

# The Relationship among Educational Attainment, Race and Attitudes Toward Income Redistribution

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## Research Questions

- Does educational attainment influence respondent's attitudes toward income redistribution?
- Does race influence this potential association?

## Significance

- Equality is causally related to numerous public health issues such as obesity, public trust, mental health, social trust, etc. (Wilkinson et. al., 2011).
- It is important to research issues related to social inequality to better understand and provide for the needs of the disadvantaged.

## Background

- Individuals are less likely to support social benefits if there is an increasing share of ethnic diversity (Dahlberg et. al., 2012).
- Support for redistributive policies is negatively affected by mobility (Alesina & Angeletos, 2005).
- People take equality of opportunities into consideration when deciding to support income distribution (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2005).

## Hypotheses

- Individuals who are White and more educated are less likely to support income redistribution.
- There is a weaker association among minorities between education and favoring income redistribution.

## Data and Sample

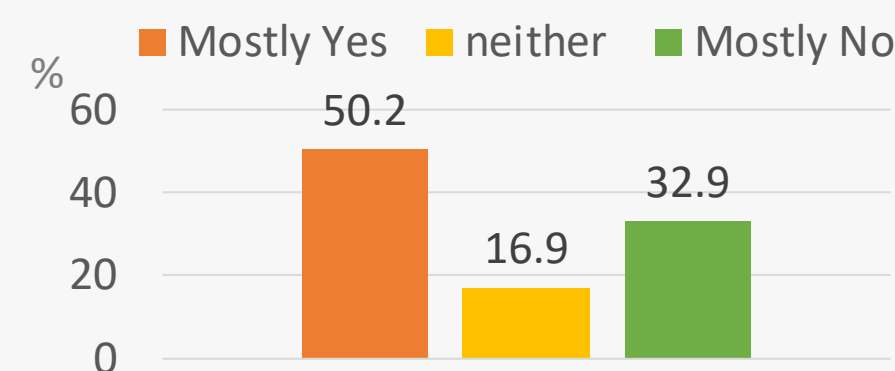
- General Social Survey (GSS) 2018 public data (N = 2,348)
- English or Spanish speaking American adults ages 18 and older

## Dependent Measure

Opinions on Income Redistribution

- "What score between 1 and 7 is closest to the way you feel?"
  - 1-3: Mostly yes for redistribution
  - 4: Neither
  - 5-7: Mostly no for redistribution

Figure 1. Opinions on Income Redistribution



## Independent Measure

Educational Attainment

- What is the highest degree you have received?

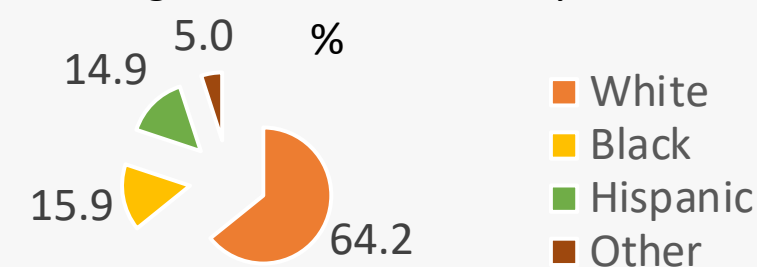
Figure 2. Education



## Control Measure

Race/Ethnicity

Figure 3. Race/Ethnicity



## Analysis

- Cross tabulation and Chi-square test using SPSS.
- Because of the small sample size, results for "other race" are not discussed.

