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TOURISM CENTER

A Summary of African-American Travel Interests and Behaviors

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A Summary of African-American Travel Interests and Behaviors

November 21, 2014

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The University of Minnesota Tourism Center is a collaboration of University of Minnesota Extension and the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences.

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SUMMARY

This report provides a brief outline of the existing and potential domestic travel market among African Americans in the United States. Demographics, income information, and basic trip characteristics are presented.

In summary, according to the 2010 Census, the African-American population was 42,020,743 in the United States (13.6% of the U.S. population), and 327,548 in Minnesota (6.2% of the state population). African Americans are the second largest racial group in the United States with a median age of 32.4 years in the country and of 26.2 years in Minnesota. The group has a lower median household income than the overall population of the United States, as well as the lowest median household income when compared to Asian Americans and Hispanics, both within the country and Minnesota.

Travel is most frequently for leisure purposes, for 2.5 days, in the Southern United States, using paid lodging. Group sizes average 2.8 persons. The average trip expenditure is lower than what has been reported for Asian Americans and Hispanics. African Americans accounted for 172.6 million domestic person-trips in the United States in 2010. The population is expected to grow to 48 million by 2020, and the number of domestic person-trips could grow by as much as 24.6%.

CURRENT DEMAND

U.S. Basic Demographics

Population: In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau reported 42,020,743 African Americans living in the United States, which was 13.6% of the total population. (Figure 1). Included in this population are 3.1 million U.S. mixed-race residents who are African American and at least one additional race. The percentage increase of this particular population between the years of 2000 and 2010 was 15.4%, whereas the increase for the overall U.S. population was only 9.7% (Rastogi, Johnson, Hoeffel & Drewery, 2011).

Fifty-five percent of African Americans live in the South, 18.1% in the Midwest, 17.1% in the Northeast, and 9.8% in the West (Rastogi et al., 2011).

Age Distribution: Median age of the single-race African-American population was 32.4 years. The corresponding figure for the population as a whole was 37.2 years (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; Figure 2).

Household Income: Median household income among African Americans in 2012 was \$35,564, which is lower than \$53,046 for the U.S. population in general (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 ACS; Figure 3). This variation in income is not seen in middle income segments where differences are small, but in the extreme lower and upper income segments (The Nielsen Company, 2013).

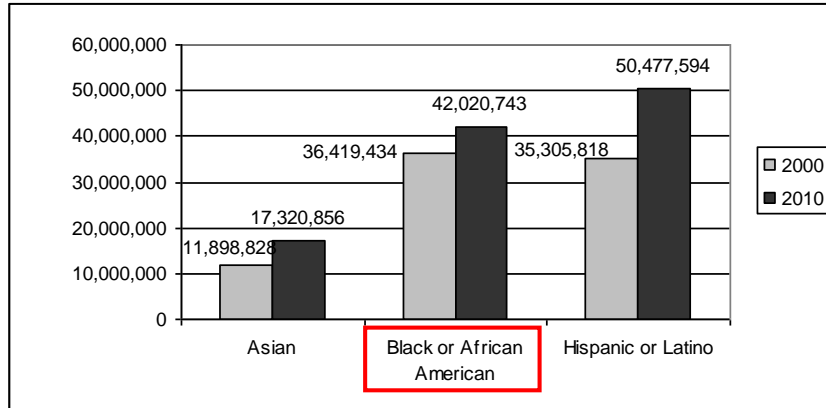


Figure 1. Population of Asian Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics in the United States during 2000 and 2010. Race alone or in combination with one or more other races; Hispanic or Latino of any race (Data from U.S. Census Bureau.)

