

# Numerous variables relating to 2016 election in 2021 US GSS\*

Possible factors effecting 2016 election

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## Abstract

First sentence (what was done). Second sentence(what was found). Third sentence (why this matters).  
Fourth sentence.

## 1 Introduction

Donald Trump won the 2016 United States presidential election. From what we remembered, it was quite surprising considering his image outside of U.S or even in U.S. Also, from what we remembered, before the election, Hillary Clinton was winning in most surveys as well. There is a famous quote that we learn from the past. Therefore, we thought that even though we are living in 2022, it would be meaningful to analyze the election so that we get to know what U.S citizens thoughts, or in broad sense thoughts trends in nowadays and what factors they or we considered most important to decide our representative.

This paper is going to explore mainly possible variables that potentially had impacts on deciding factors in the election as well as their analysis. However, making a decision that this variable affects U.S citizens to lean on Trump side or Clinton side is not easy because there is nothing in this world absolute. Thus, as we mentioned above, we are going to focus on general flows of results instead of defining variables as absolute factors of the demarcation. Following that, this paper has structures: Data, Results, Discussion, Appendix and supplementary survey.

We have obtained dataset from U.S GSS, and sorted variables that we consider as potential factors affecting the election. Throughout analysis of relation between the variables and respondents' votes on the election, we could observe that people who have conservative thoughts on equality and welfare preferred Trump, and people who do not preferred Clinton. This may sound obvious considering their parties, however in result session, reader can observe that what specific areas or fields they become more conservative and progressive. We believe that this situation is not only happening in U.S, but it also happens all over the world. This claim is going to be conducted with supplementary survey session.

## 2 Data

Original dataset is collected through US GSS, which is aimed for the goal that enabling the cleanest comparison to show changes in public opinion in the United States. Usually, it is conducted in person, however because of pandemic, this time it was conducted via online. Among numerous interesting findings from the dataset, we choose to analyze the 2016 United States presidential election. This slightly deviates from the US GSS goal, but we thought that it can clearly represent current situations of U.S. However, choosing specific

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\*Code and data are available at: <https://github.com/SANGWOONG-LEE/2016electionanalysis>

variables related to the election was not easy since deciding who to vote is followed by countless and complex factors. After looking over the variables, we chose age, race, gender, degree, born US, family income, national spending on education, race, arms, welfare, the poor, the other countries, social security and immigration as potential variables.

We mainly divided the variables into two parts: personal information (Age, race, gender, degree, born US and family income) and thoughts on national policies (national spending on education, race, arms, welfare, the poor, the other countries, social security and immigration). As I mentioned above, deciding who to vote is followed by very complex system of thoughts. Thus, as we cut down the variables, they do not guarantee 100% of the vote. Also, we thought that excluding non-response completely would be a bias for our understandings in data, so even though it caused difficulties in interpretation, we decided to include it except “pres16,” which is our main variable whether respondents voted for Clinton and Trump. This is because non-response does not have meanings with respect to our interests. There exists similar survey similar to ours, CNN exit polls, however it is not easy to obtain the datasets they used. Also, US GSS is more realistic than exit polls since people would think more rational in US GSS than exit polls.

Now, let’s get into the variables in details. One thing that we focused at first was whether respondents were equivalently recruited. To do this, we have to look at respondents’ personal information. If you take a look from figure 1 to 4. We can see some interesting observations as followed:

- 1) number of survey participants of age in the range of 20~40 is unexpectedly low compared to other ages.
- 2) There are more white race than others. However, considering US race demographics, it is very reasonable. For more details on US race demographics, please visit the link: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045221>.
- 3) For gender, there is slightly more female than male, and we will see later whether this has impacts on vote or not.
- 4) Clinton’s vote is higher than trump’s vote in this survey, which contradicts the election result of 2016, reader should keep in mind that this survey is more biased towards Clinton.

From figure 5 to 14, they represent respondents’ thoughts on national policies as well as relation between variables. Mostly they were collected from questions that whether you think that national spending on corresponding variables is about right, too much, or too little. For instance, let’s take a look at figure 7. This graph represents respondents’ thoughts on U.S national spending on improving black condition, and we sorted it with our interest, Clinton or Trump. For more example, let’s take a look at figure 9. This graph represents relation between income and degree with respect to our interest. It generally shows that higher education you have more income you earn. We are going to talk about interesting results in more detailed later in result and discussion session. For more information regarding variables graph please check Appendix.

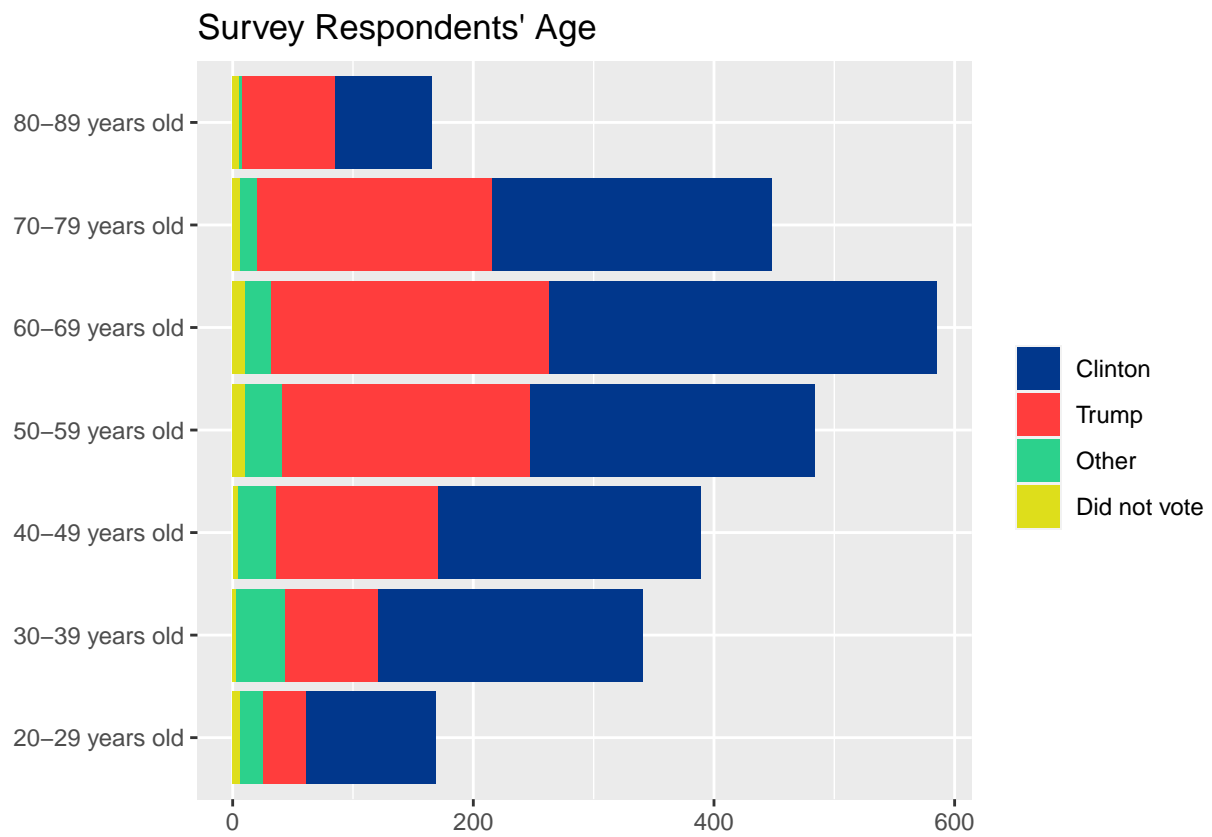


Figure 1: Distribution of survey respondents' age group.

