A NATIONAL SURVEY OF BLACK WOMEN

OUR POWER, OUR LEGACY





Introduction

Racial wealth gaps are widening as a result of 400 years of slavery, segregation, and institutionalized discrimination. These gaps have intensified against the backdrop of COVID-19. According to a study by W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the United States economy could be \$8 trillion larger by 2050 if the country eliminated racial disparities in health, education, incarceration and employment. America needs bold, cross-sector solutions to rebuild.

We need multiple, structural solutions focused on generational wealth creation in Black communities. Wealth provides opportunity -- from the ability to respond in emergency situations to the ability to pay for educational and health services to the ability to seamlessly transition between jobs. To create generational wealth in Black communities, we need solutions that honor the histories and lived experiences of Black communities, improve access to high-quality schools, advance economic and health outcomes for Black communities, and increase the participation and leadership of Black communities in democracy.

This is why The Highland Project was created: to deeply invest in Black women leaders of communities, institutions, and systems who are driving bold solutions resulting in multi-generational wealth and opportunity in their communities. Black women are powerful leaders who imagine, design, build, and scale bold change. They represent tremendous political, economic and intellectual power. And yet, these very systems are not serving Black women. The voices and leadership of Black women are not centered in these systems either: 0% of Governors and U.S. Senators are Black women. Just 3.6% of K-12 Superintendents and 0.2% of Fortune 500 CEOs are Black women.

We commissioned this poll with brilliant corners Research and Strategies to center the very real and lived experiences of Black women in America. It is our hope that this research is used to rally policymakers, politicians, and practitioners around a set of solutions and priorities that will result in multigenerational opportunity with Black women at the core. We are the driving force behind our communities, institutions, and systems: it is time for our power to be met with actions that enable us to thrive.

Gabrielle Wyatt Founder, The Highland Project

Methodology

These findings are from a proprietary survey conducted by brilliant corners Research & Strategies on behalf of the Highland Project. This is a survey of 733 African American women at least 18 years of age and registered to vote. The survey was conducted by phone, using professional interviewers starting on June 15th, 2021 and ending on June 28th, 2021. The survey's sample was drawn randomly from the voter file and geographically stratified for proportional representation. The data was weighted slightly to adhere to population demographics. The margin of error overall is +/- 3.6 percent, with a 95 percent confidence interval. Notably, the margin of error for sub-groups will be higher depending on the size of the sub-group sample and the size of the actual response to any given question.

Key Groups

Breakout	% of Total	Definition
Under 50	53%	Under the age of 50
50 and Over	47%	Over the age of 50
Non-College	65%	Some college or less
College Grad	32%	Bachelors degree or higher
Married / With Partner	38%	Married or with partner
Single	31%	Not married
Moms	27%	Kids under 18 living in household

Executive Summary

What We Found

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND HIGHLIGHTS



Black women plan to continue demonstrating their political power. Going into midterms, political leaders must be focused on engaging Black women on their top issues and concerns if they want to garner their votes.

O2) THE ECONOMY

The economy is not back for all Black women.

(03) TOP CONCERNS

Racial discrimination, voting rights, and education are at the very top of their concerns.

(04) DEFINING SUCCESS

Living a successful life is not just about dollars in pocket.

(O5) BARRIERS

Racial discrimination is <u>the</u> barrier to wealth.

What's Next

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOVING FROM RHETORIC TO ACTION

- O1 CENTER AND INVEST IN BLACK WOMEN
- O2) REDEFINE THE WEALTH GAP

- O3 PURSUE CHANGE ACROSS SECTORS
 THAT ADDRESSES SYSTEMIC RACISM
- (04) PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS
- 05) ELIMINATE STUDENT DEBT

What's Next

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOVING FROM RHETORIC TO ACTION



CENTER AND INVEST IN BLACK WOMEN

There is no future prosperity in America without Black women – when Black women win, everyone wins. Therefore it is essential Black women leadership is centered, empowered and sustained. To realize the power of Black female leadership requires multi-year and multi-million dollar investments. The Highland Project seeks to increase capital to leaders by providing direct, unrestricted funding. We must shift trusting capital into the hands of Black women.



REDEFINE THE WEALTH GAP

Wealth is more than just money. It's about power, leadership, social mobility, ownership, and justice. It's about removing any barrier that hinders opportunity. With Black women at the center, we must take a holistic approach to defining wealth.

What's Next

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOVING FROM RHETORIC TO ACTION



PURSUE CHANGE ACROSS SECTORS THAT ADDRESSES SYSTEMIC RACISM

Racism and discrimination are at the root of Black women's top concerns. We need solutions across sectors – from education to healthcare to criminal justice – that address root causes of social problems to fundamentally change outcomes. This looks like tackling conditions that keep systemic challenges in place – policies, practices, resource flows, and power dynamics.



PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS

Addressing systemic racism means keeping voting protections in place at every level of democracy.



ELIMINATE STUDENT DEBT

Black women are some of the most educated <u>and</u> saddled with student debt – a crippling barrier to wealth building. Though women are carrying about two-thirds of the nation's at-minimum \$1.5 trillion student loan debt, Black women have the highest student loan debt of any racial or ethnic group.

What We Found

Finding 1: Black women plan to continue demonstrating their political power.

Political Power

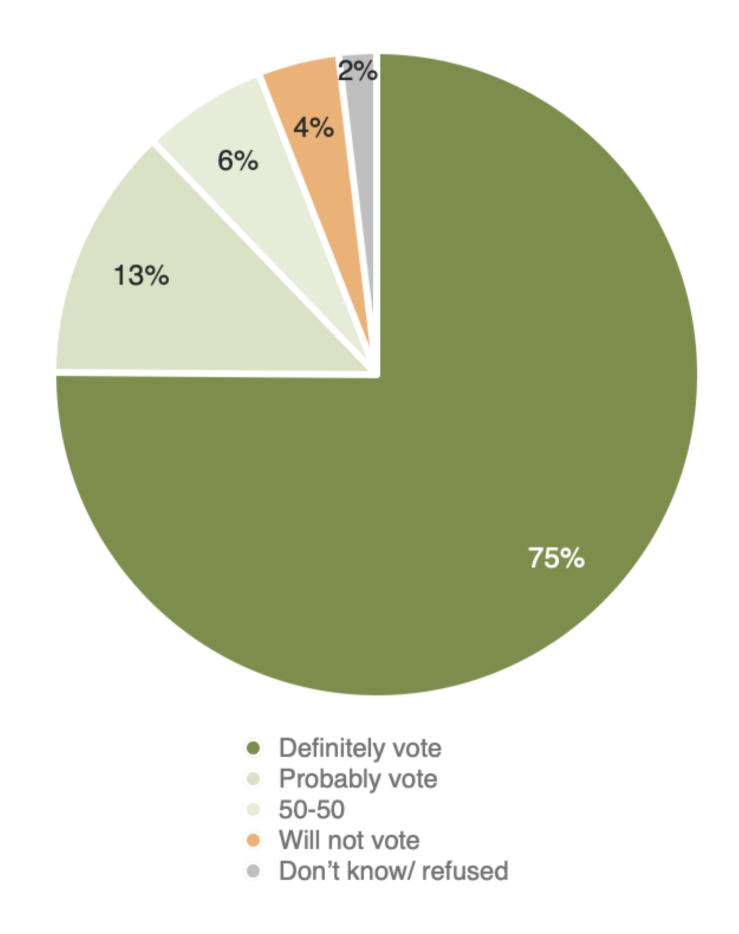
FINDING 1

- Going into midterms, political leaders must be focused on engaging Black women on their top issues and concerns if they want to garner their votes.
- Without question, 2020 showed us how important Black women voters are to democracy.
- However, as our findings suggest, Black women are not a monolith. Their issue concerns, aspirations, and value considerations are as diverse as they are. There is no one size fits all messaging or policy approach that will work when trying to communicate and engage with Black women.

Nearly 90% say they will vote during midterms.

Q: "What are the chances that you will vote in the November 2022 midterm elections for Congress and other offices— will you definitely vote, probably vote, are the chances 50-50, or will you probably not vote?"

See appendix for breakdown by key demographics.



Finding 2: The economy is not back for all Black women.