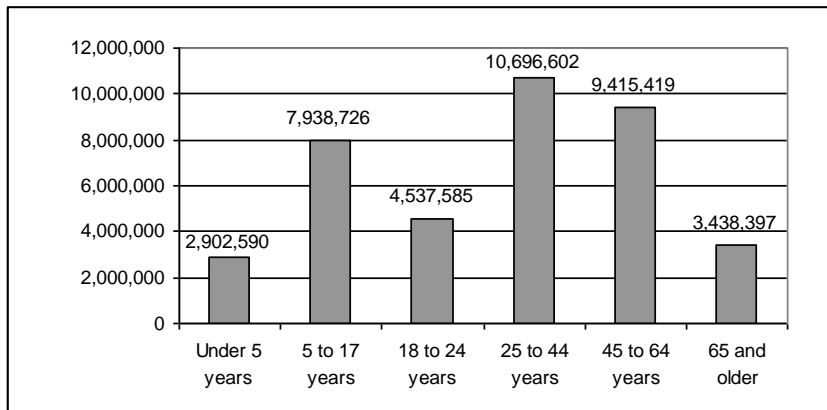


Figure 2. Age distribution of the African-American population in the United States, 2010. Single race (Data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.)

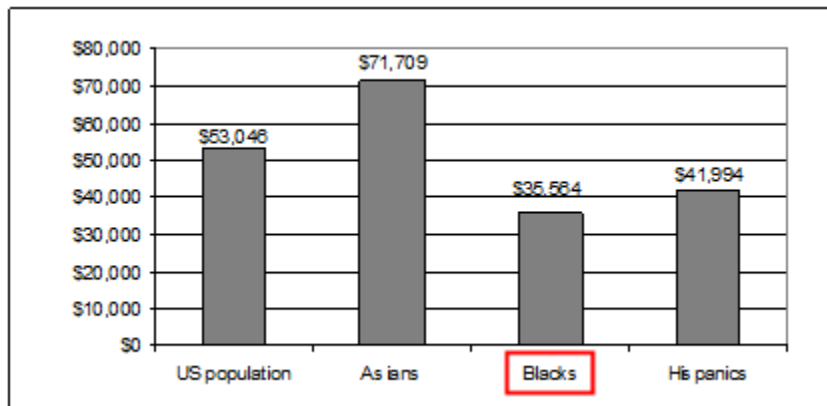


Figure 3. Median household income in the United States, 2012. Single race household (Data from 2008-2012 ACS.)

In a study related to demographic patterns that characterized out-of-town vacation usage and vacation commercial lodging usage, Peterson and Lambert (2003) found income was the most influential independent variable in each model (the higher the income, the more likelihood of taking an out-of-town vacation and using commercial lodging), but they also found that being black was a negative variable—among others—in both models (African Americans were less likely to take an out-of-town vacation and use commercial lodging). Future research is necessary to corroborate this finding.

MINNESOTA BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: In 2010, the African-American population in Minnesota was 327,548, which is 6.2% of the total state population of 5,303,925. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; Figure 4). The growth of this group between the years 2000 and 2010 was 61.4% (Rastogi et al., 2011). African-American population in the Twin Cities Metro Area was 279,060 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census), or 5.3% of the total state population.

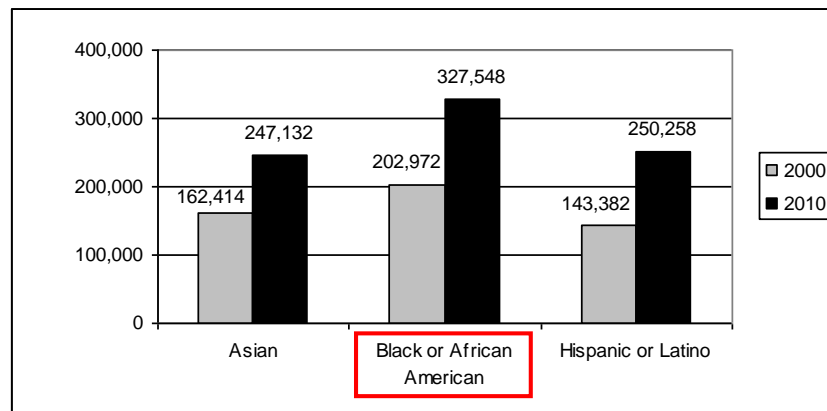


Figure 4. Population of Asian Americans, African Americans and Hispanics in Minnesota, 2000 and 2010. Race alone or in combination with one or more other races; Hispanic or Latino of any race (Data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.)

