

Perceptions of Workplace Discrimination

In U.S. Workplaces

A majority of U.S. workers (61%) report that discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a problem in private workplaces today. One-quarter (28%) of U.S. workers say that racial and ethnic discrimination is a major problem in private workplaces (Figure 3).

Question:

Do you think discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in the following workplaces today?

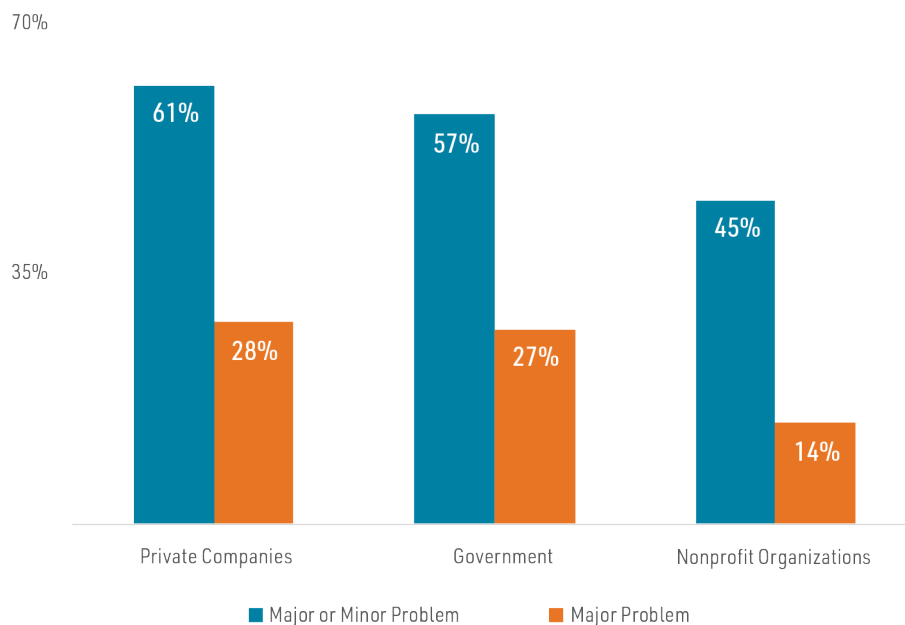


Figure 3: Problem of Racial and Ethnic Discrimination in Workplaces Today, U.S. Workers

When ranked by workers' race and ethnicity,⁹ 56% of White workers, 62% of Latino workers, 71% of Asian-American workers, and 74% of Black workers say racial and ethnic discrimination is a problem in private workplaces today (Table 4).¹⁰

As shown in Table 4, Black workers are twice as likely to say that they think workplace discrimination is a major problem, compared to White workers: one in two Black workers say discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem in private companies (49%); one in five White workers say the same (22%).

When asked about employment in government agencies, workers also think racial and ethnic discrimination is a problem, and these opinions vary within the U.S. workforce: 51% of White workers, 63% of Latino workers, 71% of Asian-American workers, and 73% of Black workers think discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major or minor problem in government.

One in two Black workers say discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a **major problem** in government (49%) compared to one in three Asian-American and Latino (both 34%) and one in five White workers (21%).

In **nonprofit organizations, fewer than half of U.S. workers say they think racial and ethnic discrimination is a major or minor problem:** 39% of White, 49% of Latino, 56% of Asian-American, and 58% of Black workers say they believe this is the case. Three in 10 Black workers (29%) say it is a major problem, compared to 2 in 10 Asian-American and Latino (19% and 18%, respectively) and 1 in 10 White workers (9%).

When tabulated by race and ethnicity and reported gender, three in four Black females say discrimination is a problem in private workplaces today (76%); one in two indicate it is a major problem (55%) (Figure 4 on page 17).

As illustrated in Figure 5 on page 17, one in two Black workers who make at least \$50,000 annually say discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem in private workplaces today (51%) – twice as many as White workers earning at least \$50,000 annually (23%) (Table 5).

On discrimination in private workplaces in America

“It happens to someone, everyday, everywhere.”

- Black female warehouse worker

Question:

Do you think discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in the following workplaces today?

	Problem in Private Workplaces Today	Major Problem in Private Workplaces Today
U.S. workers	61%	28%
Race and ethnicity		
Asian American	71%	31%
Black	74%	49%
Latino	62%	33%
White	56%	22%

Table 4: Discrimination is Major or Minor Problem/Major Problem in Private Workplaces Today, by Race/Ethnicity¹¹

Question:

Would you say discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in the following workplaces today? Private workplaces.

	Problem	Major Problem
Asian American <\$50K	63%	23%
Asian American \$50K+	73%	33%
Black <\$50K	71%	47%
Black \$50K+	78%	51%
Latino <\$50K	60%	30%
Latino \$50K+	63%	35%
White <\$50K	49%	22%
White \$50K+	60%	23%

Table 5: Discrimination is Major or Minor Problem/Major Problem in Private Workplaces Today, by Race/Income, Ranked¹²

Question:

Do you think discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in the following workplaces today? Private workplaces.

55% of Black females say racial and ethnic discrimination is a major problem in private workplaces today

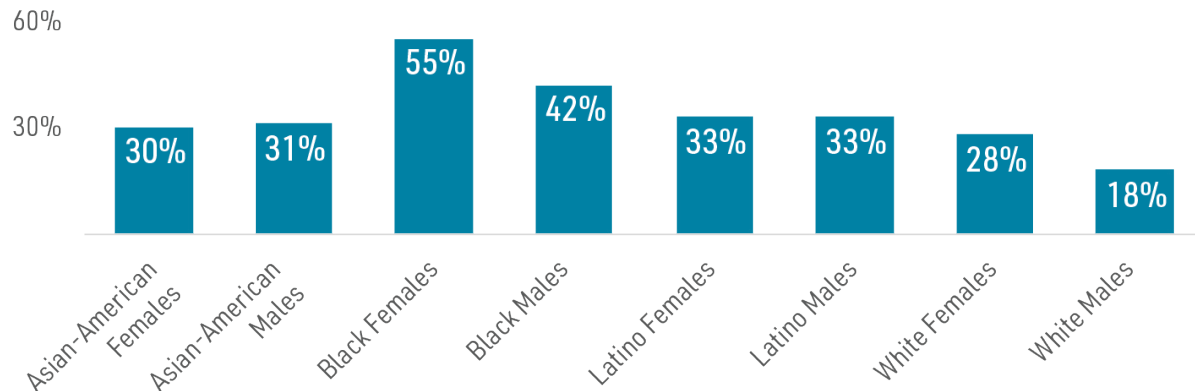


Figure 4: Percent Discrimination is Major Problem in Private Workplaces, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender

Question:

Do you think discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in the following workplaces today? Private workplaces.

There are no differences by income when asking about opinions of the problem of discrimination in private workplaces today

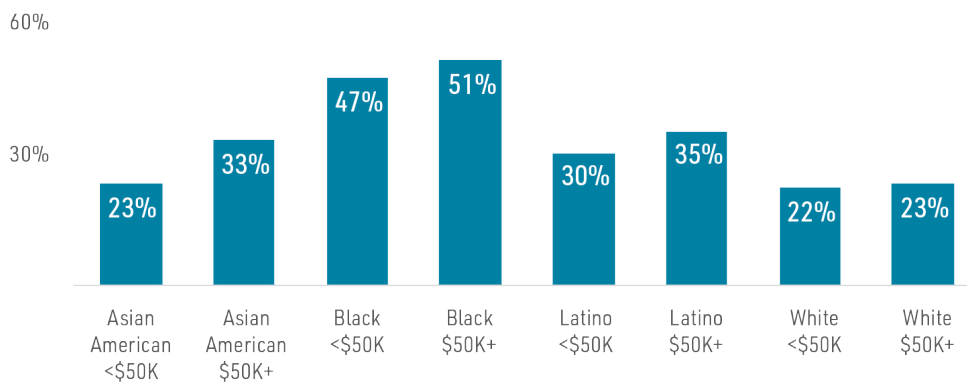


Figure 5: Discrimination is Major Problem in Private Workplaces Today, by Race/Income

Of those who say racial and ethnic discrimination is a problem in private workplaces, 4 in 10 Asian-American (43%), White (41%), and Latino (38%) and 5 in 10 Black workers (53%) say **unconscious bias** contributes a lot to discrimination because of race or ethnicity in workplaces in general today (Table 6 and Figure 6).

Question:

How much do each of the following things contribute to discrimination because of race or ethnicity in workplaces in general today?

