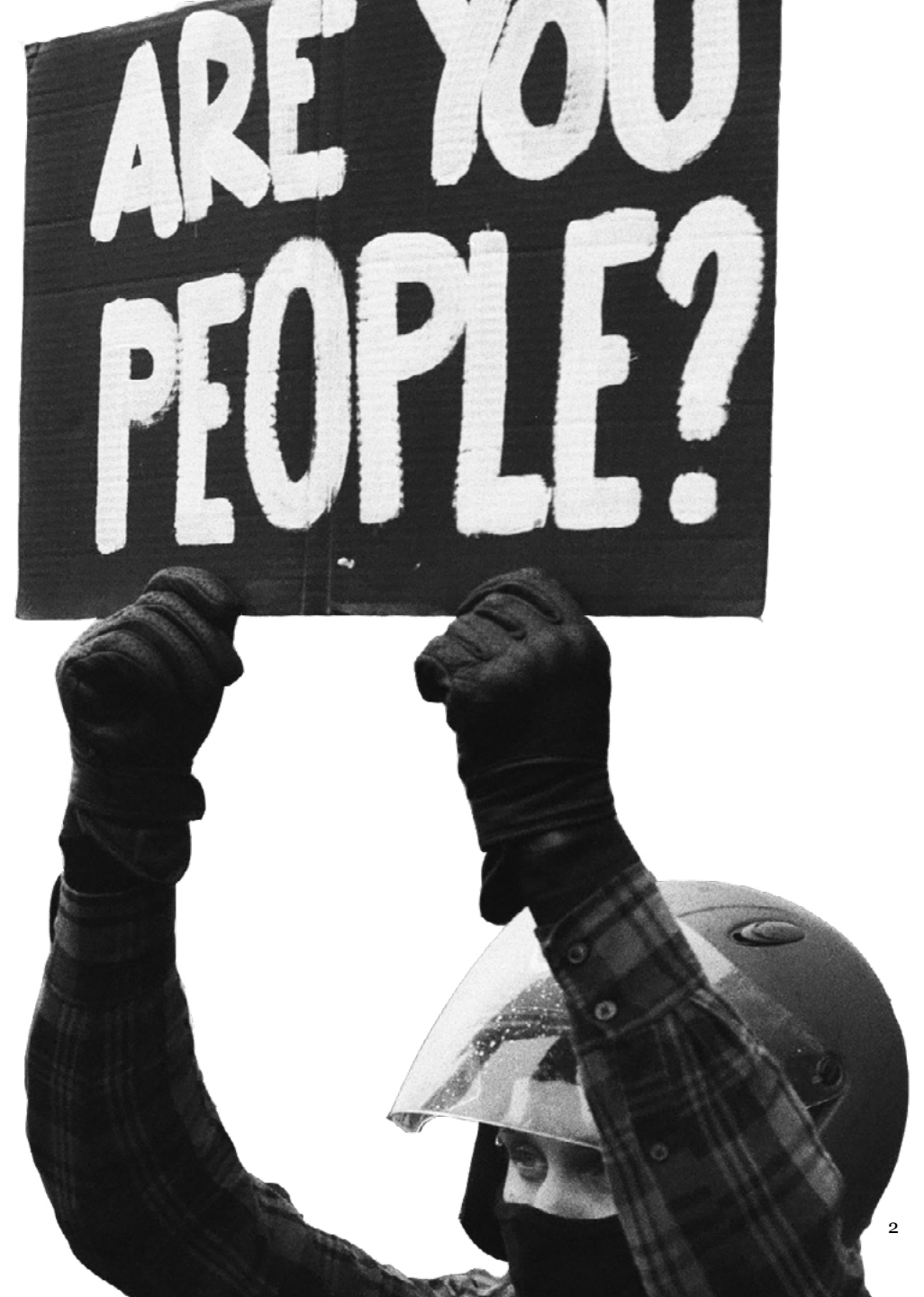# Savanta:

Black Lives Matter:
Everywhere

The truth about what consumers and employees from ethnic minorities expect from the brands they support and the institutions that they work for.

Contents

Introduction

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd, on 25th May 2020, the Black Lives Matter movement has redefined how many around the world perceive the struggle for racial justice and the necessary steps needed to combat injustice. The movement has emphasised the necessity for all facets of society to stand up to fight injustice.