Age Distribution: The median age of the single-race African-American population in Minnesota was 26.2 years. The corresponding figure for the state population as a whole was 37.4 years (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; Figure 5).

Household Income: Annual median household income in Minnesota in 2012 (inflation-adjusted dollars, black or African American alone household) was \$29,003. Median household income for the overall population in the state was \$59,126 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 ACS).

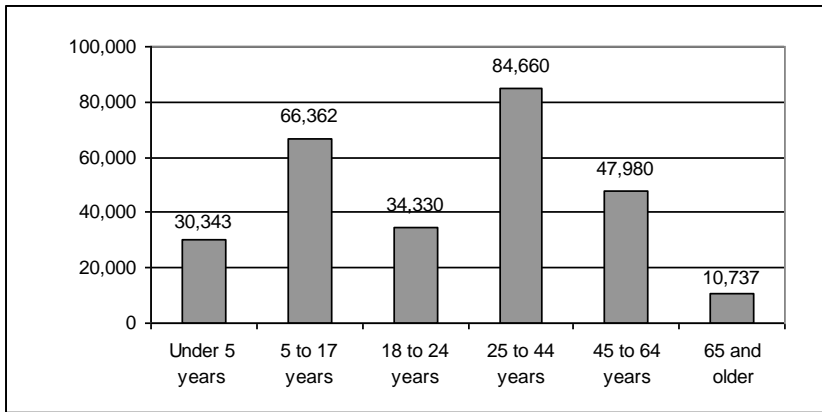


Figure 5. Age distribution of the African-American population in Minnesota, 2010. Single race (Data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.)

TRAVELING AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS

Public information about travel habits among African Americans is limited. The most recent statewide survey of Minnesota travelers reveals three percent identified as African-American in the state overall, with four percent in the Metro area (Davidson-Peterson, 2008). The sample sizes are too small for further analysis, so information from national datasets is used to reveal a variety of trip details and consumer behavior. TNS' TravelsAmerica survey of U.S. residents taking domestic trips during 2012 (U.S. Travel Association, 2014) presents some basic characteristics of leisure and business trips among African Americans:

Trip Purpose: The primary trip purpose was leisure (79%) vs. business (10%). Within leisure, visiting friends/relatives was the most common trip purpose (Figure 6). The main activities reported were family/reunion, entertainment/amusement, and art & culture (Figure 7).

Duration of Trips: Forty percent of the trips were 1-2 nights (Figure 8). The mean duration of the trips was 2.5 days (when day trips are included), or 3.4 days (when day trips are not included). Corresponding means for overall domestic travelers were 2.6 and 3.7 days, respectively.

Person-trips: The number of domestic person-trips in 2010 was 172.6 million, which is nine percent of all domestic person-trips. (Cook, 2011).

Season: Most frequently, trips happened in the summer (32%) and in the spring (25%).

Travel Party Size: The mean size of the household travel party (excluding day trips) was 2.0 persons, and 2.8 persons for parties including non-household members. Thirty percent of travel parties (including non-household members) included adults and children. The corresponding mean party sizes for overall domestic travelers were 1.9 people for household parties and 2.6 people for parties including non-household members (22% of parties were composed of adults and children).



Figure 6. Primary trip purpose, 2012 (Data from U.S. Travel Association, 2014).