## Results

Figure 4. Opinions on Income Redistribution by Education: White Respondents

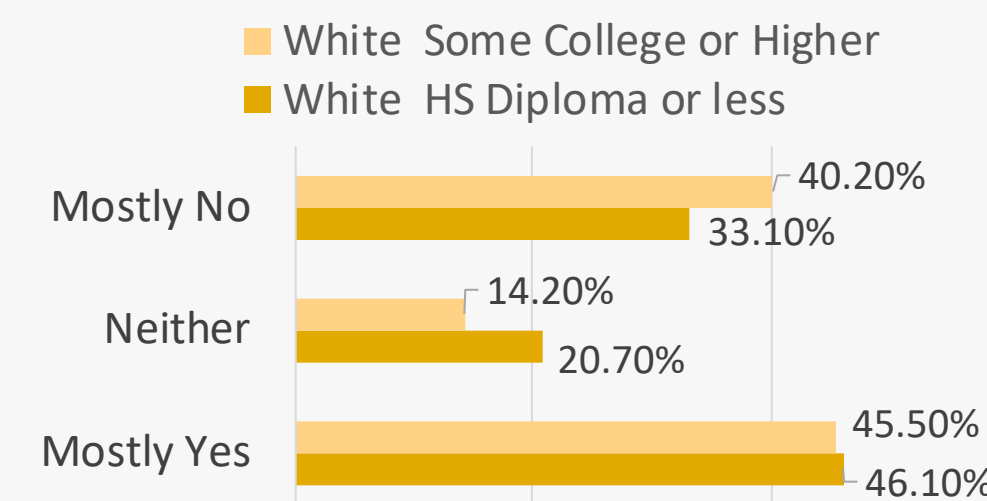


Figure 5. Opinions on Income Redistribution by Education: Black Respondents

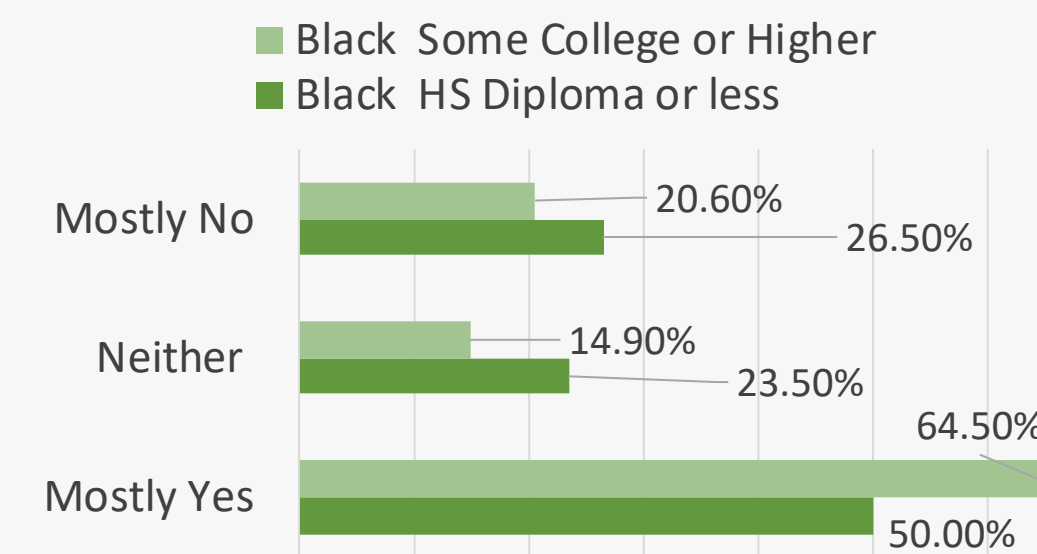
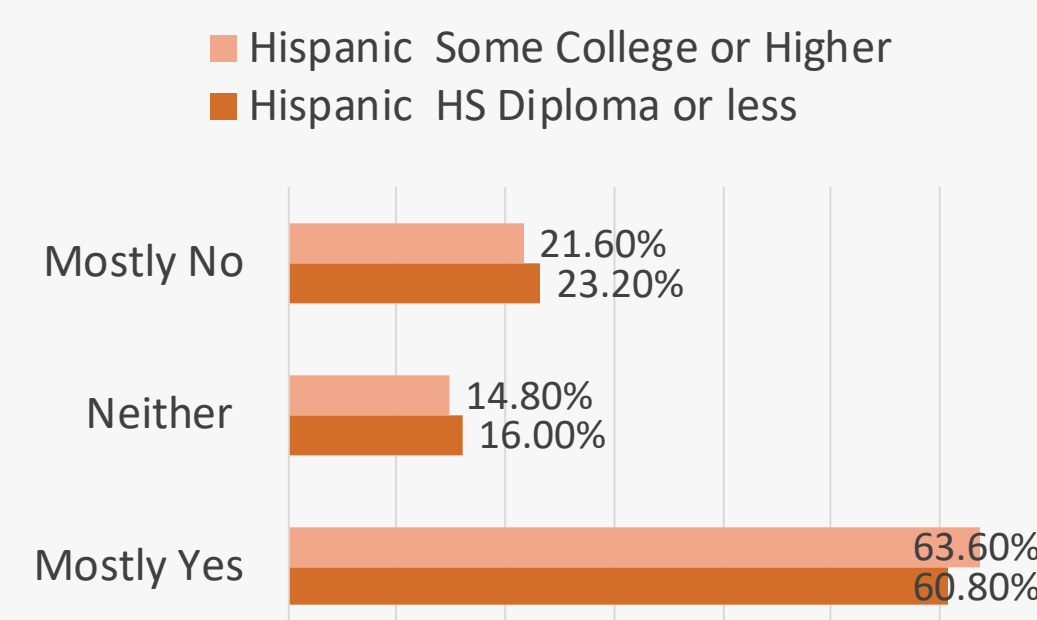


Figure 6. Opinions on Income Redistribution by Education: Hispanic Respondents



## Summary of Findings

- A significant relationship between education and attitudes toward redistribution was found among White respondents: Whites with college education are significantly more likely to believe it was NOT the government's responsibility to redistribute income.
- Marginally significant ( $p = .067$ ), Blacks with college education are *more* likely to support income redistribution.
- These two findings are interesting because they are opposite findings.
- People tend to oppose redistribution when they believe everyone has equal opportunities. Black people may realize that opportunities are not equal and thus support redistribution.

## Future Research

- Future research interests may include analyzing incomes of different races with opinions on income redistribution.
- A study by Alesina & La Ferrara (2005) found that prospective income influences opinions on income redistribution.

## References

- Alesina, A., & La Ferrara, E. (2005). Preferences for redistribution in the land opportunities. *Journal of Public Economics*, 89(5), 897-931.
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- Dahlberg, M., Edmark, K., Lundqvist, H., Stockholms universitet, Samhällsvetenskapliga fakulteten, & Institutet för internationell ekonomi. (2012). Ethnic diversity and preferences for redistribution. *Journal of Political Economy*, 120(1), 41-76.
- Wilkinson, Richard G., and Kate Pickett. *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*. Bloomsbury Press, 2011.