

# Does a Virus Discriminate? Examining the Social Implications of COVID-19

Emma Balda

Research Mentors: Max Dunsker, Mariya Vizireanu, Alejandra Alarcon, and Brianne Gilbert

## Introduction

Wearing masks, social distancing, and staying at home has reshaped our ideas of community and care while also straining our ability to care for others; however, this strain differs across various groups' social conditions. Social conditions, defined here as race, survey language, income, homeownership, education and level of dependency on others/themselves. These impact individuals' health status and access to preventative measures. This project looks at the social implications of COVID-19, focusing on Angelenos' level of worry regarding their ability to protect their family and look after their children and elders.

## Methodology

This project examined data from the 2020 COVID-19 Public Opinion Survey (n=2,000), a mixed-mode survey of adult Los Angeles County residents conducted by the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University in March and April of 2020. The data are analyzed by race, survey language, income, homeownership, education and level of dependency on others/themselves using the chi-square test of independence to indicate significant results at  $p < 0.05$ .

Respondents were asked the following:

*How worried are you about your ability to...*

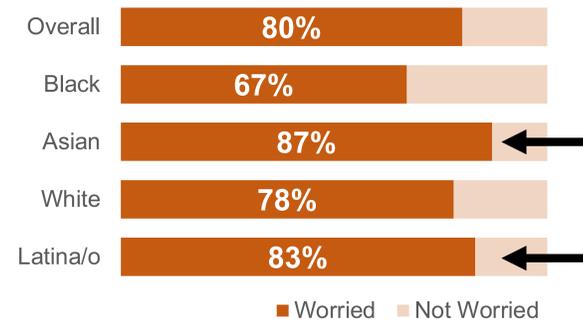
- protect your family?
- look after your children?
- look after your elders?

*In the event that you become sick, do the following scenarios apply to you?*

- Others in my household still depend on me for care
- I can depend on someone outside of my household for care

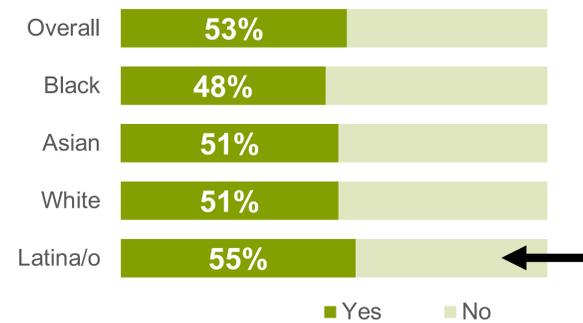
### Worry About COVID-19 by Race/Ethnicity

Latina/o and Asian respondents were more worried about COVID-19.



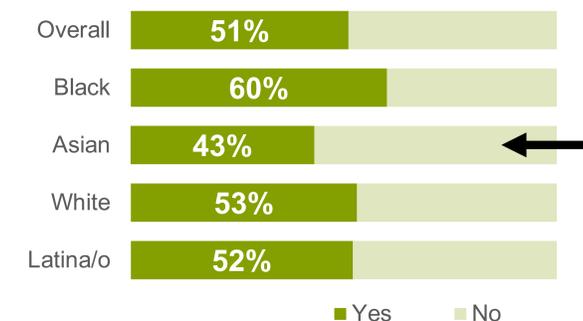
### Others in My Household Still Depend on Me by Race/Ethnicity

Latina/o respondents were the most likely to say they have others depend on them for care.



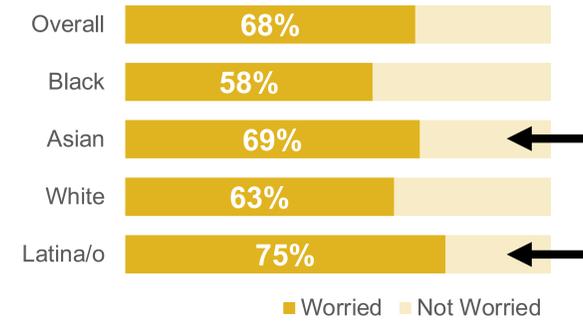
### I Can Depend on Someone Outside of My Household by Race/Ethnicity

Asian respondents were least likely to say they could depend on someone outside their household



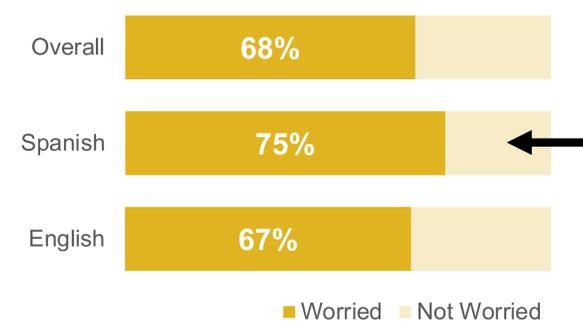
### Worry About Ability to Protect Family by Race/Ethnicity

Latina/o and Asian respondents were more likely to worry about their ability to protect their family.



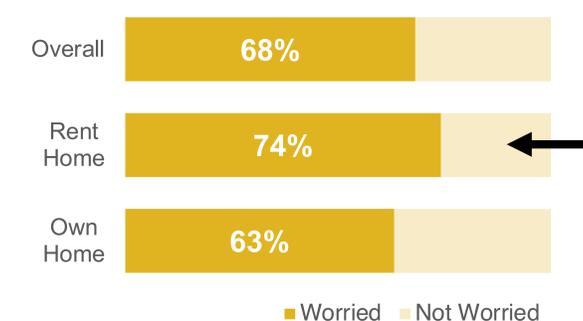
### Worry About Ability to Protect Family by Language

Spanish-speaking respondents are more likely to be worried about ability to protect their family.



### Worry About Ability to Protect Family by Home Ownership

Renters were more likely to be worried about their ability to protect their family.



## Results

Results show that Latina/o and Asian respondents, Spanish-speaking respondents, and renters were the most worried about their ability to protect family and look after their children and elders. Latina/o respondents were the most likely to say that others in their household still depend on them, while Asian respondents were least likely to say they can depend on someone from outside their household, which may explain their increased worry regarding caring for others. Income was not a significant factor in terms of how worried Angelenos were about their ability to protect family and care for children and elders.

## Conclusion

When examining COVID-19's impact on respondent's worry about their ability to protect others, it is crucial to frame it in the context of their social conditions, as it can dictate their ability to access resources that will aid in developing better health or rely on others for care. By examining Angelenos' worry about their ability to care for others, disparities appear amongst different demographics, showing how a respondents' level of worry regarding COVID-19 may have to do with more than just their physical health.

### References

Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Center for the Study of Los Angeles. (2020). *COVID-19 Public Opinion Survey*. Loyola Marymount University.

### Contact Information

Emma Balda  
Sociology & History, Loyola Marymount University '22  
ebalda@lion.lmu.edu