

COVID-19 Coping and Anxiety Survey Findings in Black and Latinx Communities

Prepared by the Howard Initiative on Public Opinion in the Graduate School & the Ronald Walters Leadership and Public Policy Center at Howard University

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**Howard Initiative
on Public Opinion**



Executive Summary

Introduction

This report is the second in a series focused on findings from a national poll of Black and Latinx adults over the age of 18 on issues related to the impacts of COVID-19. Led by a team of interdisciplinary scholars, the Howard University Initiative on Public Opinion (HIPO) conducted the poll at a time when many states were shut down, many workers were furloughed and many individuals were deciding how to adapt to a new 'normal'. This report highlights the emotional impacts and behavioral responses to stress derived from the pandemic's effects on Black and Latinx populations.

Methodology

It is important to note that this survey's focus on the African American and Latinx community makes it unique. The large sample collected on these populations allows for an assessment of variations within and between the race and ethnic categories. The survey contained scales that measured anxiety levels, coping strategies, and response to uncertainty.

A total of 1,654 completed surveys were collected during two weeks in June 2020. The data were primarily collected online through Qualtrics (Provo, UT), which used a series of techniques to capture online audiences for survey distribution (N=1,500). Additional data were collected online by HIPO (N=154). The data used in this report focuses solely on respondents who identified as African American/Black and non-Black Latinx (N= 1307).

The Sample

Individuals who characterized themselves as African Americans represented 51.9% of the sample (n=858) while individuals who characterized themselves as Latinx comprised 47.2% of the sample (n=771). Significantly, 19.5% of the sample characterized themselves as both Black and Latino (n=322). Most of the sample were women, with the majority falling within the age group of 18 and 45 (82.6%); 18 and 35 (67.6%); 18 and 24 (37.6%).

Executive Summary

Key Findings

The findings reveal several interesting similarities and differences between Black, Afro-Latinx, and Latinx (non-Black) respondents. There were relatively no differences between the racial and ethnic groups as it related to the significant concerns brought on by the pandemic. All of the respondents noted that their primary concerns were family and friends' well-being, personal health risk, and job security. Among the financial matters, the ability to pay for food/groceries, cover household bills, and pay for the rent/mortgage were the top three.

Because the pandemic constitutes a time of great uncertainty, respondents were asked questions regarding the degree to which they are comfortable with ambiguity. More specifically, the survey included a measure for the need closure that assesses the degree to which people desire to have an answer to a question to end tribulation even if the answer is incorrect. Among the respondents, 48.1% of Blacks (n=256) had a high need for closure, compared to 53.1% of Afro-Latinx (n=171) or 46.3% of Latinx (n=208).

In an effort to discern how they were dealing with the pandemic's negative impacts, respondents were asked about the coping practices they have employed. All of the racial/ethnic groups reported a high to medium reliance on acceptance as a coping practice at close to the same rates. However, when compared to other groups, a higher percentage of Blacks reported a high to medium use of religion as a coping mechanism and a greater proportion of Afro-Latinx respondents reported a high to medium use of reframing as a coping method.

The survey also measured anxiety levels of respondents. 47.7% percent of Blacks (n=250) had high levels of anxiety compared to 50.9% of Latinx (n=164) and 44.5% of Latinx (n=200).



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General Demographics

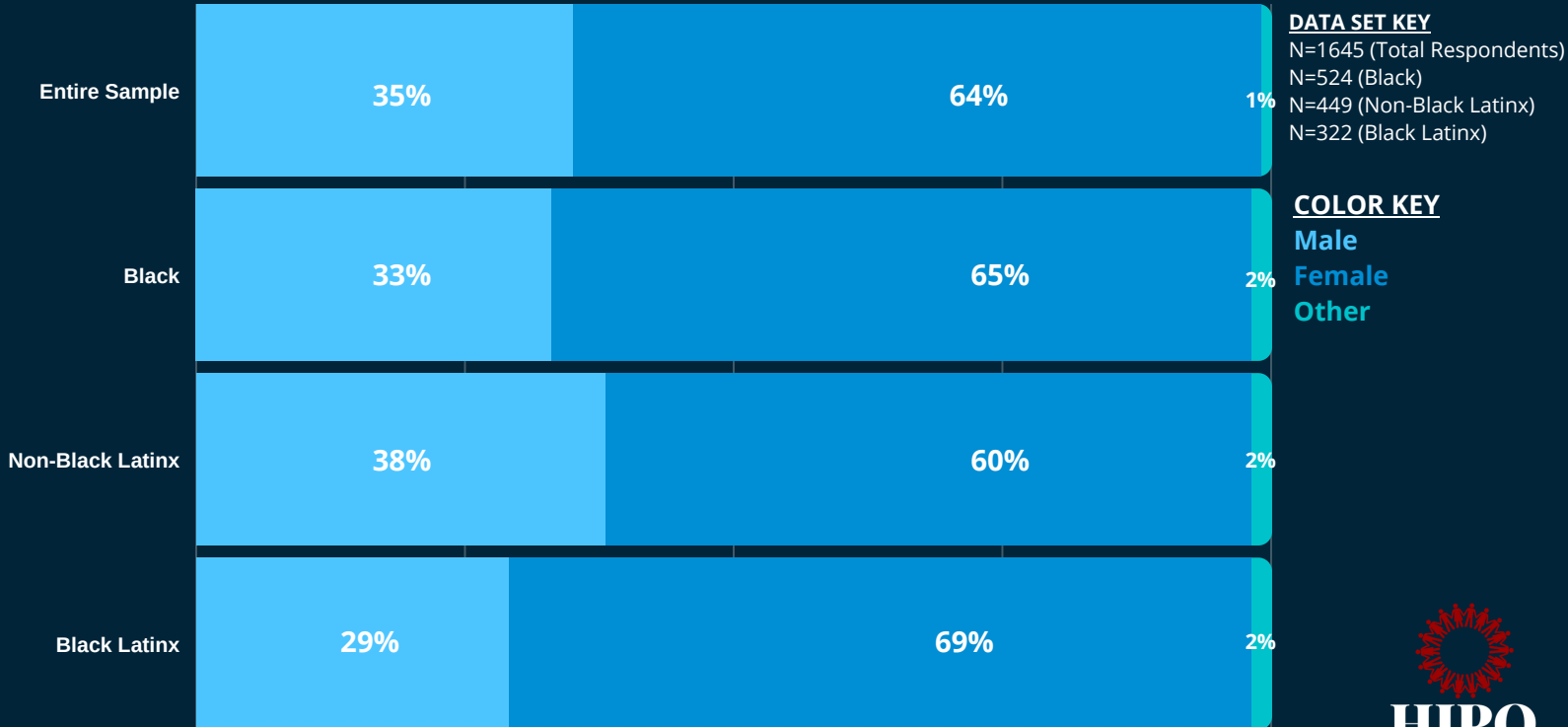


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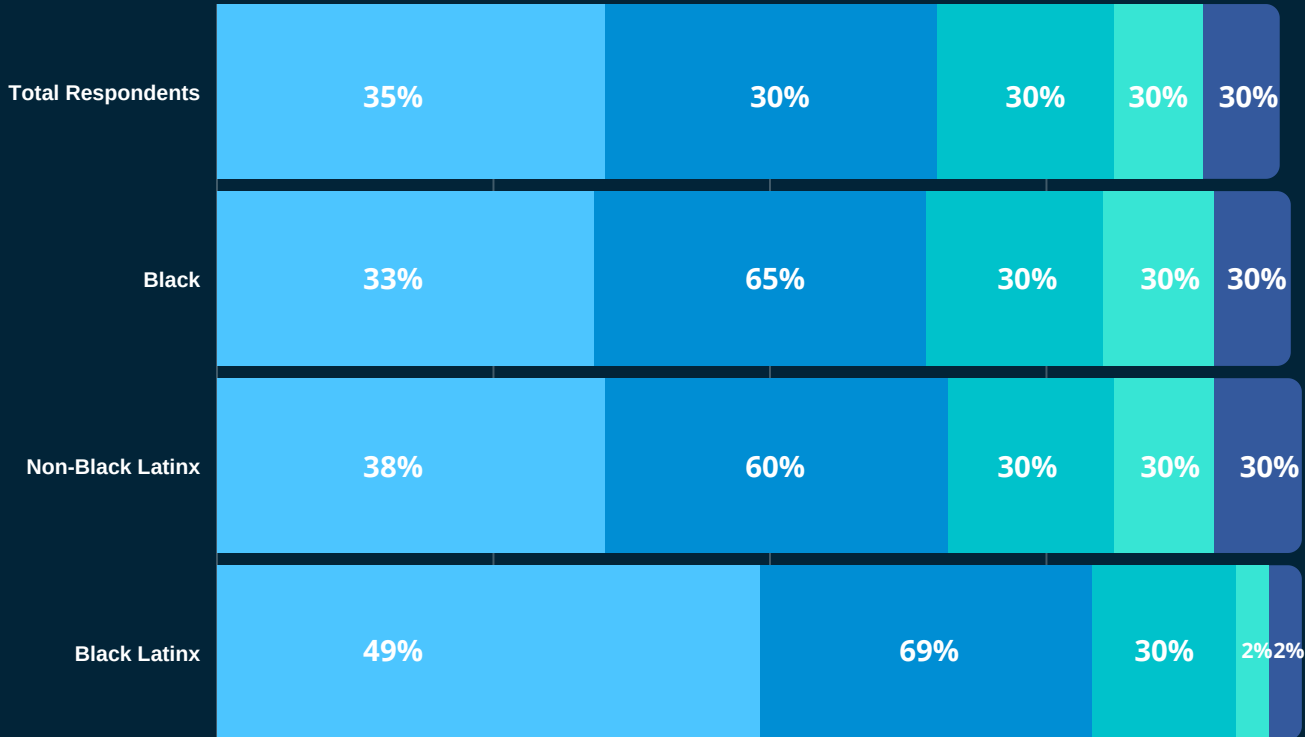
Gender

64% of total respondents are female.



Age

*35% of total respondents are between the ages of 18-24 and
30% are between the ages of 25-35.*



DATA SET KEY

N=1645 (Total Resondents)

N=524 (Black)

N=449 (Non-Black Latinx)

N=322 (Black Latinx)

COLOR KEY

18-24

25-35

36-45

46-55

56-65

AGES 66 & UP

Entire Sample:- 4%

Black: 3%

Non-Black Latinx: 2%

Black Latinx: 2%



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Income Levels

40% of total respondents have an annual income of no more than \$29,999.

DATA SET KEY

N=1645 (Total Respondents)

N=524 (Black)

N=449 (Non-Black Latinx)

N=322 (Black Latinx)