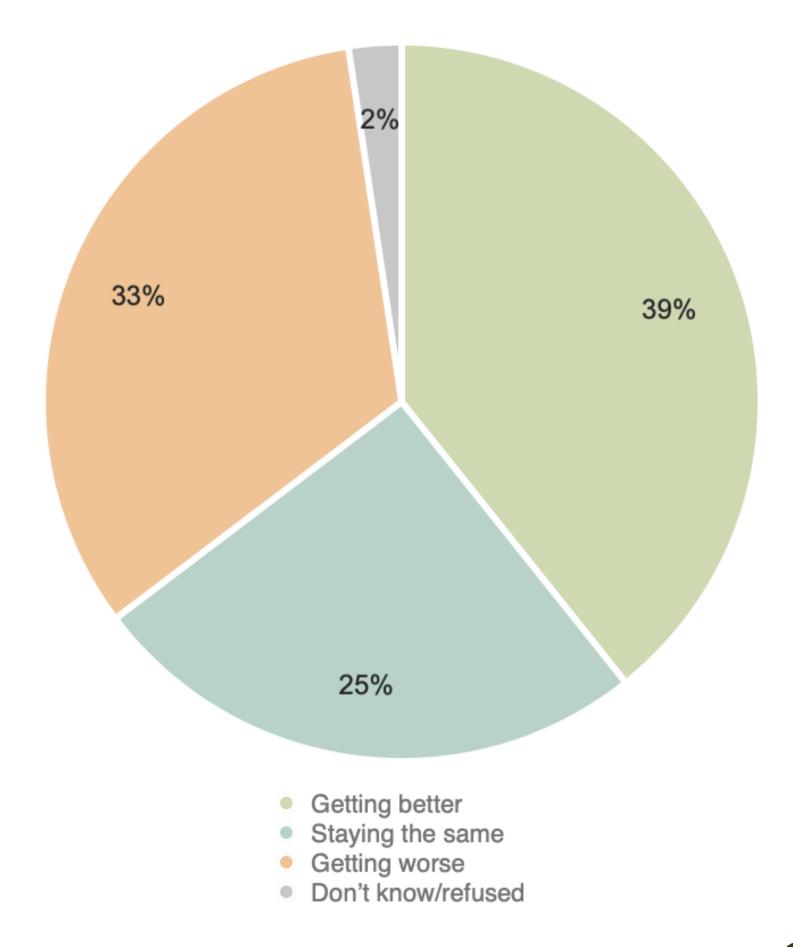
The Economy

FINDING 3

- While a majority of Black women now think the country is heading in the right direction, it is not simply because of the economy. One-third of Black women think economic conditions in the country are still getting worse.
- A 41% plurality of Millennials/Gen Z women think the economy is getting worse.
- Black women by and large do not think they are getting ahead economically at this time, particularly younger, single, and non-college graduates.
- They do not see obstacles to advancing and improving communities just through the lens of conventional economic issues - moral values are important.

One-third of Black women feel the economy is getting worse.

Q: "In your opinion, are economic conditions in the country getting better, staying the same, or getting worse?"



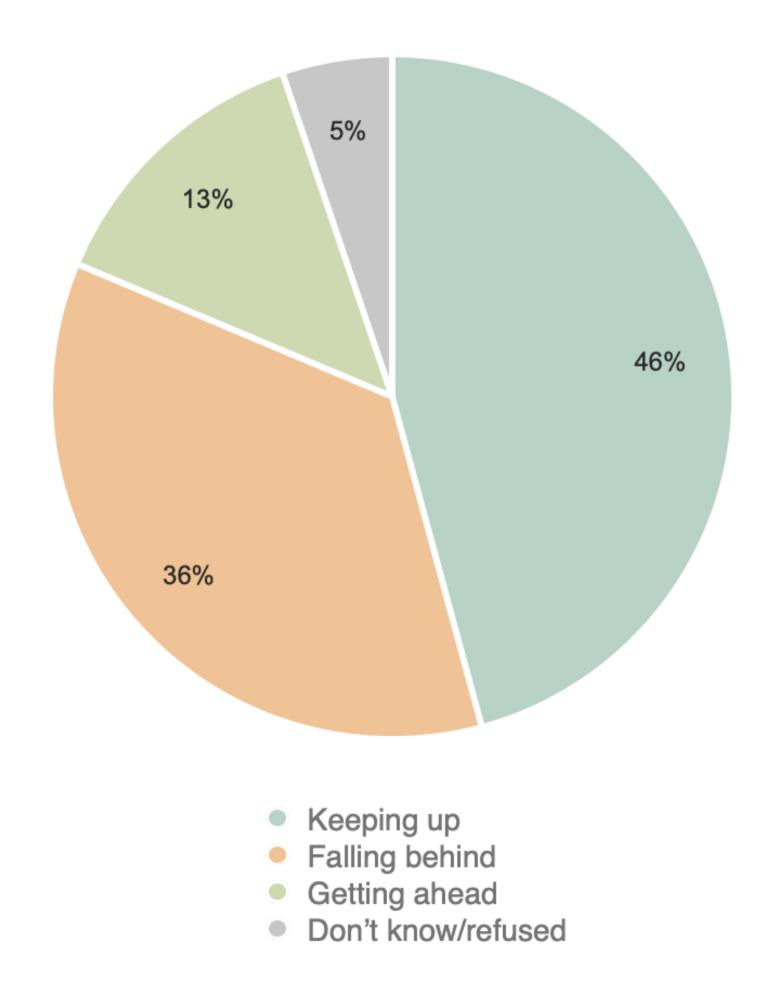
Views of the economy split largely along age lines.

	Total	Under 50	50 and over	Non-college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Getting better	39%	34%	46%	39%	42%	49%	31%	40%
Staying the same	25%	28%	23%	25%	25%	24%	27%	29%
Getting worse	33%	37%	28%	34%	31%	26%	39%	30%
Don't know/ refused	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%

- 34% of under 50s said that economic conditions in the country are getting better, versus 46% of over 50s
- A 41% plurality of Millennials/Gen Z women think the economy is getting worse

Black women do not think they are economically getting ahead...

Q: "Thinking about how the economy is going, specifically for you and your family – would you say your wage or salary is just keeping up with the cost of living, falling behind the cost of living, or rising to the point where you can really get ahead?"



...particularly women who are younger, single, and non-college graduates

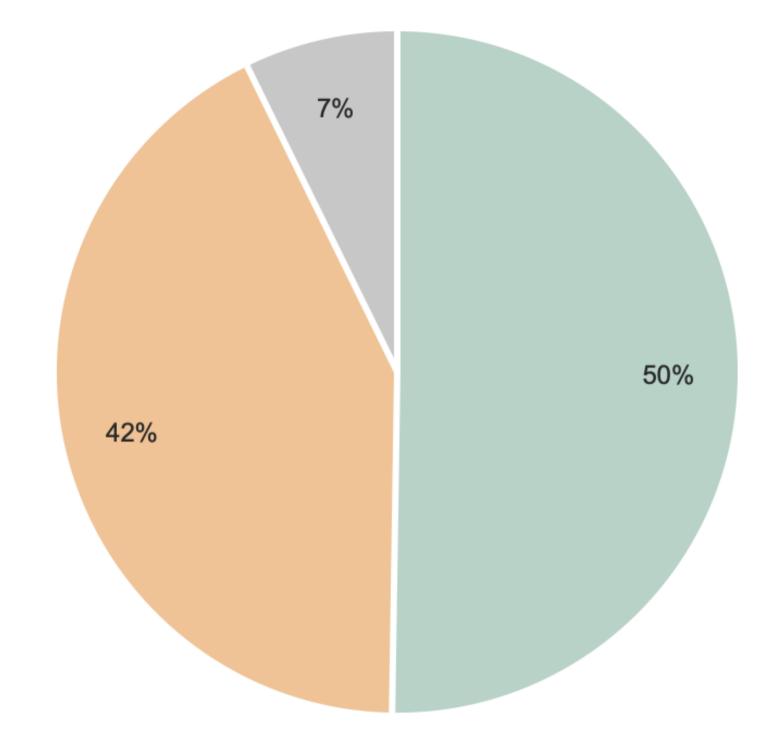
	Total	Under 50	50 and over	Non-college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Keeping up	46%	45%	47%	45%	47%	52%	39%	53%
Falling behind	36%	38%	33%	40%	29%	31%	38%	28%
Getting ahead	13%	15%	12%	11%	18%	14%	17%	16%
Don't know/ refused	5%	3%	8%	4%	7%	3%	5%	3%

• 55% majority of households making less than \$50k/year say wages are falling behind versus only 23% households \$50k+

Improving communities is not just about economic conditions.

Q: "Tell me which of the following two statements comes closest to your opinion when thinking about your community:

- Today, the biggest obstacles to our advancing and improving our community have more to do with a lack of good paying jobs and economic opportunities, and a lack of quality public schools for our kids than anything else.
- Today, the biggest obstacles to our advancing and improving our community have more to do with a decline in moral values, a lack of personal responsibility and the continued breakdown of the family structure than anything else. "



- Lack of economic opportunities, quality public schools
- Decline in moral values, lack of personal responsibility
- Don't know/refused

Finding 3: Racial discrimination, voting rights, and education are at the very top of their concerns.

