Facing Racial Discrimination in the Labor Environment

The Honors Program
Senior Capstone Project
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ABSTRACT

Almost 50 years after the signing of the 1968 Civil Rights Act, and over 150 years after the official end of slavery in the US, the labor market is still far from equal. Minorities, especially those who racially identify as black and Latino, still face higher unemployment rates, lower median salaries (Wilson, 2015), and higher difficulty in obtaining interview opportunities (Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2004). The overarching question for my Capstone is as follows: How does perceived racial discrimination affect a person in the labor environment[1]? To investigate this question, I conducted a survey for Bryant University alumni which asked the ways that these alumni have perceived racial discrimination occurring within the labor environment. The survey showed that for Latinos were the race with the greatest percentage of respondents perceiving racial discrimination occurring to themselves (42%). However, blacks were the race with the highest percentage of perceiving racial discrimination occurring to others (35%). I then used the results of the survey to formulate questions for semi-structured interviews which I conducted with current Bryant University students. Overall, the results show that although racial discrimination may not be as overt as it has been in the past, the consequences of racial discrimination still affect people of every race in the labor environment.

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[1] Defined as the process by which a person obtains and maintains a profession, and the environment in which he or she works (ex. Interview process, hiring decision, physical workplace)

INTRODUCTION

The Meaning and Function of "Race" in America
Many scholars define the term of "race" in different ways. For the purposes of my project, I use the definition provided by Aguirre, Jr. and Turner. In their 2011 book *American Ethnicity: The Dynamics and Consequences of Discrimination*, Adalberto Aguirre Jr. and Jonathan Turner describe race as "[connoting] biological differences among peoples—skin color, facial features, stature, and the like—that are transmitted from generation to generation" (p. 2). The authors continue by stating that race does not make much biological sense, since it is used to describe some minor genetic differences which give people different appearances: there is also no strict definition of the dividing lines between races (i.e. Where does "white" end and "black" begin?). Some examples of common racial classifications are: Caucasian (white), black, Asian, and so on.

In addition, race is a social construction which people of one race can manipulate to justify the subordination and mistreatment of people of other races (Aguirre and Turner, 2007, pp. 6-7). This occurs when people associate race, a term which attempts to describe biological differences in appearance, with psychological and behavioral differences—and as a result, they establish racial discrimination within interpersonal relationships. Even today, despite the progress made by the Civil Rights movements of the 1960s and continued activism by minority races, racial discrimination still exists in many aspects of American society.

The topic of "race" is a crucial yet divisive subject matter in this country. With racial relations and discrimination being spotlighted by groups such as Black Lives Matter, it is impossible to live one day in the United States and not encounter "race" and how it is used as a means to divide and discriminate Even those that argue that there are no racial issues in the United States must concede that people from every race believe that they are not treated equally. Whether through interactions with people who are from different races, or being exposed to social demonstrations advocating for an end to racial mistreatment, or police brutality against racial minorities on television, race is just as, if not more integral than it has ever been in the United States. However, if "race" truly is a term used to describe the variations in our DNA

which cause one person to have different physical features than another person, then it has no merit to be used as an agent of discrimination.

Topic Formation

I began formulating this research topic after I read the story of Jose Zamora documented by Cate Matthews in 2014. Jose Zamora is a Mexican-American who changed his name to Joe Zamora on his resumes after receiving no interview requests for job applications, despite sending out 50-100 resumes at a time. By "whitewashing" his resume, "Joe" received multiple callbacks and requests to interview for positions, and he reports that after using "Joe" instead of "Jose," "his inbox was full [of interview requests]" (Matthews, 2014).

When I discovered this story, I thought about my own experience applying to internships. Upon reflection, I realized that when I use my given name of "Ya" on my resumes and applications, I have not yet received any positive responses from employers asking for interviews; however, when I use my English name, "Mark," I can recall receiving five interview requests to date. Therefore, as a racial minority who has experienced the effects of "whitewashing" to avoid potential racial discrimination, I sought to discover if my experience was shared among people of other races. Therefore, for my Capstone I decided to conduct a study which would shed light on this subject. For this study, I focused on Bryant University students and alumni, because these groups would give insight on how I could expect to perceive racial discrimination occurring in the labor environment in the future.

In the topic formation process, I created two questions which I sought to answer for both groups I would be researching. They are as follows:

1. To what degree do Bryant alumni *perceive* that they have experienced racial discrimination in the labor environment?

2. If at all, how do current Bryant students *perceive* they may experience racial discrimination in the labor environment?

I use the term "perceive" because though racial discrimination is very much present (as shown by several studies which I will discuss in my literature review) in the labor environment,

proving it to be "real" in a legal sense is very difficult. Therefore, I utilize "perceive" to overcome this issue.

With these questions serving to guide my research, I began to conduct a review of the existing literature on how other researchers have studied racial discrimination in the labor environment and how I could approach uncovering my own findings on the subject.

LITERATURE REVIEW

My literature review is comprised of peer reviewed (scholarly) articles, popular news articles, and other sources. For purposes of this literature review, I will highlight only the sources which were most helpful in guiding my research. I will begin by discussing the peer reviewed articles and the purpose of these articles within the context of my research.

Past Research and Big Picture Framework: Peer Reviewed Articles
The primary purpose of the peer reviewed (scholarly) articles was to provide a picture of the work that had already been done on the subject. They also served to inform me of the different ways that racial discrimination could manifest itself in the labor environment and what I may expect to find in my research: for example, blacks being the race with the highest percentage of perceiving racial discrimination occurring to themselves.

In 2008, Pager and Shepherd conducted an analysis of previously published studies analyzing the prevalence of racial discrimination in American society in housing, employment, credit, and consumer markets. In employment, white men were found to make 15% more than black men, and white women were found to make 6% more than black women. Additionally, black men with high school diplomas faced 70% higher instances of "involuntary unemployment" than whites with "otherwise equivalent characteristics;" the instances increased with higher levels of education (p. 7). In addition, housing studies showed that there is still evidence of "racial placement" for minority races. Consumer market and credit analysis showed that blacks are charged more for interest rates on mortgages and tend to pay more for goods such as automobiles.

This study informed my research because it showed that even without an experiment, one could still see the disparity in how different races are treated in various aspects of American society. In addition, Pager and Shepherd's analysis on the showed that some examples of racial discrimination in the labor environment is the amount employees of different races are paid, and how employers may "ignore" education level for racial minority applicants, especially those who are black. Though I did not choose to analyze wage or education level specifically, the study revealed some of the ways racial discrimination occurs in the labor environment. This led me to explore the possibility of allowing respondents to fill in responses of how they had perceived racial discrimination in lieu of selecting a multiple-choice option that I had provided, allowing my research to uncover a larger picture of different examples of racial discrimination in the work environment in the alumni survey.

A 2004 study by Bertrand and Mullainathan revealed that "black" sounding names are less likely to receive interview requests than those with "white" sounding names. In this study, the researchers applied to almost 1,300 job postings in Boston and Chicago and sent out about 5,000 resumes total; job titles ranged from cashier to sales management positions. Four resumes were sent to each job posting: two "higher quality" resumes and two "lower quality" resumes: one "higher quality" resume and one "lower quality" resume was assigned to "black" sounding names, and one "higher quality" resume and one "lower quality" resume were assigned to "white" sounding names. The researchers determined that a "success" would be a resume receiving an employer request to interview the "candidate."

The experiment results revealed that resumes with "white" names received a 9.65% "successful" response rate, but ones with "black" names received only a 6.45% "successful" response rate. This means that on average, "white" resumes (ones with "white" sounding names) received an interview request once every 10 resumes, but "black" resumes (ones with "black" sounding names) received an interview request once every 15 resumes, meaning "black" applicants were 50% less likely to receive interview requests from employers. In addition, having a "white" name on a resume increased the response rate similar to a "black" resume having 8 additional years or work experience. In other words, having a "white" name is equivalent to 8 years of work experience.

The study provided an example of how racial discrimination in the labor environment can be present even outside of a physical workplace. Even before minorities are introduced into a company work environment, they can face barriers that prevent them from even being considered for a job. In the context of my research, this study reinforced my belief that racial discrimination in the labor environment is still very much prevalent even in the 21st century. In addition, it encouraged me to expand my definition of the labor environment to include elements beyond just the physical workplace, and include items like the interview process and the application process.

In her 2013 book, Collins discusses how different elements of identity can combine to determine how one is treated. On page 217, she uses the example of slavery to show how the elements of "race, gender, and class…interlock in structuring the institutional dimension of oppression." Though slavery is typically seen as a "racist institution," and less often as a "class institution," Collins argues that "slavery was a race-, class-, and gender-specific institution" (p. 217). She elaborates that slavery was a "patriarchal institution" in which the affluent white male was always at the top. The affluent man's wife would function as a helper to the man, but poor white women and black slave women were treated far less favorably. Though poor white women had few of the benefits that their rich counterparts had, the "devalued status" of black women was key in preserving the social ranking of all white women. Black women were valued for little more than their fertility, by which the rich white plantation owner would be guaranteed future generations of slaves (pp. 217-218).

Though Collins did not refer to any specific studies, her words helped me conceptualize intersectionality. Different parts of a person's identity come together and intersect to determine how others treat him or her, and influence how a person may view him or herself. Specifically for my research, the element of intersectionality helped me realize that though I was analyzing racial discrimination, identity as a whole cannot be analyzed by just researching one part of identity. All elements of identity connect and influence how others see a person and how a person sees him or herself. Therefore, to analyze racial discrimination and not include other elements of identity, or at least a question on intersectionality would be to

obtain an incomplete picture. As a result, I included an intersectionality question in the survey.

I will group the next two studies together because both employed a similar methodology and referenced the 2004 Bertrand and Mullainathan study previously described. A study conducted in 2015 by Nunley, Pugh, Romero, and Seals found similar instances of racial discrimination in the application process. In their experiment, the researchers randomly generated around 9,400 resumes. The resumes were sent to job postings between January and July 2013, and analyzed the variables of name, major, and amount of work experience. In any resume pair, only one variable would be changed at a time: for example, the major and amount of work experience would be the same for both "applicants," but one applicant resume would be assigned a "black" name, and the other resume would be assigned a "white" name. Specifically, for every four resumes grouped together, one was given a "distinctively black" male name, another a "distinctively black" female name, another a "distinctively white" male name, and the last resume a "distinctively white" female name.

Overall, the results showed that resumes with "black" names were 14% less likely to receive interview requests than ones with "white" names. Furthermore, this discrepancy doubled when analyzing applications to jobs which called for more direct customer interaction (for examples, postings with "representative," "sales," "customer," etc. in the job title). In these cases, "black" resumes were 28% less likely to receive interviews than "white" ones were.

In 2014, Gaddis conducted a study which sought to analyze racial discrimination with a similar method. He created 1,904 resumes with different names ("white" vs. "black"), university selectivity ("elite" vs. "less selective"), majors, and social classes. Resumes were paired one "white" name resume with one "black" name resume. These resumes were sent to a variety of job types: customer service, sales, administrative assistants and so on.

Though the only variable which showed statistically significant differences between "white" and "black" names was university selectivity, the results of the study revealed an even greater discrepancy than the previous studies for the way that "black" resumes and "white" resumes were treated by employers. Resumes with "black" names were 63% less likely than white

ones to receive any kind of response from an employer, whether positive (interview request) or negative (acknowledgement of application but no interview request). Of the resumes which received responses from employers, when university selectivity was held constant, "black" and "white" resumes were responded to differently by employers. For resumes with "elite" universities, "white" resumes would receive one interview request for every six applications (about 17% rate), while "black" resumes would receive one interview request for every eight applications (just over 12%). This difference increased with applications with "less selective" universities on their resumes. With "less selective" universities, "white" resumes would receive one interview request for every nine applications (about 11%), while "black" resumes would receive one interview request for every fifteen applications (under 7%). Therefore, a "black" applicant from an "elite" university received about the same interview request rate as a "white" applicant from a "less selective" university. Furthermore, when "black" resumes were offered interview requests, the interviews were for jobs with lower starting salaries and lower "prestige" than those "white" resumes were offered.

Both studies further proved to me that discrimination based on race is clearly prevalent, because despite all other variables being essentially equal, the resumes with "black" names were regarded much less favorably than those with "white" names. Even in cases where "black" resumes had advantages in work experience and education, "white" resumes were often chosen by employers instead. Similar to the Bertrand and Mullainathan study, these experiments helped me conceptualize the way that racial discrimination in the labor environment manifests itself. Racial discrimination is not just mistreatment in the workplace because of race, but it can also be a denial of an opportunity to either advance in a career or obtain a job. With the peer-reviewed articles providing a framework for quantitative evidence of racial discrimination, I continued my research using popular news articles to provide specific examples of how individuals have been affected by racial discrimination in their labor environments.

