

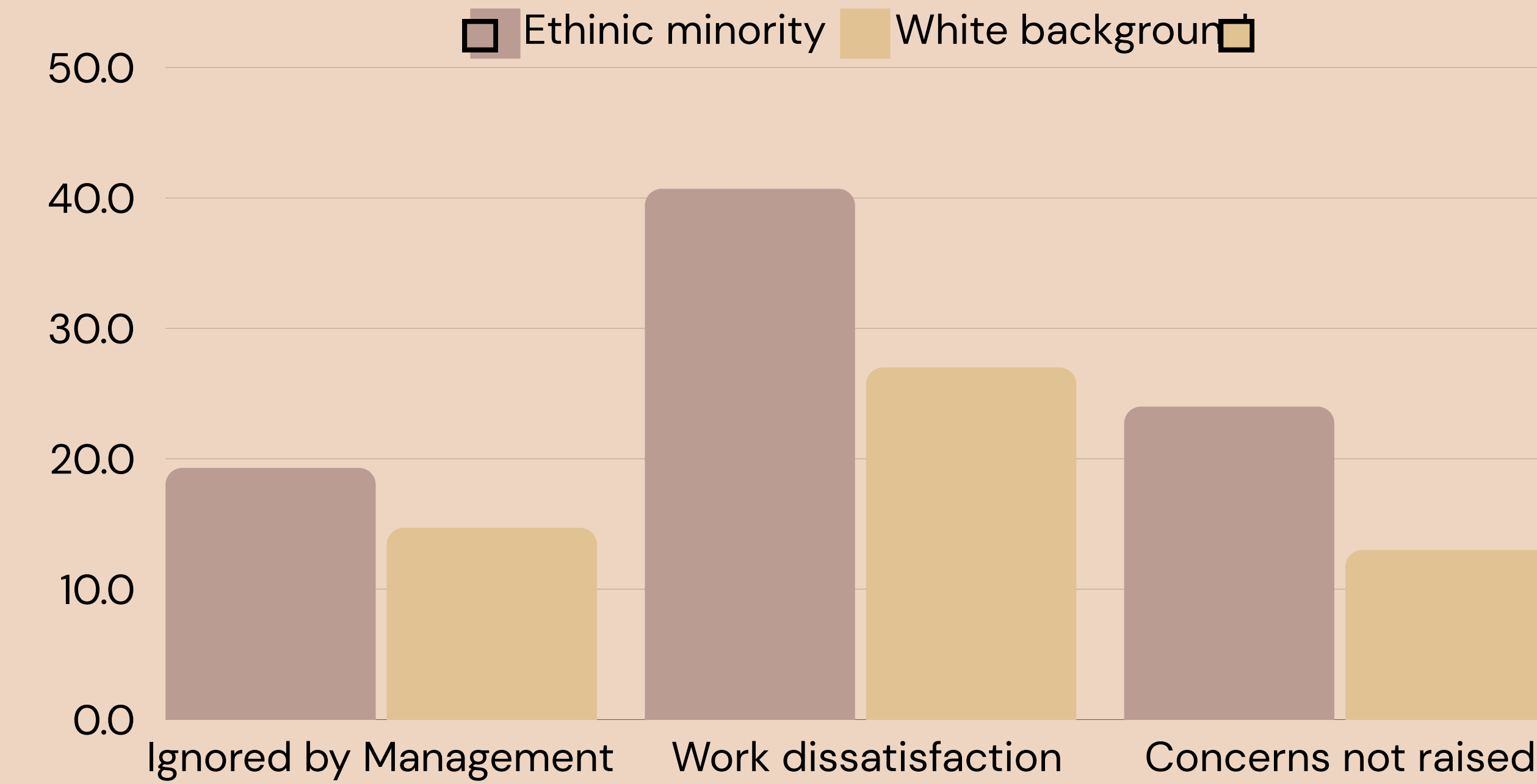
How Effective Leadership Can Support Anti-Racism in the Midwifery Workforce

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Rationale:

- The Francis Report (2013) highlighted how discrimination and racism against BAME staff directly affected patient care and safety.
- The RCM has also noted the importance of providing an inclusive service where all backgrounds are represented at all levels, with inclusive organisations being more 'psychologically safe'.(Shore, Cleveland and Sanchez, 2018)
- Compassionate and inclusive leadership creates a working environment where staff are more supported and effectively communicate, leading to fewer errors, injuries and bullying. This would directly reduce patient mortality.(Carter et al., 2008)

Statistics on discriminatory behaviour towards BAME staff:



Background:

- The NHS staff survey in 2020 found that 4 in 10 midwives had experienced discrimination based on their ethnic background (RCM, 2021).
- Only 7.4% of maternity units had a head of midwifery from a BAME background and 85% of senior managerial positions were filled with people of a white background.(RCM, 2021)
- NHS England (2020) also found that staff from a BAME background are 1.6x more likely to face disciplinary proceedings from managers which may be due to a lack of cultural competence and may have fewer opportunities for career progression (Archibong et al., 2019).

