

The SWIID and the Political Consequences of Economic Inequality

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Overview

Overview

- The Standardized World Income Inequality Database

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- Political consequences of economic inequality

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 - Political engagement

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- The Standardized World Income Inequality Database
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 - authoritarianism, religiosity, meritocracy ...
- Next steps

The SWIID

The Problem with Inequality Data:
Quantity vs. Quality

The SWIID

The Problem with Inequality Data: Quantity vs. Quality

- Goal: To make valid comparisons of levels and trends in income inequality across many countries and over time

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The Problem with Inequality Data: Quantity vs. Quality

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The Problem with Inequality Data: Quantity vs. Quality

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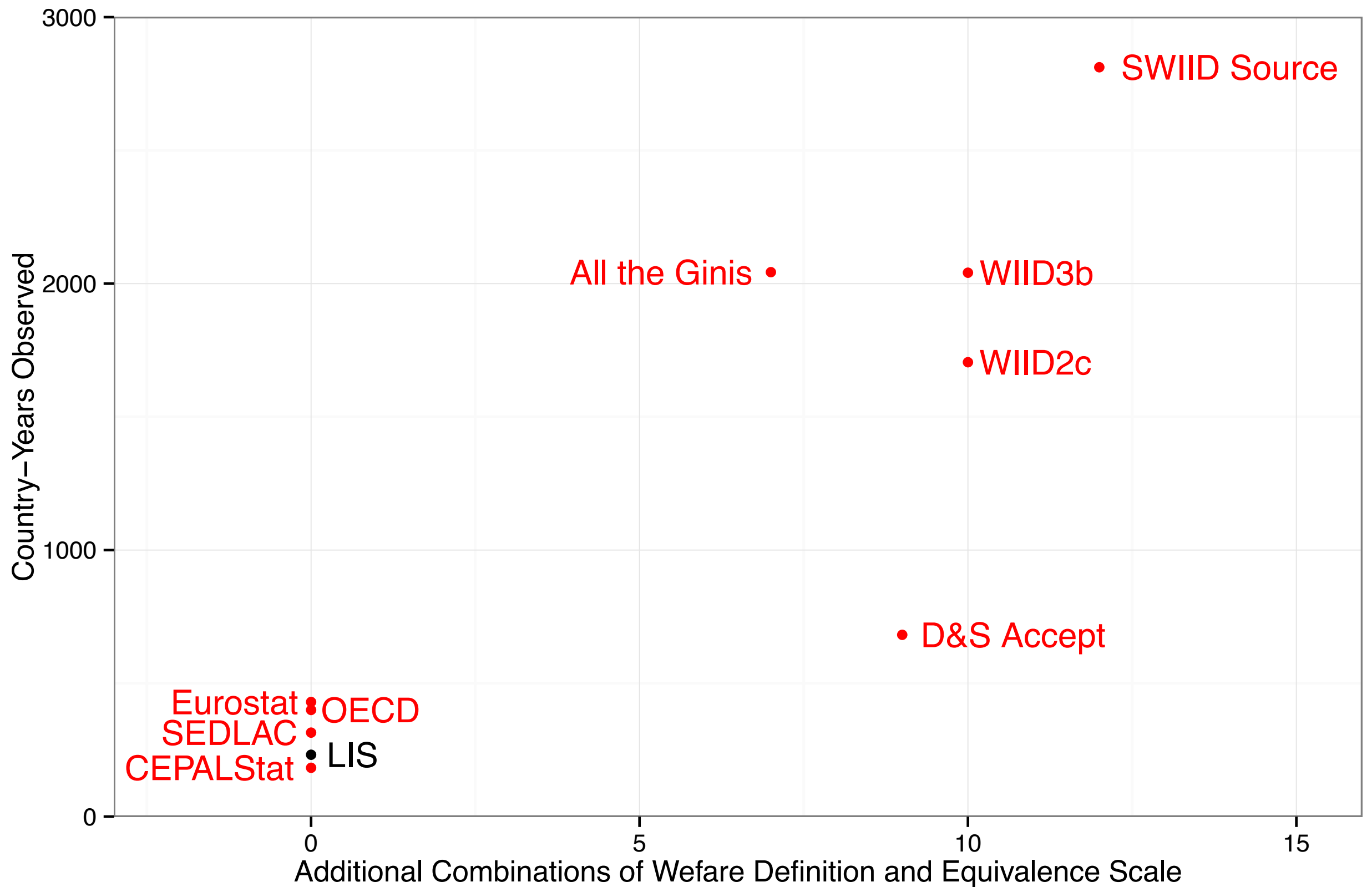
The SWIID

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 - Harmonization (e.g., treatment of non-monetary income)

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A Tradeoff



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Two (Not-So-Attractive) Solutions

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- **Comparable** Data for **a Few** Countries and Years

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The SWIID

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The SWIID

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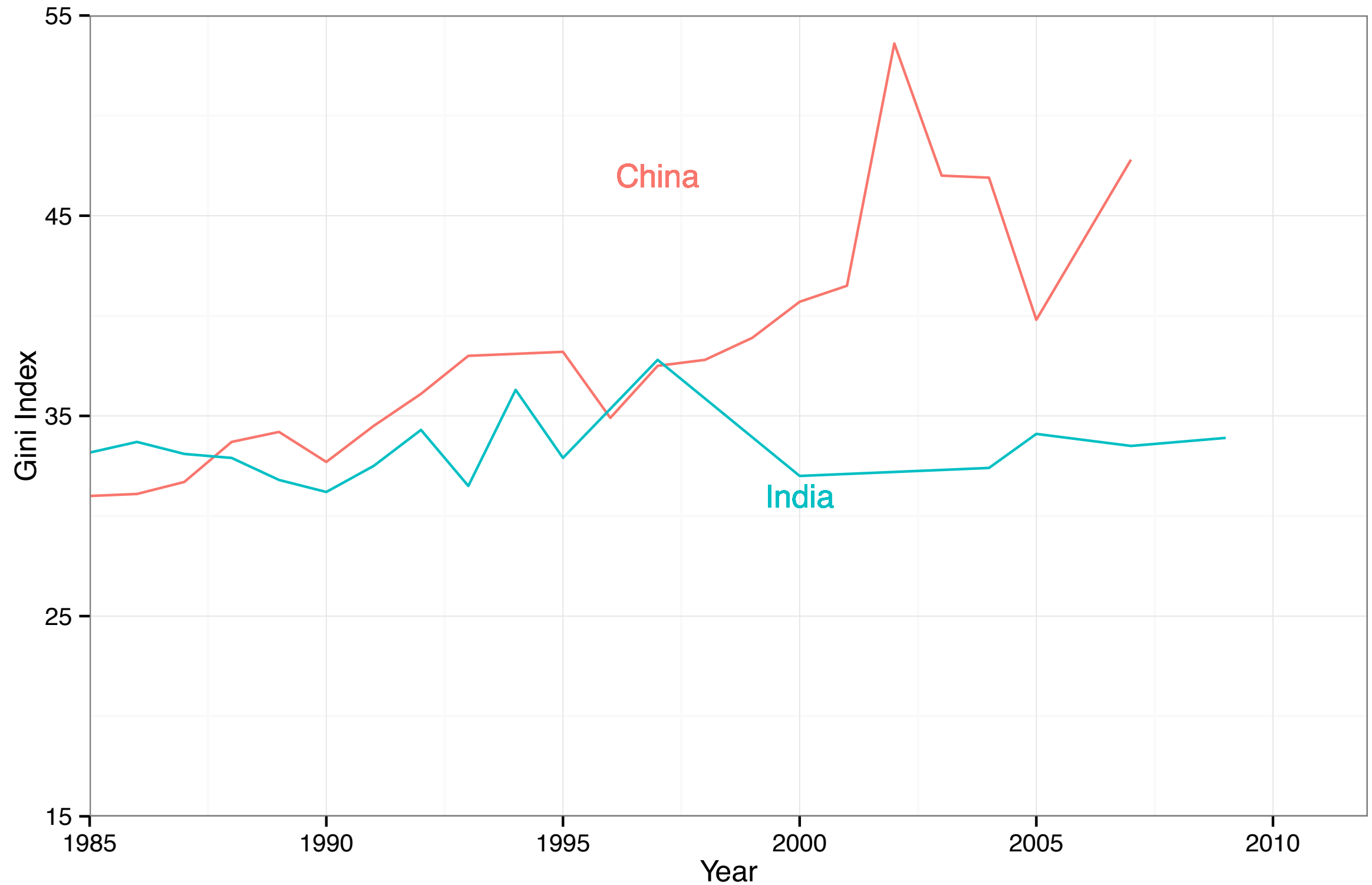
The SWIID

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- But crudely reducing these differences to constants means any comparisons are **extremely** dubious

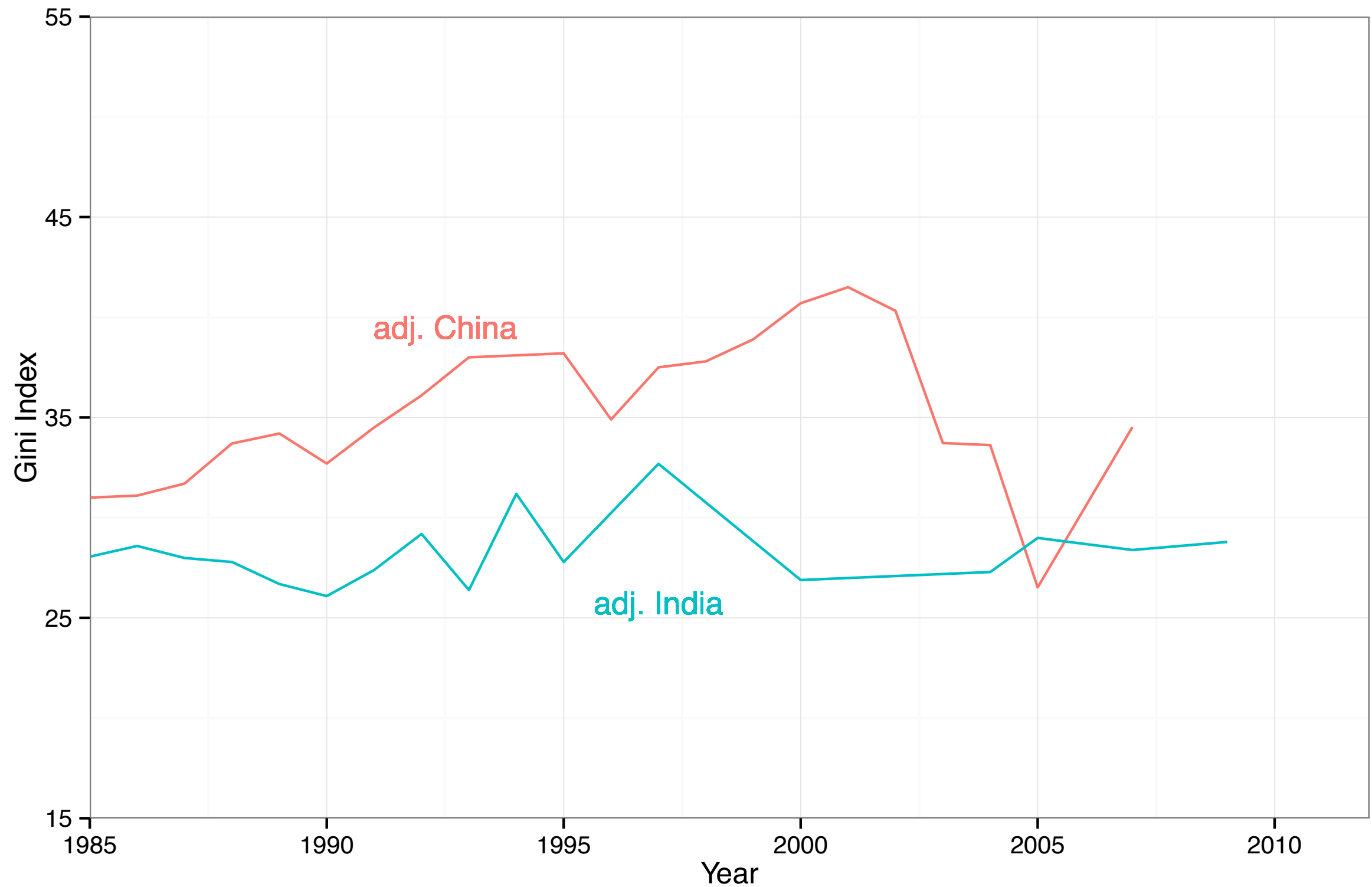
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All the Ginis



