



# The Association Between Support for Foreign Aid and Race

Juliette Vemmer, Applied Data Analysis, Wesleyan University

## Introduction

- Foreign aid is distributed with the goal of increasing the economic, social, and political development of recipient countries. Foreign aid both assists recipient countries and benefits U.S. interests (Ingram, 2019).
- Public opinion is extremely important to foreign aid, as the public influences the effectiveness, quality, and making of foreign aid policy (Paxton & Knack, 2011).
- Individual inclinations for or against foreign aid have been surprisingly neglected in the realm of international government research (Paxton & Knack, 2011).
- Previous studies have explored the association between support for foreign aid and economic status, feelings of resentment, paternalistic attitudes, altruism, and nativity. However, certain important determinants of support for foreign aid have yet to be explored.

## Research Questions

- Is identifying with certain racial populations, specifically non-white groups, associated with the belief that the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid?
- Does the association between race and foreign aid opinion differ based on nativity status, feelings on upward mobility, and exposure to poorer populations?

## Methods

### Sample

- Respondents (n=4,032) were drawn from the 2021 General Social Survey (GSS), a nationally representative sample of non-institutionalized adults over the age of 18 in the U.S.

### Measures

- Race was combined into one variable and grouped into 7 categories.
- Beliefs about whether the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid was coded dichotomously (1=too much; 0=too little or about right).
- Exposure to poverty was assessed on a scale of 1(never) to 7 (everyday). This was collapsed into 4 categories.
- Nativity was measured dichotomously (1=born in the U.S.; 0=not born in the U.S.).
- For upward mobility, participants were asked whether Black Americans should work their way up in society without special favors. The possible answers were collapsed into three categories (agree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree).

## Results

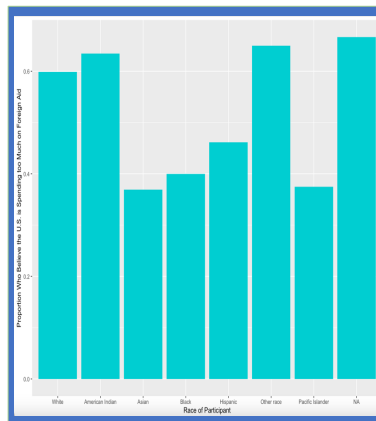
### Univariate

- 75.5% of respondents are white, 4.5% are Asian, 11.1% are Black, and 4.2% are Hispanic.
- 87.2% of respondents were born in the U.S.
- 27.4% of respondents believe the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid.
- 28.4% of respondents agree with the upward mobility statement.

### Bivariate

- A Chi-square analysis showed that race ( $\chi^2=51.041$ ,  $p<0.0001$ ) was significantly associated with the belief that the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Belief that the U.S. is Spending too Much on Foreign Aid as Related to Race

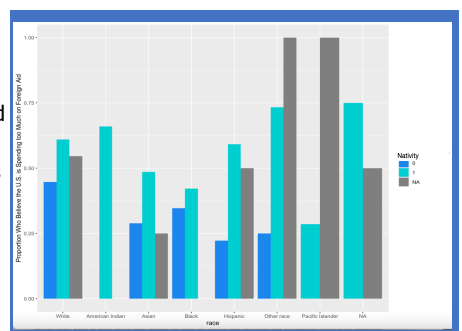


- A logistic regression showed that race is negatively significant for those who identify as Black (O.R. 0.45, CI 0.59,  $p<0.0001$ ), Asian (O.R. 0.39, CI 0.61,  $p<0.0001$ ), and Hispanic (O.R. 0.57, CI 0.9,  $p<0.05$ ) compared to White.
- Disagreement with the upward mobility statement is negatively and significantly associated with the belief that the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid (O.R. 0.25, CI 0.33,  $p<0.0001$ ) compared to agreement.

### Multivariate

- After controlling for nativity and opinions on upward mobility, race (Black) is significantly and negatively related with the belief that the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid (O.R. 0.69, CI 1.0,  $p<0.05$ ) compared to race (white).
- As shown in Figure 2, nativity is significantly and positively associated with the belief that the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid (O.R. 2.23, CI 3.42,  $p<0.001$ ).
- Exposure to poverty is not significant.

Figure 2. Belief that the U.S. is Spending too Much on Foreign Aid as Affected by Race and Nativity



## Discussion

- Race, nativity, and feelings on upward mobility may be related to whether an individual believes the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid.
- It is more likely that those born in the U.S. will believe the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid compared to those born outside of the U.S. Those who identify as Black are less likely to believe the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid compared to those who identify as White.
- Like previous racial resentment studies, those who show negative opinions toward upward mobility are more likely to believe the U.S. is spending too much on foreign aid.
- Based on this, garnering support for foreign aid initiatives is likely best found in populations who identify as Black or who are born outside of the United States. Also, groups that show negative opinions toward racial advancement are likely less inclined to support foreign aid initiatives.
- More research is needed to determine why specific racial identification groups support foreign aid over others.

Paxton, P. & Knack, S. (2012). Individual and country-level factors affecting support for foreign aid. *International Political Science Review*, 33(2), 171-192.

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