



Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County

Ninth Annual Study • Focus on Media

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Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County

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Introduction

University of Arkansas at Little Rock Chancellor, Joel E. Anderson, committed the university to being a leader in seeking solutions to what he terms Arkansas’s biggest problem – the continuing racial divides in Arkansas. For the past eight years UALR has conducted a survey of the racial attitudes in Pulaski County. This report summarizes the findings of the ninth annual survey focused on the media.

The commitment to using its research capabilities to address the issue of race in Little Rock is consistent with the focus of UALR. As a metropolitan university, UALR uses its research capabilities to address a number of issues of critical importance. In *UALR Fast Forward*, the university’s strategic planning document, UALR promises to be a “keeper of the flame on the subject of race.” This pledge reflects recognition that racial divides are a barrier to social and economic progress in Arkansas. Chancellor Anderson has committed UALR to using the university’s resources to remove this barrier, stating, “You have to face it to fix it.”

As in previous years, a telephone survey was conducted during the fall semester of 2011. For the second consecutive year, the survey includes Hispanic residents of Pulaski County in addition to white and black residents. The residents responded to questions that focused specifically on media, including residents’ preferences, attitudes, and habits surrounding news and media sources, internet access and usage, and social media. The Chancellor’s Committee on Race and Ethnicity chose this topic because media is a powerful tool of communication and plays a large role in shaping our views of events and conditions in society. Media also often serves as a catalyst for social change. In addition to questions concerning media, respondents were asked questions that reflect racial attitudes on some specific areas of concern. There are also other standard racial attitudes modules that are repeated at intervals in order to track changes over time. These modules were repeated in the Year 9 survey.

Year 9 is an historic year for the UALR Racial Attitudes study. The UALR Institute on Race and Ethnicity was launched on July 10, 2011, after several years of deliberation by the Chancellor’s Committee on Race and Ethnicity and vetting with many stakeholders in the community. The chancellor gave the institute the responsibility for working with UALR’s Institute of Government in formulating the survey and preparing this report. The excellent work of the Institute of Government in implementing the survey and analyzing the results continues. The Institute on Race and Ethnicity was responsible for assisting in the report writing and marshaling the report through the process of drafts to completion in the form you now hold. In certain sections of the report, the Institute on Race and Ethnicity has added context to the subject of the sections. This context provides the reader with a social interpretation of some of the data. For example, in reporting on education and incarceration, the institute has added national and local research that provide evidence that some of the current disparities are a result of continuing racism, usually in the form of structural racism. The Institute on Race and Ethnicity’s mission is to seek racial and ethnic justice in Arkansas by remembering and understanding the past, informing and engaging the present, and shaping and defining the future. The Racial Attitudes Survey is one way that the UALR Institute on Race and Ethnicity can fulfill that mission.

The mission is also fulfilled by continuing UALR’s engagement with community groups that ask to meet with institute staff concerning the Racial Attitudes Survey.

Reports are available at no cost. Copies for viewing and circulation may be obtained at the following web address: **ualr.edu/race-ethnicity**.

Executive Summary

Year 9 of UALR’s study of *Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County* presents data collected from an annual telephone survey. The survey included several modules of general questions assessing interracial attitudes and perceptions plus a module of questions related to the media. The following are some of the major findings of the Year 9 study:

- Whites and blacks are significantly more likely to get their news from local papers than Hispanics;
- Hispanics are much more likely to get news from local TV channels than they are to read local papers;
- Whites are significantly more likely to get their news online than blacks or Hispanics;
- Blacks are significantly more likely to feel they are portrayed unfairly by the media than whites or Hispanics;
- Blacks are significantly more likely to feel Hispanics are portrayed unfairly by the media than Hispanics are themselves;
- Blacks and whites are significantly more likely to “disagree” or “strongly disagree” that TV or Internet news reports information fairly as compared to Hispanics;
- More than one half of blacks, whites, and Hispanics say an open dialogue could help “bring races together”;
- Blacks are significantly more likely to perceive widespread discrimination against blacks than whites or Hispanics;
- Blacks are significantly more likely to perceive widespread discrimination against Hispanics than whites or Hispanics, themselves;
- More than one-half of Hispanics say they are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the way they are treated;
- Blacks are less satisfied with the treatment Hispanics receive than Hispanics are themselves;
- Whites and Hispanics are significantly more likely to be “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the way blacks are treated than are blacks;
- Blacks are most likely to say they are treated “less fairly than whites” when dealing with police;
- Hispanics are most likely to say they are treated “less fairly than whites” when dealing with police or at work;
- Blacks are more likely to say racism is a “major factor” influencing incarceration rates than they are to say it is a “major factor” in lower educational attainment;
- Blacks are significantly more likely to believe President Obama’s race is a “major reason” for opposition to his policies than whites or Hispanics.

Resumen Ejecutivo

El estudio sobre *Actitudes Raciales en el Condado de Pulaski* que lleva a cabo UALR tiene como objetivo documentar las actitudes y percepciones que tienen las razas sobre sí mismas y sobre otras razas. En este noveno año, el interés se centró en los medios de comunicación. El estudio se basa en una encuesta telefónica. Entre los hallazgos más importantes de este estudio se encontró lo siguiente:

- Los blancos y los negros obtienen las noticias de los periódicos locales con mayor frecuencia que los hispanos.
- Los hispanos, a su vez, obtienen las noticias a través de los canales locales de la televisión con mayor frecuencia que leyendo los periódicos locales.
- Los blancos obtienen las noticias en línea con mayor frecuencia que los negros o los hispanos.
- Los negros, con mayor frecuencia que los blancos o los hispanos, sienten que son tratados injustamente por los medios de comunicación.
- Los negros, con mayor frecuencia que los mismos hispanos, consideran que los hispanos son tratados injustamente por los medios de comunicación.
- Los negros y los blancos reportan, más frecuentemente que los hispanos, que están en desacuerdo o muy en desacuerdo en que la televisión y las noticias en líneas reportan la información de manera justa.
- Más de la mitad de los blancos, negros e hispanos considera que un diálogo abierto puede ayudar a acercar a las razas.
- Los negros perciben, con mayor frecuencia que los blancos o los hispanos, que existe una discriminación generalizada hacia los negros.
- Los negros perciben, con mayor frecuencia que los blancos o que los mismos hispanos, que existe una discriminación generalizada hacia los hispanos.
- Más de la mitad de los hispanos reporta que están medianamente satisfechos o muy satisfechos con la forma en los tratan.
- Los negros están menos satisfechos con la forma en que se trata a los hispanos que los mismos hispanos.
- Los blancos y los hispanos reportan con mayor frecuencia que los negros, que están medianamente satisfechos o muy satisfechos con la forma en que se trata a los negros.
- Los negros reportan, con mayor frecuencia, que la policía los trata de manera más injusta que a los blancos.
- Los hispanos reportan con mayor frecuencia que, comparados con los blancos, la policía los trata de manera más injusta y que son tratados de manera más injusta cuando están en el trabajo.
- Más que el bajo nivel educativo, los negros perciben las tasas de encarcelamiento como el efecto negativo más frecuente del racismo.
- Los negros reportan, con mayor frecuencia que los blancos o los hispanos, que la raza del presidente Obama es una razón importante por la que sus políticas enfrentan oposición.

Study Methodology

This study is based on a dual frame (landline and cell phone) survey conducted by the UALR Institute of Government Survey Research Center between September 8, 2011 and December 15, 2011. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish.

A total of 1,915 interviews were conducted with adults living in households located in Pulaski County, Arkansas. A hybrid sample design was used which included: 1) a combination of a countywide stratified RDD (Random Digit Dialing) sample of landline telephone numbers in Pulaski County, 2) a countywide sample of cell phone numbers, and, 3) a listed landline sample of people with distinctive Hispanic surnames; oversamples were drawn for OLR-blacks and Hispanics to ensure that enough members of these two groups were included in the survey to be statistically significant. Of all completed interviews, 88 percent were landline interviews and 12 percent were cell phone interviews.

Since the study focuses on black, white and Hispanic attitudes towards race relations, the data used in this analysis were limited to these three racial groups and divided into five geo-racial groups with a total of 1,871 respondents.

LR-blacks	OLR-blacks	LR-whites	OLR-whites	Hispanic
Black respondents living WITHIN the Little Rock city limits	Black respondents living OUTSIDE the Little Rock city limits	White respondents living WITHIN the Little Rock city limits	White respondents living OUTSIDE the Little Rock city limits	Hispanic respondents living in Pulaski County

The black and white geo-racial groups contain between 391 and 428 respondents, providing a margin of sampling error of ±5 percent at the conventional 95 percent confidence level. The Hispanic group contains 221 respondents, providing a margin of sampling error of ±7 percent at the conventional 95 percent confidence level.

The response rate for the Year 9 survey is 35 percent (RR3) with a cooperation rate of 80 percent based on standards established by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations.

Research shows that responses to racial issue questions can be influenced by whether interviewers and respondents perceive themselves to be of the same or of a different race. For the Year 9 study, the Survey Research Center used the same methodology as in previous years whereby the races of the black and white respondents and the telephone interviewers were matched. Most Hispanics respondents were matched with Hispanic interviewers. This matching process allows for more consistent comparisons among groups and across years.

Several of the questions used in the Year 9 survey are based upon questions developed, tested, and used by the following organizations and persons: The Gallup Research Center, Pew Research Center, U.S. Department of Commerce, and Dr. David C. Wilson. These entities bear no responsibility for the interpretations presented or conclusions reached based on analysis of the data. We gratefully acknowledge their contributions to this study.

Descriptive data analysis includes frequency distributions and cross-tabulations. Because of the size of the data set, the level of statistical significance is designated to be 0.05. When tests indicate a less than 5 percent probability that a difference occurred by chance, that difference is considered to be statistically significant and the term is used that there is a “significant difference”. The reader should be aware that a finding may be “statistically significant” but the term does not imply the difference is of practical significance. In addition, if differences are not found to be statistically significant it does not mean that the results are unimportant.

This research is conducted in accordance with protocols and procedures approved by the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects’ research at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Media

Media has a fundamental role in our society to disseminate the information and events happening across the state, the nation, and the world. The latest U.S. Census revealed that the majority of people live in racial and economic communities with others who are similar to themselves¹. This makes forming accurate perceptions of other races difficult when many people’s contact with individuals who are racially or ethnically different from themselves is limited and therefore lacks depth. Media is often the primary source for information about people of other races and ethnicities, and, as a result, serves to shape how they view those who differ from themselves.

This year’s special focus is on the media – from the printed word to television to the digital world. Respondents were asked a series of questions relating to how they use various media sources to gain information, what kind of media they use, and how they feel the media represents certain racial and ethnic groups. The questions explore their interests, habits, preferences and attitudes, in an effort to uncover any similarities or differences that may exist within the Pulaski County community.

Getting the News: Where and When?

These initial questions asked respondents about their use of news media, focusing first on local newspapers and television news shows. They were then asked about their use of the Internet as a news source. The survey acknowledged that the language used to present news may influence the choices of the Hispanic respondent group, so several questions relating to language preference were also included.

Local newspapers


 *Do you ever get news from local newspapers?*

- **Whites and blacks are significantly more likely to get their news from local papers than Hispanics.**

Considerable majorities of all five groups say they get their news from local newspapers.

Overall, the results of blacks and whites are most similar: 75 and 80 percent of whites get their news this way, as well as 73 and 77 percent of blacks.