An anti racist workplace is one in which racism is actively targeted, challenged and barriers that enable racism are also removed. With Anti Racist practice, inequalities amongst midwives can be eradicated and there will also be an increase in workforce retention. Patient safety will also increase and the organisational culture will improve. (The NHS Confederation, 2022)

Leadership Styles:

Leadership plays an important role in creating an environment where racism and discrimination is either tolerated or stopped.

Compassionate, transformational leadership is required to diminish systemic racism in midwifery. This will develop effective allies by creating a psychologically safe environment .

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders inspire others to achieve their best by creating a safe and fertile working environment. They cultivate ongoing improvements and change by empowering followers to develop into leaders themselves.



Transformative leadership is essential in cultivating an environment for allyship and psychological safety. Through the power of developing individuals into leaders with the courage to speak up, discrimination will become unacceptable.

Compassionate Leadership

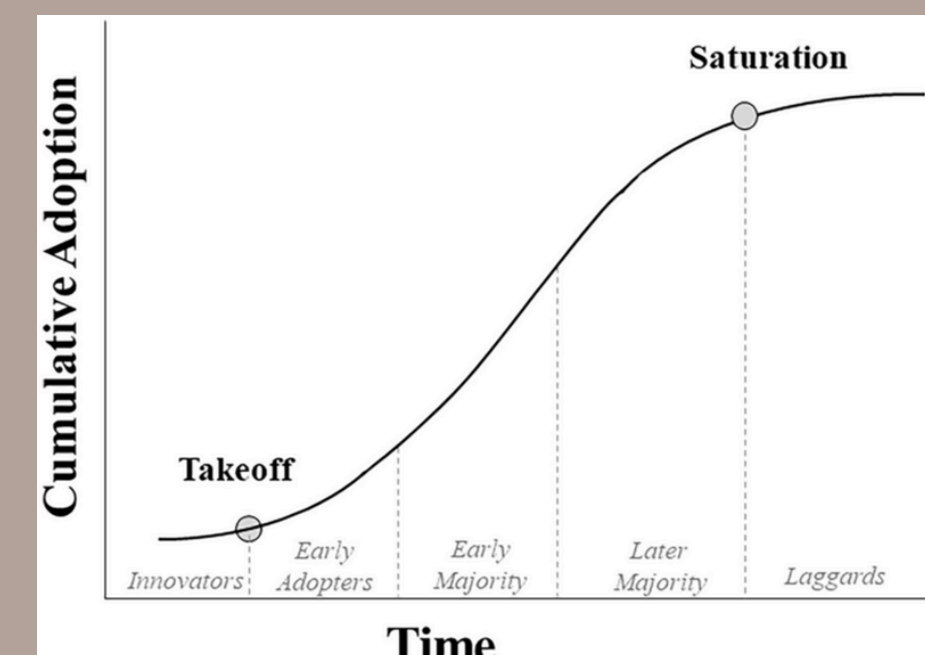
Compassionate leadership aims to focus on relationships through listening to and supporting all members of the team to develop a motivated, inclusive and diverse team. This approach increases engagement of staff and quality of care (West, 2021).

The Role of Courage:

Rumbling with vulnerability, a theory by Brené Brown (2018), speaks of the importance of stepping out of comfort zones and speaking honestly. This is integral to tackling racism within midwifery and could be adopted as part of NHS culture.



Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rodgers, 1962):



Adapted from Rodgers (2009)

As individuals adopt the behaviour of speaking up and challenging racism when they see it, others will observe and feel enabled to do the same themselves. The diffusion of innovation shows us how adoption of anti-racist behaviour might be expected to spread and become the norm with the support of effective leadership.

Current practices and Recommendations :

Implementation of adequate training and mentoring is essential. There is currently a lack of knowledge and education and staff do not feel able to speak up. Improvement can be made to the organisational culture using Transformational and Compassionate leadership styles combined. This will create a psychologically safe environment in which racism and discrimination can be reported and robustly dealt with. Leadership training programmes must be promoted (Barling et al., 1996).