Top Concerns

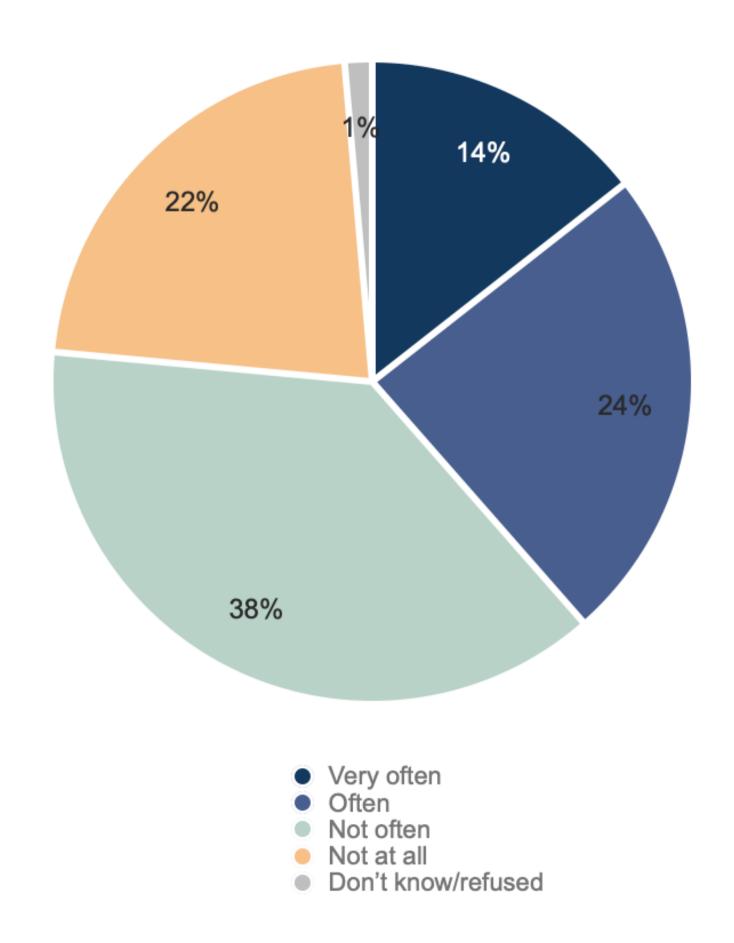
FINDING 2

- Racism and discrimination, along with voting rights are at the very top of their concerns.
- Over one-third of Black women experience racism in their everyday life.
- Education issues from access to safe and in-person learning and K-12 schools to college affordability follow closely as top issues.

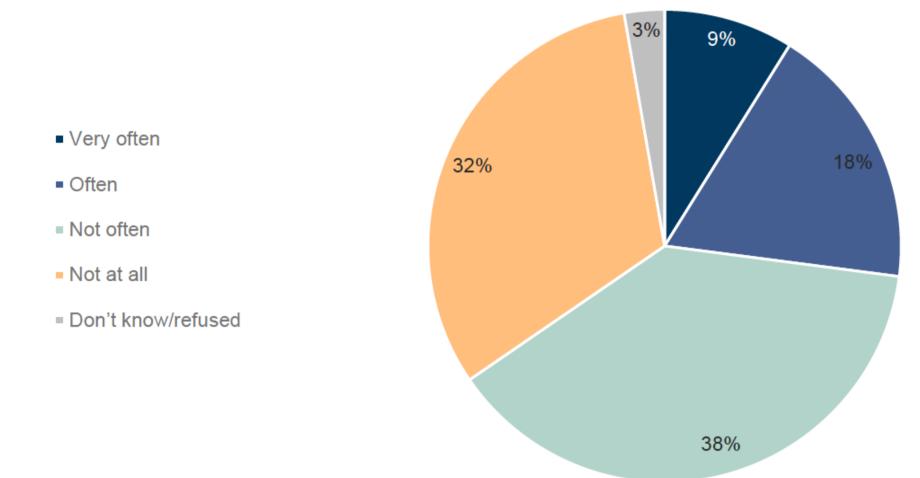
Over one-third of Black women experience racism often in their everyday life.

Q79: "How often would you say you experience racism or discrimination in your everyday life? Would you say very often, often, not often or not at all?"

See appendix for breakdown by key demographics.

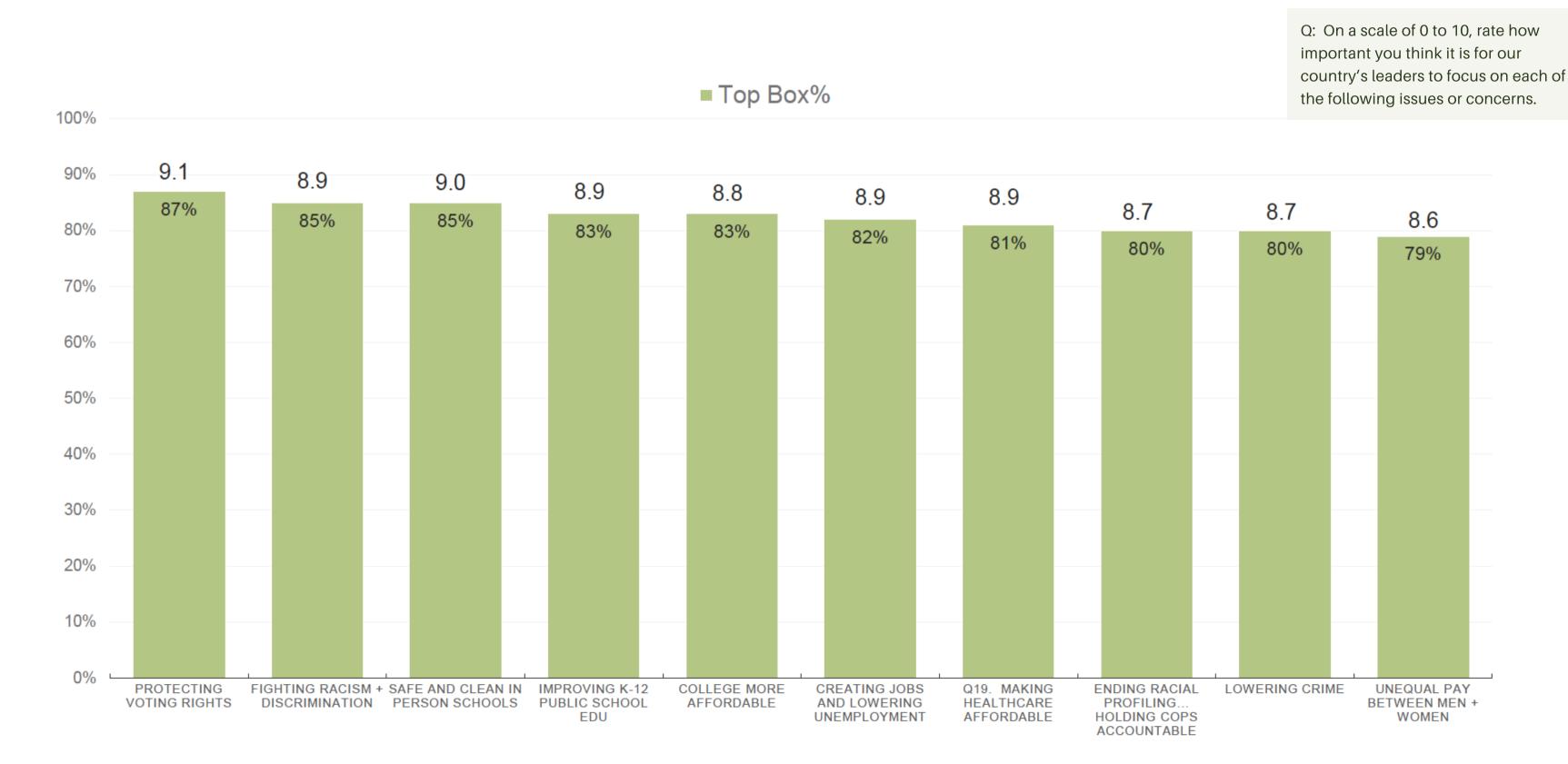


Particularly for single women, sexism is experienced far too often in everyday life.

