



ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ETHNIC AND RACIAL GROUPS: UNDERSTANDING MECHANISMS BEHIND THE DISPARITY

Martin Puga, Jr. (Rebecca Utz)
Department of Sociology

Previous research suggests that Blacks, American Indians, and Hispanics have lower educational attainment than non-Hispanic Whites and Asians despite high academic aspirations. While there is research explaining this disparity, I will conduct my own project to verify these trends. This project has two primary research questions 1) Are there differences by race and ethnicity in educational outcomes? 2) What variables explain these differences? Educational outcomes are defined in terms of educational aspirations (desire and perceived likelihood of attending college) and educational attainment (bachelor degree attainment). Explanatory variables used to explain differences are connection to school, supportiveness of family, individual attributes, and educational background and familial resources. Descriptive statistics and logistic regression analyses were conducted on data from 5,114 young adults surveyed through the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). The findings suggest that students from all ethnic-racial groups wanted to obtain a higher education, however, many were not able to obtain it. Multivariate logistic regressions reveal that the explanatory variables mediate differences in educational outcomes with the exception of non-Hispanic American Indians and educational attainment.

