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## Analyzing and Enhancing CMC Biography Subject Headings for Race and Gender

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# Analyzing and Enhancing CMC Biography Subject Headings for Race and Gender

Peter Spyers-Duran, Sai Deng, Jeanne Piascik, Amy Dovydaits & Kristine Shrauger  
University of Central Florida Libraries



## Abstract

Dr. Rudine Bishop's theory "Windows, Mirrors and Sliding Glass Doors" explains that children need to see themselves reflected in books and learn about the lives of others. With equity, diversity, and inclusion in mind and to improve access to the juvenile biographies in the University of Central Florida Curriculum Materials Center (CMC) Library, librarians from cataloging, CMC, and ILL analyzed 952 bibliographic records and used the results to enhance subject headings with biographees' gender, race, nationality and other information.

The librarians devised a rubric to analyze and quantify the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) and non-LCSH in the records. A student assistant was trained to review the juvenile biographies and input data about each book into a database. Librarians used this data to compile statistics to measure subject headings for bias and inequality and to determine how cataloging practice has changed over time. They also added local subject headings, LCSH, LC Demographic Group Terms and Homosaurus terms to these records in the library catalog. This project aids student educators in discovering materials for the diverse population they will teach.

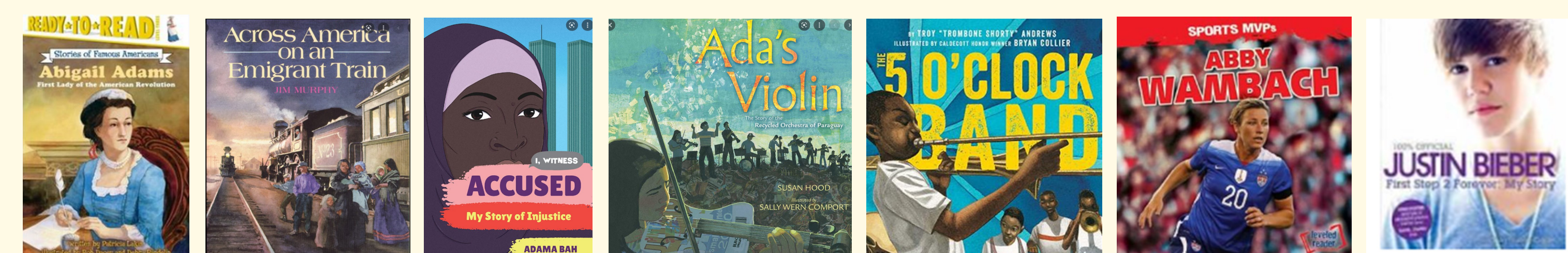
## Rationale & Goal

- Patrons and librarians rely on bibliographic record searches to identify and locate pertinent diverse library materials within their collections.
- Education students seeking diverse biographies within the CMC cast a spotlight upon the overall lack of discoverability regarding this collection.
- CMC staff were unable to effectively search for diverse biographee reading recommendations by gender, race, ethnicity, or nationality since this information was not equitably and uniformly included in the subject headings.

