



Researching Black and Minority Ethnic Communities



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Some facts and figures

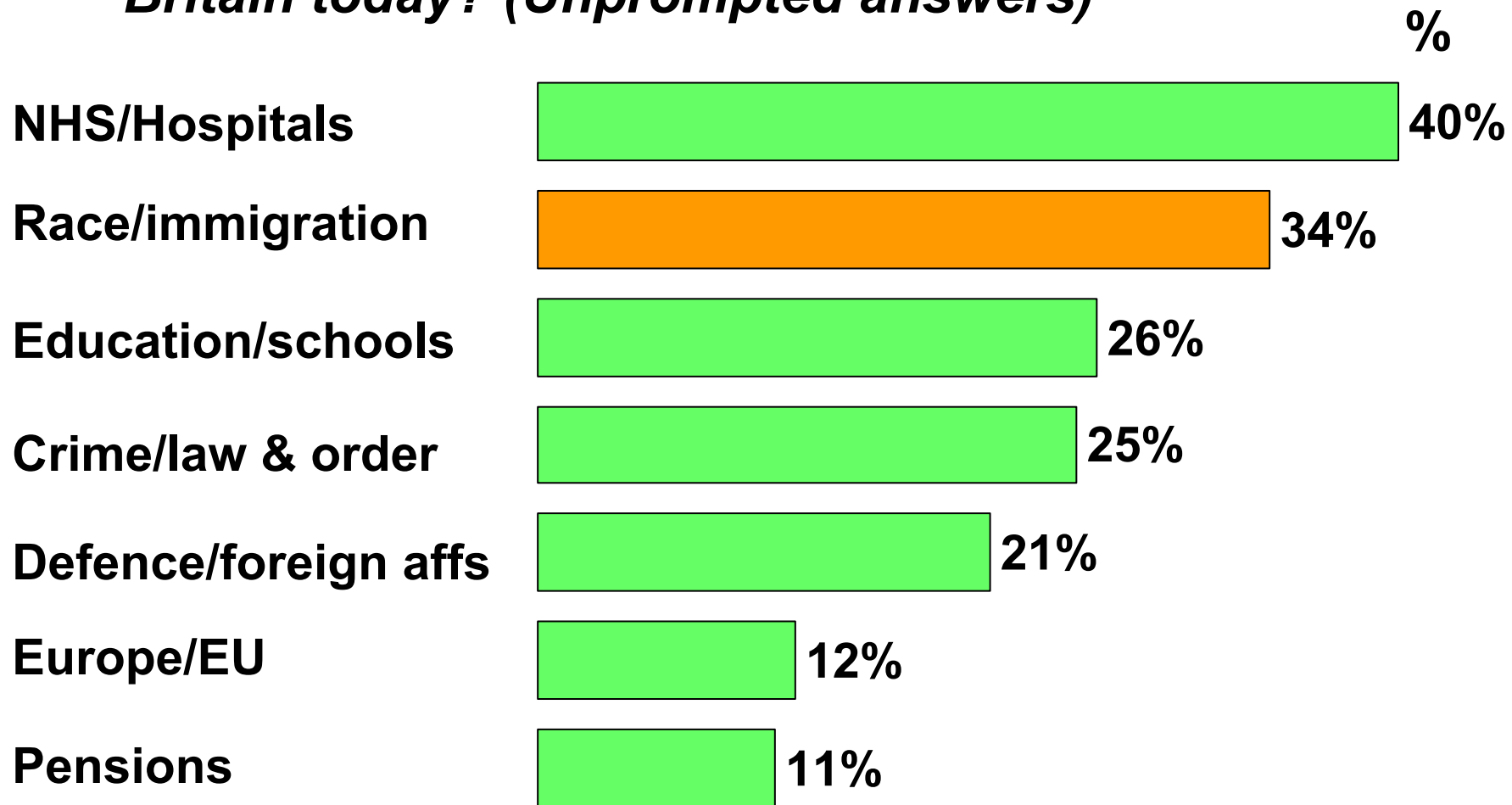
■ Some facts and figures

- **Around 9% of the population of GB is from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) Community**
- **Almost half of the BME population lives in London**
- **The vast majority of BMEs live in the most deprived wards in England**
- **BMEs face greater barriers to entry and progression within the Labour market and higher levels of unemployment**