	U.S. Workers	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Unconscious bias of people at work	43%	43%	53%	38%	41%
Intentional prejudice of individual people at work	28%	30%	44%	33%	22%
Existing policies, procedures, or systems in the workplace	26%	25%	38%	31%	22%

Table 6: Source of Problem of Discrimination in Private Workplaces, Percent a Lot, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

How much do each of the following things contribute to discrimination because of race or ethnicity in workplaces in general today?

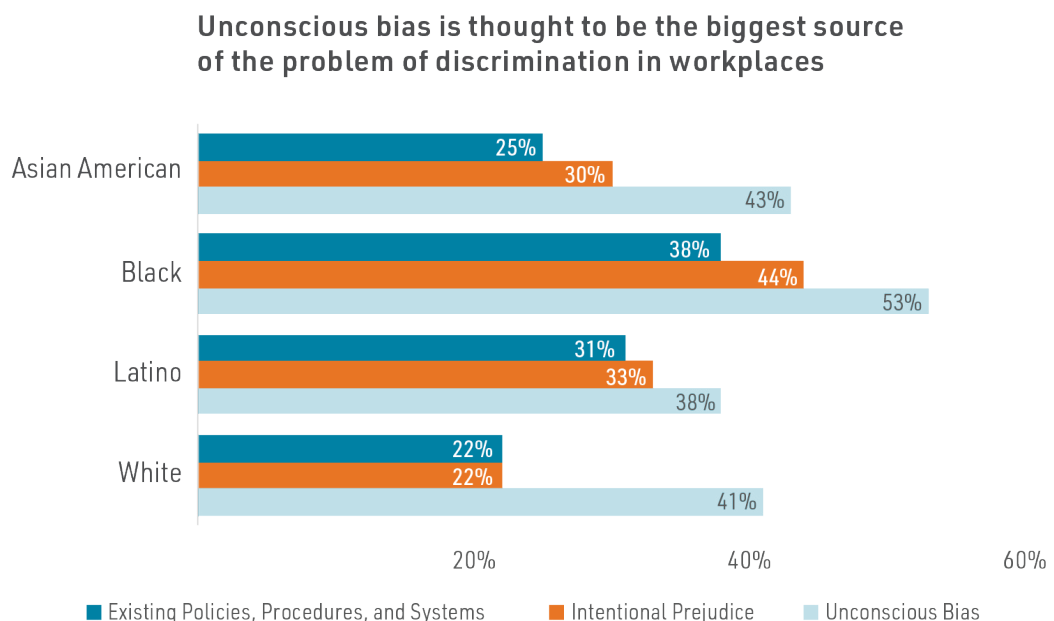


Figure 6: Source of Problem of Discrimination in Workplaces, Percent Contributes a Lot, by Race and Ethnicity

In Workers' Own Workplaces

Asking about the "Problem" of Racial and Ethnic Discrimination

When asked about the problem of racial and ethnic discrimination in their own workplaces, one in three (33%) U.S. workers say they think discrimination in their own workplace is a major or minor problem, including 9% who say it is a major problem (Table 7). **One in two Black workers say it is a major or minor problem (52%), including 23% who say it is a major problem.** For all other workers, 43% of Asian-American (16% say major problem), 36% of Latino (12% say major problem), and 27% of White workers (5% say major problem) believe discrimination is a major or minor problem in their companies or organizations.

Overall, U.S., Latino, and White workers are twice as likely to say they think discrimination is a problem in private workplaces, compared to their own workplaces (Table 8 and Figure 7).

Twenty-eight percent of Black females say discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem at work, compared to six percent of White females (Table 9). Figure 8 shows workers' impressions about whether racial/ethnic discrimination is a major or minor problem in their workplaces.

Question:

Do you think discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in the following workplaces today? Your company/organization.

	Problem	Major Problem
U.S. workers	33%	9%
Race and ethnicity		
Asian American	43%	16%
Black	52%	23%
Latino	36%	12%
White	27%	5%

Table 7: Problem of Discrimination in Own Workplace, by Race and Ethnicity¹³

Question:

Do you think discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in the following workplaces today? Private companies/Your company/organization

	Problem in Private Workplaces	Problem in Own Workplace
U.S. workers	61%	33%
Race and ethnicity		
Asian American	71%	43%
Black	74%	52%
Latino	62%	36%
White	56%	27%

Table 8: Major/Minor Problem of Discrimination in Private Workplaces vs. Own Workplace, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Do you think discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in the following workplaces today? Your company/organization.

	Problem	Major Problem
Asian-American females	41%	13%
Asian-American males	47%	18%
Black females	57%	28%
Black males	47%	18%
Latino females	40%	17%
Latino males	34%	9%
White females	25%	6%
White males	29%	6%

Table 9: Problem of Discrimination in Own Workplace, by Race and Ethnicity

Do you think discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in the following workplaces today?

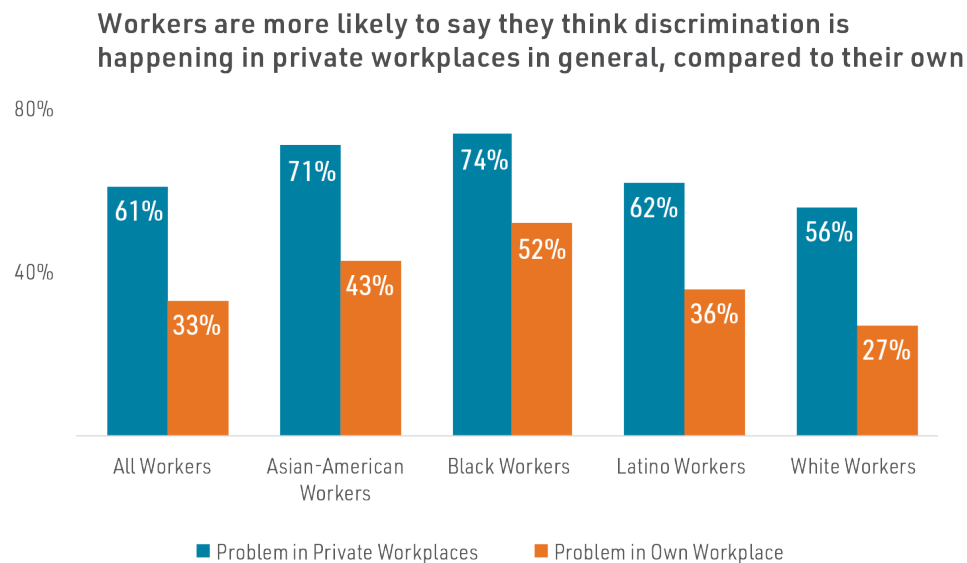


Figure 7: Problem of Discrimination in Private Workplaces vs. Own Workplace, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Do you think discrimination because of race or ethnicity is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in the following workplaces today? Private companies/Your company/organization

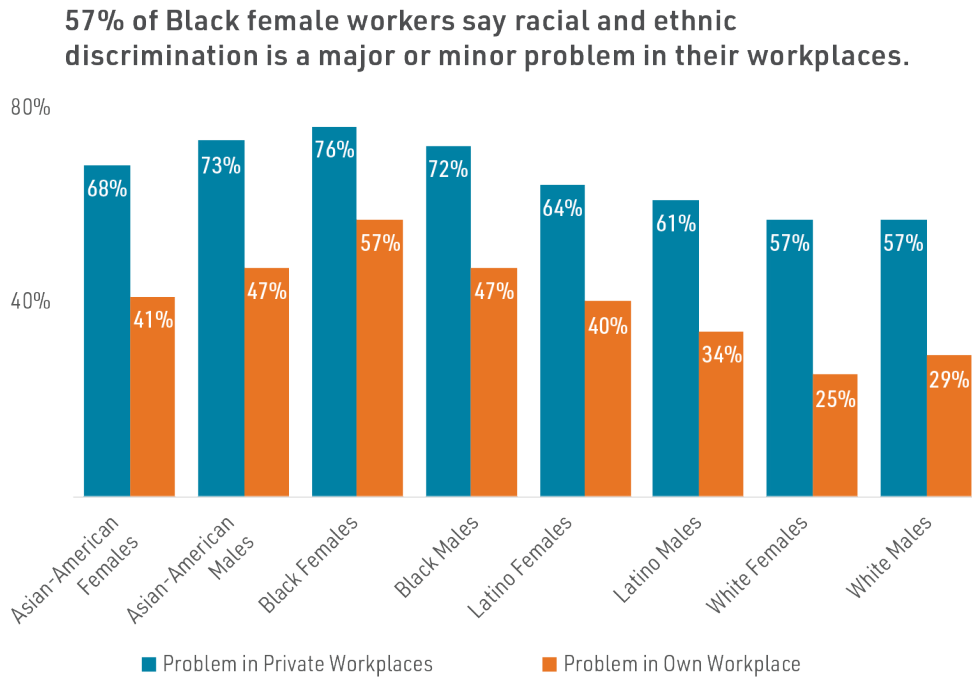


Figure 8: Problem of Discrimination in Private Workplaces vs. Own Workplace, by Race and Ethnicity and Gender

As shown in Figure 9, of those who say racial and ethnic discrimination is a problem in their own workplaces, 39% of Black workers and 30% of White workers say unconscious bias contributes a lot to this problem; 32% of Black workers and 13% of White workers say intentional prejudice contributes a lot to racial and ethnic discrimination in their own workplaces.