Examples of Racial Discrimination Today: Popular News Articles
The purpose of popular news articles in my research was to provide current examples of racial discrimination and how it could affect different groups of people in the labor environment.

The articles gave me ideas on what specific examples of racial discrimination I could ask about in the survey, and how I may expect survey respondents and interview subjects to react to different examples of racial discrimination. As I have already detailed the 2014 Matthews in the Introduction section, I will refrain from including it in this section.

A 2016 article by Prokop details the story of a former black Washington state jail employee was awarded $500,000 because those in his labor environment racially discriminated against him. In the article, Britt Easterly, the former jail employee, alleged that he faced repeated discrimination due to his race, from being denied certain training opportunities, to having nobody defend him when inmates used racial slurs, to facing harassment from other officers. In addition to all of this, he alleged that he was repeatedly passed up for promotion because he was black. At the conclusion of the case, jurors, citing a "pattern of racism," awarded Easterly half a million dollars in order to "make a point."

Though Easterly was eventually compensated for the racial discrimination that he faced in his work environment, the money awarded to him does not change the fact that he and the jury in this case believe that he had been racially discriminated against. In his labor environment, he was not only called racial slurs, but was also supposedly withheld promotion because of his race. This article informed my research through showing that racial discrimination that occurs in the workplace can be both overt (called names/slurs) or covert (discrete, not given advancement opportunities). Therefore, I expected to find examples of both overt and covert racial discrimination in my data, and did not want to exclude one or the other when formulating the questions I would ask research participants.

In 2015, Richards wrote an article detailing the alleged racial-religious discrimination faced by Jose Alcantra. Alcantra is a Latino American who is a Muslim. He began to grow out his beard in accordance with his faith, and when he did so, he alleges that this was when he began to be discriminated against in his Bed Bath & beyond workplace. For example, Alcantra recalls how he was asked inappropriate questions such as "why don't you believe in God," (as a Muslim, Alcantra does in fact believe in God, but he calls God "*Allah*"). In addition, he says that a coworker called him a "terrorist," but when he reported the incident to HR, he says that the incident was dismissed as "just a joke." Furthermore, Alcantra says that he was eventually

fired because he failed to show up for work for three consecutive days—however, according to Alcantra he had not signed up to work on those days, and his supervisor changed his work schedule without consulting him. Alcantra believes that this was directly due to the fact that he began growing his beard in accordance with the Muslim faith.

This article was crucial because along with Collins's book, the article introduced the element of intersectionality into my research. Though Islam is a religion and not a race (just as Muslims are a religious group and not a racial group), for many people religion is an important part of their identity. Because identity is comprised of many factors including race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, social class, and nationality, these factors are intertwined and have influence on how a person sees him or herself and how other people will treat him or her because of his or her identity. Since intersectionality of different elements of identity is key to understanding identity and how people respond to it as a whole, I decided to include a question which asked about intersectionality in both my surveys and interviews.

These scholarly and popular news articles informed my research in different ways. However, every source contributed to formulating my research scope and focus. After conducting a review of the existing literature, I began to formulate the research methodology I would use for data collection.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In my research methodology, I employed a mixed methodology approach which would yield both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data would be obtained through surveys directed towards Bryant University alumni. Qualitative data would come from semi-structured interviews with current Bryant University students. A mixed methodology would allow for greater insight into the reasons behind the responses and the thought process of how research participants perceived racial discrimination in the labor environment.

The first step immediately following the review of the literature was to create a survey which would be relevant to what I desired to discover in my research. My Capstone team and I

worked through multiple drafts, refining the amount of questions and the question content to create focused questions on four main topics. The topics are as follows:

1. Demographics

2. Perceived Racial Discrimination

3. Future Job Prospects

4. Intersectionality (of identity elements)

The questions asked solely about racial discrimination in the labor environment, and did not ask about racial discrimination in other aspects of life (in the airport, in a store, etc.). Each question was worded to explicitly ask only about the labor environment. Prior to administering the survey, I submitted the list of the 18 survey questions (19 including the last question in which participants could list their email if they would like a copy of my final report) along with an application for IRB approval and the informed consent agreement of my survey to the Bryant University Institutional Review Board. Upon receiving approval within the week, my Capstone team and I began to work with Bryant University's Alumni Relations Office to administer the survey to select alumni.

The primary criterion used to select participants was were alumni who currently work in the United States. We also decided to target those who identified as racial minorities in hopes that the results would yield a greater number of examples of how the survey respondents had perceived racial discrimination in the work environment. Given that Bryant University's racial composition is about 80% white (and had even greater proportions of white students in past years), my team believed that if we had just sent out the surveys to all alumni working in the United States, the results would be racially imbalanced and would not provide significant insight into the ways that Bryant alumni may perceive racial discrimination in the labor environment.

The survey was administered via email by Alumni Relations and sent to alumni matching the predetermined criteria listed above. Alumni Relations sent on my behalf an introduction

message along with the link to the survey, which was created with Qualtrics. The email with the survey link was sent on February 24, 2017, and respondents were given 3 weeks to complete the survey before it closed on March 17, 2017.

The survey began with an informed consent agreement, in which respondents were informed that their responses would be confidential and their identities would remain anonymous. Respondents were also informed that they could stop responding to questions at any point without penalty. In addition, any responses that were made would not affect their relationships with Bryant University or its employees in any way. After the respondents indicated that they had read and agreed to the informed consent agreement by clicking a button to continue with the survey, respondents progressed to the survey questions. A complete list of questions can be found in the Appendix, along with the description of each question's response requirement (multiple choice, single answer; multiple selection; fill-in), along with the categorization and organization of all questions. The rationale behind using these different response requirements instead of solely multiple choice, single answer was that some questions could reveal more insight into perceived racial discrimination if respondents were allowed to fill in the response, some questions could be considered offensive if respondents were not allowed to write their own response (i.e. the question on racial identity, as controversy exists over the labeling/naming of certain racial categories), and some questions would be too long if every possible choice was listed (ex. age).

Upon conclusion of the survey and analysis of the data (full details in the Results section), I created questions which I would ask current Bryant students about how they expect to perceive and confront potential racial discrimination in the labor environment. These questions served to guide the interview and were designed to gather qualitative data from the students' responses. A list of the questions is included in the Appendix, but because the questions were meant to guide a semi-structured interview, some questions were asked to students which are not included in the questions list in the Appendix section. In addition, the interviews were limited to 15-20 minutes in some cases, so not all the question were asked to every student interviewed. Full specifications of which questions were asked to each student and how they responded can be found in the Results section.

Upon receiving IRB approval for the interview questions, I worked together with the CDI and with my faculty sponsor, Professor Judy McDonnell, to organize interviews with students. Each interview began with an informed consent agreement, in which the student was notified of the subject matter of the questions and was given the option to stop the interview at any point where said student felt uncomfortable. In addition, students were informed that the interview would be recorded, but only for response analysis and the recording would not be shared with any outside parties. As with the survey, student participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity.

During the interview, students were asked questions from a set of five questions. As stated before, not every question was asked to every student. If students did not understand a question, they were given the opportunity to ask the interviewer (me) to rephrase the question and/or provide a further explanation on the question. On average, student participants were asked X questions each.

After the interview, students were debriefed for a period of about 5 minutes. While debriefing, students were asked about how they felt after the interview and how it was like to participate. Additionally, students were given an opportunity to ask any questions that they may have had and were thanked for their participation after the debrief.

RESULTS

Because my research involved a mixed methodology, the data analysis and results are divided into quantitative and qualitative subsections. The quantitative data was obtained through the survey, and the qualitative data was obtained through the semi-structured interviews. I would like to add that because I was interested only in how Bryant alumni and students perceive racial discrimination in the labor environment, I had no set hypothesis entering into the research and data collection. Please note that percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Survey
In total, there were 65 completed responses of the alumni survey, with the median age of 34 years old for the respondents. Of the 65 participants, 36 identified as male, and 29 identified

as female. Because the question asking for racial identity allowed respondents to fill in their answers, respondents were categorized into racial categories based on how they responded. In total, 20 were determined to be black, 11 were determined to be white, 18 were determined to be Asian (including East Asian, South Asian, and Pacific Islander), 12 were determined to be Latino, and 4 were not categorized into a racial category based on their responses. The rationale for not categorizing these 4 respondents into a single racial category is because their responses indicated either that they were likely biracial (and therefore it would not be methodologically proper to include them into one racial category), or the response gave no indication of racioethnic background (i.e. one respondent identified as "American," which cannot be grouped into a particular race). If a respondent's response did not indicate that he or she was biracial (i.e. one race AND another race, ex. "Asian and White"), he or she was grouped based on the first race that he or she indicated in the response. For example, hypothetically speaking someone who identified as a "black Latino" would be grouped into the "black" racial category, while someone who identified as "Latino Caucasian" would be organized into the "Latino" racial category.

Percentage-wise, the racial breakdown of survey respondents is as follows: 30.8% black, 16.9% white, 27.7% Asian, 18.5% Latino, and 6.1% biracial or unidentified race. The gender ratio was about 55% male and 45% female. This ratio is not perfectly balanced, but considering Bryant University has historically been a male-majority campus and even today is around 60% male, this did not come as a surprise. Visual representations for the racial and gender breakdown, along with visualization for the responses of select questions are available in the Appendix section.

The first question asked respondent if they perceived that they have been racially discriminated against in the labor environment. 17 respondents (26%) said that they had and elaborated with a direct personal example. 3 respondents (5%) said that they had, but when they elaborated their responses indicated that they were commenting in a more general sense (such as a comment on society) and did not necessarily provide a personal example. Forty-five respondents (69%) replied that they had not perceived personal racial discrimination, and some indicated that they were surprised that they had not. Respondents indicated a variety of

personal examples, from inappropriate comments or jokes, to inability for career advancements ("glass ceilings" and lack of promotion), to lower pay than coworkers. There was no true "dominant" example which respondents reported facing the most frequently, though the most common response was inappropriate jokes or comments (5 respondents indicated this was how they perceived being personally racially discriminated against).

Of those who responded "Yes" to the question with a personal example, 11 were male and 6 were female. This breaks down to about a 65-35 male to female ratio, which is about 10% more imbalanced for both genders than the overall survey gender ratio. It is worth noting that of the 10 black female respondents, none perceived that they had been personally racially discriminated against in the labor environment. The racial breakdown of the yes responses can be shown by this visualization:
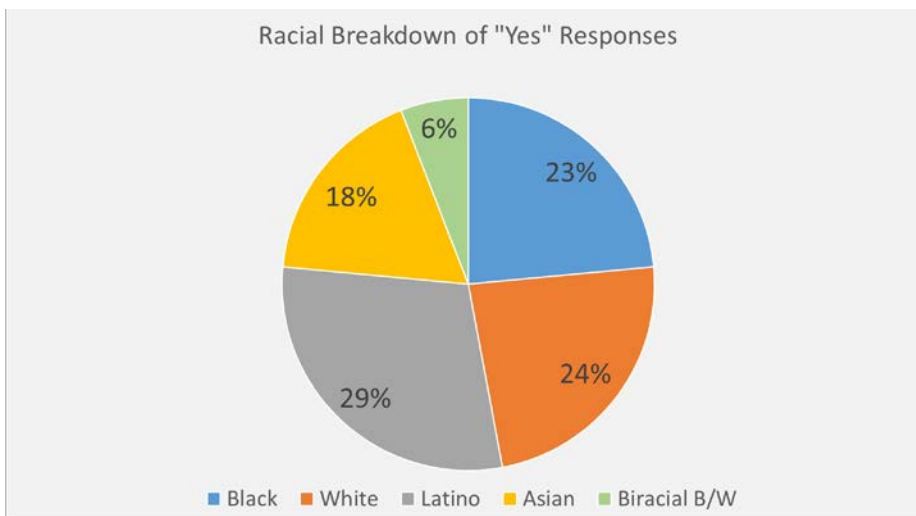
"Biracial B/W" indicates the respondent identified as biracial black and white. As shown in the chart, Latinos make up the plurality of the "yes" responses ("yes" response defined as a response which included a personal example of racial discrimination). However, when analyzing the proportion of each race that responded "yes" to the question, there is an even greater discrepancy between races.

Proportionally, Latinos were the highest in terms of the percentage of respondents in a particular race which responded "yes" to this question. 42% of Latinos perceived being personally racially discriminated against, which was higher than the next highest race by

about 15 percentage points. Whites were the race with the 2nd highest rate of perceived personal racial discrimination, with 27% of white respondents perceiving that they have been personally racially discriminated against. This was followed by the non-categorized/biracial group at 25%, then by blacks at 20%, and finally by Asians at 17%. Though whites are considered the majority/dominant race in the US, in the survey whites were percentage-wise the 2nd-highest race which perceived personal racial discrimination. I will discuss interpretations and possible explanations for survey results in the conclusion section.

