

# The Relationship Between Education Level and Support For Donald Trump In the 2024 Election

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## Introduction

- Research done by Pew Research center found that Highly educated adults, more specifically those who have attended graduate school, are far more likely than those with less education to take predominantly liberal positions. (Geiger, "A Wider Ideological Gap Between More and Less Educated Adults")
- Another Pew Research study found that Voters with postgraduate degrees are even more Democratic than those with bachelor's degrees. About six-in-ten registered voters who have a postgraduate degree (61%) identify with or lean toward the Democratic Party, while 37% associate with the Republican Party. ((Pew Research Center, "Partisanship by Race, Ethnicity and Education")
- 49 percent of college educated men voted for Harris, compared to 48 percent voting for Trump. 61 percent of college educated women voted for Harris compared to 37 percent for Trump. (Alonso, "Men and White People Vote Differently Based on Education")

## Research Questions

- Is there a relationship between higher education levels and lower Trump Vote support?
- Does each unit increase in education level lower the chance one votes for Trump?

## Methods

### Sample

- The American National Election Survey is an academically-run national survey of voters in the United States, conducted between August 3, 2024 and November 5, 2024, with November 5th being Election Day.
- The ANES used random sampling to ensure a representative sample.

### Measures

- Vote Support
  - Support was measured using ANES item: "For whom did you vote in the 2024 presidential election". The variable was conducted dichotomously in terms of the presence or absence of a vote for Donald Trump.
  - Recoded: Trump = 1, Harris = 0; "neither" excluded.
- Education Levels:
  - Highest degree completed (ANES)
  - Categories recoded into five groups:
    - No high school degree, high school degree, some college/associate degree, bachelor's degree, and postgraduate degree.

## Results

### Univariate

- Of this sample, 54 percent of respondents voted for Harris, and 45 percent voted for Trump. There were a total of 4,994 respondents.

### Bivariate

- Chi-square analysis showed that **education was significantly associated with lower voter support for Trump**,  $\chi^2(6) = 250.48$ ,  $p < 0.00$ .
- Support for Trump **generally decreases with education**: 62 percent less than hs, 57 percent somehs, 60 percent hs degree, 53 percent beyond hs, and 39 percent beyond hs.
- Post-hoc tests indicated that several pairwise differences were significant, particularly, once someone had gotten a hs degree or beyond, the relationship between Trump support and education under these circumstances is statistically significant.
- Multivariate**
- Logistic regression controlling for race shows that the relationship between education level and vote support for Trump is only significant for White identifying respondents and Black identifying respondents.
- Figure 1 shows that with Harris as 0 and Trump as 1, we see amongst each race category besides Native Americans, Harris has an advantage in vote share amongst bachelor degree educated respondents, as well as graduate degree educated respondents.

