

Understanding the Historical and Modern Barriers of Economic Mobility
For Black Women in the Cincinnati Region





The Black Women's Economic Mobility Project

Phase 1: Literature review of the historical context of labor trends and systemic barriers to Black women's employment.

Phase 2: Quantitative analysis to understand Black women in the workforce and their economic mobility status in Cincinnati region.

Phase 3: Qualitative study to determine the factors fostering or deterring Black women's economic mobility.



Phase 2

Realizing the Potential of an Equitable Economy: Centering Black Women's Upward Mobility in the Cincinnati Region

Key Findings

- The industries with a significant portion of the Black female workforce are also the growing industries in the Cincinnati MSA.
- There is a high desire to participate in the workforce by Black women, and they have a disproportional harder time gaining employment.
- Black women are predominantly in jobs that do not pay a living wage, and wage gaps are experienced in every occupation group.
- Black women are not seeing the economic returns for increased educational attainment.

2018 Total Prime Working-Age Population by Employment & Poverty

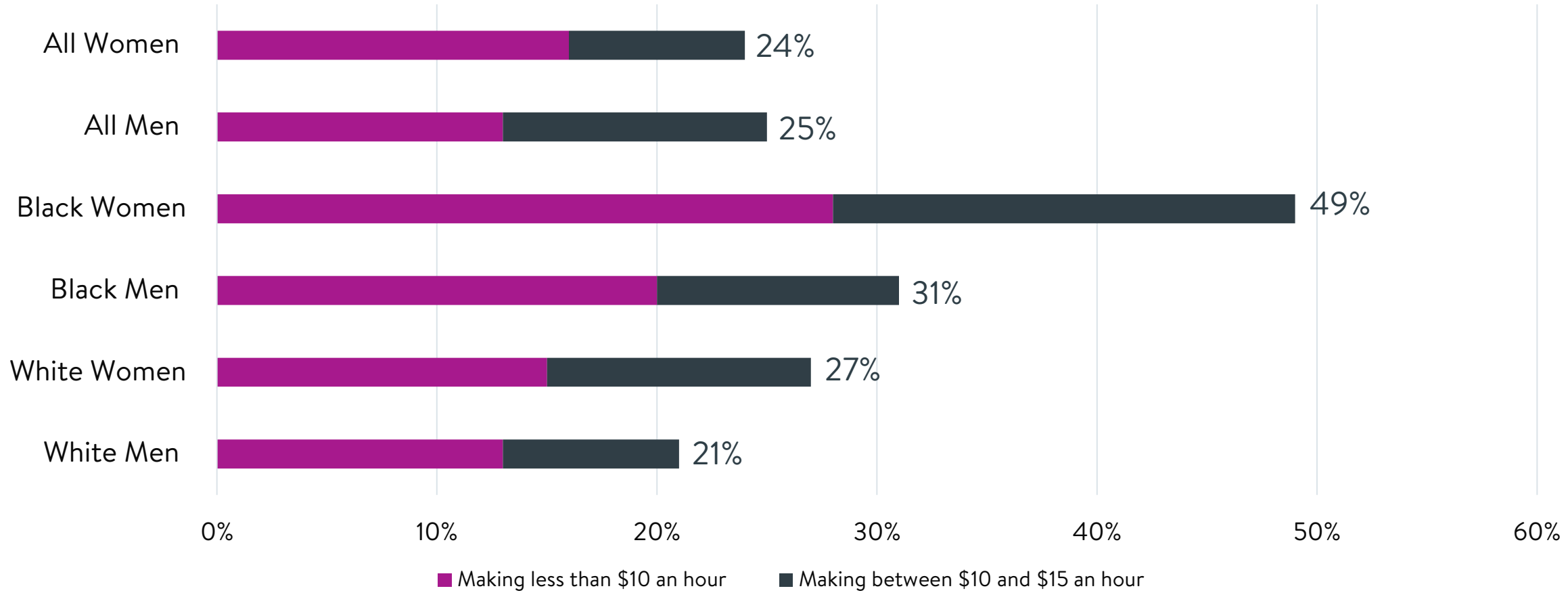
	Black Women	White Women	Black Men	White Men
Total Prime Working-Age Population	58,572	335,915	49,801	334,964
Employment				
Labor Force Participation	78.3%	79.9%	75.4%	90.7%
Unemployment Rate	4.5%	2.1%	2.4%	3.5%
Poverty & Public Assistance				
Percentage with Annual Earnings below 100% FPL	26.2%	9.4%	18.8%	8.3%
Percentage Receiving Public Assistance	6.7%	1.3%	0.9%	0.5%

Labor Force Participation: A measure of an economy’s active workforce (all workers employed and actively seeking employment).

Unemployment Rate: A measure of the share of workers in the labor force who do not currently have a job but are actively looking for work.



Percentage of Employed Individuals Making Less than \$10 and \$15 an Hour





Percentage of Employed Individuals Making Less than \$15 an Hour by Educational Attainment

	No Formal Education	High School Diploma/ GED	Some College	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctoral Degree
Black Women	71%	43%	47%	37%	32%	9%	0%
White Women	67%	38%	37%	20%	13%	9%	8%
Black Men	55%	38%	36%	36%	10%	13%	0%
White Men	52%	29%	26%	11%	11%	5%	3%



Percentage of Employed Individuals Making Less than \$15 an Hour by Educational Attainment

	No Formal Education	High School Diploma/ GED	Some College	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctoral Degree
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Phase 3

***The Influence of Gendered Racism and
Understanding Economic Fragility for Black Women
in the Cincinnati Region***

Methodology

- ▶ This study interviewed 32 self-identified Black or African American women
- ▶ Qualitative, one-on-one interviews, several hours each
- ▶ Interviews were anonymized and compensated
- ▶ Conducted between December 2020 and January 2021

Gendered Racism Framework



Gendered racism refers to the ways in which racism manifests differently based on gender and how racism and sexism intertwines.

Gendered Racism

Category	Economic Fragility Status	Attributes
Downwardly Mobile	High	While making advancements in education and earnings, they are experience economic disruption
Immobile	Constant	Immobile are generationally stuck in place. They rarely or never really had a chance to move upward.
Upwardly Mobile	Less	Persons who are or have acquired wealth often at a higher economic position class than their parents. Individuals in this category often had advanced education and steady employment.

Key Findings

- Black women are vulnerable to gendered racism in the workplace and at home, and this impacts their economic mobility opportunities.
- Many women report episodic experiences with physical and sexual violence.
- All the women interviewed have too little external and familial support, and many of the participants reported being the person everyone else calls on for help.
- Child support is a huge barrier for Black women's economic stability, irrespective of their mobility status.
- Interviewees reported a generational wealth deficit due to the lost family home.
- Reproductive injustice is a pronounced component of life for Black women across the three economic mobility categories. Maternal and infant mortality is not the problem of being poor but rather a problem of being Black in America.

Recommendations for All Sectors

- ▶ All interventions need to be better resourced.
- ▶ Address racism and sexism and how it holds us all back from participating, prospering and reaching our full potential as a community.
- ▶ Include more community/employee voice in all decision making

Actionable Recommendations

- ▶ Policy Makers - Apply a racial & gender lens to all new legislation; conduct a racial & gender impact analysis for all policy.
- ▶ Employers - Implement supportive and stabilizing benefits that meet the needs of lower wage workers.
- ▶ Educational Institutions - Address barriers to student success outside of the classroom; transportation, childcare, emergency expenses
- ▶ Funders - Invest in projects creating social capital and creating supportive peer networks



Thank You!

Questions?

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