Question:

How much do each of the following things contribute to discrimination because of race or ethnicity in your workplace?

When asked about their own workplaces, unconscious bias contributes a lot to the problem of racial and ethnic discrimination for 4 in 10 Black workers, and 3 in 10 Black, Latino, and White workers

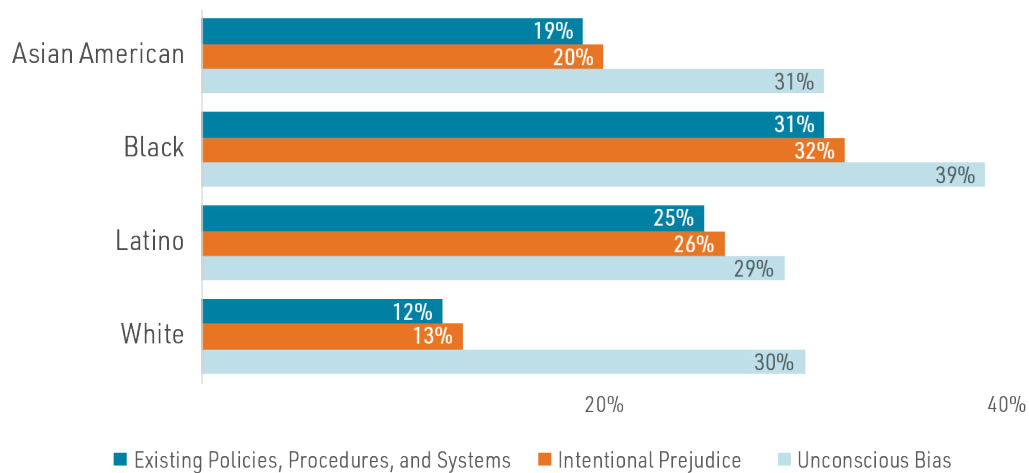


Figure 9: Source of Problem of Discrimination at Work, Contributes a Lot, by Race and Ethnicity

Frequency of Unfair Treatment and Discrimination: In General and at Work

The survey used multiple questions, scales, and prompts to ask workers to describe their perceptions of and experiences with discrimination in various time periods: ever, in their professional lives/careers; in jobs held previously; and in their current jobs. These questions asked about discrimination and unfair treatment in various ways, and of half-samples of workers, where possible, in order to triangulate responses across multiple items asked in the survey. **This section summarizes how workers perceive discrimination in their current jobs – whether it exists, how big of a problem it is, and what is happening at work – both in the workplace environment in general, and in their own experience.**

When asked about discrimination or unfair treatment in their everyday lives:

- One-third of Black workers say they are unfairly treated or discriminated (34% and 33%, respectively) against because of their race or ethnicity at least a few times a month or more every day (Table 10).¹⁴ One-fourth of Black workers say they are unfairly treated or discriminated against (24% and 26%) because of their race or ethnicity at work at least a few times a month (Table 11).**

- **One-fourth of Latino workers say they face unfair treatment or discrimination a few times a month or more in their lives (22% and 26%, respectively) (Table 10) and at work (20% and 23%, respectively) (Table 11).**¹⁵

Question:

Thinking about your day-to-day life in general, how often do you feel like you are treated unfairly/experience what you consider to be discrimination because of your race or ethnicity?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Unfairly treated day to day, a few times a month or more	16%	34%	22%	5%
Discriminated against day to day, a few times a month or more	21%	33%	26%	4%

Table 10: Unfair Treatment/Discrimination Daily/Generally, a Few Times a Month or More, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

What about at work? How often do you feel like you are treated unfairly/experience what you consider to be discrimination because of your race or ethnicity?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Unfairly treated at work, a few times a month or more	11%	24%	20%	3%
Discriminated against at work, a few times a month or more	16%	26%	23%	5%

Table 11: Unfair Treatment/Discrimination at Work, a Few Times a Month or More, by Race and Ethnicity¹⁶

Overall, one in four Black workers (25%), one in five Latino workers (21%), and 1 in 10 Asian-American workers (14%) say they are unfairly treated or discriminated against at work, at least a few times a month or more (Table 12). There are no differences between the two half-samples when asking about unfair treatment or discrimination because of race and ethnicity (Tables 13 and 14).

Question:

What about at work? How often do you feel like you are treated unfairly/experience what you consider to be discrimination because of your race or ethnicity?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Unfairly treated or discriminated against at work, a few times a month or more	14%	25%	21%	4%

Table 12: Unfair Treatment/Discrimination at Work Combined, a Few Times a Month or More, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Thinking about your day-to-day life in general, how often do you feel like you are treated unfairly/experience what you consider to be discrimination because of your race or ethnicity? What about at work? How often do you experience unfair treatment because of your race or ethnicity?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Unfairly treated day to day, a few times a month or more	16%	34%	22%	5%
Unfairly treated at work, a few times a month or more	11%	24%	20%	3%

Table 13: Unfair Treatment Daily and at Work, a Few Times a Month or More, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Thinking about your day-to-day life in general, how often do you experience what you consider to be discrimination because of your race or ethnicity? What about at work? How often do you experience what you consider to be discrimination because of your race or ethnicity?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Discriminated against day to day, a few times a month or more	21%	33%	26%	4%
Discriminated against at work, a few times a month or more	16%	26%	23%	5%

Table 14: Discrimination Daily and at Work, a Few Times a Month or More, by Race and Ethnicity

Twenty-one percent of Black workers, 18% of Asian-American workers, and 15% of Latino workers say they are treated worse at work, compared to what they experience every day (Table 15). Even when workers know their colleagues, they are more likely to perceive that they are being discriminated against at work than during their daily life. This may reflect the fact that occasional interactions with strangers from other racial or ethnic groups present far fewer opportunities than can occur in a workplace where people interact more frequently and when individuals are often competing for wages, benefits, or assignments and/or tasks.

Question:

Would you say your everyday experiences with unfair treatment/what you consider to be discrimination because of your race or ethnicity are better, worse, or the same as what you experience at work?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Treated at work better	11%	18%	12%	7%
Treated at work worse	18%	21%	15%	3%
Treated the same	71%	59%	72%	89%

Table 15: Comparing Unfair Treatment/Discrimination at Work to Daily Life, by Race and Ethnicity

On Unfair Treatment, Discrimination, and Inclusion at Work: “Affirmative” Statements¹⁷

Prior to asking workers whether discrimination is a problem in workplaces today or in their own workplaces, respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the following statements that were framed affirmatively – that is, giving respondents the opportunity to agree or disagree with favorable/positive circumstances or situations in their current workplaces, rather than unfavorable/negative.¹⁸

1. Where I work, people are treated the same, regardless of their race/ethnicity.
2. Where I work, managers/supervisors work well with employees of different races and ethnicities.
3. Where I work, I feel included, regardless of my race or ethnicity.

As illustrated in Tables 16, 17, and 18, overall, 6 in 10 Black workers agree with the statements (59%, 66%, 67%), as well as 7 in 10 Asian-American workers (71%, 75%, 75%), 7 in 10 Latino workers (74%, 78%, 78%), and 8 in 10 White workers (82%, 83%, 86%).

Nine in 10 workers who reported that racial and ethnic discrimination is not a problem in their workplaces later in the survey either agree or strongly agree with the affirmative statements, with 6 in 10 (61%) saying they strongly agree that people are treated the same regardless of their race or ethnicity, that managers/supervisors work well with employees of different races and ethnicities, and that they feel included regardless of their race or ethnicity (Tables 19, 20, and 21 as well as Figure 10).

Question:

Where I work, people are treated the same, regardless of their race/ethnicity; excludes not applicable responses.

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
NET agree	71%	59%	74%	82%
Strongly agree	28%	28%	46%	49%
Agree	43%	31%	28%	33%
Neither agree nor disagree¹⁹	20%	27%	17%	12%
NET disagree	8%	14%	8%	6%
Disagree	7%	10%	7%	4%
Strongly disagree	2%	4%	1%	1%

Table 16: Treatment is the Same at Work, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Where I work, managers/supervisors work well with employees of different races and ethnicities; excludes not applicable responses.