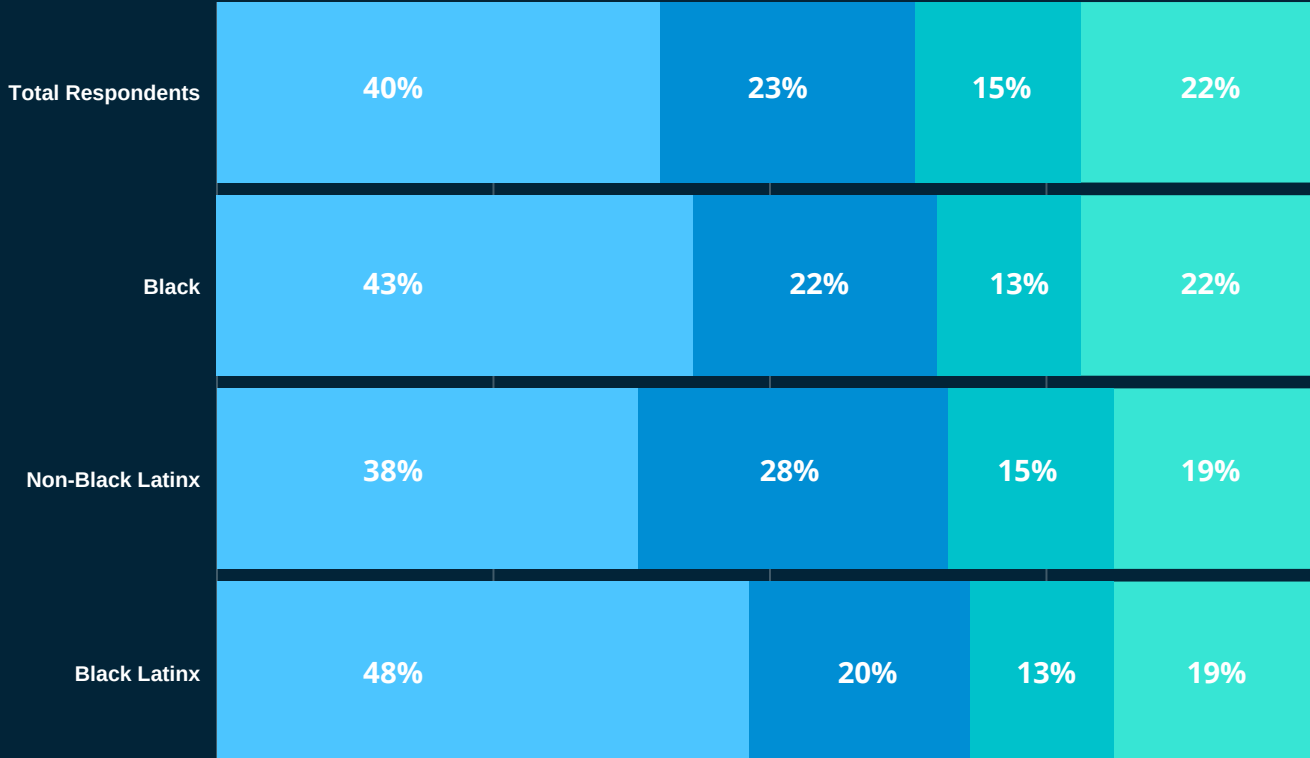
COLOR KEY

\$0-\$29,999

\$30,000-\$59,999

\$60,000-\$89,999

\$90,000 and up



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Major Concerns and Worries

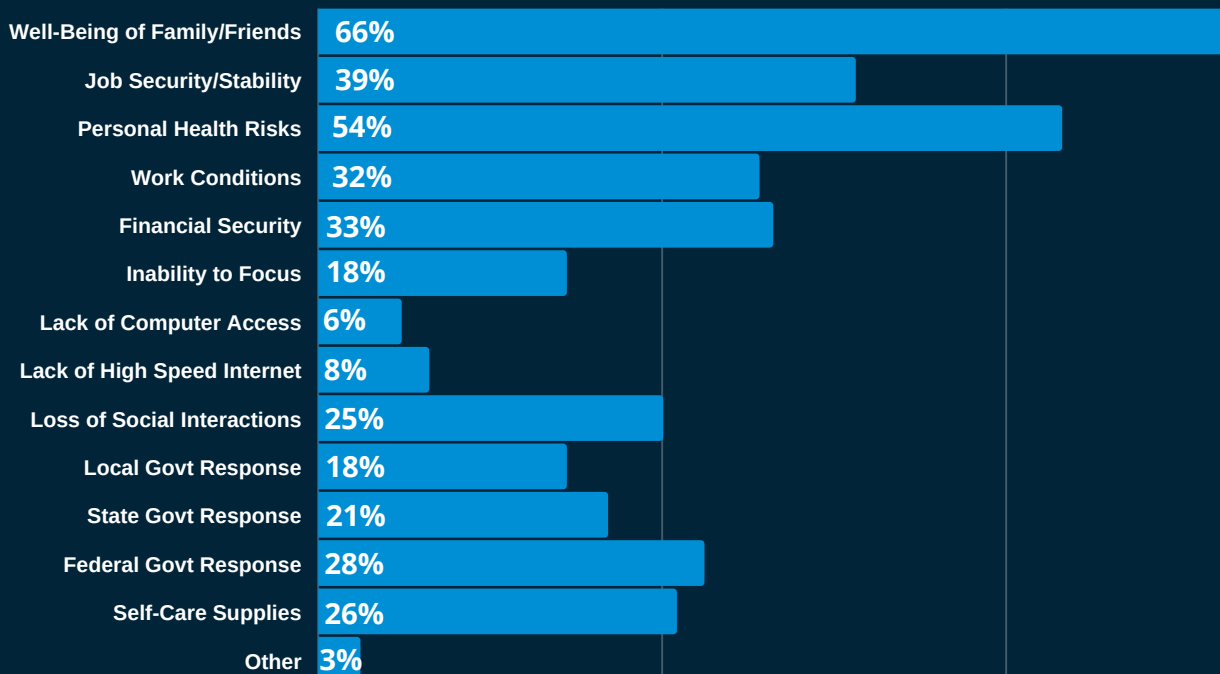


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Major Concerns Since Onset of Pandemic: Black Respondents

Black Americans indicated that their major concerns since the onset of COVID-19 were well being of friends and family and personal health.



DATA SET

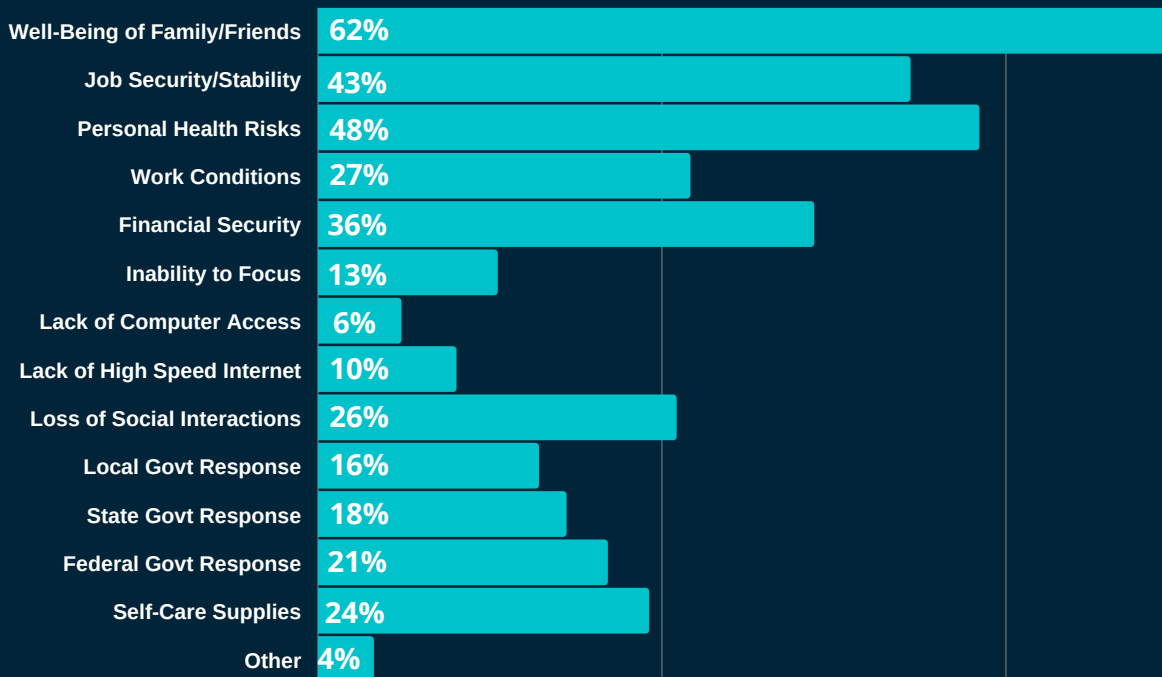
N=524



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Major Concerns Since Onset of Pandemic Non-Black Latinx Respondents

Non-Black Latinx Americans indicated that their major concerns since the onset of COVID-19 were well being of friends and family and personal health.



DATA SET

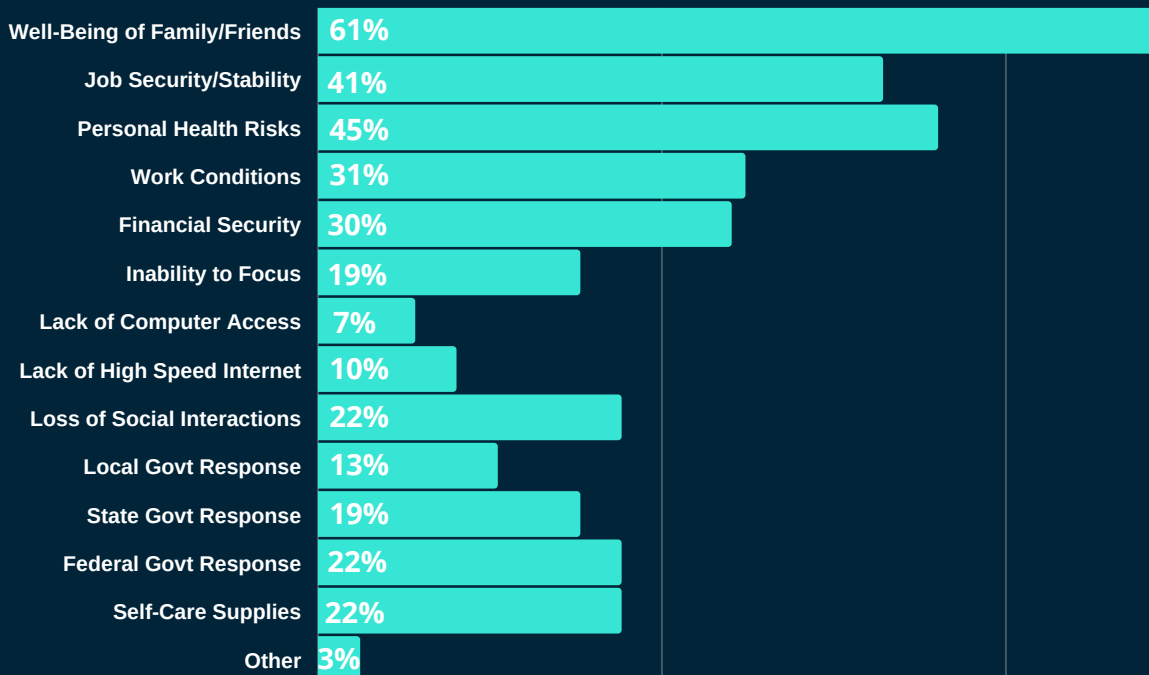
N=449



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Major Concerns Since Onset of Pandemic Black Latinx Respondents

Black Latinx Americans indicated that their major concerns since the onset of COVID-19 were well being of friends and family and personal health.



DATA SET

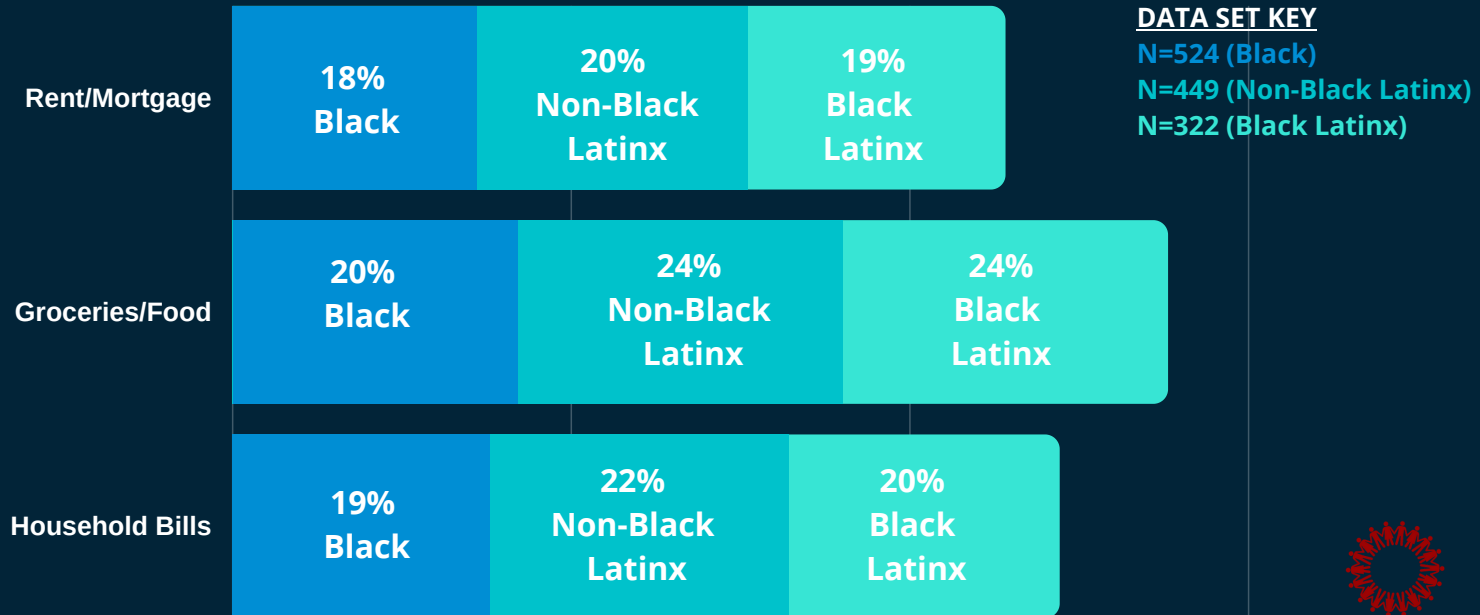
N=322



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Top Three Financial Causes of Worry

Top three financial causes of worry for Black and non-Black Latinx are rent/mortgage, groceries/food, and household bills.