However, there is a significant difference between Hispanics, and both white groups and the OLR-black group. Only 67 percent of Hispanics get their news from local newspapers, making this the group least likely to do so. One possible explanation for this result could be that although there are a number of Spanish-language newspapers in Pulaski County, they are either weekly or monthly and some have limited news.


 *How often do you read the local newspaper?*

Those respondents who say they do read the local newspaper were then asked how often they did so. The majority of blacks (65 and 69 percent) and whites (61 and 66 percent) read the paper frequently and regularly - either “several times a week” or on a “daily” basis.

Hispanics who get their news from the local paper are significantly less inclined to read it as frequently as blacks or whites, with only 32 percent picking up the local newspaper “daily” or “several times a week.” The majority of Hispanics (65 percent) say they read the local newspaper “once a week.” Again, this lower frequency may be related to the fact that the Spanish-language newspapers in Pulaski County are published either weekly or monthly.

The questions about newspapers were followed by a complementary pair of questions concerning local TV news.

Local news channels


 *How about the local TV news stations in your area? Do you ever get news from local TV news shows?*

- **Hispanics are much more likely to get news from local TV channels than they are to read local papers.**

Local TV shows proved to be a popular source of news for a large majority of all respondent groups.

Between 90 and 92 percent of black respondents say they get information from watching local channels, along with 86 and 88 percent of white respondents.

Hispanics are somewhat less likely to get news from local TV shows than are whites or blacks, although 75 percent do say they tune in to watch the news. The percentage of Hispanics getting news from local TV shows, however, is greater than the percentage getting news from local papers.

 *How often do you watch the local TV news?*

- **Blacks are more likely to watch local TV news “daily” or “multiple times per day” than whites or Hispanics.**

Respondents who say they obtain information from local TV news shows were then asked how frequently they tune in. The majority of all respondents say they watch local TV news on a regular basis, although there are significant differences within and between groups.

Between 73 and 81 percent of blacks watch local TV news “multiple times per day” or “daily.”

The white groups are more inconsistent along geographic lines, with OLR-whites being significantly more likely to watch local news programs “multiple times per day” or “daily” than their Little Rock counterparts (at 69 percent versus 54 percent, respectively).

¹⁰ [1] http://www.us atoday.com/news/nation/census/2010-12-14-segregation_N.htm

Two-thirds of Hispanics (66 percent) tune in to televised local news “multiple times per day” or “daily.” This means that they are much more likely to watch TV for information on current affairs than they are to read local newspapers.

Online news

? Do you ever get news from Internet sources such as news websites, blogs, or tweets?

- Whites are significantly more likely to get their news online than blacks or Hispanics.

Overall, whites are more likely to use Internet sources to obtain news than any of the other groups, with 62 and 68 percent going online to follow current affairs. In contrast, only 48 and 57 percent of blacks, and 44 percent of Hispanics say they use Internet news sources.

News and language preference

Given that language preference or proficiency may influence where Hispanics go to find news, all Hispanic respondents were asked about both Spanish and English sources.

? Do you ever get news from Spanish-language news sources?

- Approximately three-quarters of Hispanics get their news from Spanish-language sources

Approximately 3 in 4 (76 percent) Hispanics say they get news from Spanish language sources. This might be unsurprising, but it is interesting to note that this means that approximately 1 in 4 (24 percent) of Hispanic respondents say they never consult Spanish-language news, relying instead on other sources.

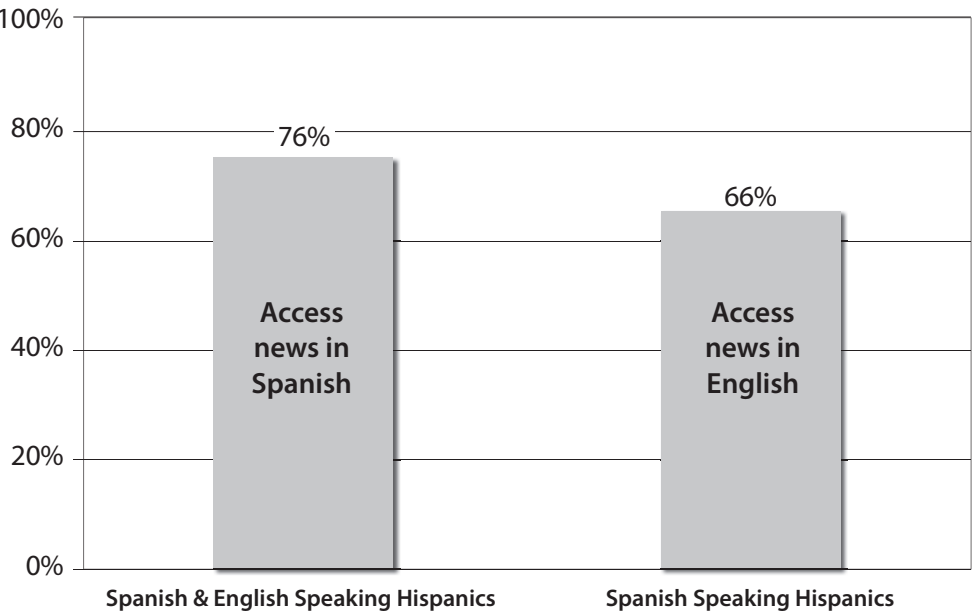
? Do you get news from English-language news sources?

- Two-thirds of Hispanics who prefer to speak Spanish get their news from English-language sources.

Interviews with Hispanic respondents were begun in Spanish, and respondents were then given the choice to continue in their preferred language. Those Hispanic respondents who elected to complete the survey in Spanish were then asked if they ever got news from English language sources.

Choosing to complete the interview in Spanish is an indication that Spanish is the preferred language of the respondent, even if they also speak English. In light of this, it is interesting that 66 percent of respondents who prefer to speak Spanish actually obtain news from English language sources. Again, this may speak to the availability of Spanish language news services.

Exhibit 1
Percentages of Hispanic respondents accessing news in Spanish / English



Topics of Interest in the News

The next set of questions focuses on what kinds of news interest Pulaski County residents. Respondents were given a list of news categories and asked to indicate if they kept up-to-date with each of them.

? Next, I have a few questions about the things that may or may not be of interest to you. Which of the following things, if any, do you generally keep up-to-date with . . .

How about local news and events?

- Blacks and whites are most likely to be interested in local news and events.

Large majorities of all the respondent groups have an interest in local news and events. Similar shares of blacks (at 90 and 91 percent) and whites (at 89 and 91 percent) report that they keep up-to-date with news and events related to their community. Significantly fewer Hispanics report an interest in local news and events, but still there is a considerable majority (74 percent). For blacks and whites, local news and events proved to be the most popular type of news interest across the board.

? Sports news?

Many respondents report that they keep up-to-date with sports news, but there are some small differences to be found.

Again, the responses from blacks and whites are more similar to each other than they are to those of Hispanics. Slightly more than one-half of black and white respondents (55 and 56 percent, and 50 and 54 percent respectively) follow sporting news, while the number for Hispanics is somewhat greater, at 65 percent.

? *Entertainment or celebrity news?*

For the most part, similar shares of all groups watch entertainment or celebrity news. This is true of 51 percent of blacks, along with 52 percent of Hispanics and 47 percent of LR-whites. The share for OLR-whites is lowest at 34 percent.

? *News about the U.S. or world economy?*

- **Hispanics’ most popular news choice is U.S. or world economy.**

Perhaps unsurprisingly in these times of economic uncertainty, the vast majority of all respondent groups keep up-to-date with news about the U.S. or world economy.

Between 81 and 85 percent of blacks, 89 percent of whites, and 80 percent of Hispanics keep abreast of economic affairs. For Hispanics, however, the U.S. and world economy prove to be the most popular type of news interest across the board.

? *Political news?*

- **Blacks and whites are significantly more likely to be interested in political news than Hispanics.**

Although the majority of all respondents say they like to stay informed about political affairs, significant differences can be found between the groups.

Between 73 and 75 percent of blacks keep up-to-date with political news, along with 73 and 81 percent of whites. Although a considerable majority of Hispanics (64 percent) follows political news, they are significantly less likely to do so than blacks or whites.

? *Religious news and information?*

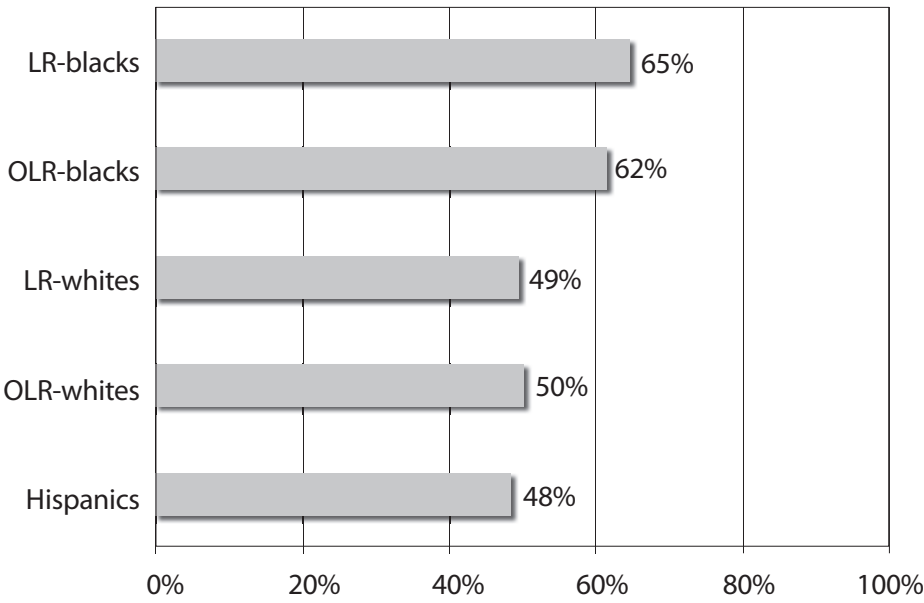
- **Blacks are significantly more likely to be interested in religious news than whites or Hispanics.**

Religious news is also a popular choice among respondents, but again, the findings reveal significant differences between some groups.

In this instance, whites and Hispanics have the most in common, with 49 and 50 percent of whites and 48 percent of Hispanics seeking this kind of information.

However, blacks are significantly more likely to be interested in this kind of material than either of their peer groups, with 62 and 65 percent expressing interest in this category.

Exhibit 2
Percentages interested in religious news



? *Information on health and nutrition?*

Health and nutrition information also proved to be a popular category.

Overall, blacks are slightly more likely to be interested in these issues than whites or Hispanics, but not to any significant degree.

Between 79 and 81 percent of blacks like to keep up-to-date with this kind of information, compared to 68 and 74 percent of whites, and 72 percent of Hispanics.

? *Are there other news topics that are of interest to you?*

By and large, respondents felt that their interests had mostly been accounted for in the given categories.

However, approximately 1 in 10 blacks (11 and 12 percent) and Hispanics (10 percent) say there are other topics they are interested in that are not generally covered by the news sources they use.

The number was somewhat higher for whites, particularly for those located in the Little Rock area. Nearly 1 in 5 (23 percent) LR-whites feel their interests are not met completely by existing news coverage. OLR-whites have more in common with blacks and Hispanics in this instance, at 15 percent.

Asking respondents what other topics were of interest to them elicited a broad range of responses, so broad in fact that it is hard to detect any large-scale themes. In addition, only a small number of respondents answered this question, so it is difficult to say whether race, ethnicity, or geography has any bearing on their replies.