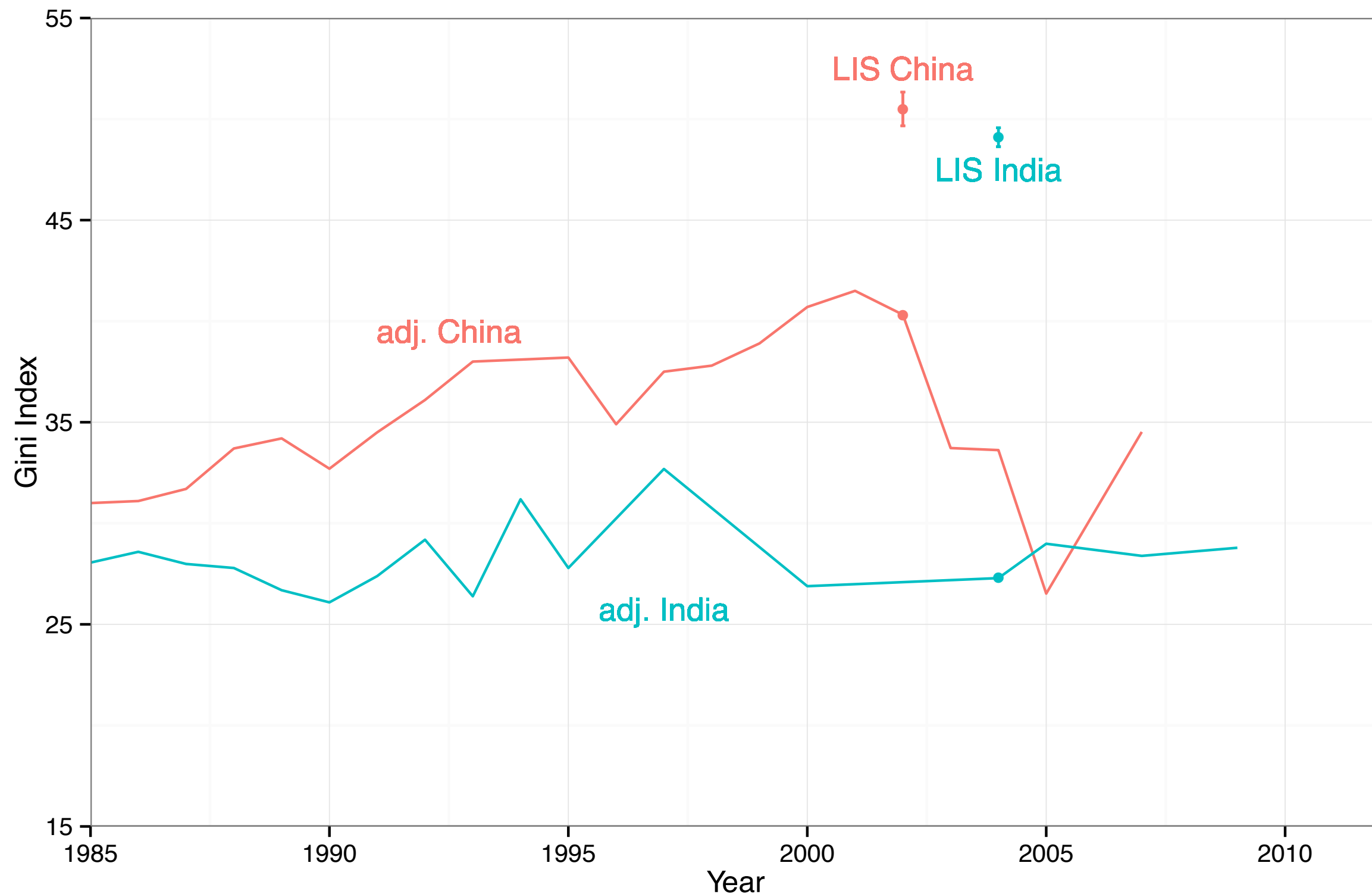
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All the Ginis with adjustments



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Actually comparable data



The SWIID

Constructing the SWIID: The Logic

The SWIID

Constructing the SWIID: The Logic

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Constructing the SWIID: The Logic

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The SWIID

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 - ‘Adjustment’ modeled as varying across countries and over time, relying as much as possible on proximate years in the same country
 - Error terms in the models—the residual incomparability—is incorporated as uncertainty

The SWIID

Constructing the SWIID

The SWIID

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The SWIID

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 - e. Regression by advanced or developing world

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5. Make two-step predictions: $\hat{\rho}_{1bit} = \hat{\rho}_{abit} \times \hat{\rho}_{1ait}$

The SWIID

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The SWIID

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The SWIID

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The SWIID

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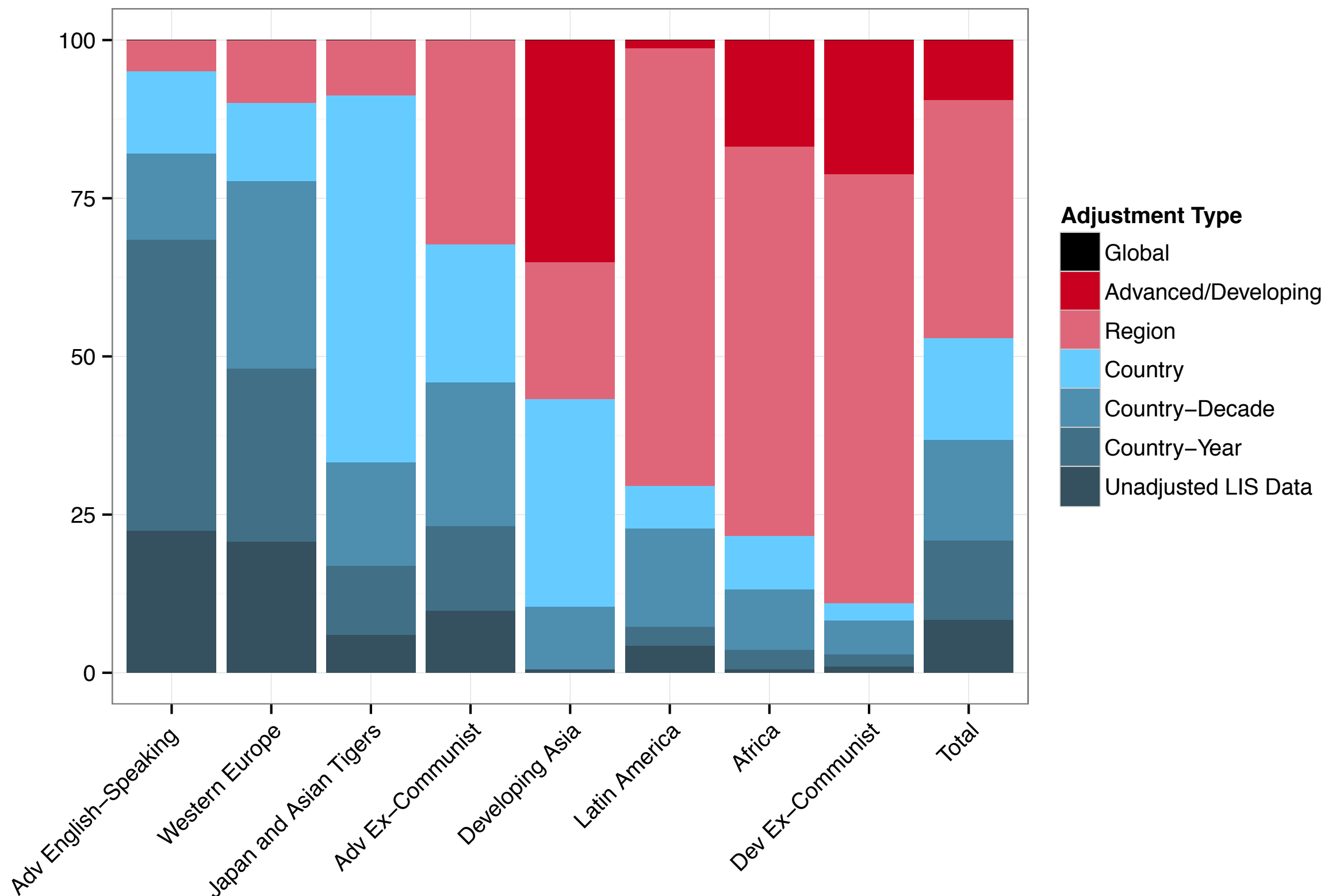
The SWIID

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7. If multiple estimates exist for a country-year, combine them:
 - a. Start with best-fitting estimate for each country-year
 - b. Incorporate additional estimates if they reduce error
8. Inform with estimates from surrounding country-years using a weighted moving-average smoother (with exceptions)

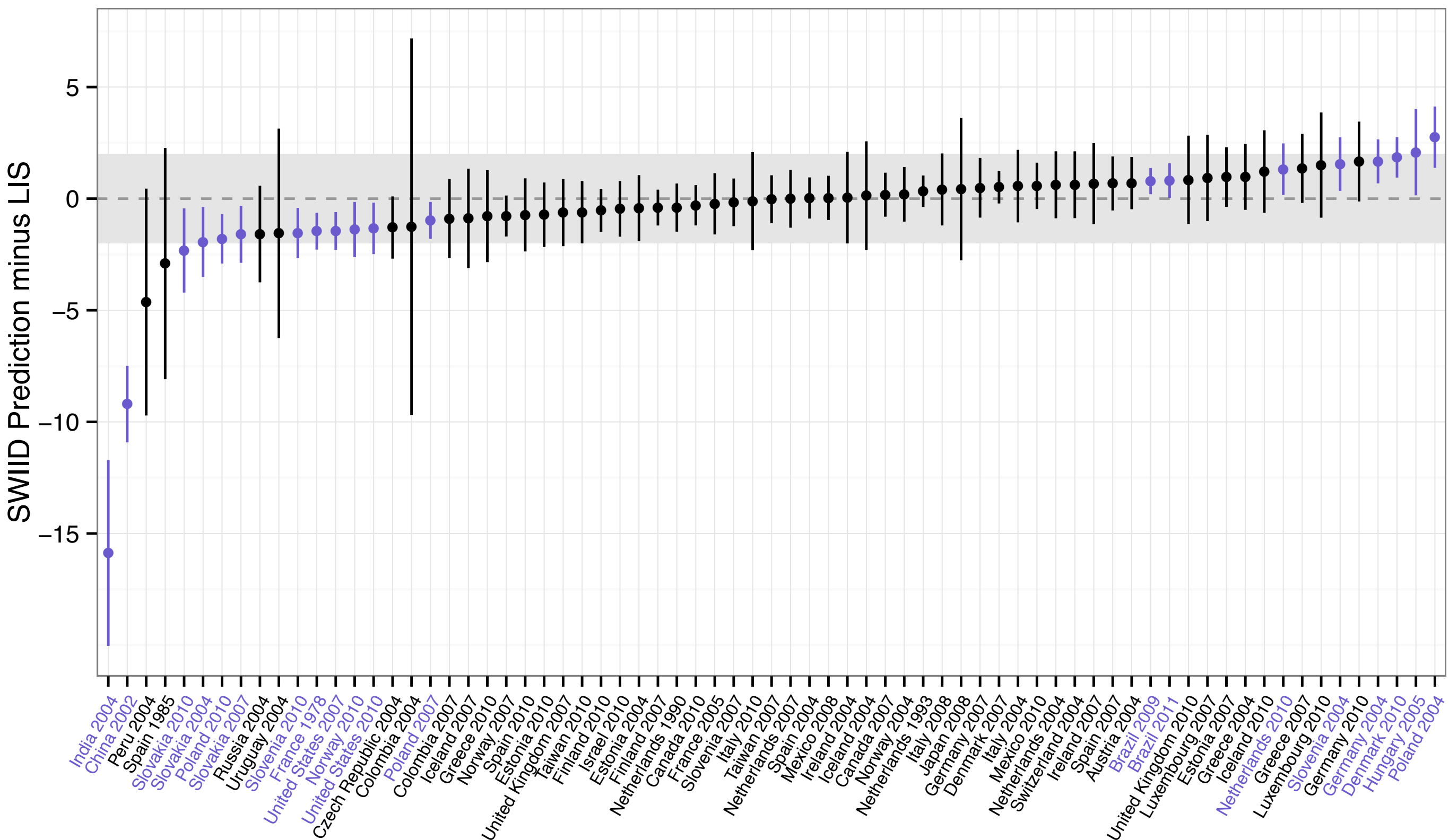
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Assessing the SWIID



The SWIID

Predicting the LIS



The SWIID

Using the SWIID

The SWIID

Using the SWIID

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Income Inequality & Its Consequences,
Comparative Political Behavior, and
Dynamic Comparative Public Opinion

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SWIID

The Standardized World Income Inequality Database

Cross-national research on the causes and consequences of income inequality has been hindered by the limitations of the existing inequality datasets: greater coverage across countries and over time has been available from these sources only at the cost of significantly reduced comparability across observations. The goal of the Standardized World Income Inequality Database (SWIID) is to meet the needs of those engaged in broadly cross-national research by maximizing the comparability of income inequality data while maintaining the widest possible coverage across countries and over time. It incorporates data from the United Nations University's [World Income Inequality Database](#), the [OECD Income Distribution Database](#), the [Socio-Economic Database for Latin America and the Caribbean](#) generated by CEDLAS and the World Bank, [Eurostat](#), the World Bank's [PovcalNet](#), the [UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean](#), national statistical offices around the world, and academic studies while minimizing reliance on problematic assumptions by using as much information as possible from proximate years within the same country. The data collected by the [Luxembourg Income Study](#) is employed as the standard. The SWIID currently incorporates comparable Gini indices of net and market income inequality for 176 countries for as many years as possible from 1960 to the present; it also includes information on absolute and relative redistribution. A full description of the SWIID, the procedure used to generate it, and an assessment of the SWIID's performance in comparison to the available alternatives is presented here:

[Solt, Frederick. 2016. "The Standardized World Income Inequality Database." *Social Science Quarterly* 97. \(Pre-publication copy \[available here\]\(#\).](#)

There are two ways of using the SWIID. To directly compare up to four countries in estimated levels and trends of (a) inequality in net (post-tax, post-transfer) income, (b) inequality in market (pre-tax, pre-transfer) income, (c) absolute redistribution (market-income inequality minus net-income inequality), or (d) relative redistribution (market-income inequality minus net-income inequality, divided by market-income inequality), or to compare several of these measures in a single country, use the SWIID web app below. To use the SWIID in statistical analyses, datasets formatted for use in Stata and R are available for download.