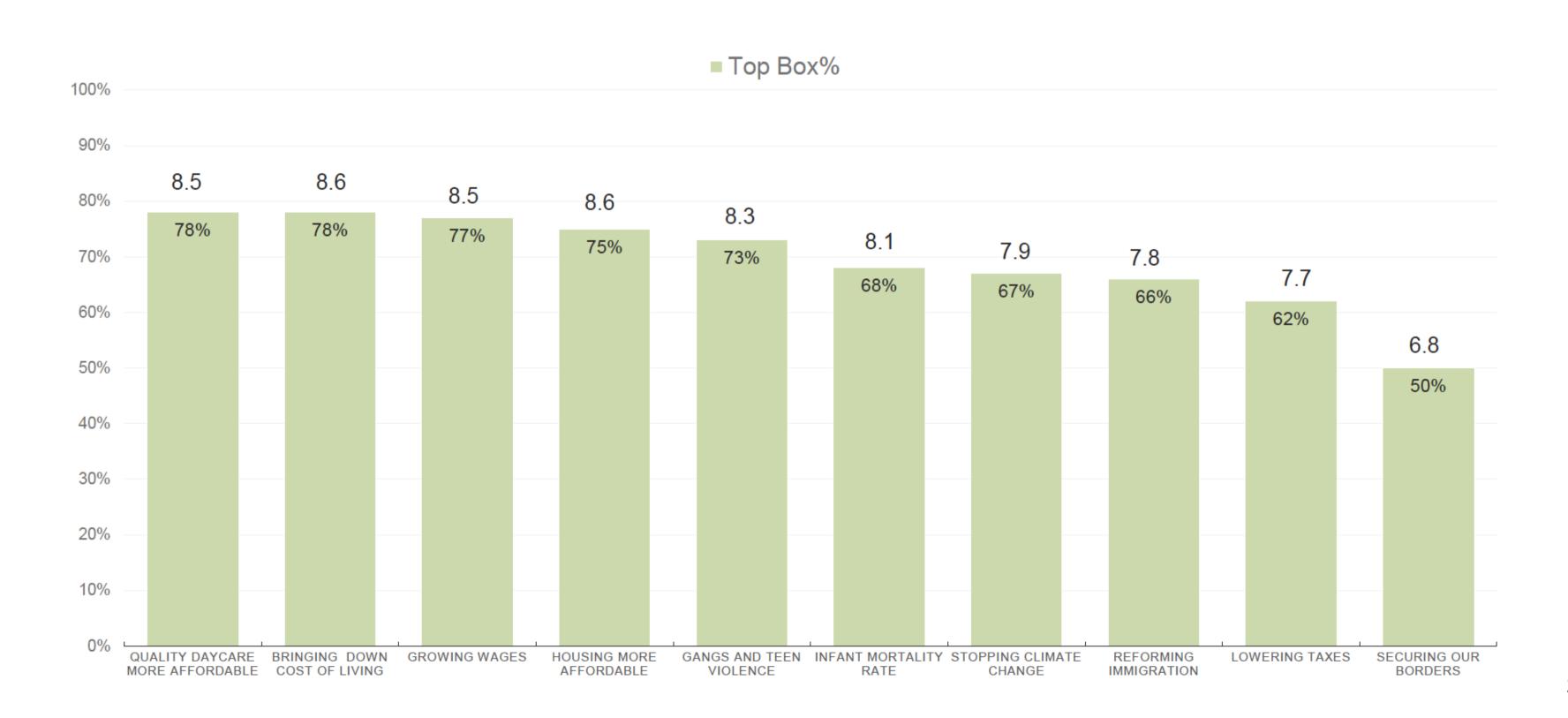


	Total	Under 50	50 and over	Non-college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Total Often	27%	29%	25%	26%	31%	27%	39%	34%
Very often	9%	7%	11%	8%	10%	6%	10%	11%
Often	18%	22%	14%	18%	21%	21%	19%	23%
Not often	38%	37%	40%	40%	36%	36%	45%	34%
Not at all	32%	32%	31%	32%	32%	34%	24%	30%
Don't know/refused	3%	1%	4%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%

Voting rights, fighting racism and education issues top the list of concerns Black women want leaders most focused on.



Securing borders and lowering taxes fall toward end of top 10 issues.



Detail: Top 10 Issues by Key Demographics

	Mean (0-10)	Total Top Box (8-10)	Under 50	50 and over	Non- college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Q24. PROTECTING VOTING RIGHTS	9.1	87%	83%	91%	83%	95%	88%	87%	84%
Q12. FIGHTING RACISM & DISCRIMINATION	8.9	85%	82%	89%	82%	91%	82%	89%	76%
Q20. SAFE AND CLEAN IN PERSON SCHOOLS	9.0	85%	82%	88%	87%	82%	88%	83%	80%
Q29. IMPROVING K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDU	8.9	83%	84%	82%	83%	85%	78%	89%	85%
Q28. COLLEGE MORE AFFORDABLE	8.8	83%	79%	87%	84%	82%	80%	88%	75%
Q10. CREATING JOBS AND LOWERING UNEMPLOYMENT	8.9	82%	80%	85%	81%	86%	85%	81%	80%
Q19. MAKING HEALTHCARE AFFORDABLE	8.9	81%	80%	83%	81%	84%	80%	83%	81%
Q17. ENDING RACIAL PROFILING HOLDING COPS ACCOUNTABLE	8.7	80%	83%	77%	77%	87%	81%	81%	80%
Q16. LOWERING CRIME	8.7	80%	71%	90%	82%	75%	78%	80%	76%
Q15. UNEQUAL PAY BETWEEN MEN & WOMEN	8.6	79%	79%	79%	78%	83%	78%	77%	79%

Continued: Top 10 Issues

	Mean (0-10)	Total Top Box (8-10)	Under 50	50 and over	Non- college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Q26. QUALITY DAYCARE MORE AFFORDABLE	8.5	78%	75%	82%	80%	74%	81%	77%	74%
Q27. BRINGING DOWN COST OF LIVING	8.6	78%	79%	76%	79%	77%	77%	73%	82%
Q11. GROWING WAGES	8.5	77%	80%	73%	77%	76%	77%	77%	79%
Q25. HOUSING MORE AFFORDABLE	8.6	75%	74%	75%	77%	71%	72%	76%	75%
Q23. GANGS AND TEEN VIOLENCE	8.3	73%	73%	73%	74%	72%	73%	73%	76%
Q21. INFANT MORTALITY RATE	8.1	68%	68%	68%	67%	71%	65%	74%	74%
Q22. STOPPING CLIMATE CHANGE	7.9	67%	61%	73%	64%	72%	68%	70%	56%
Q13. REFORMING IMMIGRATION	7.8	66%	66%	66%	64%	71%	68%	63%	67%
Q18. LOWERING TAXES	7.7	62%	54%	70%	66%	52%	58%	59%	62%
Q14. SECURING OUR BORDERS	6.8	50%	38%	62%	57%	33%	48%	46%	49%

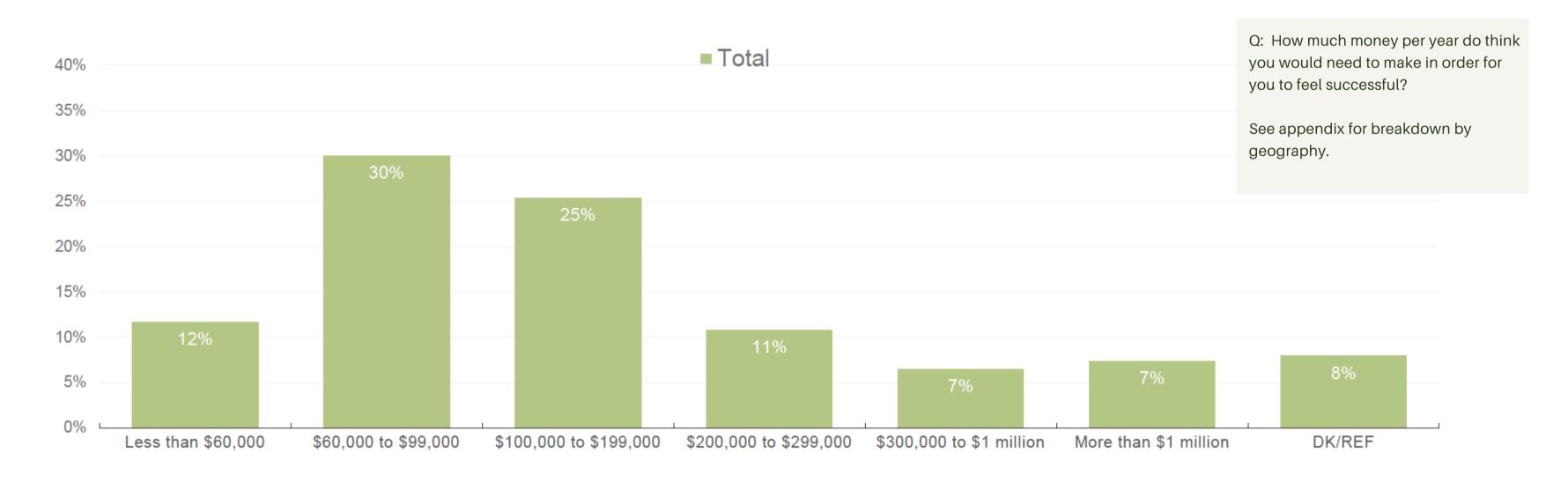
Finding 4: Living a successful life is not just about dollars in pocket.