Perceived Fairness of Media Representation

The perceived unfairness of media representation of people of color was strengthened in 2005 with the media’s coverage of Hurricane Katrina. News reports following the major devastation of New Orleans - photographs of blacks taking items from a store with the caption “looting” with similar photographs of whites with the caption “finding” - reinforced the racial stereotype of blacks as criminal. Studies of various media outlets throughout the country found that racial minorities are consistently portrayed in stereotypic roles; and, that blacks are more likely to appear in stories about crime.

The next pair of questions was designed to gain a sense of how much Pulaski County residents felt the media projected fair representations of blacks and Hispanics. Respondents could choose from a scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.”

? To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the media which includes television, newspapers, magazines, radio, or the Internet. . .

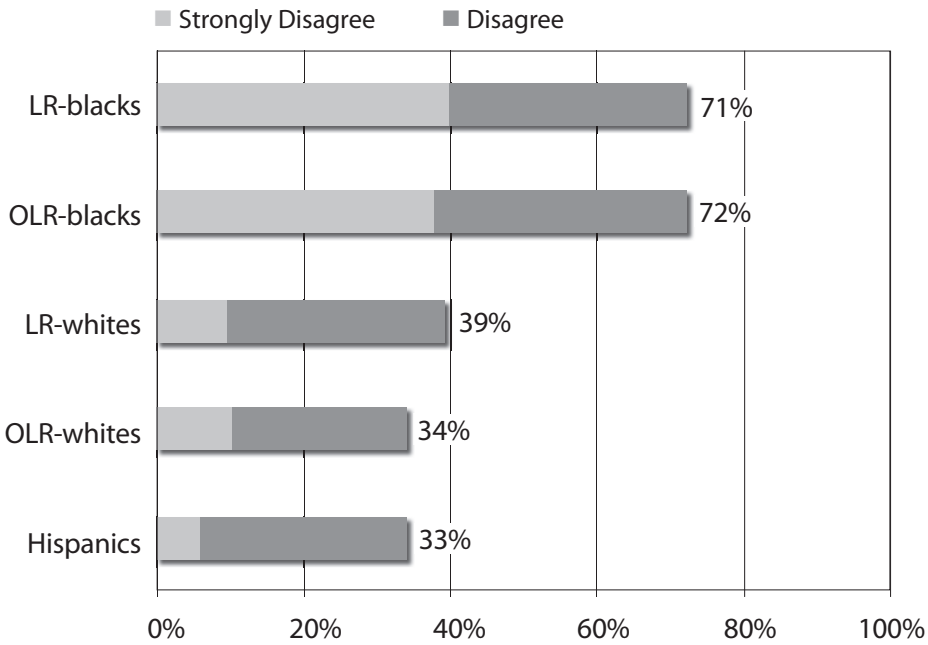
The media is fair in the way it represents blacks.

- Blacks are significantly more likely to feel they are portrayed unfairly by the media than whites or Hispanics.

This question reveals a gap in perception along racial and ethnic lines. Black respondents in particular have doubts that media outlets can be relied upon to portray black people fairly. Blacks are significantly more likely to “disagree” or “strongly disagree” that black people receive accurate representation than are whites or Hispanics.

Nearly three-fourths (71 and 72 percent) of blacks selected these responses. The share of whites giving these responses is considerably lower, with around one-third (34 and 39 percent) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this statement. Hispanics hold similar opinions to whites, with 33 percent answering in this way.

Exhibit 3
Percentages disagreeing the media portrays blacks fairly



? The media is fair in the way it represents Hispanics.

- Blacks are significantly more likely to feel Hispanics are portrayed unfairly by the media than Hispanics are themselves.

This time, respondents were asked to consider media portrayal of Hispanics, and the distribution of responses is similar to that of the previous question. Black respondents are significantly more likely to “disagree” or “strongly disagree” with this statement than whites or Hispanics.

Around two-thirds of blacks (65 and 70 percent) contest the idea that Hispanics receive fair representation in the media. Whites are considerably less likely to share this opinion, with 41 percent of LR-whites and 32 percent of OLR-whites saying they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Interestingly, the views of Hispanics respondents are more in line with those of whites than blacks. To put this in perspective, blacks are actually significantly more likely to feel that the media portrays Hispanics poorly than Hispanics are themselves. Forty-one (41) percent of Hispanics say they “disagree” or “strongly disagree” that Hispanics are depicted appropriately, which is significantly lower than the percentage of blacks giving these responses.

How Trustworthy is the News?

Once respondents had been asked if they believed media outlets portrayed blacks and Hispanics fairly, they were asked how much faith they had in these outlets to portray information fairly. In this instance, they were asked about television and Internet news sources. Again, respondents were presented with statements and asked to select to what extent they agreed or disagreed with them.

Television news



I trust television news to report information fairly.

- **Blacks and whites are significantly more likely to “disagree” or “strongly disagree” that TV news reports information fairly as compared to Hispanics.**
- **Hispanics are significantly more likely to trust TV news than whites and blacks.**

The previous questions demonstrate that black respondents are most inclined to exhibit lower levels of trust in media representations of black and Hispanic people. Their responses to this question indicate that they also display less trust in television’s ability or desire to present the news fairly. The majority of blacks (between 55 and 61 percent) disagreed or “strongly” disagreed that television news could be trusted to convey this kind of information fairly.

The opinions of Hispanics also mirror their previous responses. They are significantly less inclined to “disagree” or “strongly disagree” that TV news is fair than are blacks, with 30 percent selecting these responses.

Although the viewpoints of Hispanics are closely aligned with those of whites when it comes to media representation of blacks and Hispanics, in this instance they diverge. Here, whites are significantly more likely to agree with the black respondents and to “disagree” or “strongly disagree” that TV news presents information fairly. Approximately one-half of whites (48 and 57 percent) do not trust TV news to present information fairly.

Online news



I trust Internet sources to report the news fairly.

- **Hispanics are significantly more likely to trust Internet news than whites and blacks.**
- **Blacks, whites, and Hispanics trust Internet news to about the same degree that they trust TV news.**

Responses to this question suggest that blacks, whites and Hispanics trust Internet news about as much as they trust TV when it comes to reporting the news fairly.

Again, blacks and whites are generally in agreement, with more than one-half of whites (52 and 58 percent) and blacks (58 and 60 percent) disagreeing or “strongly” disagreeing that Internet news coverage can be relied upon to be fair.

The viewpoint of Hispanics is also fairly consistent with their response to the previous question, with around 1 in 4 (26 percent) Hispanics selecting these response categories – significantly less often than for blacks or whites.

Trust in mass media

A similar question was posed in Year 7 of the survey, where respondents were asked how much trust and confidence they had in the mass media to deliver news fully, accurately, and fairly. Although this year’s questions refer specifically to the Internet and TV news sources, results from the Year 7 question are comparable.

In Year 7, black and white respondents also expressed low levels of trust in media, with 55 and 61 percent of blacks, and 48 and 57 percent of whites saying they had “not very much” confidence in fair and accurate reporting, or “none at all.” These results indicate that the opinions of blacks and whites have changed little over time.

Topics of Special Interest

Respondents were then asked about any other topics that were of interest to them that had not already been mentioned. Once they had identified this topic, they were asked where they went to obtain information about it, and to what extent they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the media coverage this particular issue had received.



What issue has been particularly important to you over the past 3 months?

- **Blacks and whites are most interested in the economy.**
- **Hispanics are most interested in the economy and immigration issues.**

Respondents were asked to name any issue that had been important to them in recent months, whether or not it had received any media coverage. In this instance, respondents were free to answer as they chose. Their answers were then taken and arranged into categories to see if any patterns emerged among their choices.

For blacks and whites, the issues of overriding importance are connected to the local, national, or world economy.

Although these issues account for the largest share of all responses from blacks and whites, there is a significant difference between the two races. Twenty-six (26) percent of comments from black respondents refer to economic issues, compared to 40 and 43 percent for whites.

A considerable minority of Hispanics (19 percent) expresses a special interest in economic affairs. However, a comparable share of their comments (21 percent) was, perhaps unsurprisingly, devoted

to an interest in immigration issues. Immigration is of significantly less interest to the other groups, accounting for less than two (2) percent of comments from blacks and two (2) percent of comments from whites.

Politics is also a popular topic for many respondents. Two major categories of comments emerged, one concerning politics in general, governmental issues and President Obama, and the second, the 2012 presidential election. In combination, these two categories account for 20 and 22 percent of comments from blacks, and 18 and 20 percent of comments from whites. These areas hold less interest for Hispanics, only seven (7) percent of whose comments made reference to politics. No other major categories emerged, although many comments were directed towards what might be described as issues related to social well-being and environment: jobs and employment, health and health care, education, crime, and issues pertaining to race and race relations.



Where do you get your information on this issue?

- **Blacks, whites, and Hispanics are most likely to get information on this topic from TV news.**

Respondents were then asked to volunteer which sources they use to get information on their topic or issue of interest.

The findings from previous questions on news media sources indicate that blacks and whites express fairly low levels of trust in TV and Internet news. In addition, blacks, whites, and Hispanics are all about as likely to trust the Internet to report news fairly as they are to trust television.

Despite this, a substantial majority of all groups still turn on the television rather than go online when searching for information on the topics that interest them. This is true of 66 and 72 percent of blacks, 60 and 69 percent of whites, and 69 percent of Hispanics.

However, many respondents still use local newspapers and the Internet. Between 31 and 34 percent of blacks say they would consult the local press, along with 35 and 43 percent of whites, and 30 percent of Hispanics.

Similar proportions of all respondents say they would go online, although blacks are slightly less likely to say so than the other groups. Between 34 and 37 percent of blacks make use of the Internet to find information on the topic in which they expressed interest, compared to 48 and 49 percent of whites, and 48 percent of Hispanics.



To what extent would you say that you were (satisfied or dissatisfied) with the media coverage of this issue.

- **Blacks are significantly less likely to be satisfied with the media coverage of their topics than whites or Hispanics.**
- **Approximately three-fourths of Hispanics are “satisfied” or “strongly satisfied” with the media coverage of their topics.**

Satisfaction with media coverage of the issues that concern respondents varies somewhat across groups.

Overall, blacks are less satisfied with the media coverage of their area of interest than the other groups. In fact, black respondents are significantly less likely to respond that they are “satisfied” or “strongly satisfied” than whites or Hispanics. Slightly less than one-half of blacks (46 and 48 percent) answer in this way, whereas the portion of whites doing so is closer to two-thirds, at 62 and 64 percent.

In keeping with their higher trust levels in media coverage, Hispanics are more likely to exhibit the highest levels of satisfaction in this instance. Seventy-three (73) percent say they are “satisfied” or “strongly satisfied” with media coverage of the subjects in which they are interested.

Computer Access and Usage

Over the past two decades, information technology has undergone a paradigm shift few could have predicted. Computers, Smartphones, and tablets have revolutionized the way we communicate, work, and play. A 2010 Pew research report found that nationally, Americans are going online using laptops or cell phones at a greater rate, with blacks and English-speaking Hispanics outpacing whites in this area. Blacks have also had a substantial increase in their home usage rates of broadband internet services. More and more, access to these technologies is impacting people’s ability to participate in the modern digital world. Those who are denied access, because of socioeconomic circumstances, education, or geography, find themselves on the wrong side of what has been termed “the digital divide,” putting them at a disadvantage in accessing job and career opportunities, health information, government services, and information to enrich their lives.