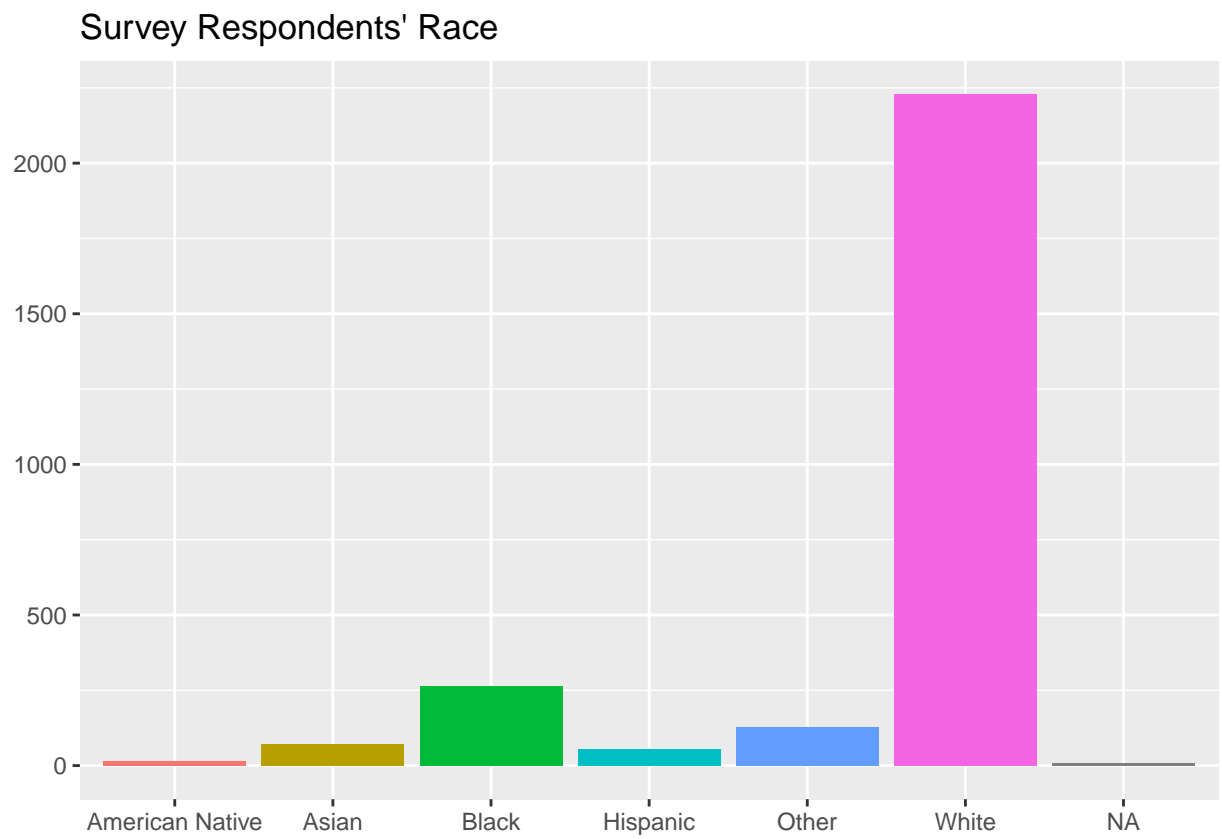


Figure 2: Distribution of survey respondents' race.