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
NET agree	75%	66%	78%	83%
Strongly agree	31%	30%	45%	50%
Agree	44%	36%	32%	33%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	25%	15%	13%
NET disagree	6%	9%	7%	4%
Disagree	5%	6%	6%	3%
Strongly disagree	1%	3%	1%	1%

Table 17: Managers/Supervisors' Treatment is the Same at Work, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Where I work, I feel included, regardless of my race or ethnicity; excludes not applicable responses.

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
NET agree	75%	67%	78%	86%
Strongly agree	34%	31%	46%	52%
Agree	41%	37%	32%	34%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	23%	16%	10%
NET disagree	6%	9%	6%	3%
Disagree	5%	6%	5%	2%
Strongly disagree	1%	3%	1%	1%

Table 18: Opinions About Inclusion, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Where I work, people are treated the same, regardless of their race/ethnicity; excludes not applicable responses.

	Discrimination is Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
Strongly agree	21%	61%
Agree	38%	30%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	7%
Disagree	14%	1%
Strongly disagree	4%	>1%
Unweighted N	1,358	1,541

Table 19: Treatment is the Same at Work, by Discrimination in Own Workplace is Problem, U.S. Workers

Question:

Where I work, managers/supervisors work well with employees of different races and ethnicities; excludes not applicable responses.

	Discrimination is Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
Strongly agree	26%	61%
Agree	41%	30%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	7%
Disagree	9%	1%
Strongly disagree	2%	0.3%
Unweighted N	1,346	1,526

Table 20: Managers/Supervisors' Treatment is the Same at Work, by Discrimination in Own Workplace is Problem, U.S. Workers

Question:

Where I work, I feel included, regardless of my race or ethnicity; excludes not applicable responses.

	Discrimination is Major/Minor	
	Problem	Not a Problem
Strongly agree	29%	61%
Agree	41%	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	6%
Disagree	7%	1%
Strongly disagree	2%	0.4%
Unweighted N	1,349	1,536

Table 21: Opinions About Inclusion, by Discrimination in Own Workplace is Problem, U.S. Workers

9 in 10 American workers who say racial and ethnic discrimination is not a problem agree that supervisors/subordinates work well with people of different races and ethnicities, people are treated the same no matter their race or ethnicity, and they feel included, regardless of race or ethnicity



Figure 10: Affirmative Statements About Treatment and Inclusion, by Discrimination in Own Workplace is Problem, U.S. Workers

On Unfair Treatment, Discrimination, and Inclusion at Work: “Negative” Statements

The majority of the questions asking respondents to describe their experiences with discrimination in the workplace were framed in the negative – that is, workers who do not experience discrimination would tend to disagree with the various statements and items presented about experiences with discrimination.

After the question asking about whether discrimination is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem – when asked to describe their opinions about their current workplace in the survey using negative statements – nearly half (5 in 10) of Black workers (47%) say some people get better treatment in their own workplaces because of race or ethnicity; 20% say this happens a lot (Tables 22 and 23). Four in 10 Asian-American workers (37%), 3 in 10 Latino workers (30%), and 2 in 10 White workers (18%) also say treatment because of race or ethnicity happens a lot or a little in their current jobs. When asked about their jobs in general, workers of color are more likely to report that better treatment, higher pay, valued work, training and promotion opportunities, and discrimination because of race and ethnicity are realities, compared to White workers. In general, **Black workers are about three times more likely to express concern about treatment in their current workplace because of race or ethnicity than White workers.** While 47% of Black workers say that some people get better treatment because of their race or ethnicity, fewer (34%) say there is discrimination against people of color at work (Figure 11).

Question:

Do the following statements describe your current workplace a lot, a little, or not at all?

	U.S. Workers	Asian- American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Some people get better treatment because of their race or ethnicity	25%	37%	47%	30%	18%
Some people get higher pay in their jobs because of their race or ethnicity	18%	30%	38%	24%	11%
Supervisors value the work of people of some races or ethnicities, more than others	20%	29%	41%	27%	12%
Workers of some races or ethnicities receive fewer opportunities for training or promotions, compared to workers of other races and ethnicities	18%	25%	37%	27%	11%
There is discrimination against people of color where I work	17%	25%	34%	24%	10%

Table 22: Negative Statements About Select Discrimination/Unfair Treatment, Percent a Lot and a Little, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Do the following statements describe your current workplace a lot, a little, or not at all?

	U.S. Workers	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Some people get better treatment because of their race or ethnicity	7%	12%	20%	10%	3%
Some people get higher pay in their jobs because of their race or ethnicity	6%	9%	17%	10%	2%
Supervisors value the work of people of some races or ethnicities more than others	6%	8%	16%	10%	2%
Workers of some races or ethnicities receive fewer opportunities for training or promotions, compared to workers of other races and ethnicities	5%	5%	13%	9%	2%
There is discrimination against people of color where I work	4%	5%	9%	7%	1%

Table 23: Negative Statements About Select Discrimination/Unfair Treatment, Percent a Lot, by Race and Ethnicity

Two in three Black workers, one in two Asian-American workers, one in two Latino workers, and one in three White workers say at least one of the proposed statements describes their workplace a lot or a little (Table 24). One in 3 Black workers, 1 in 4 Latino workers, 1 in 5 Asian-American workers, and 1 in 10 White workers say they can use the term a lot when thinking about at least one of the proposed statements (Table 25).

Question:

Do the following statements describe your current workplace a lot, a little, or not at all?

"Better treatment" because of race or ethnicity describes the current workplace a lot or a little by 5 in 10 Black workers, 4 in 10 Asian-American workers, and 3 in 10 Latino workers

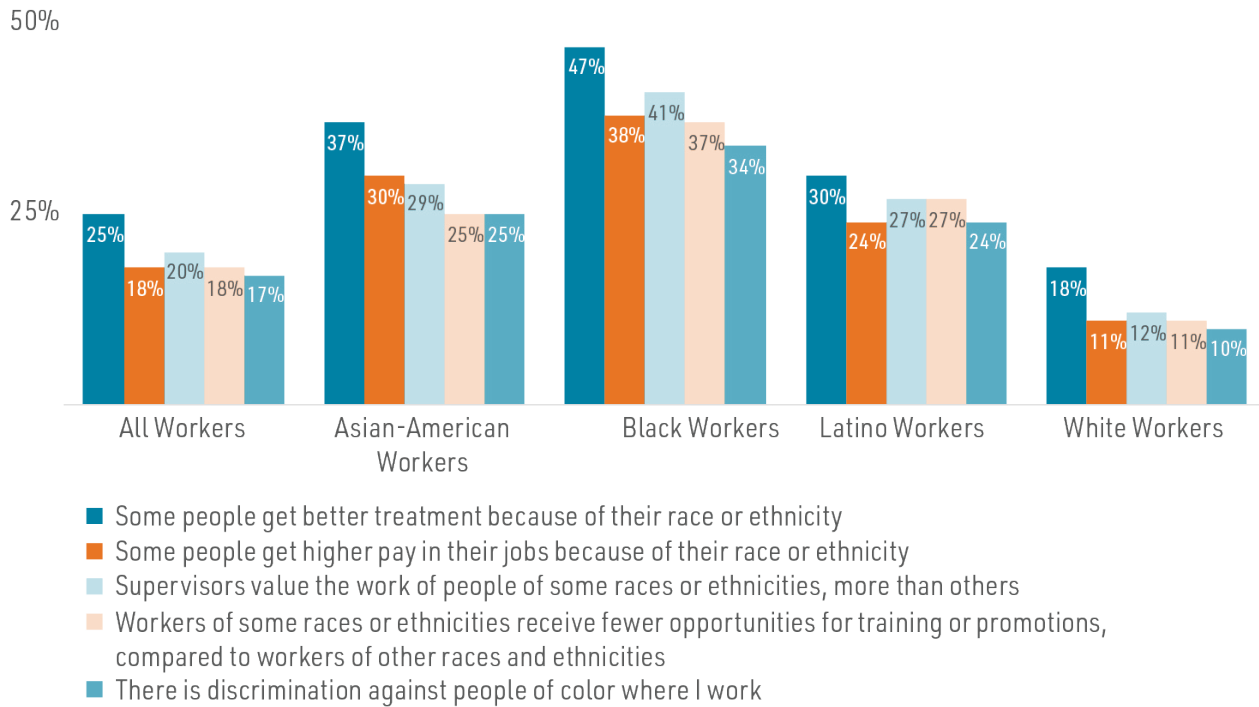


Figure 11: Negative Statements About Select Discrimination/Unfair Treatment, Percent a Lot or a Little, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Do the following statements describe your current workplace a lot, a little, or not at all?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
0	47%	36%	51%	66%
1	9%	8%	10%	12%
2	8%	7%	6%	6%
3	5%	6%	5%	4%
4+	31%	43%	28%	11%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
All	7%	9%	9%	0.9%

Table 24: Negative Statements About Select Discrimination/Unfair Treatment, a Lot/a Little Count, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Do the following statements describe your current workplace a lot, a little, or not at all?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
0	80%	65%	77%	92%
1	6%	9%	9%	5%
2	3%	8%	5%	1%
3	3%	5%	2%	1%
4+	7%	10%	8%	0.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
All	0.6%	2%	2%	0

Table 25: Negative Statements About Select Discrimination/Unfair Treatment, a Lot Count, by Race and Ethnicity

U.S. employees who work in larger companies – those with 250 or more employees – are more likely than those in smaller organizations to say that:

- some people get higher pay because of their race or ethnicity,
- some people get better treatment because of their race or ethnicity, and
- there is discrimination or unfair treatment for others or themselves at work.