DOWNLOAD SWIID VERSION 5.1

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Country

United States ▼

Country

Canada ▼

Variable

Net Inequality ▼

Variable

Net Inequality ▼

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Using the SWIID

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Income Inequality & Its Consequences,
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Country

United States ▼

Country

Canada ▼

Country

select ▼

Country

select ▼

Variable

Net Inequality ▼

Variable

Net Inequality ▼

Variable

Net Inequality ▼

Variable

Net Inequality ▼

Select Years:

1975

2015

1960 1972 1984 1996 2008

Theme

Standard ▼

Download PDF

SWIID Gini Index, Net Income

Year

Note: Solid lines indicate mean estimates; shaded regions indicate the associated 95% confidence intervals.
Source: Standardized World Income Inequality Database v5.1 (Solt 2016).

Canada
United States

Powered by [RStudio](#).

Please cite the SWIID as follows:

Solt, Frederick. 2016. "The Standardized World Income Inequality Database." *Social Science Quarterly* 97. SWIID Version 5.1, July 2016.

[Download BibTeX citation.](#)

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Using the SWIID

The screenshot shows a Google Scholar search results page for the query "The standardized world income inequality database". The search was performed on fsolt.org/swiid/ and returned approximately 843 results in 0.06 seconds. The left sidebar contains filters for "All citations", "Articles", "Case law", and "My library", along with time filters ("Any time", "Since 2016", "Since 2015", "Since 2012", "Custom range...") and sorting options ("Sort by relevance", "Sort by date"). The main results list includes:

- The standardized world income inequality database**
[PDF] redproteccionsocial.org
- Redistribution, inequality, and growth**
MJD Ostry, MA Berg, MCG Tsangarides - 2014 - books.google.com
The Fund has recognized in recent years that one cannot separate issues of economic growth and stability on one hand and equality on the other. Indeed, there is a strong case for considering inequality and an inability to sustain economic growth as two sides of the ...
Cited by 442 Related articles All 34 versions Cite Save More
- Parasite-stress promotes in-group assortative sociality: The cases of strong family ties and heightened religiosity**
CL Fincher, R Thornhill - Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 2012 - Cambridge Univ Press
Abstract Throughout the world people differ in the magnitude with which they value strong family ties or heightened religiosity. We propose that this cross-cultural variation is a result of a contingent psychological adaptation that facilitates in-group assortative sociality in the ...
Cited by 245 Related articles All 23 versions Cite Save
- Global Inequality: Beyond the bottom billion—A rapid review of income distribution in 141 countries**
I Ortiz, M Cummins - Available at SSRN 1805046, 2011 - papers.ssrn.com
Abstract: This working paper:(i) provides an overview of global, regional and national income inequalities based on the latest distribution data from the World Bank, UNU-WIDER and Eurostat;(ii) discusses the negative implications of rising income inequality for ...
Cited by 230 Related articles All 32 versions Cite Save
- Democracy and the left: social policy and inequality in Latin America**
E Huber, JD Stephens - 2012 - books.google.com
Although inequality in Latin America ranks among the worst in the world, it has notably declined over the last decade, offset by improvements in health care and education, enhanced programs for social assistance, and increases in the minimum wage. In ...
Cited by 229 Related articles All 2 versions Cite Save More
- Economic versus cultural differences: Forms of ethnic diversity and public goods provision**
K Baldwin, JD Huber - American Political Science Review, 2010 - Cambridge Univ Press
Abstract Arguments about how ethnic diversity affects governance typically posit that groups differ from each other in substantively important ways and that these differences make effective governance more difficult. But existing cross-national empirical tests typically use ...
Cited by 179 Related articles All 13 versions Cite Save

The SWIID

Problem?

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Problem?

1. Keeping current with newly released data is hard

The SWIID

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2. Standard errors underestimated: only 73% within 95% c.i.

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The SWIID

Problem?

Do you see *more?!?!?*

The SWIID

Problem? *Problems***s**?!?

Do you see *more*?!?!?

Consequences

Two Theories

Consequences

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- **Conflict Theory**

Consequences

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How would we know?

Consequences

Political Engagement

Consequences

Political Engagement

TABLE 2 Effects of Inequality on Political Engagement by Income Quintile

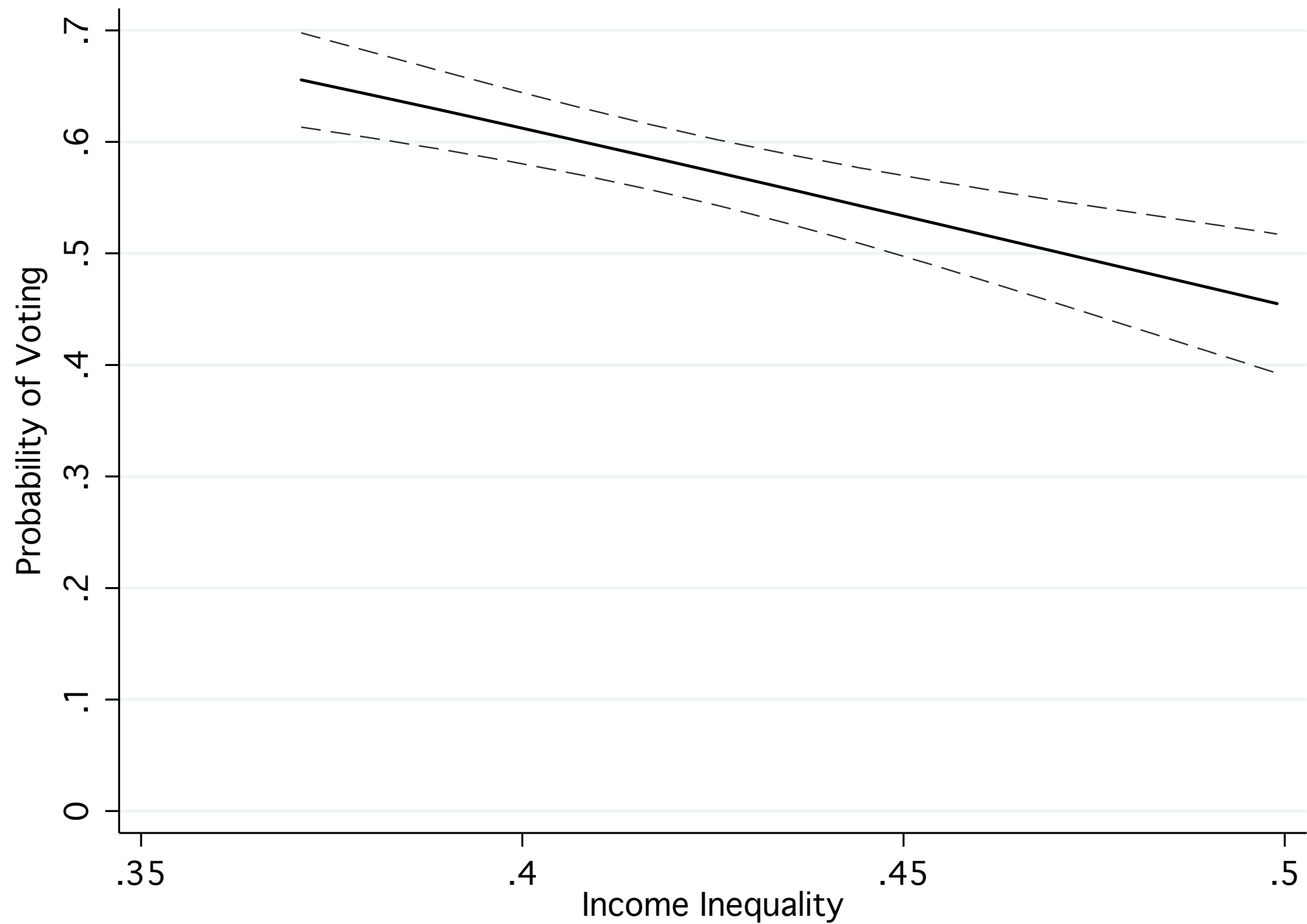
	Poorest Quintile	Second Quintile	Median Quintile	Fourth Quintile	Richest Quintile
Dependent Variable	Estimate (Std. Error)	Estimate (Std. Error)	Estimate (Std. Error)	Estimate (Std. Error)	Estimate (Std. Error)
Political Interest	−6.821* (2.623)	−5.726* (2.547)	−4.633* (2.514)	−3.541 (2.528)	−2.448 (2.588)
Political Discussion	−7.139* (2.220)	−6.160* (2.172)	−5.181* (2.156)	−4.201* (2.175)	−3.222 (2.226)
Electoral Participation	−4.873* (2.010)	−4.415* (1.978)	−3.957* (1.914)	−3.498* (1.914)	−3.040 (1.979)

* $p < .05$

Solt (2008)

Consequences

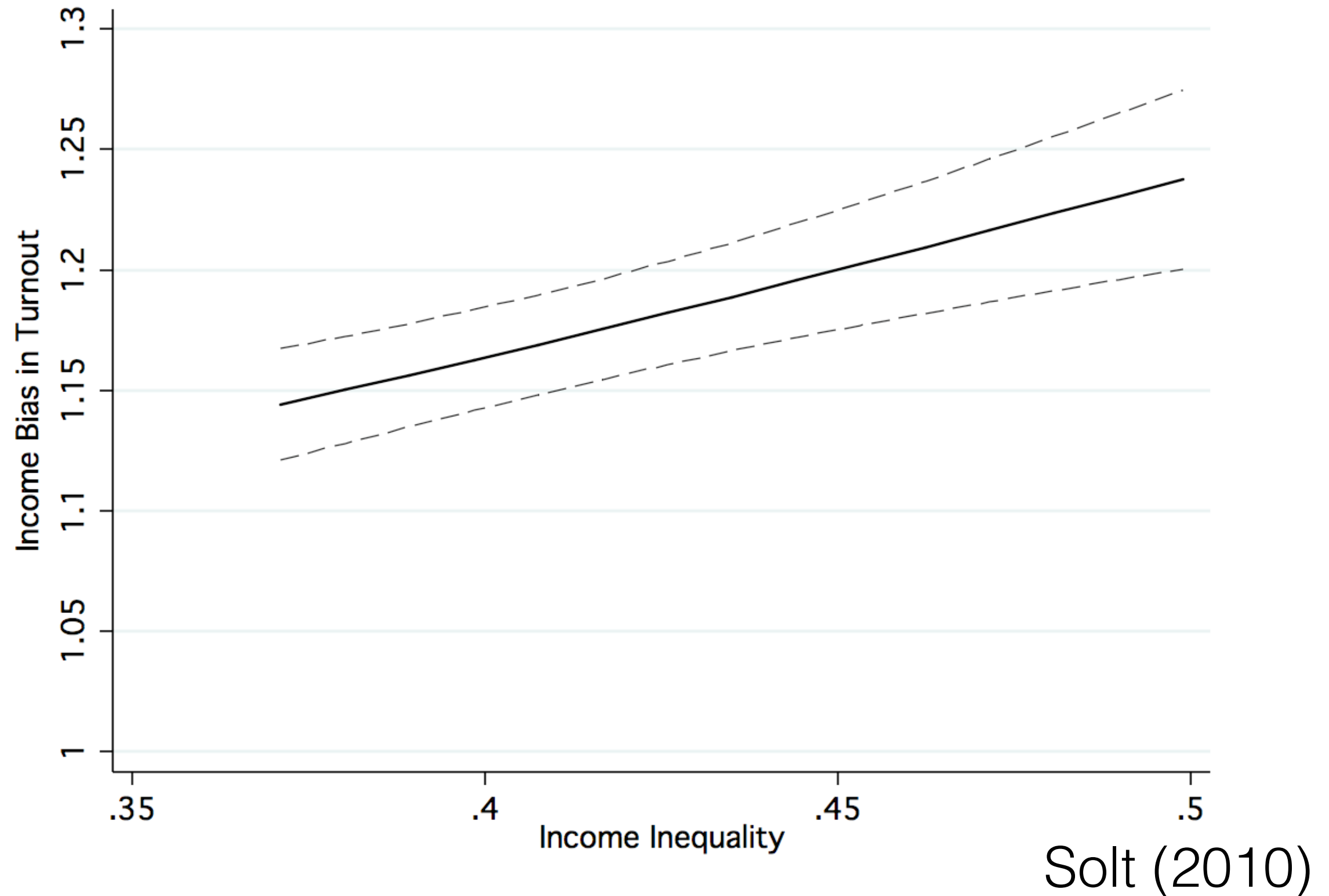
Political Engagement



Solt (2010)