The following questions were designed to gain a sense of whether or not a digital divide exists in Pulaski County between racial and ethnic groups by asking respondents about their access to and usage of computers and the Internet.



On a different topic, do you use a computer or Smartphone at your workplace, at school, at home, or ANYWHERE else on at least an OCCASIONAL basis?

- **Most respondents use a computer or Smartphone.**

Substantial majorities of all respondents use a computer or Smartphone device in some capacity. However, LR-whites and OLR-whites are significantly more likely to report using a computer or Smartphone than Hispanics are. This is the case for 81 and 86 percent of whites and 74 to 76 percent of blacks compared to 68 percent of Hispanics.



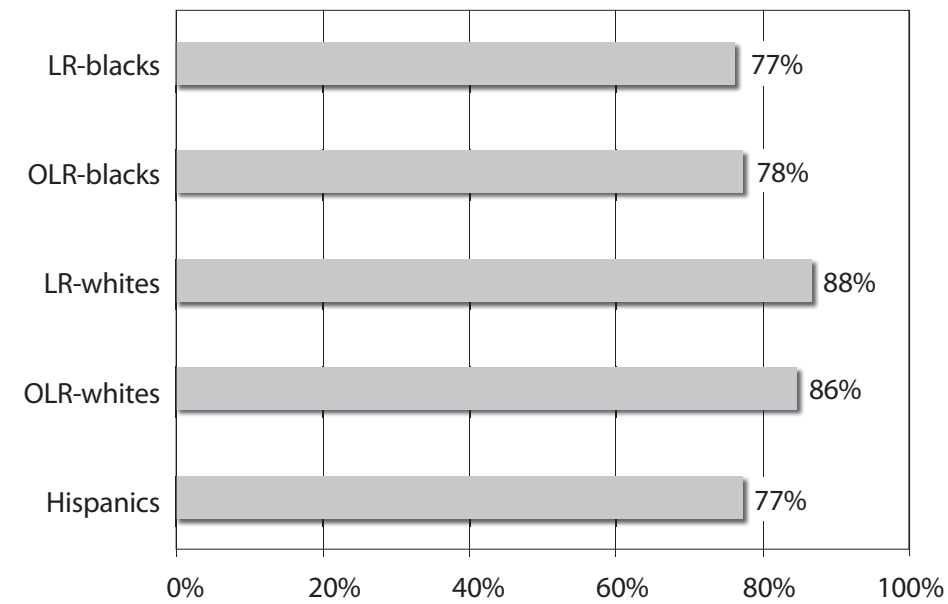
Do you have access to the Internet IN YOUR HOME either on a computer or Smartphone?

- **The majority of respondents have Internet access at home.**

Having established whether respondents make use of any kind of computing device, the next question looked at access to the Internet. Do respondents have the capacity to go online in their own homes, rather than at work or elsewhere?

The results show that having Internet access in the home is extremely common, with no significant differences among the groups. In this instance, the responses of blacks and whites follow a similar pattern to that of the previous question. Between 77 and 78 percent of black respondents say they have Internet access at home, along with 86 and 88 percent of whites and 77 percent of Hispanics.

Exhibit 4
Percentages with Internet access at home



Overall, the results suggest that there is no statistically significant digital divide within the Pulaski County community, at least in terms of access to computers and home Internet connectivity. However, there are small but noticeable shares of respondents who do not have Internet access at home, and the following question sought to identify reasons this might be the case.

? *What is the MAIN REASON your home does not have Internet?*

- **Most blacks and whites without home Internet access simply choose to do without it.**
- **Most Hispanics without home Internet access do so because of cost.**

In a time of widespread economic instability, it is interesting to discover that the main reason many respondents do not have online access at home was not due to the cost of maintaining an Internet service.

Among those with no domestic online access, the most popular reason by far is simply that they choose not to have the Internet in their homes. This was the case for 53 percent of blacks and 59 and 65 percent of whites.

A considerable share of Hispanics (42 percent) also say they neither wanted or needed Internet access at home, but cost was the defining factor for more than one-half (53 percent). Nearly twice as many Hispanics gave this response as blacks (at 19 and 24 percent) or whites (at 24 and 25 percent). However, only a small portion of respondents were asked this question, so this result has no statistical significance.

Although a good deal of research has suggested that another aspect of the digital divide is location, this did not prove to be the case in the local community, among the urban or rural population. Fewer than 1 in 10 respondents say there is no Internet service available in their area.

? *In a normal day, how long do you spend on the Internet?*

No significant differences exist among the groups when it comes to the amount of time they spend online in the average day.

The amount of time respondents spent online varied greatly, but for the majority, Internet usage was confined to between 1 and 2 hours per day. Between 26 and 36 percent of blacks gave this response, along with 36 and 39 percent of whites, and 31 percent of Hispanics.

Across all the groups, Hispanics are most likely to say they “never” access the Internet, at 30 percent. This was also the case for 22 and 23 percent of blacks and 14 and 18 percent of whites.

Social Media

Social media is the term used to describe certain kinds of new web-based and mobile technologies. The growth of computer and Smartphone usage, along with the increasing availability of Internet services, has meant social media has come to provide a new forum for the exchange of ideas and content. Individuals and communities of all kinds can now communicate, organize and interact in more dynamic ways than ever before. Growth has been dizzyingly rapid, and these technologies have become an integral part of many people’s lives. The next set of questions asked if Pulaski County residents use these new technologies, and if they do, how do they use them.

? *Have you EVER joined a social networking site like MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter?*

- **Substantial percentages of blacks, whites, and Hispanics have joined social networking services.**
- **Blacks and Hispanics in Pulaski County are less likely to have joined a social networking service than blacks and Hispanics nationally.**

Social Networking Sites (referred to as “SNS” by the Pew Internet & American Life Project) are a popular means of engaging with others in the virtual world. Today, many people have an account with high-profile services, such as Facebook and Twitter, and this was also true of our respondents.

Well over one-half of white respondents (61 and 63 percent) have joined an SNS, making them somewhat more likely to have done so than black or Hispanic respondents. The number of blacks

and Hispanics who have signed up for an SNS is still considerable, but the percentage is closer to one-half for these respondent groups, at 48 percent for blacks and 52 percent for Hispanics.

When these local results are compared to the findings of Pew’s Internet & American life survey, which was conducted nationally, some differences emerge.

Pulaski County Hispanics are somewhat less likely to have joined an SNS than their national counterparts, with a difference of 14 percentage points. The gap between local and national black respondents is larger still with 48 percent of local black respondents having joined an SNS. The local percent is 21 percentage points less than the national figure of 69 percent.

Local and national white groups are almost the same, with 63 percent of Pew respondents reporting they have joined an SNS.

? *What are the different ways you have used social networking sites...*

- ... stay in touch with friends?*
- ... make new friends?*
- ... make new business or professional contacts?*
- ... organize with other people for an event, issue, or cause?*

- Blacks, whites, and Hispanics primarily use social networking services to keep in touch with friends, differing from national data from a 2010 Pew research study that shows that the attitudes of people of color toward social media vary significantly from those of whites in that they are more likely to view sites like Facebook and Twitter as a way to make government more accessible and keep informed about government news.**

Social Networking Sites can be utilized in numerous ways, but keeping in touch with existing friends proved to be the most popular reason respondents visit them.

Although there are no significant differences among the groups, whites are somewhat more likely to use SNS for this purpose than blacks or Hispanics. Between 58 and 59 percent of whites say they use networking services for this reason, along with 43 and 47 percent of blacks and 49 percent of Hispanics.

Another popular use of SNS was to organize people in connection with an event, issue, or cause; this was common to all groups. Approximately one-third of respondents use SNS as an organizational medium. This is true of 33 percent of blacks, between 33 and 37 percent of whites, and 32 percent of Hispanics.

Maintaining contact with friends is the most popular use of SNS, but using these services to make new friends proved to be somewhat less common. However, between 23 and 30 percent of blacks do use SNS to make new friends, along with 20 and 23 percent of whites and 27 percent of Hispanics.

Comparable shares of respondents use SNS to create new business or professional contacts. Between 23 and 24 percent of blacks use SNS to extend their professional network and create new business opportunities, as do 17 to 23 percent of whites and 22 percent of Hispanics.

Race, Ethnicity and Treatment

Talking about race

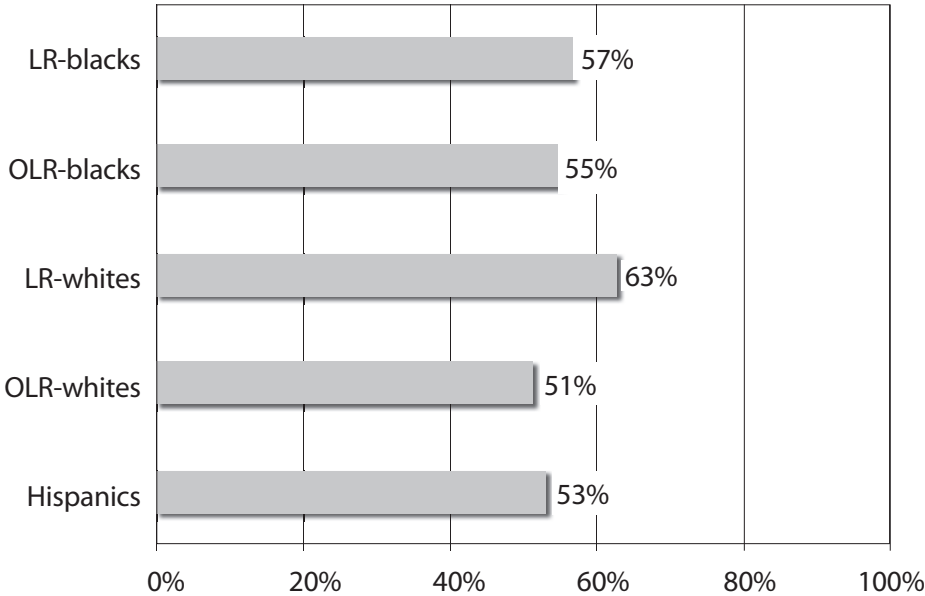
The next question tried to gauge how open respondents would be to the idea of a frank and candid discussion on the topic of race. Does the local community feel that shining a light on issues such as race relations and racial attitudes would be a productive venture? Or is the public more likely to fear that highlighting race would bring latent tensions to the surface, thereby intensifying them?

? *And now on a different subject, as you may know, some leaders in our community have called for an open dialogue on race. If blacks, whites, and Hispanics honestly expressed their true feelings about race relations, do you think this would do more to (bring races together or cause greater racial division)?*

- More than-one half of blacks, whites, and Hispanics say an open dialogue could help “bring races together.”**

Overall, majorities of all respondent groups feel that such a dialogue would be beneficial and could help to forge better relations between different racial and ethnic groups.

Exhibit 5
Percentages saying dialogue could “bring races together”



Between 55 and 57 percent of blacks say an open discussion on race could help to bring races together, as did a similar share of Hispanics (53 percent).

LR-whites are somewhat more likely than any of the other geo-racial groups to have a positive take on open dialogue, with 63 percent anticipating it could improve race relations. Here they differ significantly from OLR-whites, 51 percent of whom are in favor of an open dialogue.

This question has also been fielded nationally by the Gallup Research Center, but yielded somewhat different results.

At the national level, black respondents were more inclined to see the merits of an open dialogue on race, with 70 percent feeling it could bring races together. The same is true of Hispanics (albeit by a slightly smaller margin), with 64 percent being in agreement.