Health Conditions: Closure and Anxiety

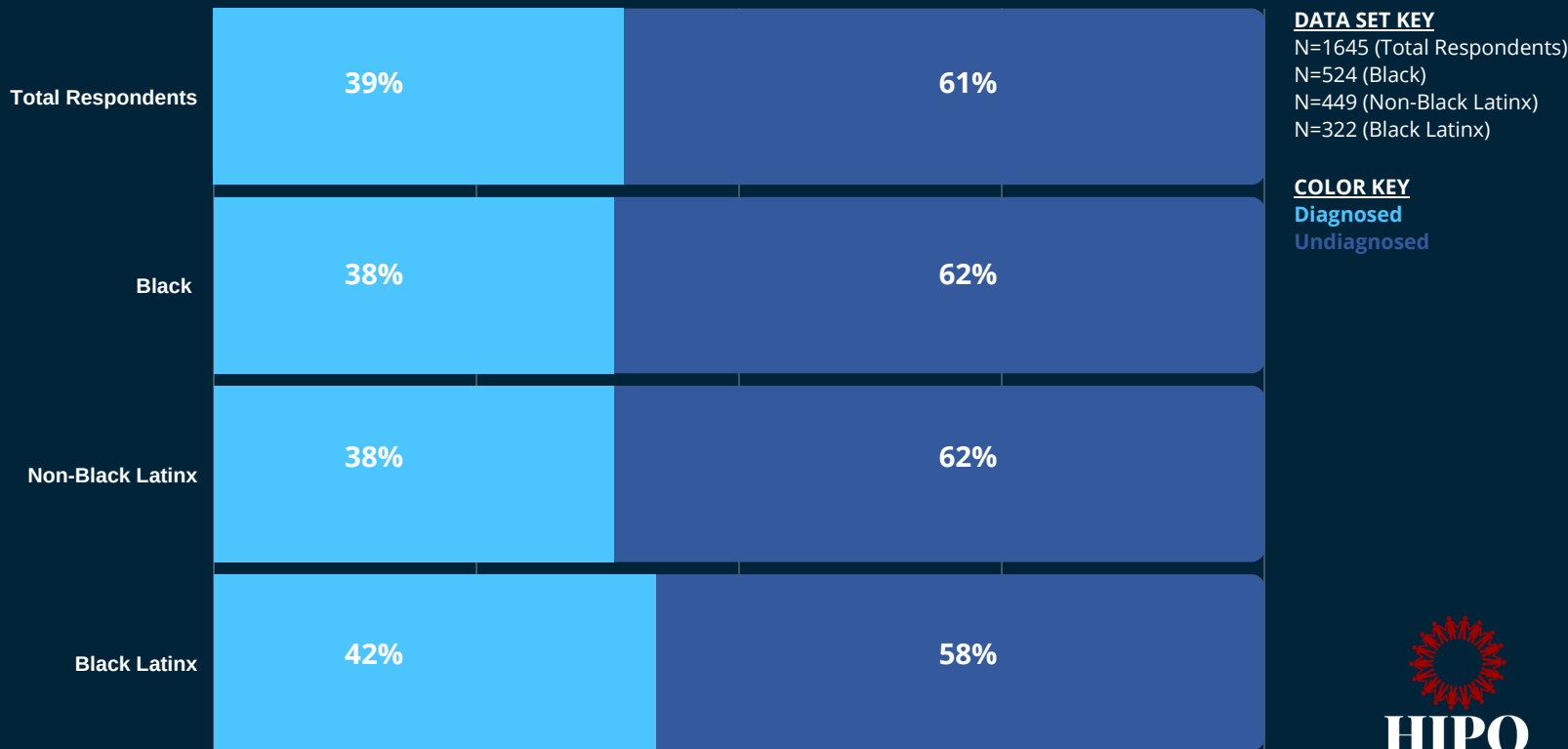


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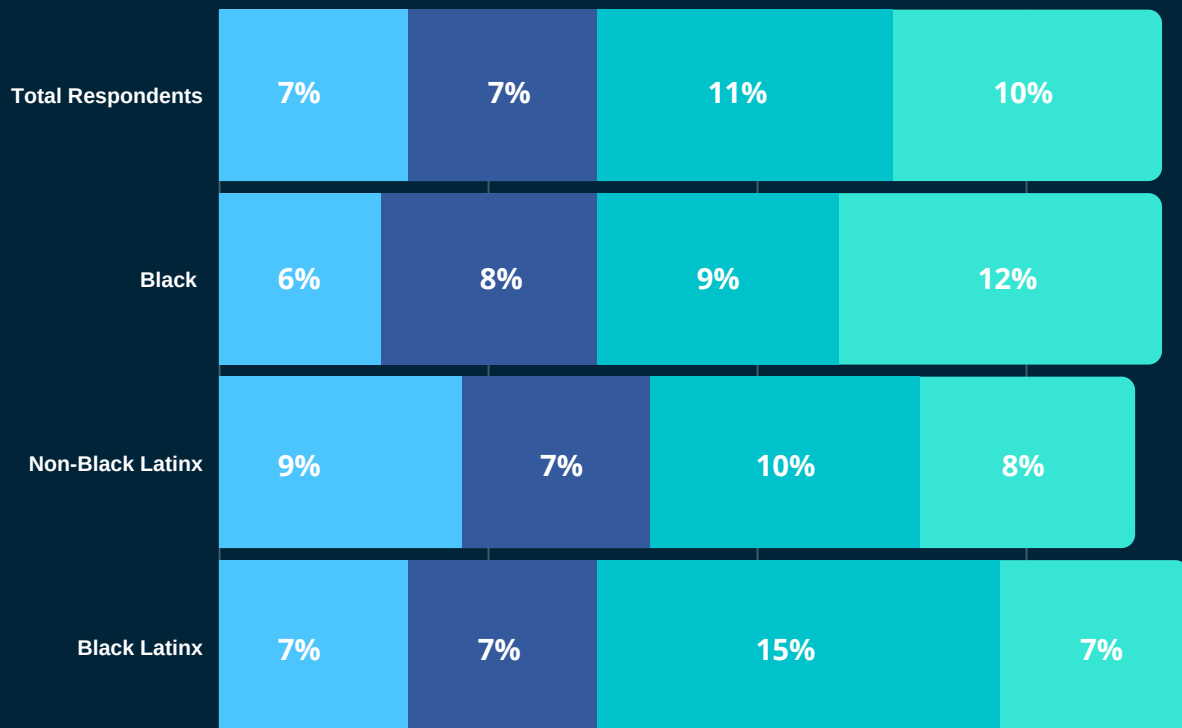
Pre-Existing Condition Diagnosis

There is a greater than expected prevalence of pre-existing conditions among Black (38%), Non-Black Latinx (38%) and Black Latinx (42%) respondents.



Top Four Pre-Existing Health Conditions

Depression diagnosis is more prevalent among non-Black Latinx (10%) and Black Latinx (15%) respondents while high blood pressure diagnosis is more prevalent among Black respondents (12%).



DATA SET KEY

N=1645 (Total Respondents)

N=524 (Black)

N=449 (Non-Black Latinx)

N=322 (Black Latinx)

COLOR KEY

Heart Disease

Diabetes

Depression

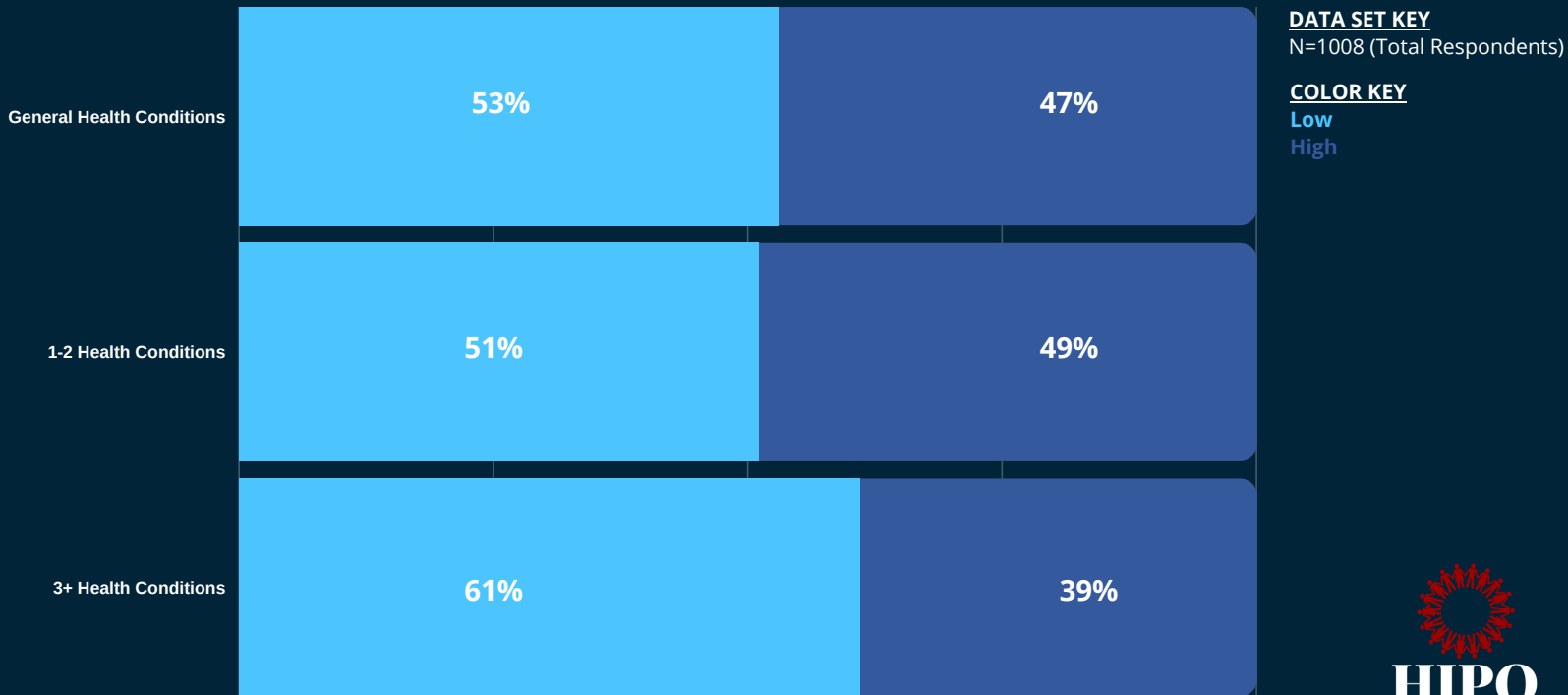
Hypertension/HBP



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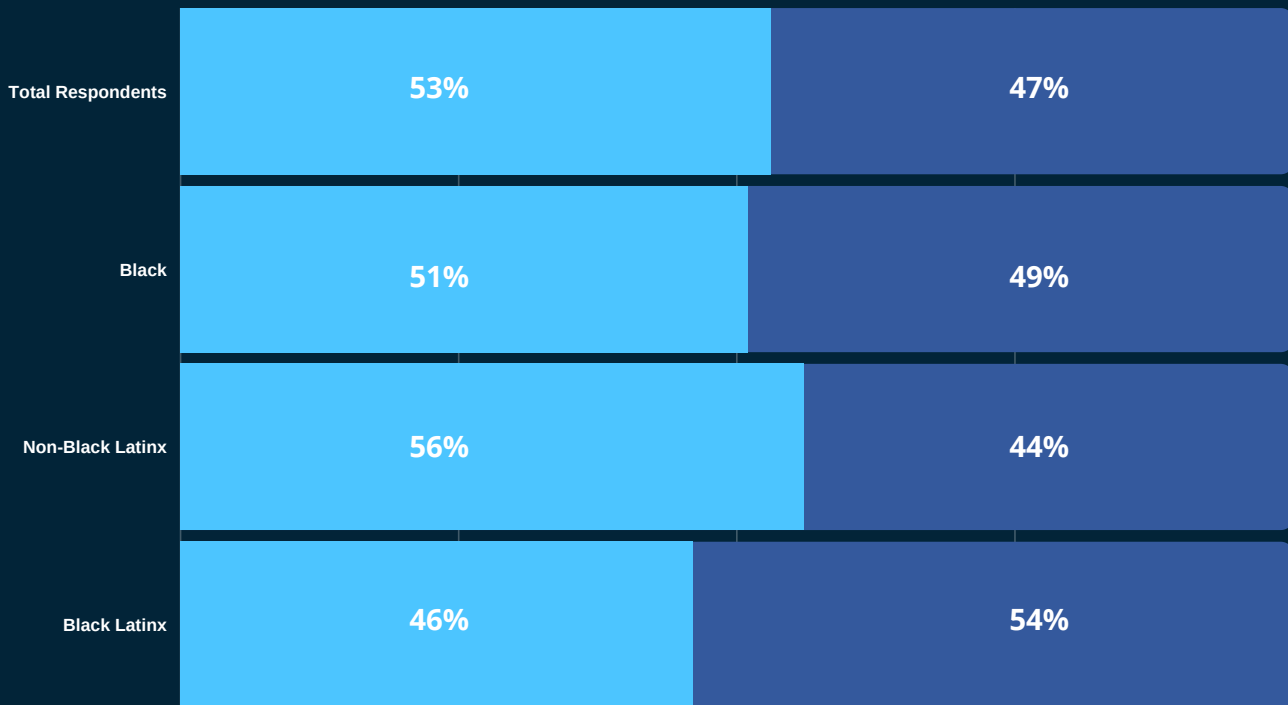
Need for Closure Overview: Total Respondents

61% of total respondents who indicated they have 3 or more health conditions have a lower need for closure.



Need for Closure: General Health Conditions

Black (51%) and non-Black Latinx (56%) respondents who have been diagnosed with health conditions indicated they have low need for closure; Black Latinx (54%) respondents indicated a high need for closure.



DATA SET KEY

N=1008 (Total Respondents)

N=326 (Black)

N=279 (Non-Black Latinx)

N=188 (Black Latinx)

COLOR KEY

Low

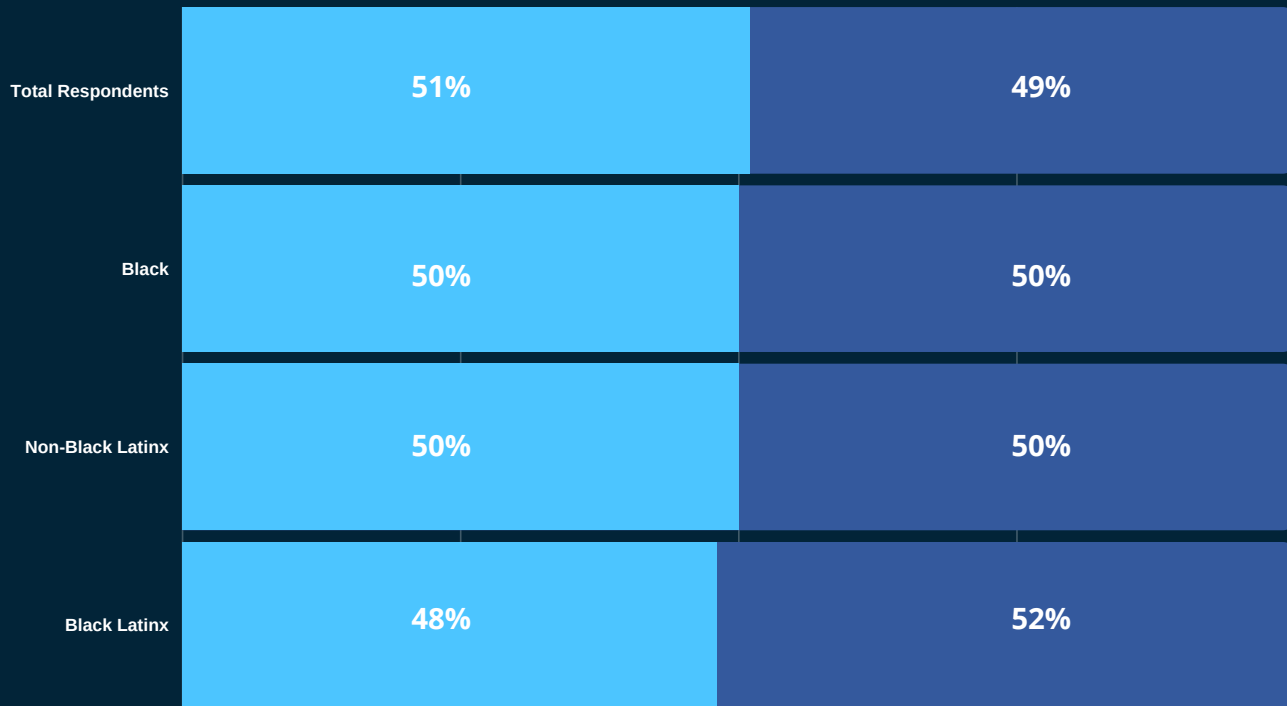
High



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Need for Closure: 1-2 Health Conditions

Total respondents (51%) with 1-2 health conditions have a low need for closure: Black (50%), non-Black Latinx (50%), Black Latinx (48%)



DATA SET KEY

N=522 (Total Respondents)

N=172 (Black)

N=137 (Non-Black Latinx)

N=111 (Black Latinx)