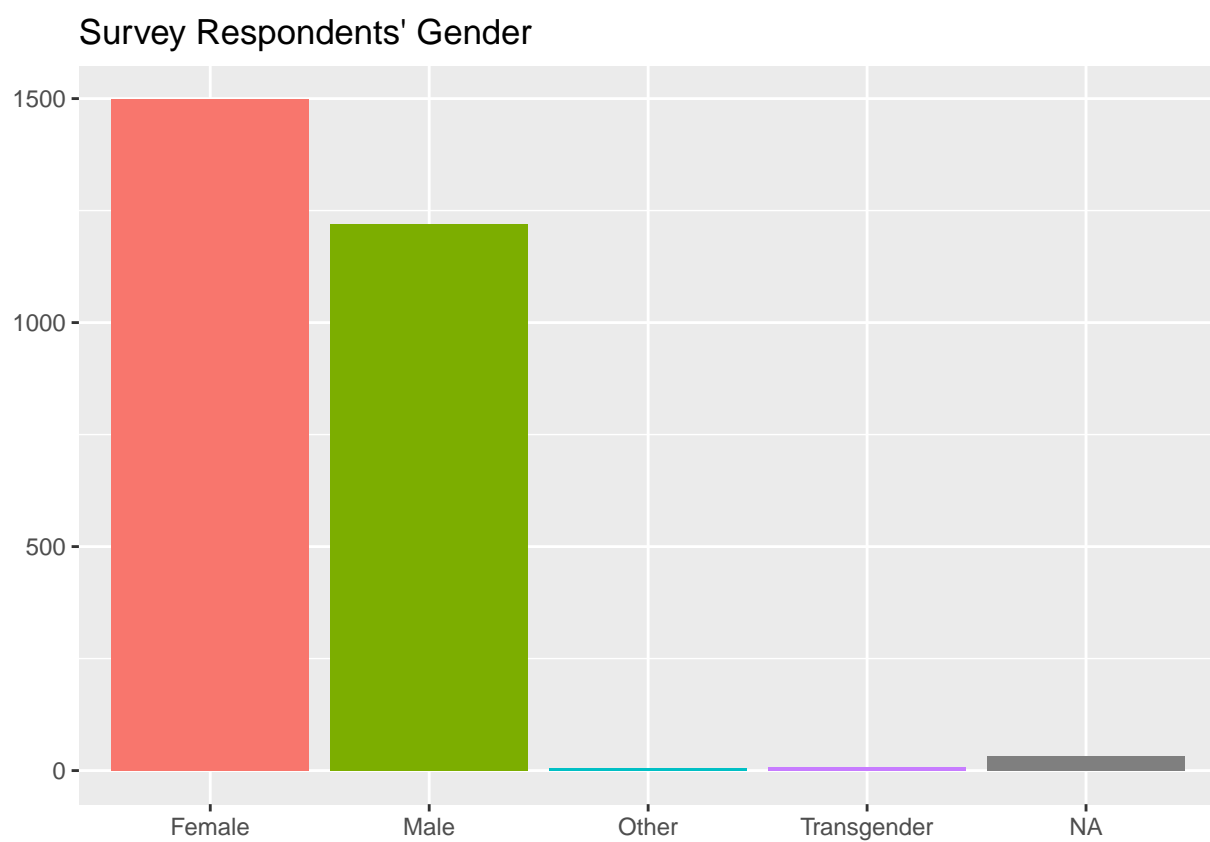


Figure 3: Distribution of survey respondents' gender

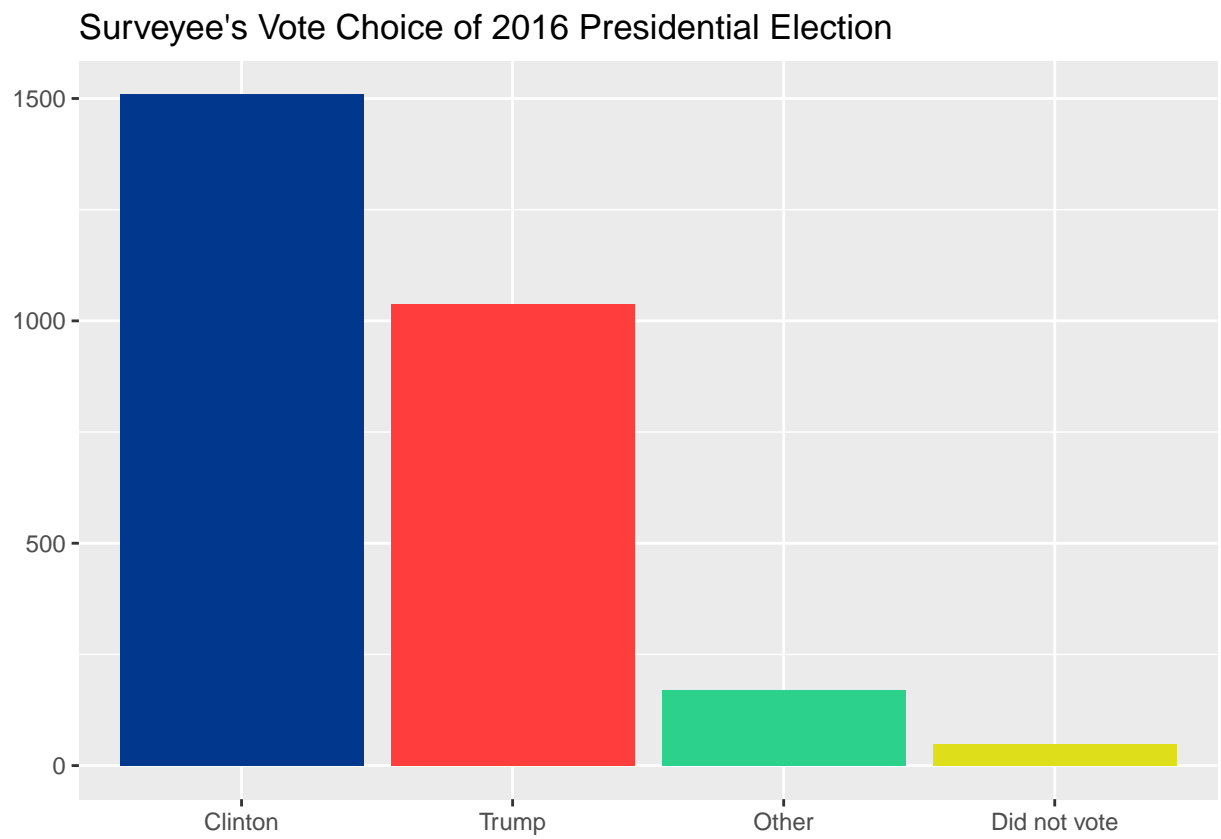


Figure 4: Distribution of survey respondents

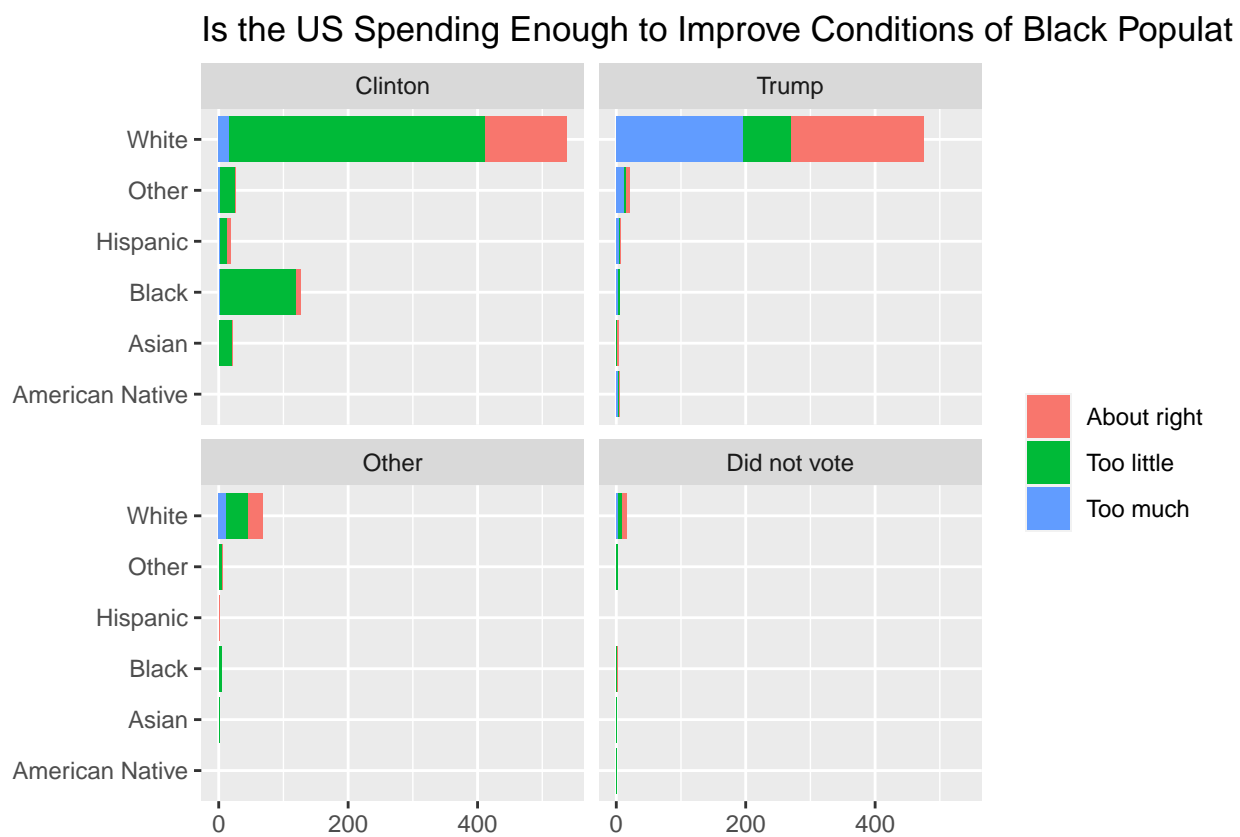


Figure 5: Opinion on national spending on improving conditions of black population