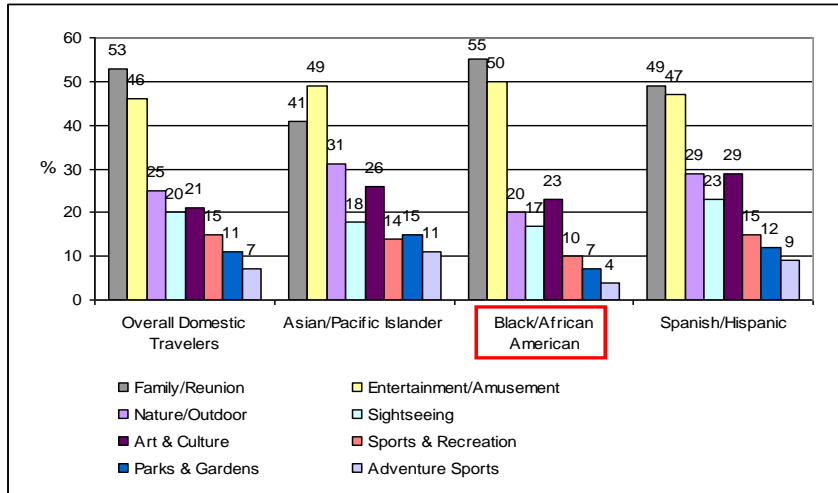


Figure 7. Activities reported, 2012. Multiple response (Data from U.S. Travel Association, 2014.)

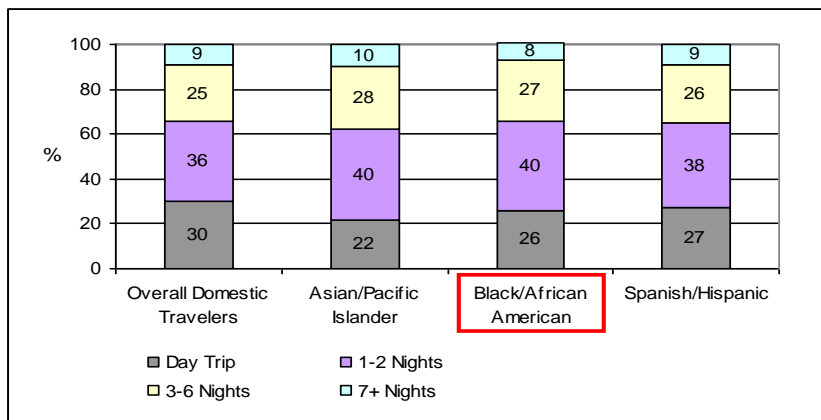


Figure 8. Duration of trips, 2012 (Data from U.S. Travel Association, 2014).

Destination: Among African Americans, in-state only trips were 43% of destinations, and out-of-state only trips were 54%. The main destination of travelers was the South Census Region (66%) (Figure 9), and within it, the South Atlantic Division (40%), which includes Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia. (U.S. Travel Association, 2014.)

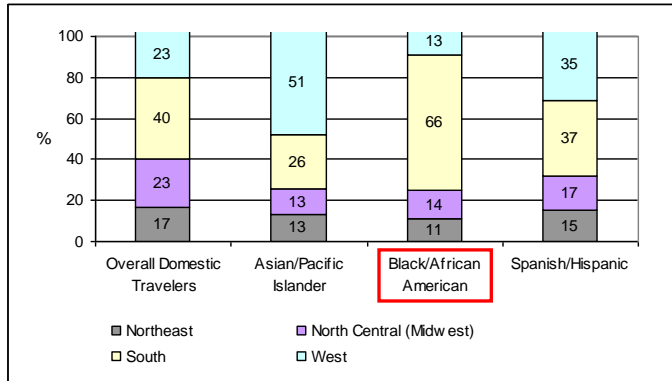


Figure 9. Destination by census regions, 2012 (Data from U.S. Travel Association, 2014.)