COLOR KEY

Low

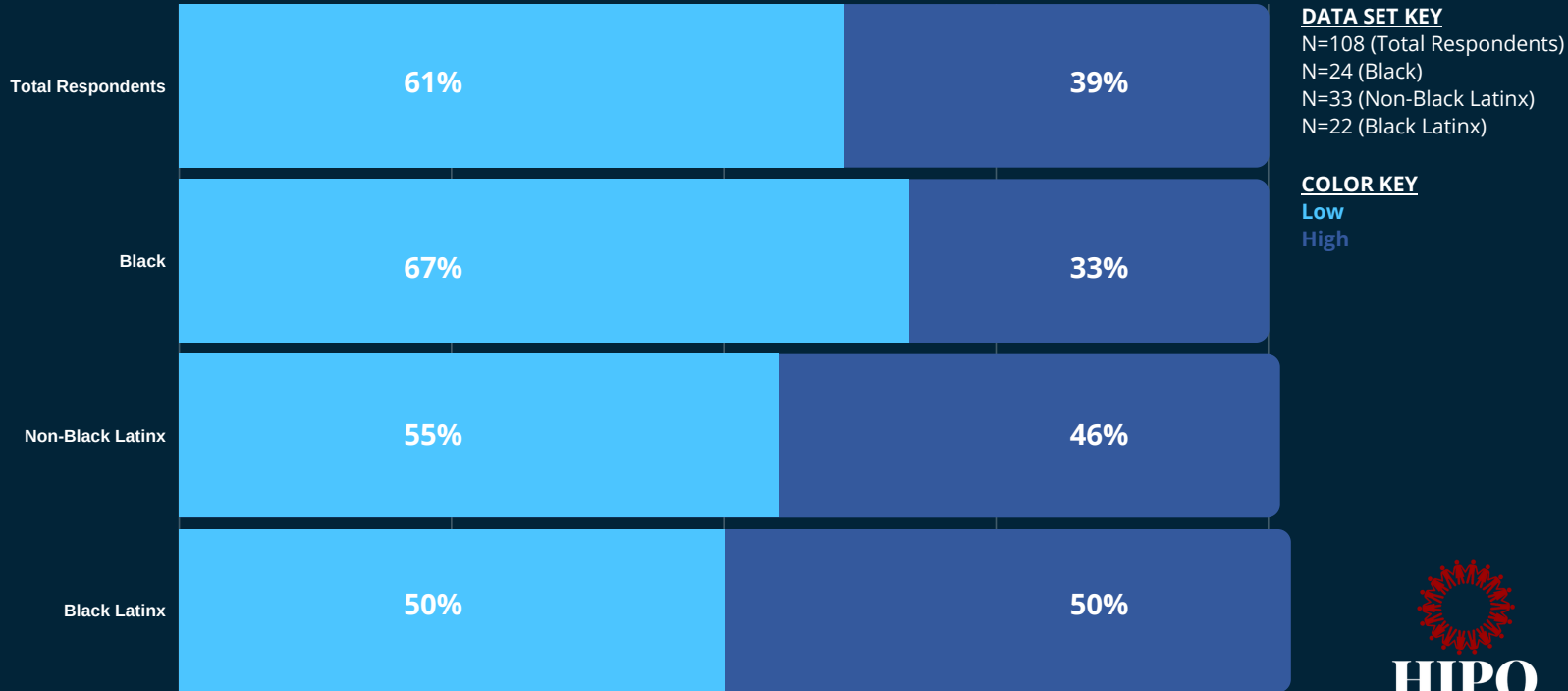
High



HIPO

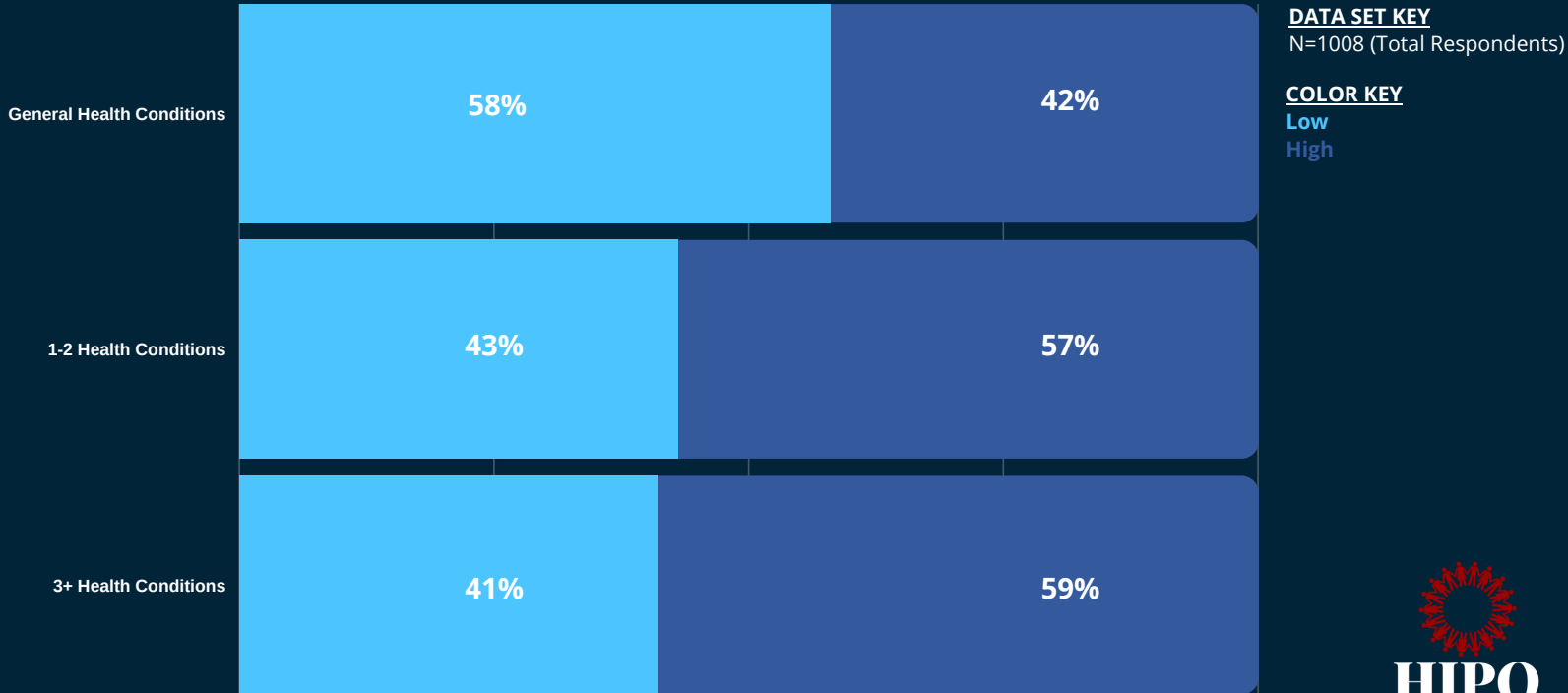
Need for Closure: 3 or more Health Conditions

Total respondents (61%) with 3 or more health conditions have a low need for closure: Black (67%), non-Black Latinx (55%), Black Latinx (50%)



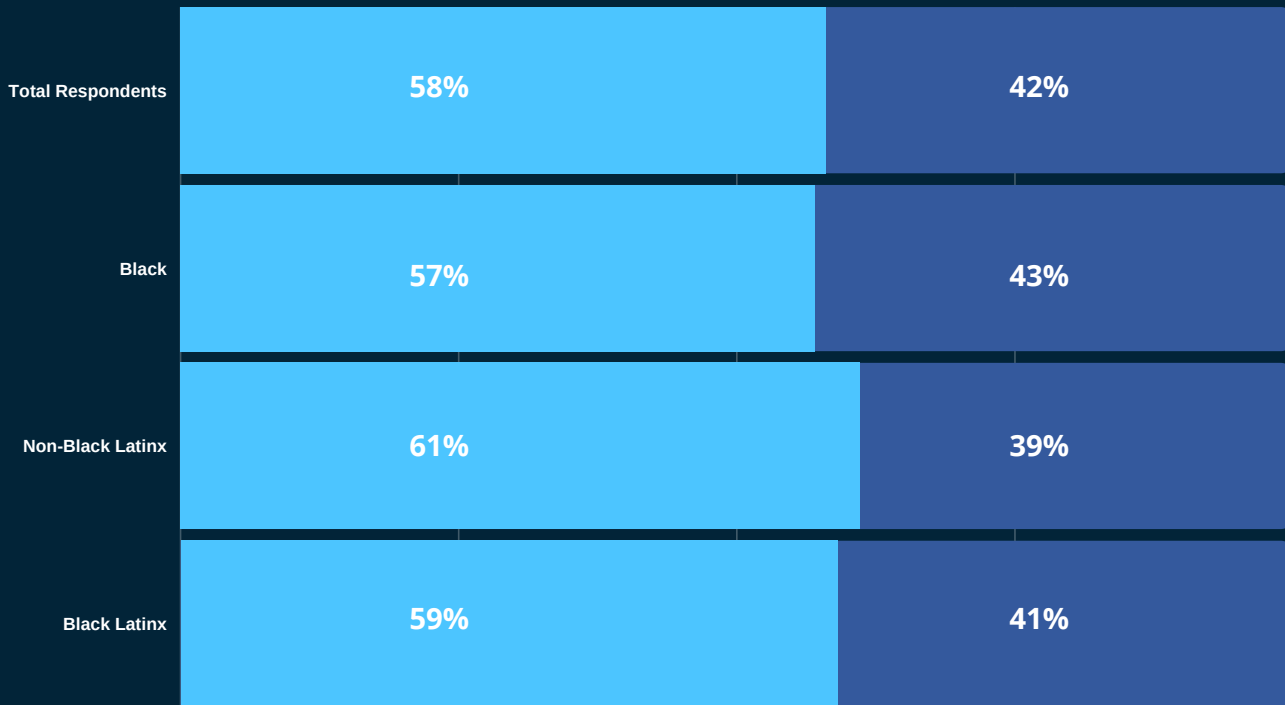
Anxiety Levels Overview: Total Respondents

58% total respondents with general health conditions experience anxiety at lower levels; 57% total respondents with 1-2 health conditions and 59% total respondents with 3+ health conditions experience anxiety in higher levels.



Anxiety Levels: General Health Conditions

Total respondents (58%) with general health conditions have low anxiety levels: Black (57%), non-Black Latinx (61%), Black Latinx (59%)



DATA SET KEY

N=1008 (Total Respondents)

N=326 (Black)

N=279 (Non-Black Latinx)

N=188 (Black Latinx)

COLOR KEY

Low

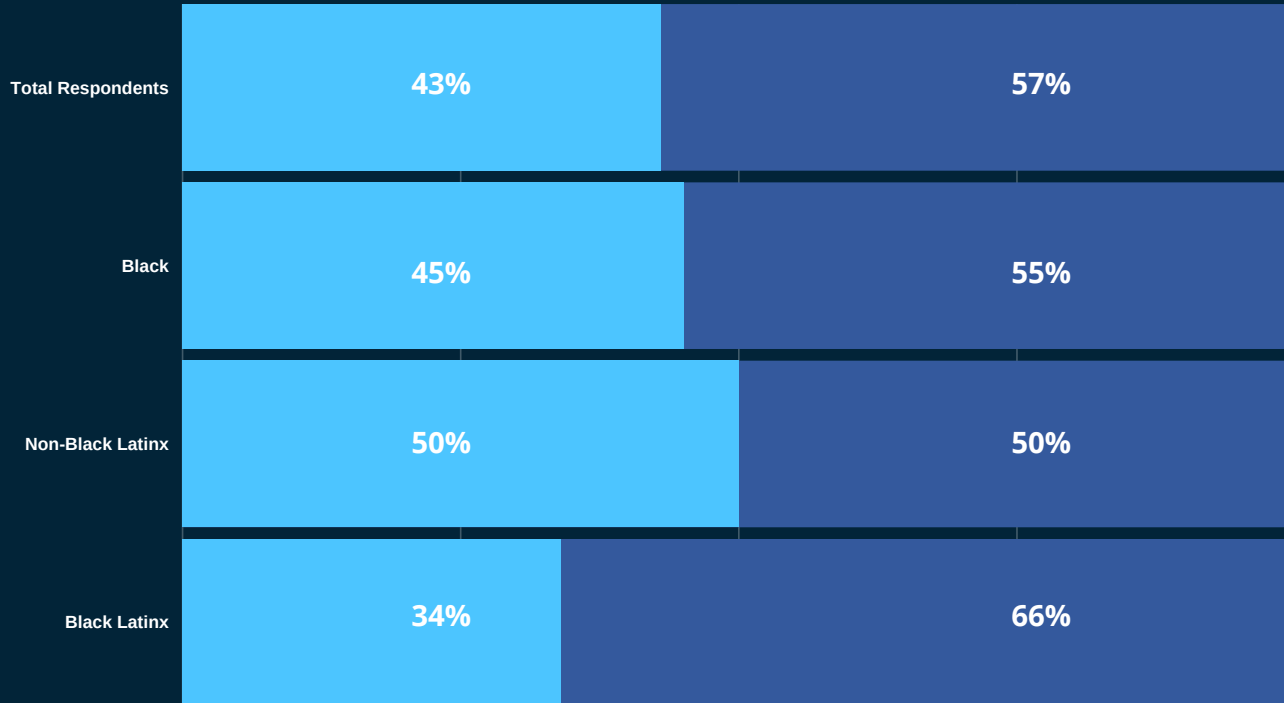
High



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Anxiety Levels: 1-2 Health Conditions

*Total respondents (57%) with 1-2 health conditions have high anxiety levels:
Black (55%), non-Black Latinx (50%), Black Latinx (66%)*



DATA SET KEY

N=522 (Total Respondents)

N=172 (Black)

N=137 (Non-Black Latinx)

N=111 (Black Latinx)