(2022) NHS England, Nursing and midwifery anti-racism resource framework Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/combating-racial-discrimination-against-minority-ethnic-nurses-midwives-and-nursing-associates/>



Evaluation:

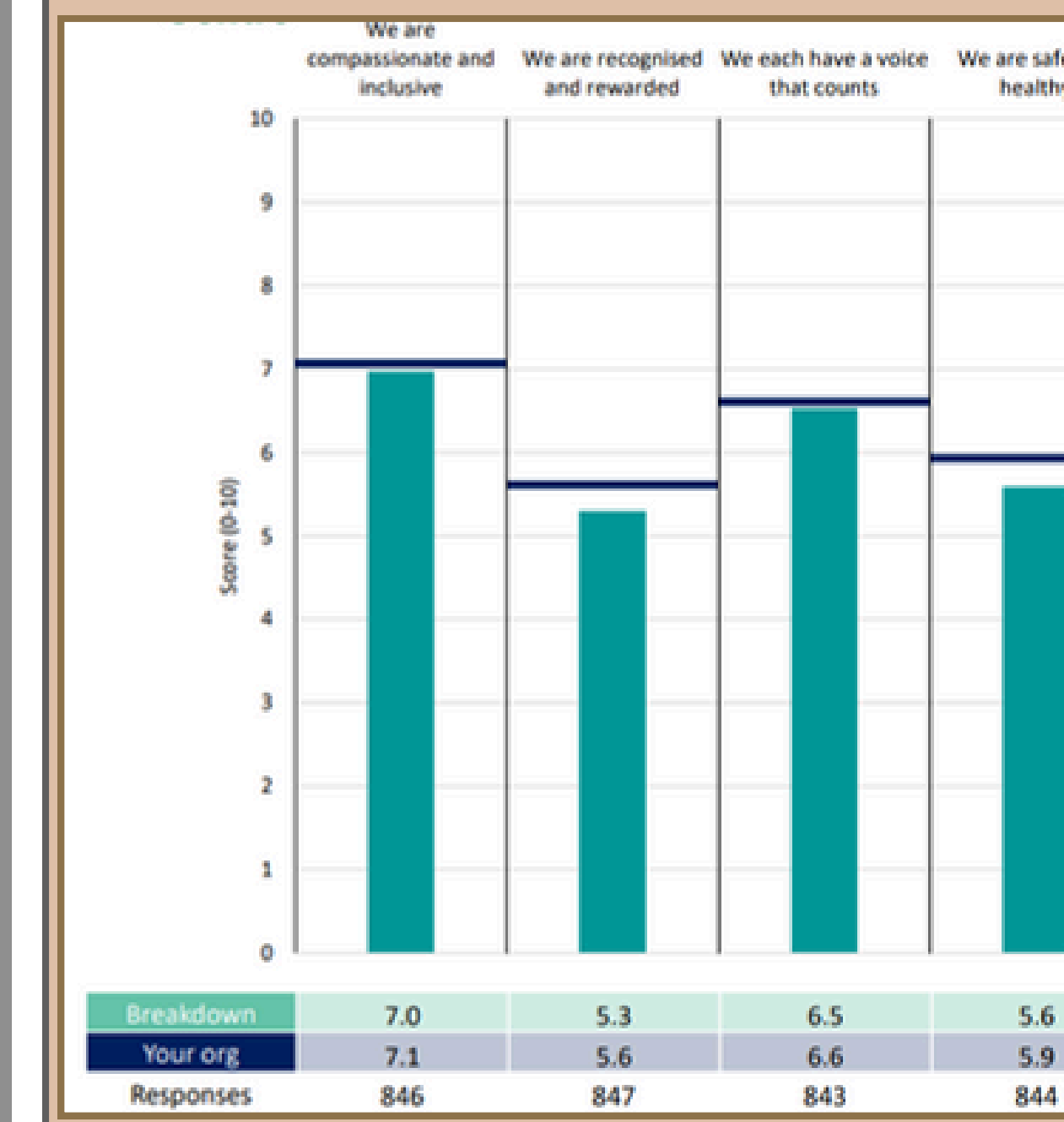
A truly effective leader will actively work to dismantle discriminatory practices within the healthcare system that adversely affect both the staff and those receiving care (NHS England, 2022). This commitment aligns with the principles of the NMC Code (2018) and contributes to the promotion of professionalism and trust.

Key points of evaluation of leadership:

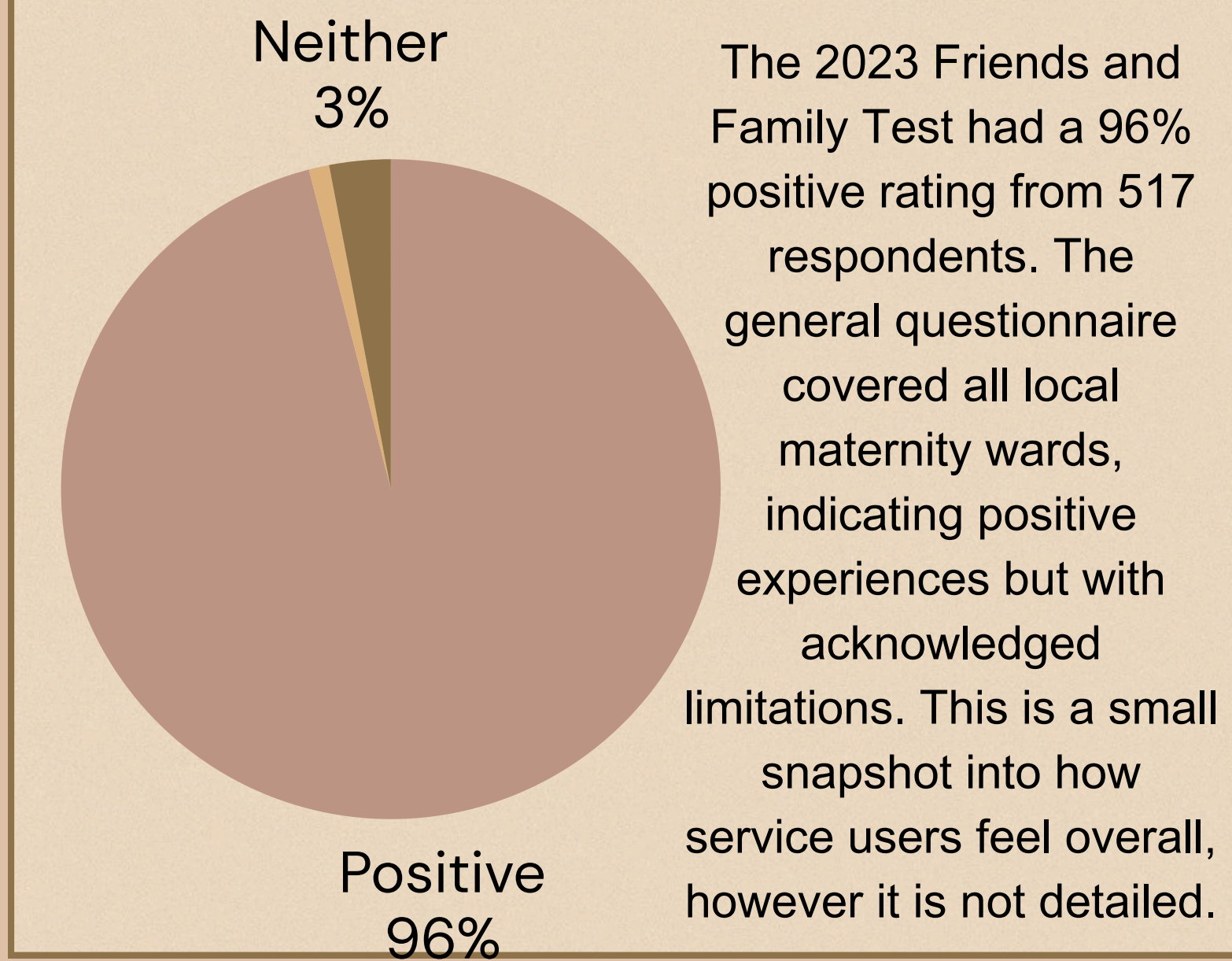
Care Quality Commission (CQC) reports/ audits, NHS Staff survey results, and local patient surveys are all forms of secondary research that can be used to evaluate effectiveness of leadership through quantitative and qualitative measures
NHS staff survey (2022): Minimal change in diversity responses. Slight career fairness improvement. Manager/colleague discrimination stable at 9.0%, but patient/public discrimination up by 0.4%. Around 19.9% of minority ethnic staff reported discrimination in the last 12 months. It is unfortunate that staff discrimination has not changed, and transformational leadership may improve this.

CQC report (2023); Found across both local hospitals to require improvement overall. Leaders, however, were stated to be approachable and actively engaged with staff and service users. Staff also were encouraged to undertake further leadership programmes and progress professionally.

NHS Staff Survey results (2022):



Friends and family survey results(2023):



Local Trust:

The local trust has set a 5 year EDI plan from 2020-2025. The staffing levels in 2020 the overall diverse targets were just met. The target by 2028 is to aim to have more than 200 BAME staff members in a band 8 position or higher. This is to attempt to improve BAME representation at a leadership level for staffing. This EDI plan has taken themes from the NHS people plan to integrate into the plan but aligned to national, regional and system level priorities (Local trust, 2020).

NMC:

The NMC have set out 10 objectives, priorities and actions to make sustainable progress in EDI plan from 2022-2025. This includes enhancing the EDI capability of all colleagues. The NMC in partnership with NHS England also have set out an anti-racist resource framework, which highlights the four key areas.

RCM have published a decolonisation education toolkit to help educate midwives and help promote EDI in midwifery education (RCM, 2023).

NHS:

NHS England clearly acknowledge that there is a problem, and as part of tackling this they have set out some clear ways to measure this. Currently the NHS predominately use quantitative measures which include the following: NHS staff surveys, equality and diversity workforce dashboard and the WRES. However they now think that qualitative measures are necessary and include: Training and support for staff to help use their voice and access to and feedback from external 'freedom to speak up' guardians.

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