



Black-Owned Small Businesses in Englewood, Chicago: Documenting the Effects of COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter Movement in 2020

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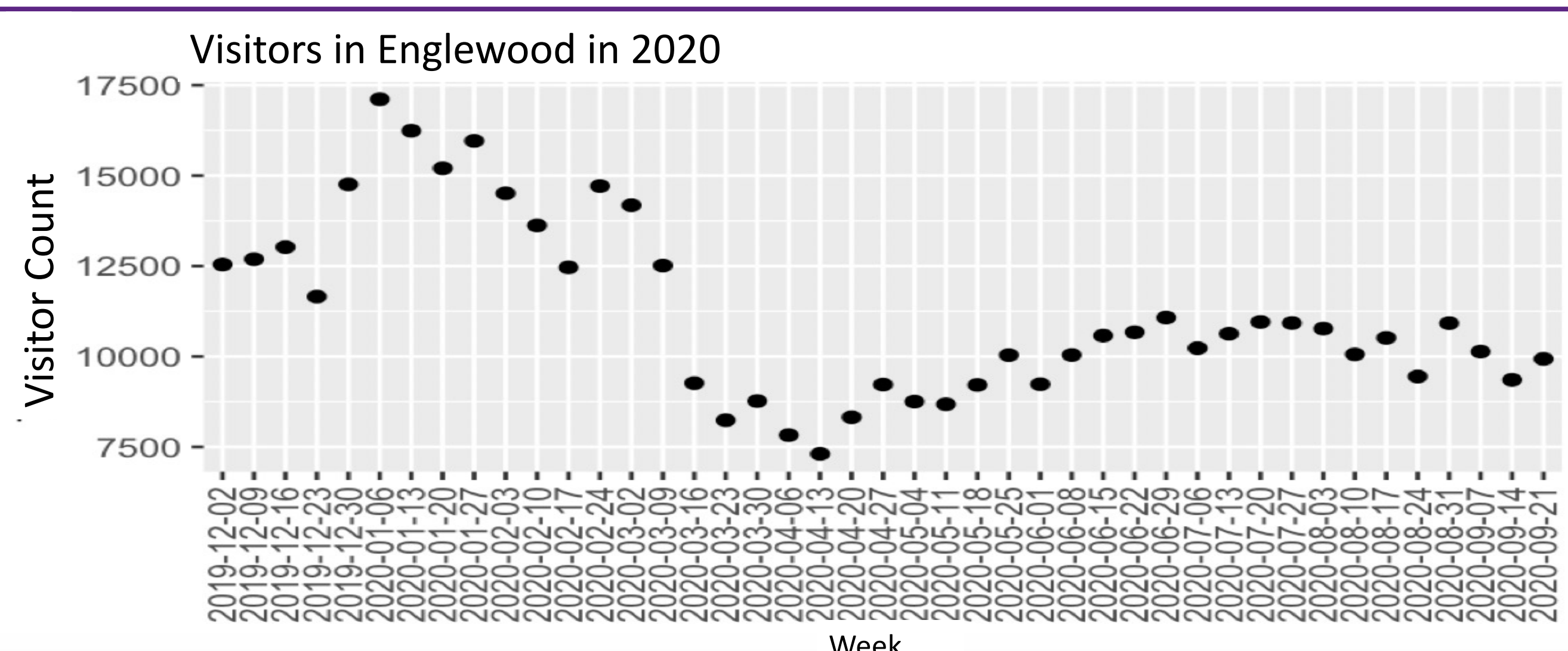
BACKGROUND

2020 crises disproportionately affected Black communities

- A disproportionate number of Black-identifying business owners reported not working in April due to COVID-19¹
- Black business owners faced social stress from BLM's prevalence after the murder of George Floyd, and looting in June 2020 damaged Black-owned small business fronts²

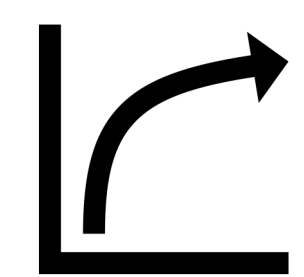
Englewood, Chicago was particularly affected by 2020 crises

- For the purposes of this research, the Englewood area contains two adjacent neighborhoods, West Englewood and Englewood³
- Median household income is \$28,000, which is half of Chicago's overall median household income⁴
- Approximately 90% of Englewood residents are Black⁴
- In the Civil Rights Era, looting inhibited economic investment in Englewood for decades⁵



Graph exhibits drop in visitor count in Englewood around the stay-at-home order

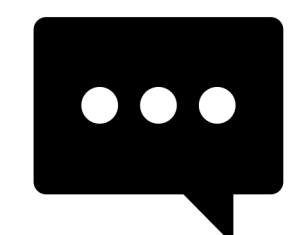
METHODS



Question 1: How was Englewood economically impacted according to foot traffic data?

The study used SafeGraph cell phone records to examine 2 events of interest with difference-in-difference analyses:

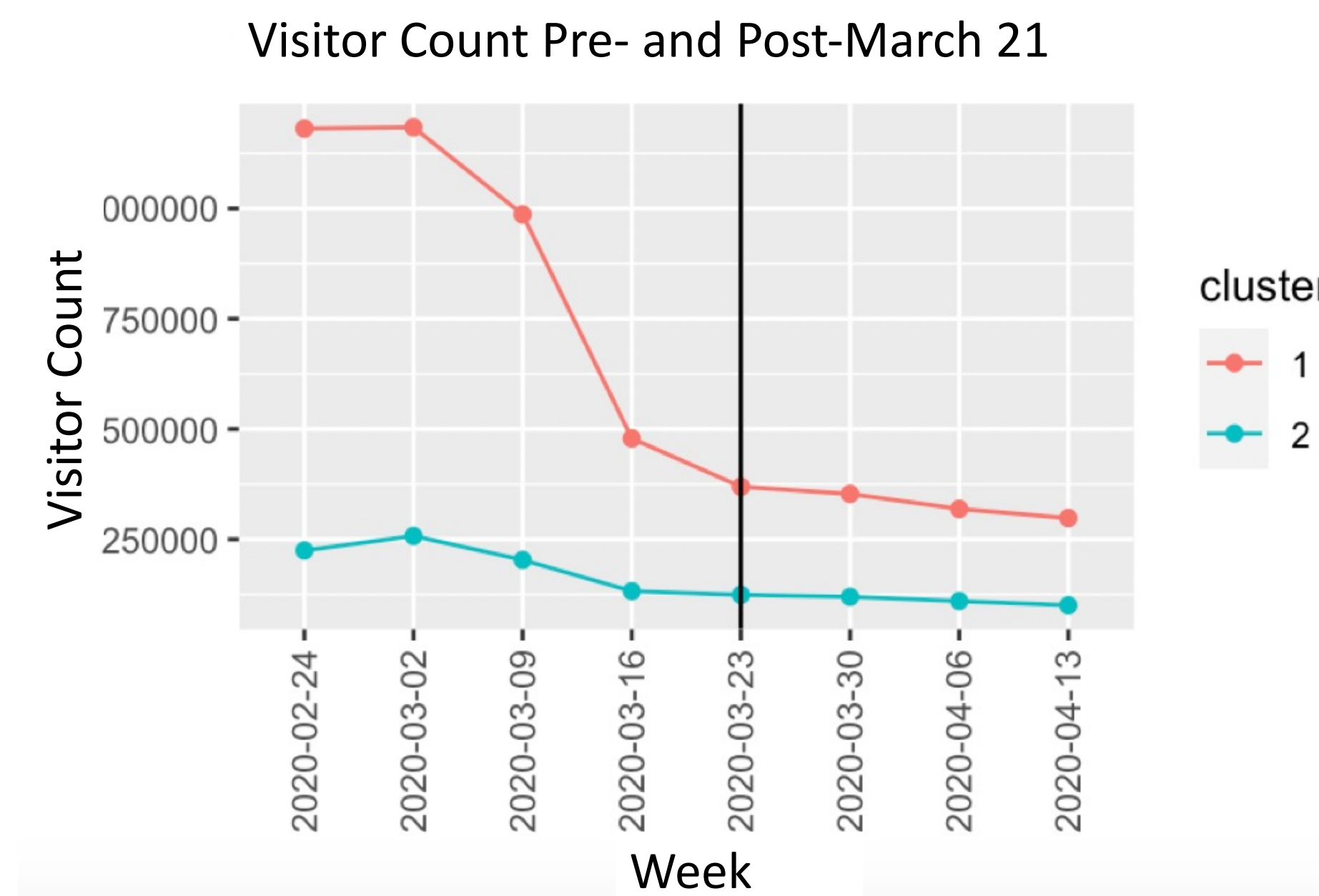
- 1) March 21 Illinois stay-at-home order
- 2) May 25 murder of George Floyd



Question 2: How was Englewood economically impacted according to business owners' accounts?

Semi-structured interviews with Black-identifying small business owners in Englewood (n=8) provided nuance to quantitative findings by revealing the complexity of the mechanisms by which COVID-19 and BLM activities disproportionately influenced Black communities in Chicago.

EVENT 1: ILLINOIS STAY-AT-HOME ORDER (MARCH 21)

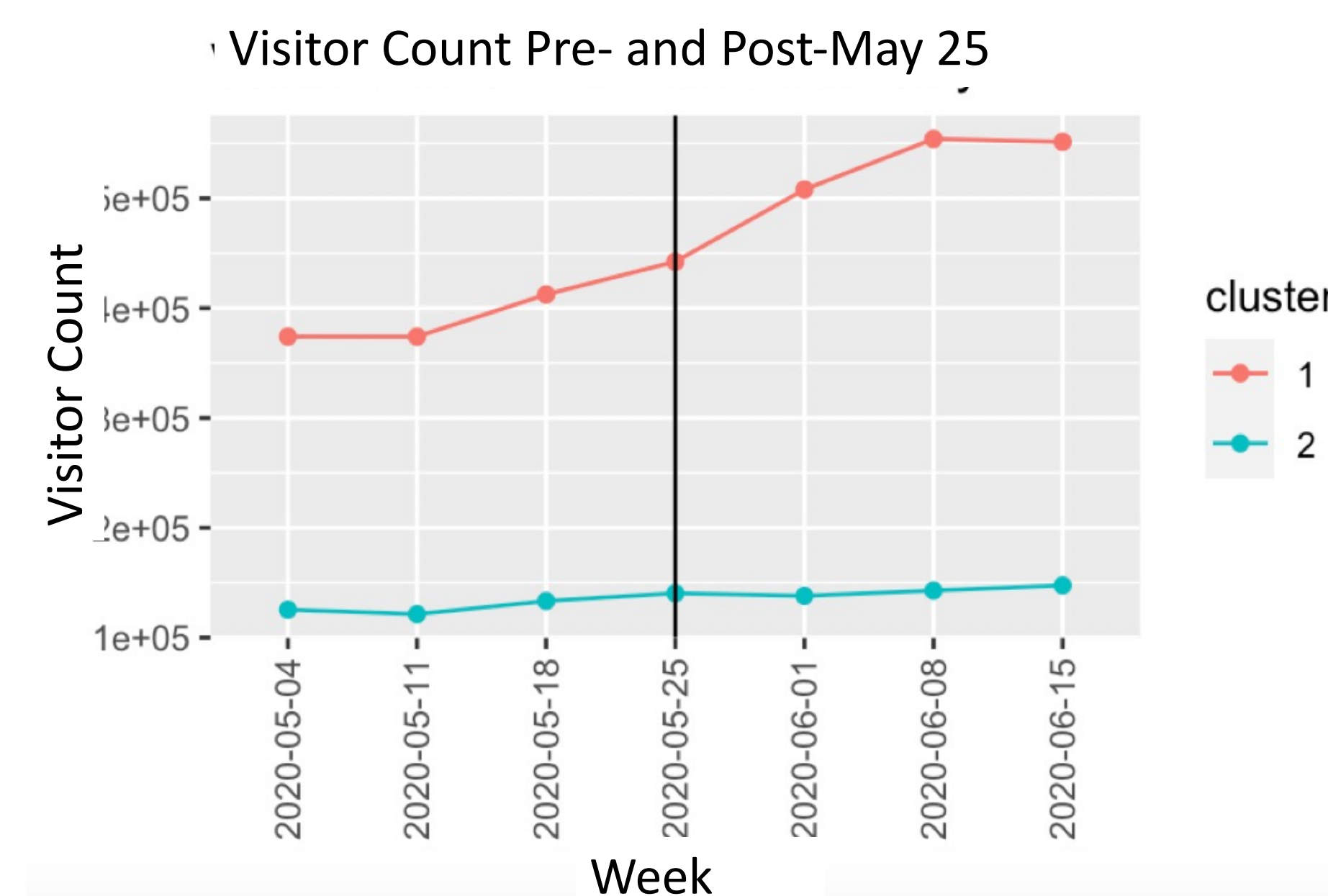


- Businesses in majority-Black neighborhoods (cluster 2) had **smaller declines** in foot traffic after March 21 than in majority-non-Black neighborhoods (cluster 1)
- Foot traffic in Englewood was **not significantly different** compared to other majority-Black neighborhoods

Smaller declines in foot traffic are likely attributable to essential workers, as participants discussed economic damage from COVID-19

- Customers in majority-White neighborhoods patronizing Englewood businesses at a lower frequency
- Businesses stopped making food for delivery services due to non-compliance with mask mandates
- Participants cut prices and hours of operation: "COVID hit, so I dropped my prices"

EVENT 2: MURDER OF GEORGE FLOYD (MAY 25)



- Businesses in majority-Black neighborhoods had **smaller increases** in foot traffic after May 25 as compared to majority-non-Black neighborhoods
- Foot traffic in Englewood was **not significantly different** compared to other majority-Black neighborhoods

Smaller increases in foot traffic attributable to low protest activity, as participants recounted few protests but significant looting damages

- "Protests come from groups that have a little bit more than what we have. We're more in survival mode than we are in changing mode."
- Participants described looting as "disrespect to the community" and tried to stop looting as it occurred
- Looting negatively impacted participants' social-emotional well-being

CRISIS ADAPTATION

2020 crises necessitated in business model adjustments, but participants still maintained their values

Participant	Business Value	2020 Obstacle	Quotation or Solution
Participant 2 (Funeral Home)	Customer service	Novel causes of death (i.e. COVID-19, police-involved shootings)	"It doesn't matter what the cause of death was. We take the necessary precautions regardless of what they died from."
Participant 3 (Restaurant)	Healthy eating	Low customer disposable income	Participant 3 "found out the thing that was most inexpensive" and began serving a \$6 meal that was affordable and healthy
Participant 8 (Barber Shop)	Customer appreciation	Low business discretionary funds	"The finances weren't coming in. [So] I just took my credit card and went to Sam's Club and spent over \$2,000 just to give back"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCES

CONCLUSIONS

The BLM movement, COVID-19 pandemic, and looting **interacted** to affect the experiences of Black-owned business owners in Englewood and other majority-Black neighborhoods, resulting in **financial burden** and **social-emotional** distress.



Business owners exemplified considerable **attachment to their business values**, modifying operations to maintain their principles. 2020 crises **highlighted the influence** of Black-owned small businesses in their communities.

"COVID exposed to people what we already knew in Englewood, that we have lacked resources for years. And so hopefully we won't just be a study for the study, but people will take action to bring resources to the community."