COLOR KEY

Low

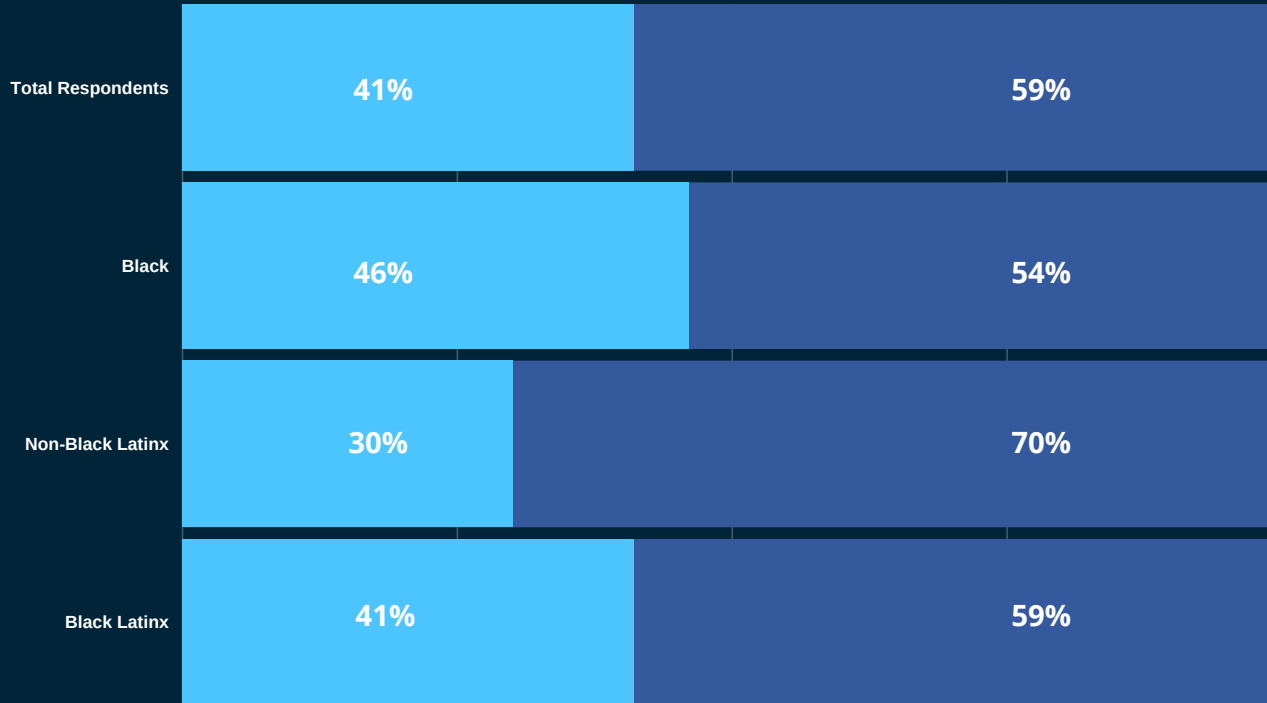
High



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Anxiety Levels: 3 or more Health Conditions

Total respondents (59%) with 3 or more health conditions have high anxiety levels: Black (54%), non-Black Latinx (70%), Black Latinx (59%)



DATA SET KEY

N=108 (Total Respondents)

N=24 (Black)

N=33 (Non-Black Latinx)

N=22 (Black Latinx)

COLOR KEY

Low

High



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Coping Strategies

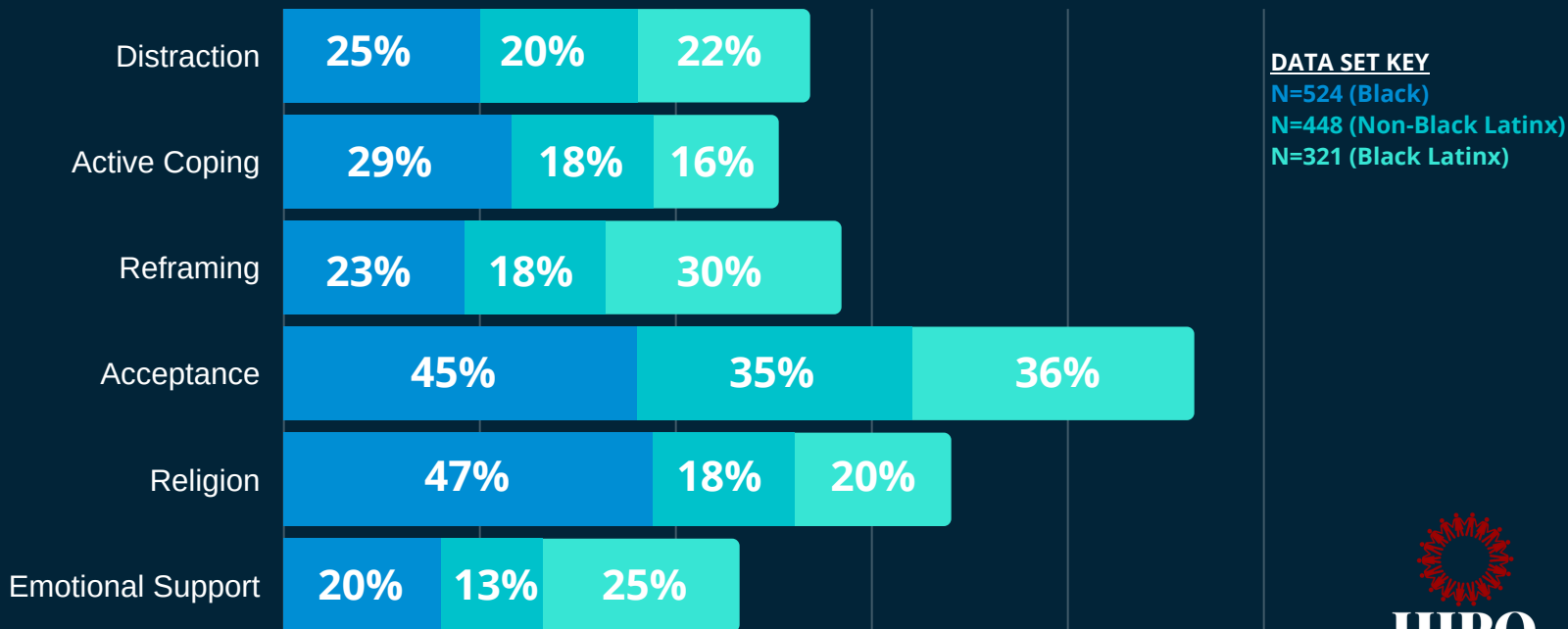


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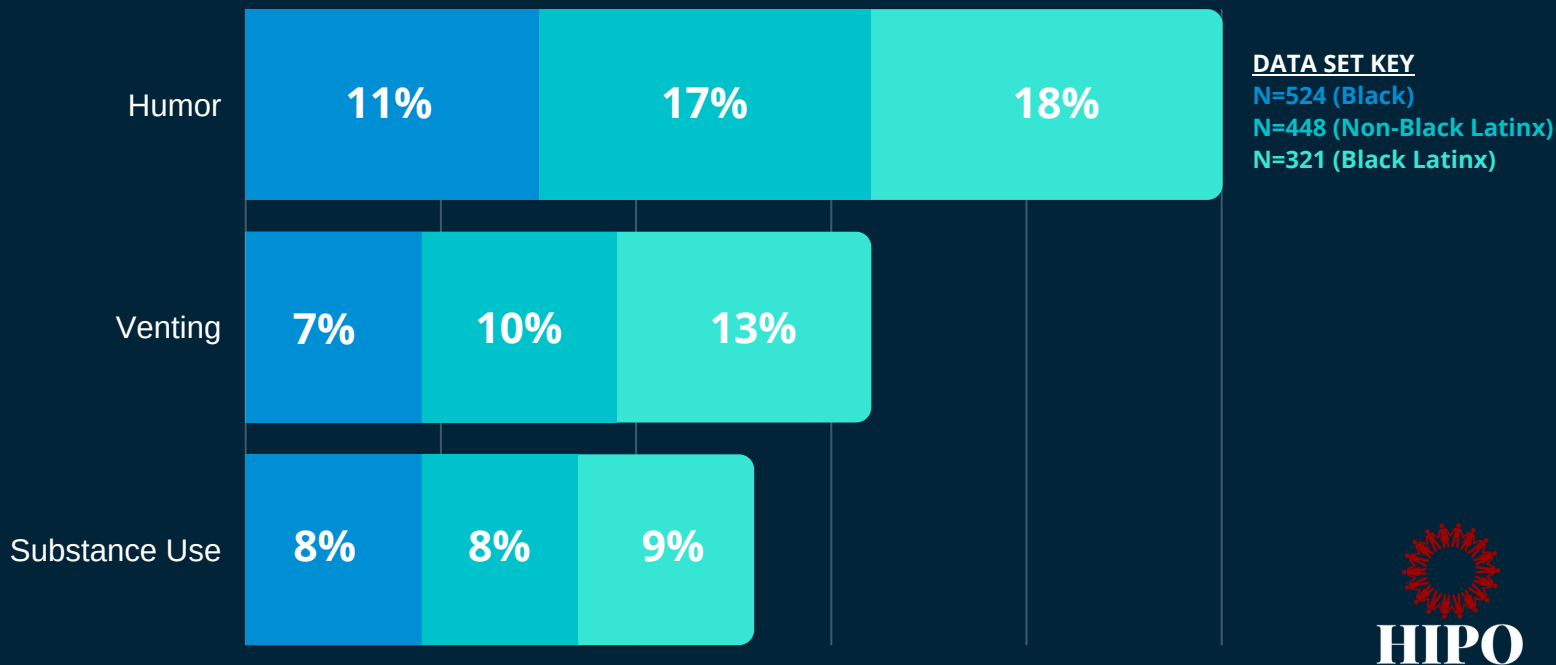
Most Used Coping Strategies in High Levels

Acceptance is the coping strategy used MOST by Black respondents (47%), non-Black Latinx respondents (35%) and Black Latinx respondents (36%).



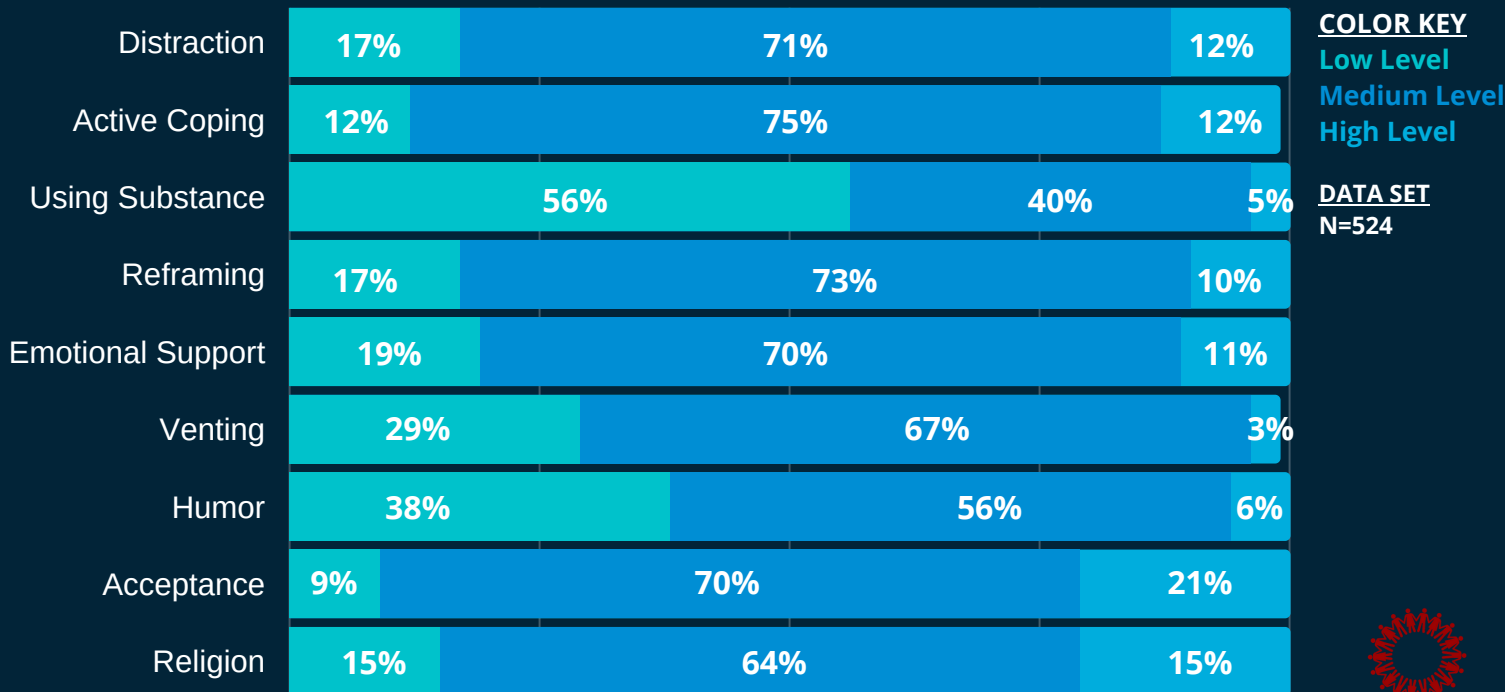
Least Used Coping Strategies in High Levels

Despite stereotypes within Black and Latinx communities, substance use is the coping strategy used LEAST by Black respondents (8%), non-Black Latinx respondents (8%) and Black Latinx respondents (9%) in higher levels.