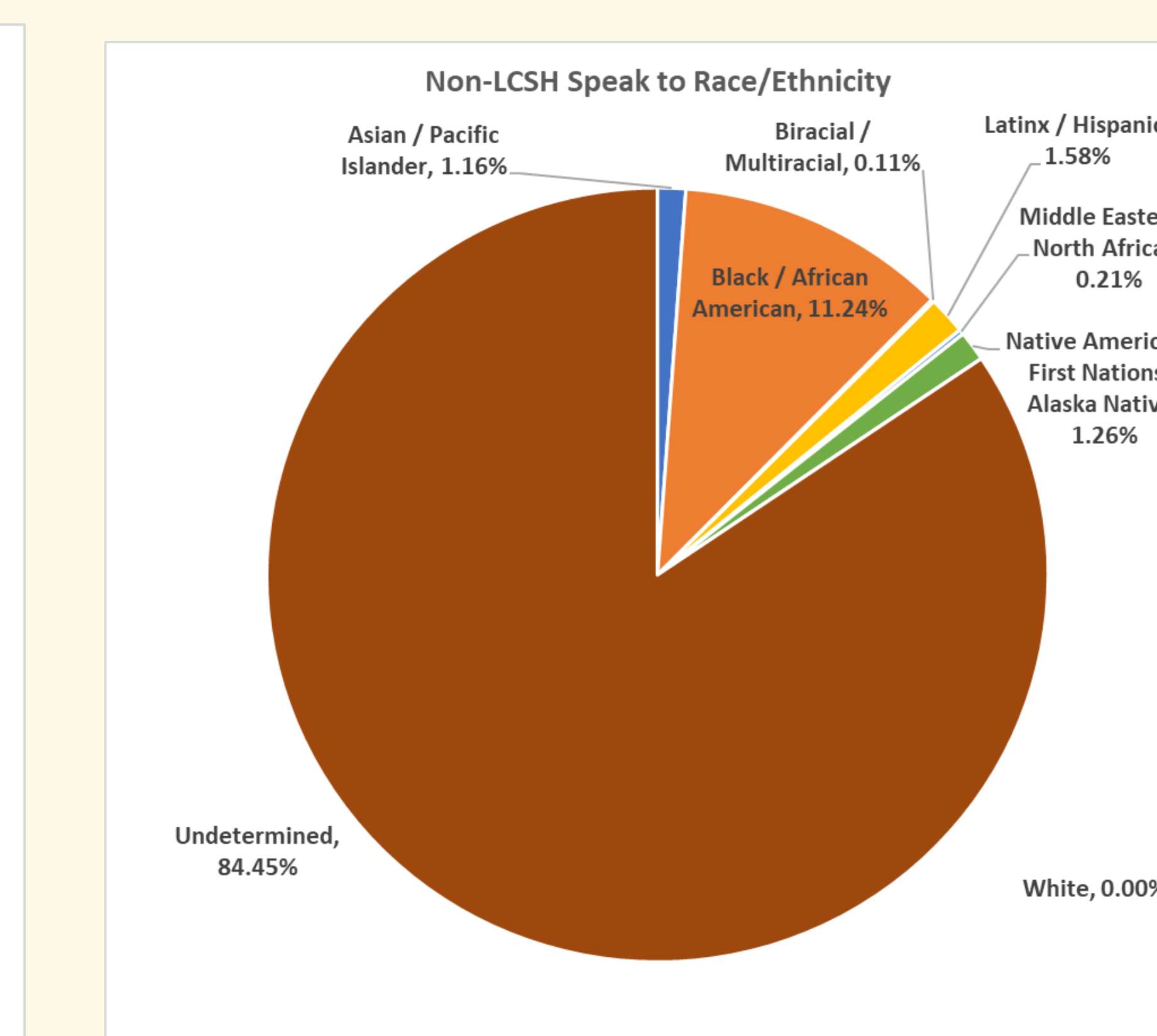
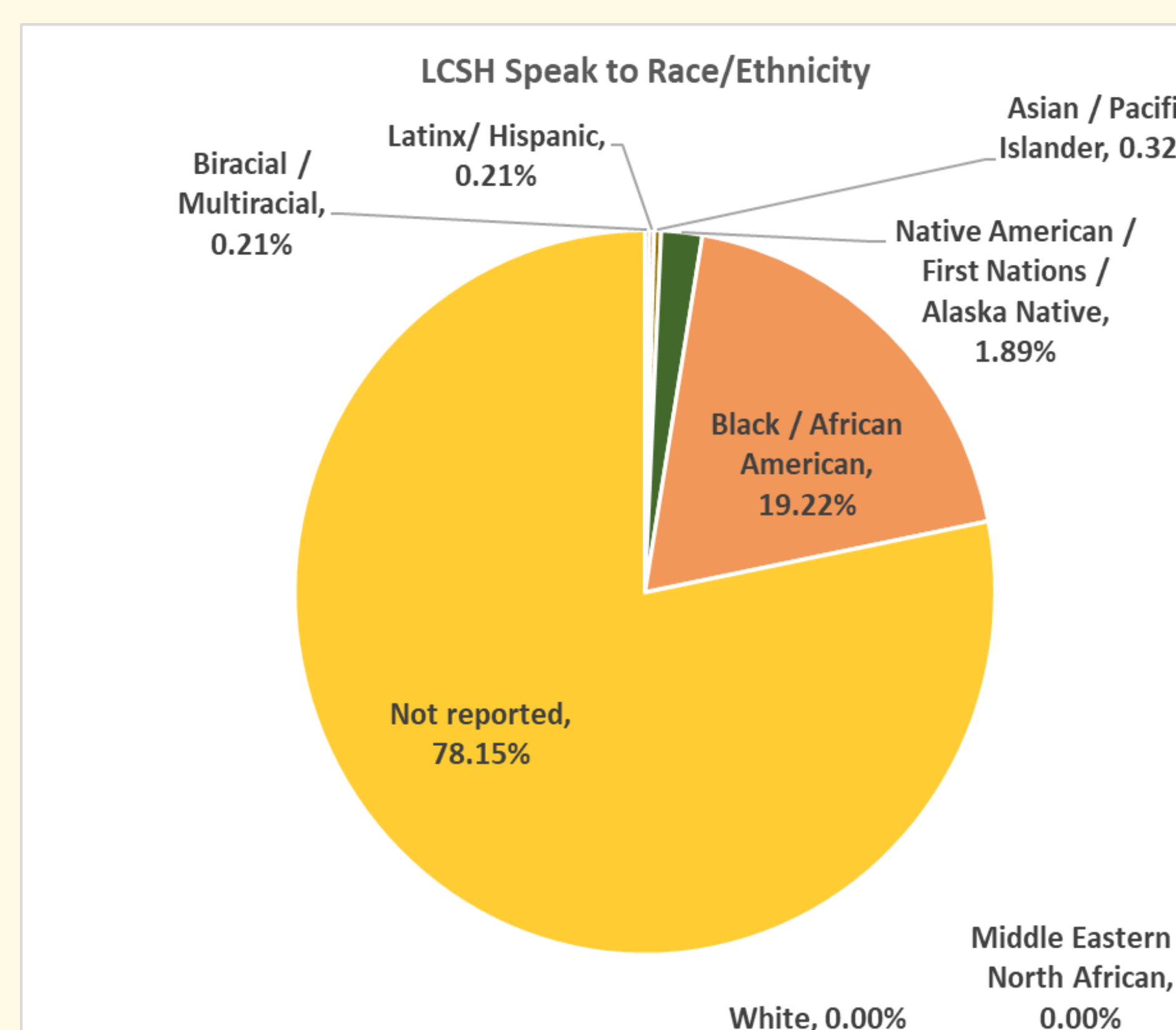
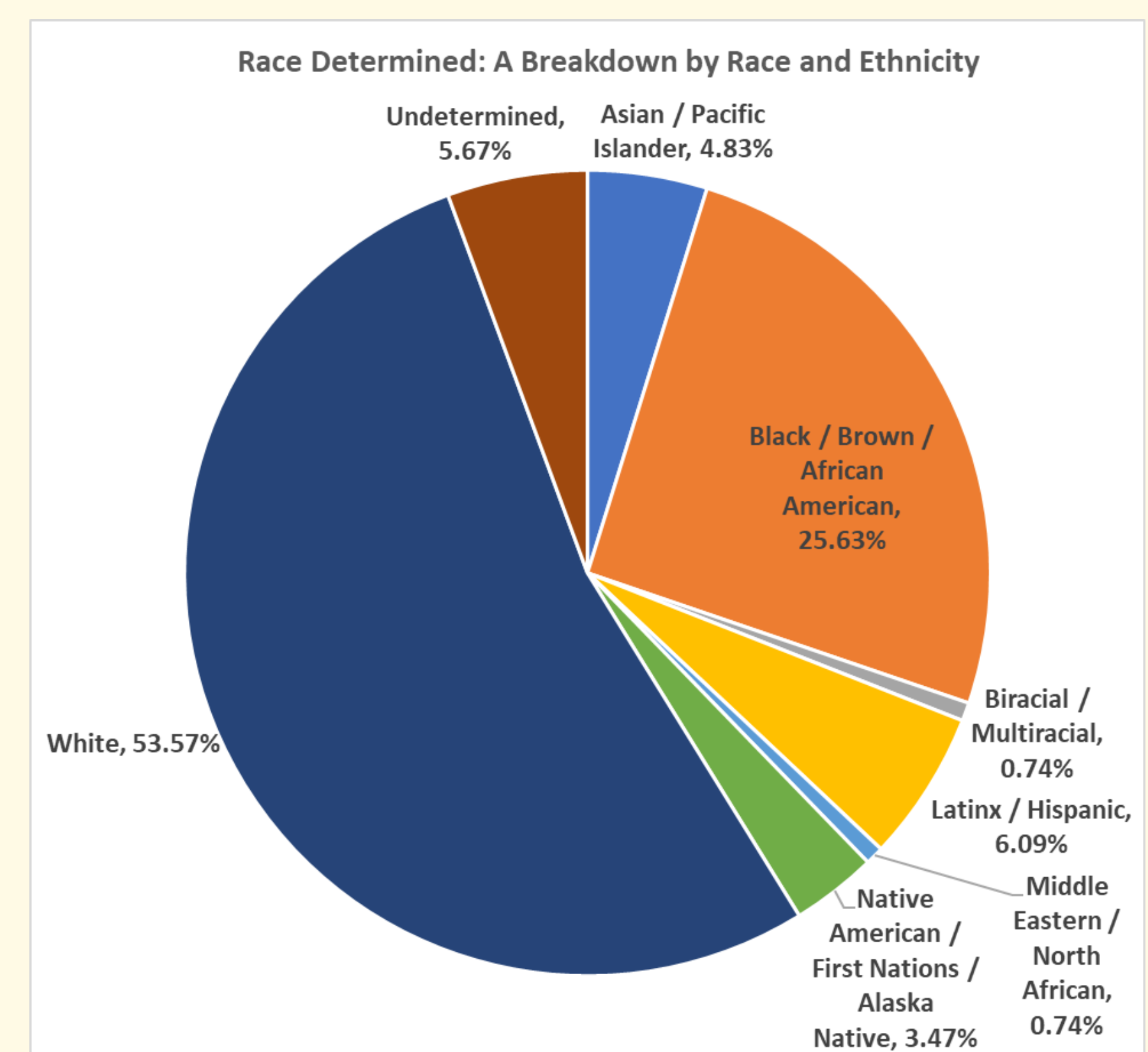
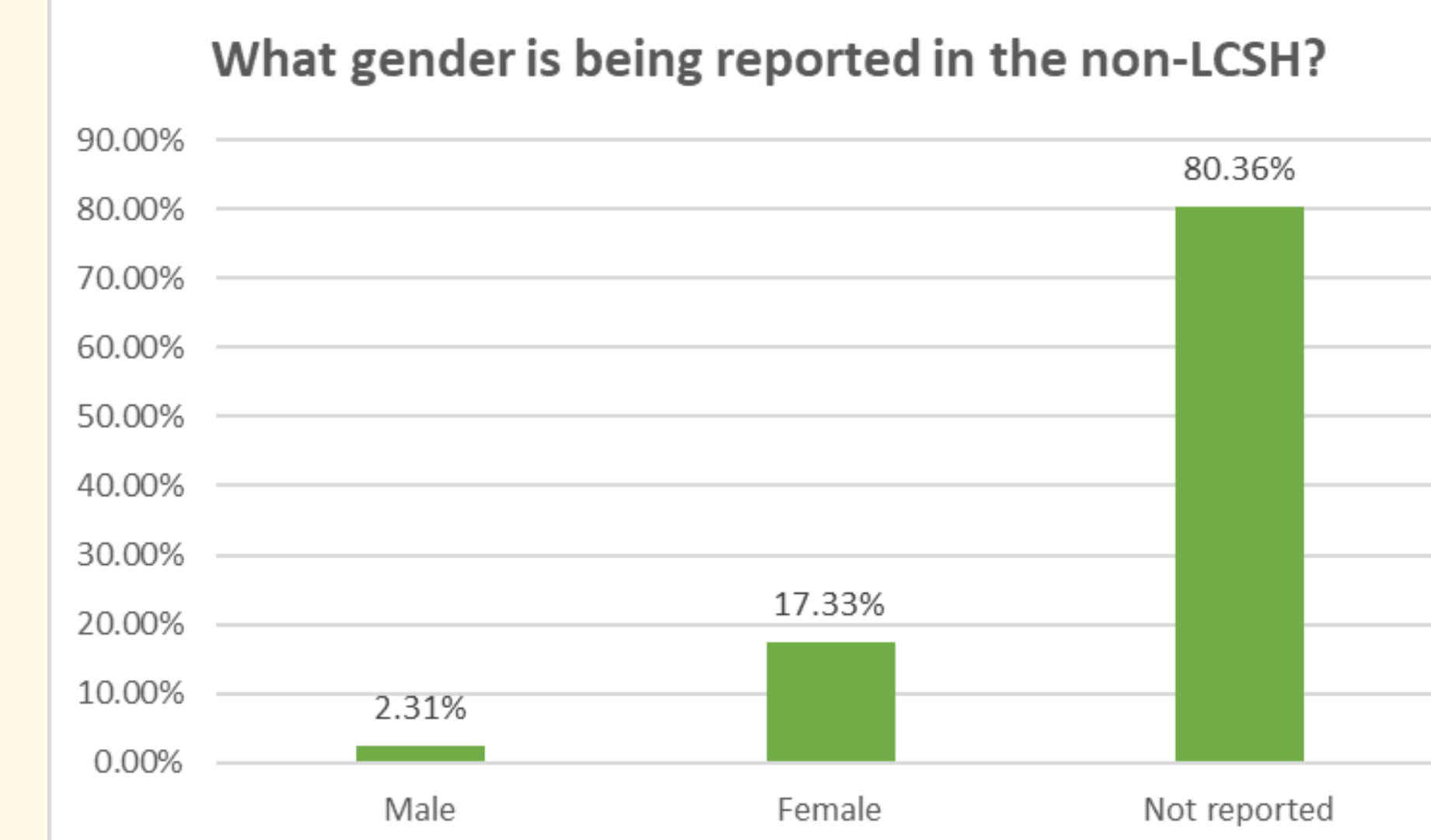