Brands and organisations are no longer able to sit on the side-lines and watch the passing of this defining moment. The focus is no longer just on governing and political institutions. Customers demand non-passive behaviour from organisations with a platform to speak out. Employees demand their employers use their power for good and internal leaderships demand that they must find a way to do what is right. From what stemmed as, rightful lose, outrage at a blatant display of social injustice, - has gone on to illuminate the wider public, to the day-to-day struggles for People of Colour (POC) and the importance of improving the lives for all in the workplace.

In January 2021, Savanta released its 'Black Lives Matter: Everywhere', campaign in the United States. This was a report which sought to amplify the voices of minorities within the workplace. Uncovering what Black and other ethnic minority background employees felt they needed for a safer and fairer workplace experience. The findings illustrated the microaggressions these employees dealt with on a regular basis. Beyond highlighting daily workplace marginalisation's the report provides viable solutions and outlines what actions employers can take, to better accommodate an inclusive workplace environment, since the BLM movement erupted over the summer of 2020.

This new report shifts the focus away from the United States and onto the United Kingdom, a nation with its own unique story to tell with regard to racial injustice. As part of this research, Savanta spoke to over 1,500 employed adults in the UK. With over 500 respondents from Black backgrounds, 500 from White backgrounds and 500 from Asian and other ethnic minority backgrounds - this report reveals the truth about what consumers and employees from ethnic minorities expect from the brands they support and the institutions that they work for.

Savanta's Role

Savanta regularly conducts thought leadership research on key issues. Using our strengths in research and data collection, we wanted to survey Black employees in the UK, as well as employees of color, to gauge what is happening in the workplace during this time. Through our findings, we want to enforce and validate what many already know, and to shine a light on what Black employees and employees of color need to succeed. We want to amplify their voices even more and give brands and employers a chance to listen.

Responses from organisations

Black Lives Matter responses from organisations

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement was an urgent call for action for many across British society and for a large portion of the population.

Many brands and organisations have stood in support of the BLM cause through various acts of service in either: promotional campaigns - centred around the movement, public statements - voicing acknowledgement, and social posts - in general support. It can be argued that many organisations felt an obligatory need to stand up and support the movement, as this support showed understanding and respect for their black colleagues and partners within their company, as well as ensuring a positive brand image was maintained.

In terms of actions taken, three in ten (30%) employees say that their company/ organisation has made employees aware

that the company supports the BLM movement, while one in five (22%) say that their company/organisation released a statement addressing the Black Lives Matter movement. These figures are significantly higher where that organisation has some form of Diversity and Inclusion initiative available at the workplace.

Where a statement was released, asking to rate the BLM statement, from 0 to 10, with 0 being "Empty/Hollow" and 10 being "Thoughtful/Actionable", half (50%) of respondents say their company's statement scored 7 to 10.

However, there is still work to be done.

Three in ten (28%) of respondents say their company/organisation took no measures to address the Black Lives Matter movement and three in ten (31%) of respondents are disappointed with their employer's response to the Black Lives Matter movement. This is significantly higher amongst the younger population, increasing to 37% in those aged 18-34.

30%
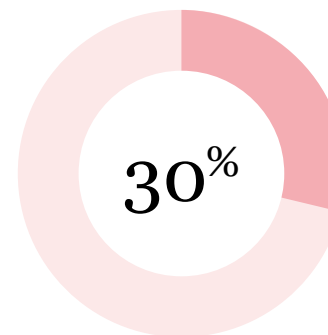
Three in ten (30%) say that their employer has made them aware that the company supports Black Lives Matter

28%
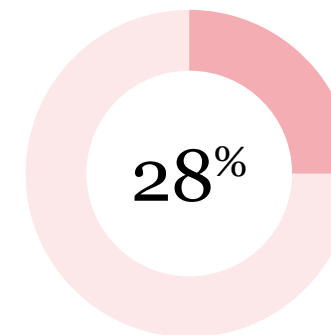
But, a similar proportion (28%) say that their company/organisation took no measures to address Black Lives Matter

POC Experience in workplace

POC Experience in workplace

It is disappointing to learn that three in ten Black employees feel discriminated against by their employer (28%), rising to a third of their Asian counterparts (32%) who say the same.