Coping Strategies: Black Respondents

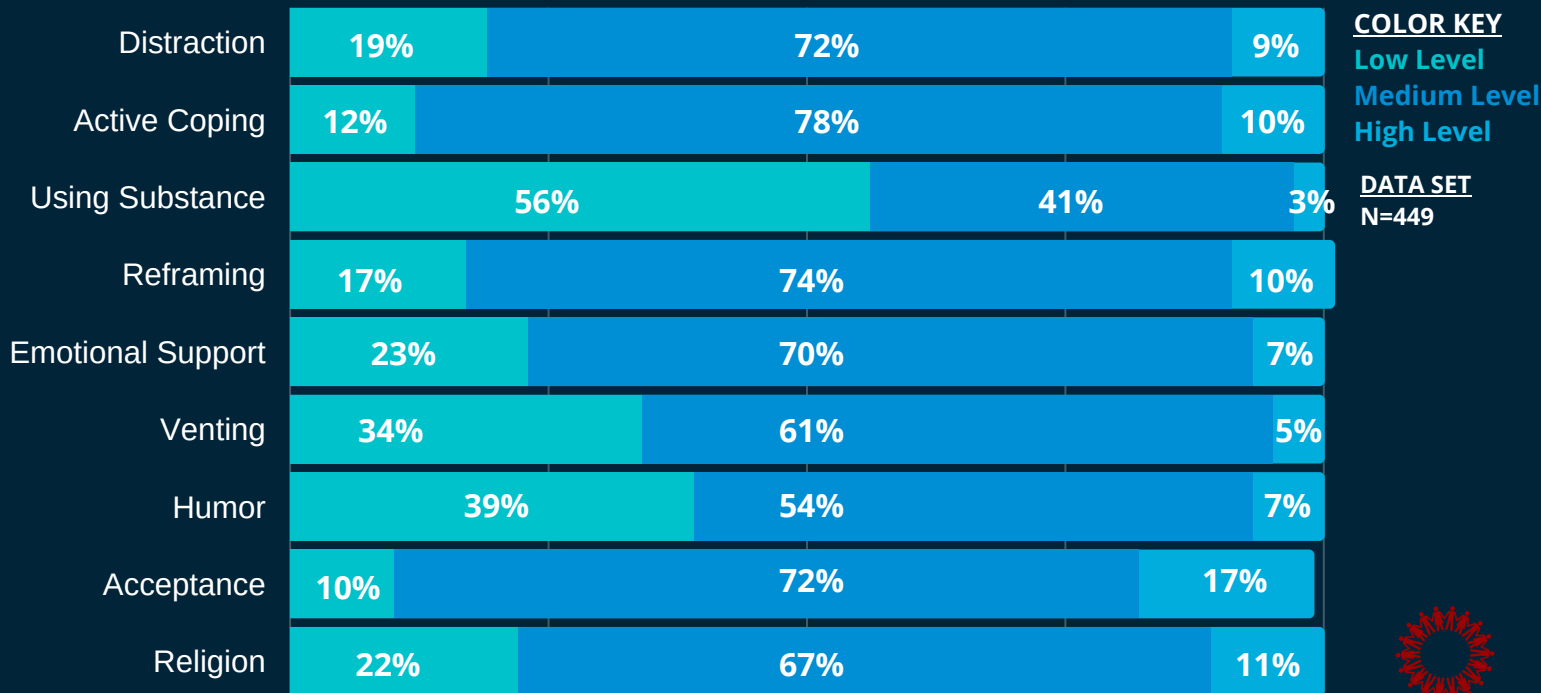
While using a range of coping strategies, notably 56% Black respondents used substance at low levels.



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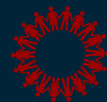
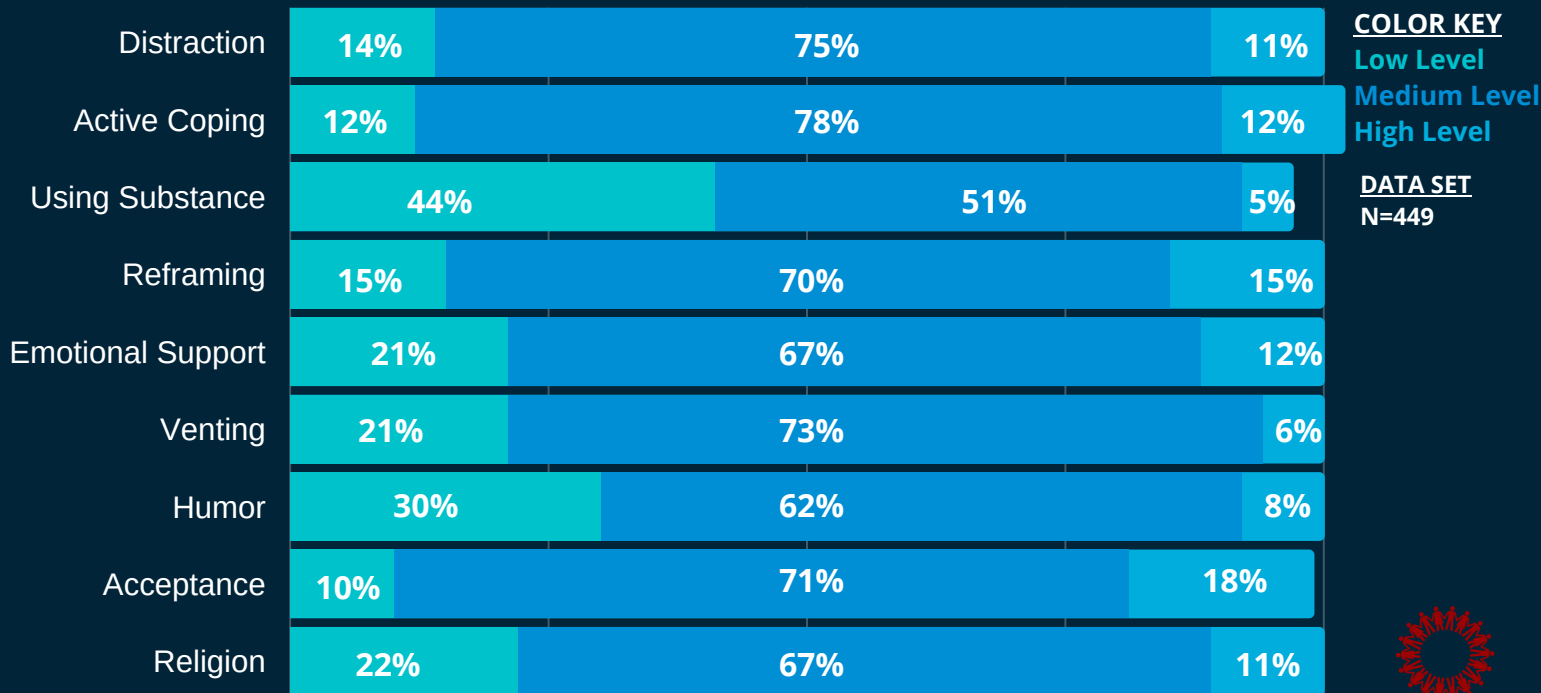
Coping Strategies: Non-Black Latinx Respondents

While using a range of coping strategies, notably 56% non-black Latinx respondents used substance at low levels.



Coping Strategies: Black Latinx Respondents

While using a range of coping strategies, notably 44% non-black Latinx respondents used substance at low levels.



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Religious/Non-Religious Respondent Coping Strategies Comparison

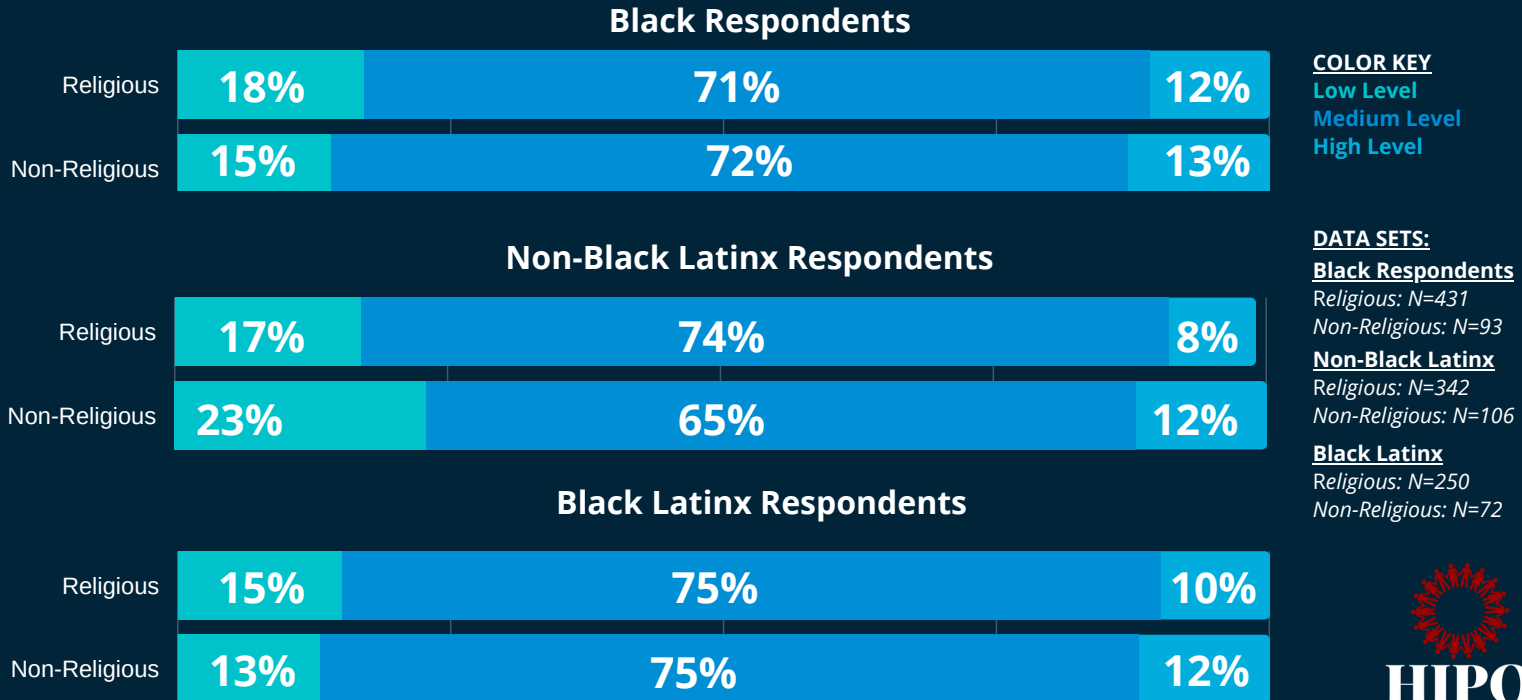


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Religious/Non-Religious Coping Strategies: Distraction

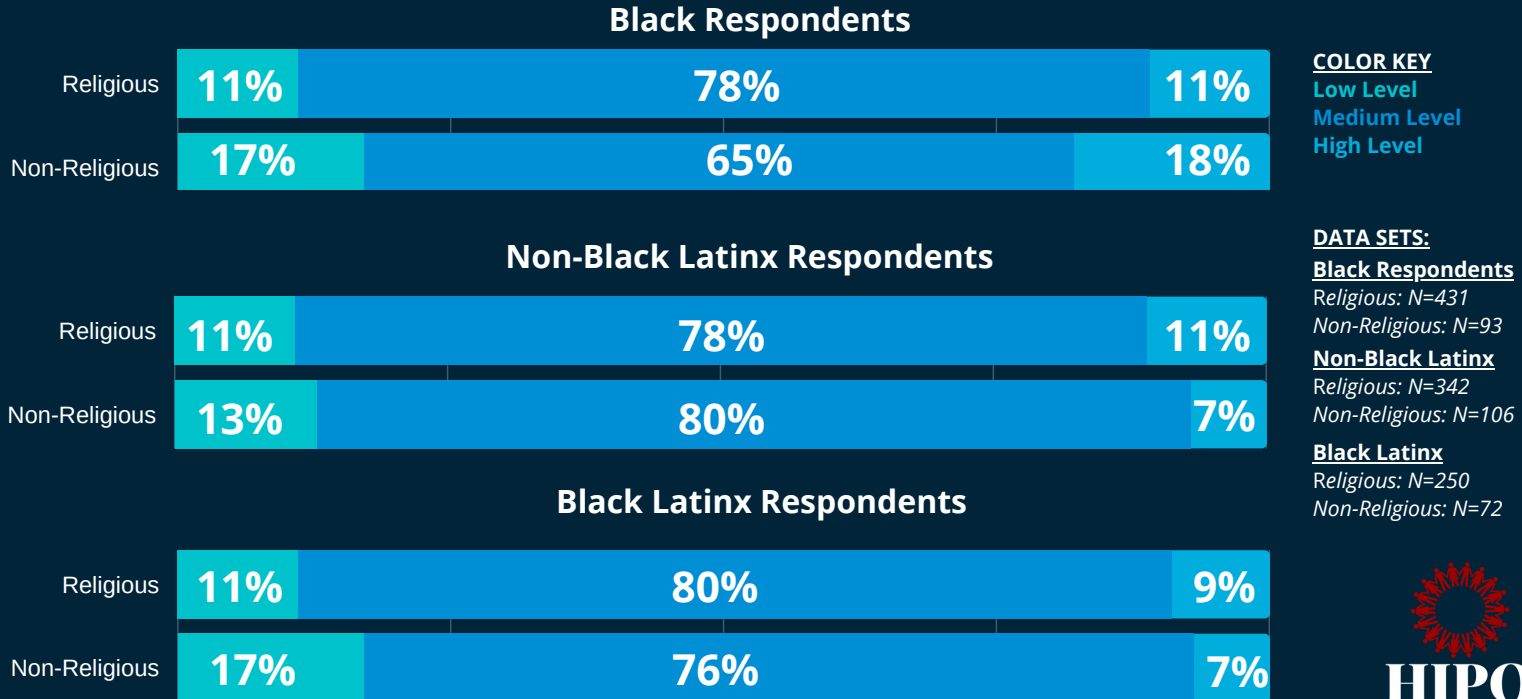
Distraction is used as a coping strategy largely by non-religious Black (85%), religious non-Black Latinx (82%), and non-religious Black Latinx (87%) respondents.