According to Cook (2011), the states of Georgia, California, Texas, and Florida are the primary destinations for domestic travel among African Americans. Similar to Hispanic and Asian-American hotel users, Midwest states are generally not among the top travel destinations for African-American hotel users. Less than one percent of African Americans travelers report Minnesota as a destination.

Modes of Transportation: The primary modes of transportation were own car/truck and airplane (Figure 10).

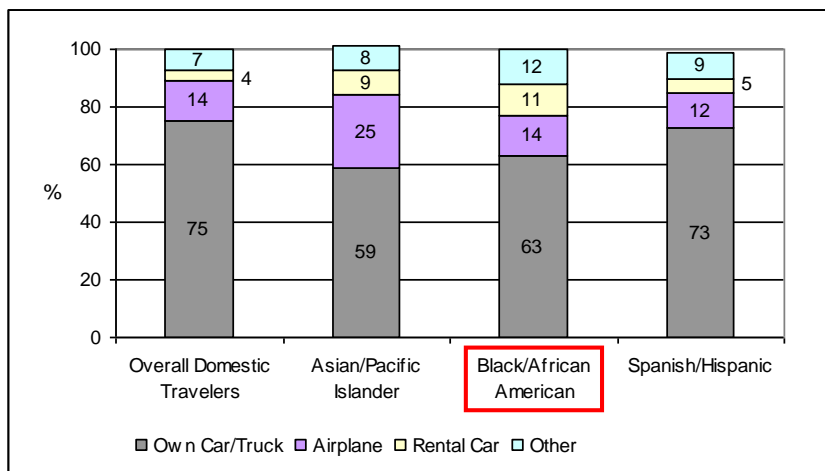


Figure 10. Primary mode of transportation, 2012 (Data from U.S. Travel Association, 2014.)

Lodging: Lodging used for overnight stay was mostly hotel/motel (52%). The proportion for private home lodging (unpaid accommodations) was 42%; bed & breakfasts were two percent. The corresponding percentages for overall domestic travelers were 49%, 42%, and 1%, respectively.

Trip Spending: According to USTA, average total trip spending was \$485.8 (Figure 11). For total trip spending, 50% of the trips were in the range of \$1-249, and 32% were in the range of \$250-999 (U.S. Travel Association, 2014). It has been estimated that African Americans spent \$48.6 billion on domestic travel in 2010 (Cook, 2011).



Figure 11. Average trip spending, 2012 (Data from U.S. Travel Association, 2014.)

Planning and Booking: For planning trips, offline sources were reported as the most frequently used (47%; mostly one’s own experience and friends/relatives), compared to online sources (20%). For booking, online sources (27%) were used more than offline sources (18%).

Characteristics of Leisure Trips: Mandala Research (2011) conducted an online survey intended to serve as a benchmark in identifying, profiling, and segmenting leisure African-American travelers in the United States. Some of the most important findings of the study are summarized below.

While people take an average of four or five leisure trips per year, the average was lower for African-American travelers. The majority of respondents take one (29%) or two (26%) leisure trips per year. Ninety-seven percent take at least one leisure trip per year.

The most frequent trip purposes were visiting friends and relatives (64%), vacation (59%), and a weekend getaway (40%). The top five states visited were Florida, Texas, Georgia, California and Nevada. Miles traveled were 1-250 miles (40%), 251-500 miles (22%), and 501-1,000 miles (21%). Only 16% take a trip further than 1,000 miles away.

The most common accommodation types were hotel/motel/resort (61%) and staying with family/friends (37%). The modes of transportation most frequently used were automobile (51%), airline (28%), and rental car (12%).

The most common activities during trips included attending social or family events, shopping, taking a scenic drive, fine dining, participating in night life, and attending festivals or live music performances (each one of them with 50% or more responses, multiple response question type). Average total spending, excluding shopping, was \$886; average spending in shopping was \$258. These numbers are higher than reported by the USTA data.

The most important factors when choosing a destination were cost, relatives or friends living at the destination, and distance to travel. The economic recession was the most common reason why African-American travelers say they will not be taking a trip the year following this survey.