It is difficult to compare local and national white respondents in this instance, as there is a significant divergence of opinion among LR-whites and OLR-whites. However, it can be said that 53 percent of whites surveyed nationally feel an open dialogue could be beneficial, which means their opinions are more in keeping with those of OLR-whites than LR-whites.

Perceptions of Discrimination

The next pair of questions looks at perceptions of discrimination. Respondents were asked to consider if discrimination against blacks or Hispanics were pervasive problems in the local area.

In your opinion, do you think discrimination against BLACKS is widespread or is NOT widespread in Pulaski County?

- Blacks are significantly more likely to perceive widespread discrimination against blacks than are whites or Hispanics.

This question reveals that black respondents have very different opinions from white and Hispanic respondents when it comes to this issue. Between 65 and 71 percent of blacks see widespread discrimination in Pulaski County, making them significantly more likely to do so than whites or Hispanics.

This question, originally posed by Gallup in a national study, was designed to assess perceptions of racism against blacks in the U.S. as a whole.

National black respondents were more or less in agreement with their local counterparts, with 72 percent saying anti-black racism was a pervasive problem.

Although sizable minorities of whites in the current study (32 and 39 percent) agree with this assessment, opinions at the national level were higher. The whites surveyed nationally were more likely to perceive widespread racism than whites in this study, at 49 percent.

However, the biggest difference between local and national results can be found in responses from Hispanics. Fifty-nine (59) percent of the Hispanics surveyed by Gallup agreed that racism against blacks is common, compared to only 30 percent of Hispanics locally.

Do you think discrimination against HISPANICS is widespread or is NOT widespread in Pulaski County?

- Blacks are significantly more likely to perceive widespread discrimination against Hispanics than whites are.
- Blacks are significantly more likely to perceive widespread discrimination against Hispanics than Hispanics themselves.

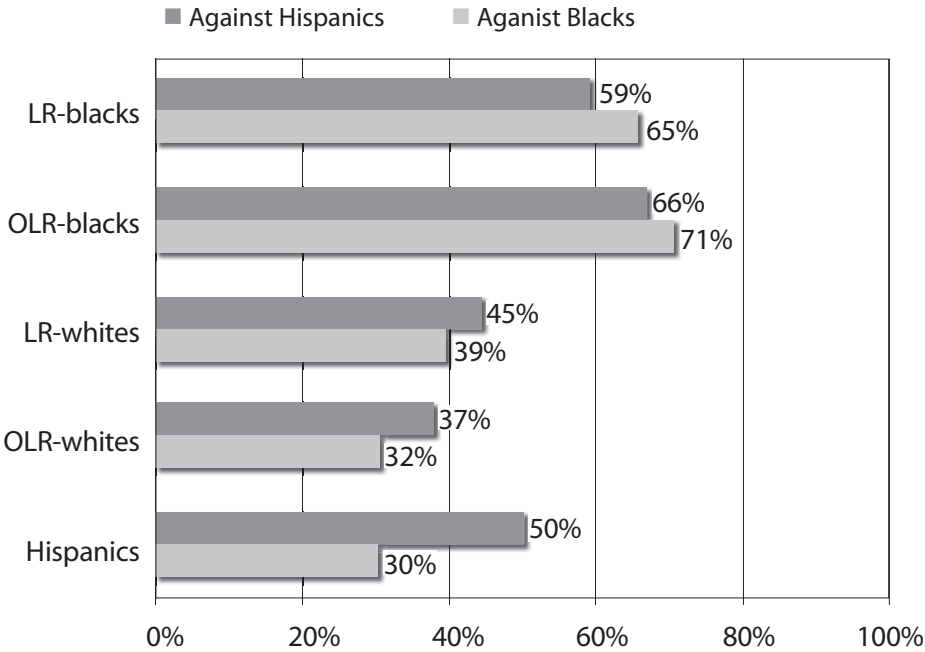
As with the previous question, the race and ethnicity of respondents seems to influence perceptions of discrimination against specific groups.

A clear majority of black respondents say they feel discrimination is widespread, in this case discrimination directed against Hispanics. Between 59 and 66 percent of blacks select this response. Interestingly, black respondents are actually more apt to answer in this way than Hispanics.

In general, Hispanics tend to perceive lower levels of discord and racism in communities than blacks and whites do. However, 1 in 2 Hispanics (50 percent) do say they find anti-Hispanic discrimination a widespread problem in Pulaski County.

Whites are significantly less likely to perceive widespread discrimination against Hispanics than blacks are, but sizable minorities (37 and 45 percent) still do find this to be the case.

Exhibit 6
Percentages saying discrimination against blacks/Hispanics is widespread



Perceptions of Treatment in the Community

This next series of questions continues to look at the perceptions blacks, whites, and Hispanics have about racial and ethnic discrimination in the local community.

Satisfaction with treatment

This time, respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the treatment of various groups. They could choose from a scale ranging from “very satisfied” to “very dissatisfied.”

Next are a few questions about your attitude towards the way various groups in your community are treated by others. For each of the following groups, please tell me whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the group is treated...

How about whites?

- Around 8 out of 10 whites are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the way they are treated.
- Blacks are significantly less likely to be “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the way whites are treated than whites and Hispanics.

A national Gallup survey asked respondents how satisfied they were with the treatment they saw blacks and Hispanics receiving in the local community. This study extends this line of questioning by asking respondents how satisfied they are with the way whites are treated, to look at people’s opinions from a slightly different perspective.

The vast majority of white respondents have a positive view of the way whites are treated in the local community, exhibiting high levels of satisfaction. Between 80 and 81 percent of whites say they are either “somewhat” or “very” satisfied, making them the group most likely to be content with the way their own racial or ethnic group is treated. The numbers for Hispanics are not much lower - with 78 percent saying they are either “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the treatment whites receive.

Interestingly, blacks are significantly less likely to express satisfaction with the way whites are treated than whites and Hispanics, with between 60 and 63 percent of blacks saying they are either “somewhat” or “very” satisfied. This finding seems counterintuitive and there was no follow-up question to ascertain the reason for these responses. There is also no national survey on this question to which to compare.

How about Hispanics?

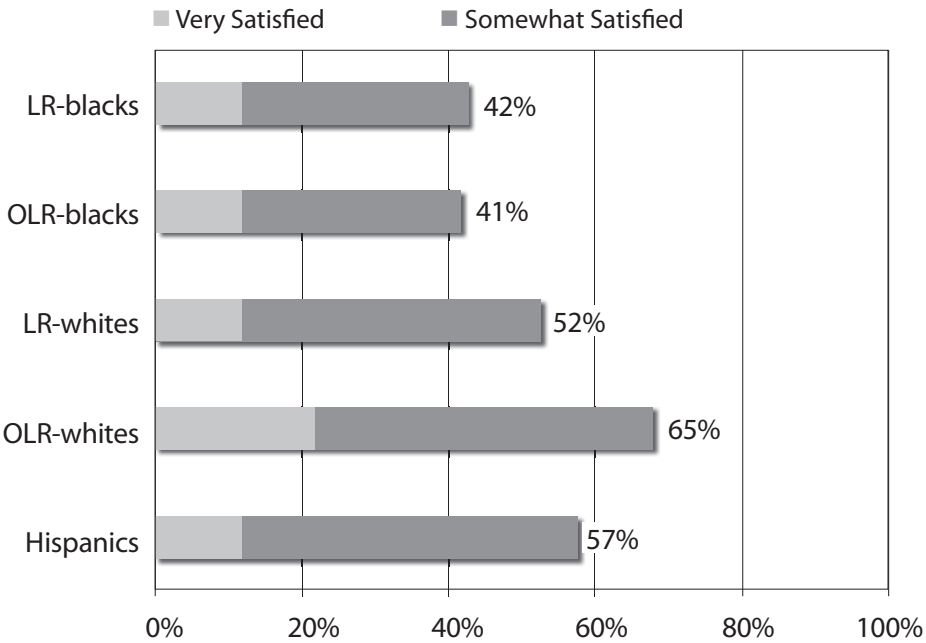
- More than one-half of Hispanics say they are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the way they are treated.
- Blacks are less satisfied with the treatment Hispanics receive than Hispanics are themselves.

Hispanics are more likely to be satisfied with their treatment in the community than are blacks. The majority of Hispanics (57 percent) say they are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the way they are treated.

However, OLR-whites are actually slightly more likely to say they are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the way Hispanics are treated than Hispanics are themselves, at 65 percent. LR-whites are significantly less inclined to feel this way, with a scant majority of 52 percent saying they are satisfied with the treatment Hispanics encounter.

Again, blacks are significantly less likely to be satisfied with the community’s treatment of the racial and ethnic groups they were asked about, with 41 and 42 percent being “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the treatment Hispanics receive. Interestingly, therefore, blacks are more apt to be dissatisfied with the treatment of Hispanics than Hispanics are themselves.

Exhibit 7 Percentages who are satisfied with way Hispanics are treated by others



When local results are compared to national findings, we can see that the blacks groups are more or less in agreement, with 40 percent of the blacks surveyed by Gallup saying they are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the way Hispanics are treated in their local community (compared to local figures of 41 and 42 percent).

Once again, a meaningful comparison between the local and national white groups is hard to make owing to a difference of opinion between the LR and OLR populations. Overall, however, the whites surveyed by Gallup were still more likely to be “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the treatment of Hispanics than blacks were, with 60 percent selecting these responses.

Hispanics in Pulaski County are considerably more positive about the treatment they receive than national respondents. Whereas 57 percent of local respondents say they are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied, this figure falls by 14 percentage points for national Hispanic respondents, to 43 percent.



How about blacks?

- **Whites and Hispanics are significantly more likely to be “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the way blacks are treated than are blacks.**

In keeping with findings from previous questions, white and Hispanic respondents are less likely to perceive racism and discrimination against blacks than are blacks. In this instance, whites and Hispanics are significantly more likely to say they are “very” or “somewhat” satisfied with the treatment black people receive in the local community than blacks.

Around one-third of blacks (31 and 36 percent) say they are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the treatment blacks receive. For Hispanics this figure is significantly higher, at 59 percent.

Whites are also far more likely than blacks to express these high levels of satisfaction, but, once again, there is a noticeable divergence of opinion among the white groups. LR-whites tend to agree with Hispanics, with 58 percent saying they are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the way blacks are treated. OLR-whites, however, are significantly more likely to say they are satisfied than any of the other groups, with 71 percent giving these responses.

Gallup fielded this question across the country in 2008. For black respondents, there was little difference between local and national findings, with 35 percent of blacks surveyed by Gallup saying they were “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the treatment blacks received in the local community (compared to 31 and 36 percent locally).

Gallup found that Hispanics from the national group are also far more likely to be satisfied with the treatment blacks receive than blacks are themselves. However, there was some difference of opinion between the local and national groups, and Hispanics at the national level were not as satisfied as their local counterparts are, with less than one-half (48 percent) saying they were “somewhat” or “very” satisfied, compared to 59 percent locally.

Everyday treatment

Racial Microaggressions

Research and the resultant scholarship have identified and described the experience of people of color as they move through the U.S. post the acceptance of overt racism. The passage of civil rights laws, the growing numbers of white people who have abandoned conscious racism, and the growing number of people who find racial maltreatment unacceptable have created an era in which many believe people of color are treated no differently than whites. Yet, the research has identified what are called “racial microaggressions” – subtle, almost imperceptible ways that people of color are reminded of their perceived inferiority to whites: a white woman clutching her purse when a black man passes; a store owner following a person of color around the store; an Asian or Hispanic person speaking perfect English being asked “Where are you from.”