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Religious/Non-Religious Coping Strategies: Active Coping

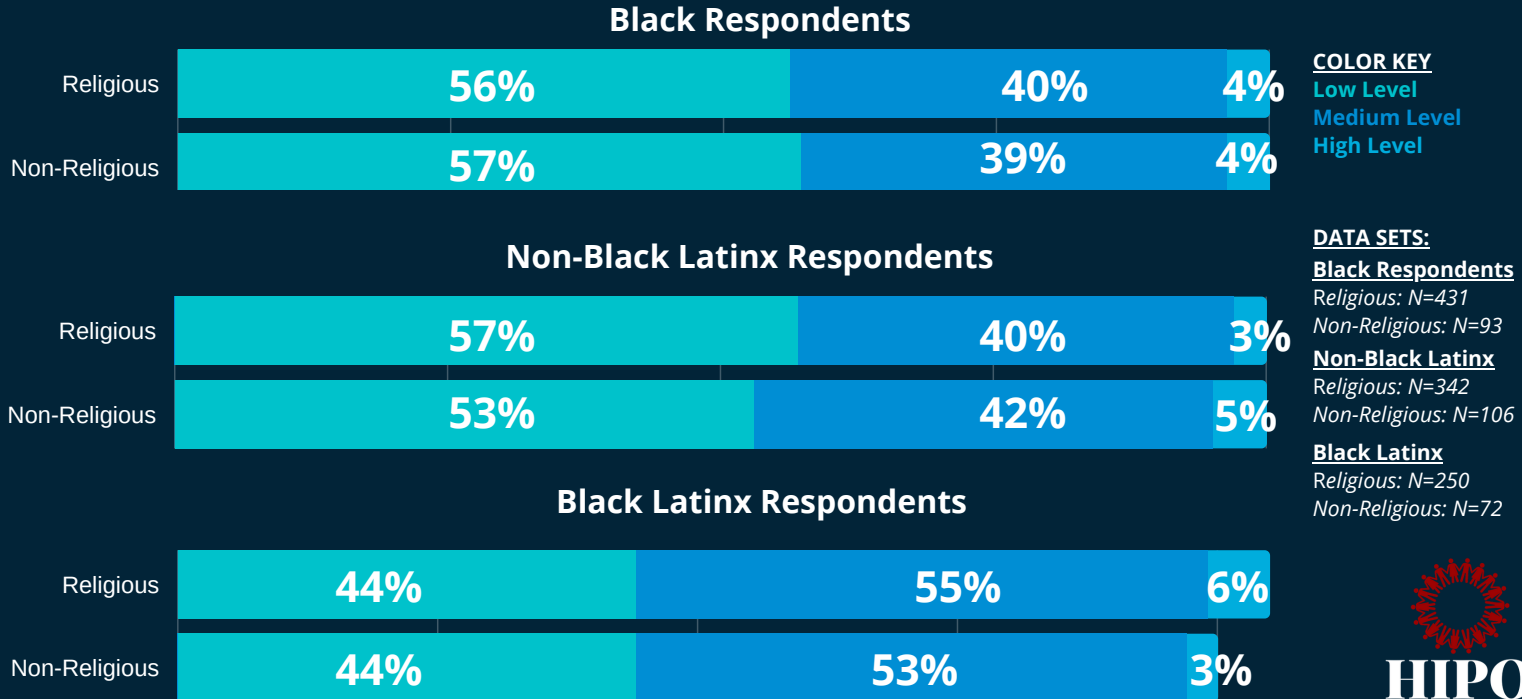
Active coping skills are used at the same rate by all respondents who indicated that they are religious: Black (89%), non-Black Latinx (89%), and Black Latinx (89%).



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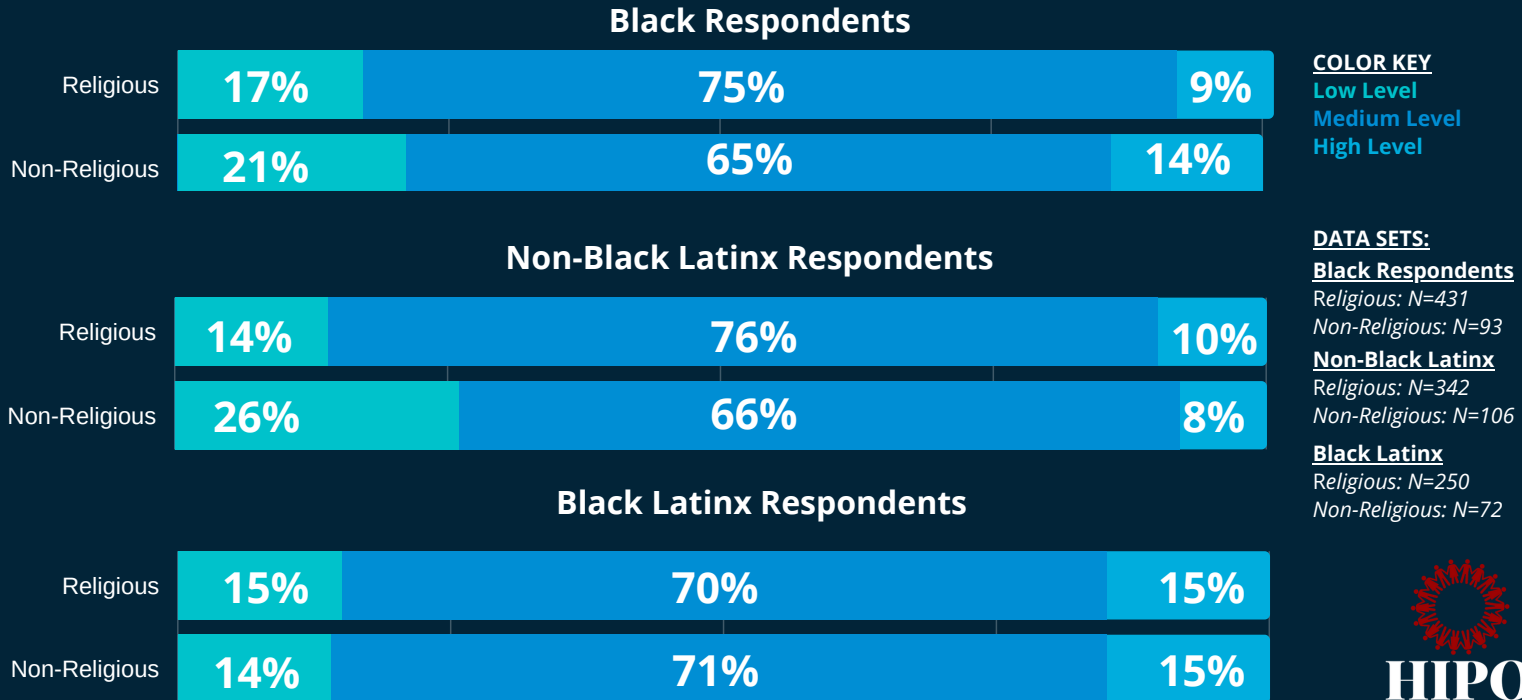
Religious/Non-Religious Coping Strategies: Substance Use

Both religious and non-religious respondents use substance as a coping strategy in LOW LEVELS: Black (56%), non-Black Latinx (56%), and Black Latinx (44%).



Religious/Non-Religious Coping Strategies: Reframing

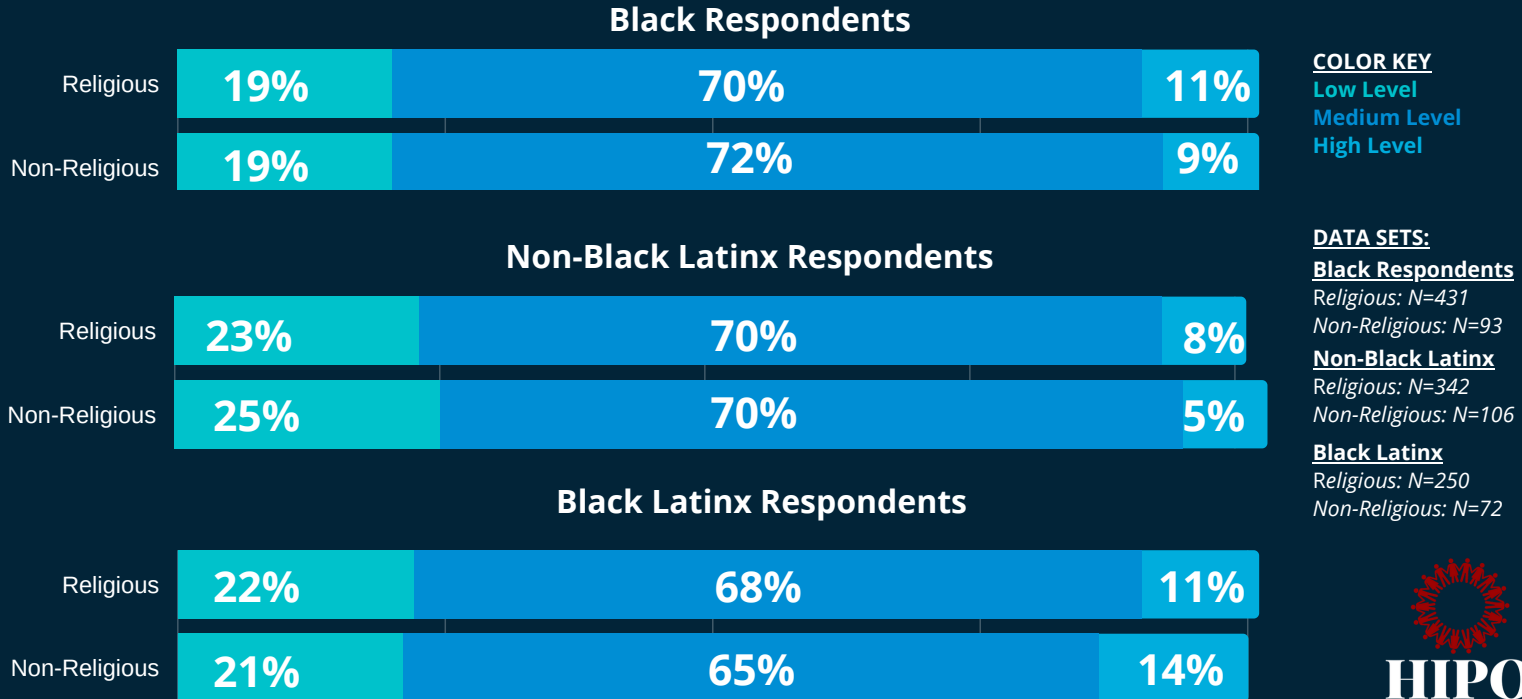
*Religious respondents use reframing as a coping strategy MORE than non-religious respondents:
Black (84%), non-Black Latinx (86%), and Black Latinx (85%).*



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Religious/Non-Religious Coping Strategies: Emotional Support

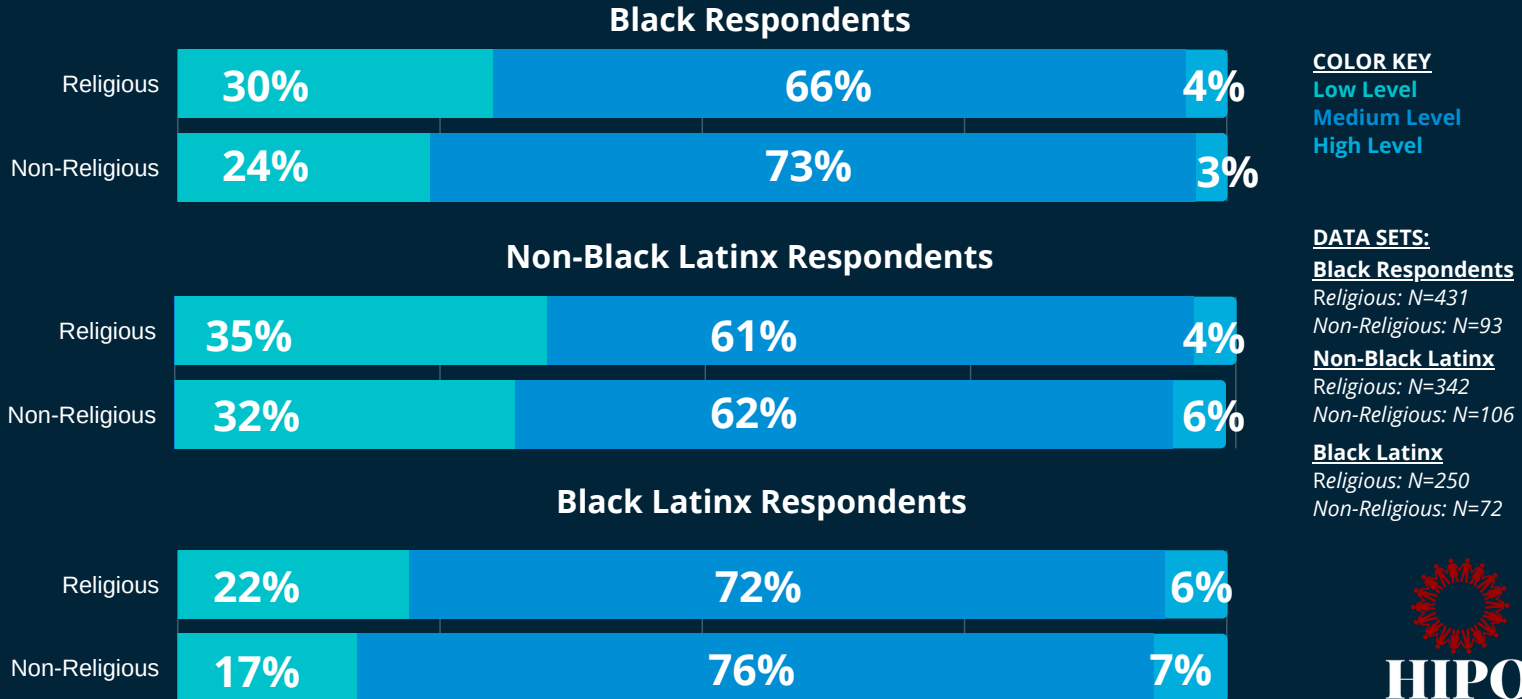
Both religious and non-religious Black (81%) and Black Latinx (79%) respondents indicated they use emotional support as a coping strategy MORE than non-Black Latinx respondents.