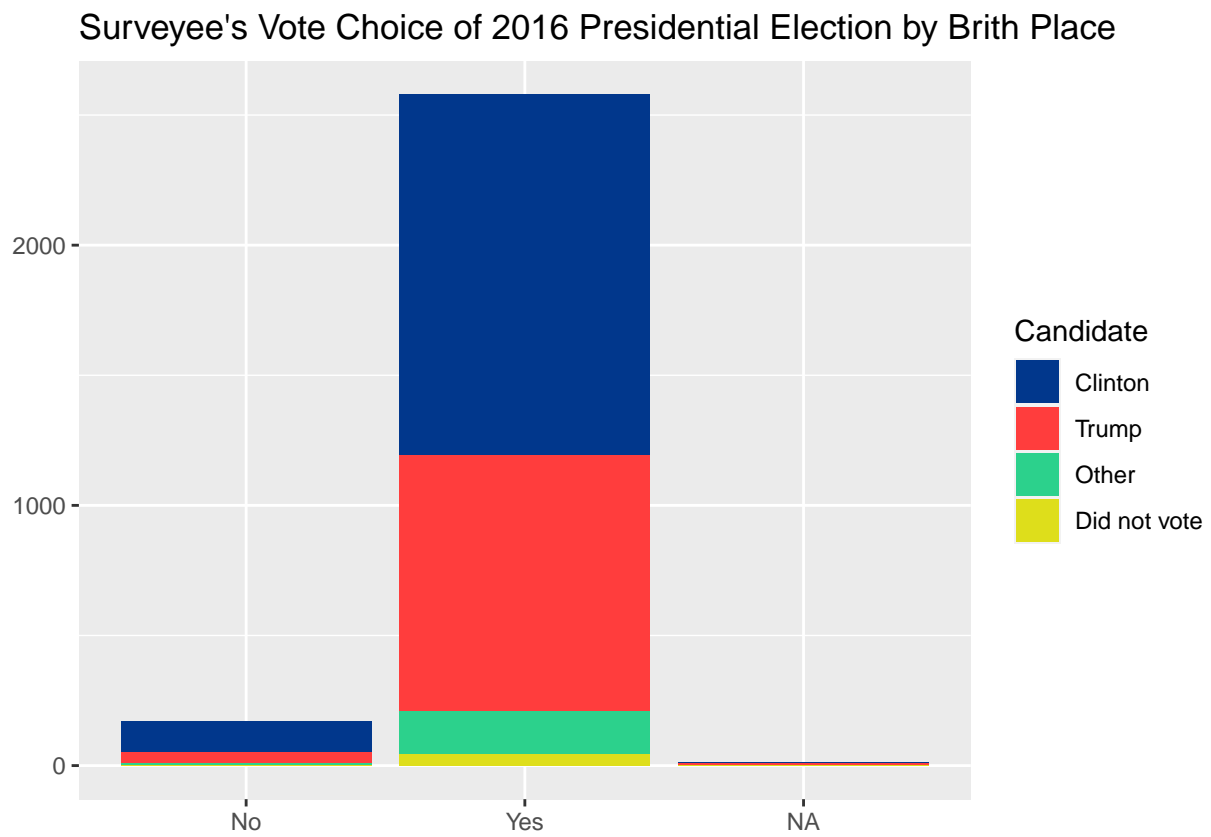


Figure 6: Distribution of survey respondents' vote choice by birth place



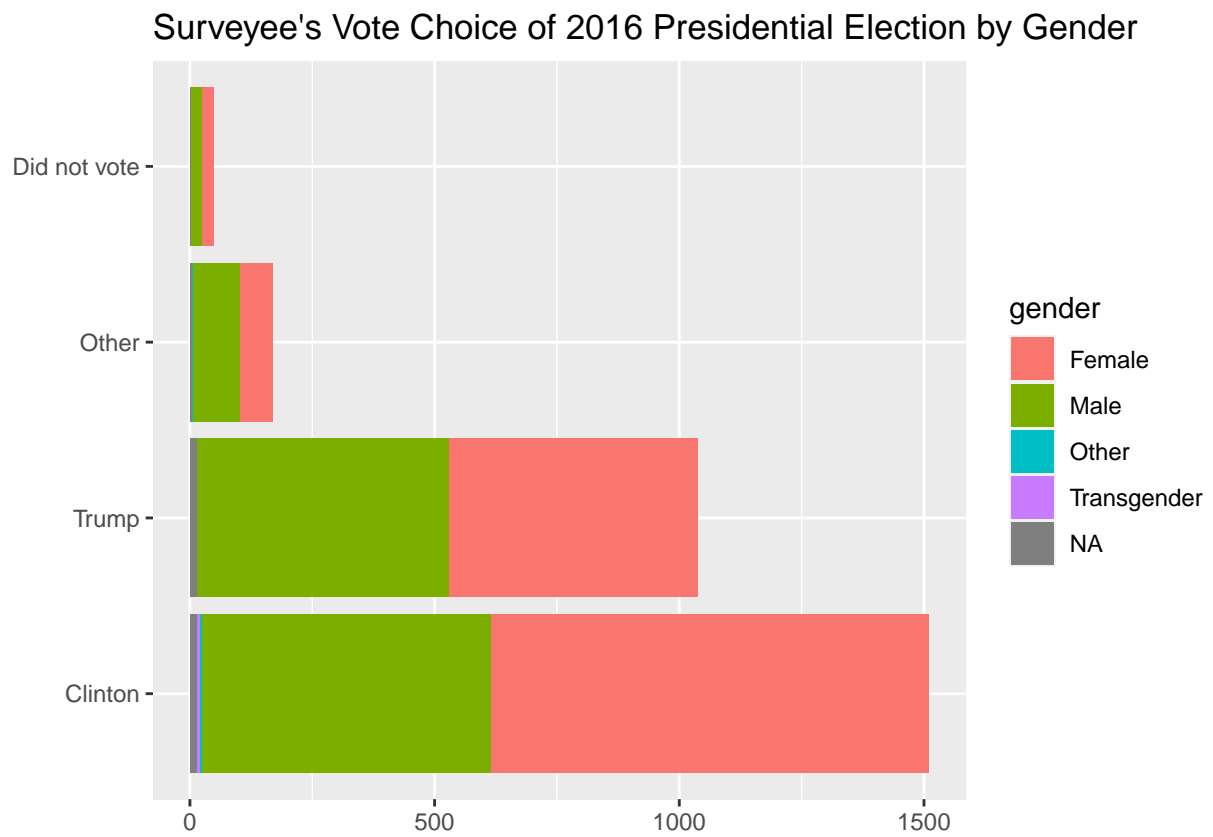


Figure 7: Distribution of survey respondents' vote by gender

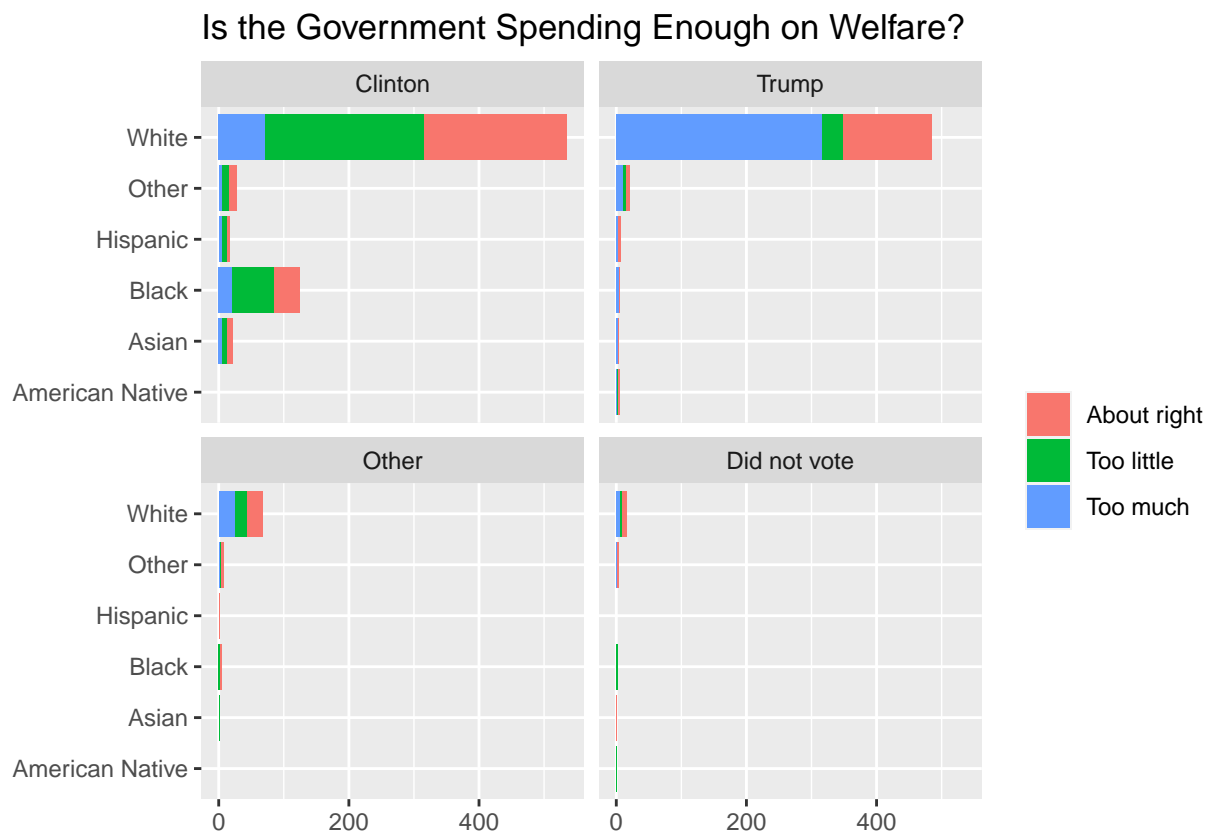


Figure 8: Opinion on national spending on welfare

Education, Income and its Effect to the Vote

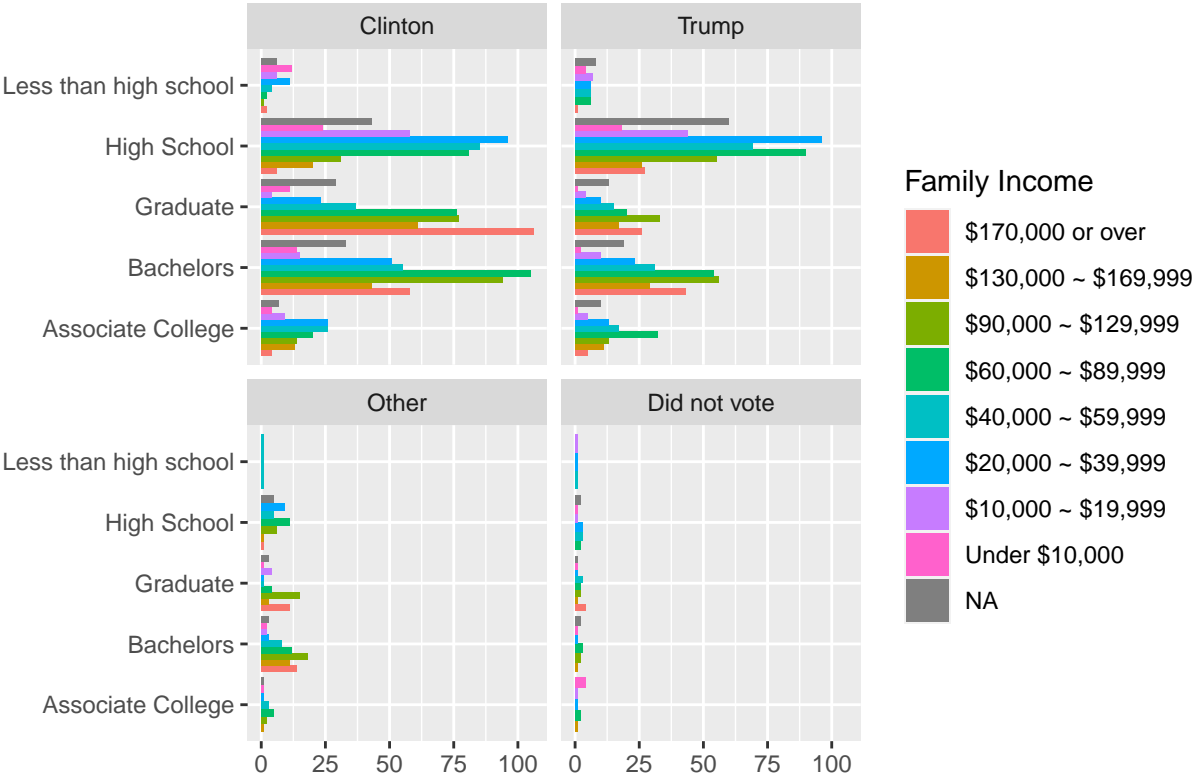


Figure 9: Distribution of votes by degree and family income

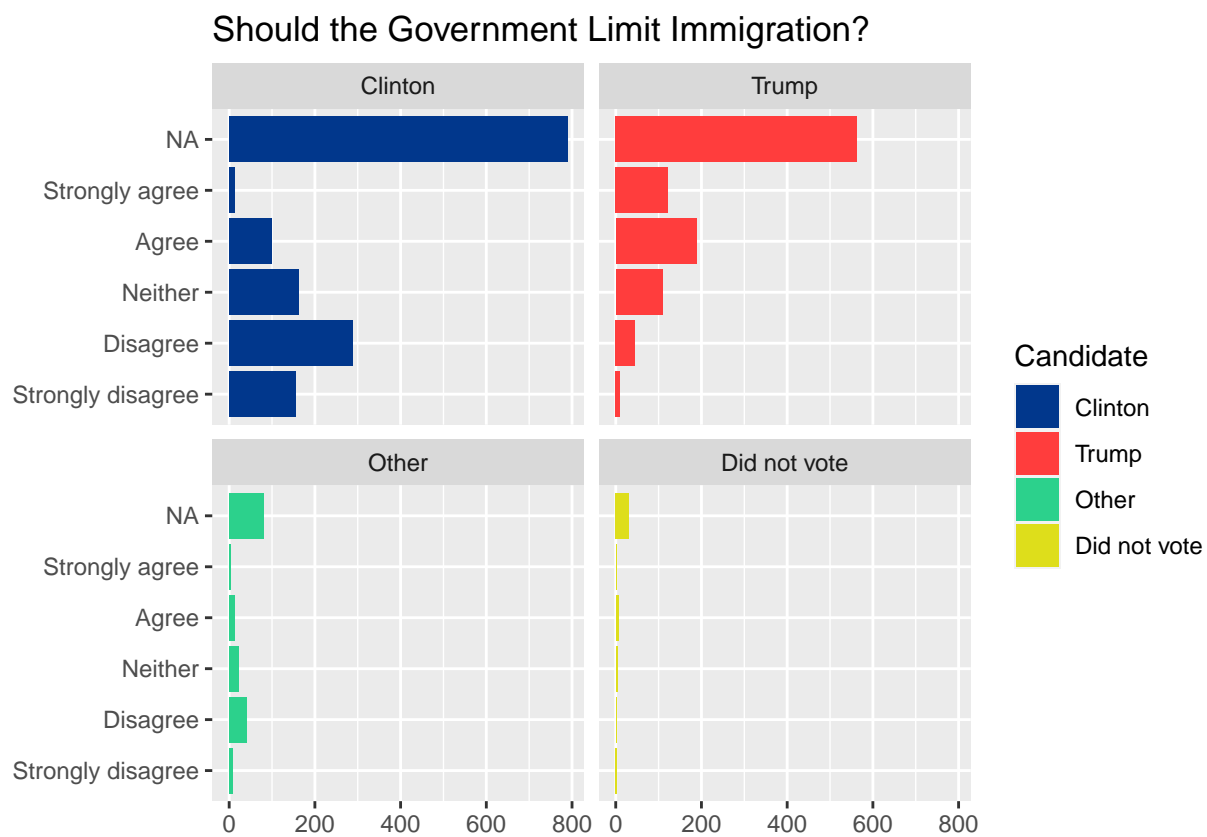


Figure 10: Opinion on whether the US should limit immigration to protect their culture