Defining Success

FINDING 4

- Black women are defining success on their own terms and not necessarily in terms of salary.
- Success for them is primarily about how they live their lives ethically and honestly, the relationship they have with family, not needing to be dependent on anyone financially, having a rewarding job, and eating healthy.

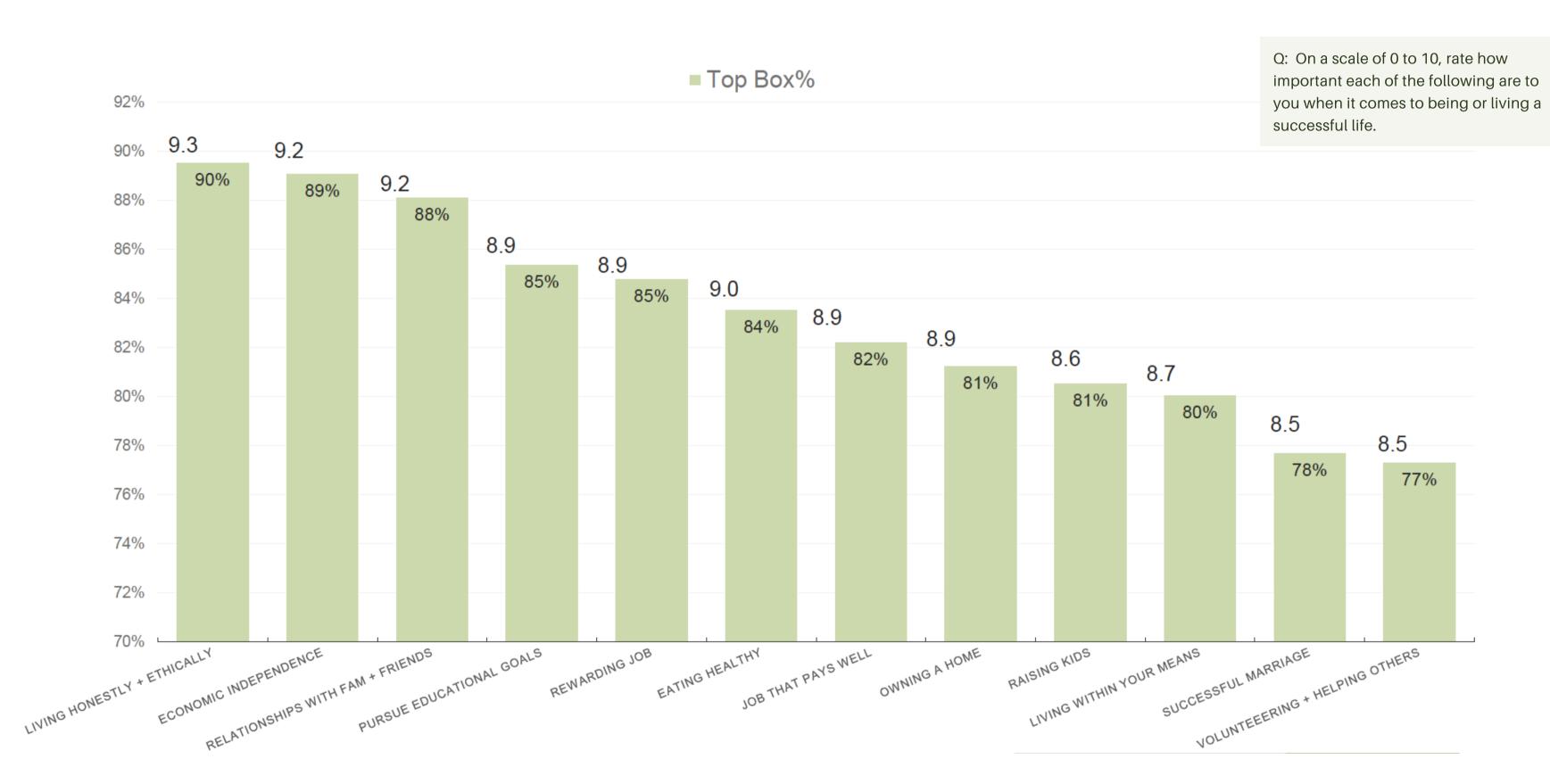
Really large salaries are not necessarily the keys to success.



	Total	Under 50	50 and over	Non-college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
< \$60,000	12%	8%	16%	14%	6%	8%	12%	11%
\$60,000 - \$99,000	30%	30%	30%	32%	27%	29%	35%	26%
\$100,000 - \$199,000	25%	27%	23%	21%	36%	31%	23%	23%
\$200,000 - \$299,000	11%	13%	8%	11%	11%	12%	10%	14%
\$300,000 - \$1 million	7%	7%	7%	6%	8%	6%	4%	7%
\$1 million+	7%	8%	6%	8%	6%	6%	9%	9%

Rather success is also defined as

living ethically, having loving relationships with family, and not needing financial help from others.



Finding 5: Racial discrimination is the barrier to wealth.