About 8 in 10 workers who said earlier in the survey that racial and ethnic discrimination is not a problem in their workplaces also say that these situations **do not** describe their current workplaces. Workers who say that racial and ethnic discrimination is a problem in their workplaces are split when asked about these scenarios, including between 15% and 22% who say they are unsure if these situations are happening (Tables 26 to 30). For example, 78% of U.S. workers who say discrimination is not a problem in their own workplaces say “some people get better treatment because of their race or ethnicity” does not describe their workplace at all (Table 26).

In addition, workers were also asked to describe their **own** experiences at work using multiple questions. First, when asked to describe the frequency of selected experiences with situations that can arise at work, with no mention of the reason for the experience (race or ethnicity), one in three Black workers say they need to work harder than others to get the same treatment (37%) and feel they are watched more closely than others (33%) at least a few times per month (Table 31).²⁰

Question:

Some people get better treatment because of their race or ethnicity.

	Discrimination is Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
A lot	16%	3%
A little	35%	11%
Not at all	33%	78%
Don't know	15%	9%
Unweighted N	1,354	1,558

Table 26: Better Treatment Because of Race or Ethnicity, by Discrimination in Own Workplace is Problem, U.S. Workers

Question:

Some people get higher pay in their jobs because of their race or ethnicity.

	Discrimination is Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
A lot	14%	2%
A little	24%	7%
Not at all	39%	76%
Don't know	22%	16%
Unweighted N	1,349	1,560

Table 27: Higher Pay Because of Race or Ethnicity, by Discrimination in Own Workplace is Problem, U.S. Workers

Question:

Supervisors value the work of people of some races or ethnicities, more than others.

	Discrimination is Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
A lot	12%	3%
A little	29%	7%
Not at all	41%	80%
Don't know	19%	10%
Unweighted N	1,353	1,561

Table 28: Supervisors Value Some Because of Race or Ethnicity, by Discrimination in Own Workplace is Problem, U.S. Workers

Question:

Workers of some races or ethnicities receive fewer opportunities for training or promotions, compared to workers of other races or ethnicities.

	Discrimination is Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
A lot	11%	2%
A little	30%	5%
Not at all	40%	84%
Don't know	19%	9%
Unweighted N	1,355	1,563

Table 29: More Training or Promotion Opportunities Because of Race or Ethnicity, by Discrimination in Own Workplace is Problem, U.S. Workers

Question:

There is discrimination against people of color where I work.

	Discrimination is Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
A lot	9%	1%
A little	30%	6%
Not at all	42%	88%
Don't know	19%	6%
Unweighted N	1,349	1,556

Table 30: Discrimination Occurs, by Discrimination in Own Workplace is Problem, U.S. Workers

Question:

Here are some situations that can arise at work. How often do you feel you have to/are you...?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Work harder than others to get same treatment or evaluation	30%	37%	32%	18%
Watched more closely than other workers	21%	33%	26%	12%
Humiliated in front of others	11%	15%	11%	4%

Table 31: Various Experiences at Work, Percent a Few Times a Month or More, by Race and Ethnicity

Workers were asked to report on whether they have sometimes been treated poorly, discriminated against, or treated unfairly at work, because of their race or ethnicity.²¹ There are no differences between the three types of wording among workers. Approximately one-third of Black workers, one-quarter of Latino workers, and one-quarter of Asian-American workers say they have been treated poorly, discriminated against, or treated unfairly in their current job because of their race or ethnicity (Table 32). When compared with White workers, Black workers say they are sometimes treated poorly because of their race or ethnicity by more than five to one, Asian Americans by four to one, and Latinos by more than three to one. There are similar disparities in reporting for perceptions of unfair treatment and discrimination (Table 33).

Question:

Do the following statements describe your current workplace a lot, a little, or not at all?

	U.S. Workers	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Where I work, I have sometimes been treated poorly because of my race or ethnicity	13%	24%	32%	22%	6%
Where I work, I have sometimes been discriminated against because of my race or ethnicity	15%	28%	32%	22%	9%
Where I work, I have sometimes been treated unfairly because of my race or ethnicity	15%	26%	34%	23%	9%

Table 32: Comparing Poor Treatment with Unfair Treatment and Discrimination, Percent a Lot or a Little, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Do the following statements describe your current workplace a lot, a little, or not at all?

	U.S. Workers	Asian- American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Where I work, I have sometimes been treated poorly because of my race or ethnicity	3%	7%	10%	6%	1%
Where I work, I have sometimes been discriminated against because of my race or ethnicity	3%	6%	8%	6%	1%
Where I work, I have sometimes been treated unfairly because of my race or ethnicity	3%	5%	9%	6%	1%

Table 33: Comparing Poor Treatment with Unfair Treatment and Discrimination, Percent a Lot, by Race and Ethnicity

Workers are more likely to say that discrimination is a problem in their own workplaces than report that they themselves have experienced discrimination: 43% of Asian-American workers say discrimination is a major or minor problem in their workplaces (28% say they sometimes have been discriminated against, indicating the statement describes their workplaces a lot or a little), 52% of Black workers say discrimination is a major or minor problem (32% say they have sometimes been discriminated against), 36% of Latino workers say discrimination is a major or minor problem (22% say they have sometimes been discriminated against), and 27% of White workers say discrimination is a major or minor problem (9% say they have sometimes been discriminated against).

The majority of U.S. workers who say that racial and ethnic discrimination is not a problem also say they have not been treated unfairly, discriminated against, or treated poorly because of their race or ethnicity (Tables 34 to 36). And workers who say they have been treated unfairly or discriminated against because of their race or ethnicity are split when asked if they think the offenders are intentional or unaware in their treatment.

As shown in Tables 37 and 38, two-thirds (66%) of Black workers who say they have either been treated unfairly or discriminated against say they think the actions they experience are intentional.

Question:

There is discrimination against people of color where I work.

	Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
A lot	8%	1%
A little	28%	5%
Not at all	57%	90%
Don't know	7%	5%
Unweighted N	1,352	1,559

Table 34: Experience with Unfair Treatment, by Discrimination is a Problem in Own Workplace, U.S. Workers

Question:

Where I work, I have sometimes been discriminated against because of my race or ethnicity.

	Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
A lot	8%	1%
A little	26%	6%
Not at all	56%	88%
Don't know	11%	5%
Unweighted N	1,352	1,556

Table 35: Experience with Discrimination, by Discrimination is a Problem in Own Workplace, U.S. Workers

Question:

Where I work, I have sometimes been treated poorly because of my race or ethnicity

	Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
A lot	8%	1%
A little	21%	5%
Not at all	61%	91%
Don't know	10%	3%
Unweighted N	1,351	1,560

Table 36: Experience with Poor Treatment, by Discrimination is a Problem in Own Workplace, U.S. Workers

Question:

When you are treated unfairly because of your race or ethnicity, do you think the person is usually (doing it intentionally) or (unaware that he or she is being unfair)?

	U.S. Workers	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Intentionally	58%	49%	66%	55%	56%
Unaware	41%	50%	33%	44%	42%
Unweighted N	786	172	327	197	90

Table 37: Experience with Unfair Treatment is Intentional or Not, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

When people discriminate against you because of your race or ethnicity, do you think the person is usually (doing it intentionally) or (unaware that he or she is being discriminatory)?