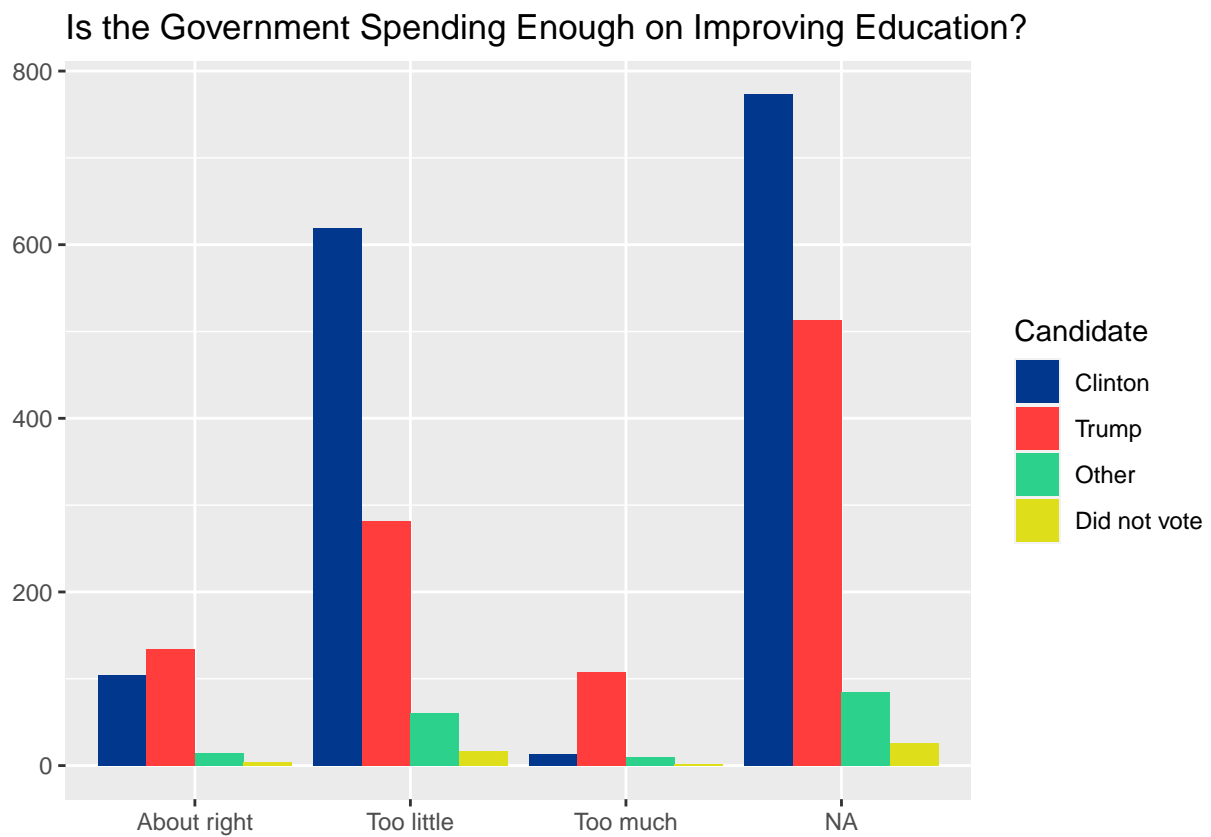


Figure 11: Surveyee's opinion on government's budget on education improvement

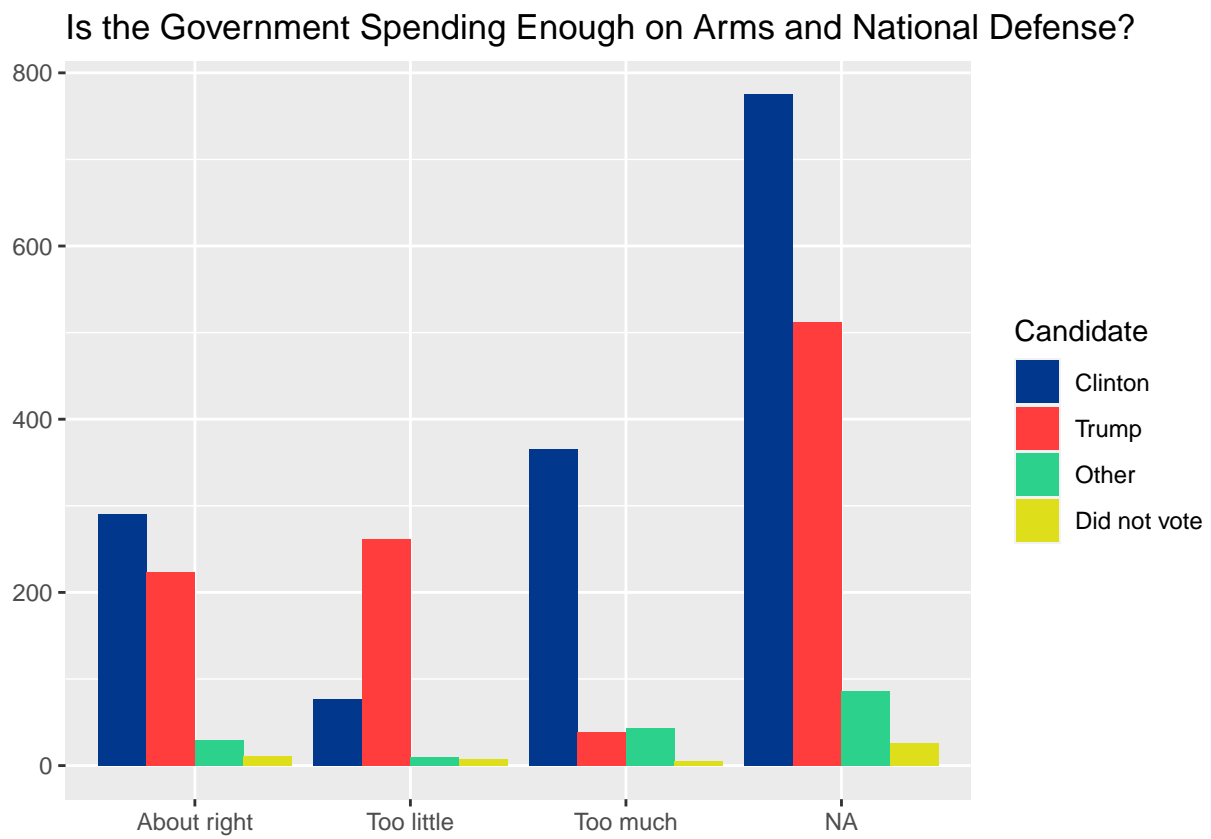


Figure 12: Surveyee's opinion on government's budget on arms

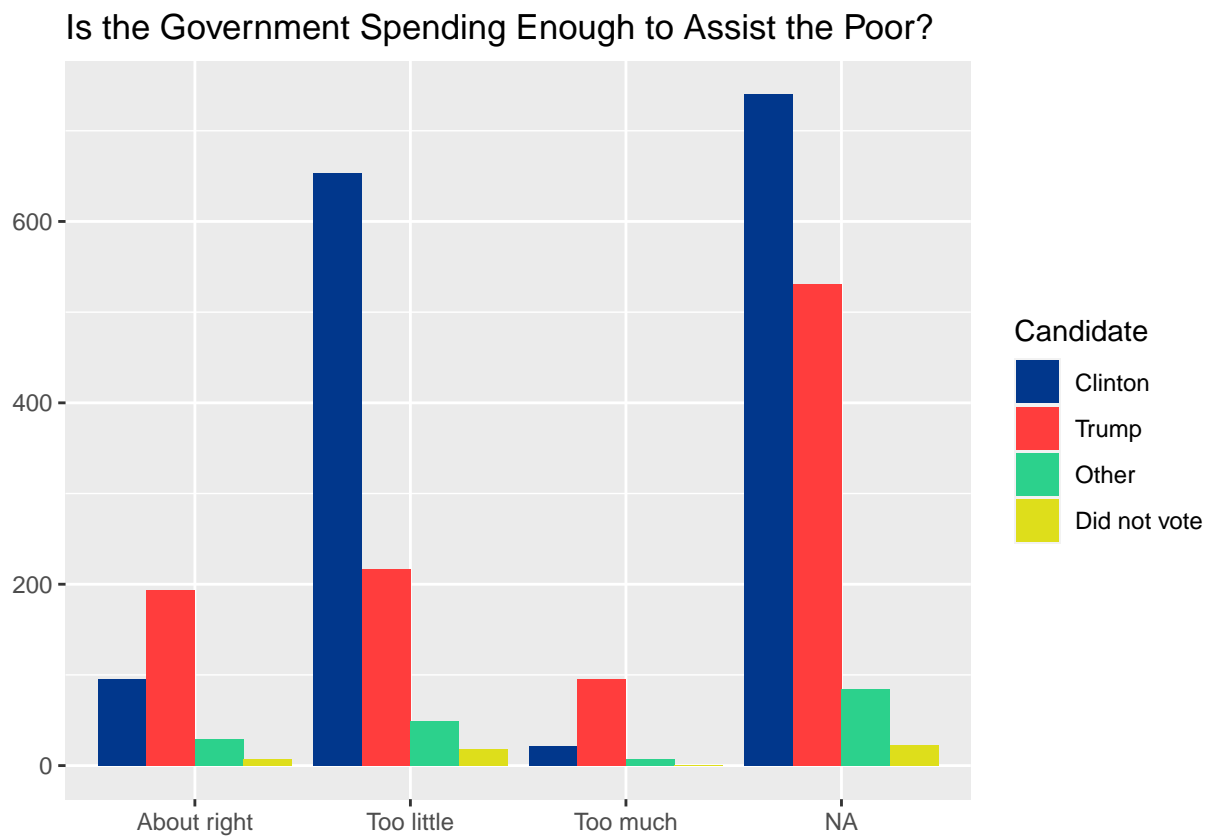


Figure 13: Surveyee's opinion on government's budget on assisting the poor

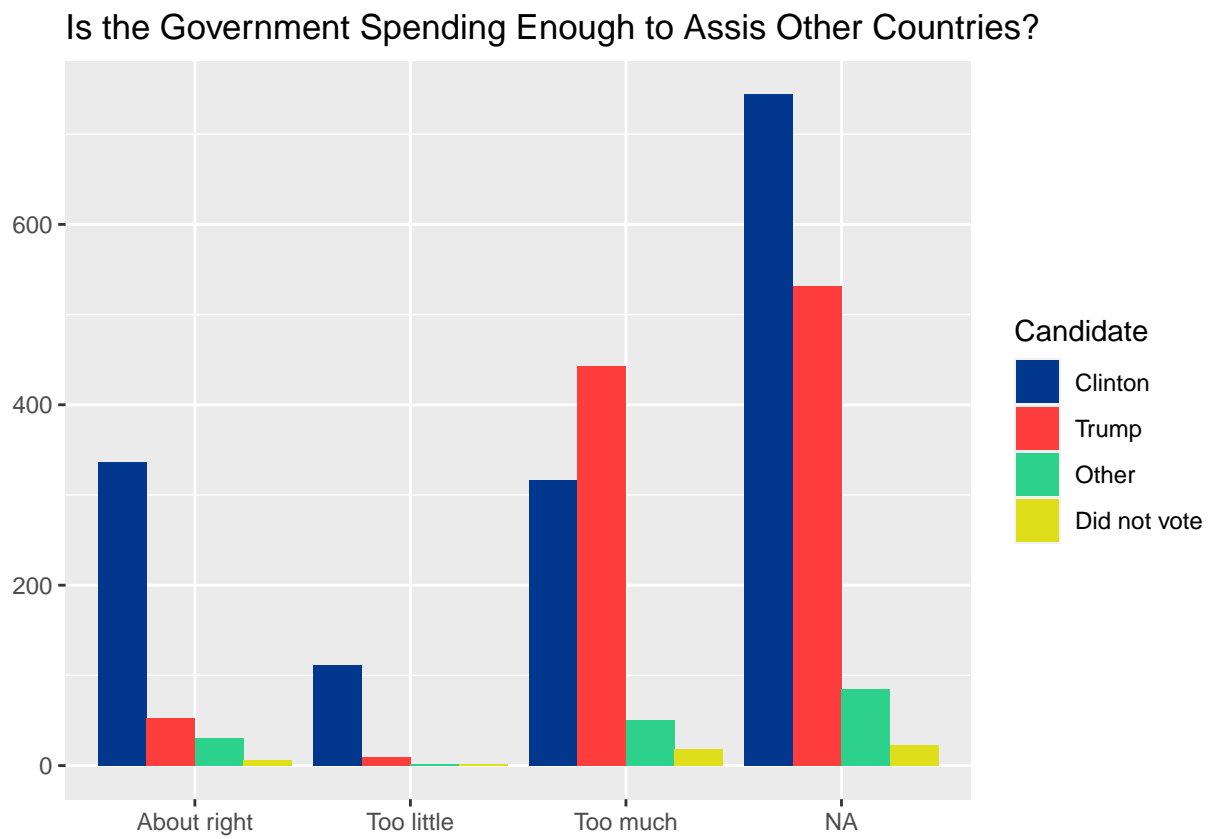


Figure 14: Surveyee's opinion on government's budget on assisting other countries



### 3 Results

The questions asking personal information shows some obvious but also interesting results. Figure 1 shows that younger generation did not participate in the survey as much as older generation. It can also be seen that while almost all age groups preferred Clinton over Trump, compared to younger generation, older age groups shows more interest to Trump. Females participants outnumbers male participants by significant amount as seen on Figure 3, and many of female participants' vote went to Clinton, while male votes divided almost evenly(Figure 6). Figure 8 shows some very interesting responses. Considering the distribution of votes, votes of white population are fairly split between Clinton and Trump, with more votes to Clinton, but all other races heavily favors Clinton. Some aspects that are not so obvious are ones involving education, family income and its correlation with the candidate preference. AS seen on figure 9, People with higher education and higher income voted for Clinton while lower income and education votes are quite evenly split.

Figures 9-14 focuses on the questions that involves asking their opinions of various subjects of government policies and how supporters of different candidate , figure 8 shows that white population's general opinion is that the government's budget on welfare is not lacking, with many of them thinking government is spending too much, whereas other races opinions are evenly split with black community leaning more towards the opinion that it is lacking. We can also observe from the same figure that Clinton supporters generally think that the budget on welfare is lacking and Trump's supporters think budget is too much. Figure 10 shows answers to question on immigration and whether the government should limit immigration to protect american culture, and it shows that out of the people who answered the question, majority of Clinton voters disagrees and majority of Trump voters agrees. We start to see a trend here that Trump supporters have more conservative opinions and Clinton supporters are more