The next set of questions presented respondents with a variety of commonplace scenarios, and they were asked to consider how fairly they felt blacks and Hispanics are treated in comparison to whites.

This same set of questions has been asked at intervals since this study was first conducted nine years ago. Repeating certain core questions in this way can help map the evolution of a community’s attitudes and perceptions. Attitudes tend to change slowly, however, so these questions are cycled through on a 2 – 3 year basis.

Results for blacks and whites from previous surveys are discussed, but results for Hispanics are not. Last year was the first occasion on which a large enough number of Hispanics were surveyed to infer meaningful results. As a consequence, there is little past data to which to compare the results in this study.



Thinking about your community in general, based on your personal experiences, are BLACKS in your community treated less fairly, about the same, or more fairly than WHITES

- ... on the job or at work?*
- ... in stores or at the mall?*
- ... in restaurants, bars, theaters, or other entertainment places?*
- ... in dealing with the police?*

- **Blacks are significantly more likely to say blacks are treated “less fairly than whites” than are whites or Hispanics.**
- **Blacks are most likely to say they are treated “less fairly than whites” when dealing with police.**

Consistent with their higher levels of dissatisfaction with treatment of black people in the local community, the black respondent group is significantly more likely to note discrimination in everyday situations than are whites or Hispanics.


Respondents were also asked about their perceptions of treatment in a less typical situation, when dealing with the police (for example, as the result of a traffic incident). Although all of the groups are more inclined to say blacks are treated “less fairly” than whites when dealing with the police than they are for any of the other scenarios they were presented with, striking differences of opinion are evident.

Substantial majorities of black respondents believe that whites are treated more fairly by police, with 63 and 70 percent selecting this response. This number falls sharply for LR-whites, to 46 percent, and significantly further for OLR-whites, at 29 percent. Hispanics are most likely to agree with OLR-whites, with 28 percent perceiving unequal treatment in this situation.

Smaller majorities of black respondents (52 and 54 percent) also say they are treated “less fairly” than whites when it comes to more common situations: while at work or when shopping. Again, whites and Hispanics are significantly less likely to believe this is the case. Between 11 and 24 percent of whites say blacks encounter unequal treatment in the workplace or while visiting stores, along with between 15 and 17 percent of Hispanics.

Slightly fewer black respondents note being treated poorly in comparison to whites while out at entertainment venues, but only by the narrowest of margins. With 43 to 47 of blacks stating they are treated “less fairly” in this scenario, they are still significantly more likely to do so than whites (at 12 and 20 percent), and Hispanics (at 12 percent).

This set of questions has been asked in Year 1, Year 2, and Year 5 of the survey, and perceptions have not varied significantly during this time. The only area in which a degree of change can be noted is in black respondents’ perceptions of treatment while out at entertainment venues. The shares of blacks who say they are treated “less fairly” than whites in this circumstance have fluctuated over time. Overall, there is nearly a 10-percentage point variation from 51 percent in Year 1, to 43 percent in Year 2, to 53 percent in Year 5. Therefore, this year marks a small downturn in the numbers of blacks who feel they are treated “less fairly” than whites while at entertainment places.



Thinking about your community in general, based on your personal experiences, are HISPANICS in your community treated less fairly, about the same, or more fairly than WHITES

... on the job or at work?

... in stores or at the mall?

... in restaurants, bars, theaters, or other entertainment places?

... in dealing with the police?

- **Hispanics are most likely to say they are treated “less fairly than whites” when dealing with police or at work.**

This series of questions was posed to Hispanic and white respondents. In the future, it would be informative to obtain blacks views on these questions to determine if they are similar to their views of discrimination against Hispanics discussed previously.

Hispanics are most likely to say they have endured unfair treatment while dealing with the police or in the workplace. Close to one-half of Hispanics (46 to 48 percent) say they are treated poorly in comparison to whites in these scenarios.

Again, the opinions of whites are somewhat divided along geographic lines. Between 40 to 43 percent of LR-whites say Hispanics are treated less fairly in encounters with the police and at work, making them significantly more likely to do so than OLR-whites (at 28 and 29 percent).

Hispanics are somewhat less likely to say they have been treated unfairly while shopping in stores or at entertainment venues, although 25 and 30 percent do report they have been treated “less fairly” than whites in these situations.

Again, LR-whites are significantly more likely to perceive unfair treatment against Hispanics than OLR-whites, with between 29 and 37 percent selecting this response, compared to 20 and 24 percent of OLR-whites.


Race, Education and Incarceration

The next two questions concern certain social disparities between the life outcomes of some members of the black population when compared to those of whites.

Research has shown that there is, on average, an educational attainment gap between blacks and whites in the U.S. “Educational attainment” refers to the last educational level an individual has reached. This could mean the highest grade of school completed, or, in post-secondary education, the highest degree level achieved (such as a Masters or Doctoral degree). In the U.S., census data illustrates that this level is generally lower for blacks than it is for whites. Studies examining this disparity suggest that some of it is due to the higher quality educational experience many whites receive, both historically and currently.

In addition to differences in educational attainment, there are disproportionately high numbers of blacks incarcerated compared to the white population. “Incarceration” means that an individual has received a custodial sentence and is detained in prison. Again, this fact is borne out by U.S. census data. The disparities in sentencing between whites and blacks have been the subject of numerous studies and the focus of the Federal Sentencing Commission. Credible findings from scholars and the Federal Sentencing Commission support a conclusion that some of the significant disparity is due to differences in treatment of the races by the criminal justice system.

Respondents were asked to what extent they believed racial discrimination contributed to these disparities, or if they believed racism was not a factor at all.



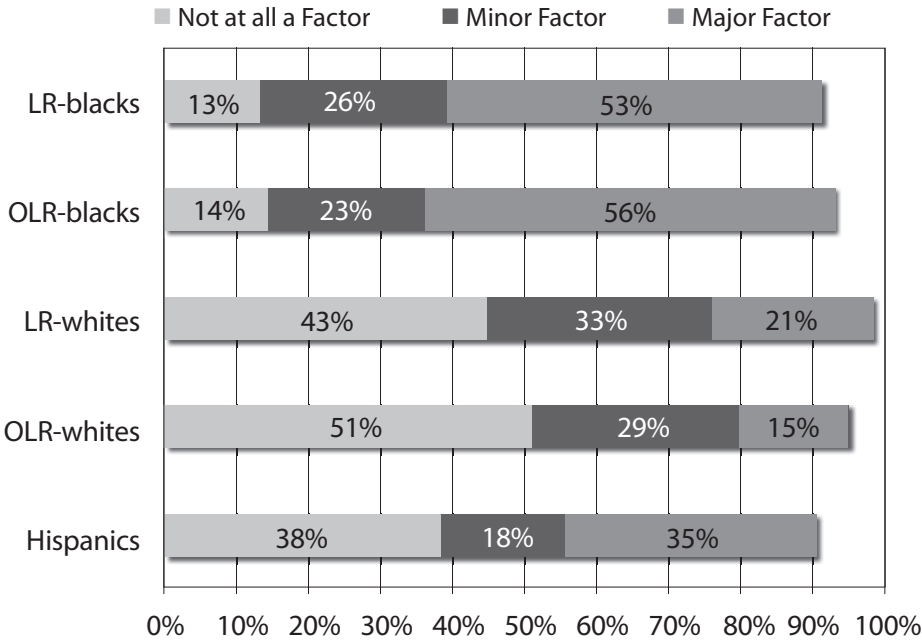
Now I have a few questions to find out your thoughts on racial discrimination against BLACKS. Do you think racial discrimination is a major factor OR a minor factor in contributing to Blacks having, ON AVERAGE, lower levels of education OR is racial discrimination not at all a factor in one’s educational achievement?

- **The majority of blacks say race is a “major factor” in lower black education levels.**
- **Overall, whites are over three times more likely to say race is “not at all a factor” in lower black education levels.**

Other results in this survey indicate that blacks are more likely to observe racism and unfair treatment than the other groups surveyed, so it is perhaps unsurprising that the same is true in this instance. More than one half of blacks (53 and 56 percent) attribute disparities in educational attainment between blacks and whites to racial discrimination. It is perhaps more interesting, therefore, to look at the shares of respondents who believe that race is “not at all a factor.”

A small minority of black respondents (13 and 14 percent) discounts the theory that discrimination is a factor in lower black educational attainment levels, but they are significantly less likely to do so than the other groups. The share of respondents who say race is “not at all” a factor rises to 43 and 51 percent for whites and 38 percent for Hispanics.

Exhibit 8
Perceived effect of racism on black educational attainment



In 2008, blacks surveyed nationally were slightly more likely than local black respondents to cite racism as a “major factor” contributing to attainment level disparities, with nearly two-thirds selecting this response (64 percent nationally compared to 53 and 56 percent locally).

At the other end of the scale, the responses of blacks at the local and national level are more in alignment, with 11 percent of blacks surveyed by Gallup saying discrimination was “not at all a factor.”

The national data for whites and Hispanics selecting this response deviate from local results to a much greater degree. Locally, whites and Hispanics are much more likely to think that racism is not a factor in educational disparities than their national counterparts.

Between 43 and 51 percent of whites surveyed in Pulaski County do not believe racism is a factor “at all,” compared to 29 percent nationally. Hispanics responding to the local survey are nearly twice as likely to reject racism as a factor, with 21 percent of Hispanics surveyed by Gallup selecting this response (compared to 38 percent locally).

Do you think racial discrimination is a major factor OR a minor factor for there being a greater percentage of blacks in U.S. prisons OR is racial discrimination not at all a factor?

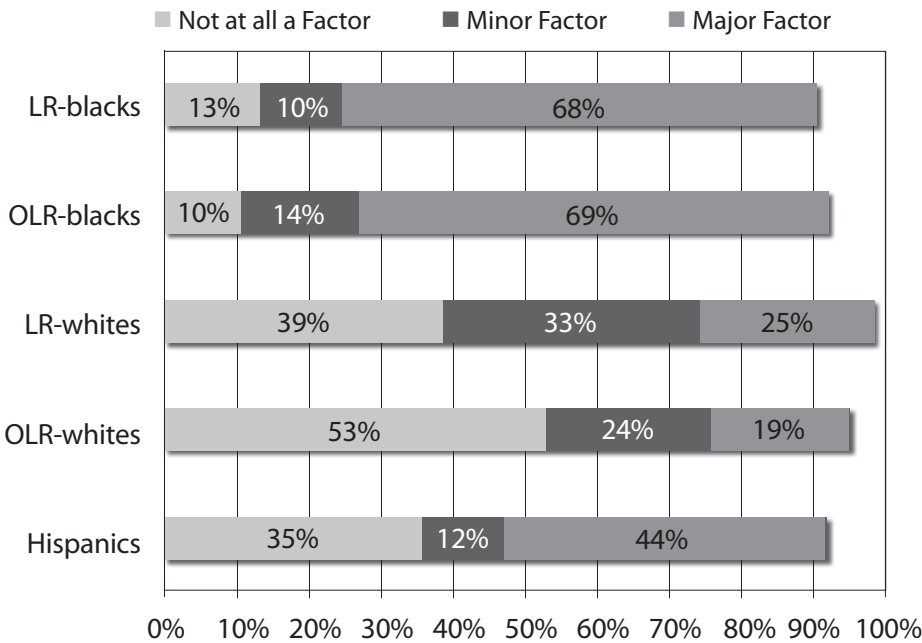
- Blacks are more likely to say racism is a “major factor” influencing incarceration rates than they are to say it is a “major factor” in lower educational attainment.