As well as issues within the
BME community, race
issues are a priority
nationally

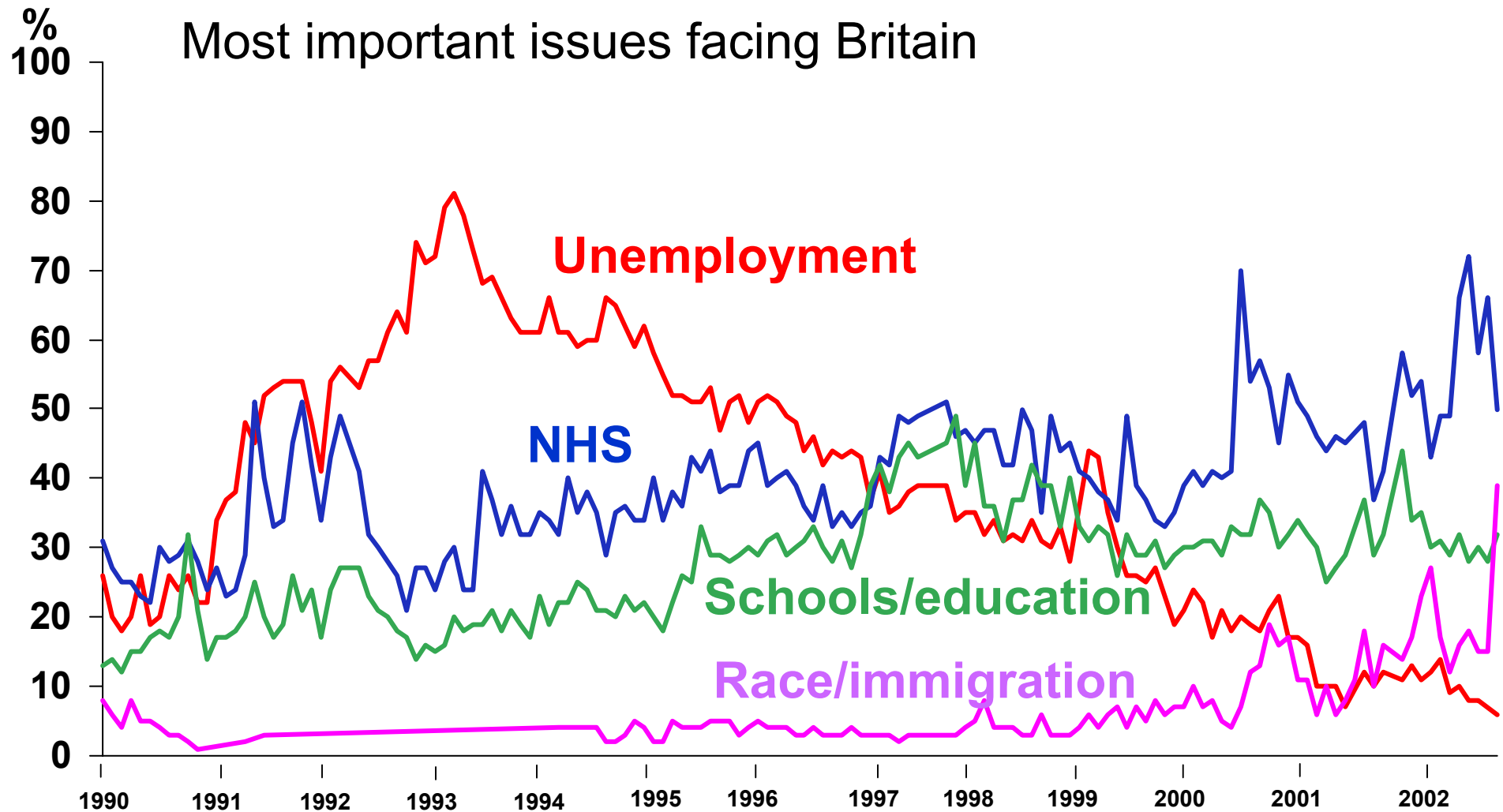
Most important issues, October 2003

Q *What would you say are the most important issues facing Britain today? (Unprompted answers)*