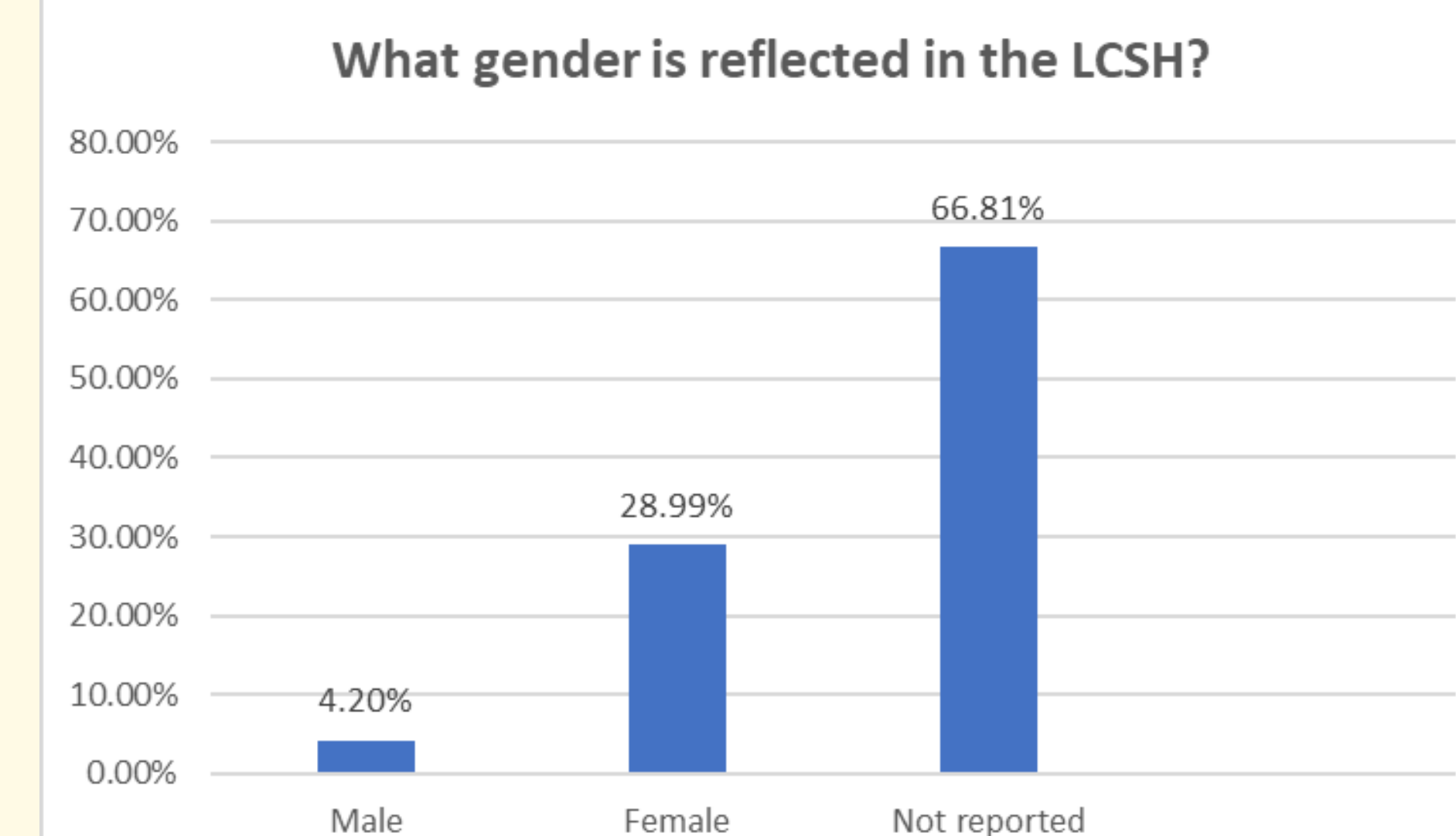
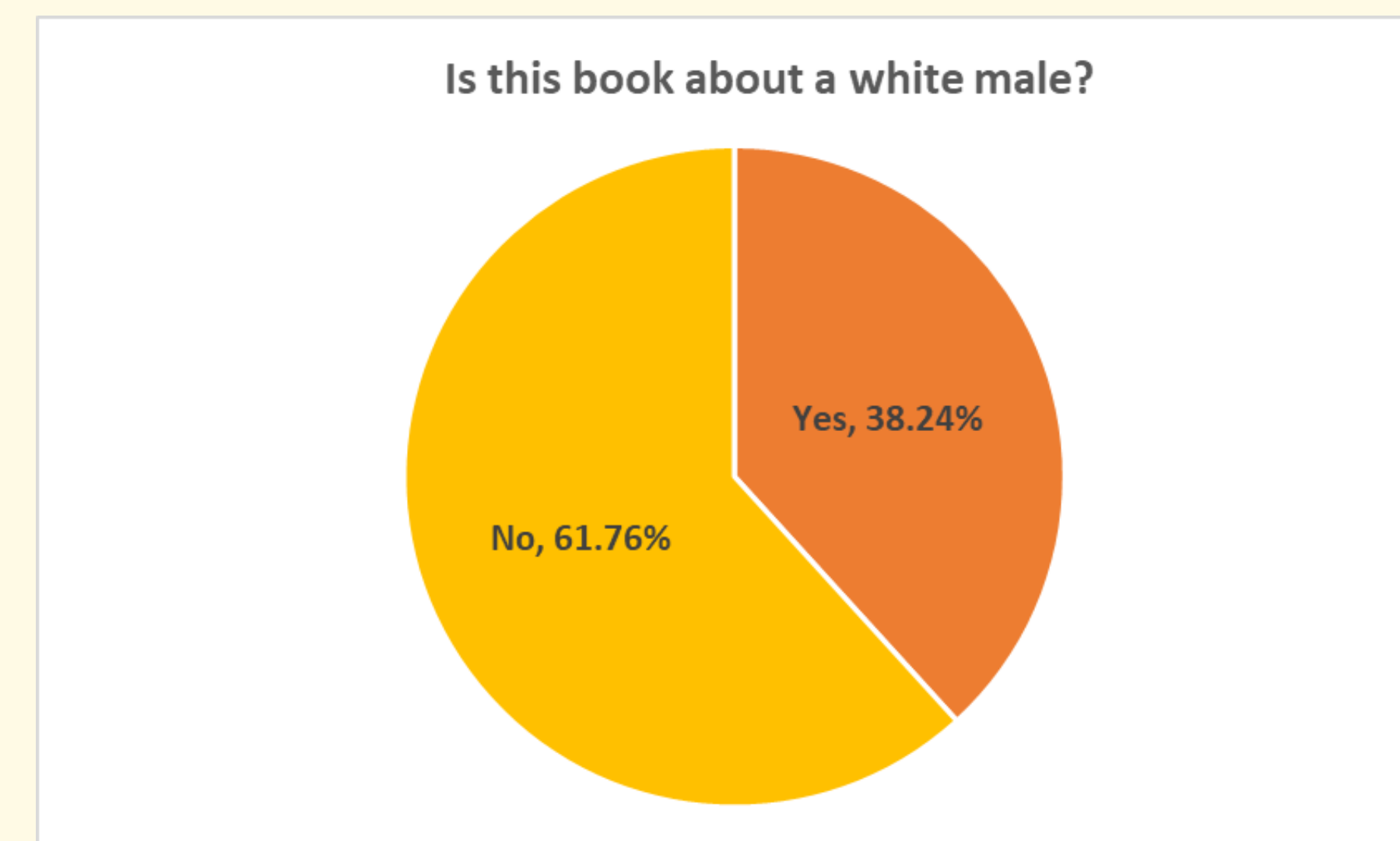
The goal was to first analyze the bibliographic records for the biographies, discover any bias in the subject headings, and then remedy the bias and make the records more discoverable by adding local subject headings and other access points.

