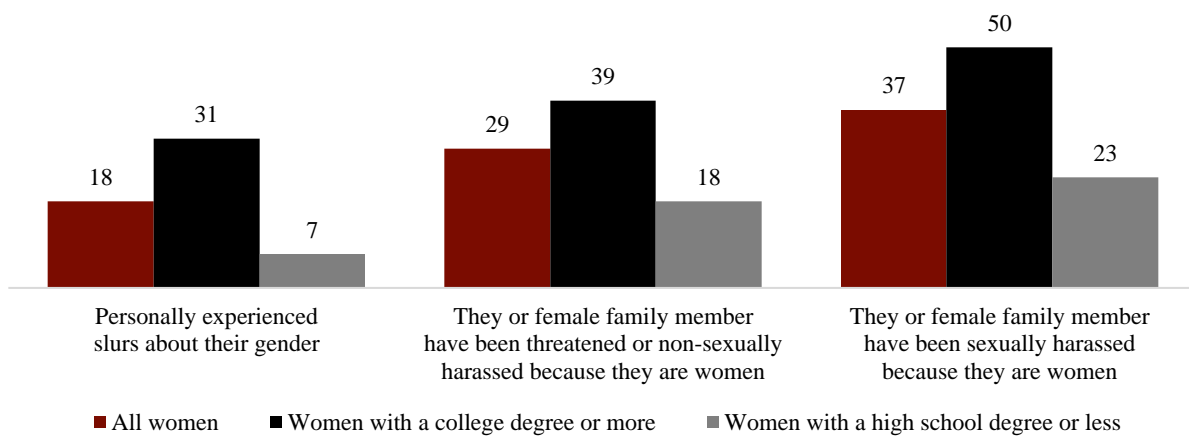
⁶ See also Pew Research Center (2016), “Blacks with college experience more likely to say they faced discrimination,” <http://pewrsr.ch/2abk7up>, for a similar finding.

⁷ There are too few Asian American and Native American respondents to analyze education differences on a question asked of half the sample, and so this figure shows only Black and Latino responses.

For example, there is a 25-point gap among Latinos: 54% of Latinos with a college degree say that someone has referred to them or a group they belong to using racial or ethnic slurs, compared to 29% of Latinos with a high school degree or less (Figure 12).

Similarly, Figure 13 shows that women with a college degree are more likely than those with a high school degree or less to report various forms of individual discrimination.

Figure 13:
Percent of Women, By Education, Reporting
Various Forms of Individual Discrimination Related to Their Gender



NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Discrimination in America, January 26 – April 9, 2017. Q63a/Q64a, Q63b/Q64b, Q92. Each question asked of half-sample. Total N=3453 U.S. adults.

Women with a college degree are more than four times as likely as women with a high school degree or less to report that they personally have experienced insensitive or offensive comments (38% vs. 8%) or slurs about their gender (31% vs. 7%). Women with a college degree are also more than twice as likely as women with a high school degree or less to report that they or a female family member have been sexually harassed (50% vs. 23%) or threatened or non-sexually harassed (39% vs. 18%) (Figure 13).

Rare differences by education or income in experiencing institutional discrimination

For institutional forms of discrimination, only rarely are there instances where there are significant differences in experience by income or education. For example, a majority of Black Americans across the income or education spectrums report experiencing racial discrimination in the workplace or when interacting with police; higher education or income does not provide protection from these experiences.

Conclusion

This poll surveyed 3,453 Americans – including Black, Latino, white, Asian, and Native Americans, as well as men, women, and LGBTQ people – and asked them about both their beliefs regarding and experiences with discrimination in America.

A majority of all groups (except men) believe that, generally speaking, discrimination against their own group exists in America today. However, there is significant variation across these groups in their personal experiences of discrimination.

In the context of institutional discrimination, across all groups, the top two most frequently reported experiences of discrimination are in the workplace: when applying for jobs and when it comes to being paid equally or considered for promotions. The third most frequently reported varies across groups, highlighting the ways in which discrimination in America differently manifests for different groups: Black and Native Americans' third most frequently reported experience of racial discrimination is when interacting with the police, while Asian Americans and Latinos' is when seeking housing. White Americans' third most frequently reported experience is when applying to or while attending college.