Base: 1,052 British adults 18+, 23-28 Oct. 2003. Source: MORI Political Monitor

A new pattern of concerns?



Base: c. 2,000 British adults

Most Important Issues - by Ethnicity

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White Black Asian

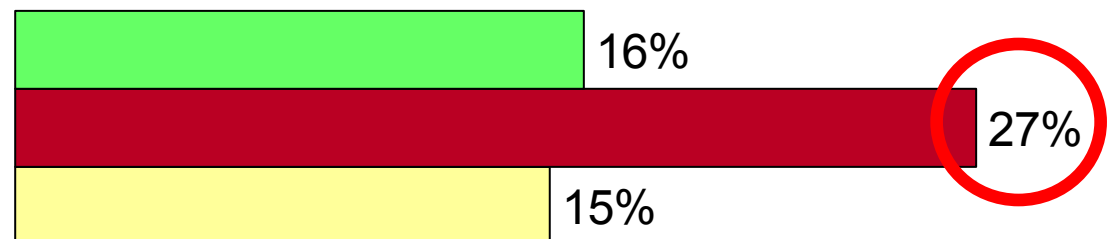
National Health Service/hospitals



Education/schools



Crime/law & order/violence/vandalism



Base: c. 2,000 British adults

So what does this mean in terms of researching the BME community?

- **Can make researching BME communities more challenging**
 - **May need to be more creative in your approach, not using traditional methods**
 - **Need to consider cultural sensibilities**
 - **Can make service delivery more challenging for service providers**
 - **Need to ensure trust of participants – feel they are contributing to something useful**



**Things to think
about BEFORE
starting your
research or
consultation**

Have Clear Objectives

Are you?

- **giving people a chance to have an input**

- speak to community groups, invite comments, survey at shopping centre

- **boost involvement/understanding**

- communications campaigns, real debates, delegation

- **trying to get an accurate measure of views**

- surveys that are representative of the whole community

- **difficult to do all three using the same exercise**

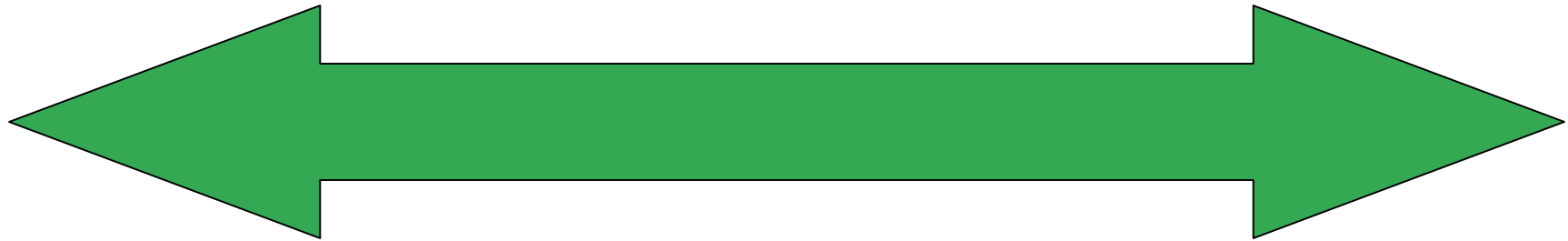
- **increasing need for a combination of approaches**

- **And one may be more appropriate than other when thinking about research BME or hard to reach communities**

