

Racial and Ethnic Differences in Adolescents' Intentions on Attending College

Research Questions

- Are there differences in adolescents' intentions to go to college by race/ethnicity?
- Do such racial/ethnic differences appear for adolescents who like or dislike school similarly?

Significance

- Educational attainment and achievement in American societies have links to better life outcomes such as enhanced life satisfaction and well-being (Hossler & Stage, 1992).
- There are large gaps in the college enrollment and graduation rates between White students and racial and ethnic minorities (Sandefur et al., 2006).

Background

- Ogbu (1983) argued that Black and Hispanic students have *lower* academic aspirations than White students due to perceived barriers to opportunity.
- Empirical research has shown *higher* aspirations for Black students than White students (Kao & Tienda, 1998; Qian & Blair, 1999).
- Minority students who were more involved in high school activities had higher levels of post-secondary education aspirations (Hossler & Stage, 1992).

Hypotheses

- Black and Hispanic adolescents will have less intention of going to college than White adolescents.
- Black and Hispanic students who often disliked school will have less intention of attending college than White adolescents who often disliked school.

Data and Sample

- Monitoring the Future Survey
- 2018 Public Data N = 29,980
- U.S. adolescents in grades 8 and 10

Dependent Measure

- Adolescents' expectations to attend college
- “How likely is it that you will do each of the following things? Go to college.”
- Definitely or probably won't: 9.0%
- Probably will: 28.4%
- Definitely will: 62.6%

Independent Measure

- Race and Ethnicity
- Black: 15.2%
- Hispanic: 26.9%
- White: 57.9%

Control Measure

- School attachment
- “Thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you hate being in school?”
- Never, Seldom, Sometimes: 64.6%
- Often or Always: 35.4%

Analysis

- Cross tabulation
- Chi-Square tests
- SPSS

Results

Figure 1. % College Attendance Expectations by Race/ethnicity: Total sample

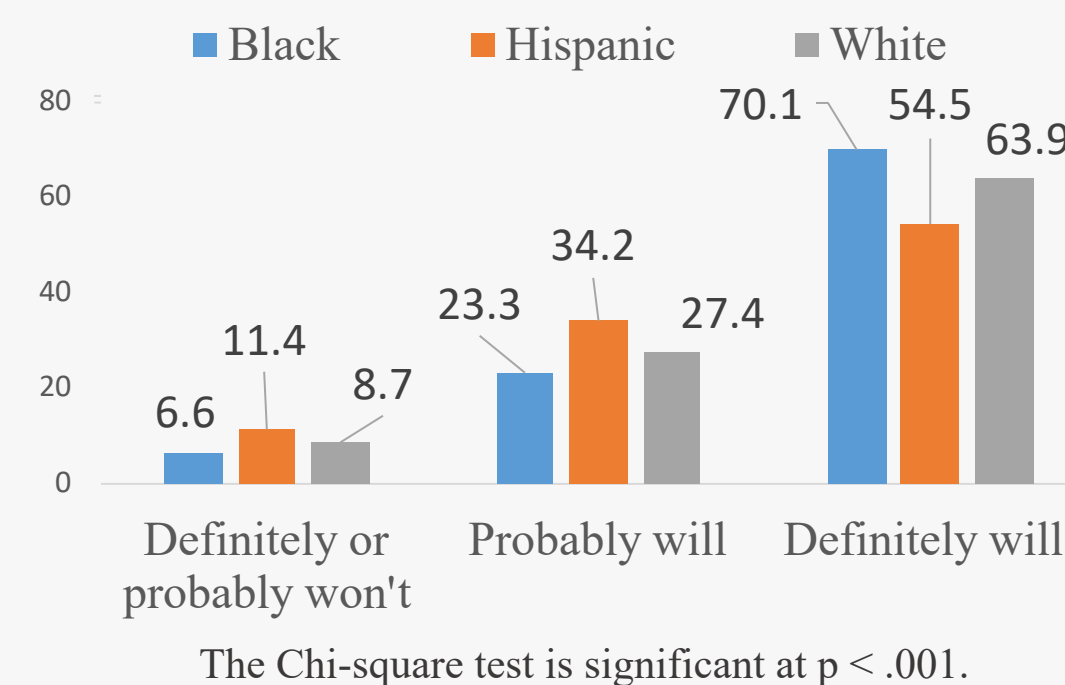


Figure 2. % College Attendance Expectations by Race/ethnicity: Higher school attachment