Not widely recognized is the pervasive experience of individual forms of discrimination, such as harassment, violence, and slurs. This survey illustrates the widespread, far-too-common experience of ill treatment for many Americans: nearly 60% of LGBTQ people and a majority of Black Americans, for example, report personally experiencing slurs about their identity.

Another less recognized point illuminated by this series: while financial barriers to health care remain a significant obstacle in America, this survey also reveals that discrimination is a barrier for many Americans. Furthermore, a significant share of Americans avoid seeking health care due to concern they will be discriminated against because of their identity.

Finally, though some may expect that educational experience or higher income may act as shields from discrimination, this survey demonstrates clearly that this is not the case for many Americans. For many minority groups, individuals with higher education and income are *more likely* to report various forms of individual discrimination, with few if any differences in reporting institutional forms of discrimination.

Discrimination has been widely shown to have significant, harmful effects on health and well-being. Taken together, this series illustrates the significant and widespread level of discrimination against many groups in America today, as well as the complex manifestation of these experiences across different groups and different areas of life. Finally, the series demonstrates that, rather than isolated incidents, these experiences reflect a larger, systemic pattern of discrimination in America, with significant implications for the health and justice of both individual Americans and the nation as a whole.

Methodology

The poll in this study is part of an on-going series of surveys developed by researchers at the Harvard Opinion Research Program (HORP) at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and National Public Radio. The research team consists of the following members at each institution.

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health: Robert J. Blendon, Professor of Health Policy and Political Analysis and Executive Director of HORP; Logan S. Casey, Research Associate in Public Opinion; John M. Benson, Senior Research Scientist and Managing Director of HORP; Justin M. Sayde, Administrative and Research Manager; Caitlin L. McMurtry, Research Fellow; and Tiffany Chan, Research Fellow.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: Carolyn Miller, Senior Program Officer, Research and Evaluation; Jordan Reese, Director of Media Relations; and Dwayne Proctor, Director, Achieving Health Equity Portfolio.

NPR: Anne Gudenkauf, Senior Supervising Editor, Science Desk; Joe Neel, Deputy Senior Supervising Editor, Science Desk; Keith Woods, Vice President, Diversity in News and Operations; Sara Goo, Acting Managing Editor, Digital News; Vickie Walton-James, Senior Supervising Editor, National Desk; Luis Clemens, Supervising Editor, National Desk; Alison Macadam, Senior Editorial Specialist; Alison Kodjak, Correspondent, Science Desk; and Rae Ellen Bichell, Reporter, Science Desk.

Interviews were conducted by SSRS of Glen Mills (PA) via telephone (including both landline and cell phone) using random-digit dialing, January 26 – April 9, 2017, among a nationally representative probability-based sample of 3,453 adults age 18 or older. The survey included nationally representative samples of Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, as well as white Americans; men and women, and LGBTQ adults. Interviews were conducted in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

Possible sources of non-sampling error include non-response bias, as well as question wording and ordering effects. Non-response in telephone surveys produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population. To compensate for these known biases and for variations in probability of selection within and across households, sample data are weighted by cell phone/landline use and demographics (sex, age, education, and Census region) to reflect the true population. Other techniques, including random-digit dialing, replicate subsamples, and systematic respondent selection within households, are used to ensure that the sample is representative.

Most questions regarding race, ethnicity, and gender were asked only of in-group members: for example, African-Americans were asked their views about discrimination against African-Americans. Latinos were asked their views about discrimination against Latinos. Women were asked about discrimination against women. In addition to the questions regarding race, ethnicity, and gender, questions regarding sexual orientation and gender identity were only asked of self-identified members of the LGBTQ community.

Each report in the “Discrimination in America” series is available at HORP’s website: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/horp/discrimination-in-america/>.

Methodology (continued)

	Number of Interviews (unweighted)	Margin of Error at the 95% confidence level (percentage points)	Weighted % of total sample
Total	3453	±3.2	100
Whites	902	±4.7	64
African Americans	802	±4.1	12
Latinos	803	±4.5	15
Asian Americans	500	±5.8	6
Native Americans (American Indians/Alaska Natives)	342	±8.0	1
Men*	1814	±4.5	48
Women*	1596	±4.6	52
LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer)**	489	±6.6	6

* Men and women are self-identified. Men includes both transgender and cisgender men, and women includes both transgender and cisgender women.

** LGBTQ also includes people who identify as genderqueer or gender non-conforming.

For further methodological information, see the methodology section of each individual report.