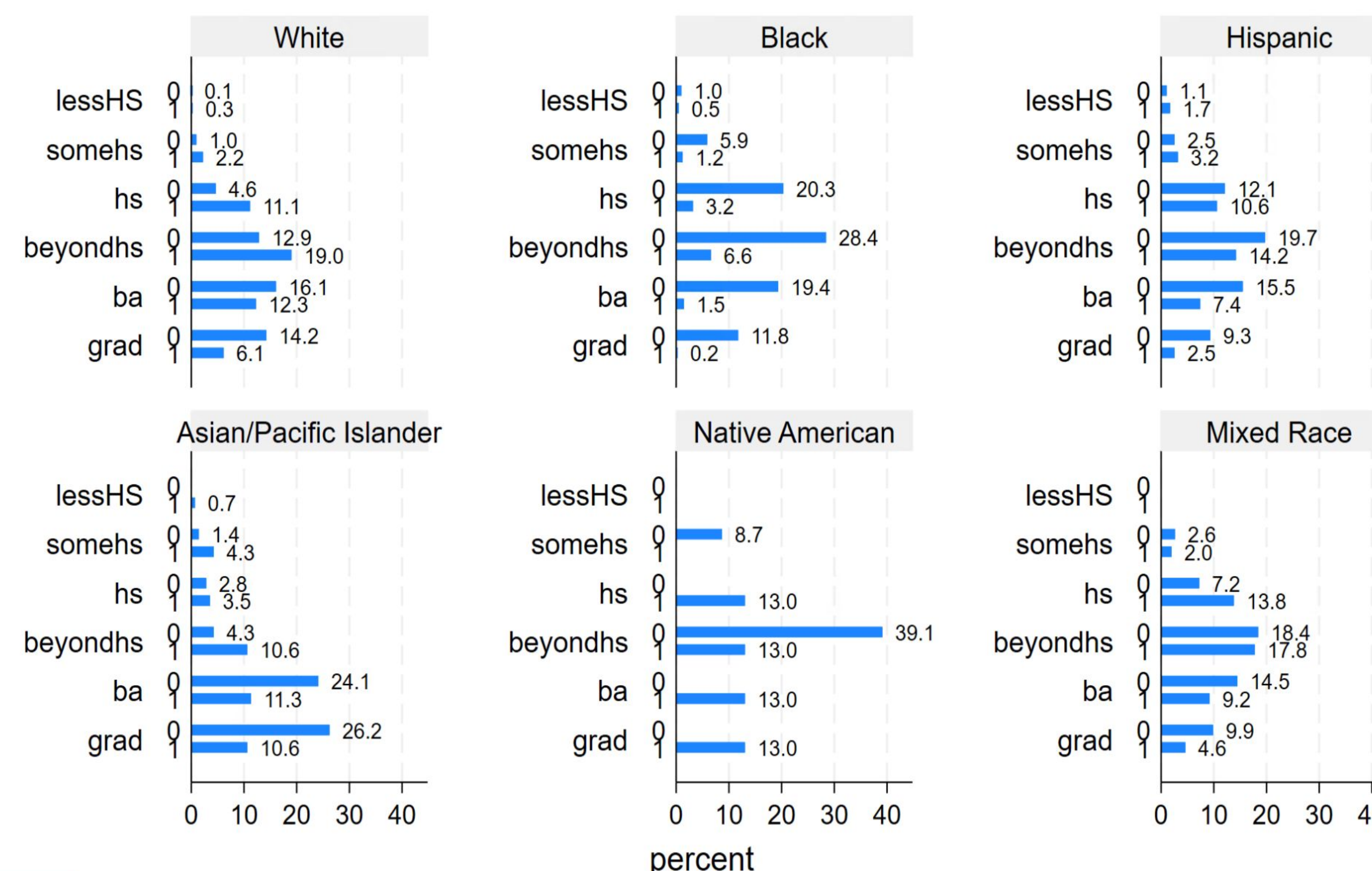


Figure 1

- Notably, **support advantage for Trump drops once respondents reach beyond hs education.**
- This graph suggests that education alone does not fully explain voting behavior, and that racial identity plays an important moderating role in shaping political preferences.