Black (42%) and Asian (36%) employees are significantly more likely than White employees (26%) to have left a job due to the lack of workplace Diversity & Inclusion.

When looking at what actions' employers had taken to address Black Lives Matter, our research revealed that 72% had taken no action but of the 28% that had; almost a third had made employees aware that their company supports Black Lives Matter (30%) or had held meetings to discuss the events and open discussions around diversity and inclusivity (27%).

When asking employees to rate their employers' BLM statement (with 0 being 'Empty/Hollow' and 10 being 'Thoughtful/Actionable'), the mean score was 6.3, with only half of employees (50%) rating the statement as 7-10.
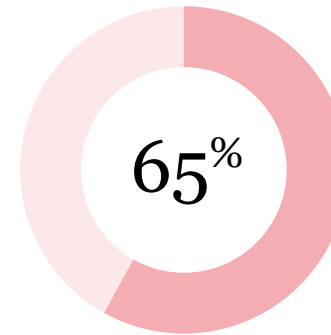
That said, work is in progress, and it is encouraging to know that almost two thirds (65%) of employees believe that their employer cares about Diversity & Inclusion and 59% feel that Black Lives Matter is causing employers and organisations to try and create an improvement in workplace culture. This rises to two thirds amongst those aged 18-34 (66%).
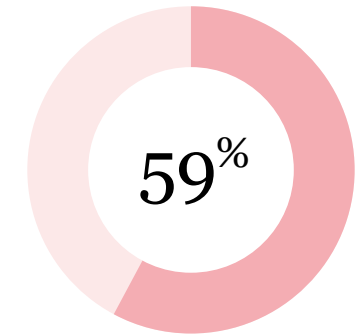
28%
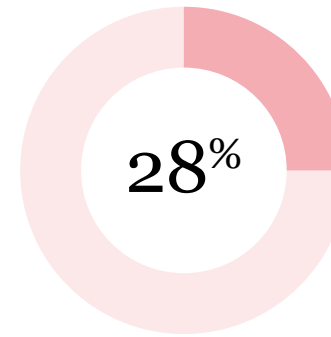
Three in ten Black employees (28%) feel discriminated against by their employer

72%
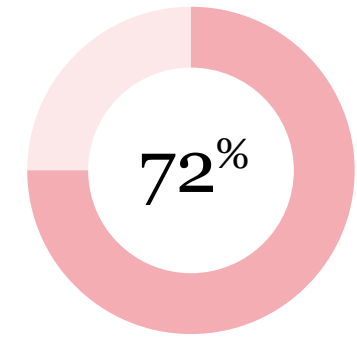
Almost three quarters of employees (72%) say that their employer had take some measures to address Black Lives Matter
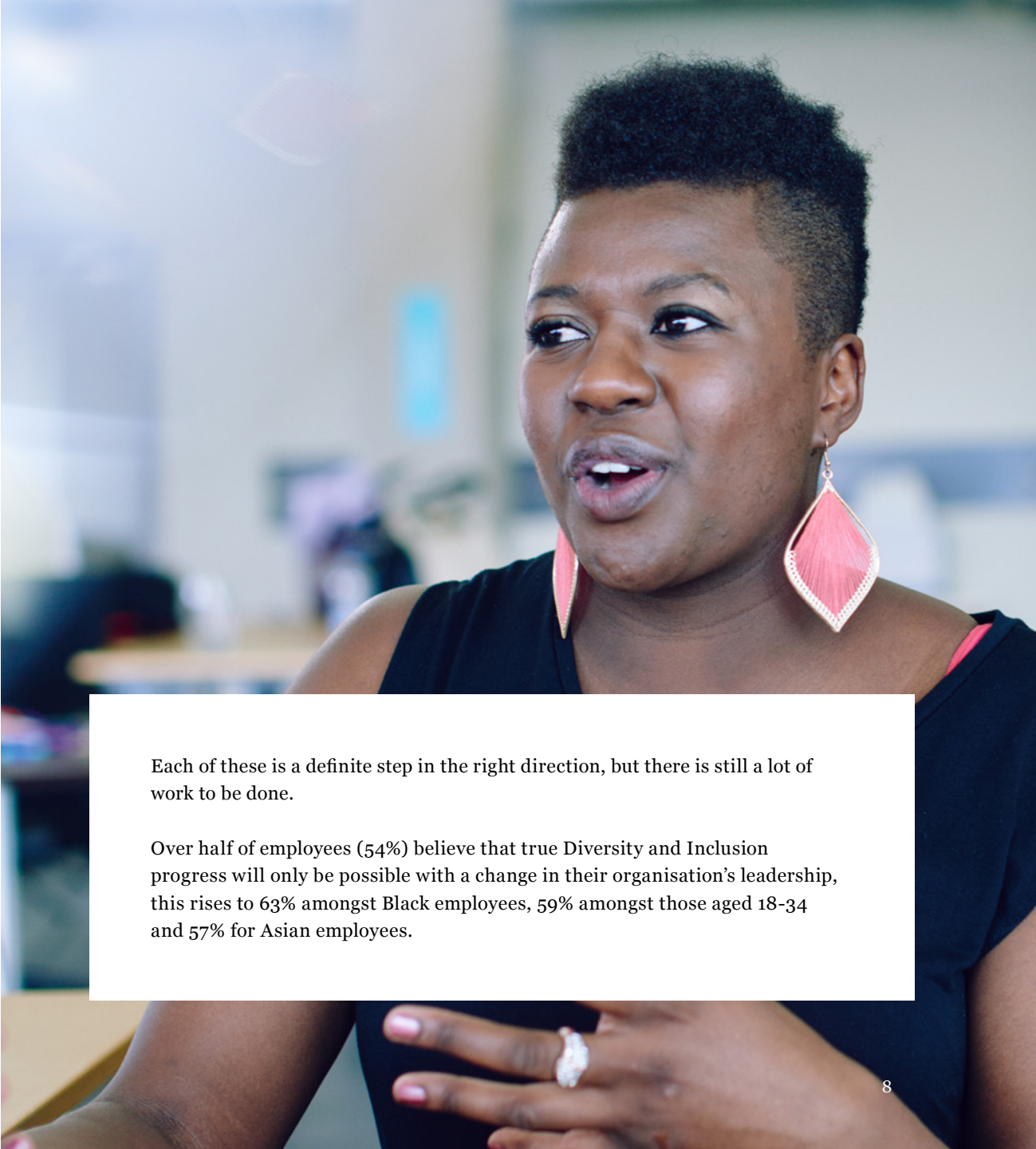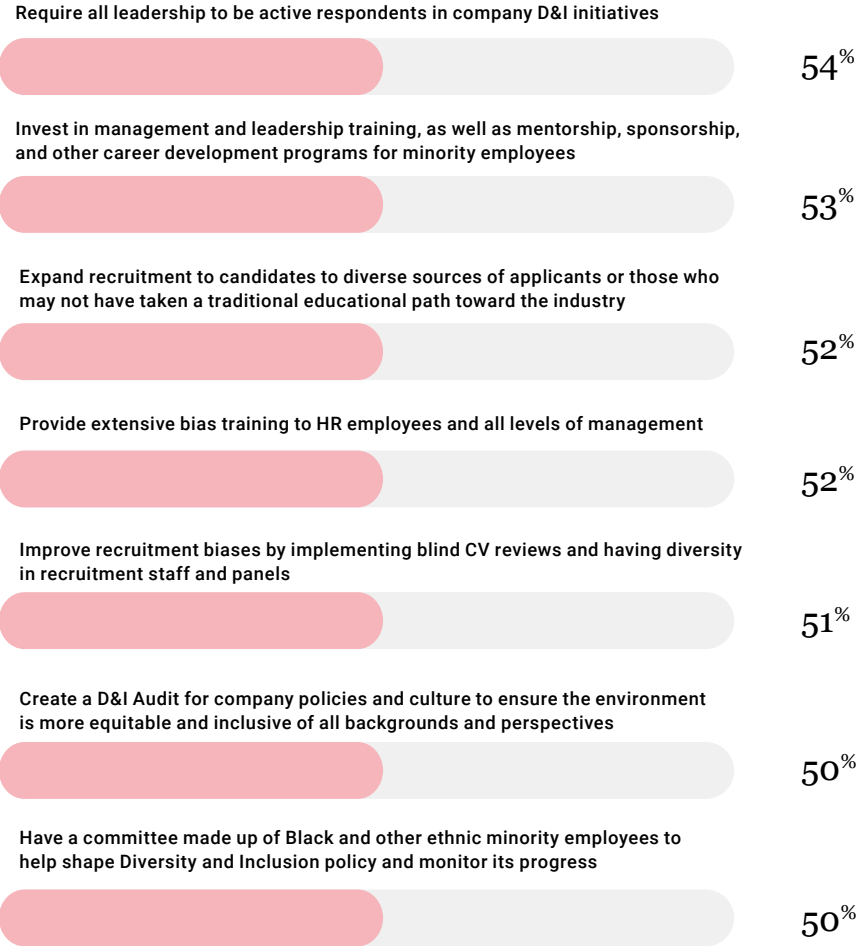
65%