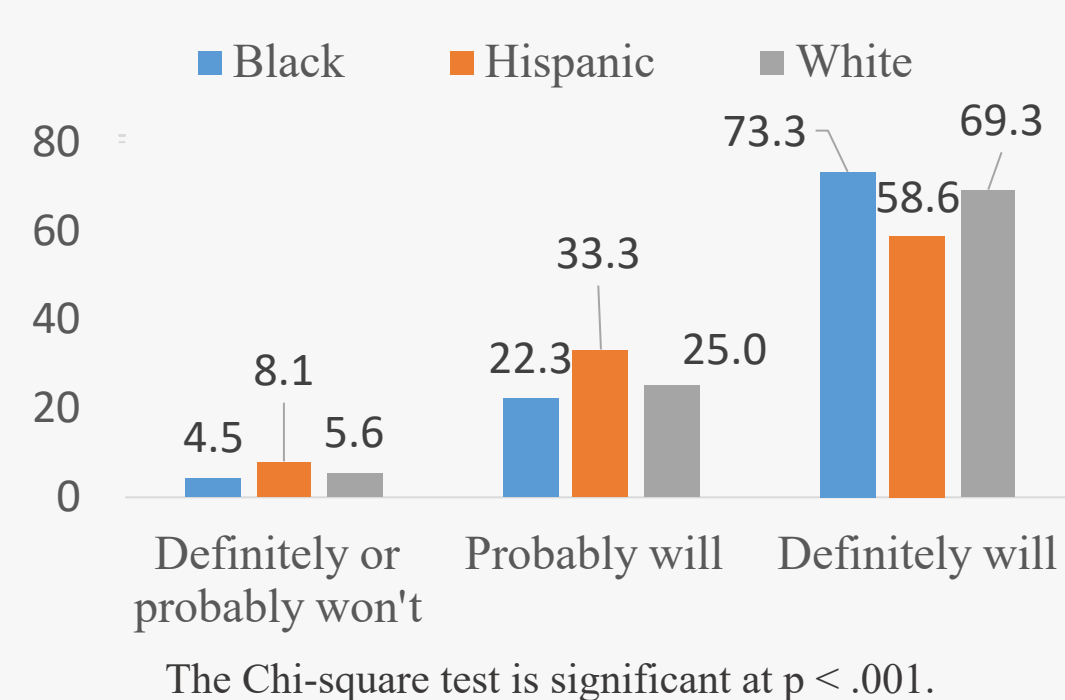
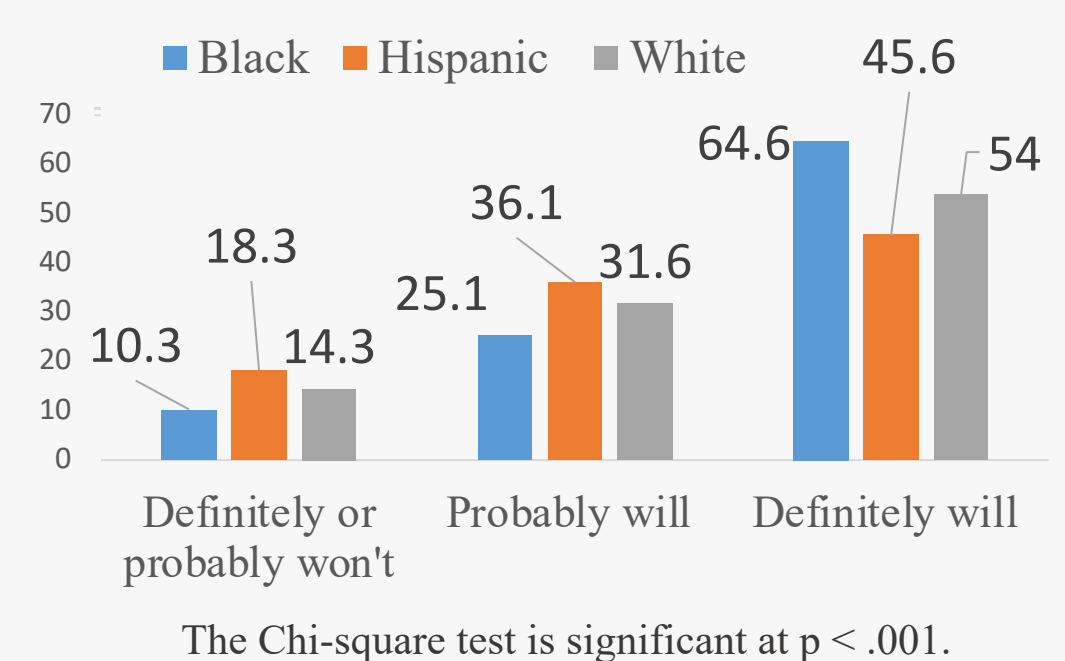


Figure 3. % College Attendance Expectations by Race/ethnicity: Lower school attachment



Summary of Findings

- Black students (70.1%) were more likely than Hispanic (54.5%) and White (63.9%) students to report they would definitely attend college.
- Hispanic (18.3%) and White (14.3%) students reported higher rates of disliking school and not wanting to attend college compared to Black students (10.3%).

Future Research

- Policy makers should consider how to increase Hispanic students' aspirations for college.
- Black students may face barriers to attend college despite their aspirations.
- Better funding for schools in poor neighborhoods.
- College counseling programs implemented in high schools.

References

- Hossler, D., & Stage, F. K. (1992). Family and high school experience influences on the postsecondary educational plans of ninth-grade students. *American Educational Research Journal*, 29(2), 425-451.
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- Sandefur, G. D., Meier, A. M., & Campbell, M. E. (2006). Family resources, social capital, and college attendance. *Social Science Research*, 35(2), 525-553.