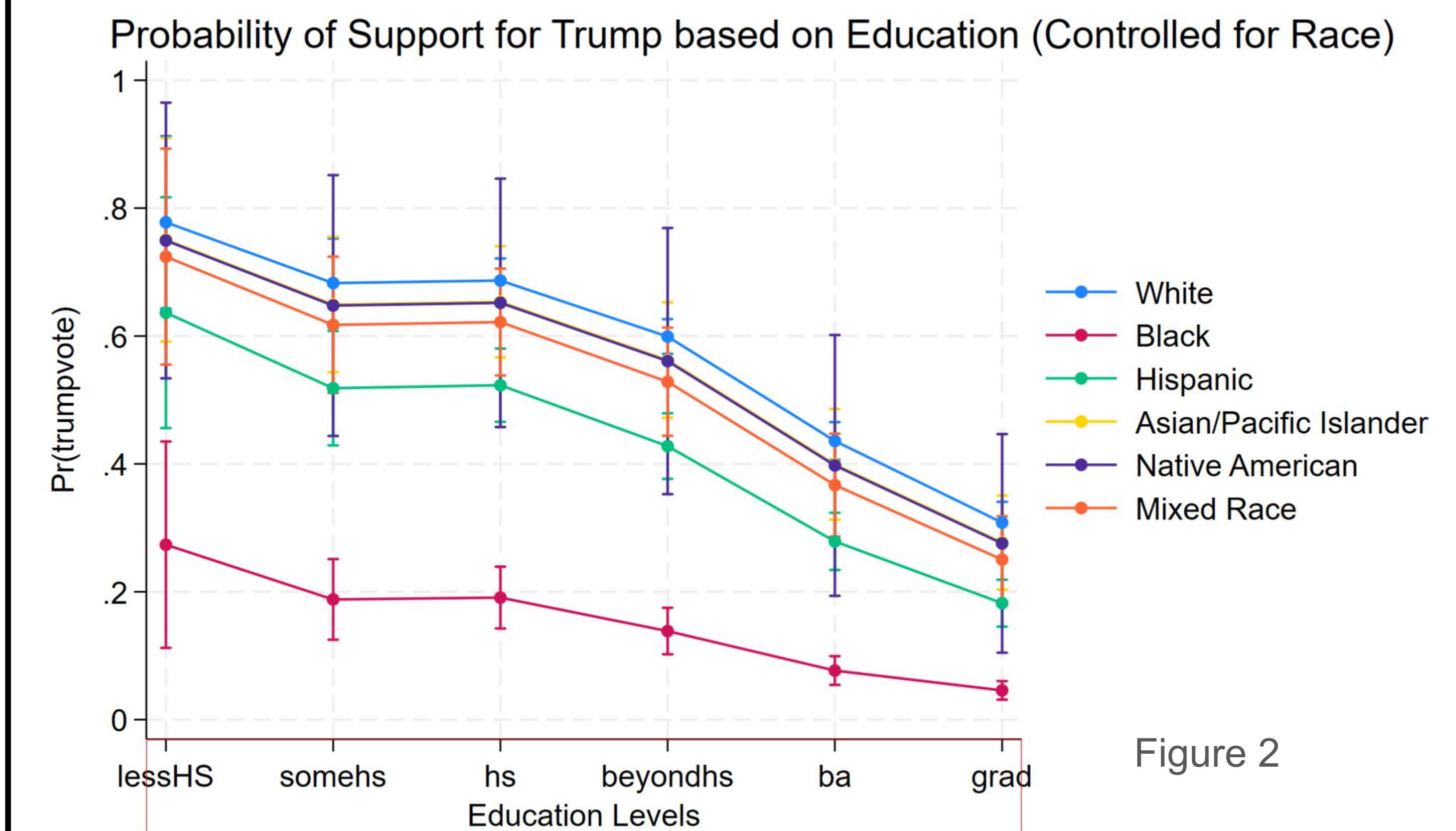


Figure 2

- This graphs shows that for each unit increase in education, each racial categories' likelihood of voting for Trump goes down.
- On average, African Americans have the least likelihood of voting for Trump compared to all racial categories.

## Discussion

- Education significantly shapes vote support for Trump, and that relationship stays significant when race is included.
- Likelihood that someone votes for Donald Trump decreases by 17 percent for every unit increase in education level. For example, someone who has completed high school has a 20 percent higher chance to vote for Trump in the 2024 election than someone who has completed some level of college.
- When including race categories into the equation, the p value changed, as well as the odds ratio, meaning their was moderation when adding the covariate race. Race categories 3 (hispanic) and 6 (other) are now insignificant.
- Limitations: other variables such as gender, economic background etc not controlled for. Further research could control for these other factors, and see if education level still has a meaningful relationship with lower Trump support.

## References

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