The next question asked if respondents perceive that they have witnessed racial discrimination occurring to others in the work environment. In total, 16 respondents indicated that they did perceive racial discrimination occurring to others, meaning about 25% of respondents responded "yes" to this question. Though the aggregate number of "yes" responses for this question may be similar to the first question, the demographic breakdown is very different.

When analyzing the gender of the respondents who indicated "yes," 9 identified as female and 7 identified as male. This translates to about at 56-44 female to male ratio, which is not only an inversion of the overall survey gender demographic, but is also the opposite of the previous question's gender ratio. Racially, the racial breakdown of the "yes" responses is as follows:
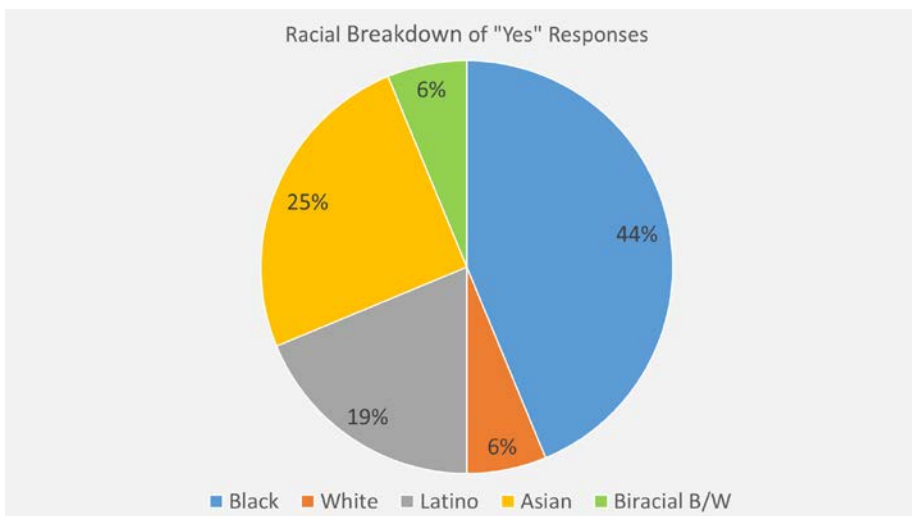
As shown, blacks comprise 44% of the "yes" responses, followed by Asians (25%), Latinos (19%), and Whites and biracial black and white (6% each). Interestingly, blacks not only

make up almost half of the "yes" responses, but also are almost double the "yes" percentage of black responses from the previous question asking about perceiving personal racial discrimination.

When analyzing the proportion of each race which responded "yes" to this question, 35% of blacks responded "yes," that they have perceived racial discrimination occurring to others. This was followed by the non-categorized/biracial group and Latinos (25% each), then by Asians (22%), and finally by whites (9%).

When comparing the results of this question to the first question, a greater proportion of blacks perceive racial discrimination occurring to others (35%) than themselves (20%). Asians were slightly more likely to perceive racial discrimination occurring to others (22%) than perceiving it occurring to themselves (17%). The non-categorized/biracial group was the same in perceiving racial discrimination occurring to others and themselves (25% each). Latinos and whites were more likely to perceive racial discrimination occurring to themselves in comparison to occurring to other people (Latinos: 42% themselves, 25% others; whites: 27% themselves, 9% others).

In addition, when I analyzed the "yes" responses of the two questions together, I found that of the 16 "yes" responses to the second question, 7 had perceived racial discrimination occurring to others but not to themselves, while 9 had perceived racial discrimination occurring to others and also occurring to themselves. This means that in total, 24 respondents (about 37%) perceived racial discrimination in their labor environment occurring in some way. In other words, <u>at least 1 in every 3 respondents has perceived racial discrimination in some way in their labor environment</u>.

The next question asked if respondents had addressed this perceived racial discrimination in any way. There were a variety of responses, from reporting the incident(s) to Human Resources, to directly confronting the person who was discriminating, to working harder to prove the discriminators wrong, to taking no action. There was no true "dominant" response, but the question did provide a picture of the variety of ways respondents attempted to address the perceived racial discrimination, if at all.

The fourth substantive question that I asked respondents were if they believe that they had been denied a job opportunity because of their race. Of the 65 responses, 9 respondents answered "yes" to the question (14%). Of the 9 "yes" responses, 3 respondents identified as black, 3 identified as Latino, 1 identified as Asian, 1 identified as biracial black and white, and 1 identified as white. Percentage-wise, the "yes" responses were 33% black, 33% Latino, 11% Asian, 11% biracial, and 11% white. The gender breakdown of "yes" responses was about 67% male and 33% female. A visualization of the racial breakdown is below:

Racial Breakdown of "Yes" Responses

■ Black   ■ White   ■ Latino   ■ Asian   ■ Biracial B/W
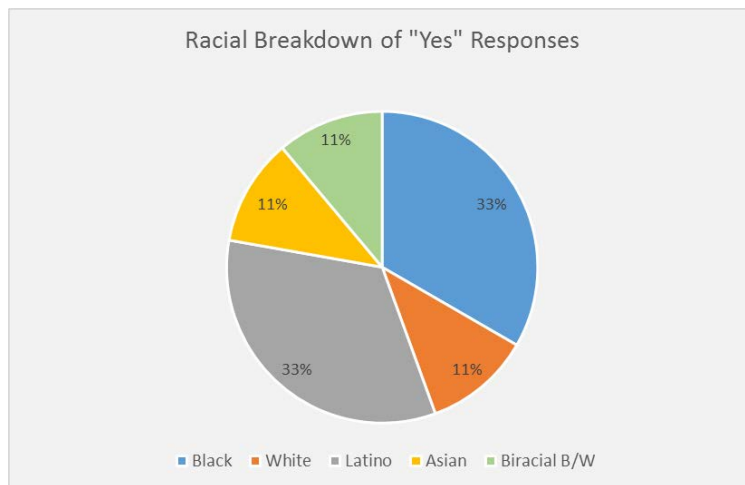
When asked to elaborate, 6 of the 9 "yes" respondents chose to elaborate on their answers. Of those who chose to elaborate, 4 mentioned that they believed the job opportunity denial happened at some point during the hiring process (interview and hiring decision), and 2 mentioned the denial occurring after obtaining and working in a position. However, unlike what I found in my literature review, none of the respondents perceived that they had been racially discriminated against during the application process; all their responses indicated that the discrimination occurred after the application process. Overall, of those who chose to elaborate 67% perceived this denial of opportunity due to race to occur during the hiring process, 33% perceived it occurring after they had already obtained and worked in a job.

The survey then asked respondents whether they perceive that they had been pressured to leave or forced to leave a job because of their racial background. 3 of the 65 respondents responded "yes" to this question. Of the 3 respondents, 1 identified as black, 1 identified as biracial, and 1 identified as white. When analyzing the gender of respondents who answered

"yes," 2 identified as female and 1 identified as male. Percentage-wise, the "yes" responses were 33% black, 33% white, and 33% biracial, and 67% female and 33% male.

Most importantly, when the "yes" respondents were asked to elaborate, every "yes" respondent mentioned that they eventually left the company, whether through being laid off or through resignation. This means that even though "only" 4.6% of respondents perceived that they had been pressured/forced to leave a position because of race, 100% of those respondents did eventually end up leaving their job.

The next set of questions asked about respondent's future job prospects. The first question in this set asked about resume modification. Specifically, the question asked if respondents would modify their resume or CV to avoid potential racial discrimination when searching for a new job. Of the 65 respondents, 10 responded "yes," they would modify their resume or CV, and 13 responded "maybe." This means that 35% of respondents would at least consider modifying their resume or CV to prevent potential racial discrimination.

Of the 23 respondents who would at least consider modifying their resume/CV, 61% identified as male and 39% identified as female. Racially, 39% identified as Asian, 30% identified as black, 26% identified as Latino, and 4% identified as white, as shown by the chart on the next page.
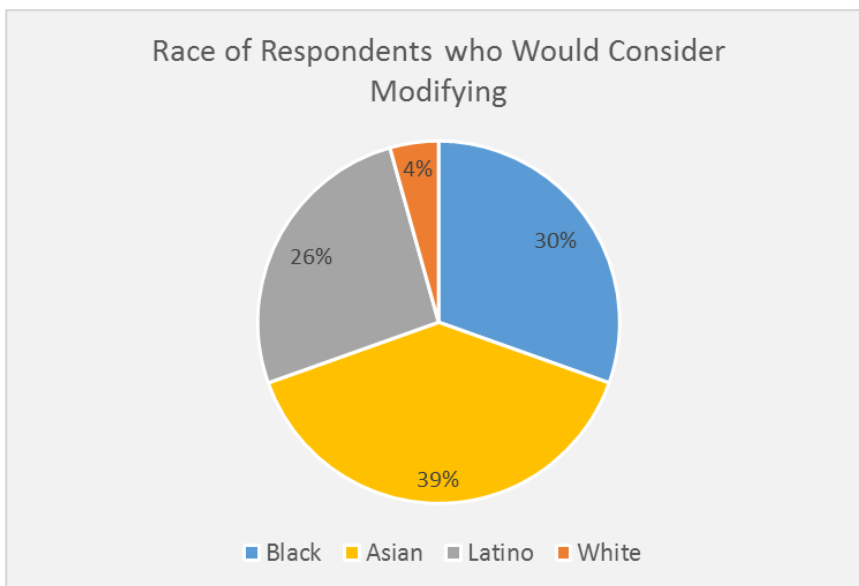
Race of Respondents who Would Consider Modifying

■ Black ■ Asian ■ Latino ■ White

The percentage of each race who would consider modifying their resumes/CVs is as follows: 50% of Asian respondents and 50% Latinos would consider modifying, 35% of black respondents would consider it, and 9% of whites would consider modifying. No respondents who were in the non-categorized/biracial group indicated that they would consider modifying their resumes/CVs to prevent potential racial discrimination.

When asked to elaborate on what they would modify, respondents could select multiple options from a list which included name, social media, address, and other/fill in response. Twelve respondents indicated that they would modify social media, which was the most popular response (52% selection rate). Seven respondents indicated that they would modify the name that they used (30%), while five answered that they would modify address (22%) and another five selected the "Other" option (22%). Those who selected other indicated a variety of responses, such as who or what organizations may be associated with them. One respondent did indicate that he/she would consider modifying his/her resume or CV but did not know what he/she would modify.

The final question in the survey was on intersectionality. Even though race is an important part of a person's identity, it only is one piece of the identity puzzle that makes up who a person is. This particular question asked respondents which elements of a person's identity they believed affects the person (either positively or negatively) in obtaining and keeping a job. The respondents could select multiple options from a list that included race, gender, nationality, social class, sexual orientation, religion, and other/fill in response. The average selection frequency for each question was about 25 selections. The option selected the most frequently was gender, with 38 respondents choosing it (58.5%). The next most frequently selected element was race, with 33 selections (50.8%), followed by nationality (28 selections, 43.1%), then sexual orientation (25 selections, 38.5%), social class (24, 36.9%), religion (15, 23.1%), and finally other (13, 20%). Of the "Other" responses, 4 respondents indicated that they believed appearance was important (weight, dress, etc.), which is about 6.2%. Other "Other" responses included age, political beliefs or affiliations, how suited the person is for the position, family (last) name, and none of the above (indicating some respondents believed that none of these elements of identity affected a person in obtaining and keeping a job).

In this final question, it is interesting to note that some respondents would consider weight, dress, and physical appearance as a part of identity. In addition, though job suitability or "fit" is not usually considered a part of a person's identity, some respondents indicated that they believe that it is and/or it is important in obtaining and keeping a job. Overall, the question on intersectionality showed that the respondents believed that gender was the most important element of identity in obtaining and keeping a job, though all listed elements had at least 20% of respondents selecting a particular one, which can show that all elements of identity are interconnected and all play a role in how one is treated and how one sees him or herself.

Semi-Structured Interviews
To gather qualitative data, I conducted three semi-structured interviews with current Bryant students. The average age of the students was 20.3 years old, and the racial breakdown was as follows: 2 black students and one (South) Asian student. In total, I interviewed 2 males and 1 female. For each interview question, I will detail how many students answered the question and what they had to say for each one.

In the interviews, I started with the question of intersectionality that I used for my survey. When asked which elements of a person's identity affect him or her in obtaining and keeping a job, all 3 students interviewed mentioned that race/ethnicity and gender were key elements which affected a person in the job obtaining and maintaining process. However, one student continued by adding that sexual orientation and social class were also important. I then asked the students if they could elaborate on the identity elements that they had mentioned and why they believed that it affected a person in job obtaining and keeping. This is how each student responded (please note that I have labeled each student with a number which is used for identification and anonymization purposes only):

Student 1:
Race and Ethnicity: for example with Affirmative Action, there are certain racial quotas that employers need to fulfill, especially for African Americans. So, minorities can sometimes just be used to fulfill the Affirmative Action quota, even though they may be qualified for the job. Race can be a pro and a con, because even though one may be hired for being a minority, one could also just be used to fill a quota even though one is qualified for the position.