open to ideas on improvement in social equality or welfare. We see this trend continue on other figures. On Figure 12, many Clinton voters think government is spending too much of national defense while very few Trump voters think the same, while many trump voters think they spend too little when very few Clinton voters have the same opinion. For the question on if they think the government is spending enough to assist other countries (Figure 14), while Clinton's supporters opinions are divided quite evenly between "about right," and "too much," majority of Trump supporters think that the government is spending too much. Figure 11 and Figure 13 shows where Clinton voters and Trump voters share the same opinion on government spending on education and to assist the poor. While majority of people who thinks that the government is spending too much on both occasions are Trump supporters, popular opinions from both parties is that the government is spending too little on education and to assist the poor.

In general, just as we expected by the trend we saw during our observation of the data, Hillary Clinton supporters were moved by improvement in social equality or welfare such as "Assistance to the Poor," "nation welfare," "nation education" and "Assistance to the other countries." On the other hand, Donald Trump supporters were interested by more conservative ideas that US is spending too much on the sessions above, and shows their support to Trump's slogan "Make America Great Again."

### 4 Discussion

In this session, we are going to explore important questions that can be raised from our findings. At this point, you may end up with question marks in meanings this analysis possess. Although this paper is a research of the past, this definitely has something to tell us about the U.S or even the world. Hopefully following questions helps you to understand our paper.

#### 4.1 What was done in this paper?

#### 4.2 What is something that we learn about the world?

Even though the world has been trying hard for social welfare and equality, throughout this paper we have observed that there still exists disagreement within gender, race, wealth and age. U.S is just one example of

this situation. If you extend your view to the world, you can observe this situation with no difficulties.

**4.3 what is left to learn or how should we proceed in the future?**

**4.4 what are some weaknesses of what was done?**

## Appendix

- 1) Figure 6 represents people who were born in US and their votes on the candidates. Most respondents were born in US.