## Methodology

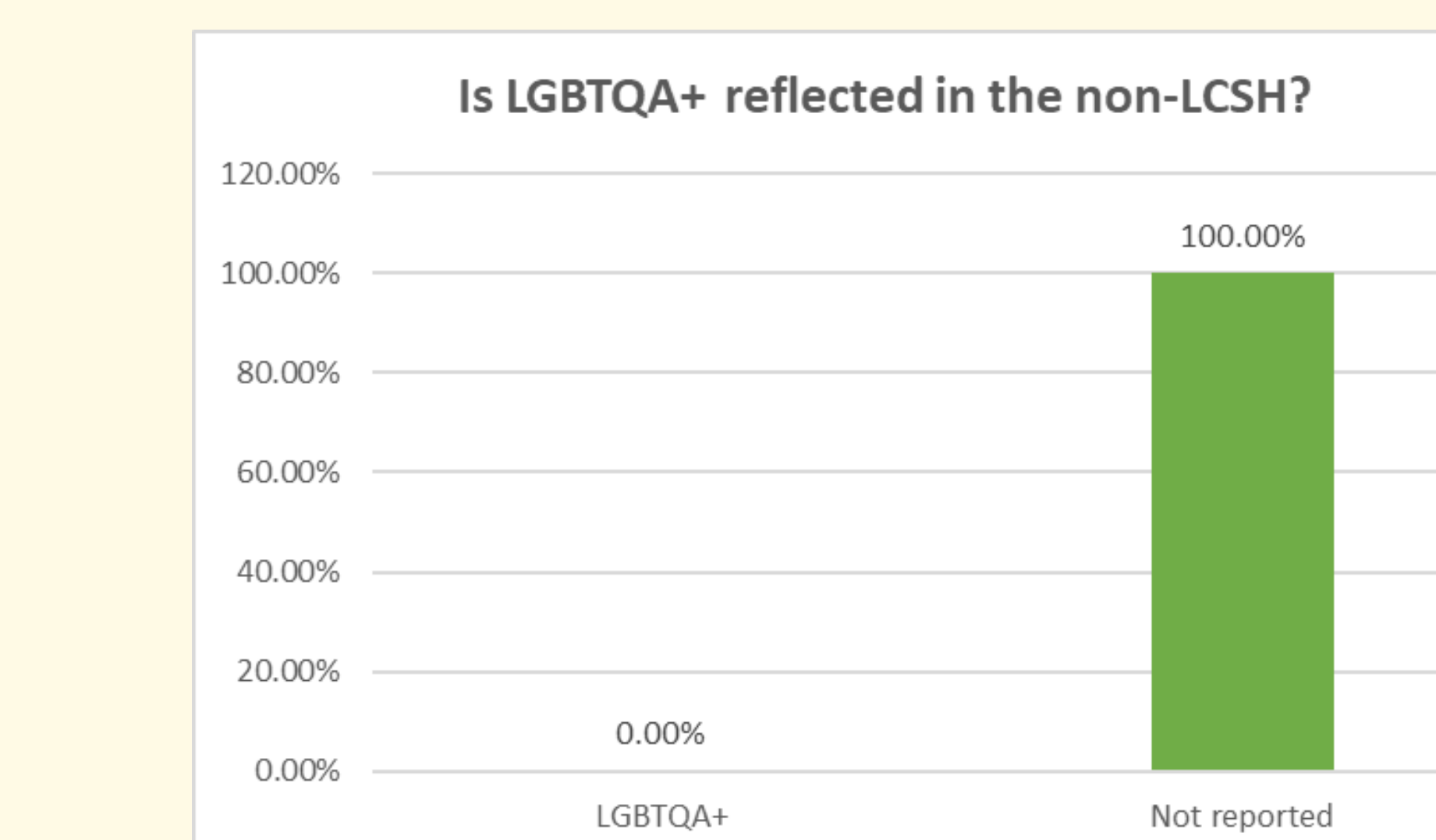
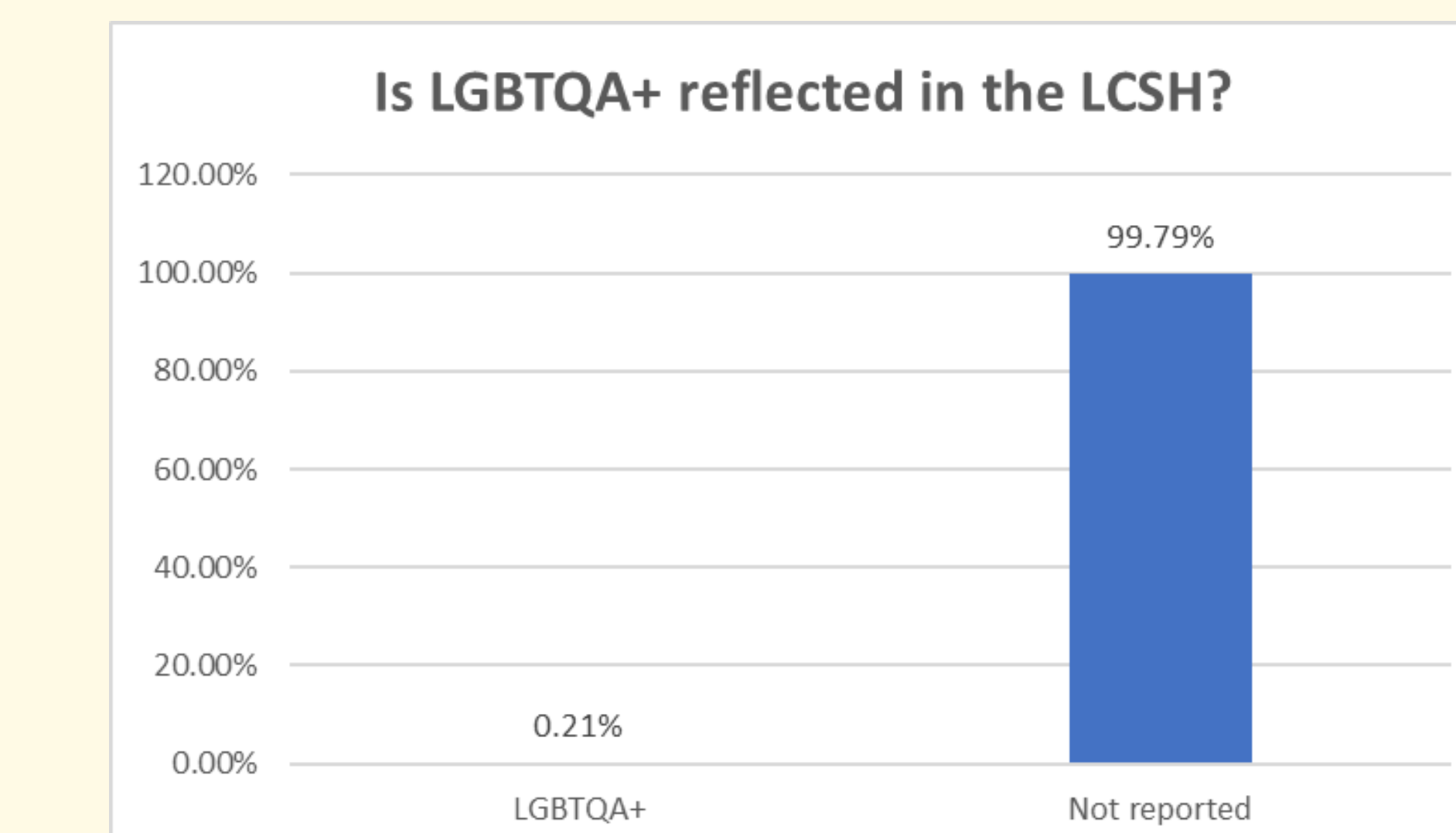
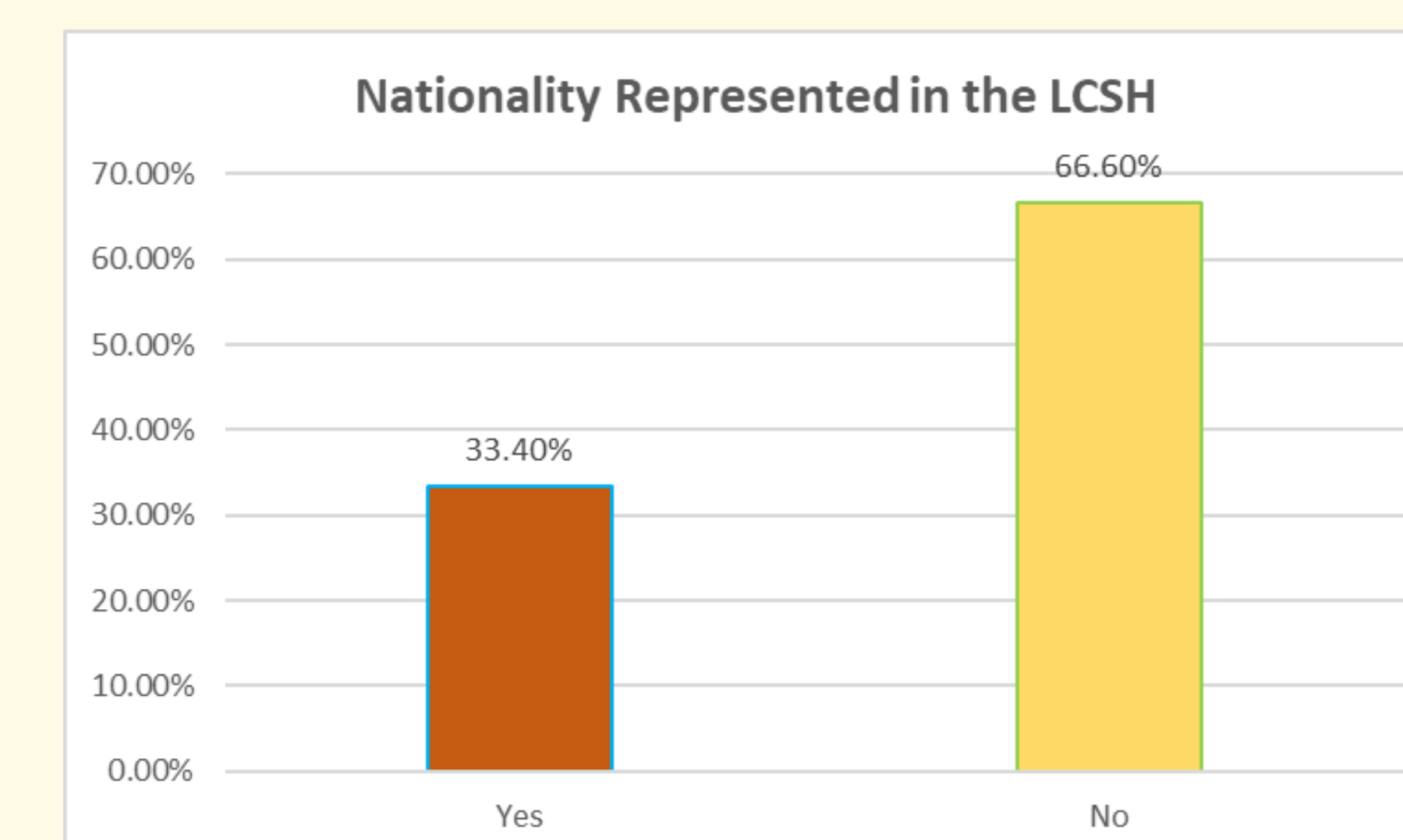
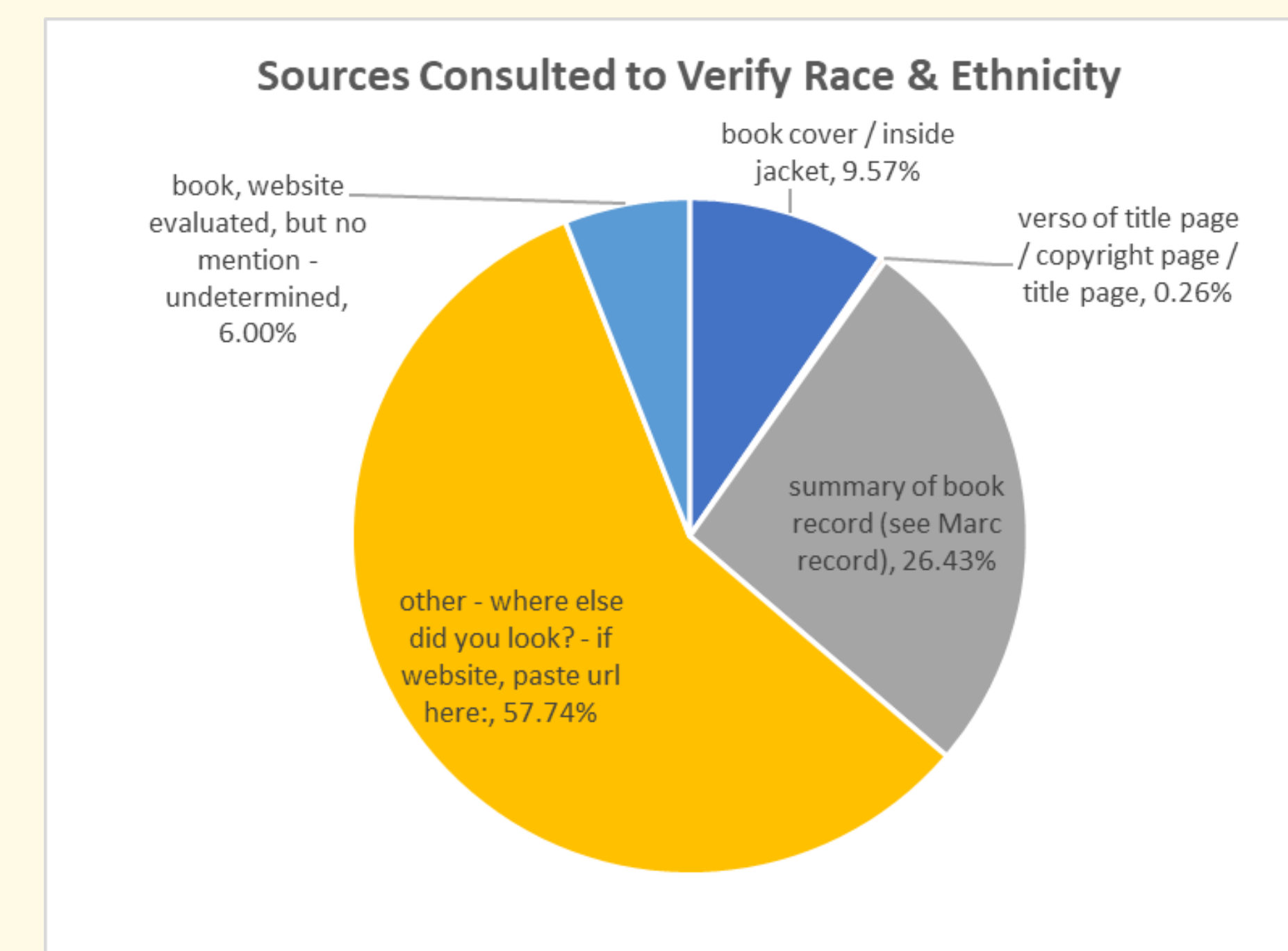
- 952 bibliographic records of juvenile biographies in the CMC were reviewed for equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).
- A Qualtrics survey was devised with 39 questions related to the biographee's gender, race/ethnicity, and nationality in the LCSH, non-LCSH, and summary/abstract of the bibliographic record.
- Sample questions included:
  - What is the title? Who is the author?
  - How many LCSH speak to gender? What gender is being reported in the LCSH?
  - To confirm inherent bias in LCSH, is this book about a white male?
  - How many LCSH speak to race/ethnicity?
  - Is nationality represented in the LCSH?
- Statistical analysis was performed on the data and evaluated for unconscious bias.
- The data was used to consistently enhance the 952 bibliographic records with local subject headings, LCSH, LC Demographic Group Terms (LCDGT) as well as terms from Homosaurus to reflect each biographee's gender, race/ethnicity, and nationality.