	U.S. Workers	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Intentionally	59%	49%	66%	58%	59%
Unaware	40%	49%	33%	42%	41%
Unweighted N	794	181	331	194	88

Table 38: Experience with Discrimination is Intentional or Not, by Race and Ethnicity

The survey asked respondents to describe the ways in which they may or may not have experienced various situations associated with unfair treatment/discrimination. In their current jobs, because of their race or ethnicity:

- 18% of Black workers say they earned less than a co-worker doing the same job (Table 39);
- 16% of Black workers say they had someone treat them as if they were less competent or valuable than someone else (Table 40);
- 16% of Black workers received less helpful advice, feedback, or opportunities for performance evaluation (Table 39); and
- 15% of Black workers have been assigned tasks or shifts considered undesirable or unwanted by others (Table 39).

This question was not prefaced with “discrimination” or “unfair treatment” verbiage, but rather “because of race or ethnicity.”

Question:

Here are a few things that some people have experienced in their workplace because of their race or ethnicity. Have the following ever happened to you in your current job, in a previous job, or hasn't this happened to you?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Denied a promotion	8%	12%	7%	3%
Earned less than a co-worker doing the same job as you	10%	18%	11%	7%
Denied a raise	7%	12%	9%	3%
Received less helpful advice, less feedback, or fewer opportunities for performance evaluation	9%	16%	8%	3%
Received fewer opportunities for education or training	7%	11%	7%	2%
Were passed over for the most important assignments or projects	8%	12%	7%	3%
Were assigned tasks or shifts that were undesirable or unwanted by others	10%	15%	11%	6%

Table 39: Experience with Advancement/Mobility and Promotion/Raise/Income in Current Job, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Here are a few things that some people have experienced in their workplace because of their race or ethnicity. Have the following ever happened to you in your current job, in a previous job, or hasn't this happened to you?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Had someone treat you as if you were less competent or valuable than someone else	9%	16%	11%	6%
Received a threat of physical violence	3%	6%	4%	1%
Experienced slights about your language or appearance	8%	10%	10%	3%
Heard or read comments, insults, or slurs (directed at you) by a manager or supervisor	6%	10%	5%	2%
Heard or read comments, insults, or slurs (directed at you) by a co-worker	7%	12%	9%	3%

Table 40: Experience with Treatment in Current Job, by Race and Ethnicity

Additionally, 37% of Black workers, 27% of Latino workers, 25% of Asian-American workers, and 16% of White workers say they have had at least one of these experiences in their current job (Table 41).

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
0	76%	62%	72%	85%
1	9%	11%	10%	6%
2	4%	6%	5%	4%
3	4%	5%	3%	2%
4	1%	3%	2%	1%
5+	7%	12%	7%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
All	0.6%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%

Table 41: Experience with Advancement/Mobility or Treatment in Current Job, Count, by Race and Ethnicity

Experiences: In the Past

The pilot study and subsequent interviews revealed that workers had recalled experiences in previous jobs with what they considered to be discrimination. **One-third of Black workers (33%) indicated that, in their experience, others at work had received a promotion or pay raise faster, because of the respondents' race or ethnicity.** This question was asked prior to asking the respondent about the various experiences with unfair treatment/discrimination that the worker may have had in a previous job or in the current place of employment, or about the problem of racial and ethnic discrimination in their own workplaces, or in workplaces in general. Table 42 shows the number of workers who reported this was true for them, and the percentage of workers who say they are unsure whether they had experienced this. There are no differences within each subgroup by age, income, pay type, or gender.

Question:

Have you ever felt at any time in the past that others at your place of employment got promotions or pay raises faster than you did because of your race or ethnicity? (Bobo, et al. 2008)

	U.S. Workers	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Yes	13%	18%	33%	17%	7%
No	70%	56%	42%	58%	80%
Unsure	17%	25%	23%	24%	13%

Table 42: Past Promotions/Pay Raises Faster Because of Race and Ethnicity, by Race and Ethnicity²²

Workers are more likely to say they have had the following experiences in a previous job, rather than in their current job:

- Three in 10 Black workers (32%) say, in a previous job, they had someone treat them as if they were less competent or valuable (Table 44), earned less than a co-worker doing the same job (30%) (Table 43), were assigned undesirable or unwanted tasks or shifts (28%) (Table 43), or received less helpful advice, less feedback, or fewer opportunities for performance evaluation (27%) (Table 43). As shown in Table 43, one in four (26%) say they have been denied a promotion because of their race or ethnicity.
- One in five Asian-American workers say they had someone treat them as if they were less competent or valuable (21%) (Table 44), were denied a raise (18%) (Table 43), experienced slights about their language or appearance (18%) (Table 44), and earned less than a co-worker doing the same job (18%) (Table 43).
- One in five Latino (19%) workers say they were assigned unwanted or undesirable tasks or shifts (Table 43) and were treated as less competent or valuable (18%) (Table 44).

Question:

Here are a few things that some people have experienced in their workplace because of their race or ethnicity. Have the following ever happened to you in your current job, in a previous job, or hasn't this happened to you?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Denied a promotion	17%	26%	13%	8%
Earned less than a co-worker doing the same job as you	18%	30%	16%	14%
Denied a raise	18%	22%	14%	8%
Received less helpful advice, less feedback, or fewer opportunities for performance evaluation	16%	27%	15%	9%
Received fewer opportunities for education or training	12%	22%	11%	6%
Were passed over for the most important assignments or projects	16%	24%	11%	8%
Were assigned tasks or shifts that were undesirable or unwanted by others	20%	28%	19%	12%

Table 43: Experience with Advancement/Mobility and Promotion/Raise/Income in Previous Job, by Race and Ethnicity

As seen in Table 45, 55% of Black workers, 42% of Asian-American workers, 38% of Latino workers, and 27% of White workers say they had experienced at least one of the proposed situations in a previous job, more than the 38% of Black workers, 24% of Asian-American workers, 28% of Latino workers, and 15% of White workers who repeated these experiences in their current jobs (Figure 12).

Question:

Here are a few things that some people have experienced in their workplace because of their race or ethnicity. Have the following ever happened to you in your current job, in a previous job, or hasn't this happened to you?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Had someone treat you as if you were less competent or valuable than someone else	21%	32%	18%	13%
Received a threat of physical violence	6%	10%	6%	5%
Experienced slights about your language or appearance	18%	19%	14%	8%
Heard or read comments, insults, or slurs (directed at you) by a manager or supervisor	12%	19%	14%	8%
Heard or read comments, insults, or slurs (directed at you) by a co-worker	13%	25%	13%	9%

Table 44: Experience with Treatment in Previous Job, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Here are a few things that some people have experienced in their workplace because of their race or ethnicity. Have the following ever happened to you in your current job, in a previous job, or hasn't this happened to you?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
0	58%	44%	61%	72%
1	8%	9%	10%	10%
2	8%	7%	7%	5%
3	4%	6%	4%	3%
4	4%	7%	4%	3%
5+	18%	26%	13%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
All	0.5%	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%

Table 45: Experience with Advancement/Mobility or Treatment in Previous Job, Count, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Here are a few things that some people have experienced in their workplace because of their race or ethnicity. Have the following ever happened to you in your current job, in a previous job, or hasn't this happened to you?

Experiences with unfair treatment/discrimination are more likely in workers' previous jobs, rather than in their current jobs

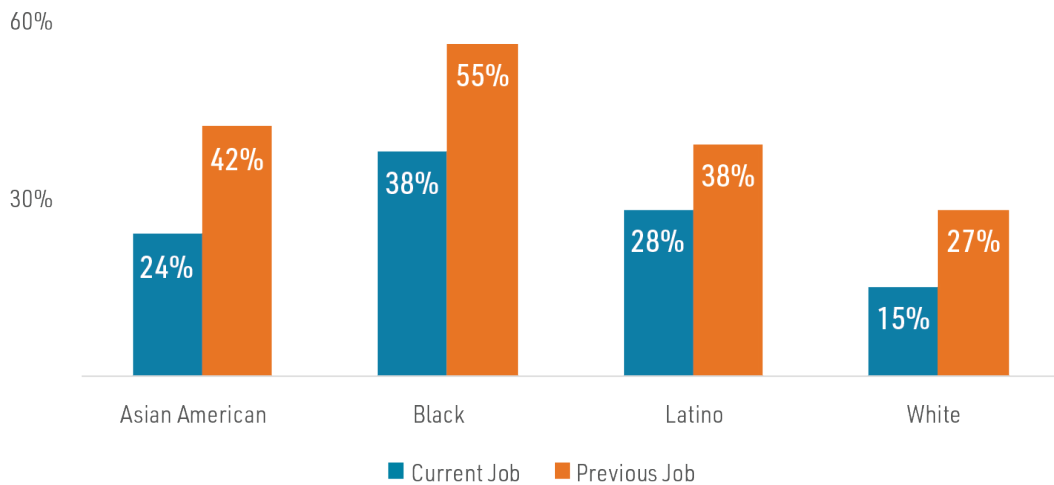


Figure 12: Experience with Advancement/Mobility or Treatment in Previous Job Compared to Current Job, Percent Workers Experiencing at Least One Situation, by Race and Ethnicity

Black females are more likely than all other females to report that they have been denied a promotion; earned less than a co-worker doing the same job; treated as less competent; passed over for important projects; heard comments, insults, or slurs from managers or co-workers; received threats of physical violence; assigned unwanted shifts or tasks; denied a raise; received fewer opportunities for education or training; and received less helpful advice.