Gender: Males are preferred in the workforce, especially in business occupations. Women are "coming up" in that more women are getting educated and gaining more job opportunities, but are getting "cut short" because of the male-dominated work environment.

Student 2:

Affirmative Action has made it so that people appear to be more likely hired because of their race or gender, though the student personally believes that people are hired for their skills and qualifications, and not necessarily because of Affirmative Action quotas. However, in the same breath the student also mentioned that diversity depends on the hiring company, because some companies genuinely seek to hire a diverse group of people, by others just want to fill Affirmative Action requirements.

Race: The student first mentioned race as an important identity element in obtaining and keeping a job. For example, someone who is white may be more than likely to be hired than someone who is a racial minority.

Gender: women not treated equally with men. They are not given the same opportunities as men are, and they must "work twice as hard" in the work environment. A woman may not even be considered for some jobs despite her qualifications because of the perception that certain jobs are "a man's job." But women are making changes and progress.

The student used the specific example of the black woman as the most mistreated person in the workforce. Because she is black *and* she is a woman, she has two forces working against her in the workplace.

Sexual Orientation: People today are more tolerant of sexual orientation, or at least have a "don't ask, don't tell" mentality. Therefore, people do not need to be as "outright" with it because it is not something that a person can tell just at first glance. However, a person can look at someone and determine that the person is (for example) a woman or Asian/African American. It is easier for people to get at least a general sense of race and gender than sexual orientation. So, even though it affects a person in obtaining and keeping a job it may not be as crucial as race or gender.

Student 3:

Race: People can have preconceived stereotypes of other people of different races even before meeting a person in the workplace.

Gender: In the workplace environment, gender matters especially in the business world. Women are expected to behave in certain ways, whereas men do not have those expectations.

Sexual Orientation: The student mentioned sexual orientation, but did not elaborate further.

Class/Social Standing: some people have benefits over others being wealthier because they have "more of a foundation" for opportunity.

Question 2

In the second question, I asked how students believed that they may perceive racial discrimination in the workplace. All students responded with answers related to racial stereotyping:

Student 1:

The student perceives that he/she will be discriminated against because of skin color. The student described his/her name as "white-sounding," which would benefit this student in the hiring process. For others with "non-white sounding" names and/or with longer names, this student mentioned that recruiters often give advice to cut those names short (possibly to avoid potential racial discrimination). On the issue of race and trust, the student used the example of a shy white person vs. a shy black person: the student expressed that the shy white person would be trusted more, and seen as shy, quiet, or reserved. However, the shy black person would be seen as having something to hide, even though shyness for anyone may be more of a reflection of personality and the environment in which they grew up, and does not truly indicate the trustworthiness of a person.

The student also continued by mentioning sexual harassment (even though it pertains more to gender discrimination than racial discrimination). He/she used this point to highlight that a minority woman may face the most discrimination in the labor environment.

Finally, the student mentioned that even though people may be American, if they are not white, others will look deeper into their background to try to uncover anything suspicious,

which is the case in many aspects of life including the work environment. In addition, even though someone may be American, if they do not appear white people are more inclined to ask where their origins are (i.e. where their parents/ancestors are from). It is as if because a person is not white, then people will seek to trace who they are back to certain places or events.

Student 2:

The student expects that he/she may perceive racial discrimination because of his/her skin color. Even though the student mentioned that he/she is unashamed of his/her skin color, because of the stereotypes associated with skin color and who this student is supposed to be, the student believes he/she will need to "work harder" in the work that he/she does and how he/she portrays him/herself. For example, the student mentions that he/she must be careful even the way that he/she dresses, because wearing certain clothes can cause other to see him/her in a certain way which may not reflect who this student truly is (ex. being lazy because of a casual outfit). The way that others treat the student because of his/her skin color "puts a lot of barriers in [his] way," because people will see the student's skin color first before they see who he/she is as a person, so this student must find a way to make others look past just his/her skin color.

The student continues by stating that it is easy for people of color to "become colorblind" and lose their identity. They may use the excuse that they are just trying to obtain a job or assimilate, but in this process, they can also lose touch with their identities just "for the sake of making a dollar."

The student mentioned that in families of his/her race, there is an expression that one must "work twice as hard to be half as good." This student also mentioned that he/she had heard this expression growing up. Even though the student has not personally perceived any personal racial discrimination in the labor environment yet, he/she expresses that the threat of racial discrimination is very real.

Student 3:

The student self-described him/herself as sensitive to microagressions, so this student said that he/she would be more likely to perceive microagressions than other people. This student mentioned that those that initiate the microagressions usually are oblivious to the fact that they are performing microagressions. In this student's opinion, addressing microagressions is "the root," or the starting point of addressing racial discrimination in the workplace. An example that the student gave of a microagression is the "where are you *really* from" question that racial minorities are often asked. Because those asking this question are really interested in learning about someone's ethnicity or ancestry, this question can be annoying especially since it is a question that whites do not have to deal with.

As a follow up question to the second question, I asked students if they would consider modifying their resumes to try to prevent potential racial discrimination, and if so, what they would modify. Two students mentioned that would not directly modify their resumes to do so, while one student mentioned that he/she has, but more so to highlight the qualifications and work experience rather than to take away any indicators of race.

Student 1:

The student mentioned that he/she would not modify his/her resume to attempt to prevent potential racial discrimination. The student then elaborated on the role of social media in the hiring process, calling it a "double-edged sword." He/she expressed that social media is a way to portray oneself to the world, but consequently any person can look up social media activity and companies can and do use social media to determine if a candidate will be a good fit with the company. Personally, this student would be cognizant of what he/she puts on social media, but did not mention any modifications that he/she would make. Overall, the student would not modify his/her resume to prevent potential racial discrimination.

Student 2:

The student mentioned that he/she has modified his/her resume before, and in the student's own words it was because the student "didn't want race to be a factor" in obtaining a job. Instead, this student seeks to emphasize his/her qualifications and what he/she has done in all

of his/her previous work experiences. In the same way, the student would add more roles and responsibilities that he/she has taken on to emphasize leadership skills. He/she elaborated by saying that he/she does not necessarily see trying to remove race from his/her resume as an issue, but more of a necessity to be able to make money. However, the student did add that he/she would do this only to keep opportunities open, and once he/she "get[s] in the door," he/she would not shy away from his/her racial identity. The student did not feel the need to modify social media because he/she is not very active on it to begin with, and does not have anything that he/she believes needs modification on his/her accounts.

Student 3:

The student answered that he/she would not change his/her name, but that he/she has faced discrimination because of his/her name before. People have asked this student if he/she has any other names besides his/her given name, and this student finds it "aggravating" when others do not put in the effort to at least try to learn his/her name. The student expresses that he/she would rather that others try to pronounce his/her name and fail than ask for an alternative name.

Question 3

The next question that I asked the about the students' thoughts on Latinos being the race in the survey with the highest percentage of perceiving personal racial discrimination in the labor environment. All students agreed that this was very possible, but one student expressed a bit of surprise.

Student 1:

The student mentioned that this "makes sense," especially given that over time the race that is most discriminated against constantly changes. The student gave the example of Muslims being more discriminated against after September 11, because one act by certain individuals is associated with all the people who "look like" those that did the act, especially in the case of minorities. The student continued to mention that the current political climate in the United States could contribute to this fact, as people may be following Trump's lead in making

derogatory comments towards Latinos. The student equated this to a herd mentality, where a person seen as a leader says one thing or targets a group of people and everybody else follows suit. The student continued by saying that because people focus so much on the outside skin color, they do not get to see who the people are on the inside. For Latinos, this means that even though they are hardworking despite their circumstances, and qualified or in some cases overqualified for certain jobs, they are still "cut short" in society because of their appearance.

Student 2:

The student mentioned that he/she "can… and definitely [does] see it," though he/she mentioned that he/she was slightly surprised. He/she elaborates on this point because growing up, he/she had always seen racial discrimination in a black against white context. For example, in history textbooks, the struggle between blacks versus whites is well documented. The student continues by clarifying why he/she was surprised, saying that for his/her non-black minority friends, they have mentioned that because their skin color is closer to "white," they have found it easier to assimilate. Similar to student 1, the student mentioned that the current American political climate and politicians who make "vulgar" comments towards Latinos can contribute to this, and that discrimination functions like a hierarchical system where people will believe the "leader" and follow what the "leader" says.

Student 3:

The student mentioned that he/she agrees with what the survey results showed, because usually "any non-white race is marginalized." Some minority races have "advantages" over others in that some races are more discriminated against than others. The students continued by stating that he/she believed that African Americans and Afro-Latinos would also perceive higher levels of perceived personal racial discrimination. When I shared with the student that in the survey both Latinos and Whites had higher percentages of perceiving personal racial discrimination, the student was somewhat surprised.

Question 4

In the fourth question, I asked all three students why they believed that blacks had the highest percentage of perceiving racial discrimination occurring to other people in the work environment. The students gave varying responses on why they thought this was the case.

Student 1:

The student expressed that he/she believed that this was because blacks have historically been the race at the forefront for fighting for equality. Because blacks have been the voices that have been pushing change in the United States, the movements by blacks may have led blacks to be more on the lookout for discrimination and be better prepared to respond to it. The student continued with saying that blacks may be less overtly discriminated against because blacks are very active in pushing for change and activism, so people may be compelled to treat blacks differently because they "don't want to have…issues with black people;" this may explain the fact that blacks were more likely to perceive racial discrimination happening to others than to themselves. Additionally, the student made the point that blacks have more "fallbacks" that not all minorities have in terms of social organizations. For example, social black organizations like the NAACP has increased the exposure of racial discrimination that blacks face in particular, so the amount of discrimination blacks perceive happening to themselves may be lower because of this.

The student shared an example of how black parents prepare their children to face racial discrimination. From a young age, black children learn about the stigmas associated with their race, so they know that they will face racial discrimination. However, some parents will tell their children to "always look for higher opportunities regardless," and constantly seek career and other advancement despite racial discrimination.

Student 2:

The student also mentioned that he agreed with what the survey showed. He/she pointed out that if one is a minority and is aware of racial discrimination, one will be more likely to notice racial discrimination. The student elaborated with a personal example of how he/she grew up in a predominantly white neighborhood, so his/her first experience truly learning about what it

means to be a minority in a diverse environment and learning more about racial discrimination was in college. However, once the student was "opened up" to the reality and the presence of racial discrimination, he/she "notice[d] it more often" and became "more sensitive" to the racial discrimination which was occurring around him/her and in American society. For this student, the reason why people notice racial discrimination is either because they want to speak up about it and use the situation in advocacy, or because they want to avoid it and therefore notice it but actively avoid addressing racial discrimination.

Student 3:

The student mentioned that because some races can be white-passing (such as Latinos) but blacks do not really have this ability, blacks may be less able to avoid racial discrimination, and therefore are confronted with it more often. The student used a personal example of how with the increasing amount that he/she learned about racial discrimination, the more able he/she became open and able to perceive racial discrimination, especially in the form of microagressions. The student also brought up the point of false consciousness, where someone of a minority group believes that he or she better off or more equal to the dominant group than he or she truly is. This could be a reason why other races did not perceive racial discrimination occurring to others as much as blacks did, because false consciousness in a racial sense is harder for blacks to attain.

Question 5

The final question asked why students believed that none of the 10 black women surveyed perceived that they had personally experienced racial discrimination in the work environment. I was only able to ask this question to student 3 because of time restrictions (I had capped the interviews at 20 minutes each plus a 5 minute debrief at the end). The student expressed that he/she believed it could be situational, that these women were either working in very accepting places, or they could have not perceived personal racial discrimination for whatever reason, although he/she did ask for clarification of whether I had asked for both racial and gender discrimination in my survey (to which I responded that I was solely focusing on racial discrimination). This may indicate that the student believes that the women could have

perceived experiencing discrimination based on gender but not on race, which would then connect to the intersectionality of the elements of identity.

All in all, the qualitative data obtained in the interviews showed that while the students did agree on many items (ex. it makes sense that Latinos would report the highest rate of personal racial discrimination, race and gender are important elements of identity which affect a person in obtaining and keeping a job), there were some differences in opinion and on the reasons that they believed could explain the survey results. The students' responses show that although they all agreed that racial discrimination in the labor environment exists, they each have unique explanations for why racial discrimination manifests itself in certain ways and how to approach addressing racial discrimination. Along with the survey data, the responses from the semi-structured interview help provide a more complete picture of how Bryant University students and alumni perceive racial discrimination in the labor environment. In addition, the results have shown that although racial discrimination affects people of every race, the ways in which different people deal with racial discrimination all play a key role in understanding how society can work together to drive out racial discrimination and create a more inclusive labor environment for all.

CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS

Overall, this Capstone project is a culmination of over a year of work with contributions from many people, including the Bryant Honors Council, my direct Capstone team, and the authors of the sources in my literature review. The results have revealed some of what I expected to find, but has taught me some new things as well. I would like to start first by singling out a few people in expressing my gratitude.

Thank You
I would like to start by thanking my parents for the love and support that they have given me throughout this process. As parents typically do, they always checked in on how I was doing, and constantly reassured me that I could complete this project just like I had completed ones in the past. In addition, they were very understanding when I explained that I could not go home as often as I had in the past because I needed to devote many weekends to this project

(but it was all worth it in the end). Without them, I would have given up a long time ago and would not have developed the determination to see anything to completion, much less my Honors Capstone. I could write an encyclopedia on how much they mean to me and everything that they have done for me, but for the sake of the readers of this document, I will continue with expressing my gratitude for others involved in this process.

I would like to thank the Bryant Honors Council and certain Bryant University faculty for their guidance throughout my Capstone. I would like to extend a thank you to Professor Segovis for creating this Capstone process and for providing feedback on my initial proposal and giving me guidance on how to complete the process. I would like to express my many thanks Kristen Park for her help in the writing process, and for guiding me through the writing of my initial proposal, final proposal, and the final paper for the Honors Capstone. Thank you to Professor Gregg Carter for reviewing my final proposal, and for providing valuable feedback that has helped shape my capstone to become something that I am proud of. Thank you to the librarians who helped me in this research process and for pointing me in the right direction for my research. Thank you to Robin Warde and Tim Dumont in Alumni Relations for helping me distribute my survey and for working with me in the weeks before the launch date to create a distribution message and plan. Thank you to the Center for Diversity and Inclusion for connecting me with students to interview. Many thanks also to Bryant University and the Honors program for allowing me to reap the benefits of being a Bryant Honors student.

To the alumni and students who participated in my data collection and patiently answered my questions, thank you for being the most important part of my research. With any research project, the most important item is the data and the source of the data, so many thanks to the alumni and students for providing me with great data and for taking the time out of their schedules to help me complete my Capstone project. Without the alumni and students, this project would literally have amounted to nothing, and would be little more than a literature review.

I would like to give a special thank you to my editorial reviewer, Professor Alex Perullo. Professor Perullo was integral in reviewing my documents to make sure that not only was the

spelling, grammar, and syntax as it should be, but also in providing suggestions to make paragraph transitions smoother and make the text understandable for someone who is not an expert in the social sciences. In addition, his suggestion to shorten my survey and clarifications on how to approach collecting qualitative and quantitative data saved many hours during this process and helped make this process not only manageable, but also enjoyable. Perhaps most importantly, without Professor Perullo I would have never gotten connected to my faculty advisor, so I have much for which to thank him in connecting us.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to Professor Judy McDonnell, my faculty advisor. Without her guidance, I could not have completed this project, or even have gotten it started for that matter (though she is too humble to ever admit this). Her input on race and her help in every aspect of this project, from formulating the topic over a year ago, to helping me conceptualize race even though I had never taken a sociology class in my college career, to generating the idea of a mixed methodology data collection, to using her connections to help me send out my survey (this is by no means an exhaustive list: such a list would require its own report). Outside of her assistance that she has provided through her academic expertise, her understanding and concern first and foremost for me as a person helped me bring this project fruition, even in times of struggle. Professor McDonnell has put in just as much effort into this capstone as I have, even working over the summer and on the weekends to help me and arriving on campus in the early morning when needed to discuss the next steps in the process. For all of the help she has given me, for reassuring me during my frustrations to sharing in my joys, thank you to Professor McDonnell for all that she has done for me in and outside of this Capstone project.

Possible Changes and Improvements
Though I obtained valuable data and insight with my methodology, as with any research there is always room for improvement. In this project, a few key improvements may have provided better data, or at least may have given me a greater sample size.

To begin, I would have eliminated the graduation year, Bryant alumnus, currently employed, and major questions. Doing so would have shortened my survey, and could have resulted in more respondents completing the survey. Aside from the survey being shortened to about 15

questions instead of 19 questions (including the last voluntary fill-in), there are several other reasons why I would eliminate these questions if given the opportunity to redo the survey.

For graduation year, I shortly realized that after launching the survey that the purpose of the graduation year question was already addressed when I asked for participant's age. There was a chance that this would have given insight on nontraditional students, but my guess is that there would be very few, if any, nontraditional students. In addition, being a nontraditional student vs. being a nontraditional student was not relevant to my research, and neither was graduating year. I was looking for age to ensure that I had a well-balanced sample of respondents, and graduation year was more of an afterthought than a crucial question. Therefore, graduation year was not very useful as a question in my survey.

I initially had included the Bryant alumnus question because I had assumed that I would need to send the survey out myself via a snowballing method. In addition, my rationale in including this question would be to serve as a quality control question which could allow me to make sure that respondents were within my target population. However, once I worked with Alumni Relations, this question became moot, because Alumni Relations would only contact Bryant alumni to begin with, and therefore some respondents may have been confused if they had received a survey from Alumni Relations and then were immediately asked if they were a Bryant alum: this may have decreased my survey size.

The question of current employment was a question that I had left in from my first draft survey which was over 30 questions long. I had included it in my first draft because I wanted to see if there was a difference between employed vs. unemployed respondents perceiving racial discrimination, and also compare unemployment rates to the US rates by race and overall population. However, once I eliminated comparison analysis from my project (due to time restrictions and for relevance for what I wanted to discover), this question became nothing more than a filler question. In addition, in my survey only 2 respondents reported being unemployed. Furthermore, there was the possibility that a respondent who saw this question could wonder if I was implying that he or she was less capable because of his or her unemployed status, even though I included this question because I had only wanted to analyze the differences in perceiving racial discrimination. However, because very few respondents

reported being unemployed, and it could have caused some negative reactions in respondents, I would not ask about current employment status.

I would also eliminate the question on what major(s) with which the respondents had graduated. I had wanted to analyze if different majors perceived racial discrimination differently in the beginning stages of my Capstone, but because my Capstone team told me that I was analyzing too much to handle for an Honors Capstone, the major question only served as a small indicator of sample diversity. Furthermore, I had also wanted to analyze if certain occupations perceived racial discrimination differently, and I believed that major could be an indication of respondents' careers without directly asking them of their industries or fields of work. However, once this analysis was eliminated from my tasks, I should have also removed the major question, especially since major does not necessarily determine a person's career path or field of work.

In the beginning of this process, I wish that I would have been realistic with my time that I could commit to the Capstone. During the initial proposal process, and even during the final proposal formation process, I thought that I would be able to devote time to analyzing all of the questions and exploring how people responded based on age, gender, race, etc. However, once senior year began, I quickly realized that for the time that I had, I could either analyze all of these variables for a few select questions, or I could ask more questions but only be able to analyze one or two variables at most: I chose the latter option. Because time was such a constrained resource that I had overestimated, there were several points where I thought that my project was far too large to manage, which caused some undue frustration.

Lastly, if the semester had played out differently, I would have sent out the survey earlier. Because of personal matters, I could not complete the final draft of the survey and launch it as early as I had wanted to. Therefore, even though I believe that I did fairly well in terms of completing the project with all of the obligations that I had, there were still some moments which may have helped if circumstances had been different. For example, when I finally launched the survey in late February, the date on which I could begin survey analysis fell during Spring Break; even though I was not doing the "typical" Spring Break activities, the location at which I was staying had very slow Wi-Fi, making data analysis essentially

impossible, and consequently giving me only one month to analyze the survey results and formulate interview questions for students (along with conduct the interviews). Though I was able to complete everything on time, the end did feel like a sprint more than it did the end of a marathon.

Further Research
The research that I have done on racial discrimination is hardly the beginning or the end of research on race, discrimination, racial discrimination, or identity. One way to continue the research is to analyze gender discrimination. Because gender was the element of identity with that alumni deemed the most crucial in obtaining and keeping a job, a logical next step would be to analyze how gender discrimination can affect people in the labor environment. In addition, other elements of identity can also be researched, such as nationality, sexual orientation, age, and so on. Because discrimination does not just affect those of a certain race, or gender, or nationality, etc., and because identity is made up of so many factors, research must be done on discrimination as a whole and identity as a whole. Furthermore, as a continuation of this study, one could interview more students of different racial and gender backgrounds to gain a more diverse data set and gain even more perspectives on how racial discrimination may be perceived by Bryant students. In addition, having a greater number and more diverse set of students would reveal an even greater amount of diversity in reactions, interpretations and perceptions of the survey results. Though much effort is required to research identity and discrimination, effective research will give a clearer picture as to how discrimination functions and how people can use their collective identities in cooperation and solidarity to push discrimination out of society.

Personal Explanation/Interpretation of Results
Though the analysis could have gone much deeper and I could have broken every question down by how many respondents of a specific race and gender (ex. Asian males) answered in a certain way, I chose not to do so because of the issue of confidentiality. In the informed consent agreement, respondents were assured that none of their specific responses would be revealed to anyone outside of my Capstone team. Therefore, revealing which respondent(s) said exactly what could violate this agreement, so I decided for the purposes of this project to refrain from analyzing the results in this manner.

I would like to preface by stating that my interpretations are my opinions, and are hypotheses as to why the survey results showed to be a certain way. They do not assume or insinuate that one race is "better" or "superior" to any other, and cannot be proven with certainty through the data that I have collected. Therefore, they are only my opinions which I use only to attempt to make sense of the data. Furthermore, I will only highlight the few results which I found the most interesting, for the sake of brevity and for greater focus in this section.

Latinos perceived the most personal racial discrimination out of any group (42%) in the survey. Part of what could explain this is the recent changes in the political climate of the United States. As alluded to by the students that I interviewed, the current President has made degrading comments towards Latinos and has provoked people to be more overt in discriminating against Latinos. In addition, the survey was administered beginning February 24, 2017, which was during a major shift in the American political climate. Furthermore, in general Latinos and Blacks are the generally races that are most discriminated against in the US; for example, Latinos and blacks make up 16% and 13% of the US population, respectively, but comprise 19% and 40% of the people in prisons, respectively according to 2010 US Census data (Sakala, 2014). This could explain why Latinos had the highest percentage of perceived racial discrimination: if someone faces more racial discrimination, he or she will tend to perceive more racial discrimination.

Though whites are considered the majority/dominant race in the United States, in the survey whites were the race with the 2nd-highest percentage of perceived personal racial discrimination (27%). This could be explained because even though one could racially identify as white, a person could argue that he/she is being racially discriminated against if the person perceives that he or she is discriminated against because of their accent, for example. Similarly, if one racially identifies as white but comes from a Latin American country, discrimination could still be perceived because of national origin, ethnicity, or another related reason. A third explanation could be that whites may perceive discrimination based on gender or ethnicity, and may attribute it to racial discrimination instead. Finally, an explanation could be that whites do experience racial discrimination, and even though they are the dominant race, there are still scenarios for which they may be discriminated against because of their

race: even though these scenarios may not be considered racism, they may still be instances of racial discrimination.

However, though whites were the race with the 2nd-highest percentage of perceiving personal racial discrimination, they were the race with the lowest rate of perceiving racial discrimination occurring to others (9%). This may be explained because whites in the United States do not experience racial discrimination as frequently or as severely as racial minorities do. In addition, white men in particular do not experience (racial or gender) discrimination as frequently or as severely as those of minority groups (this is not to imply that whites are oblivious or insensitive to discrimination). Therefore, whites may be sensitive to racial discrimination occurring to themselves because they know that there is still the possibility of experiencing discrimination even as the dominant racial group. However, because they have not experienced racial discrimination to the degree that racial minorities have, they may be less perceptive of the subtleties of racial discrimination, such as comments of microaggressions (ex. "She is so smart for a black person"), so-called glass ceilings in career advancement for minorities (ex. inability to advance past middle management positions), and being less likely to be hired for certain professions because of minority status (ex. the lack of Asian leading roles in popular films).

The survey showed that although only 20% of blacks perceived personal racial discrimination, 35% of blacks perceived racial discrimination occurring to others. This could be because blacks have grown up with discrimination (as alluded to by the interview responses), so although they may be resistant to personal racial discrimination, they may still be more perceptive to what racial discrimination looks like and be more sensitive to racial discrimination occurring to others.

The survey also showed that none of the 10 black women had personally perceived racial discrimination in their labor environments. This may be because they have experienced gender discrimination instead of racial discrimination, as gender may be a greater determinant in how one is treated in the work environment. Another explanation may be that because black women experience both racial and gender discrimination, they may have developed some resistance to personal racial attacks, even though they are still very much aware of racial

discrimination (which may be true because black women did perceive racial discrimination occurring to others).

