

A survey was administered that includes responses from May 3, 2021, to October 3, 2021. The survey sought to learn the attitudes and beliefs in the Memphis area in relation to sexual assault and domestic violence. The survey included 16 questions -- a total of 14 were used in this analysis. Respondents could select Agree, Disagree, Neutral, or choose to leave blank.

Additionally, each respondent was asked to provide age, race, sex, and city/town of residence. A total of 244 participants responded to the survey questions, however cases outside of Shelby County, Tennessee, are removed for this analysis. The number of cases included is 209. Table 1 shows the self-identified descriptive information respondents provided.

Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics	
Average Age	56.68
Percent Female	87.14%
Percent Black	32.21%
Percent White	65.38%
Percent Hispanic	.01%
Percent Native American	.01%

Results

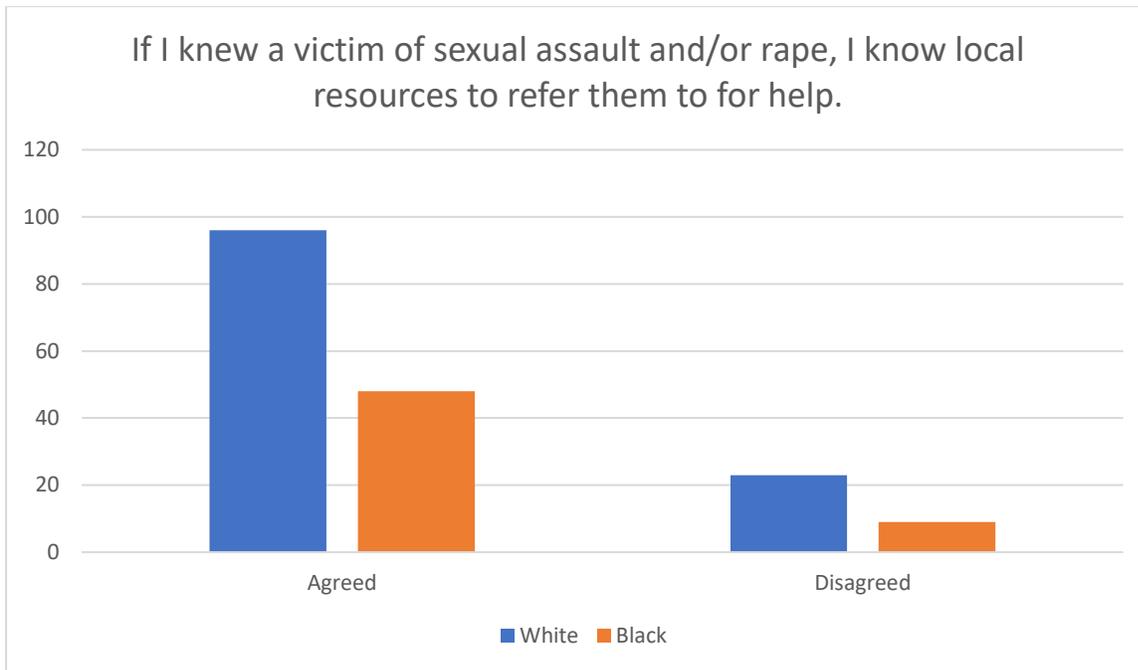
Respondents were asked a series of questions -- first about crimes of sexual assault and then questions related to domestic violence. The first question of the survey: "Sexual assault and rape can never be the victim's fault." A total of 190 Agreed, 10 Disagreed, and eight gave Neutral responses. Demographically, a total of one male Disagreed. A total of nine females Disagreed with this statement while seven more females selected Neutral. Of the females that disagreed, five self-identified as White and four self-identified as Black. The next item queries: "If someone makes their partner engage in sexual activity with them when they do not want to, that is considered sexual assault/rape." All but one respondent selected Agreed on this statement. One who selected Neutral is self-described as a Black

female. There also was agreement on the next question, "Sexual consent can be withdrawn even after sexual acts have already begun." A total of 200 Agreed, 4 Disagreed, and 60 selected Neutral. All of those who Disagreed self-identified as female (three Black, one White).

The next set of questions attempts to incorporate familial and friend ties into the context of sexual assault. The first statement is as follows, "If my mother has too much to drink at her office party and her coworker sexually assaults her, it is her own fault because she drank too much." No one Agreed with this statement, one was Neutral and 208 Disagreed. The next question states, "If my sister is out late walking home alone after studying in the library all night, she may be asking for trouble since she is out after dark by herself." A total of 16 Agreed with this statement. Half of those that agreed self-identified as Black, the other half self-identified as White. A total of 14 self-identified as females and two were males. A total of 188 Disagreed, while there was a total of 6 Neutral responses. The next question garnered much more agreement: "If my best friend goes out for her birthday wearing a short, revealing dress and someone rapes her, she brought it upon herself by not wearing more clothes." Only two respondents Agreed with this statement, both identified as Black females.