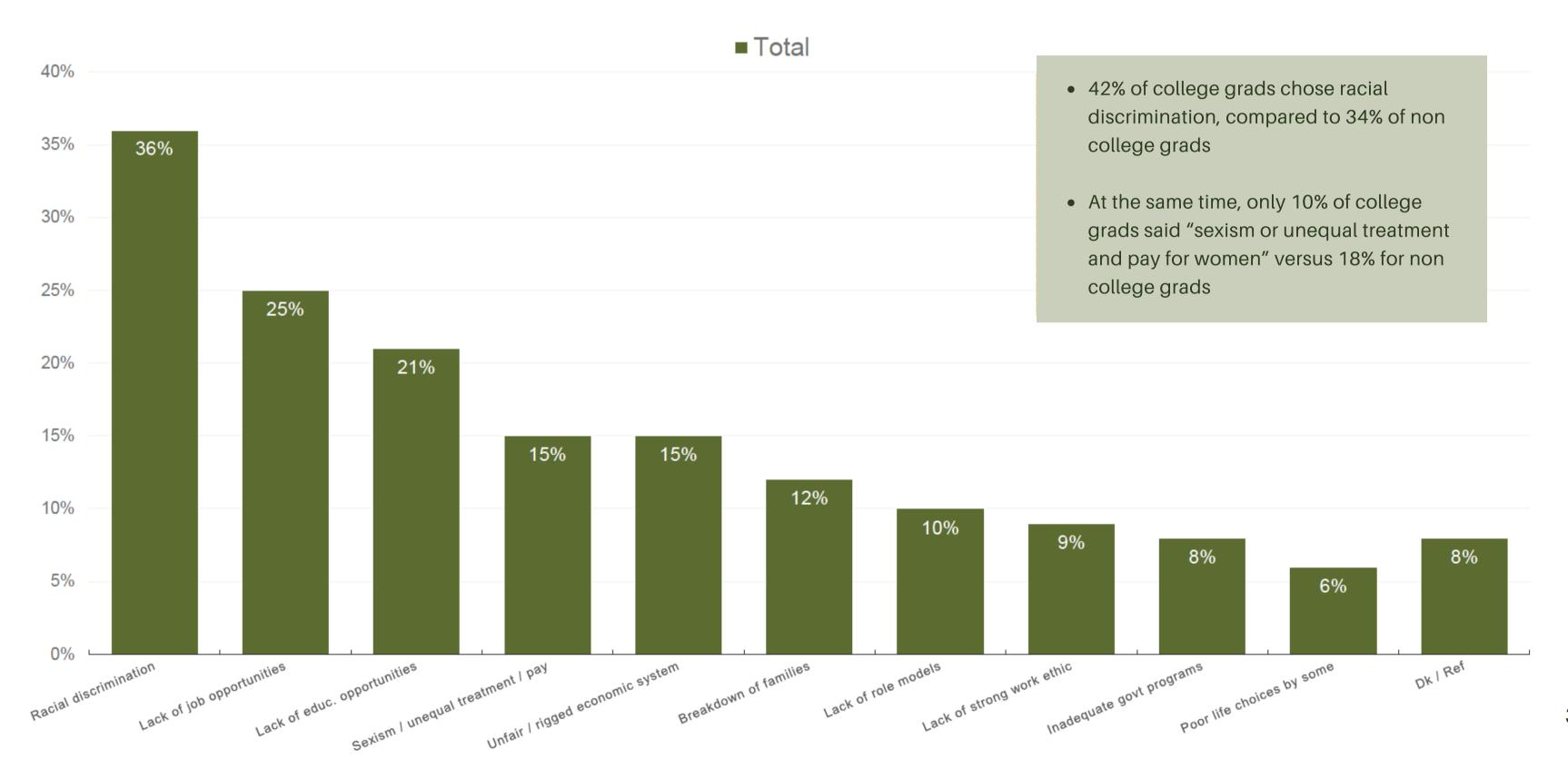
Barriers to Wealth

FINDING 5

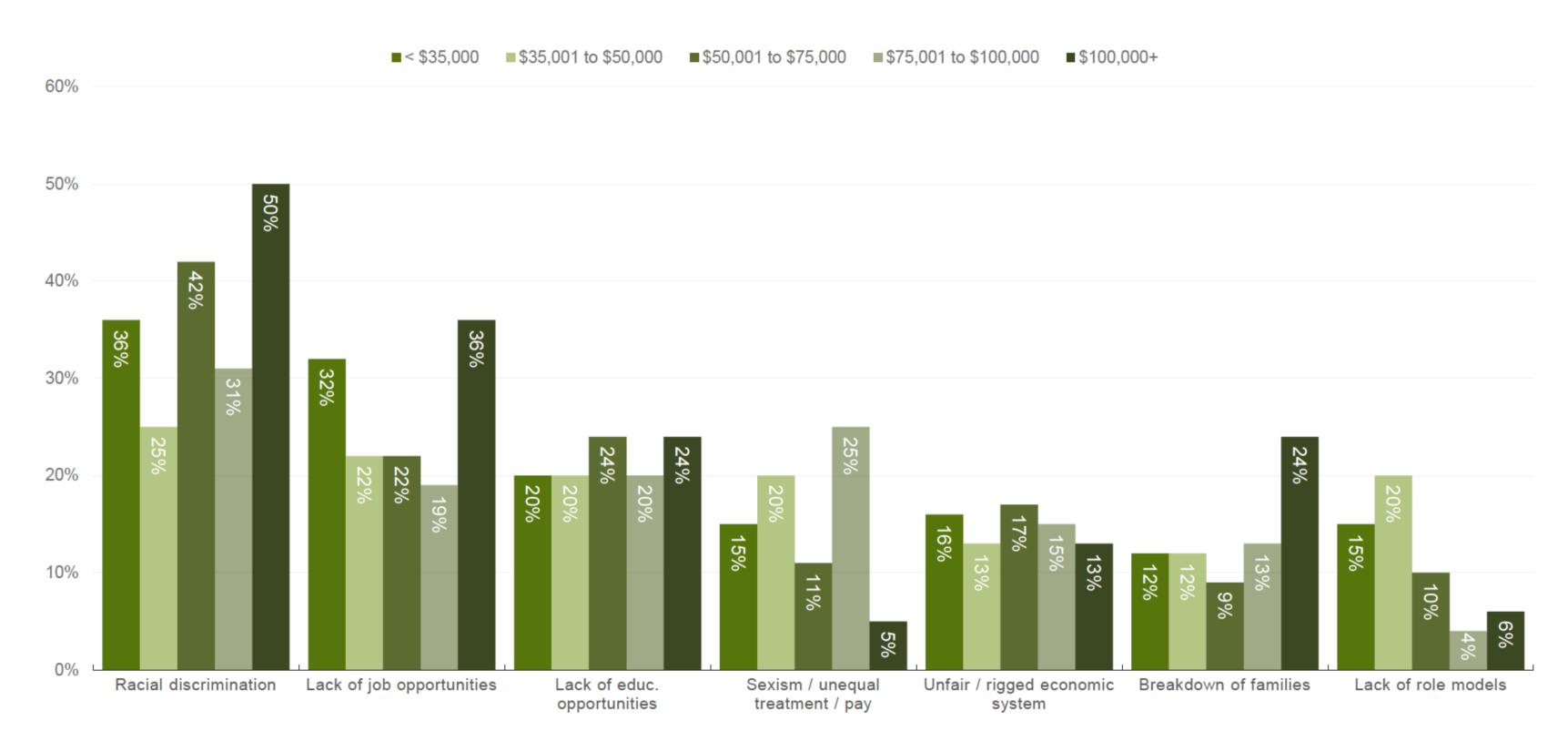
- Black women see racial discrimination as the key hurdle to economic success and believe people are wealthy as a result of advantages more so than hard work.
- They are worried most long term about kids and retirement, as well as racism and discrimination.

 Consistent with our findings about the economy, single Black women have the most economic angst.

Black women see racial discrimination as the key hurdle to economic success.



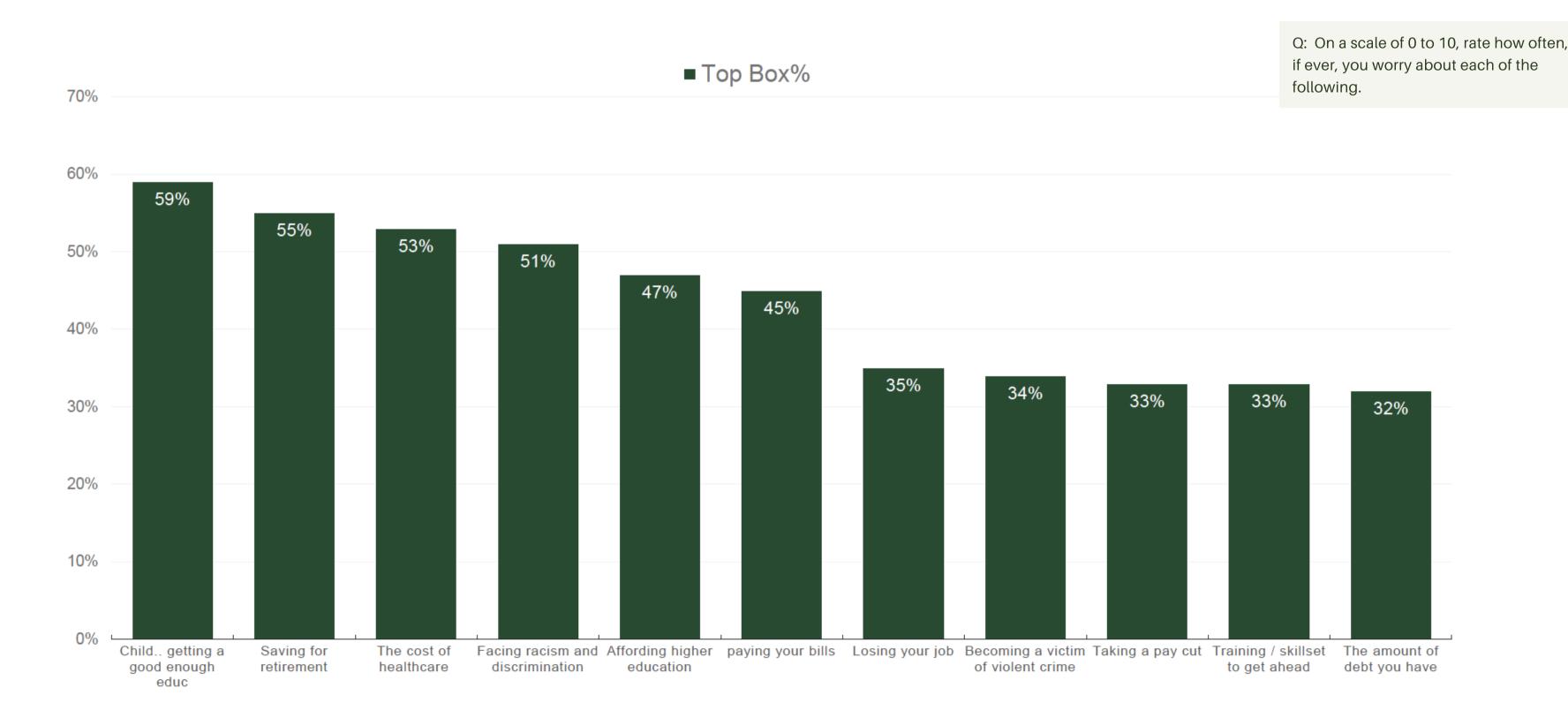
Across income levels, racial discrimination is seen as a top hurdle.



Detail: Hurdles to Economic Success by Key Demographics

	Total	Under 50	50 and over	Non- college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Racial discrimination	36%	33%	40%	34%	42%	40%	32%	27%
Lack of job opportunities	25%	25%	25%	25%	26%	21%	22%	20%
Lack of educational opportunities	21%	20%	23%	19%	28%	23%	14%	22%
Sexism or unequal treatment and pay for women	15%	15%	16%	18%	10%	12%	18%	11%
Unfair or rigged economic system	15%	16%	13%	14%	18%	14%	20%	15%
Breakdown of families	12%	14%	11%	11%	17%	14%	15%	22%
Lack of role models	10%	13%	7%	12%	8%	7%	15%	12%
Lack of strong work ethic	9%	11%	8%	8%	13%	13%	7%	11%
Inadequate government programs	8%	10%	4%	9%	6%	4%	14%	12%
Poor life choices by some	6%	6%	7%	6%	8%	10%	4%	9%

Women are worried the most long term about kids and retirement, as well as racism and discrimination.