Both 50% of Latinos and 50% of Asians would consider modifying their resumes, the highest percentage out of any racial groups. This could be because these races tend to have names (especially last names) which are less likely to be "white" sounding. For example, I have yet to meet a white person with my last name (Xu, which is Chinese), but I have met both blacks and whites with the last names of Jones, McDonald, Carter, Smith, etc. So, it would be harder to determine the race of a person named "Kevin Smith" than "Kevin Yang" or "Kevin Ramirez." Therefore, Asians and Latinos may be more likely to consider modifying their resumes because it is harder for them to conceal their race on paper than it may be for other races.

However, though these explanations are plausible, they cannot be proven through the research that I have done. Further research must be done to gain a better understanding of why the results may have shown to be how they were in my survey. Although I can continue inferring why I believe certain results occurred, this was not the purpose of my research. My research was to observe a small drop in the ocean of racial discrimination, which I was able to do with the help of the parties that I have mentioned above.

Concluding Thoughts
After over a year of planning and researching, my Capstone has come to a close. I have learned much more about racial discrimination than I could have ever imagined, and have gained just as much if not more than the effort I have put in. To sum up what I have learned, I will conclude my Capstone with three final thoughts.

The first thought is this: racial discrimination affects people of all backgrounds. Though all "minority" races reported some amount of perceiving racial discrimination, whites (who are considered the dominant race in America) also perceived racial discrimination occurring in the labor environment. This shows me that racial discrimination is not just a black issue, or an Asian issue, or a minority issue: it is a societal issue which can only be effectively addressed when people of every race come together and communicate and cooperate with each other.

Therefore, it is up to people of every race to work as one team to see how people can understand each other better and improve their interpersonal and interracial relationships.

My next conclusion is that even though racial discrimination may not be overt as it has been in the past, the consequences of racial discrimination are still very severe. To illustrate, though "only" 3 respondents perceived that they had been forced/pressured to leave a job because of their race, all 3 eventually left the company that they had been working for. So, it is important to realize that racial discrimination still exists and still carries serious implications for those being discriminated against.

However, I do not desire to end my research by finishing on discussing the negative. My last thought is that in the research, I found that despite the barriers that people may face because of their racial identities, they are still very much proud of who they are and accept all that comes with being people of different racial backgrounds. When asked if they would consider modifying their resumes to prevent potential racial discrimination, most respondents and students would not consider it, and even those that would consider it chose not to modify their name, which is the option given that was most closely associated with a person's race. I interpret this as an invitation to every person to look within themselves and learn to accept who they are. From there, the next invitation is to engage in conversations about race and identity and how collectively people can create a dialogue which celebrates differences and invites and includes people of all backgrounds, using one's self-acceptance to encourage others to accept their own identities as well.

This process of learning and researching in racial discrimination has encouraged me to engage even more in the conversation about race and identity. I have taken away findings that will help me better understand who I am as an Asian American and racial minority in the United States. All in all, my greatest hope is that this project will be a small step in furthering discussion of how people can come together to create mutual understanding, creating a future where people fully understand the beauty that is in uniqueness and diversity.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Survey Questions
Key: MCSA = multiple choice, single answer
MS = multiple selection
FI = fill-in
Question response requirement listed in front of question.

Informed Consent Agreement

Demographics

1. (MCSA) Are you a Bryant University alumnus?
     a. Yes
     b. No (if participant responds no, they will be taken to an exit screen)
2. (FI) How do you identify racially?
3. (FI) Please enter your age in the box below (in numerical form):
4. (FI) What was your graduation year?
5. (FI) What was/were your major(s)?
6. (MCSA) With which gender do you identify?
     a. Female
     b. Male
     c. Transgender
     d. Not Listed (Please specify)
7. (MCSA) Have you been employed (in the paid labor force)?
     a. Yes
     b. No
8. (MCSA) Are you currently employed?
     a. Yes
     b. No

Perceived Racial Discrimination

This set of questions asks you about your workplace and if you perceive that you have
experienced racial discrimination. Please click "Next" to continue.
9. (FI) Do you perceive you have experienced racial discrimination in any way in the
    workplace? If so, please describe.
10. (FI) Do you perceive you have witnessed racial discrimination happening to people
    other than yourself in the workplace? If so, please give a brief description of the
    occurrence(s).
11. (FI) Please describe any ways in which you have addressed this perceived racial
    discrimination either against yourself or another person.
12. (MCSA) Do you believe that you have ever been denied, rejected, or withheld
    consideration from a job opportunity at least partially because of your racial
    background?

   a. Yes
   b. Not Sure
   c. No

13. (FI) (If response = Yes) Could you please give an example of such an occurrence?
  Enter text here

14. (MCSA) Do you believe that you have ever been forced to leave a position or pressured to leave a position at least partially because of your racial background?
   a. Yes
   b. Not Sure
   c. No

15. (FI) (If response = Yes) How did you feel at that time and what did you do?
  Enter text here.

Future Job Prospects

The next set of questions will ask you about how you would manage searching for a new job.

16. (MCSA) If you were to search for a new job, would you modify information in your resume or CV in an attempt to prevent potential racial discrimination?
   a. Yes
   b. Maybe
   c. No

17. (MS) (If response = Yes or Maybe) What would you modify? (Please select all that apply)
   a. Name (i.e. try to make my name on my resume sound less indicative of my race)
   b. Social media (ex. changing profile pictures, modifying "strong opinion" posts)
   c. Address you would use for your application or resume
   d. Other information (please specify)

Intersectionality

18. (MS) Which element(s) of a person's identity do you believe affect(s) him or her (either positively or negatively) in obtaining and keeping a job?
   a. Race
   b. Gender
   c. Sexual Orientation
   d. Social Class
   e. Religion
   f. Nationality
   g. Other

Appendix B – Semi-structured Interview Questions

1. Which element(s) of a person's identity do you believe affect(s) him or her in obtaining and keeping a job?
2. If at all, how do you perceive that you could be racially discriminated against in the labor environment in the future?
    a. Follow up: would you consider modifying your resume/job application to avoid potential RD? What would you modify
3. In the Bryant alumni survey, Latinos were the race that reported the highest percentage of perceiving RD happening to them personally. What are your thoughts about this?
4. In the survey, blacks were the racial group who had the highest proportion of perceiving RD happening to others in the labor environment. Do you have any thoughts on this?

5. In the survey, all of the black females did not perceive being racially discriminated against personally. What is your reaction?

Appendix C –Graphs and Charts for Key Questions

Survey Racial Breakdown
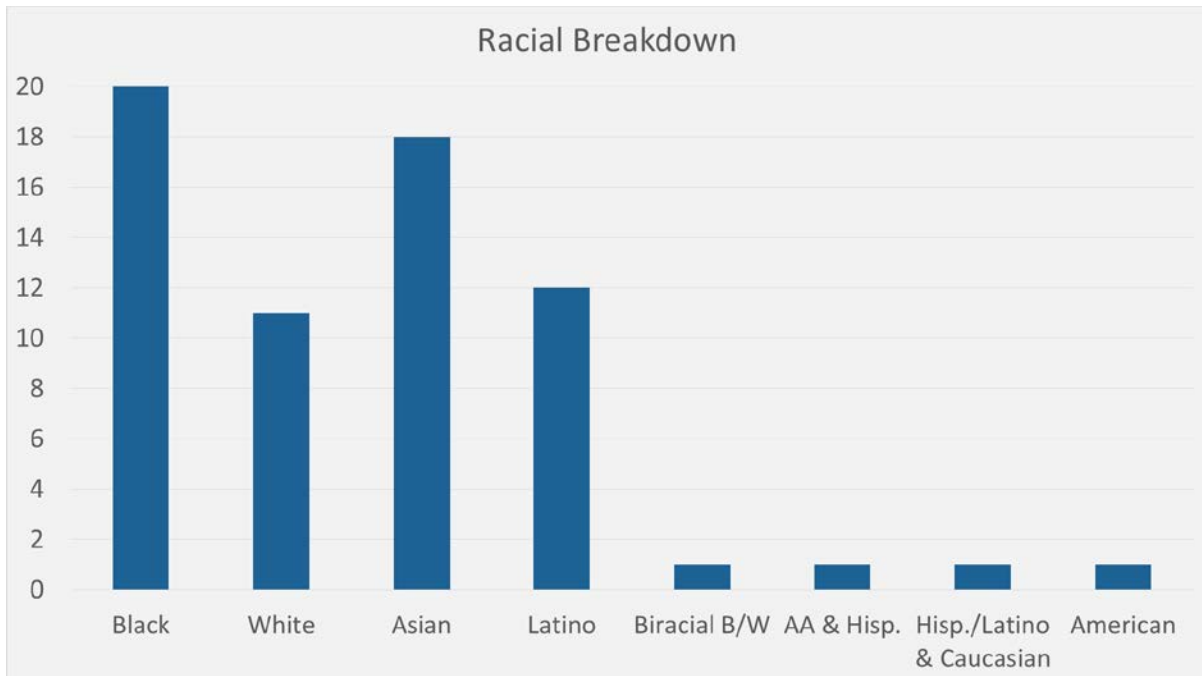
Racial Breakdown (%)
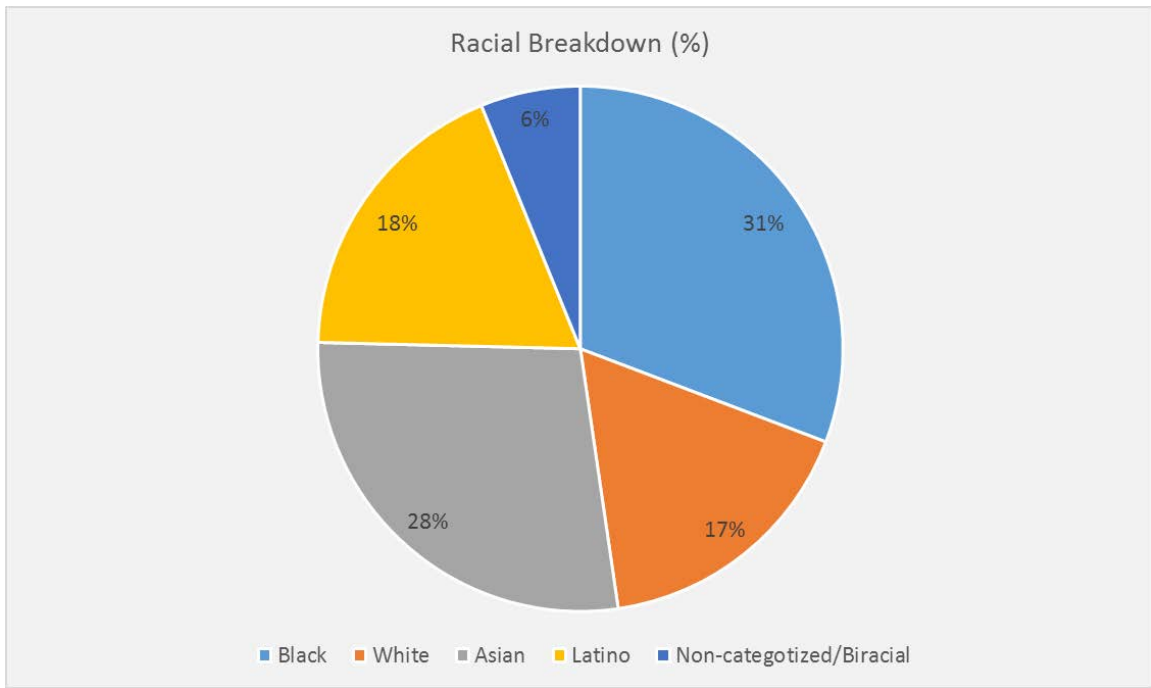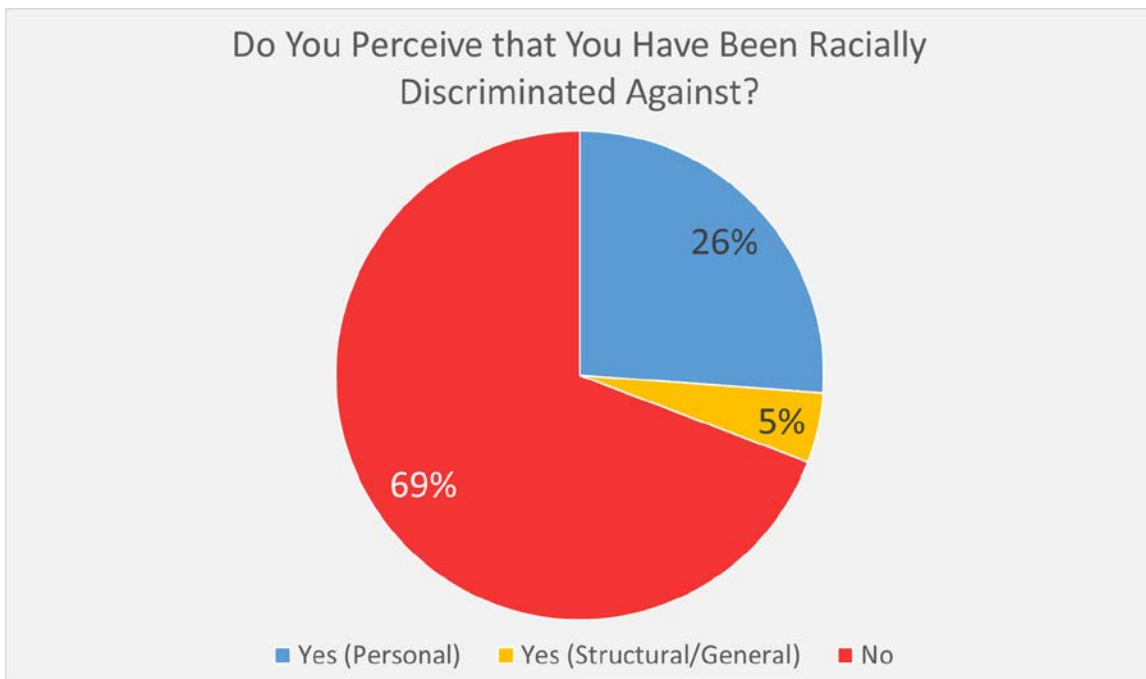
Question: Perceived Personal Racial Discrimination