Figure 1 shows the following question, "If I knew a victim of sexual assault and/or rape, I know local resources to refer them to for help." A total of 32 Disagreed with this statement (9/202 were Black, 23/202 were White, two were males). A total of 150 Agreed (48/202 were Black, 96/202 were White). A total of 15.7% Black respondents disagreed. A total of 19.3% of White respondents disagreed. A total of 28 provided neutral responses.

Figure 1.

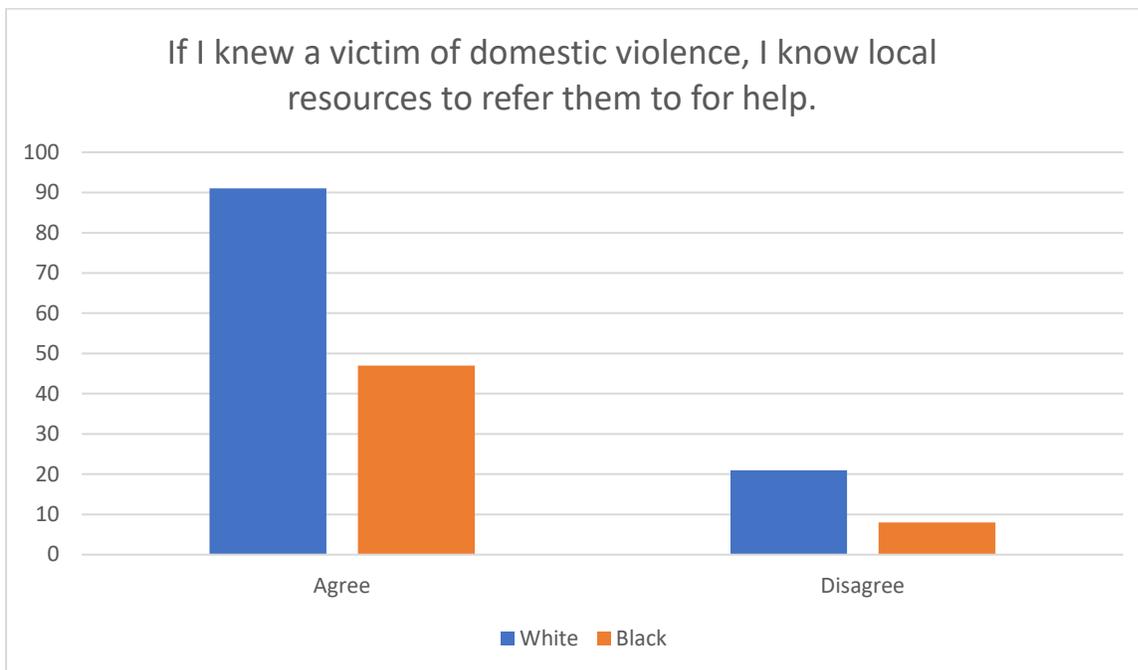


The next survey set has the respondent state what they would do in specific situations. The first states, “If I knew a suspect of sexual assault and/or rape, I would report them.” A total of 176 Agreed, three Disagreed, and a total of 31 gave Neutral responses. Of those who Disagreed or were Neutral on this item, a total of three self-described as male. A total of 19 self-identified as White, 14 as Black. The next statement is related to the respondents’ attitudes toward law enforcement. It states, “If I reported being a victim of sexual assault and/or rape, I would feel confident in law enforcement taking action.” A total of 49 Agreed, 81 Disagreed, 79 selected Neutral responses. Demographically, there were no significant differences between groups.

The next series of questions relates to concerns and beliefs around domestic violence. The first question states, “Domestic Violence is never acceptable.” All respondents Agreed with this statement. The following question concerning law enforcement provided similar responses as the previous question

related to sex crimes. “If I reported being a victim of domestic violence, I would feel confident in law enforcement taking action.” A total of 51 Agreed with this statement -- 29 self-identified as White, 22 self-identified as Black. Eight male respondents Agreed. A total of 70 Disagreed and 86 provided Neutral responses.

The following survey item examines respondents’ knowledge of resources: “If I knew a victim of domestic violence, I know local resources to refer them to for help.” A total of 148 respondents Agreed, 30 Disagreed, and 31 selected Neutral. A total of 21/30 of respondents who Disagreed were White. Eight of those who Disagreed resided outside of the City of Memphis, but within Shelby County.



The final two questions are more contextual. “If I suspect someone is a victim of domestic violence, I would report it.” A total of 109 Agreed, 15 Disagreed, 84 provided Neutral responses. Finally, more respondents agreed on the final item as it concerns the suspect and not the victim. It states, “If I

suspect someone is committing domestic violence, I would report it.” A total of 126 Agreed, 13 Disagreed, 69 provided Neutral responses.

- University of Memphis Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice