

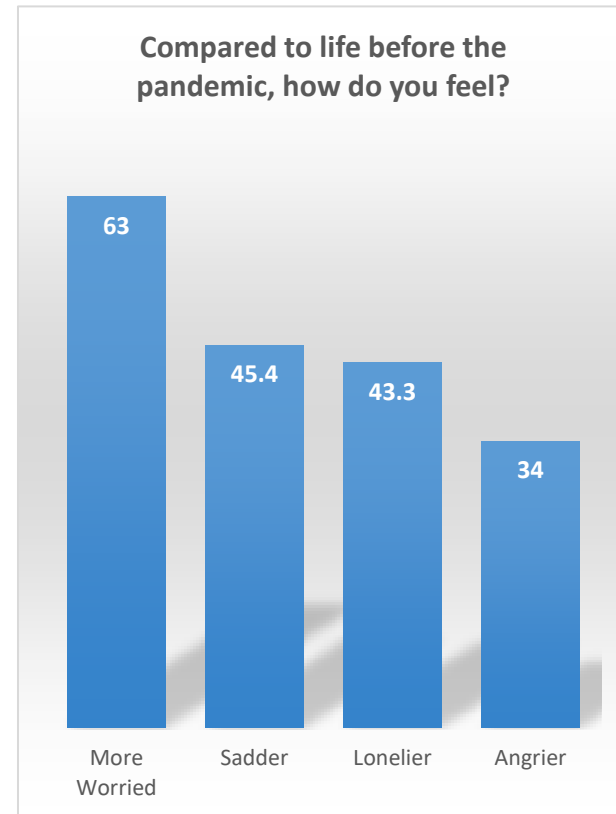
Wave 6 of the Baylor Religion Surveys contains a section devoted to how the pandemic affected Americans' activities, what Americans did in response to COVID, and how the pandemic changed the emotional lives of Americans.

Specifically, respondents were asked, "During the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to your life before, how often do you feel.....happy, sad, worried, confident, tense, relaxed, lonely, cared for, and angry?" Respondents could select from the following options: "less often, about the same, a little more, and much more often."

We present the percent of Americans who felt more worried, sad, lonely, and angry due to the pandemic (see Figure 1). The biggest change in the emotional lives of Americans was, unsurprisingly, a dramatic increase in being worried.

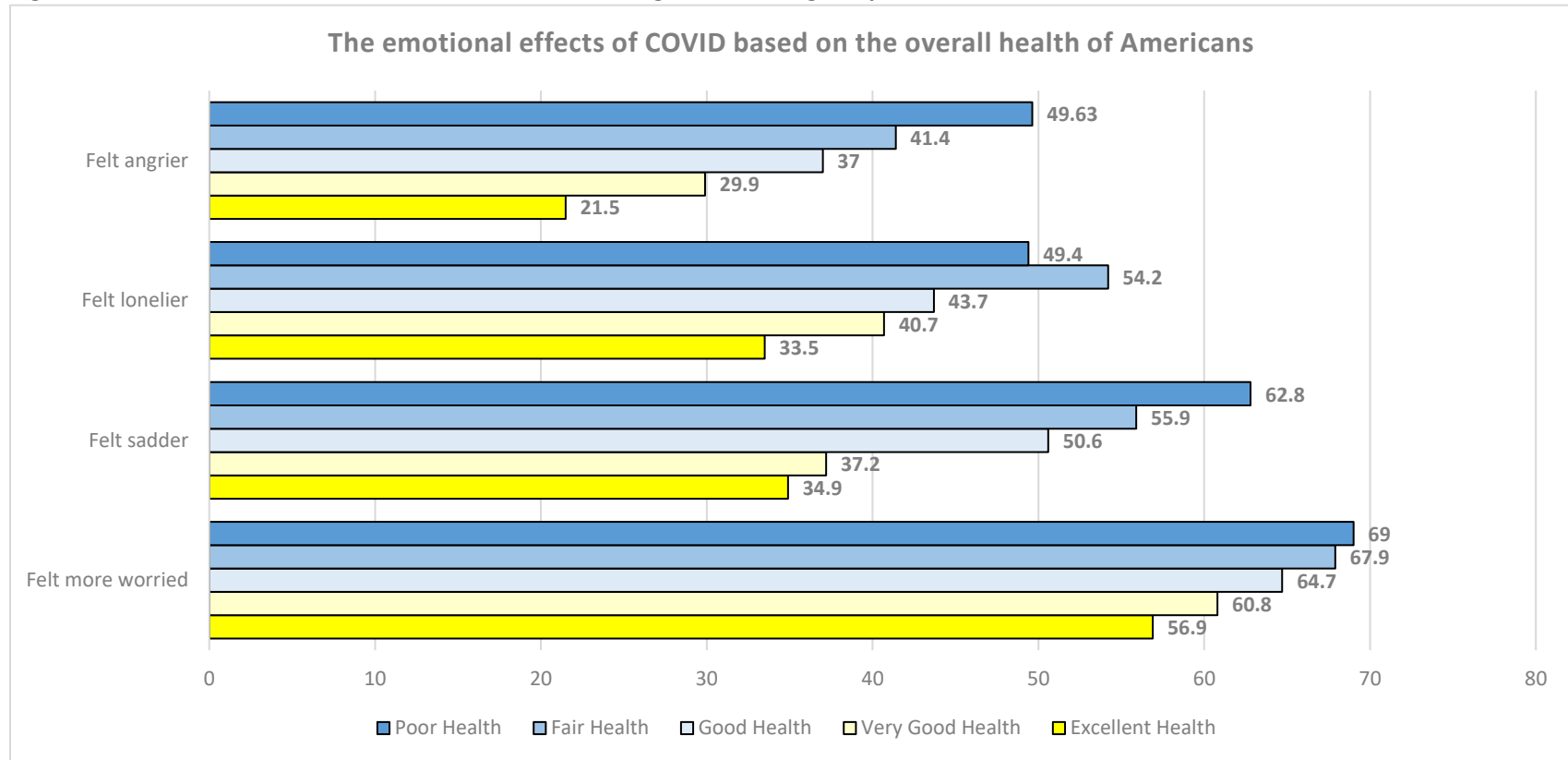
We also looked which Americans were most negatively emotionally affected by health, age, political party, and living environment.

Figure 1: The Emotional Impact of COVID



Source: Baylor Religion Survey, wave 6 (2021), n=1248

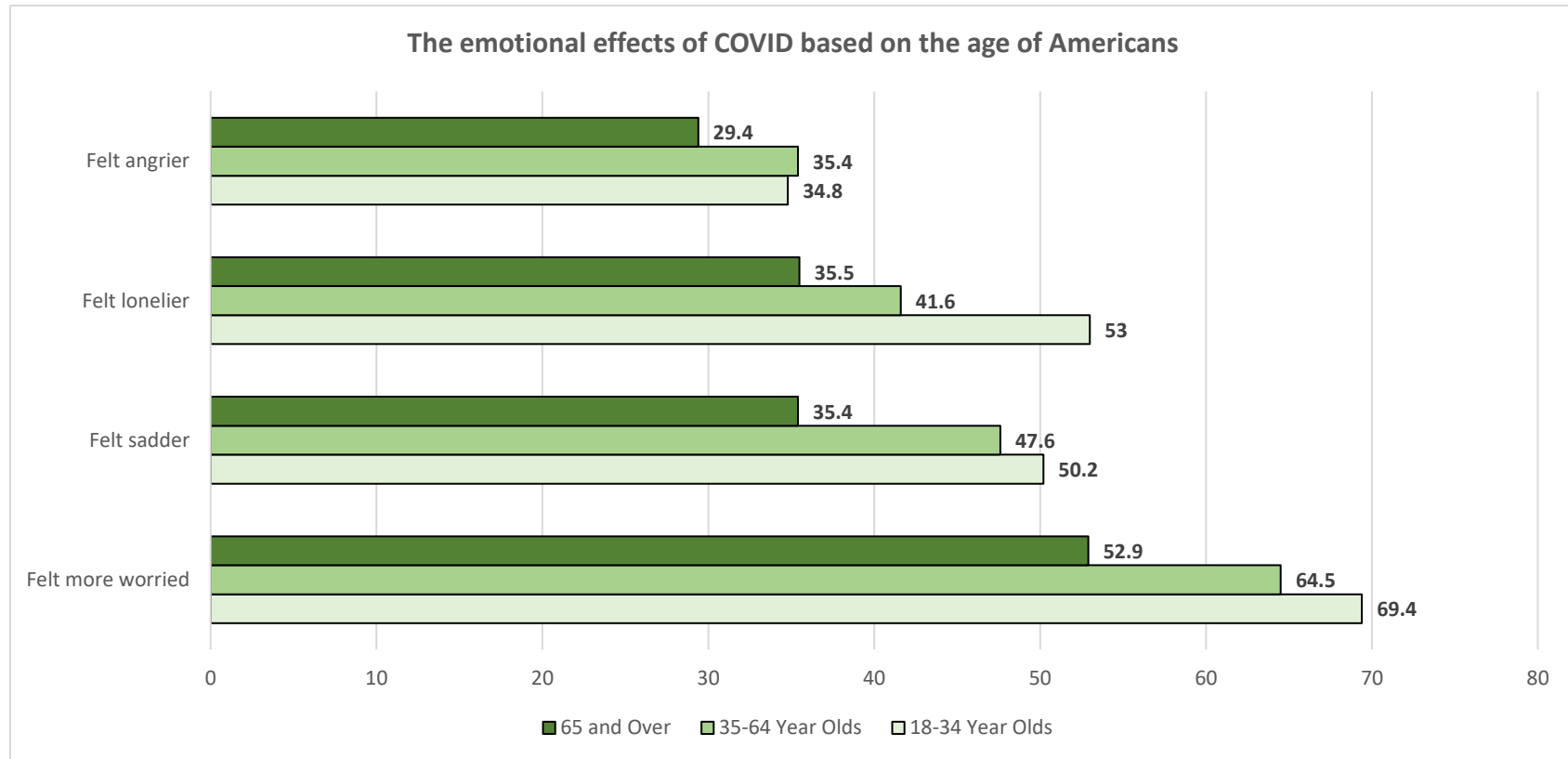
Figure 2: Americans' levels of health are related to feeling worse during the pandemic.



Source: Baylor Religion Survey, wave 6 (2021), n=1248

Overall, individuals in poor and only fair health faced more negative emotions than individuals who considered themselves in excellent or very good health. A large gap is evident when considering how angry people felt: among those in poor health, close to half claimed to feel angry more often, compared to only about one-fifth of those in excellent health. We observe a similar trend when it comes to sadness: a majority of those who state their health is poor or only fair shared that they felt sadness more often now compared to before the pandemic. Although many people share that they feel more worried, sad, lonely, and angry now than prior to the pandemic, the pandemic's emotional impact seems to have hit those struggling with ill health much more.

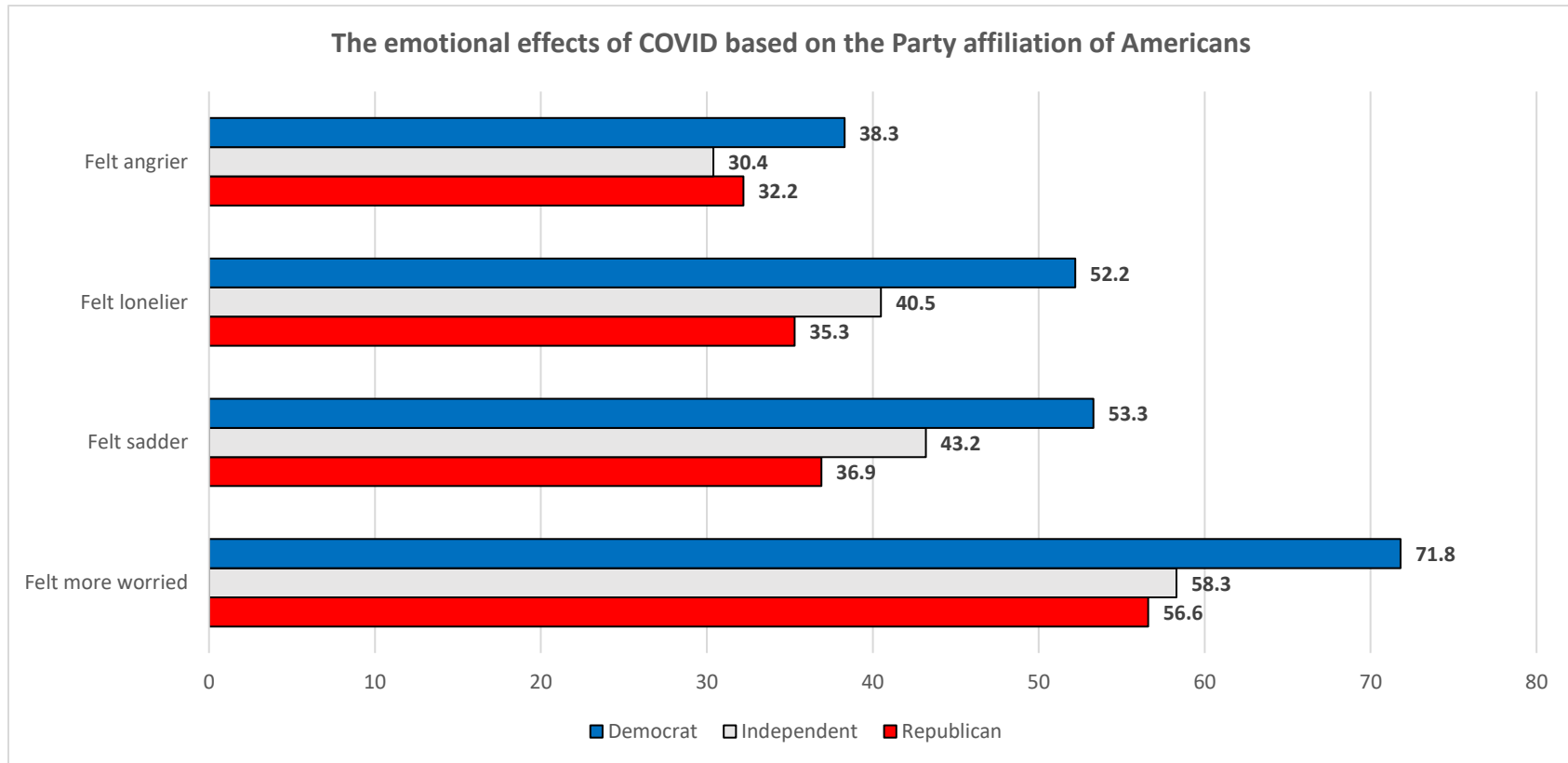
Figure 3: Americans' ages are related to feeling worse during the pandemic.



Source: Baylor Religion Survey, wave 6 (2021), n=1248

Significant shares of all age groups were affected negatively by the pandemic. However, younger adults seemed to feel lonely, sad, and worried more often compared to older adults. Half or more of 18-34 year old's shared that they felt lonelier, sadder, and more worried during the pandemic compared to before. The shares of older adults who feel similarly is notable, but not quite as large. In particular, younger adults expressed feeling significantly lonelier compared to the oldest respondents; this may be due to the fact that the question asks individuals to compare their current feelings to life before the pandemic.

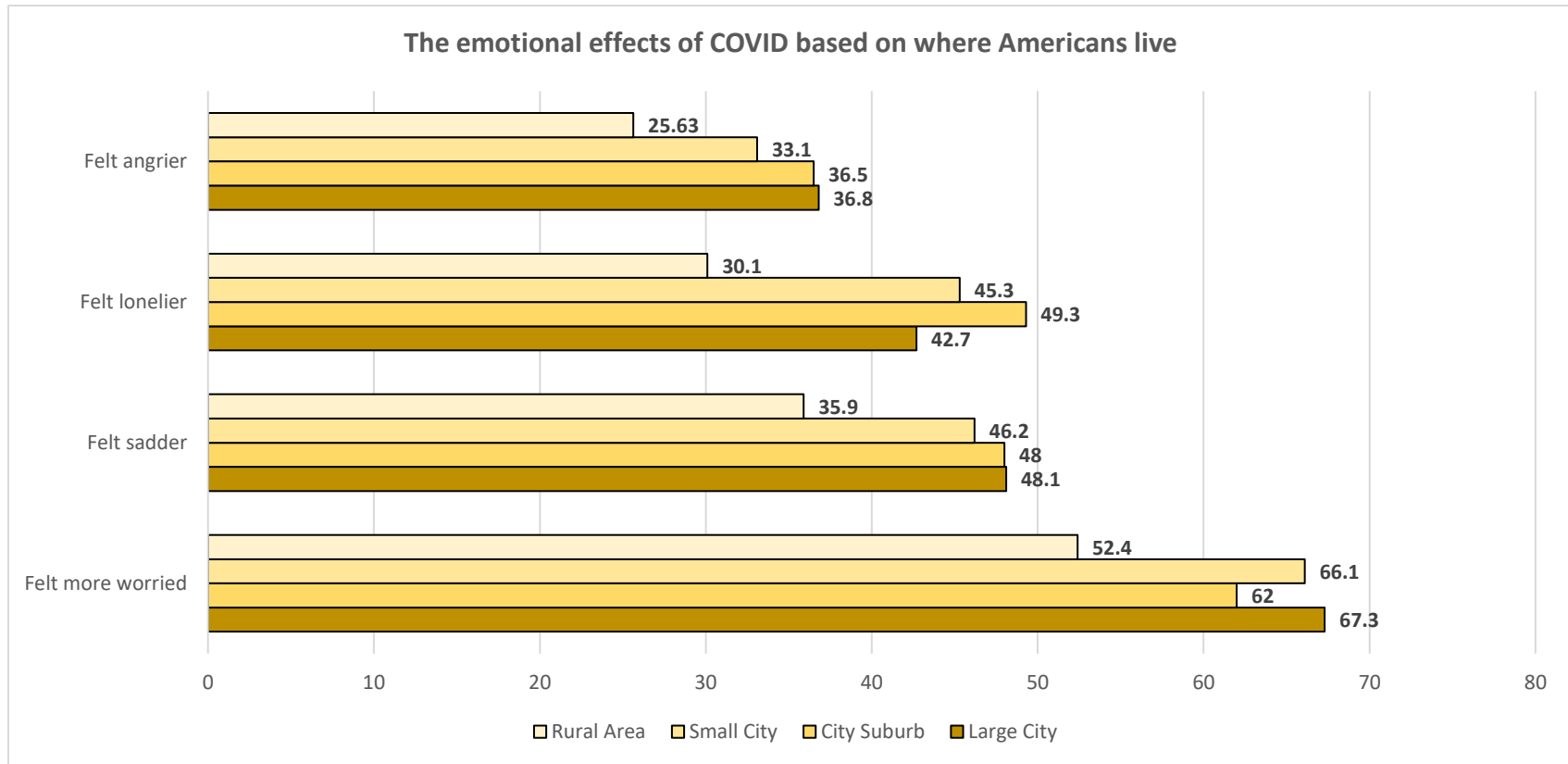
Figure 4: Americans' political party affiliations are related to feeling worse during the pandemic.



Source: Baylor Religion Survey, wave 6 (2021), n=1248

Overall, it seems that Democrats felt a stronger emotional impact across the four measures. For instance, a bit over half of Democrats shared that they felt lonelier during the pandemic than before, compared to about 35 percent of Republicans. A similar trend is evident when it comes to feeling sadness more often. When it comes to feeling more worried, close to 72 percent of Democrats shared this sentiment compared to almost 57 percent of Republicans. Of course, significant portions of all political groups felt the negative emotional impact of the pandemic. It is interesting, though, that across the four emotions Democrats show larger percentages compared to Republicans.

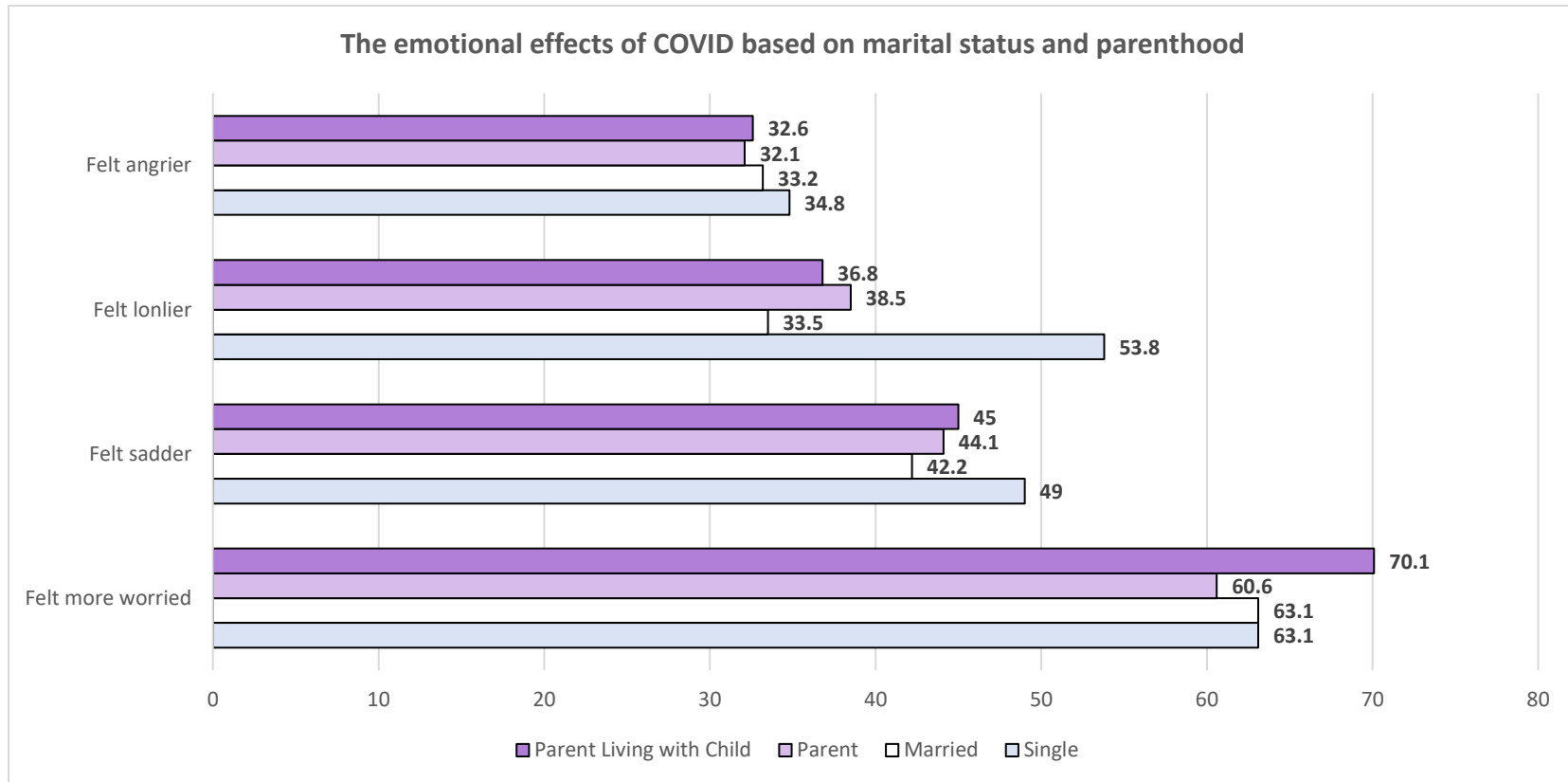
Figure 5: Americans' areas of residency are related to feeling worse during the pandemic.



Source: Baylor Religion Survey, wave 6 (2021), n=1248

Individuals residing in urban and suburban areas were, overall, more likely to feel the negative emotional impact from the pandemic compared to residents in rural areas. Americans living in rural areas were some of the least lonely in our sample. This may reflect the fact that COVID restrictions tended to be stricter in more densely populated regions of the country.

Figure 6: Americans' family lives are related to feeling worse during the pandemic.



Source: Baylor Religion Survey, wave 6 (2021), n=1248

While few differences emerge when it comes to feelings of anger, worry, and sadness, single individuals were much more likely to feel lonely more often during the pandemic. Moreover, among those living with their child(ren), about 70 percent shared that they were feeling worried more often compared to pre-pandemic times.