Note: line in picture below displays the survey "yes" response rate.
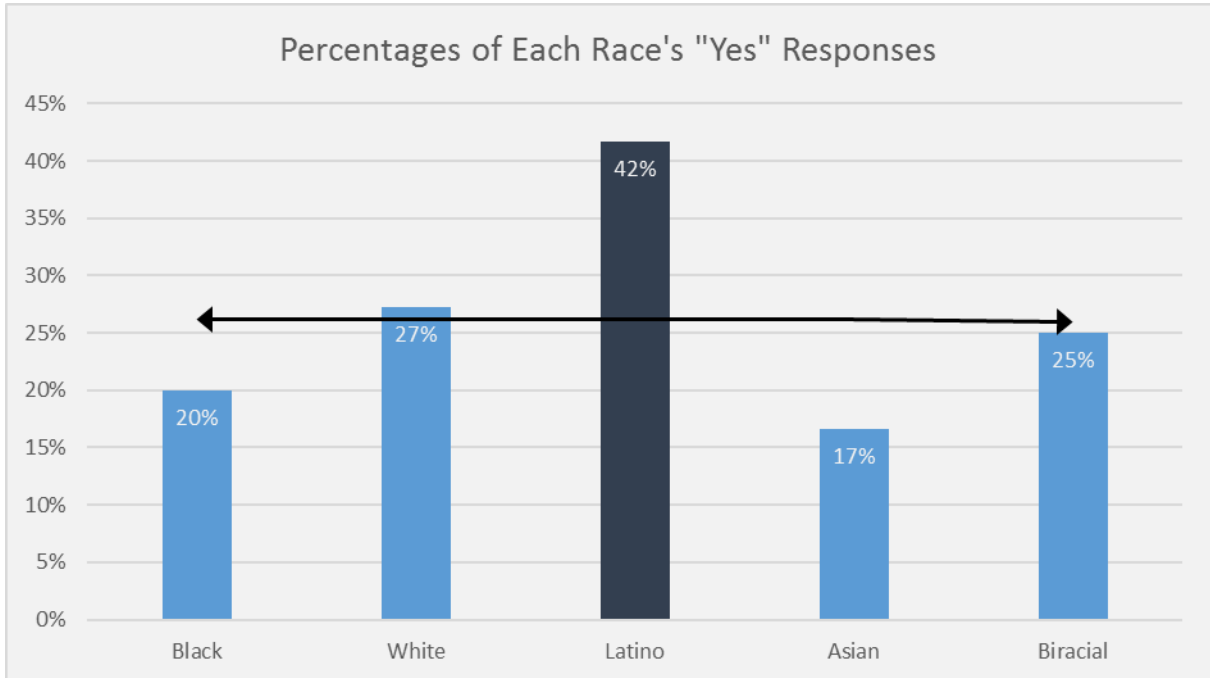
Question: Perceived Racial Discrimination towards Others
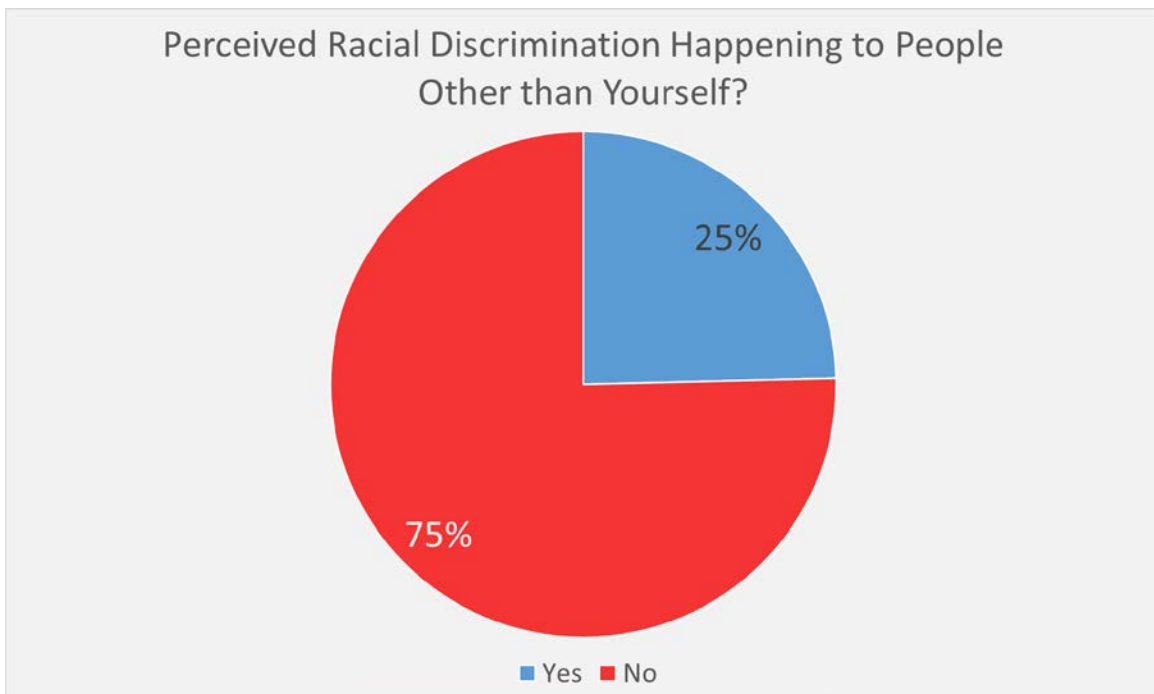
Note: line below displays the survey "yes" response rate
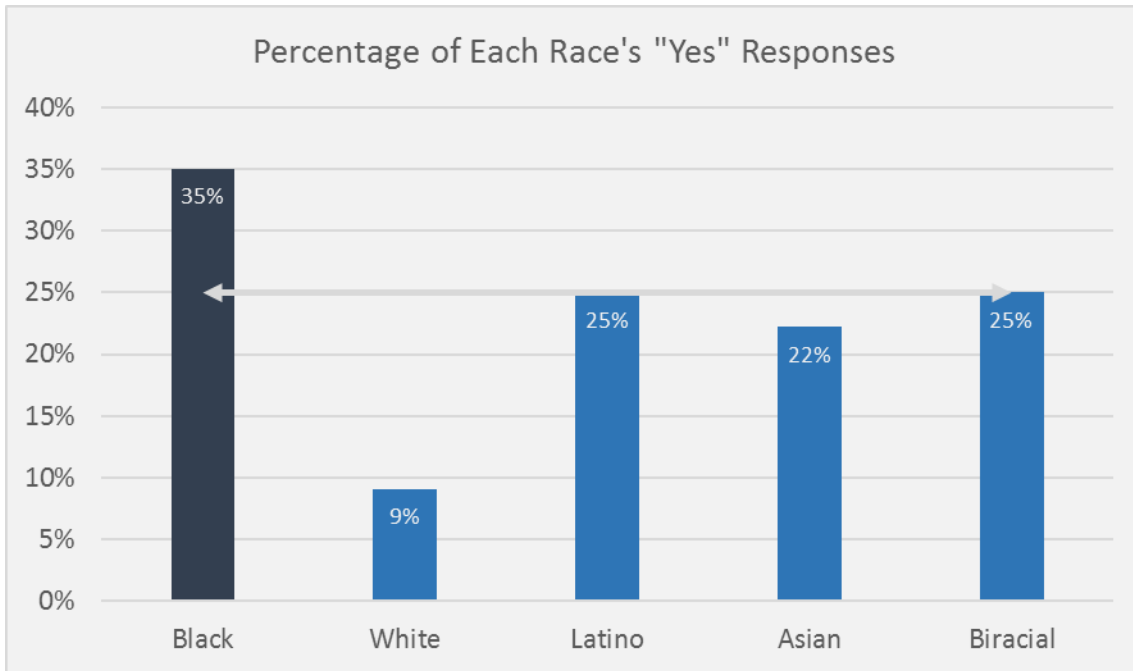
Question: Perceived Denial of Job Opportunity
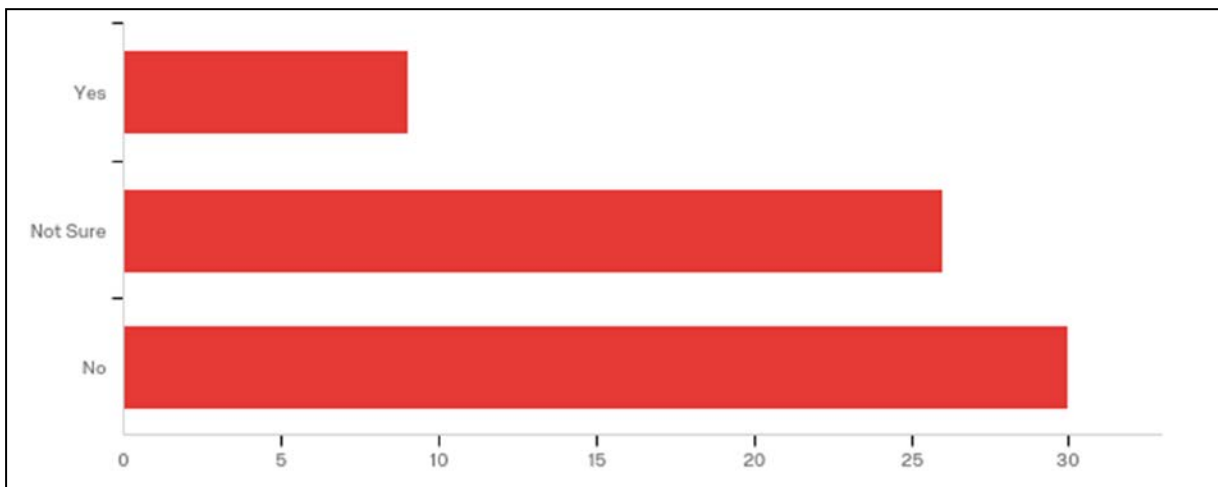
Question: Perceived Pressured/Forced to Leave a Position
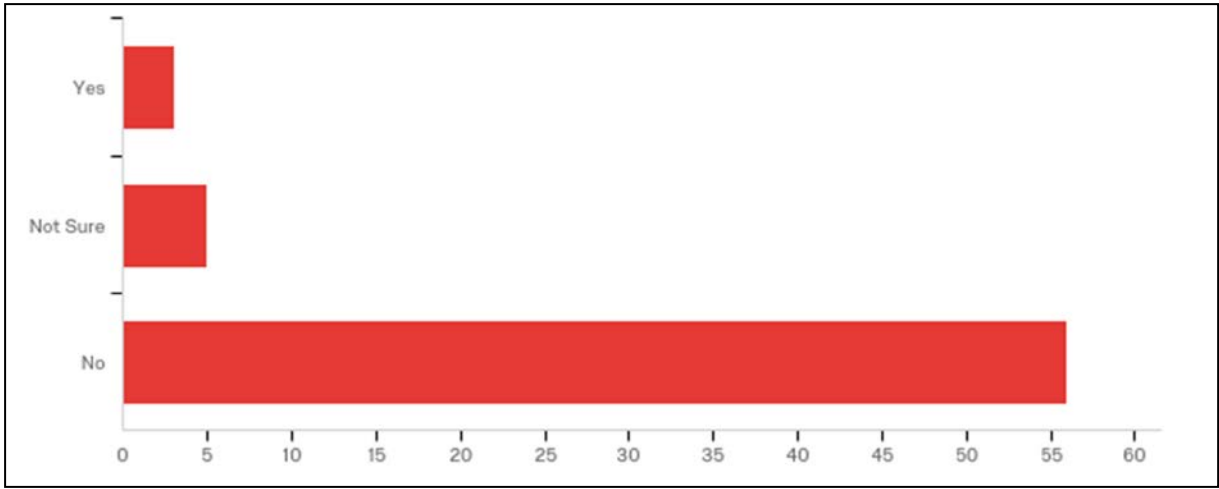
Question: Modifying Resume/CV