Two thirds (65%) of employees believe that their employer cares about Diversity & Inclusion

59%

59% feel that Black Lives Matter is causing employers and organisations to try and create an improvement in workplace culture

This progress is evidenced by at least half of employees reporting their employers or organisations to have put the following measures in place:

Require all leadership to be active respondents in company D&I initiatives

54$^{\%}$

Invest in management and leadership training, as well as mentorship, sponsorship, and other career development programs for minority employees

53$^{\%}$

Expand recruitment to candidates to diverse sources of applicants or those who may not have taken a traditional educational path toward the industry

52$^{\%}$

Provide extensive bias training to HR employees and all levels of management

52$^{\%}$

Improve recruitment biases by implementing blind CV reviews and having diversity in recruitment staff and panels

51$^{\%}$

Create a D&I Audit for company policies and culture to ensure the environment is more equitable and inclusive of all backgrounds and perspectives

50$^{\%}$

Have a committee made up of Black and other ethnic minority employees to help shape Diversity and Inclusion policy and monitor its progress

50$^{\%}$

Each of these is a definite step in the right direction, but there is still a lot of work to be done.

Over half of employees (54%) believe that true Diversity and Inclusion progress will only be possible with a change in their organisation's leadership, this rises to 63% amongst Black employees, 59% amongst those aged 18-34 and 57% for Asian employees.

Responsibilities for action

Responsibilities for action

Being responsible for our own actions and held accountable for creating a healthy, social environment for those around us is a generally accepted notion. Does this standard practice change when discussing a topic like Diversity & Inclusion?

Almost half of respondents (48%) believe it is everyone's responsibility to educate employees/colleagues on

Diversity & Inclusion. There still remains a significant percentage of the UK population who perceive it as the responsibility of those in HR (22%) or business leadership roles (20%) to inform and educate work-place environments.

It is encouraging that significantly more White employees (53%) believe this responsibility should fall to everyone, whilst Black employees are significantly more likely than White employees to believe this job belongs to HR (27%) or the Business Leadership team (26%). Perhaps understandably so, since clear set rules and guidelines leave little justification for any-and-all anti-inclusive behaviour.

> " Almost half of respondents (48%) believe it is everyone's responsibility to educate employees/colleagues on Diversity & Inclusion. There still remains a significant percentage of the UK population, who perceive it as the responsibility of those in HR. "

48%
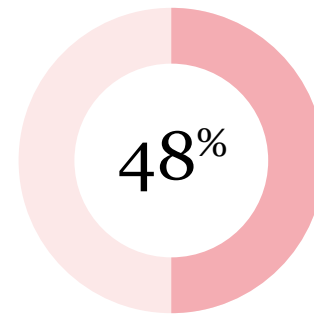
Whilst almost half of respondents (48%) believe it is everyone's responsibility to educate employees/colleagues on Diversity & Inclusion

53%
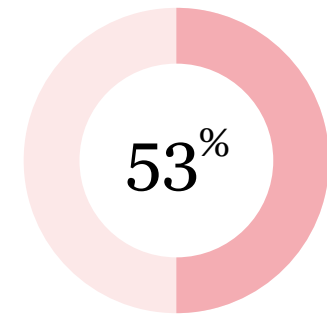
Significantly more White employees (53%) believe this responsibility should fall to everyone

When we asked other employees, 45% of them agreed that their companies also have a Diversity & Inclusion task force (or similar) and of those D&I task forces in action, there is a relatively even split between full time teams (44%) and ad-hoc teams made up of co-workers that fit the D&I tasks around their current work.

Perhaps less encouragingly, we do see a decline for involvement with Diversity & Inclusion amongst those aged 55+.