Detail: Single Black women are feeling the most economic angst

	Mean (0-10)	Total Top Box (8-10)	Under 50	50 and over	Non- college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Q71. That your child or the young people around you are getting a good enough education	7.4	59%	55%	62%	58%	60%	57%	62%	57%
Q73. Being able to save enough for your retirement	6.8	55%	56%	53%	59%	47%	45%	64%	55%
Q72. The cost of healthcare for you and your family	6.6	53%	54%	52%	54%	50%	47%	56%	53%
Q74. Facing racism and discrimination	6.6	51%	52%	48%	49%	52%	49%	50%	46%
Q77. Not being able to afford higher education for you or family member	6.2	47%	43%	51%	47%	45%	38%	55%	44%
Q70. Paying your bills	6.1	45%	46%	43%	49%	36%	38%	52%	46%
Q69. Losing your job	4.8	35%	32%	37%	37%	30%	25%	44%	32%
Q78. Becoming a victim of violent crime	5.3	34%	33%	34%	35%	28%	31%	33%	34%
Q75. Taking a cut in pay due to reduced hours or demand for your work	5	33%	32%	35%	37%	25%	25%	41%	34%
Q76. Not having the right training or skillset to get ahead	5.1	33%	33%	32%	36%	24%	28%	35%	31%
Q68. The amount of debt you have	5.1	32%	37%	26%	32%	31%	31%	31%	37%

What's Next?

What's Next

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOVING FROM RHETORIC TO ACTION



O2) REDEFINE THE WEALTH GAP

- O3 PURSUE CHANGE ACROSS SECTORS
 THAT ADDRESSES SYSTEMIC RACISM
- 04) PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS
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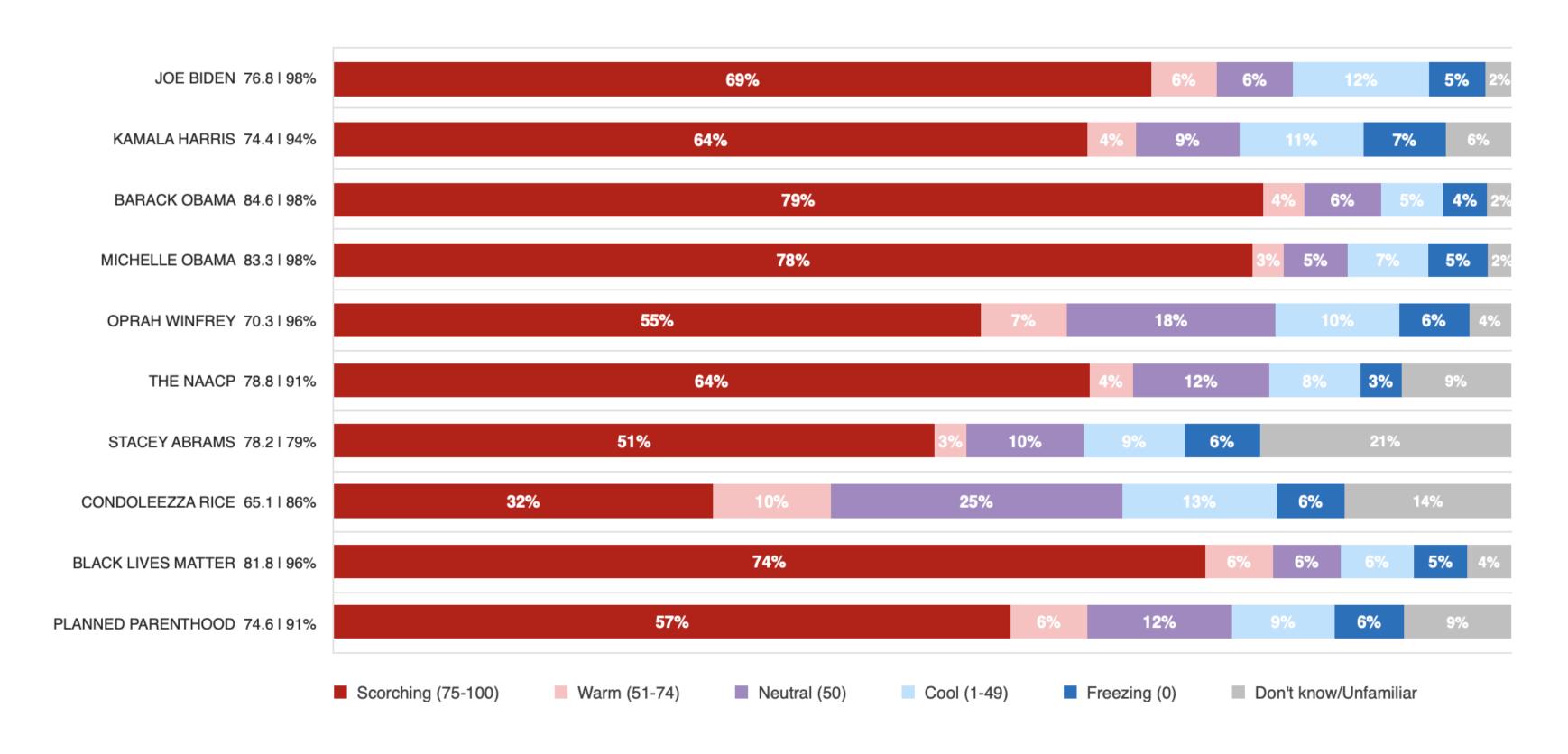
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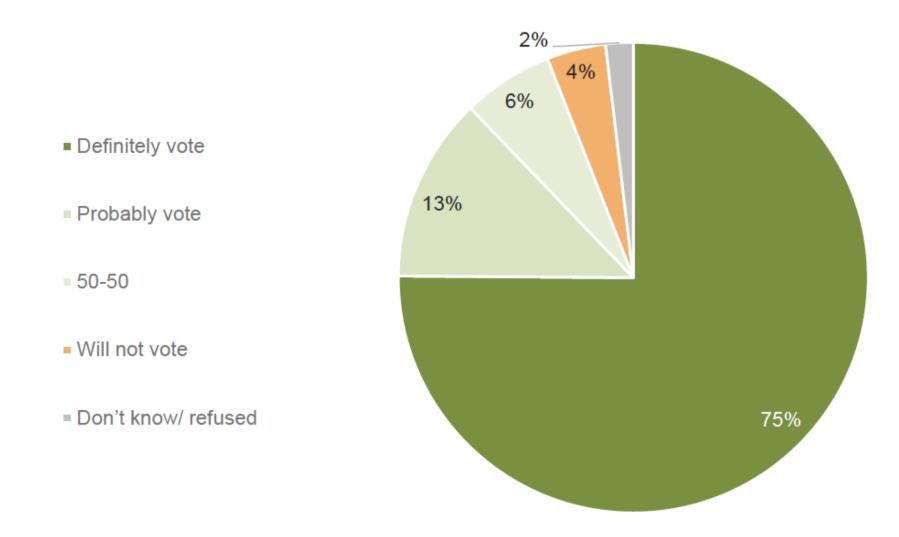
Appendices

- p. 45: Favorability Index
- p. 46-52: Key Demographic Breakdowns:
- Likelihood of Participating in Midterms
- Direction of Country
- Obstacles to Advancing Community
- Salary to Feel Successful
- Defining Success

The Obamas continue to be very popular, along with BLM.

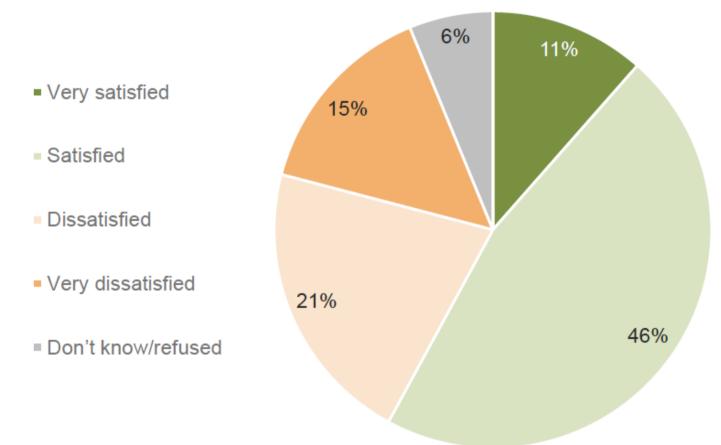


An overwhelming majority say they will "definitely vote" in the November 2022 midterms.