Think through aims and objectives

Consultation

Representative research



- Understanding/diagnostic
- Involving
- Will not provide statistically reliable results

- Rigorous sampling
- Robust sample
 - not self-selecting
- Usually quantitative - questionnaire based
- Analysis by sub-groups
- Can compare over time

- Need to be very clear about impact of informing people, and of who you are really having a dialogue with
- In research terms, want to measure impact of knowledge to assess effect eg question wording, question order
- Select who you talk to carefully to ensure representativeness - not just those who are interested
- In consultation mode
 - may be providing information to let people make informed judgements on plans
 - will be inviting as many groups/individuals to participate as possible

Steps to successful research and consultation

Steps to successful research

- **Involves staff and other key stakeholders** – such as local community groups
- **Makes good use of different research methods**
 - You may need to **be creative** when researching hard to reach or BME groups. Many traditional methods may not be practical. For instance, involving local communities to be part of the research - training local people to help with conducting interviews.
- **Be sensitive** to the nature of the community involved – ‘one size does not fit all’
- **Is realistic** about what can be achieved
- **Communicate/feedback** the findings

What types of
methodologies are more
appropriate?

Depends on what you want to achieve

- Hard data that will say x% think this or z% think that?
- Understand why people think what they do?
- Involve people in local initiative?

Undertaking Large Scale Research

- In areas where BME population a small percentage of overall population
- Research can be expensive - is the population dispersed or concentrated?
- Is a survey viable or is more 'in depth' research needed?
- Do you need to liaise with community groups to find people?
- But need to be careful you aren't getting the self-appointed representatives
 - normally only 20% of people are aware of existence of the groups who claim to represent them

Undertaking Large Scale Research

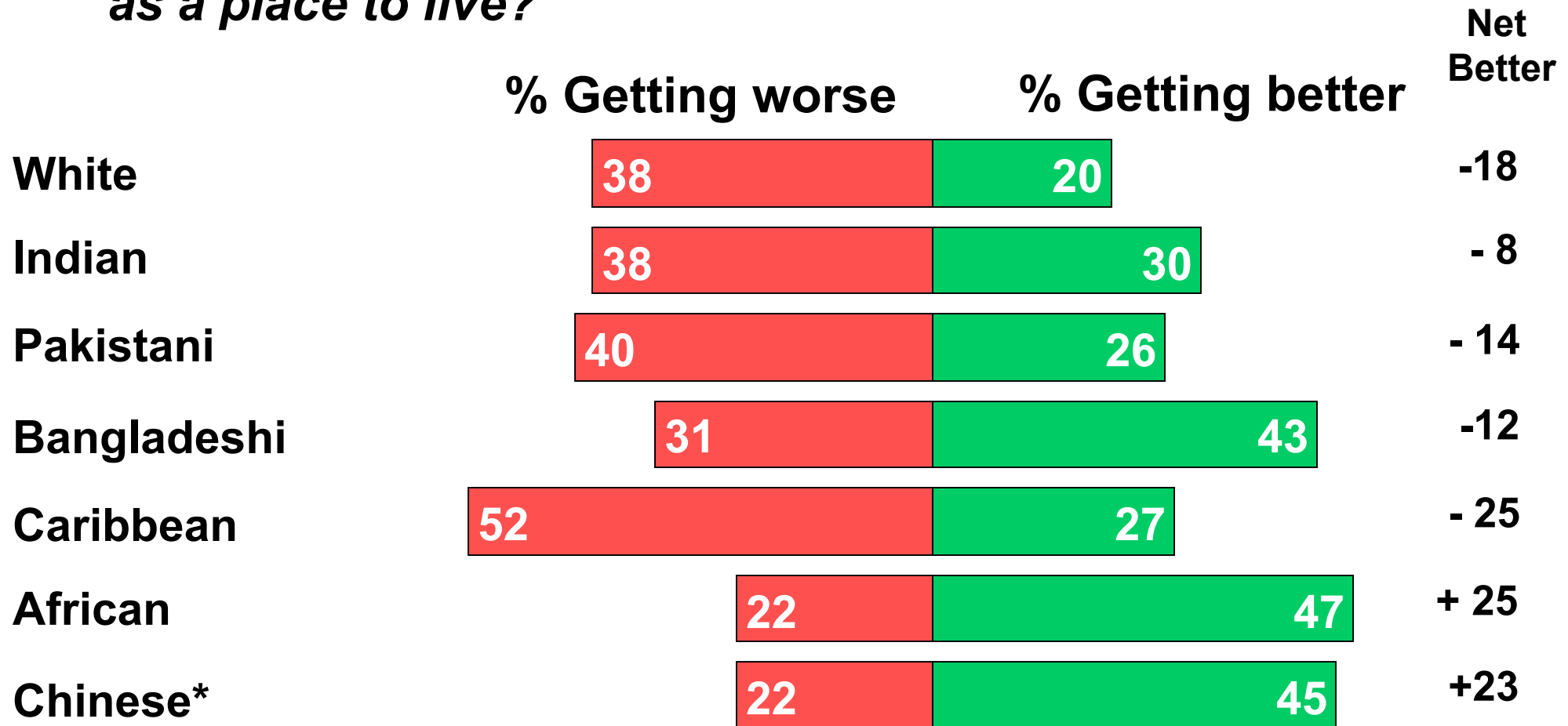
- Sampling
 - random, quota, snowballing.....
- Dealing with language issues, matching ethnicity/gender of interviewer?
- If opting for self-completion surveys remember
 - some people will not read their own language
 - offering people questionnaires translated into their own language does not generally have much impact on response rates
 - better to consider qualitative approach?