- 2) Figure 8 represents national spending on welfare. People who advocated more funds in improvement of welfare shows preference in Clinton and people who did not shows preference in Trump.
- 3) Figure 10 represents whether U.S should limit immigration in order to protect their own cultures or not. Even though many answered “Not Applicable,” we can observe two different patters in Clinton and Trump.
- 4) Figure 11 represents national spending on education with votes. People who want more funds in education improvement shows preference in Clinton and vice versa.
- 5) Figure 12 represents national spending on the arms with respect to votes for the candidates. People who thought too much clealry shows the preference toward Clinton.
- 6) Figure 13 represents national spending on the poor with respect to respondents’ votes on the candidates. From “About right” to “Too much,” there exits more Trump supporters than Clinton’s and vice versa.
- 7) Figure 14 represents national spending on aids to foreign countries with respect to the votes for candidates . There exists more Trump supporters in “Too much” comparing to Clinton’s supporters.

## A Supplementary survey

Our supplementary survey is available here: [LINK](#)

### A.1 Preamble:

The purpose of this survey is to further investigate the 2016 U.S presidential election. We are interested in more and specific opinions regarding factors you consider important to decide who to vote than what US GSS provided. If you are not a US citizen, please pretend you are, or imagine that having very similar candidates in your home country.

By proceeding with this survey, you understand that we will use your responses to better understand the 2016 U.S presidential election in the GSS. The survey is voluntary, and if you decide to participate you can skip questions and withdraw at any time.

### A.2 Questions

### A.3 End Page

Thank you for participating in our survey. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us. [sangwoong.lee@maill.utoronto.ca](mailto:sangwoong.lee@maill.utoronto.ca) and () .

## B References

- Smith, Tom W., Davern, Michael, Freese, Jeremy, and Morgan, Stephen L., General Social Surveys, 1972-2018 [machine-readable data file] /Principal Investigator, Smith, Tom W.; Co-Principal Investigators, Michael Davern, Jeremy Freese and Stephen L. Morgan; Sponsored by National Science Foundation. –NORC ed.– Chicago: NORC, 2019.
- U.S. Census Bureau (2021). Population estimates. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045221>.