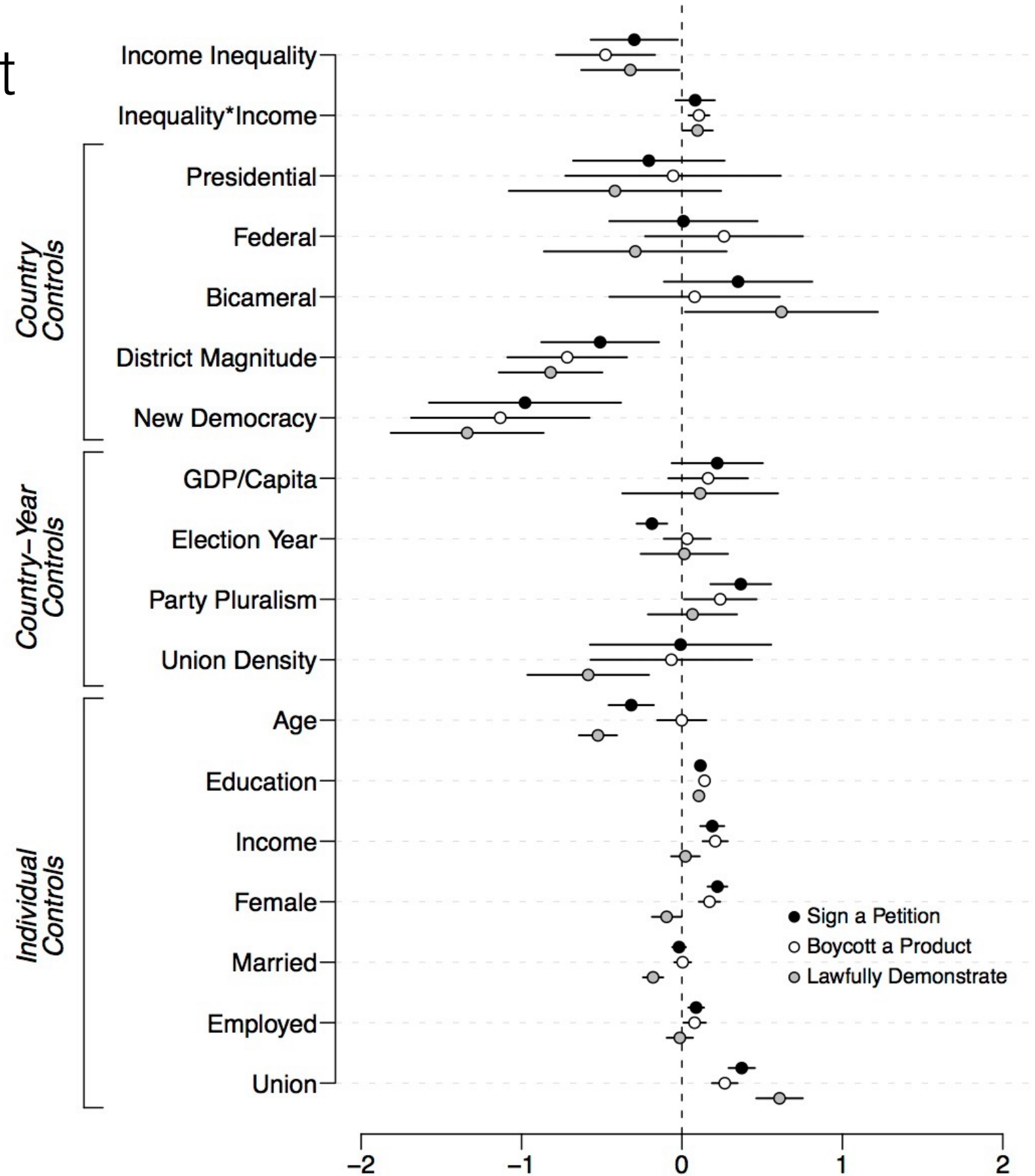
Consequences

Political Engagement



Consequences

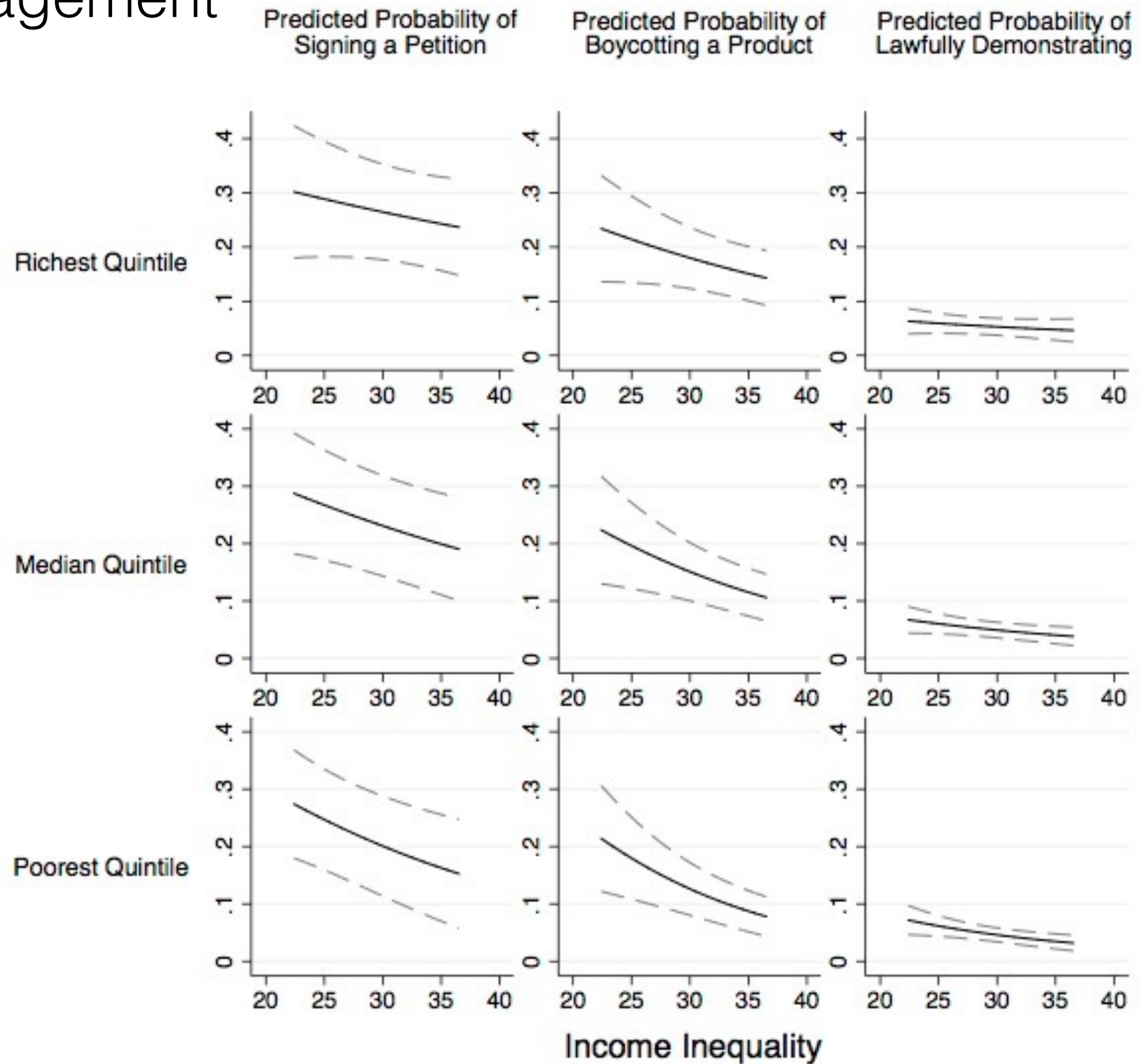
Political Engagement



Solt (2015)

Consequences

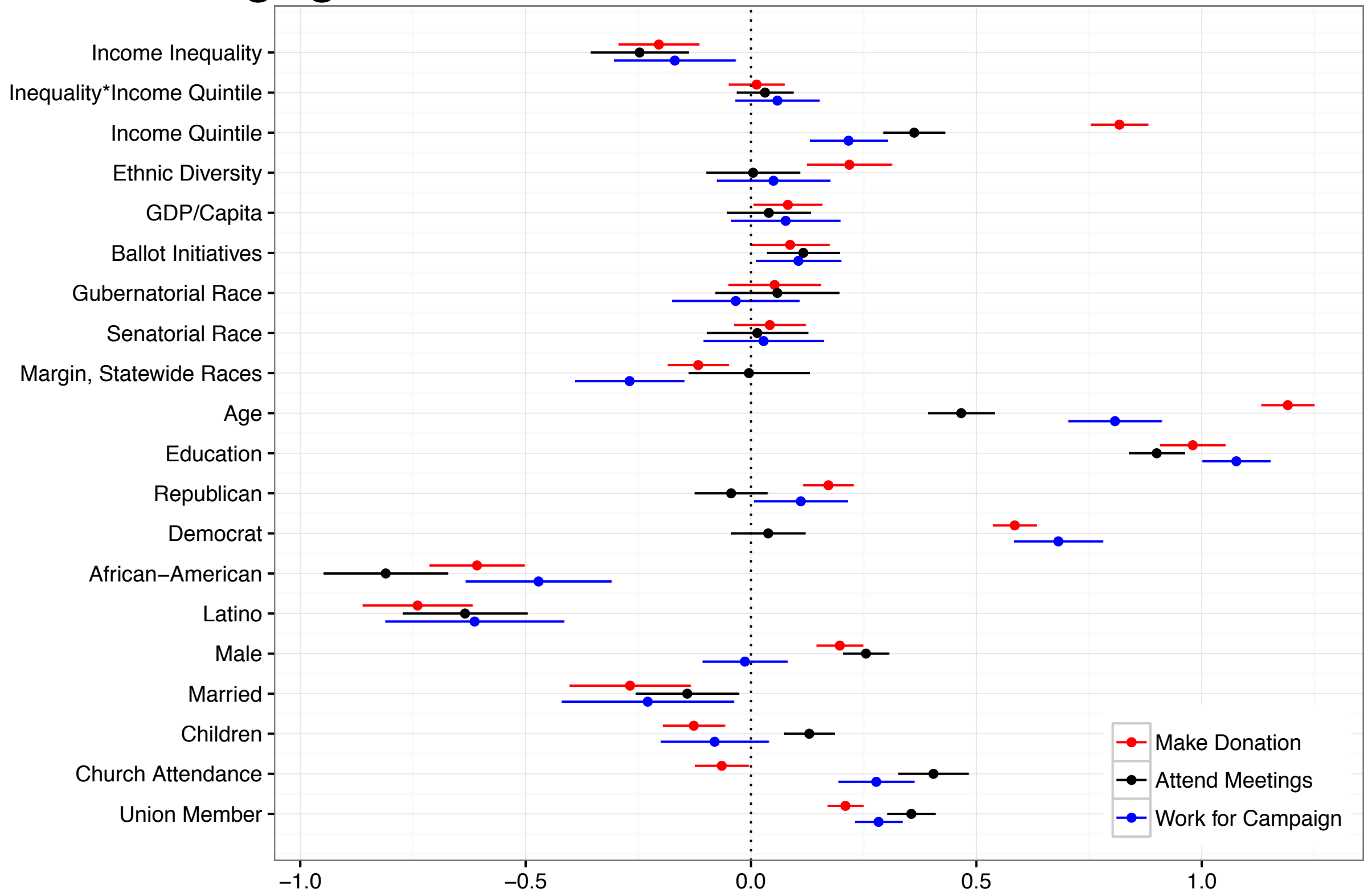
Political Engagement



Solt (2015)

Consequences

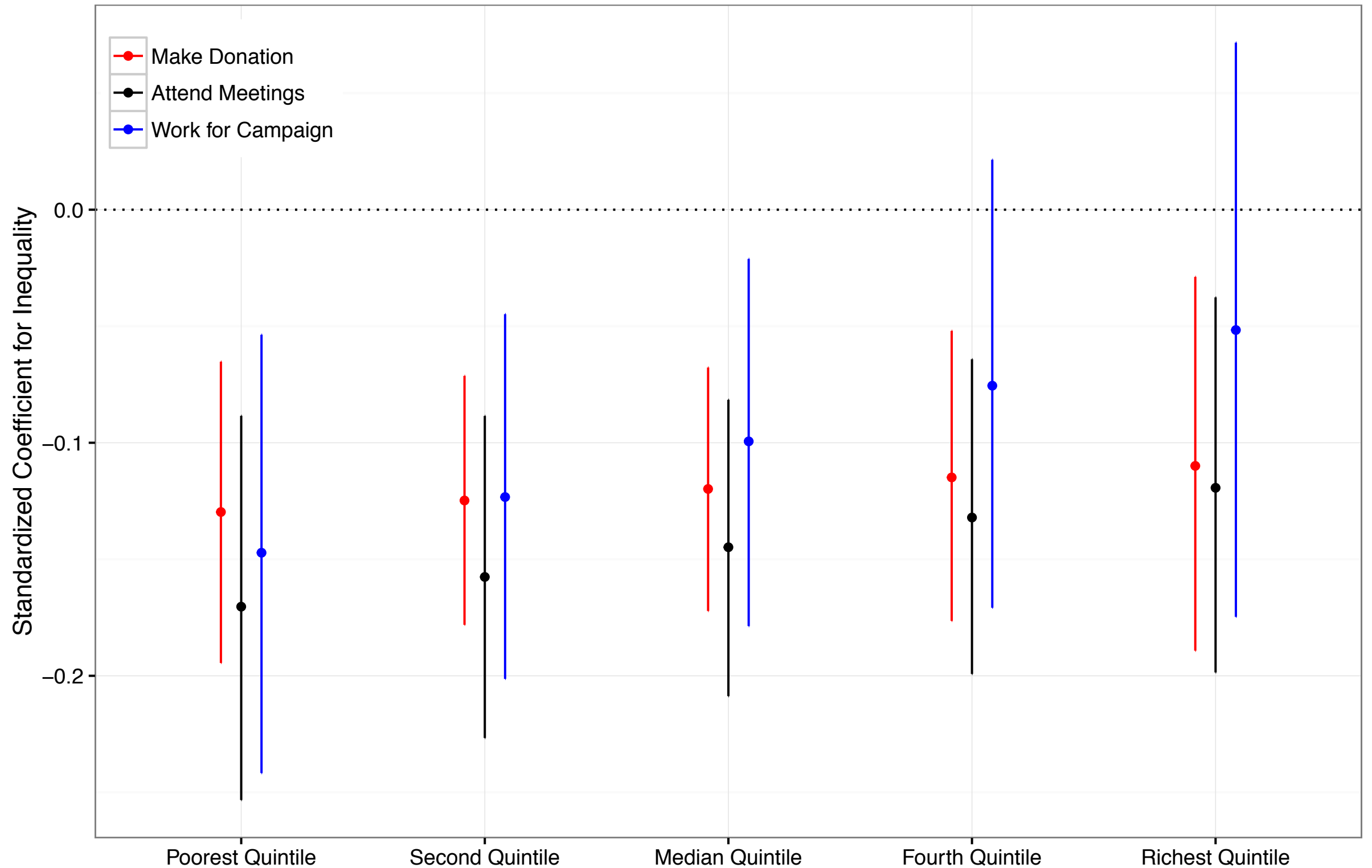
Political Engagement



Ritter & Solt (2016)