Blacks are significantly more likely to believe that racial discrimination is a “major factor” contributing to the greater number of blacks in U.S. prisons than any of the other groups. Between 68 and 69 percent of blacks find racism to be a “major factor” in sending blacks to prison.

Whites are far more likely to believe that racism is “not at all a factor” in accounting for the size of the black prison population. However, there is a difference of opinion along geographic lines. Slightly more than one-third of LR-whites (39 percent) deny racism is a factor in this instance, compared to more than one-half (53 percent) of OLR-whites.

Overall, Hispanics are somewhat less likely than whites to rule out racism as a contributory factor, but a sizable minority does answer in this way (35 percent).

Exhibit 9
Perceived effect of racism on black incarceration rates



When this question was fielded nationally, black respondents were somewhat more likely to cite racism as a “major factor” than blacks in Pulaski County, by around 10 percentage points.

As was the case in the previous question, the whites and Hispanics who were surveyed nationally are more likely than blacks to dismiss racism as any kind of factor in prison rates.


Whites in Pulaski County are much more likely to dismiss racism than those surveyed by Gallup, only 20 percent of whom are willing to disregard racism as an influential factor (compared to 39 and 53 percent locally).

Pulaski County Hispanics are also more than twice as likely to say racism is “not at all a factor” than their national counterparts, with 14 percent of Hispanics at the national level selecting this response (compared to 35 percent locally).

Political Ideology and Race

The next two questions concern political identity and race. Respondents were first asked to describe their own political perspective and then to consider to what extent they felt racism has been a motivating factor behind political opposition to President Obama’s policies. Further analysis was then conducted on these results to see if there was any link between race, political ideology, and perceptions of racism against the President.

Political ideology

 *We hear a lot of talk these days about Conservatives and Liberals. Where would you place yourself on a scale with ONE being “Extremely Conservative” and SEVEN being “Extremely Liberal?”*

- **Race and ethnicity have little bearing on political ideology.**
- **Most blacks, whites and Hispanics consider themselves to be politically moderate.**

Once respondents had described their view in accordance with this scale, they were, with their consent, assigned a number that represented their political views.

This question is about political ideology, or how a person would choose to characterize their political views, not about any political party affiliation they might have. It is possible to be a moderate Republican, or a conservative Democrat, for example.

Exhibit 10
Respondent placement on political view scale

	LR-blacks	OLR-blacks	LR-whites	OLR-whites	Hispanics
Conservative (1-2)	17%	22%	22%	25%	25%
Moderate (3-5)	47%	48%	58%	54%	43%
Liberal (6-7)	21%	17%	18%	12%	18%

Overall, no significant differences emerged between the groups; and, within each group there was no marked preference for one ideology over another.


The number of blacks, whites, and Hispanics who say they have a more conservative outlook (self-identifying as “extremely conservative” or “conservative”) is very similar to the numbers who place themselves in the more liberal categories (“liberal” or “extremely liberal”).

Between 17 and 22 percent of black respondents describe themselves as “extremely conservative” or “conservative”, along with 22 and 25 percent of whites and 25 percent of Hispanics. At the opposite end of the scale, 17 and 21 percent of blacks describe themselves as “liberal” or “extremely liberal”, along with 12 and 18 percent of whites and 18 percent of Hispanics.

Most respondents tend to place themselves in the more moderate categories. Forty-seven (47) to 48 percent of blacks identify as “slightly conservative”, “moderate” or “slightly liberal”, along with 54 to 58 percent of whites and 43 percent of Hispanics.

Opposition to President Obama: political or racial?

Race was a factor in media reports of President Obama’s run for president. Researchers examining the use of race in discussing President Obama during his campaign found that race was mentioned in about one-third of the editorials in seven major newspapers between February and April 2007 and during the three months prior to the 2008 presidential election. The researchers also found that leadership was mentioned in 44 percent of the coverage and that raising questions of leadership is a proxy for race evaluations. This survey sought to examine the role of race in post-election views of President Obama.

 *Thinking about opposition to Barack Obama’s policies, do you think that his race is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason people oppose Barack Obama’s policies?*

- **Blacks are significantly more likely to believe Obama’s race is a “major reason” than whites or Hispanics.**
- **Hispanics are significantly more likely to believe race is a “major reason” than whites.**
- **OLR-whites are significantly more likely to believe race is “not a reason” than any other group.**

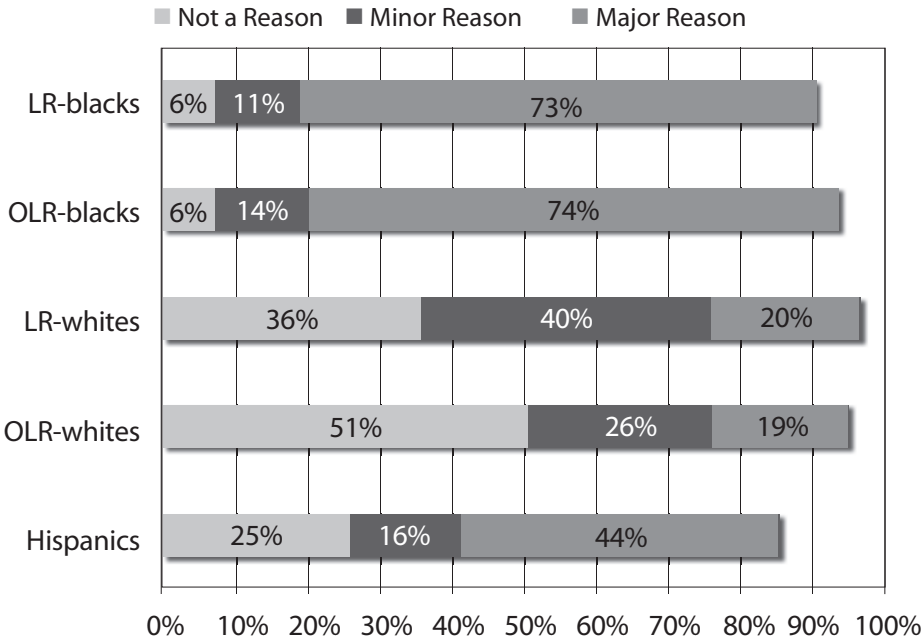
The opinions of blacks, whites, and Hispanics vary significantly in response to this question.

Nearly three-fourths of black respondents (73 and 74 percent) feel race is a “major reason” behind the opposition that Barack Obama has encountered during his presidency.

The percentage of Hispanics who cite race as a “major” factor is significantly lower, with less than one-half (44 percent) selecting this response. However, Hispanics are still significantly more inclined to hold this view than whites.

Only around 1 in 5 whites (19 and 20 percent) identify race as a “major reason” fueling opposition to the President’s policies. In fact, more than one-third of LR-whites (36 percent) believe race is “not a reason.” OLR-whites are even more likely to discount race as a factor. With more than one-half (51 percent) selecting this response, OLR-whites are significantly more likely to do so than LR-whites, blacks, and Hispanics.

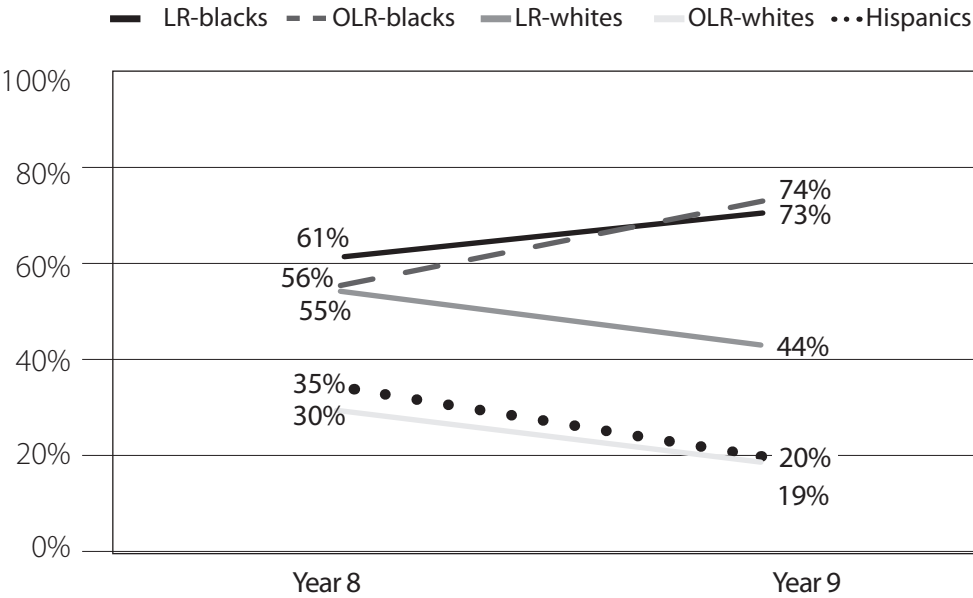
Exhibit 11
Race as reason for opposition to Barack Obama’s policies



This question was also asked in Year 8 of the survey, and, interestingly, far fewer blacks (56 and 61 percent) felt race was a “major reason” then than they do today. Conversely, in Year 8 whites and Hispanics were more likely to perceive racism as a “major” factor than they were this year, with between 30 and 35 percent of whites and 55 percent of Hispanics giving this response.

Generally speaking, attitudes tend to change very slowly over time, so to see such a variation in perceptions in the space of one year suggests that an unusually large attitudinal shift seems to have taken place concerning this question.

Exhibit 12
Change in respondents saying race is “major reason” for opposition (Year 8 – 9)



Political ideology, race, and perceptions of racism

The results from the previous two questions were combined to see if any correlations emerged between respondents’ political ideology and how likely they were to detect racially motivated opposition to President Obama’s policies. Does being a conservative, a moderate, or a liberal influence how likely an individual is to perceive racism?

- **Liberals are the group most likely to believe race is a “major reason.”**
- **Conservatives are the group most likely to say race is “not a reason.”**

The results indicate that liberals are significantly more likely to perceive a high degree of racism in this instance than moderates or conservatives.

Nearly two-thirds (61 percent) of those who identify as liberals feel that President Obama’s race was a “major reason” motivating opposition to his policies, compared to 46 percent of moderates and 43 percent of conservatives.

Conservatives are most likely to say race is “not a reason” at all, with 38 percent of conservatives selecting this response, a significantly higher figure than for moderates (at 26 percent) and for liberals (at 12 percent).

Differences can also be found if we consider the racial and ethnic composition of respondents in each of the three political ideology categories. Only responses from blacks and whites were used in this calculation, as the number of Hispanic responses would have been too small to gather representative results.

- **Blacks are most likely to be influenced by their race.**
- **Whites are most likely to be influenced by their political ideology.**

Regardless of their political viewpoints, black respondents overwhelmingly find race a “major factor” behind negative criticism of President Obama’s presidency. Eighty-two (82) percent of black conservatives, 79 percent of black moderates, and 79 percent of black liberals answer in this way, indicating that for black respondents, race is more of a determining factor than political perspective when assessing opposition to the President’s policies.

White respondents, however, are more influenced by their ideology than their race. Forty-two (42) percent of white liberals say race is a “major factor,” compared to 20 percent of white moderates, and only seven (7) percent of white conservatives. White conservatives are the group most likely to say race is “not a reason” at 71 percent.