Not only are those aged 55+ less likely to report that their company has a D&I task force, they are also significantly less likely to say they have been offered D&I training sessions within the last year (43%).

A third of employees (28%) also agree that their company publicly report/share workforce/diversity data on an annual basis and a further 33% share reports with employees internally.

28%
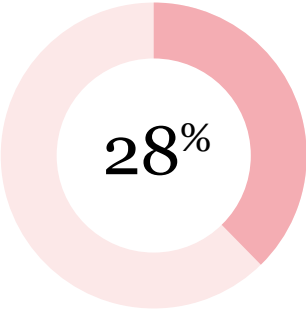
Three in ten employees (28%) also agree that their company publicly report/share workforce/diversity data on an annual basis

29%
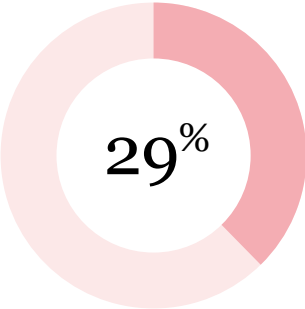
Employees aged 55+ are significantly less likely to report that their company has a D&I task force (29%)

Brands and Black Lives Matter

Brands and Black Lives Matter

Brands have an important role to play in Black Lives Matter, and many major brands have taken the opportunity to speak out in favour of the movement. Ben and Jerry's, Netflix and Glossier all supported the movement via social media, earning the respect of many customers.

Our research has found that brands speaking out about the BLM movement is important to customers, particularly Black customers. Half (49%) of Black respondents we surveyed said it is very important for brands that they are a consumer of to speak out about the movement.

Looking towards the younger generation, half (48%) of 18–24-year-olds also agreed with this statement, demonstrating that brands speaking up about the BLM movement may become even more important in future.

How important is it that the brands we consume speak out in favour of Black Lives Matter?
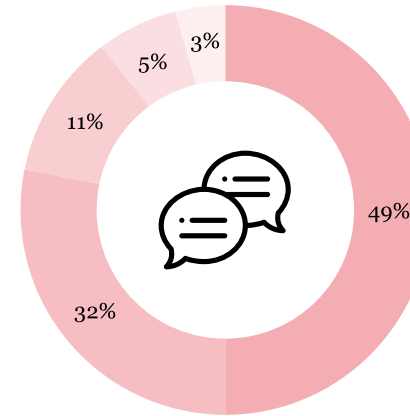
Black respondents

- Very important
- Quite important
- Not very important
- Not at all important
- Don't know
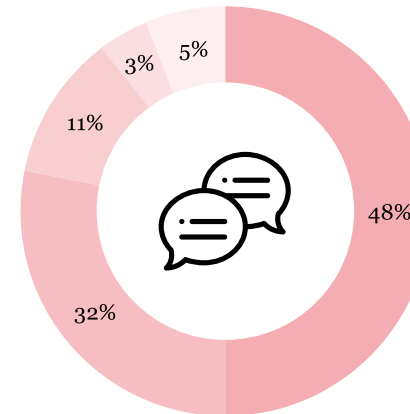
18–24-Year-old respondents

- Very important
- Quite important
- Not very important
- Not at all important
- Don't know

We also explored how shopping habits may change in light of brands responses to the BLM movement. When asked about how likely or unlikely they were to shop with a brand that has remained silent during the movement, nearly a quarter (23%) of Black respondents said they were either not at all likely or not very likely to continue shopping with the brand. At least one in ten respondents from all non-Black ethnicities supported this position too.

This demonstrates the real need for brands to be vocal about the BLM movement, to take a stance and show their customers that the inequal treatment of Black people will not be tolerated. By remaining silent on the matter, brands put themselves at great risk of losing business.
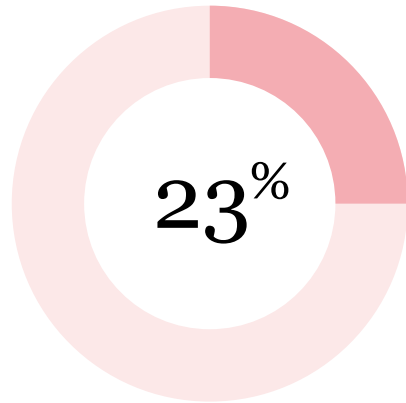
23%

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