When asked to think about the worst experience they had faced in either a previous job or in their current job, 1,704 U.S. workers indicated the following:

On why a “normal” workday is different for a worker of color

“I can’t react, get upset, show emotion when it comes to my work. I can’t with certain colleagues and I have a very low margin [of error] if I do get upset or if I do have a patient that happens not to like me; that’s generally going to be taken more seriously than some of the issues I’ve seen.”

- Black male working in health care

- Workers say that it was not necessarily evident that it was race or ethnicity that was the reason for the experience. While 23% say they are absolutely certain it was their race or ethnicity that was the reason, another 32% are somewhat certain and 44% are not at all certain.
- Seventy-seven percent of Black, 69% of Asian-American, 64% of Latino, and 41% of White workers say they were certain their race or ethnicity was the reason for the experience.**

See Appendix F for descriptions from workers about their experiences with reporting and the consequences they faced, if any, after reporting.

Impact of the “worst” experience

- 50% felt frustrated, 40% felt angry, 33% felt sad, and 28% felt powerless
- 29% said the experience was stressful, and 52% said the experience was somewhat stressful
- 41% of Black, 33% of Latino, 22% of Asian-American, and 24% of White workers said the experience was very stressful
- 15% received psychological or legal help to deal with the stress, including 22% of Latino, 20% of Black, 19% of Asian-American, and 9% of White workers (of those who said it was stressful)

Reporting the “worst” experience

- 46% reported the incident, while 54% did not
- 38% told a manager or supervisor
- 15% reported the incident to human resources
- 8% experienced negative consequences after reporting

Labeling Discrimination

The labeling of racial and ethnic discrimination as a problem, and the relationship to the experience, is clear:

- of workers who say discrimination is a problem, about half say they never experience discrimination or unfair treatment (47%).
- of workers who say discrimination is not a problem, 83% say they never experience it.
- of workers who say discrimination is a problem, 27% say in the past, others have gotten pay raises or promotions because of race or ethnicity, compared to 6% who say it is not a problem.

In the survey, workers were asked whether they considered the various experiences they had faced – being denied a promotion or raise, earning less than a co-worker, etc. – to be discrimination, or not. Three in four Black workers having these experiences say they do consider them to be discrimination (other than receiving a threat of physical violence).

For example, **4 in 10 Black workers say**, because of their race or ethnicity, in their professional life, they:

- had someone treat them as less competent or valuable in their current or previous job (44%) – 76% say they consider this discrimination (Table 47);
- earned less than a co-worker doing the same job (43%) – 72% consider this discrimination (Table 46); and
- were assigned tasks or shifts considered undesirable or unwanted by others (41%) – 73% consider this discrimination (Table 46).

One in four Asian-American workers say, because of their race or ethnicity, in their professional life, they:

- had someone treat them as less competent or valuable in their current or previous job (28%) – 61% consider this discrimination (Table 47);
- earned less than a co-worker doing the same job (25%) – 61% consider this discrimination (Table 46); and
- were assigned tasks or shifts considered undesirable or unwanted by others (28%) – 55% consider this discrimination (Table 46).

One in four Latino workers say, because of their race or ethnicity, in their professional life, they:

- had someone treat them as less competent or valuable in their current or previous job (26%) – 71% consider this discrimination (Table 47);
- earned less than a co-worker doing the same job (26%) – 65% consider this discrimination (Table 46); and
- were assigned tasks or shifts considered undesirable or unwanted by others (29%) – 58% consider this discrimination (Table 46).

Finally, **one in five White workers say**, because of their race or ethnicity, in their professional life, they:

- had someone treat them as less competent or valuable in their current or previous job (17%) – 56% consider this discrimination (Table 47);
- earned less than a co-worker doing the same job (20%) – 44% consider this discrimination (Table 46); and
- were assigned tasks or shifts considered undesirable or unwanted by others (17%) – 38% consider this discrimination (Table 46).

Question:

Here are a few things that some people have experienced in their workplace because of their race or ethnicity. Have the following ever happened to you in your current job, in a previous job, or hasn't this happened to you/Do you consider this experience discrimination, or not?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Denied a promotion	23%	35%	18%	11%
Considered discrimination	53%	70%	60%	46%
Earned less than a co-worker doing the same job as you	25%	43%	26%	20%
Considered discrimination	61%	72%	65%	44%
Denied a raise	23%	31%	21%	11%
Considered discrimination	54%	66%	56%	41%
Received less helpful advice, less feedback, or fewer opportunities for performance evaluation	23%	39%	21%	12%
Considered discrimination	64%	76%	63%	44%
Received fewer opportunities for education or training	18%	31%	17%	7%
Considered discrimination	58%	69%	53%	42%
Were passed over for the most important assignments or projects	22%	34%	17%	11%
Considered discrimination	61%	76%	69%	48%
Were assigned tasks or shifts that were undesirable or unwanted by others	28%	41%	29%	17%
Considered discrimination	55%	73%	58%	38%

Table 46: Experience with Advancement/Mobility in Any Job and Considered Discrimination, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Here are a few things that some people have experienced in their workplace because of their race or ethnicity. Have the following ever happened to you in your current job, in a previous job, or hasn't this happened to you/Do you consider this experience discrimination, or not?

Any Yes	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Had someone treat you as if you were less competent or valuable than someone else	28%	44%	26%	17%
Considered discrimination	61%	76%	71%	56%
Heard or read comments, insults, or slurs (directed at you) by a manager or supervisor	17%	27%	17%	9%
Considered discrimination	56%	74%	53%	54%
Heard or read comments, insults, or slurs (directed at you) by a co-worker	19%	34%	21%	11%
Considered discrimination	64%	74%	57%	58%
Received a threat of physical violence	9%	16%	10%	6%
Considered discrimination	48%	55%	48%	51%
Experienced slights about your language or appearance	25%	27%	22%	10%
Considered discrimination	59%	67%	70%	55%

Table 47: Experience with Treatment in Any Job and Considered Discrimination, by Race and Ethnicity

Intersectional Identities (Crenshaw, 1991)

As seen in Table 48, 1 in 10 Black workers and 1 in 10 White workers say they have been treated unfairly or experienced what they consider to be discrimination at work because of their gender/gender identity and age. One in five White female workers say they have experienced unfair treatment or what they consider to be discrimination at work because of their gender identity.²³

As seen in Table 49, 33% of White workers, 32% of Black workers, 28% of Latino workers, and 25% of Asian-American workers report having experienced unfair treatment or what they consider to be discrimination based on at least one other identity criteria.²⁴ This does not include workers who indicated they don't know if they have experienced unfair treatment or discrimination because of gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

Question:

Other than your race or ethnicity, have you ever experienced unfair treatment/what you consider to be discrimination at work because of...

	U.S. Workers	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
Gender identity	12%	8%	10%	9%	14%
Age	14%	10%	13%	13%	14%
Education	7%	7%	11%	9%	6%
Immigration status	3%	9%	6%	6%	0
Previous incarceration/ experience with criminal justice system	5%	4%	8%	7%	3%

Table 48: Percent Reporting Unfair Treatment/Discrimination by Various Characteristics, by Race and Ethnicity²⁵

Question:

Other than your race or ethnicity, have you ever experienced unfair treatment/what you consider to be discrimination at work because of...

Number of Yes Statements	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
0	75%	68%	72%	67%
1	10%	15%	13%	17%
2	7%	6%	5%	8%
3	3%	4%	4%	5%
4+	5%	7%	6%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
All	0.3%	0	0.1%	0.3%

Table 49: Unfair Treatment/Discrimination Other than Race/Ethnicity, Count, by Race and Ethnicity

Quitting/Leaving a Job

As illustrated in Table 50, one in four Black workers and one in five Asian-American workers say they have thought about quitting a job because they personally experienced or witnessed what they consider to be discrimination because of race or ethnicity.