Outdoor Recreation in Minnesota: The 2004 Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey of Minnesotans, prepared by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, does not present specific information about African Americans; the report only presents data broken down into two categories: non-white and/or Hispanic, and white, non-Hispanic.

The Minnesota data of the *2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*, prepared by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, does not present information about minorities because the sample size of these groups was too small (less than 10) to reliably report data.

A qualitative focus group study, conducted by the Metropolitan Council to identify constraints to regional park visitation among minorities in the Twin Cities area, (Salk, 2014) found the top preferred outdoor activities for African-American focus groups were picnic/BBQ, biking and basketball; for the African immigrant focus groups, using playground, walking, and being with family were the preferred outdoor activities. For African Americans, the most prominent constraints to regional park system visitation were lack of awareness, lack of transportation, fear and safety concerns, orientation challenges, cultural insensitivity, and discrimination; for African immigrants, constraints included time, lack of awareness, and lack of transportation..

PROJECTED PARTICIPATION

The African-American population is expected to grow by 13.8% during the ten years following 2010 and could reach 48 million by 2020. The percentage change of domestic person-trips from 2010 to 2020 for African Americans is expected to rise to 24.6%, which means that in 2020, there could be 215 million domestic person-trips (Cook, 2011; Figure 12). Purchasing power of African Americans is forecasted to grow from \$1 trillion in 2012 to \$1.3 trillion by 2017 (The Nielsen Company, 2013).

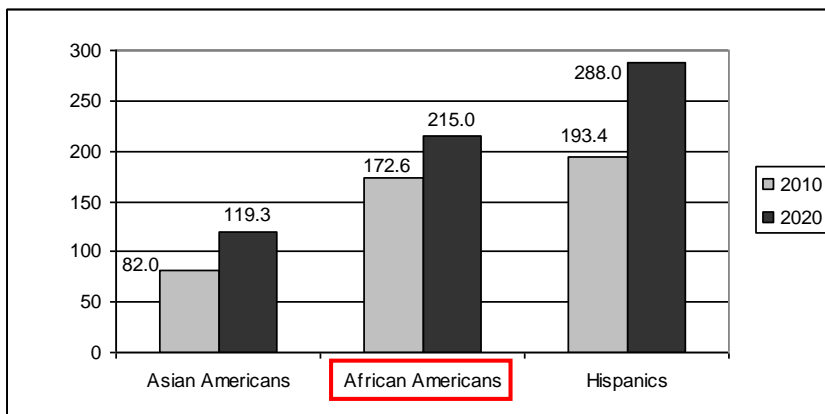


Figure 12. Domestic person-trips (in millions) in the United States for Asian Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics in 2010, as well as projections for 2020 (Data from Cook, 2011).

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APPENDIX

Notes on Data Collection Methods for References with Primary Data

Davidson-Peterson Associates. (2008). *The Profile of Travelers in Minnesota Summer Season (2005/2007)*. Onsite intercept interviews among travelers throughout Minnesota, summer seasons (June, July, and August) of 2005 and 2007; 1,664 participants.

Mandala Research, LLC. (2011). *The African American Traveler, 2011 Edition*. Online survey to 1,018 African-American leisure travelers in the United States in December of 2010.

Peterson, M., & Lambert, S. L. (2003). A Demographic Perspective on U.S. Consumers' Out-of-Town Vacationing and Commercial Lodging Usage while on Vacation. *Journal of Travel Research*. Telephone interviews conducted from January, 2000 to January, 2002; 47,980 respondents in 49 waves of data collection.

Salk, R. (2014). *Regional Park Use among Select Communities of Color. A Qualitative Investigation*.

Sixteen focus groups from the Twin Cities metropolitan region that included African Americans, African immigrants, Asian Americans, and Hispanics. Sessions held between October, 2013 and January, 2014; 257 participants total.

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