## Analysis of the Juvenile Collection



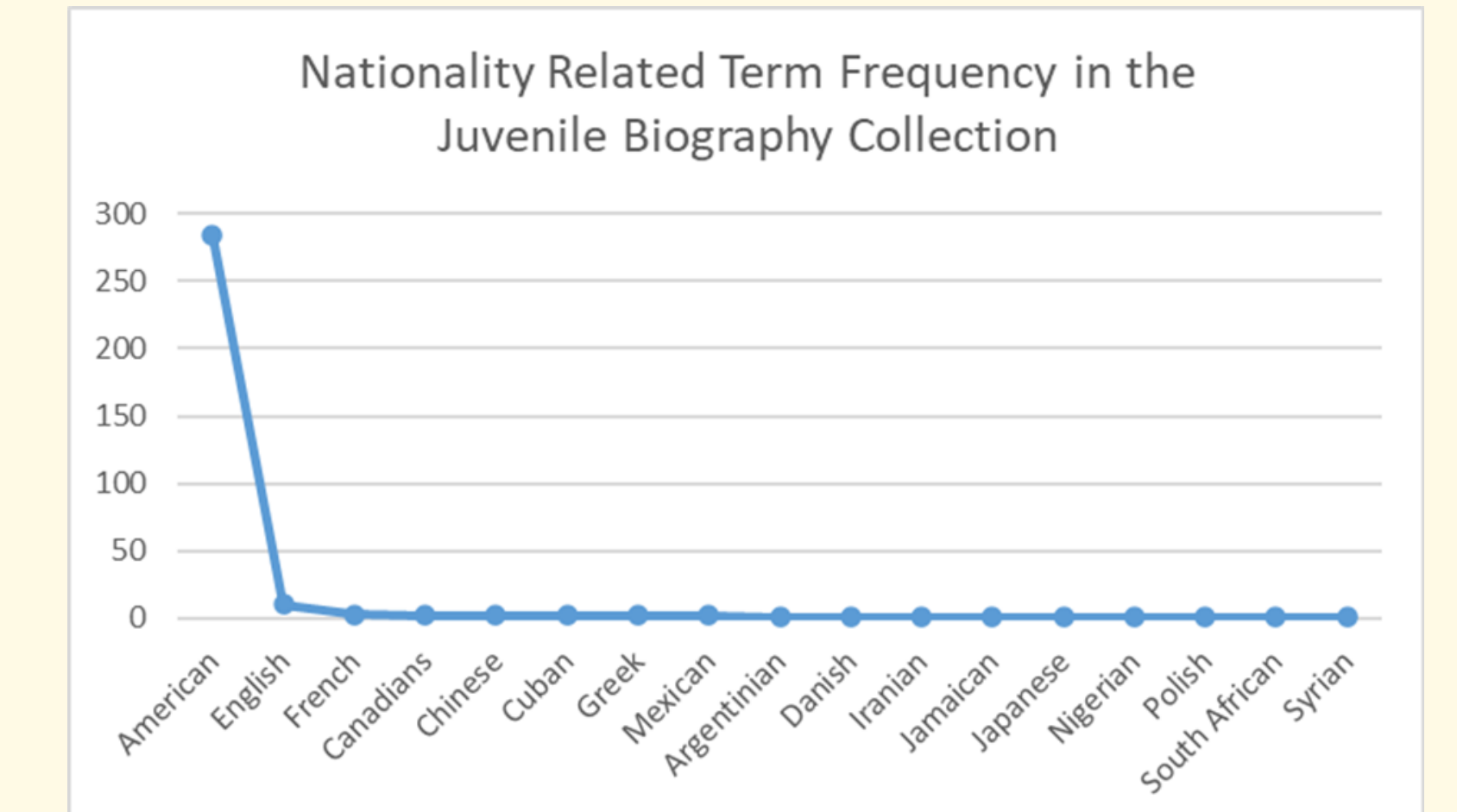
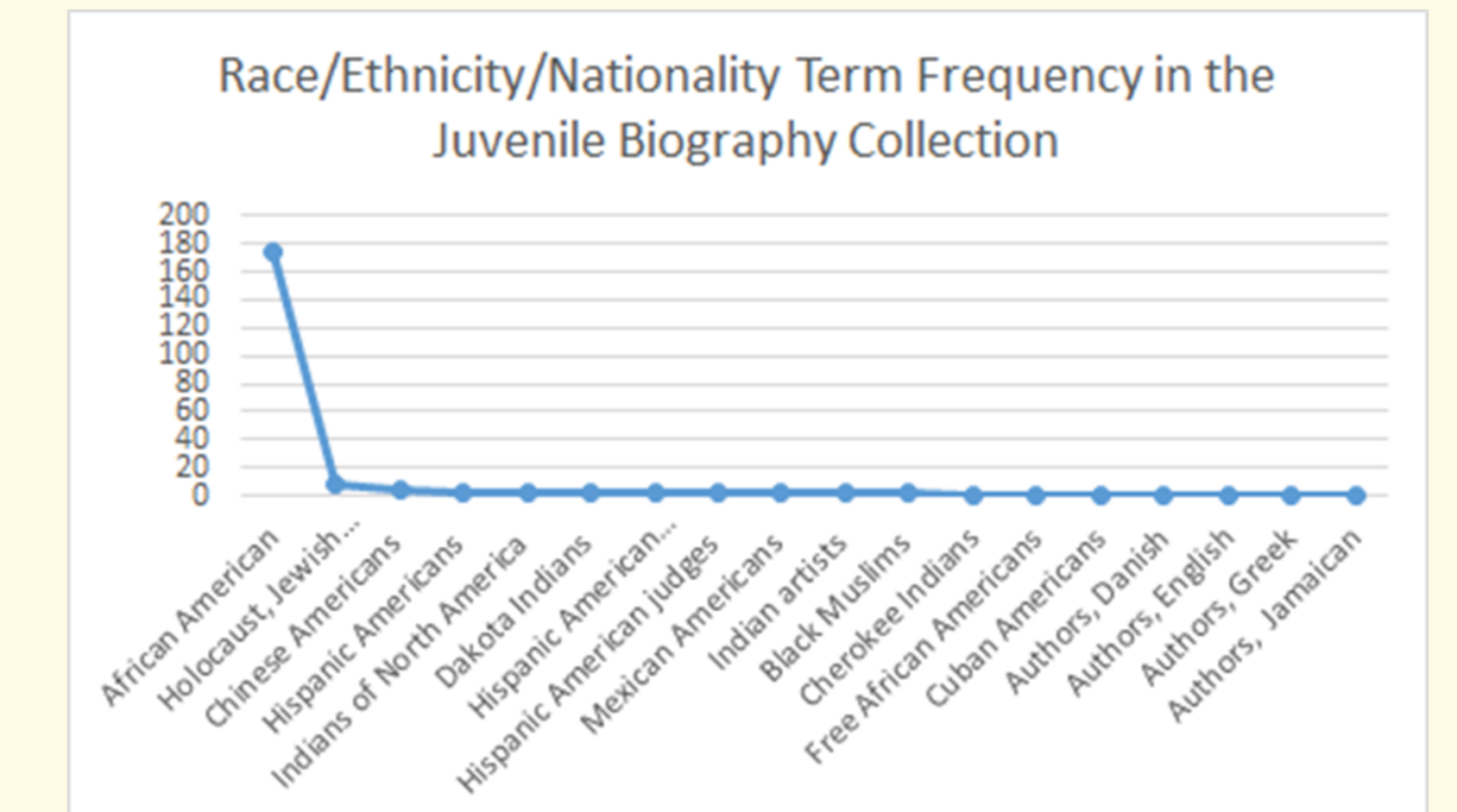
Years	# of bib records	Mean # LCSH per bib record	Mean # non-LCSH per bib record
2020-2021	94	18.94	8.56
2010-2019	526	7.68	9.2
2000-2009	214	6.88	1.75
1990-1999	94	7.78	1.38
1980-1989	12	7.58	2.33
pre-1980	12	4.5	1.17



## Subject Headings Analysis

### LCSH for Race/Ethnicity in the Juvenile Biography Collection Prior to the Audit

Types of Subject Headings	Percentage	Number
LC subject headings (650 V0)	58.82%	450
LC subject headings for children's literature (650 V1)	39.74%	304
LC Geographical names (651 V0)	0.52%	4
Geographical names from LCSH for children's literature (651 V1)	0.52%	4
Personal name from LCSH (600 V0)	0.26%	2
Personal name from LCSH for Children's Literature (600 V1)	0.13%	1
Total	100%	765



## Post Audit Edits

- Gender**
  - 690 \ \$a Biography \$x Gender \$x Male \$9 local
  - 690 \ \$a Biography \$x Gender \$x Female \$9 local
  - 690 \ \$a Biography \$x Gender \$x Gender neutral \$9 local
- Race/Ethnicity**
  - 690 \ \$a Biography \$x Race/Ethnicity \$x Native American/First Nations \$9 local
  - 690 \ \$a Biography \$x Race/Ethnicity \$x Latinx/Hispanic \$9 local
  - 690 \ \$a Biography \$x Race/Ethnicity \$x White \$9 local
- Nationality**
  - 690 \ \$a Biography \$x Nationality \$x American \$9 local
  - 690 \ \$a Biography \$x Nationality \$x Spanish \$9 local
- Ethnicity/Nationality**
  - 690 \ \$a Biography \$x Ethnicity/Nationality \$x Chinese American \$9 local
  - 690 \ \$a Biography \$x Ethnicity/Nationality \$x Mexican American \$9 local

## Concluding Thoughts

- The omission of "white" from LCSH and non-LCSH in bibliographic records clearly demonstrates that white is the default or assumed race of biographees.
- The high percentage of juvenile biography bibliographic records that lack LCSH and non-LCSH that address race/ethnicity demonstrates the need for these bibliographic records to be enhanced to reflect this vital demographic information.
- The low percentage of bibliographic records with LCSH and non-LCSH related to gender shows the extent to which gender is lacking from subject headings, and demonstrates that male is the default or assumed gender of subject headings.
- Racism, exclusion, biases, and other forms of inequality exists in LCSH. The different genders, races and ethnicities receive completely different treatment.
- Adding local subject headings for gender, race/ethnicity and nationality to bibliographic record would equalize cataloging treatment and improve searchability. Additional LC Demographic Group terms, Homosaurus and more inclusive LC headings would also increase metadata inclusiveness for the juvenile biographies.

## Acknowledgements

- Diamond Williams, University of Central Florida Student