Consequences

Political Engagement

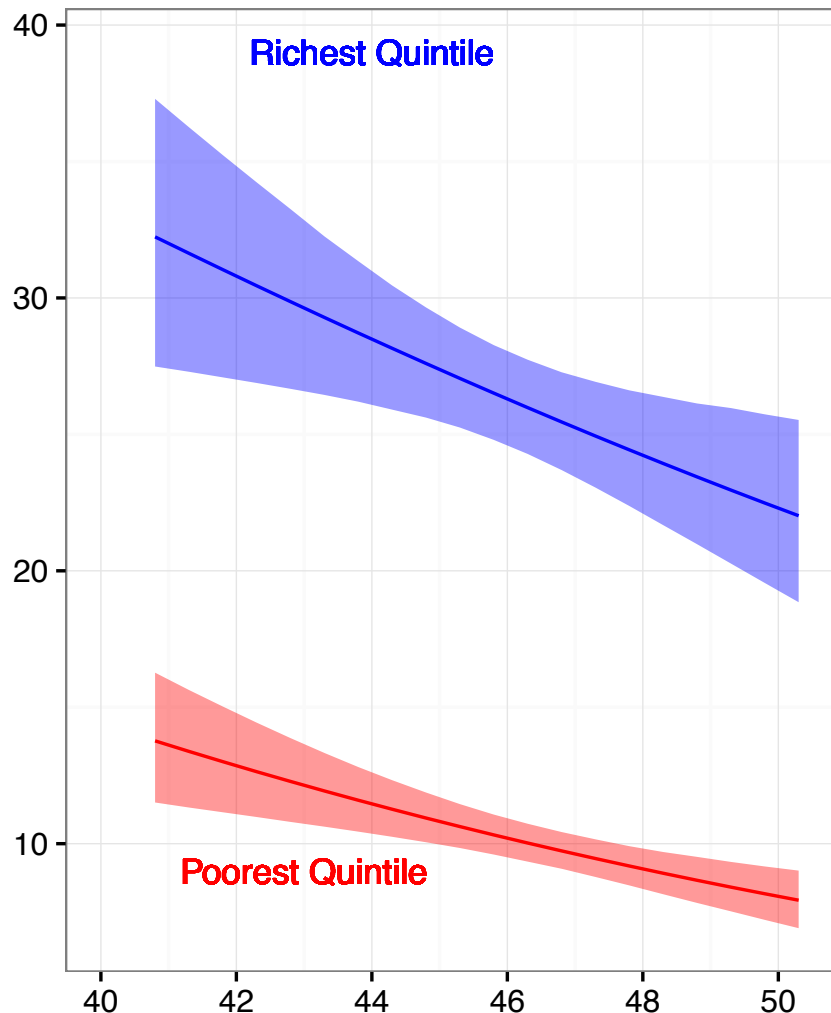


Ritter & Solt (2016)