	Total	Under 50	50 and over	Non-college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Definitely vote	75%	72%	78%	71%	86%	79%	69%	73%
Probably vote	13%	14%	11%	15%	8%	12%	14%	8%
50-50	6%	7%	6%	7%	3%	4%	9%	7%
Will not vote	4%	6%	2%	5%	2%	5%	6%	10%
Don't know/refused	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%

A majority now say they are satisfied with the direction of the country.



	Total	Under 50	50 and over	Non-college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Net satisfied	22%	11%	34%	22%	24%	21%	18%	14%
Total satisfied	58%	52%	64%	58%	59%	59%	55%	54%
Total dissatisfied	36%	41%	30%	36%	35%	38%	38%	40%
Very satisfied	11%	9%	15%	12%	10%	10%	12%	10%
Satisfied	46%	44%	49%	46%	49%	49%	43%	44%
Dissatisfied	21%	23%	19%	20%	22%	22%	25%	19%
Very dissatisfied	15%	18%	11%	16%	12%	16%	13%	22%
Don't know/refused	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%	3%	7%	5%

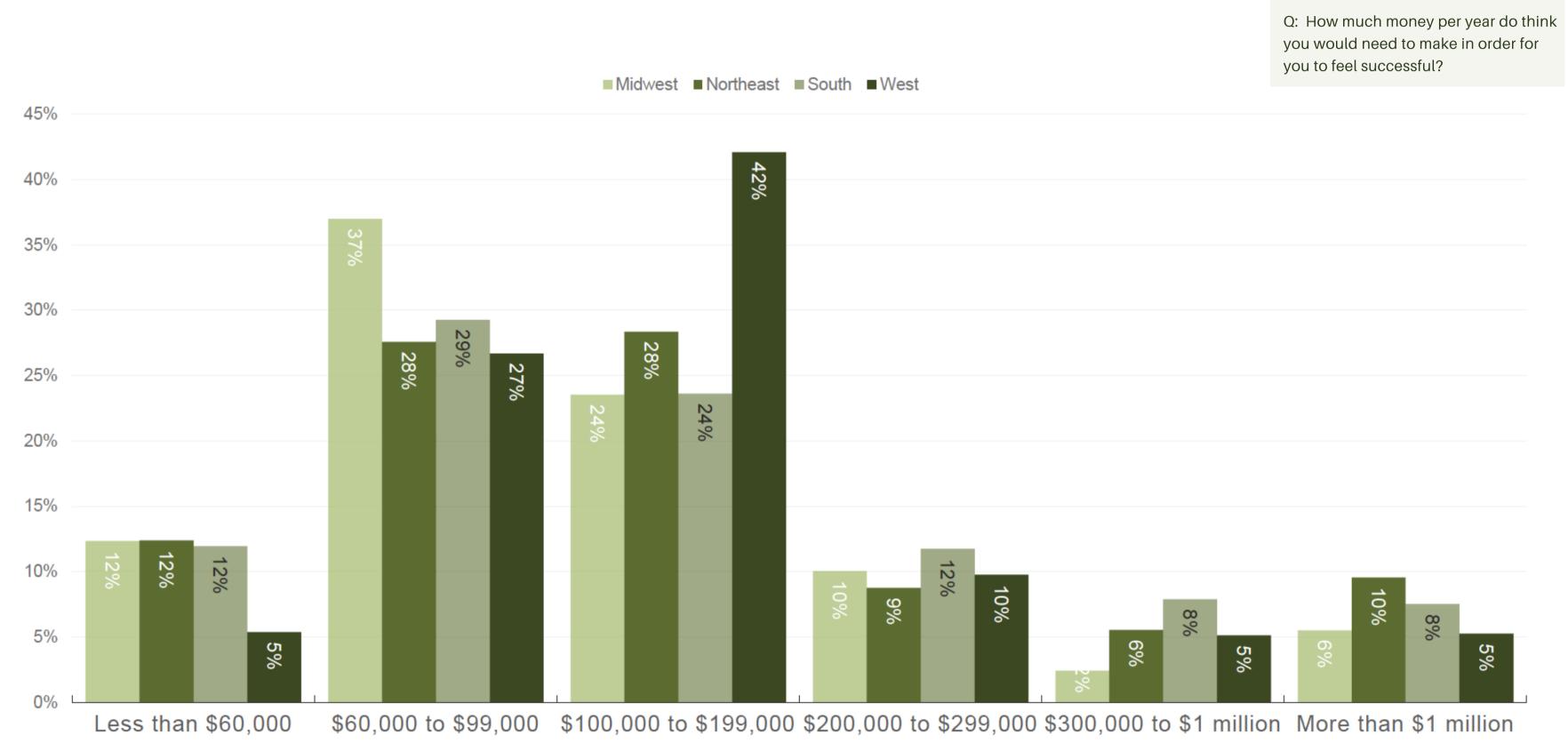
Improving communities is not just about economic conditions.

	Total	Under 50	Under 50	50 and over	Non-college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Economic opportunities	50%	50%	50%	51%	49%	52%	47%	56%	44%
Personal responsibility	42%	43%	43%	42%	43%	42%	45%	38%	48%
Don't know/ refused	7%	7%	7%	7%	8%	6%	8%	7%	8%

Q: Tell me which of the following two statements comes closest to your opinion when thinking about your community:

- Today, the biggest obstacles to our advancing and improving our community have more to do with a lack of good paying jobs and economic opportunities, and a lack of quality public schools for our kids than anything else.
- Today, the biggest obstacles to our advancing and improving our community have more to do with a decline in moral values, a lack of personal responsibility and the continued breakdown of the family structure than anything else.

Detail: Salary to feel successful by geography



Detail: Defining success by key demographics

	Mean (0-10)	Total Top Box (8-10)	Under 50	50 and over	Non- college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Q62. LIVING HONESTLY AND ETHICALLY	9.3	90%	92%	87%	87%	94%	89%	91%	90%
Q60. ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE	9.2	89%	93%	85%	88%	92%	90%	88%	92%
Q47. RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS	9.2	88%	85%	91%	86%	92%	91%	91%	90%
Q58. PURSUE EDUCATIONAL GOALS	8.9	85%	88%	82%	84%	88%	84%	87%	89%
Q42. REWARDING JOB	8.9	85%	88%	81%	83%	88%	88%	82%	90%
Q52. EATING HEALTHY	9.0	84%	82%	85%	81%	88%	85%	81%	82%
Q40. JOB THAT PAYS WELL	8.9	82%	81%	83%	82%	82%	84%	78%	83%
Q48. OWNING A HOME	8.9	81%	81%	81%	80%	82%	83%	72%	84%
Q57. RAISING KIDS	8.6	81%	79%	82%	81%	82%	83%	78%	88%
Q61. LIVING WITHIN YOUR MEANS	8.7	80%	78%	83%	79%	84%	79%	78%	81%
Q54. SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE	8.5	78%	77%	78%	75%	82%	87%	71%	80%
Q41. VOLUNTEEERING AND HELPING OTHERS	8.5	77%	71%	84%	77%	76%	76%	85%	68%

Continued: Defining success by key demographics

	Mean (0-10)	Total Top Box (8-10)	Under 50	50 and over	Non- college	College grad	Married	Single	Moms
Q59. STRONG RELIGIOUS FAITH	8.5	76%	74%	79%	77%	76%	75%	76%	73%
Q55. ENJOYING YOUR JOB	8.4	75%	74%	77%	73%	81%	75%	80%	76%
Q56. ABLE TO TRAVEL	8.4	75%	74%	76%	72%	81%	79%	72%	82%
Q51. EXERCISING REGULARLY	8.4	74%	71%	78%	76%	73%	71%	81%	69%
Q53. BEING CHARITABLE	8.4	72%	67%	77%	71%	74%	71%	73%	66%
Q50. WORKING FOR YOURSELF	8.1	67%	66%	69%	67%	66%	69%	62%	70%
Q46. POLITICALLY ACTIVE	7.5	60%	55%	66%	59%	61%	61%	61%	58%
Q43. BELONGING TO ORGANIZATIONS	7.5	56%	53%	59%	57%	53%	51%	61%	50%
Q45. SHOPPING AND SPLURGING	7.2	51%	44%	58%	52%	48%	52%	47%	41%
Q63. BEING PHYSICALLY ATTRACTIVE	7.0	49%	40%	58%	54%	36%	40%	54%	39%
Q49. EATING OUT	5.8	33%	26%	40%	35%	28%	31%	31%	22%
Q44. LARGE SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWING	4.0	20%	11%	31%	22%	11%	15%	21%	19%

Detail: Worries by Income