Modal Effects and Differential Responses

- The method used to collect data can lead to different responses
 - face to face interviewing normally more positive than postal
 - for all ethnic groups
 - but especially Asian people
- More generally, for example Asian people seem to be more positive than Afro-Caribbean people in face to face research

Local Area - Improvement or Deterioration?

Q *Do you think your neighbourhood is getting better or worse as a place to live?*

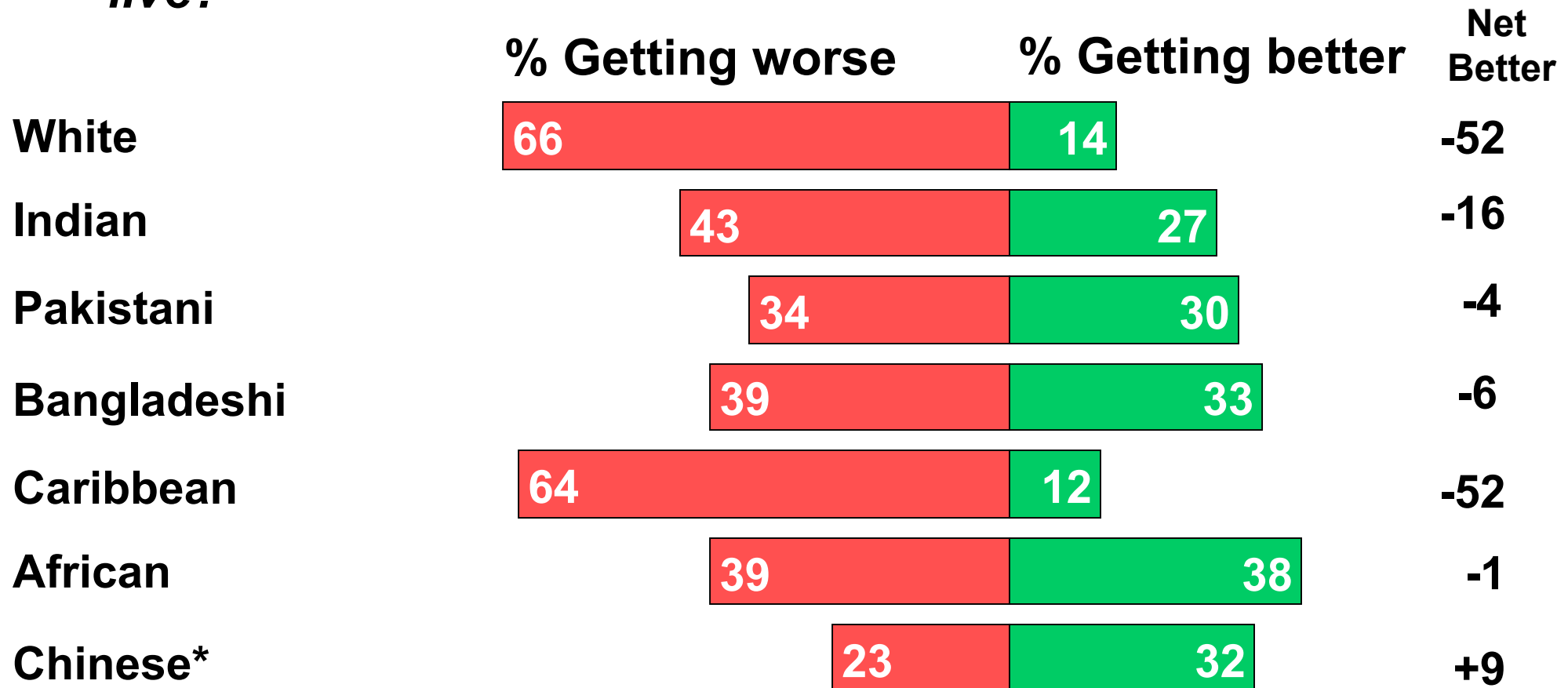


*small base

Base: All GB adults ,aged 16+ (822) All EMG adults, aged 16+ (649)

Britain - Improvement or Deterioration?

Q *Do you think Britain is getting better or worse as a place to live?*



*small base

Base: All GB adults ,aged 16+ (822) All EMG adults, aged 16+ (649)

Expectations

Q *Thinking generally about what you expect from public services, would you say that they....*

% Fall short

% Exceed

EM Booster

-33

9

Black respondents

-41

8

Asian respondents

-28

10

**UK Population
(Peoples Panel)**

-40

5

Base: whole sample - 830

A qualitative approach



- Hackney Libraries Service wanted research into views of certain communities
 - Black residents
 - Chinese residents
 - Orthodox Jewish residents from Stamford Hill area
- Discussion groups best for this – around 8-12 people
 - In-depth questions about usage, library needs, and also culturally specific factors
 - Difficult to cover this in quantitative questionnaire



- Recruitment particularly difficult with Orthodox Jewish Community
- Female recruiter – unable to recruit males so needed a male recruiter
- Difficult to gain easy access into community
- Recruited local Orthodox Rabbi to take part – helped gain trust

Culturally specific findings

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Hackney

I don't use the public library – some of the books are not the sort of books I would want my children to open

Female, Jewish Group

We've had bad experiences...you meet a lot of people in the library. We had a case of somebody who went as far as intermarriage through sitting meeting somebody in the library

Male, Jewish Group

In a nutshell, Hackney are not providing for us – we have to provide our own private facilities and it costs a lot of money

Male, Jewish Group

Cultural Empathy

- Need to be sensitive to other people's customs and cultural sensitivities
- Not a good idea to interview during holidays and religious festivals
- Venues – make sure participants feel comfortable about where the research is taking place. Make sure venue is close to where people live and familiar.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers

- Some groups may be particularly hard to reach
 - E.g. working with refugees and asylum seekers
- May be issues of trust around giving information
- May be unrealistically heightened expectations from the research
- Practical issues such as mobility
- May be difficult to track over time

Always need to consider whether differences in attitude are due to ethnicity alone, or other factors - age, class, deprivation, nature of the area

Thank You
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