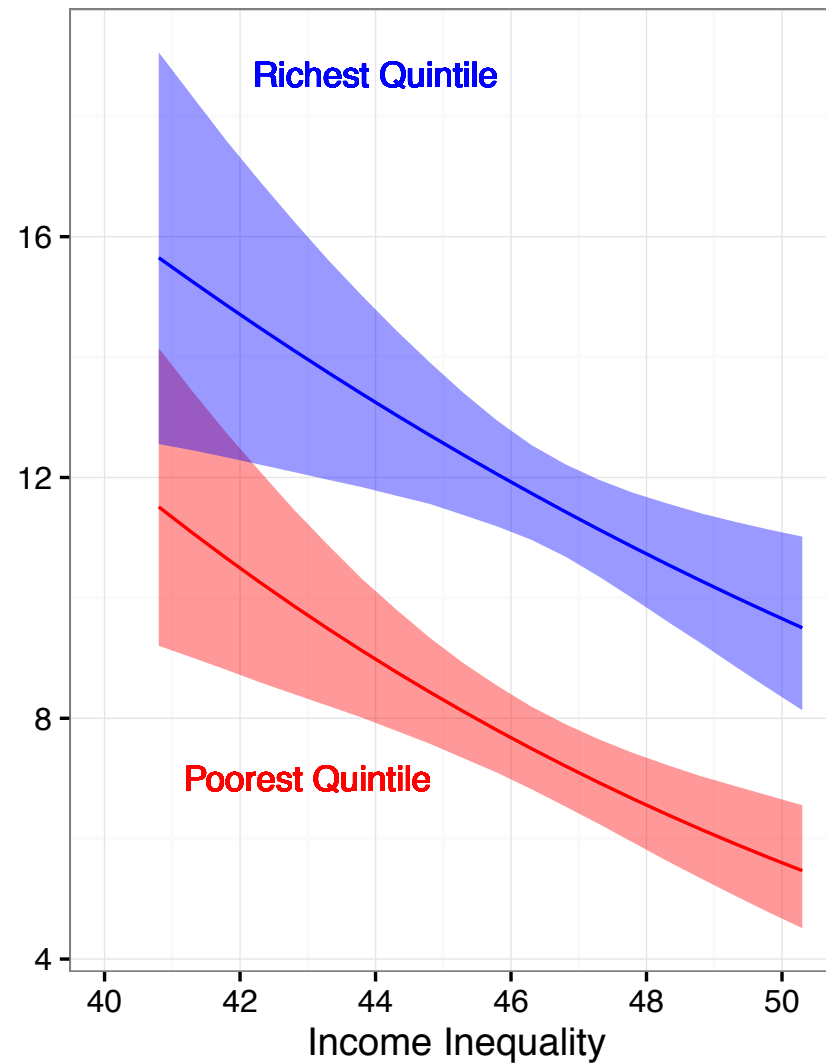
Consequences

Political Engagement

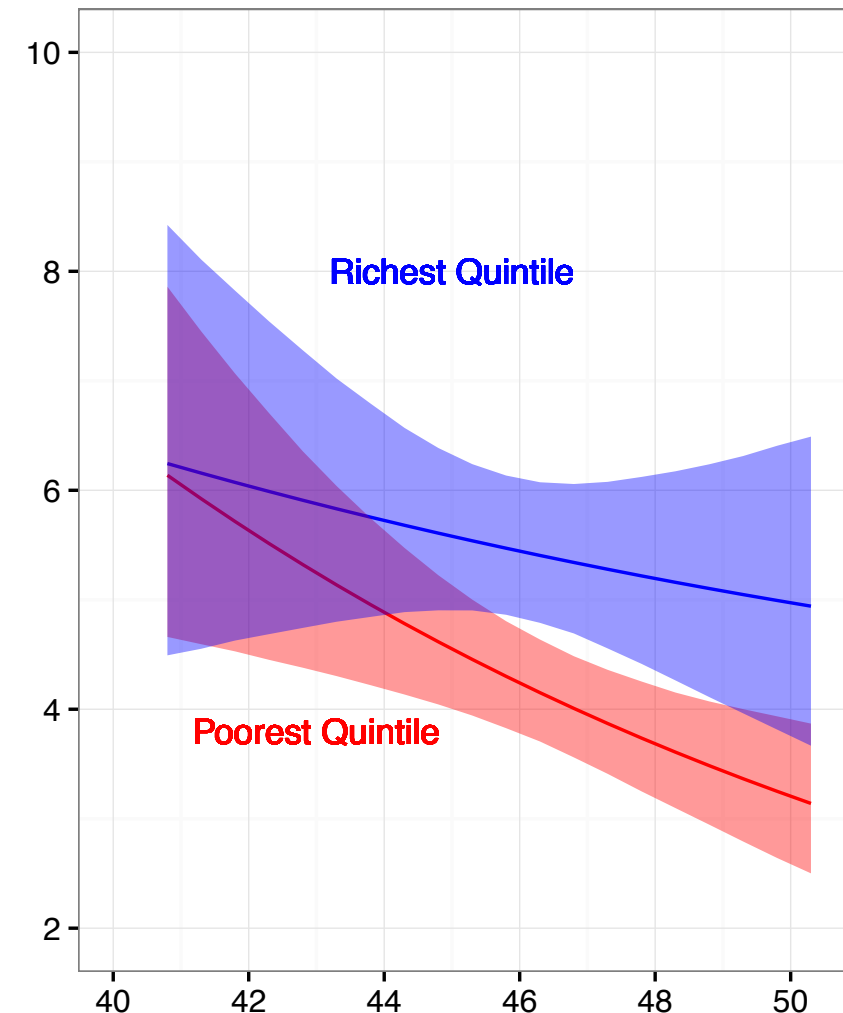
Make Donation



Attend Meetings



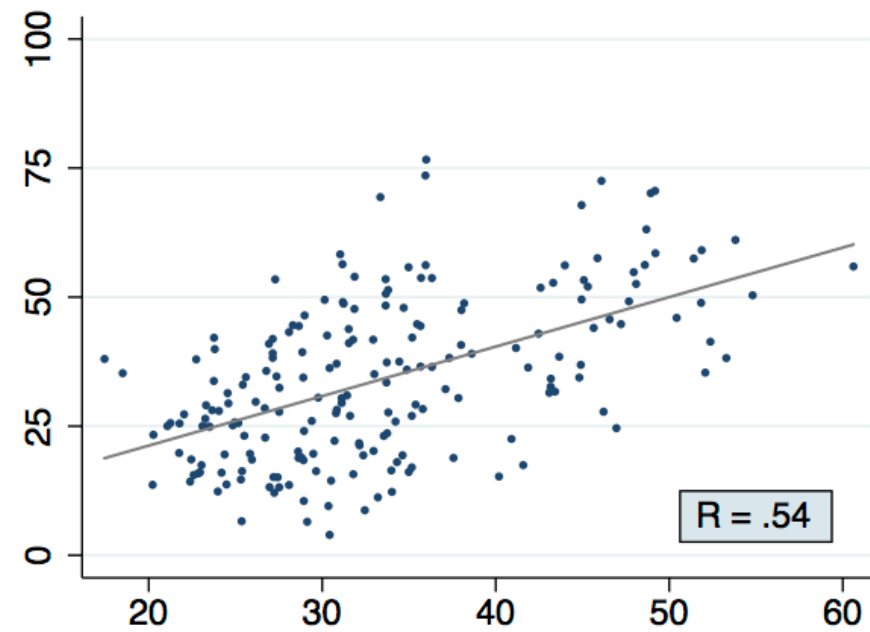
Work for Campaign



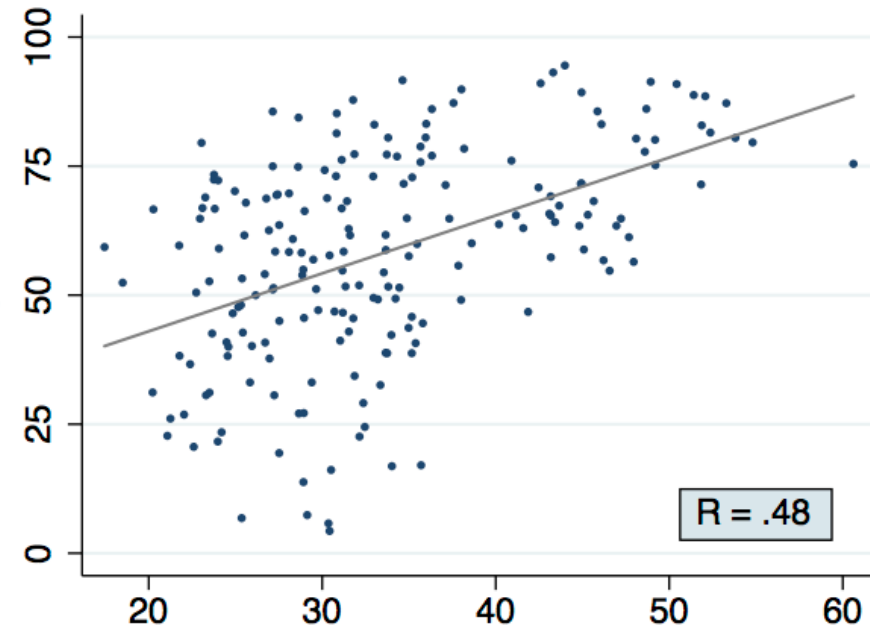
Consequences

Political Attitudes: Authoritarianism

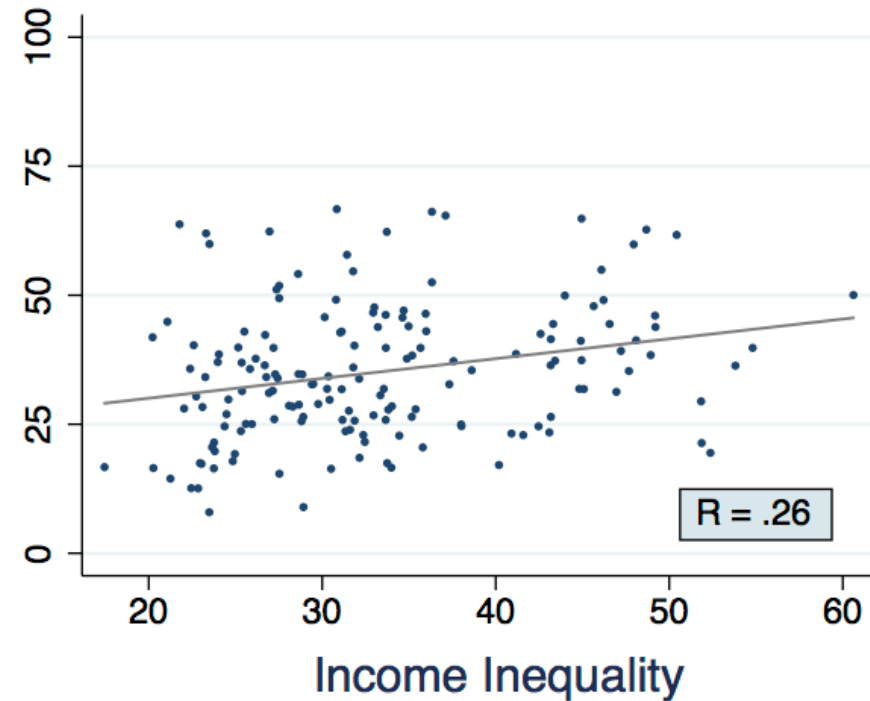
Considers Learning
Obedience Important



Prefers More
Respect for Authority



Says One Should
Always Obey Boss

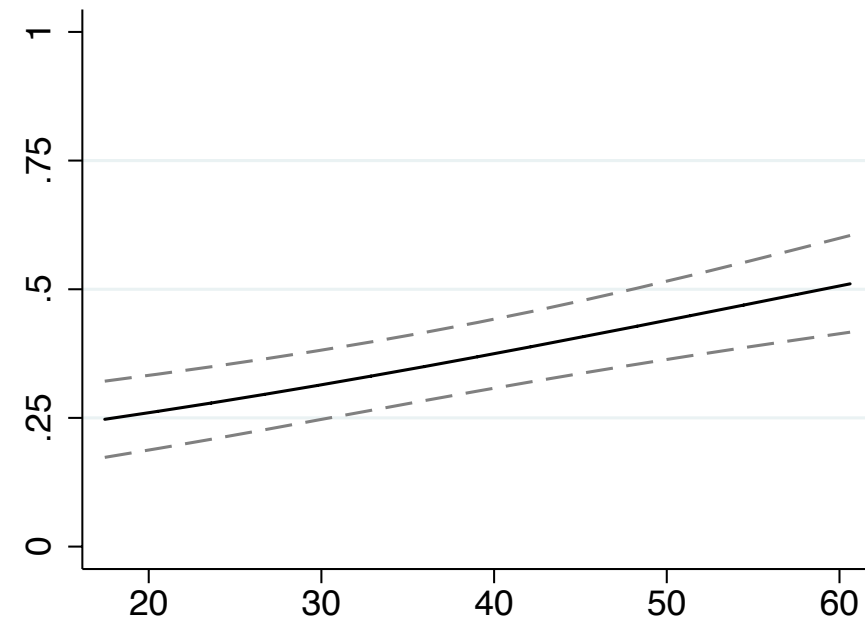


Solt (2012)

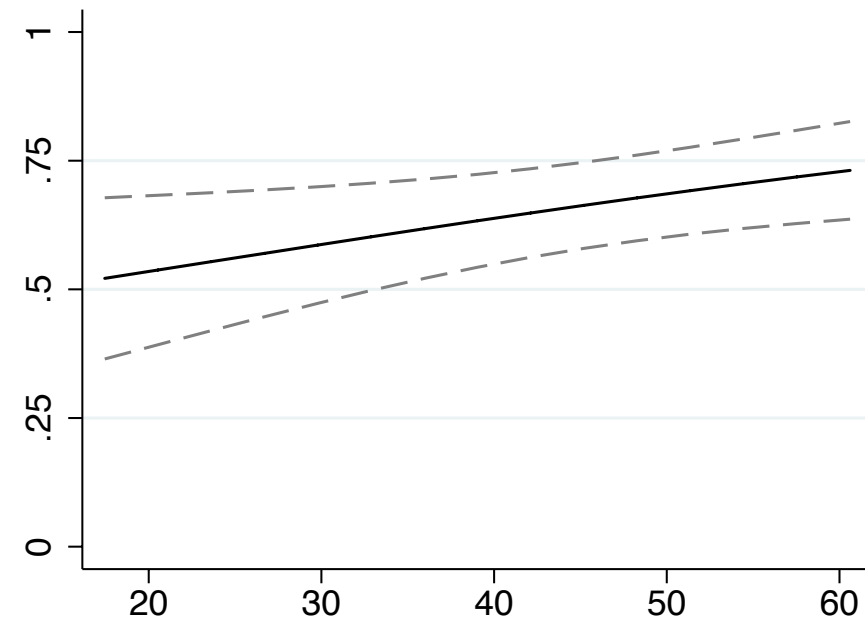
Consequences

Political Attitudes: Authoritarianism

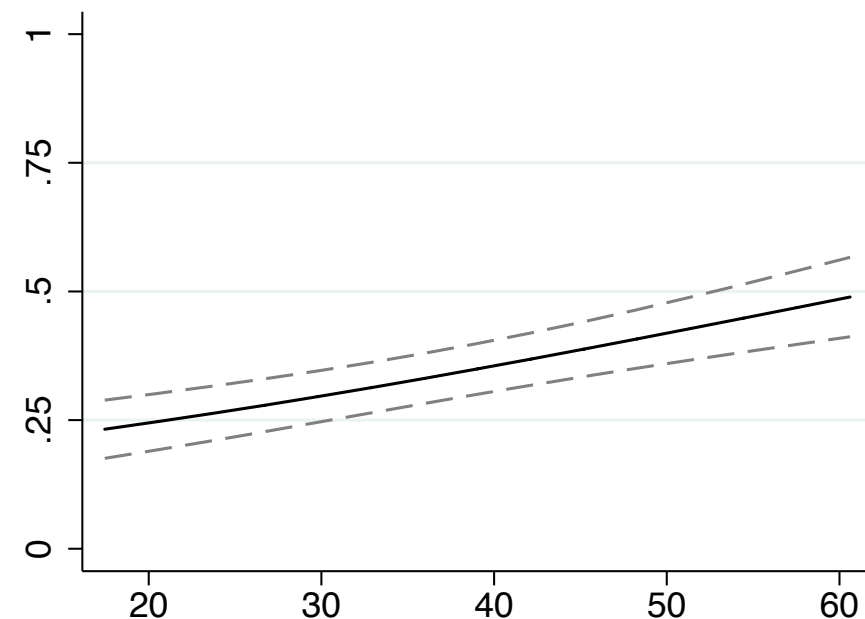
Considers Learning
Obedience Important



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Says One Should
Always Obey Boss



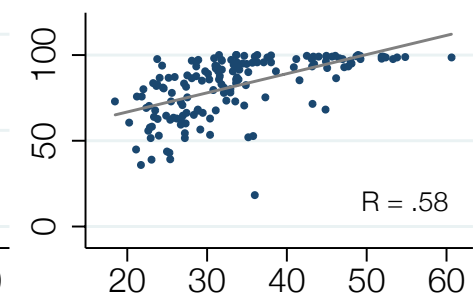
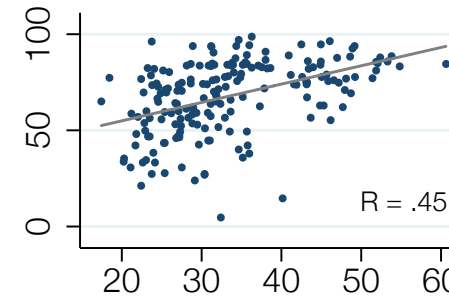
Income Inequality

Solt (2012)

Consequences

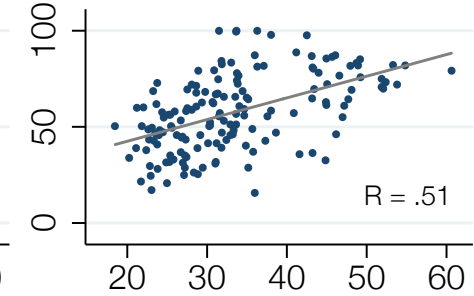
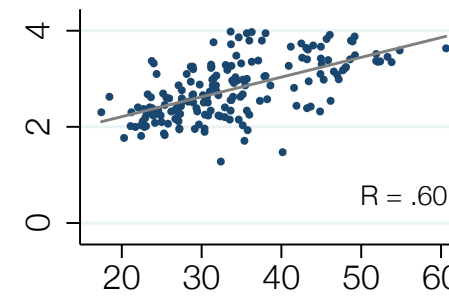
Political Attitudes Religiosity

Percent Who
Identify Selves
As Religious



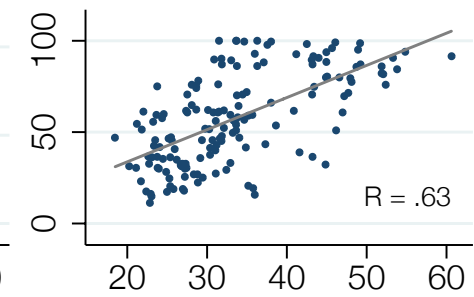
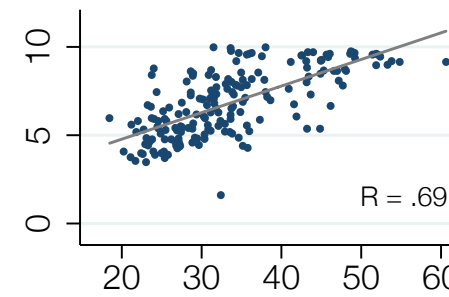
Percent Who
Believe in God

Importance of
Religion to Life



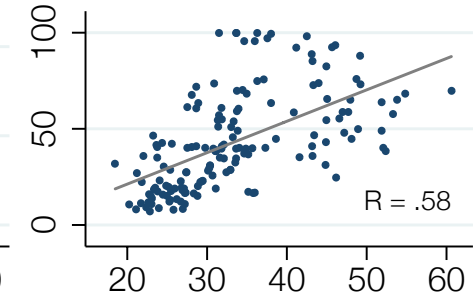
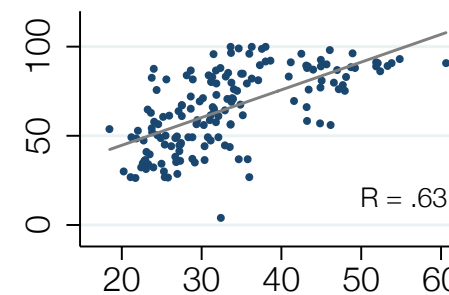
Percent Who
Believe in
an Afterlife

Importance of
God to Life



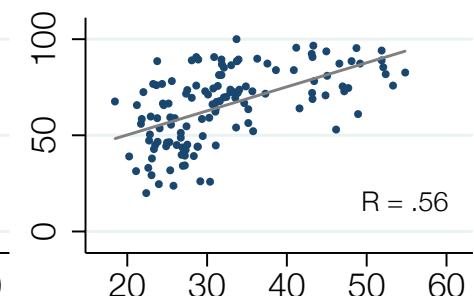
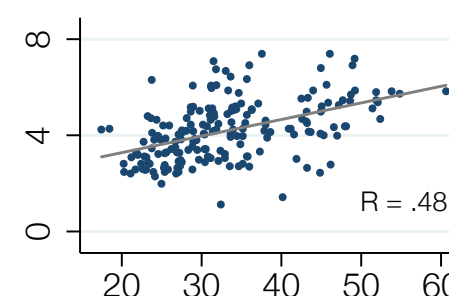
Percent Who
Believe in Heaven

Percent Who
Get Comfort
from Religion



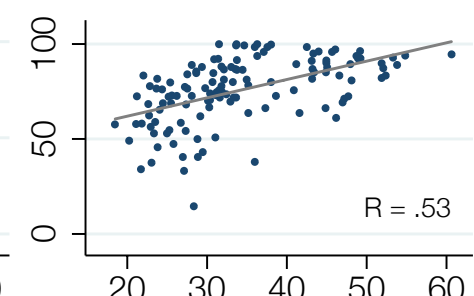
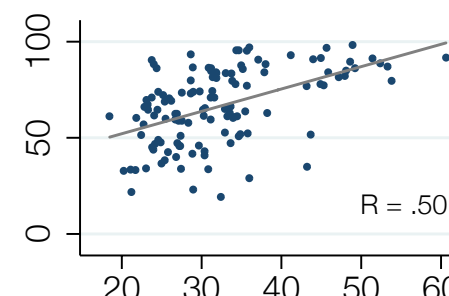
Percent Who
Believe in Hell