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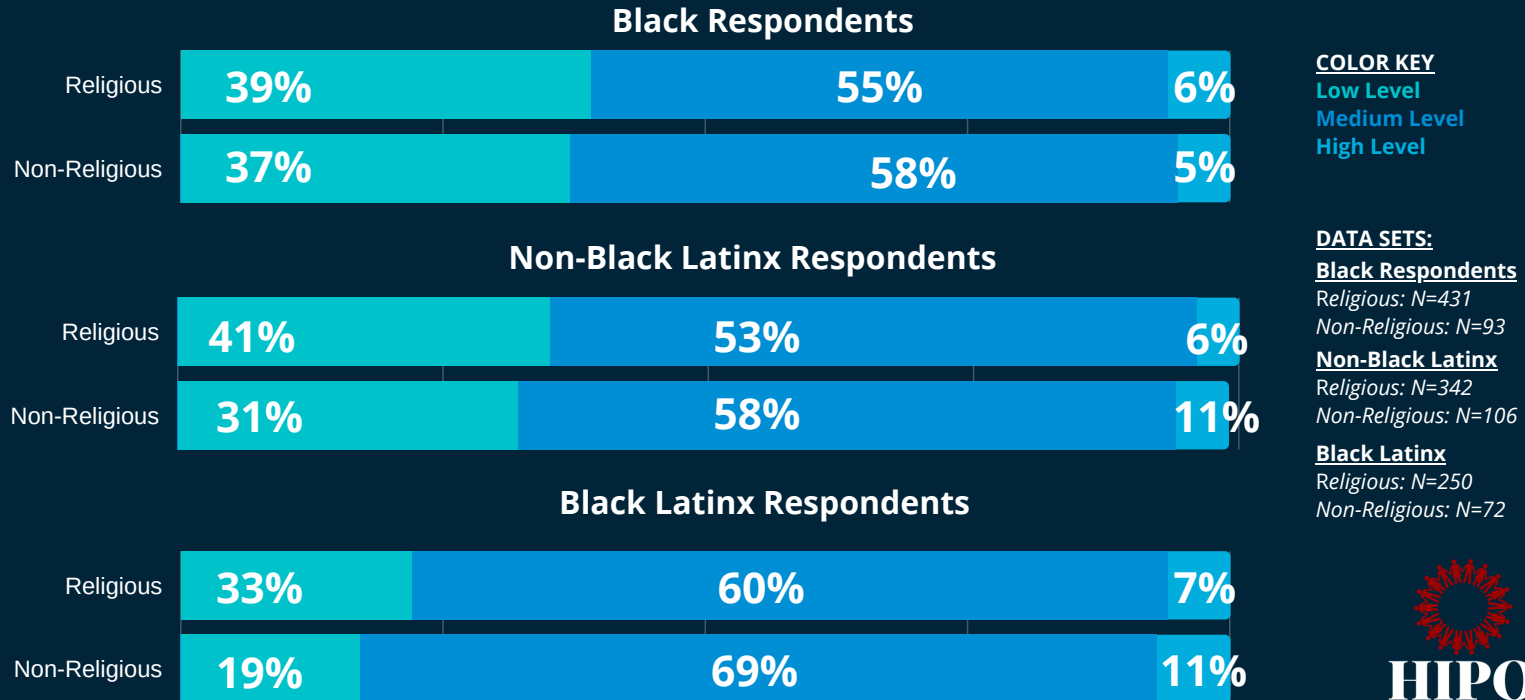
Religious/Non-Religious Coping Strategies: Venting

*Non-religious respondents use venting as a coping strategy MORE than religious respondents:
Black (76%), non-Black Latinx (68%), Black Latinx (83%)*



Religious/Non-Religious Coping Strategies: Humor

Non-religious Black Latinx respondents (80%) use humor as a coping strategy MORE than non-religious Black (63%) and non-Black Latinx (69%) respondents.

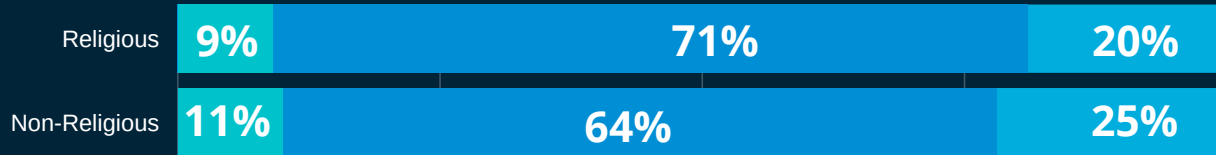


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Religious/Non-Religious Coping Strategies: Acceptance

Religious Black (91%) and non-Black Latinx (92%) respondents use acceptance as a coping strategy MORE than non-religious Black and non-Black Latinx respondents. Both religious and non-religious Black Latinx respondents (90%) use acceptance.

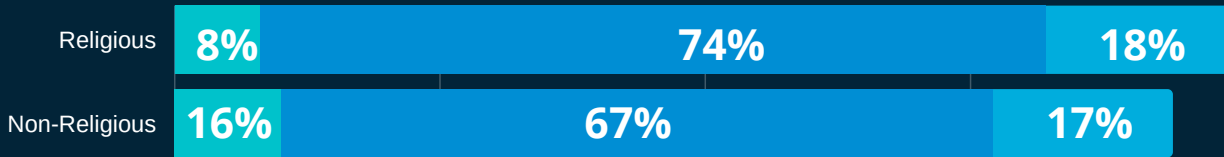
Black Respondents



COLOR KEY

Low Level
Medium Level
High Level

Non-Black Latinx Respondents



DATA SETS:

Black Respondents

Religious: N=431

Non-Religious: N=93

Non-Black Latinx

Religious: N=342

Non-Religious: N=106

Black Latinx Respondents



Black Latinx

Religious: N=250

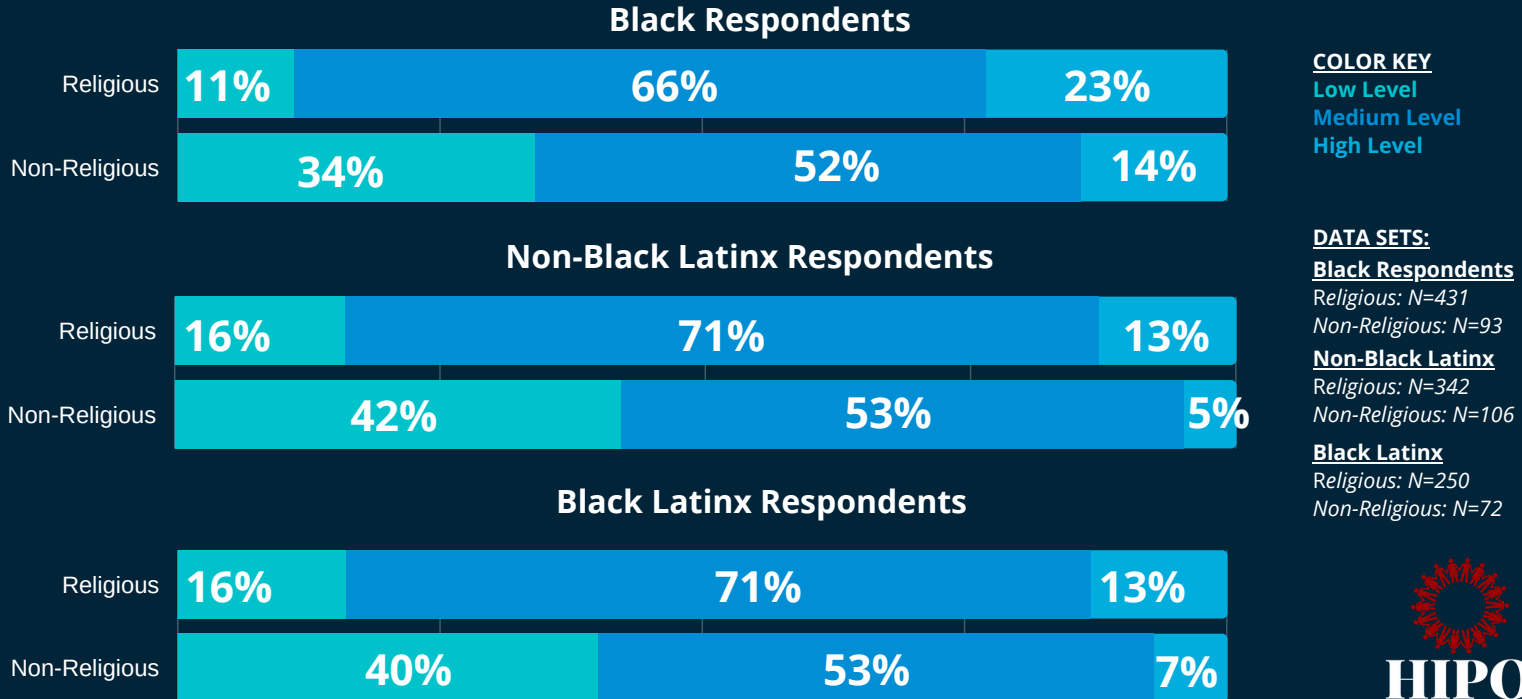
Non-Religious: N=72



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Religious/Non-Religious Coping Strategies: Religion

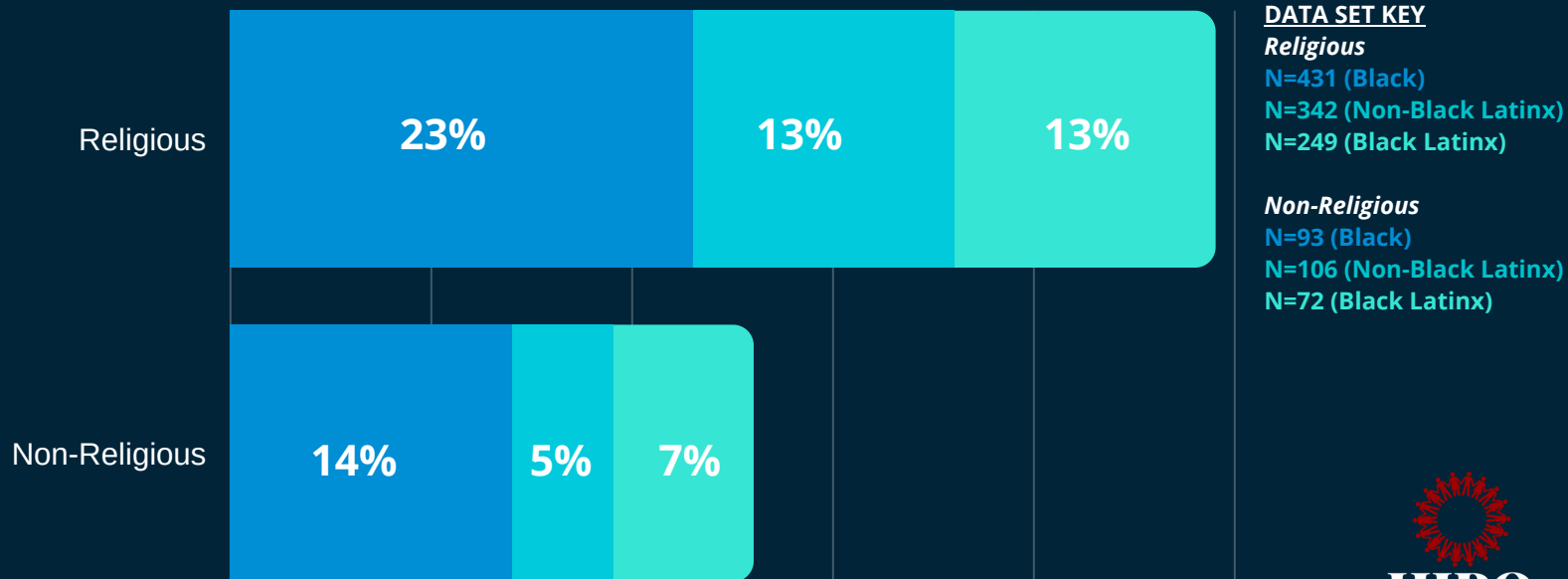
Respondents who indicated that they are non-religious still find comfort in spiritual beliefs and/or spiritual practices: Black (66%), non-Black Latinx (58%), Black Latinx (60%)



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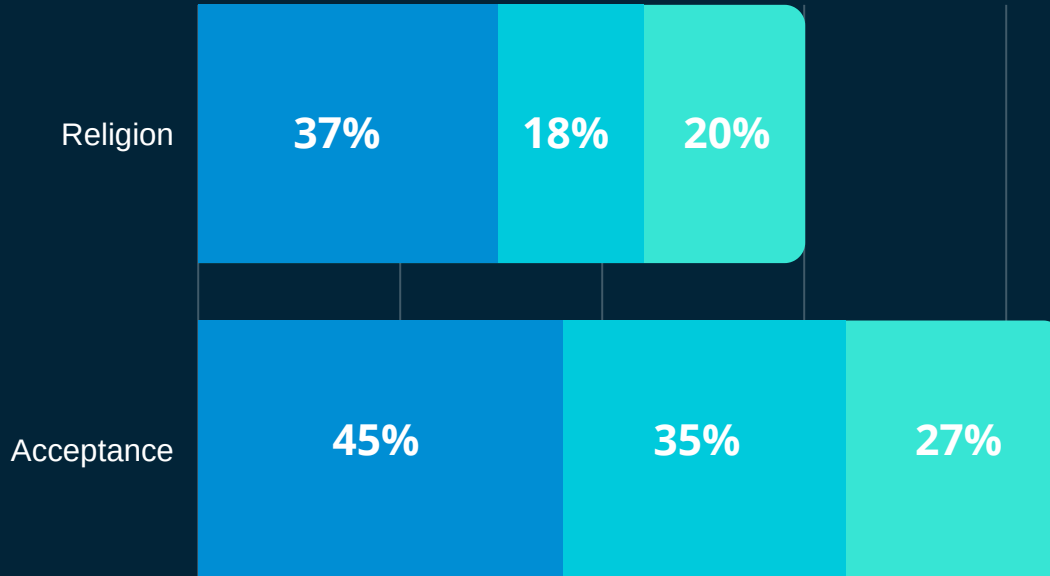
Coping Strategies: Use of Religion in High Levels

Predictably, religious people (49%) use religion at higher levels to cope than non-religious people (26%).



Coping Strategies: Acceptance and Religion in High Levels

Both religious and non-religious respondents use acceptance in higher levels MORE than religion as a coping strategy.



DATA SET KEY

N=524 (Black)

N=448 (Non-Black Latinx)

N=321 (Black Latinx)



About the Initiative



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at Howard University*

About HIPO

As the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on black and brown communities becomes more apparent and awareness about the ways police brutality and systemic racism impact African Americans adversely grows, there is an urgent call for public opinion data that represents those affected. The university has a moral imperative to provide data and analyses that can lead to systemic change in policy and expand cultural understanding.

The Howard Initiative for Public Opinion interdisciplinary researchers carry out an ongoing program of research to monitor both shifts and continuities in the populations studied. HIPO is supported by the Howard University Graduate School and the Ronald Walters Leadership and Public Policy Center.

The Team

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