Exhibit 13
Perceptions of race as reason for opposition by political viewpoint

	Black Conservatives	Black Moderates	Black Liberals	White Conservatives	White Moderates	White Liberals
Major Reason	82%	79%	79%	7%	20%	42%
Minor Reason	11%	15%	14%	22%	37%	44%
Not a Reason	6%	6%	7%	71%	41%	14%

Racial Resentment


Over the last few decades, research into the negative racial attitudes of some whites towards blacks has branched out from what might be referred to as more “traditional” forms of racism. Traditionally, racist and discriminatory views were seen as the byproduct of a misguided belief that race was a biological rather than a social construct, and that blacks were inherently inferior to whites. Credible scientific studies demonstrated the lack of merit in this biological inferiority argument.

For some, this idea still holds traction, despite the strong scientific evidence. In more recent years, however, researchers have identified other insidious forms of racism that are less blatant than the biological inferiority arguments, including unconscious racism, implicit bias, and structural racism.

Research has found that blacks and Hispanics are most often discriminated against, for example in employment, not based on a conscious statement that they are not good enough for employment but on the basis of less blatant views. Since this disparity cannot be attributed to conscious racism, some whites resent attempts to decrease these disparities through state and private programs such as Affirmative Action. They express the view that policies of this kind are unfair, giving blacks an undue advantage to the detriment of whites. To these whites, racism is a thing of the past and should no longer be used to support any special considerations. These beliefs can lead to what has been described as “racial resentment.”

Some media critics, in reviewing media coverage, suggest that media may have encouraged racial resentment by minimizing the need for continuing efforts to decrease disparities by consistent use of terms such as racial preference and framing the issue as a threat to whites’ status.

The next set of questions sought to find out to what extent whites and Hispanics in Pulaski County are influenced by these kinds of assumptions.




I resent any special considerations that blacks receive because it’s unfair to other Americans.

- **Opinions are split on issues of special considerations for blacks.**

Opinions of whites and Hispanics are fairly evenly divided between those who said they “agree” or “strongly agree” that special considerations for blacks are unfair, and those who “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”

One-half of LR-whites (50 percent) do not agree that ideologies and policies that specifically benefit blacks are unfair to other Americans. OLR-whites are significantly less inclined to disagree that ideologies and policies that specifically benefit blacks are unfair to other Americans (37 percent).

Hispanics hold similar views to OLR-whites, with 37 percent saying they “disagree” or “strongly disagree” with this statement.



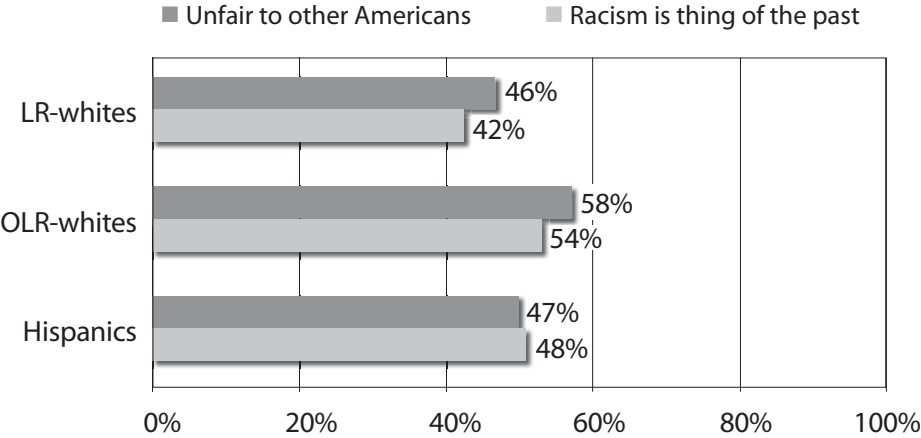
Blacks do not need any special consideration because racism is a thing of the past.

- **The findings for this question break out in a similar way to the previous one.**

LR-whites are the group least likely to say they “agree” or “strongly agree” with the idea that racism is a thing of the past, with 42 percent selecting this response.

Again, the opinions of OLR-whites and those of Hispanics are more in alignment – with only 48 and 54 percent of both groups agreeing or “strongly” agreeing that racism is a past issue and blacks should not merit any special considerations.

Exhibit 14
Percentages agreeing with statements regarding special considerations for blacks



 *For Blacks to succeed they need to stop using racism and slavery as excuses.*

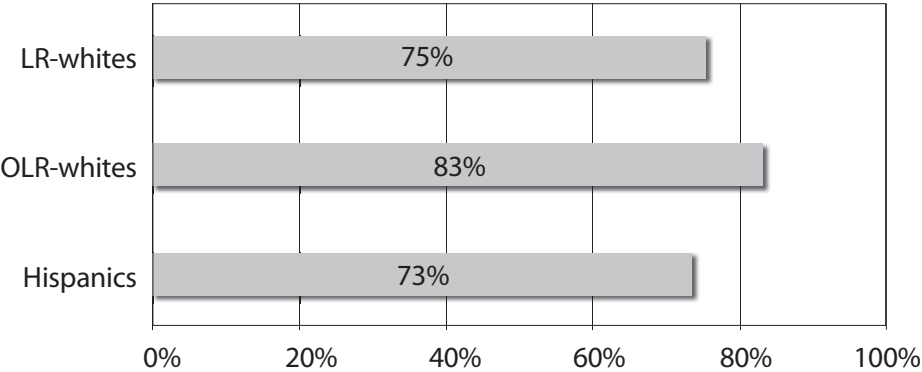
- **Around three-quarters of whites and Hispanics say blacks should “stop using racism and slavery as excuses.”**

Whites and Hispanics are more likely to agree with this statement than they are the previous ones, by a wide margin. Although sizable shares of whites and Hispanics believe racism is not a thing of the past, large majorities agree that blacks should stop using racism and slavery as “excuses” to account for any disparities in their socio-economic status.

The attitudinal gap between LR-whites and OLR-whites that exists in previous findings is narrowed here, with 75 percent of LR-whites and 83 percent of OLR-whites saying they “agree” or “strongly agree” with this particular statement.

Hispanics are also far more apt to agree with this statement than the previous ones, at 73 percent.

Exhibit 15
Percentages agreeing blacks “need to stop using racism and slavery as excuses”



Conclusion

The Racial Attitudes Survey in Pulaski County continues to reveal that people of color and whites differ in their attitudes toward important aspects of life. The Year 9 survey also revealed that, although there were some differences among the groups in terms of media preferences and news topic preference, the digital divide is not a problem among our respondents. It is important to note an interesting finding that Hispanics tended to trust all news sources more than did whites or blacks. Yet this survey also reveals that, on a number of questions, particularly about the treatment of blacks, whites and Hispanics were more in agreement than disagreement.

When compared with national black survey responders, blacks in Pulaski County were more or less in agreement on most of the questions where a comparison could be drawn. However, the responses of Hispanics in Pulaski County on most questions where there was a national survey for comparison differed more often than not from those of the national Hispanic responders. Pulaski County Hispanics’ responses, for example, to questions concerning their treatment in Arkansas reflected better treatment than that described by the national Hispanic responders.

There are some questions that suggest a need for follow-up to understand the meaning of the responses. For example, what reasons do blacks have for the view that whites are treated unfairly in Pulaski County? Also, although 30 to 40 percent of whites and Hispanics expressed the view that blacks are discriminated against, why do more than three-fourths of responders in these same groups indicate that blacks should stop using slavery and racism as an excuse for their status in Pulaski County?

For the UALR Institute on Race and Ethnicity, the most important response in the Year 9 survey was that more than half of whites, blacks, and Hispanics agree that an open dialogue on race will help bring the races together.

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Data Analysis and Demographics

The data were weighted in order to bring the sample representations in line with the actual population proportions in Pulaski County. The data were weighted for age and gender for each of five geo-racial groups. The 2008-2010 American Community Survey, 3-year estimates provided the sample estimates that formed the basis for weighting. There were 7 age groups: 18 to 29 years of age, 30 to 34, 35 to 44, 45 to 54, 55 to 64, 65 to 74 and 75 +. This resulted in a total of 70 weighted groups (7 age groups x 2 gender categories x 5 geo-racial groups). Weighting values ranged from 0.26 for black women age 65-74 years old living outside the city limits of Little Rock to 9.65 for white men aged 18 to 29 living outside the city limits of Little Rock.

The tables display the basic demographic characteristics of each geo-racial group. The tables show the sample breakdown for the following variables: age, gender, marital status, education, children in the household, employment status and income.

A1: Age

	LR-blacks	LR-whites	OLR-blacks	OLR-whites	Hispanics
18-29	28%	21%	27%	19%	46%
30-34	10%	9%	12%	8%	14%
35-44	19%	16%	20%	17%	21%
45-54	19%	17%	20%	20%	9%
55-64	14%	16%	12%	18%	5%
65-74	6%	10%	5%	10%	2%
75+	4%	10%	3%	9%	1%

A2: Gender

	LR-blacks	LR-whites	OLR-blacks	OLR-whites	Hispanics
Male	43%	48%	43%	48%	59%
Female	57%	52%	57%	52%	41%

A3: Marital Status

	LR-blacks	LR-whites	OLR-blacks	OLR-whites	Hispanics
Married	35%	52%	27%	53%	40%
Divorced	17%	11%	12%	13%	3%
Widowed	8%	9%	10%	8%	2%
Separated	4%	1%	6%	4%	9%
Never been married	4%	1%	6%	4%	9%
A member of an unmarried couple	5%	4%	4%	4%	21%

A4: Education

	LR-blacks	LR-whites	OLR-blacks	OLR-whites	Hispanics
Grades 0-8	1%	0%	2%	3%	24%
High School Incomplete	4%	1%	5%	2%	9%
High School Graduate	8%	9%	10%	8%	2%
Assoc. degree, technical, trade, or business after H.S.	11%	6%	6%	8%	3%
College Incomplete	25%	17%	28%	23%	21%
College Graduate or more	29%	62%	26%	38%	18%

A5: Children in Household

	LR-blacks	LR-whites	OLR-blacks	OLR-whites	Hispanics
None	51%	70%	56%	68%	35%
1 child	21%	15%	14%	13%	14%
2 children	11%	9%	16%	10%	31%
3 children	8%	5%	8%	6%	11%
4 or more children	8%	1%	5%	3%	9%

A6: Employment Status

	LR-blacks	LR-whites	OLR-blacks	OLR-whites	Hispanics
Employed for wages full or part time)	61%	53%	58%	53%	64%
Self-employed	4%	10%	5%	10%	13%
Out of work for more than 1 year	6%	2%	4%	2%	3%
Out of work for less than 1 year	4%	3%	1%	2%	5%
Homemaker (not employed)	1%	5%	3%	4%	9%
Student (not employed)	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Retired	12%	20%	13%	19%	2%
Unable to work	7%	7%	14%	7%	2%

A7: Income

	LR-blacks	LR-whites	OLR-blacks	OLR-whites	Hispanics
Less than 10,000	4%	1%	6%	3%	5%
10-15,000	6%	2%	7%	3%	4%
15-20,000	7%	3%	10%	5%	12%
20-25,000	13%	9%	14%	13%	33%
25-35,000	16%	11%	15%	10%	16%
35-50,000	24%	14%	20%	14%	11%
50-75,000	13%	15%	18%	18%	6%
75-100,000	10%	16%	5%	15%	7%
More than 100,000	6%	28%	6%	19%	5%

All Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County reports
can be found at: ualr.edu/race-ethnicity.



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