Attendance at
Religious Services



Percent Who
Believe in Sin

Percent Who
Take Time to Pray



Percent Who
Believe in
a Soul

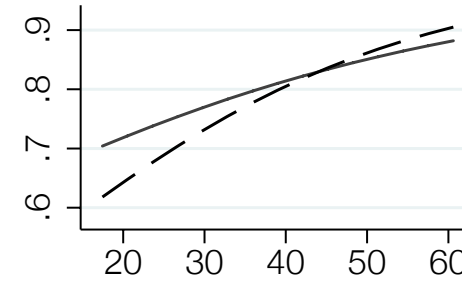
Gini Index of Net Income Inequality

Solt, Habel, & Grant (2012)

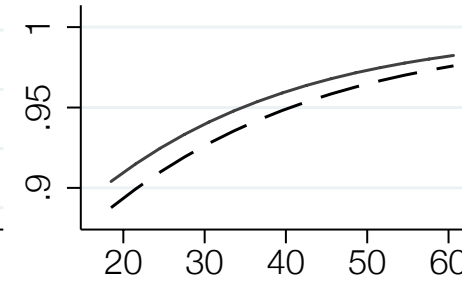
Consequences

Political Attitudes Religiosity

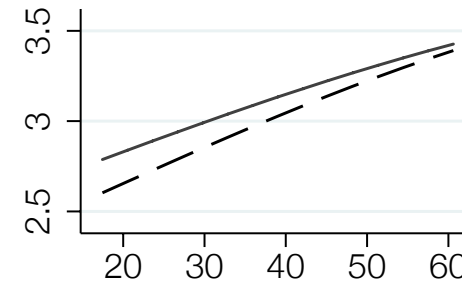
R Considers
Self to Be
Religious?



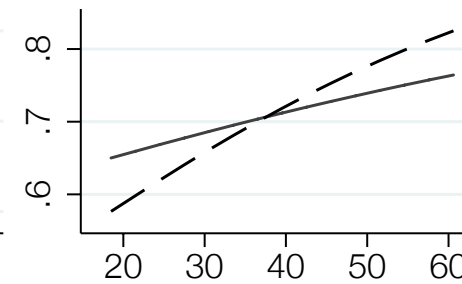
R Believes
in God?



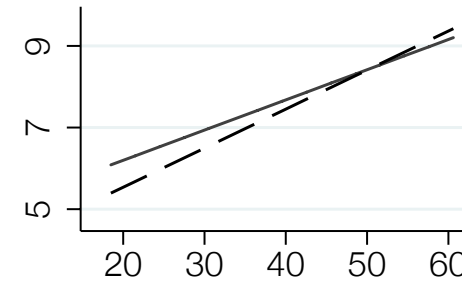
Importance
of Religion
in R's Life



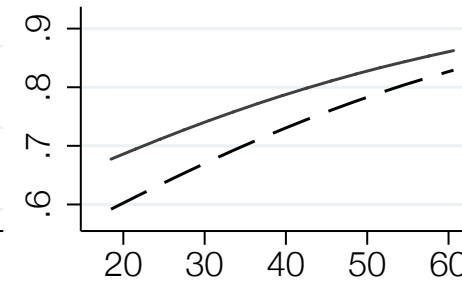
R Believes
in an Afterlife?



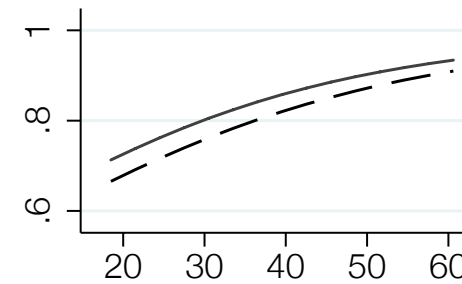
Importance
of God
in R's Life



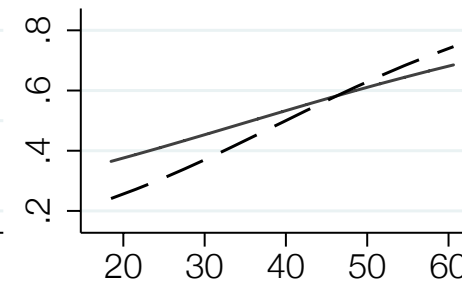
R Believes
in Heaven?



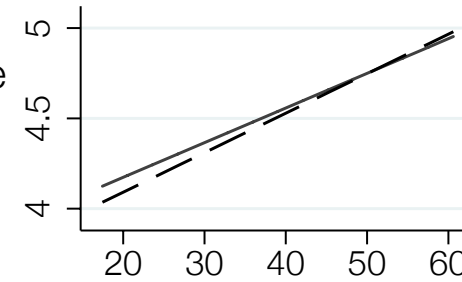
R Gets
Comfort From
Religion?



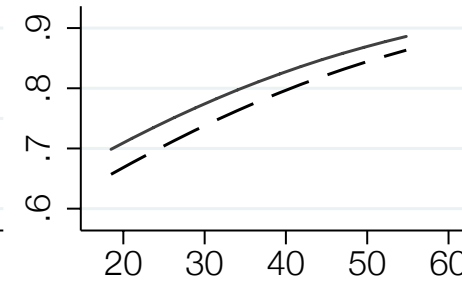
R Believes
in Hell?



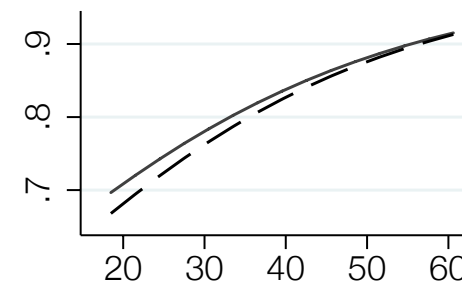
R's Attendance
At Religious
Services



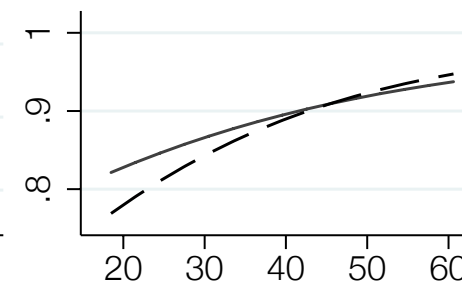
R Believes
in Sin?



R Takes
Time to
Pray?



R Believes
in a Soul?



Gini Index of Net Income Inequality

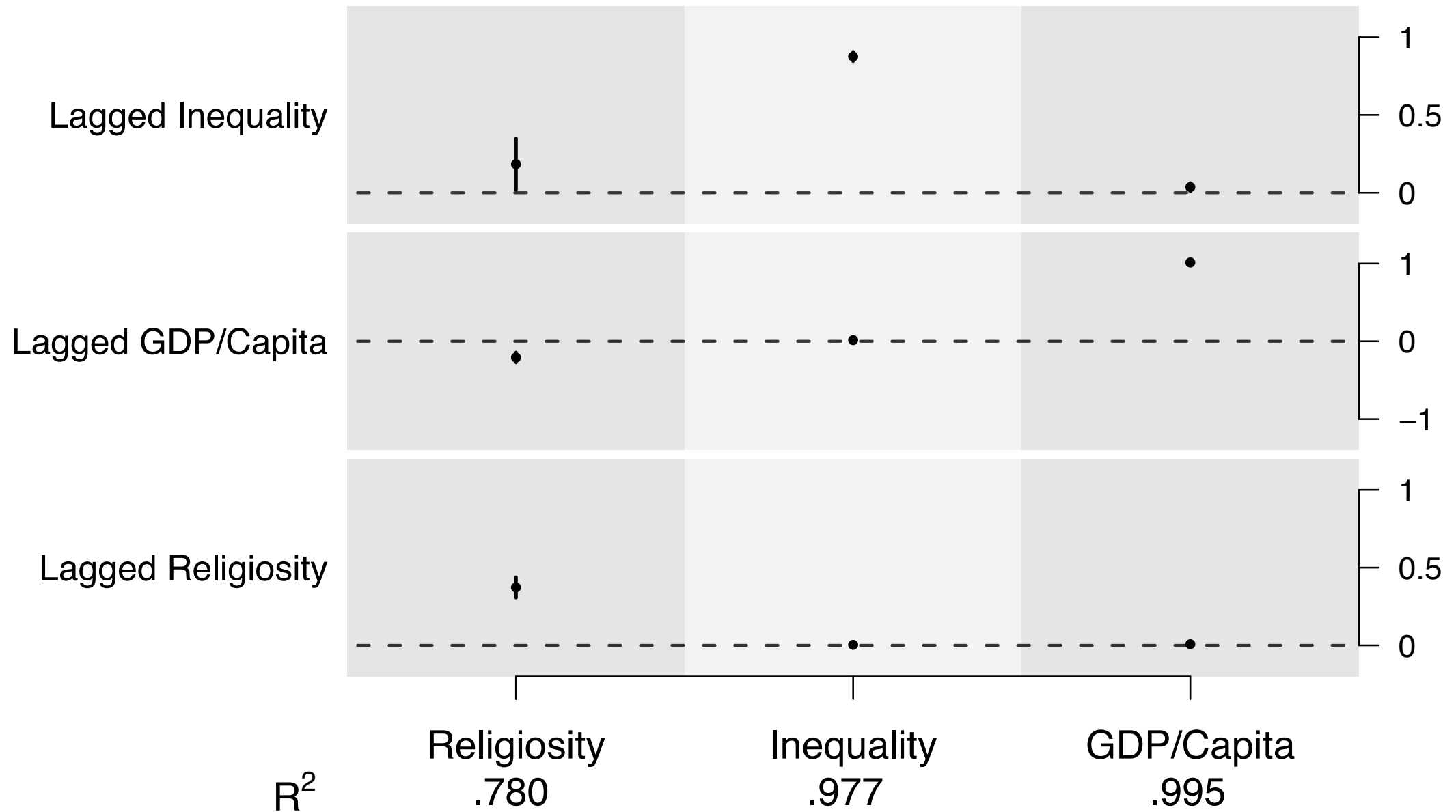
— Poorest Quintile

- - Richest Quintile

Solt, Habel, & Grant (2012)

Consequences

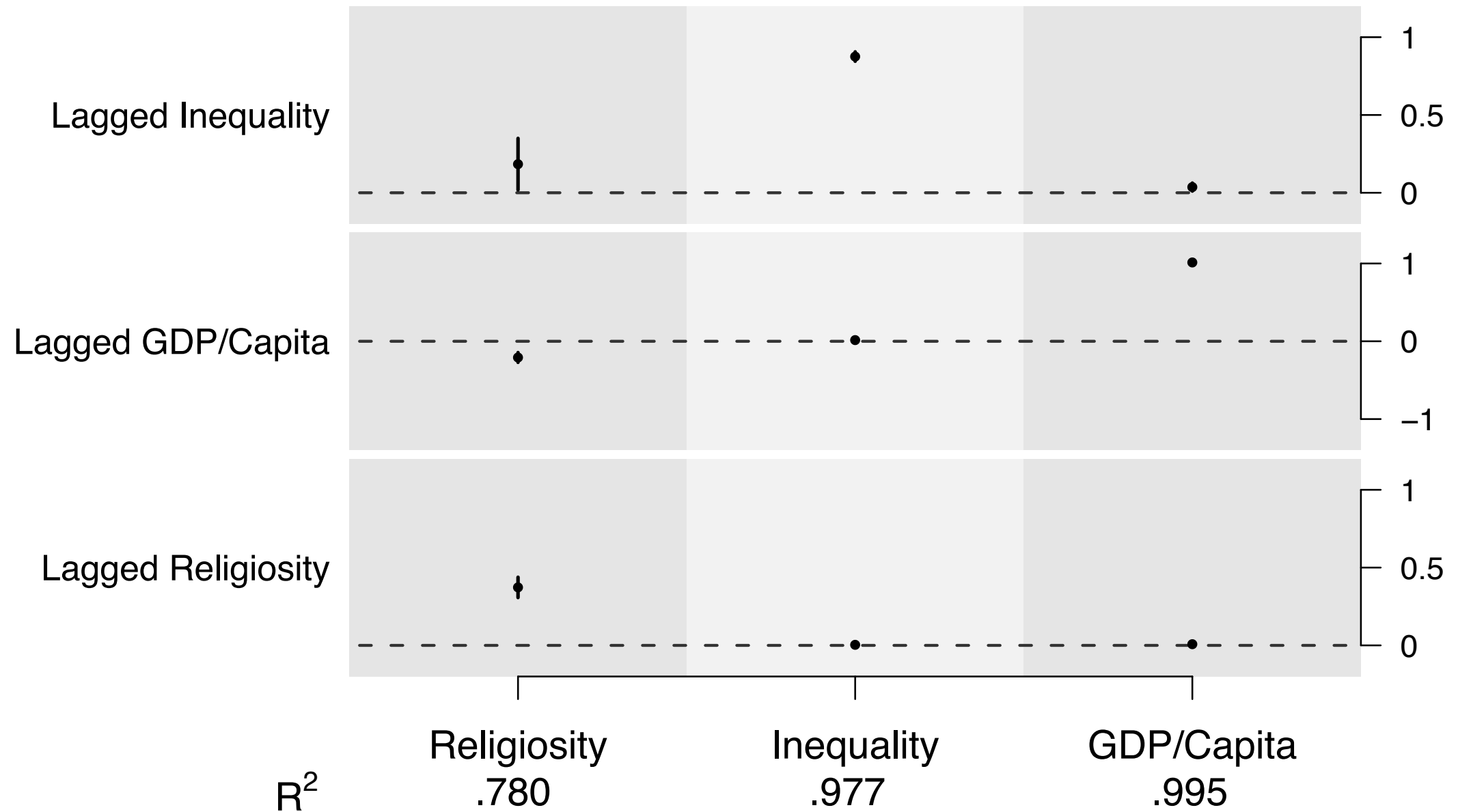
Political Attitudes
Religiosity



Solt (2014)