Question:

Have you ever thought about quitting a job because you personally experienced or witnessed what you consider to be discrimination because of race or ethnicity?

	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
NET yes	31%	43%	29%	13%
Yes, thought about it	19%	25%	16%	8%
Yes, quit a job	12%	18%	13%	5%

Table 50: Quitting/Thinking About Quitting Job, by Race and Ethnicity

Witnessing Unfair Treatment/Discrimination

When asked specifically about their **current workplace**, a considerable number – one in three Black workers (32%), one in four Latino workers (27%), and one in four Asian-American workers (25%) – but only 11% of White workers, say the statement, “I have heard or read comments, insults, or slurs, directed at a co-worker by another co-worker, because of race or ethnicity” would describe their current workplace a lot or a little (Table 51). One in 10 Black workers (11%) say this describes their current workplace a lot (Table 52).

Approximately 30% of workers who say racial and ethnic discrimination is a major or minor problem in their workplace also say they have witnessed comments, insults, or slurs directed at a co-worker either by a manager/supervisor or another co-worker (Tables 53 and 54).

Question:

Here are a few things that some people have experienced in their workplace because of their race or ethnicity. Have the following ever happened to you in your current job, in a previous job, or hasn't this happened to you?

	U.S. Workers	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
I have heard or read comments, insults, or slurs directed at a co-worker by another co-worker, because of their race or ethnicity	17%	25%	32%	27%	11%
I have heard or read comments, insults, or slurs directed at a co-worker by a manager, because of their race or ethnicity	13%	23%	24%	22%	7%

Table 51: Hearing or Reading Comments/Insults/Slurs Because of Race or Ethnicity in Current Job, Percent a Lot or a Little, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

Here are a few things that some people have experienced in their workplace because of their race or ethnicity. Have the following ever happened to you in your current job, in a previous job, or hasn't this happened to you?

	U.S. Workers	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
I have heard or read comments, insults, or slurs directed at a co-worker by another co-worker, because of their race or ethnicity	4%	5%	11%	9%	1%
I have heard or read comments, insults, or slurs directed at a co-worker by a manager, because of their race or ethnicity	3%	4%	7%	7%	1%

Table 52: Hearing or Reading Comments/Insults/Slurs Because of Race or Ethnicity in Current Job, Percent a Lot, by Race and Ethnicity

Question:

I have heard or read comments, insults, or slurs (directed at a co-worker) by another co-worker, because of race or ethnicity.

	Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
A lot	9%	2%
A little	26%	8%
Not at all	54%	86%
Don't know	11%	4%
Unweighted N	1,351	1,560

Table 53: Hearing or Reading Comments/Insults/Slurs Between Co-workers Because of Race or Ethnicity in Current Job, by Discrimination is Problem/Not a Problem

Question:

I have heard or read comments, insults, or slurs (directed at a co-worker) by a manager, because of race or ethnicity.

	Major/Minor Problem	Not a Problem
A lot	7%	1%
A little	22%	5%
Not at all	60%	91%
Don't know	11%	3%
Unweighted N	1,347	1,560

Table 54: Hearing or Reading Comments/Insults/Slurs by Manager/Supervisor Because of Race or Ethnicity in Current Job, by Discrimination is Problem/Not a Problem

Workers were asked to describe their experiences with witnessing racial and ethnic discrimination in general. One in four Black workers (27%) and one in five Latino workers (17%) say they have witnessed or heard about someone being treated unfairly or discriminated against at work because of that person's race or ethnicity (Table 55). There are no differences between the two half-samples when asking about unfair treatment or discrimination.

Questions:

Has there ever been any instance at work where you witnessed or heard about someone being treated unfairly because of their race or ethnicity? Has there ever been any instance at work where you witnessed or heard about someone being discriminated against because of their race or ethnicity?

	U.S. Workers	Asian-American Workers	Black Workers	Latino Workers	White Workers
% yes all	14%	16%	27%	17%	11%
% unsure	11%	16%	15%	12%	9%
% yes - unfairly	15%	16%	26%	18%	12%
% unsure - unfairly	10%	17%	17%	13%	8%
% yes - discriminated	13%	16%	29%	16%	9%
% unsure - discriminated	11%	16%	13%	12%	11%

Table 55: Witnessing Unfair Treatment/Discrimination, by Race and Ethnicity

Impact of witnessing unfair treatment/discrimination

- 54% were frustrated, 48% were angry, 47% were sad, and 27% felt powerless

Reporting unfair treatment/discrimination

- 42% reported the incident, while 58% did not
- 32% told a manager, while 22% told a supervisor
- 18% reported the incident to human resources
- 6% experienced negative consequences after reporting

Of the 642 workers who indicated that they had witnessed or heard about someone being treated unfairly/discriminated against because of their race and ethnicity, see Appendix F for a description of these experiences, what happened after workers reported the incident, and what consequences they believe they faced after reporting the situation.

Reporting Experiences Considered to be Racial and Ethnic Discrimination

When asked whether they would be comfortable reporting an experience that they consider to be racial and ethnic discrimination at work, either directed at themselves or someone else, 6 in 10 workers, regardless of their race or ethnicity, say they themselves would be comfortable reporting an experience in the future. Higher-income (earning at least \$50,000 per year), White (64%), and Latino (67%) workers are more likely to say they are comfortable reporting than lower-income workers (those earning less than \$50,000 per year) (51% and 54%). Moreover, 58% of Black workers ages 18 to 44 say they would be comfortable, compared to 71% of Black workers age 45 and over.

If a worker were to **see or hear someone else** experiencing what they consider to be discrimination, responses are similar: there are no differences between witnessing and one's own experience. However, 72% of White workers earning at least \$50,000 annually say they are comfortable reporting, compared to 58% of White workers earning less than \$50,000 annually.

White and Latino workers who make at least \$50,000 per year are more likely to say they trust their workplace to deal fairly with a report of what they consider discrimination (75% and 71%, respectively) compared to workers who make less than \$50,000 per year (58% and 61%, respectively). White females are more likely to say they trust their workplace a lot to deal with the issue fairly (42%), compared to Black females (26%) and Asian-American females (28%). White salaried workers are more likely to say they trust their workplace a lot/a little (79%) compared to White hourly workers (67%).

Finally, **48% of Asian-American, 44% of Black, and 36% of Latino workers say they would be concerned about negative consequences (retaliation) by a supervisor, manager, or co-worker after reporting a discrimination experience, more than White workers (23%). White workers are far less likely to be concerned about retaliation – 47% of Black females, compared to 25% of White females** (Table 56).

	Asian-American Female Workers	Asian-American Male Workers	Black Female Workers	Black Male Workers	Latino Female Workers	Latino Male Workers	White Female Workers	White Male Workers
% concerned	50%	47%	47%	41%	39%	33%	25%	21%
% very concerned	10%	11%	18%	15%	15%	11%	5%	7%

Table 56: Concern About Reporting and Retaliation, by Race and Ethnicity and Gender

On feeling uncomfortable about reporting, trust, and the relationship to supposed anonymity and possible retaliation

“Given that all of my upper management are older white men, there are certain things I can be honest about to a point, but if I don’t want to trigger defensiveness and backlash. There are things I’m not going to say to them. Not sure I can say 100% honestly what I would want to say. Given the situation with my black woman co-worker who left – from conversations with her and other Black people in the office – I know why she left. She was fairly outspoken, a younger woman. They took everything she said as extra aggressive, though it wasn’t. They did a lot of talking behind her back and were not giving her straightforward answers. They [managers] should have handled it differently. They asked for anonymous feedback, but I didn’t feel entirely comfortable, and it would have been obvious who it was from. So it was not worth it.”

- Black female academic librarian

On the complicated nature of reporting witnessed discrimination

“So my career overall since I joined I joined it in 2015, and of course we have policies in place, as the organization. They’re really trying, and then they try to protect people. But at the end of the day, as a worker or an employee, and as a Black woman who is an immigrant of being told so many things. If you try to kind of credibly challenge certain behavior. People tell you. You cannot fight blue-eyed boys or go back to Africa.”

- Black female working in corporate banking

On concern about confidentiality and reporting, and the “culture” that precludes it

“I already know that it’s only going to go some so far, you know, I’m going to say something, and they’re going to act like they’re going to say something and do something about it. But like I said, because it’s the culture, and they’re so used to doing it. Nothing’s going to happen. They’re going to the culture. And they’re so used to doing it. Nothing is going to happen. The people make comments where we have this new thing. It’s, and then then they threaten you because they’re like, well, you know, we’re gonna find out you know, if somebody calls that number, it’s really not confidential.”

- Black female distribution center/inventory worker