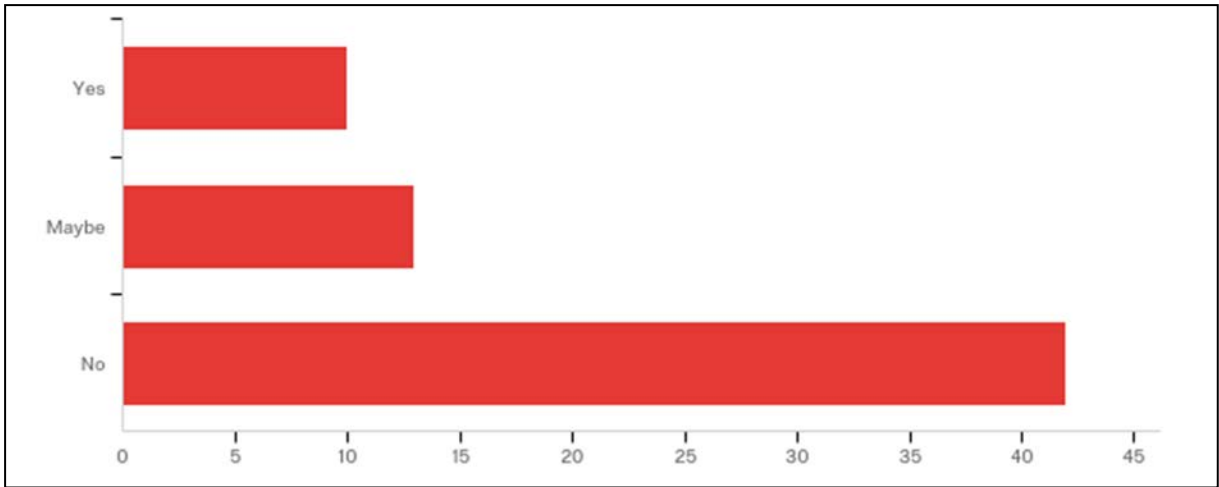
What Would You Modify (follow-up)
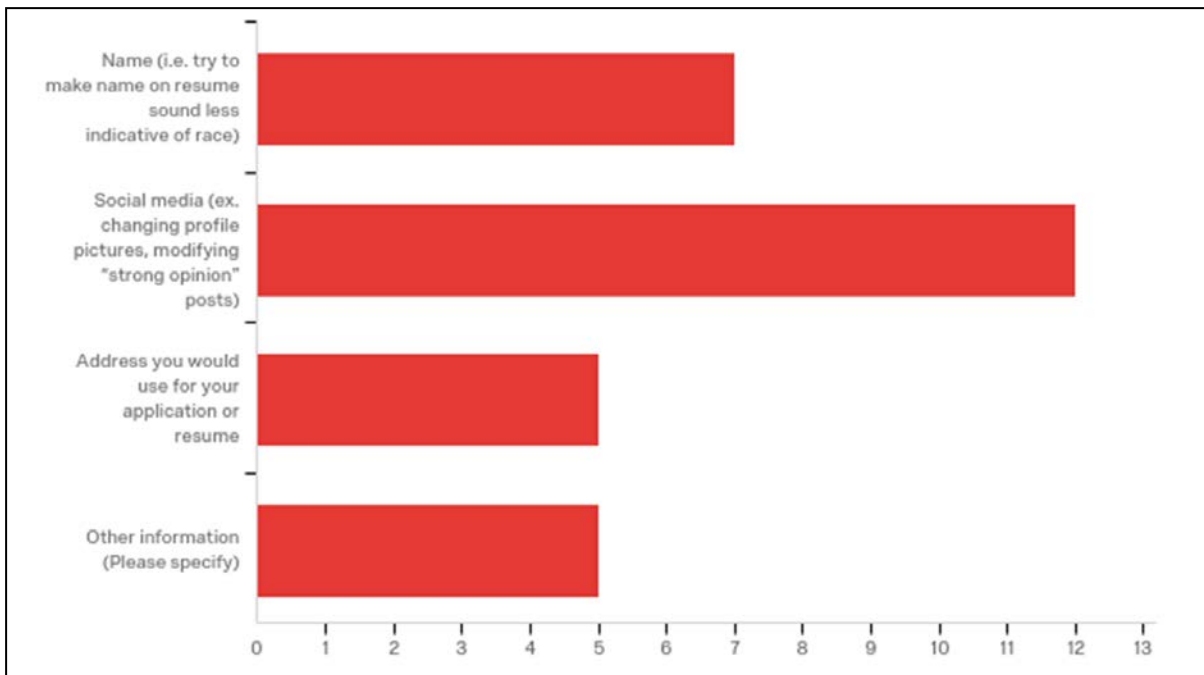
Question: Identity Elements Affecting a Person Keeping and Obtaining Job
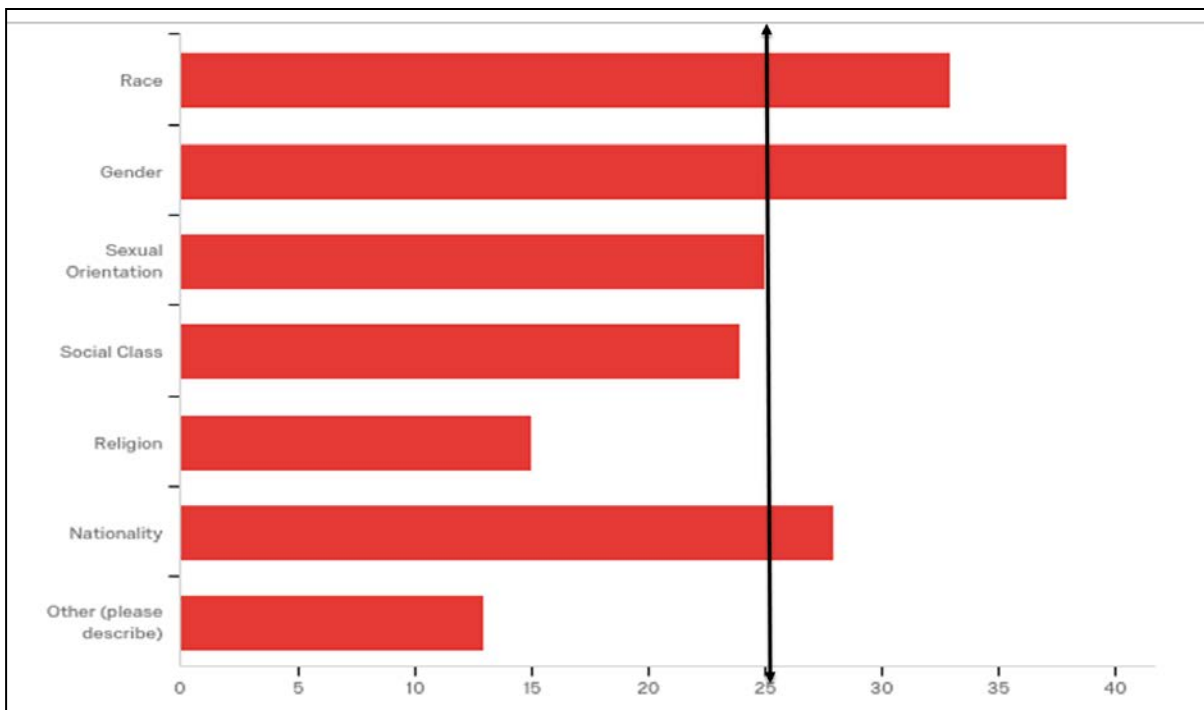
Semi-Structured Interviews: Racial and Gender Breakdown
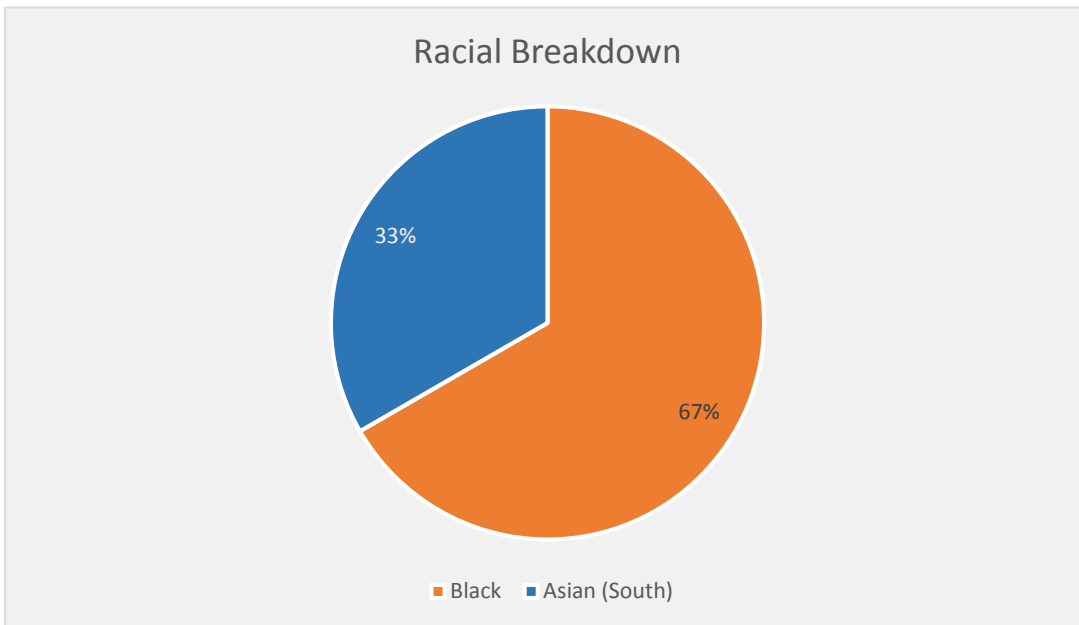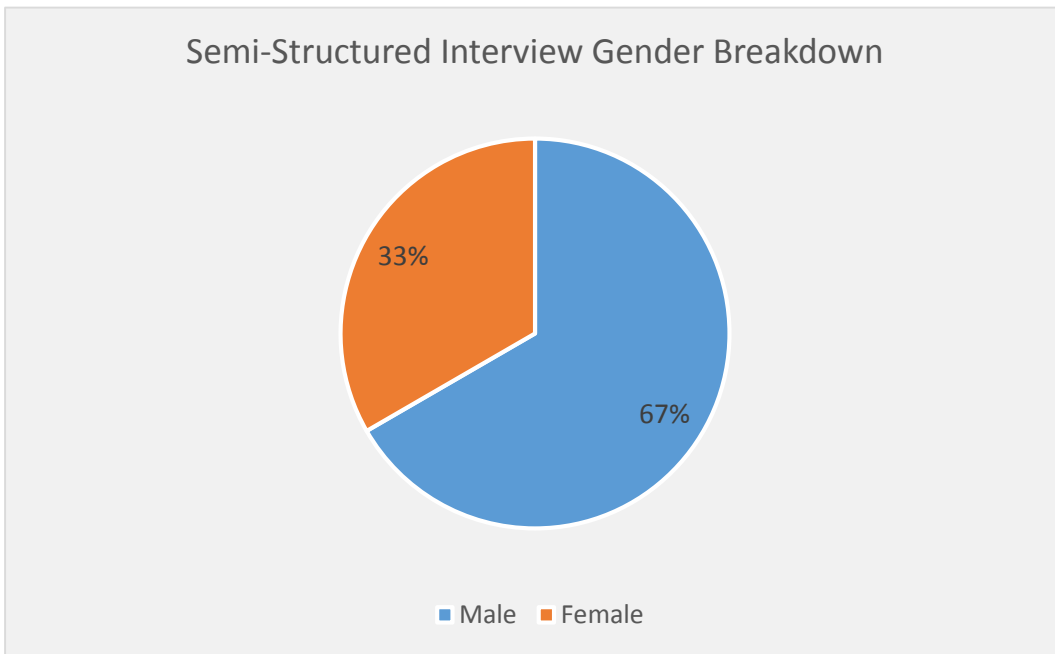
Semi-Structured Interview Gender Breakdown

33%

67%

■ Male   ■ Female

Racial Breakdown

33%

67%

■ Black   ■ Asian (South)

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