Consequences

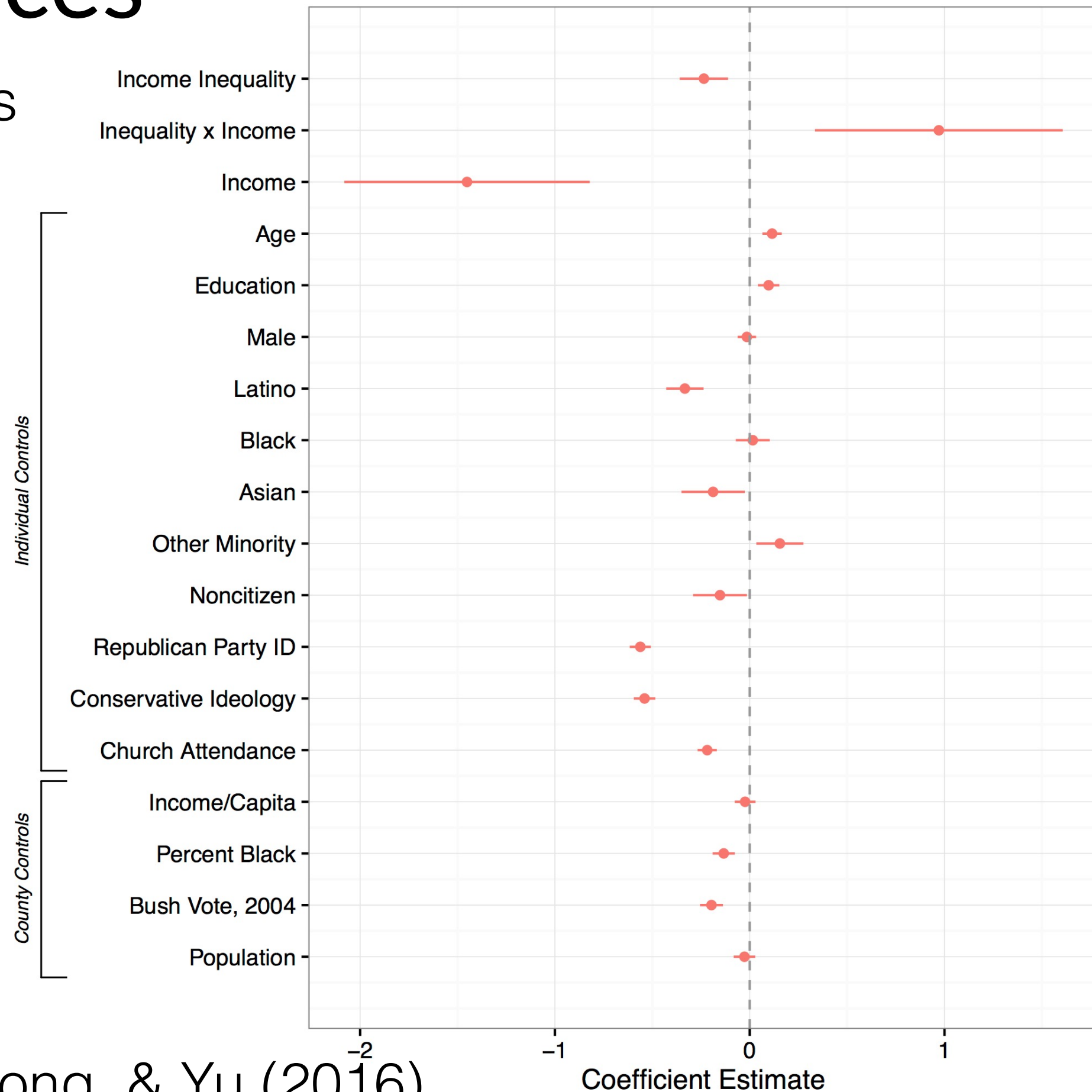
Political Attitudes
Religiosity



Solt (2014)

Consequences

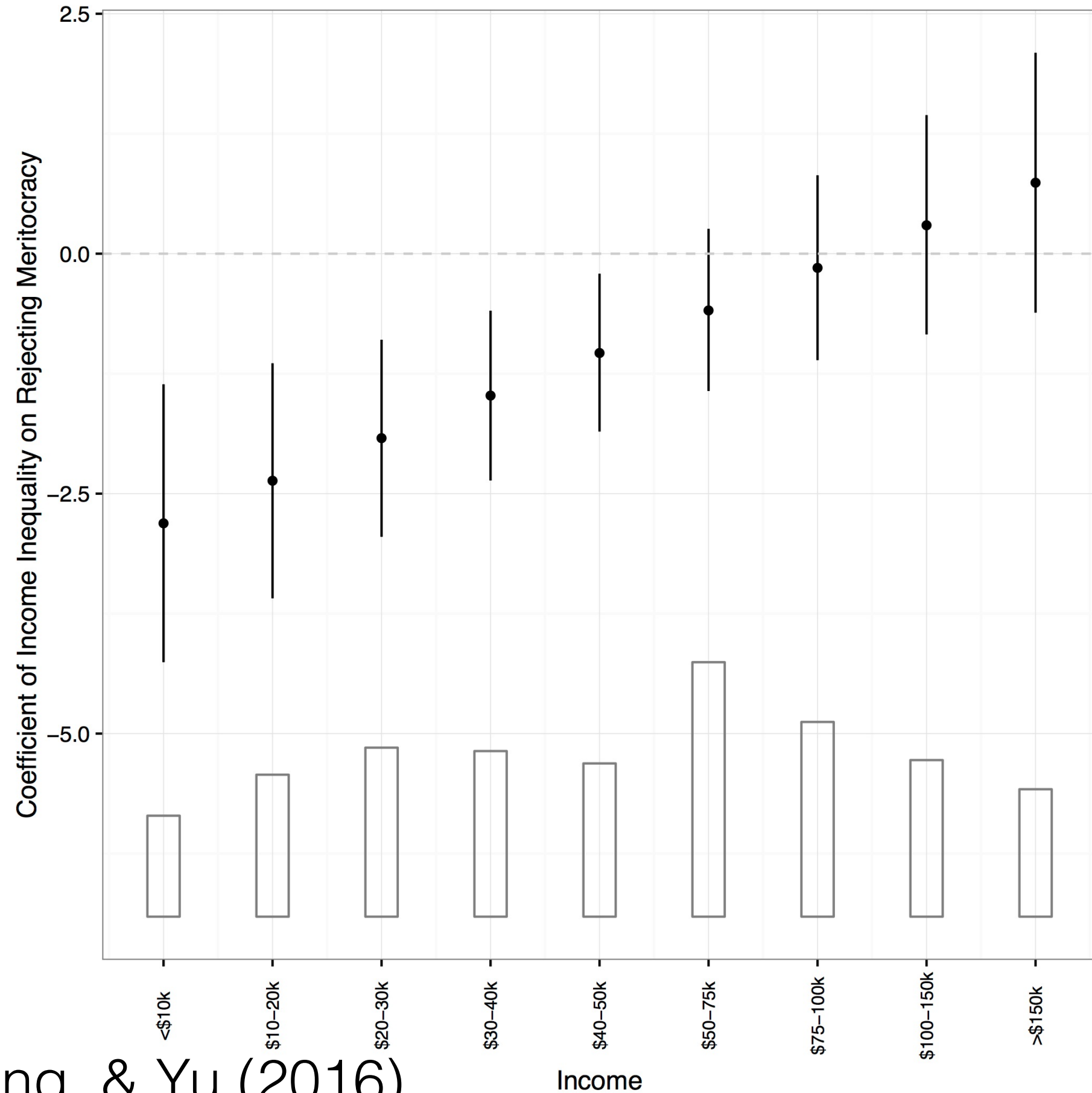
Political Attitudes
Meritocracy



Solt, Hu, Hudson, Song, & Yu (2016)

Consequences

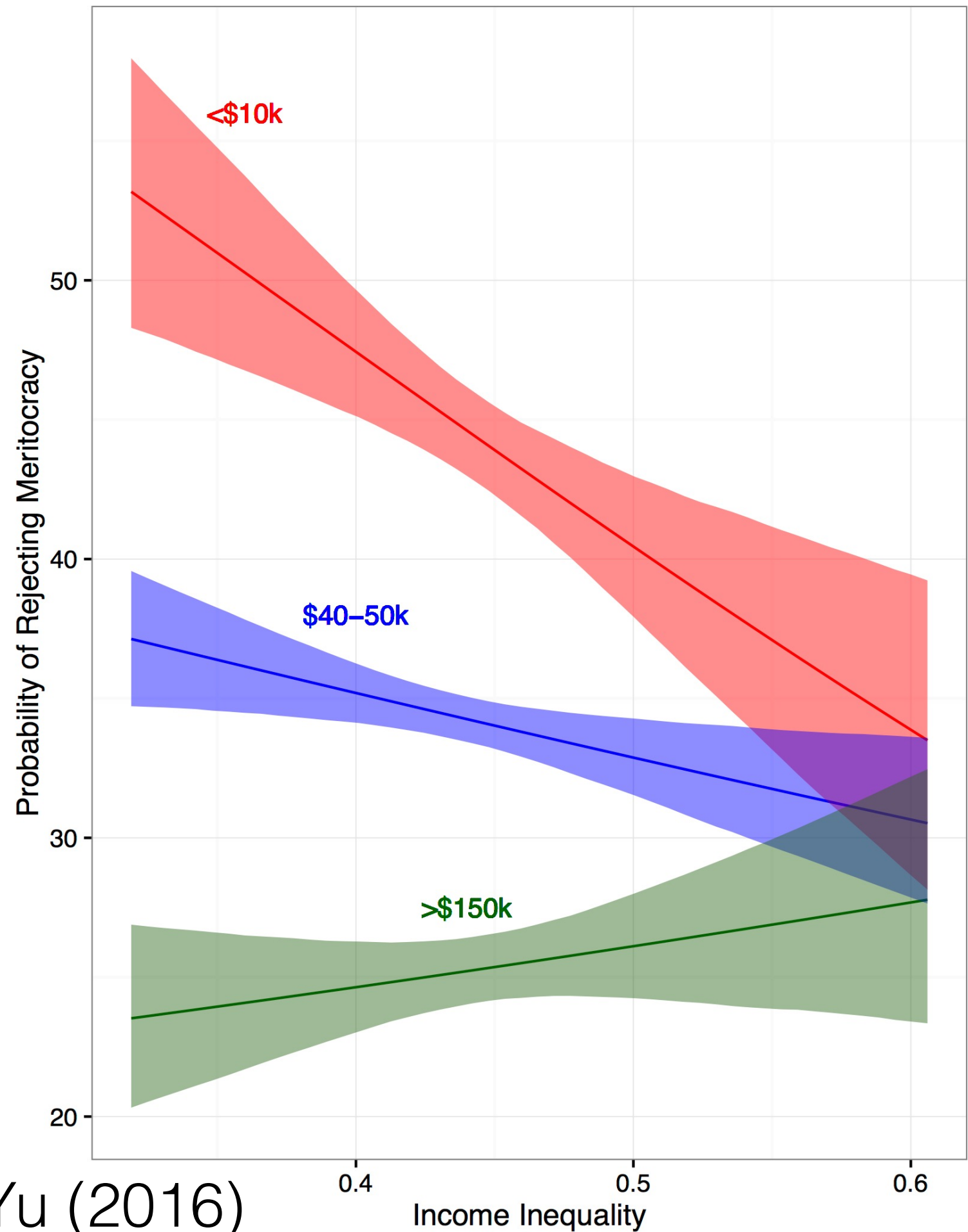
Political Attitudes
Meritocracy



Solt, Hu, Hudson, Song, & Yu (2016)

Consequences

Political Attitudes
Meritocracy



Solt, Hu, Hudson, Song, & Yu (2016)

Consequences

Conclusions

Consequences

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- **Economic inequality **won't** fix itself!**

Consequences

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Consequences

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Conclusions

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 - to shape politics in ways that discourage other people from taking part
 - even to shape others' attitudes in ways that discourage demand for redistribution

Consequences

Conclusions

- **Economic inequality **won't** fix itself!**
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 - to shape politics in ways that discourage other people from taking part
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- **Those of us who want a more egalitarian society will have to **work for it****

Consequences

Conclusions

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 - even to shape others' attitudes in ways that discourage demand for redistribution
- **Those of us who want a more egalitarian society will have to **work for it****

Thank you!

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<http://github.com/fsolt> [@fredericksolt](#)