



Introduction

The debate regarding returning voting rights to disenfranchised felons has been an important topic in past and current American political discourse. This study examines the public attitudes toward felon re-enfranchisement, focusing on how a persons education levels may shape their views. Education is linked to political knowledge and values, which may increase support for restoring voting rights.

Political Identification, age, and gender are included as control variables to account for other potential influences on public opinion

Methods

- ❖ Data taken from the 2024 American National Election Study (ANES) All analyses were conducted using R and RStudio
- ❖ Cleaned and Condensed variables from ANES
- ❖ Utilized bivariate and multivariate cross tabulations to identify the relationships between all variables

Data Analysis

An analysis of the data, it is found that when comparing educational attainment and attitudes toward felon re-enfranchisement, college graduates and post graduates are most supportive of restoring voting rights compared to those with a high school education or less.

When controlling for political identity, the data shows an additive relationship with the independent variable (Education). Support for re-enfranchisement increases with education levels for most partisan groups, specially among Democrats and Independents, showing an **additive relationship**. Democrats remain consistently more supportive across almost all educational groups. Among Republicans, there is a shift towards higher opposition at the postgraduate level compared to those with lower levels of education, this demonstrates an **interaction relationship**.

Respondents with higher levels of education are more likely to support felon re-enfranchisement than those with a lower level of education.

Findings

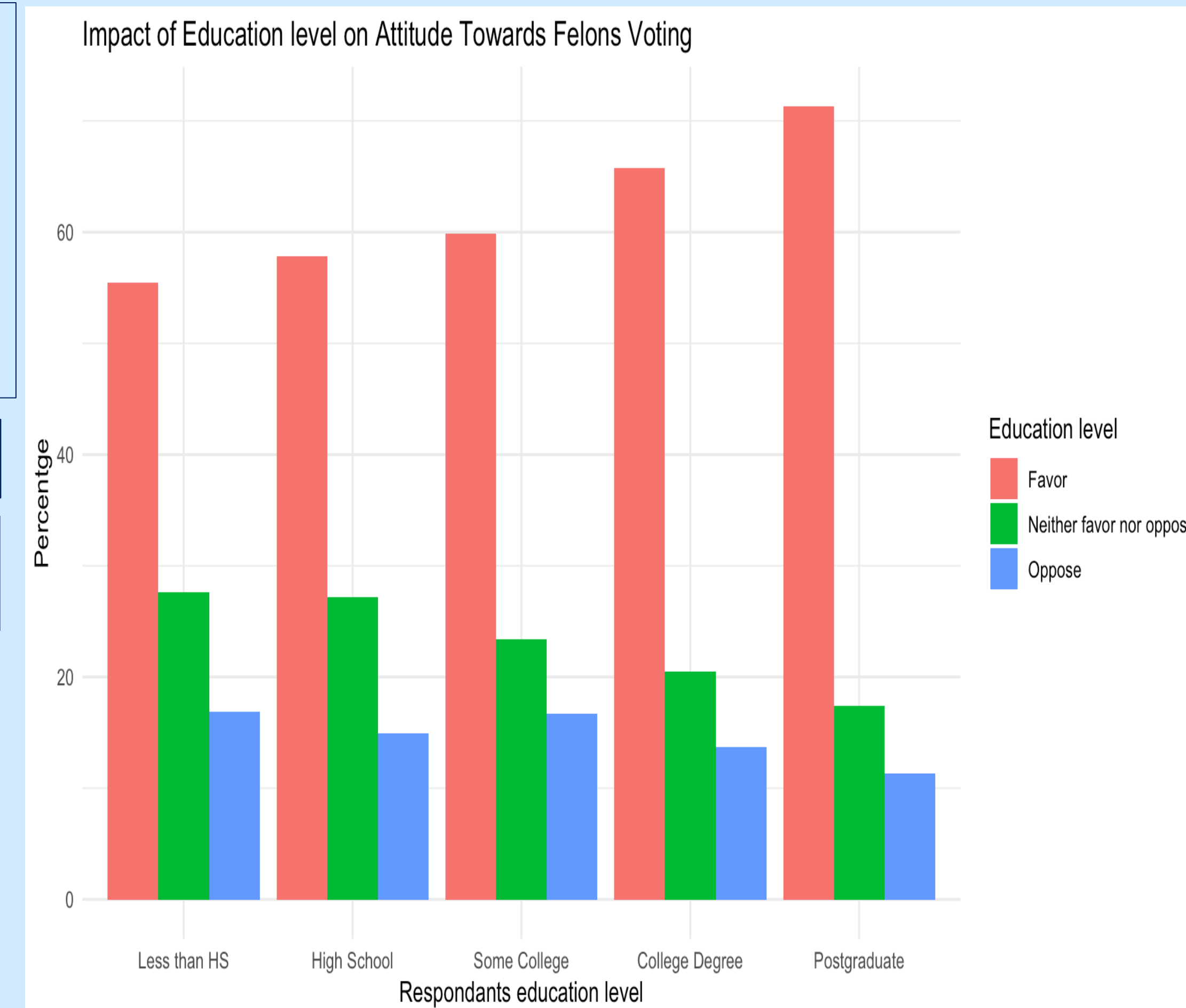
- ❖ Educational attainment positively increases support - **55.4%** among respondents with less than a high school education to **71.3%** among postgraduates.
 - ❖ Political Identification is a strong predictor of a positive attitude towards Felons Voting - by respondents, **72.8%** of Strong Democrats, **50.5%** of Independents, and **50.7%** of Strong Republications support Felons gaining their right to vote after serving their sentence.
 - ❖ Support for felon re-enfranchisement increases with education - with higher support among Democrats versus Republications, suggesting a additive relationship in which education raises support within each party.
- With these findings, the hypothesis is accepted - with higher levels of education there is an increase of support for the restoration of felon voting rights, though this effect is moderated by the respondents political identity.

Hypothesis

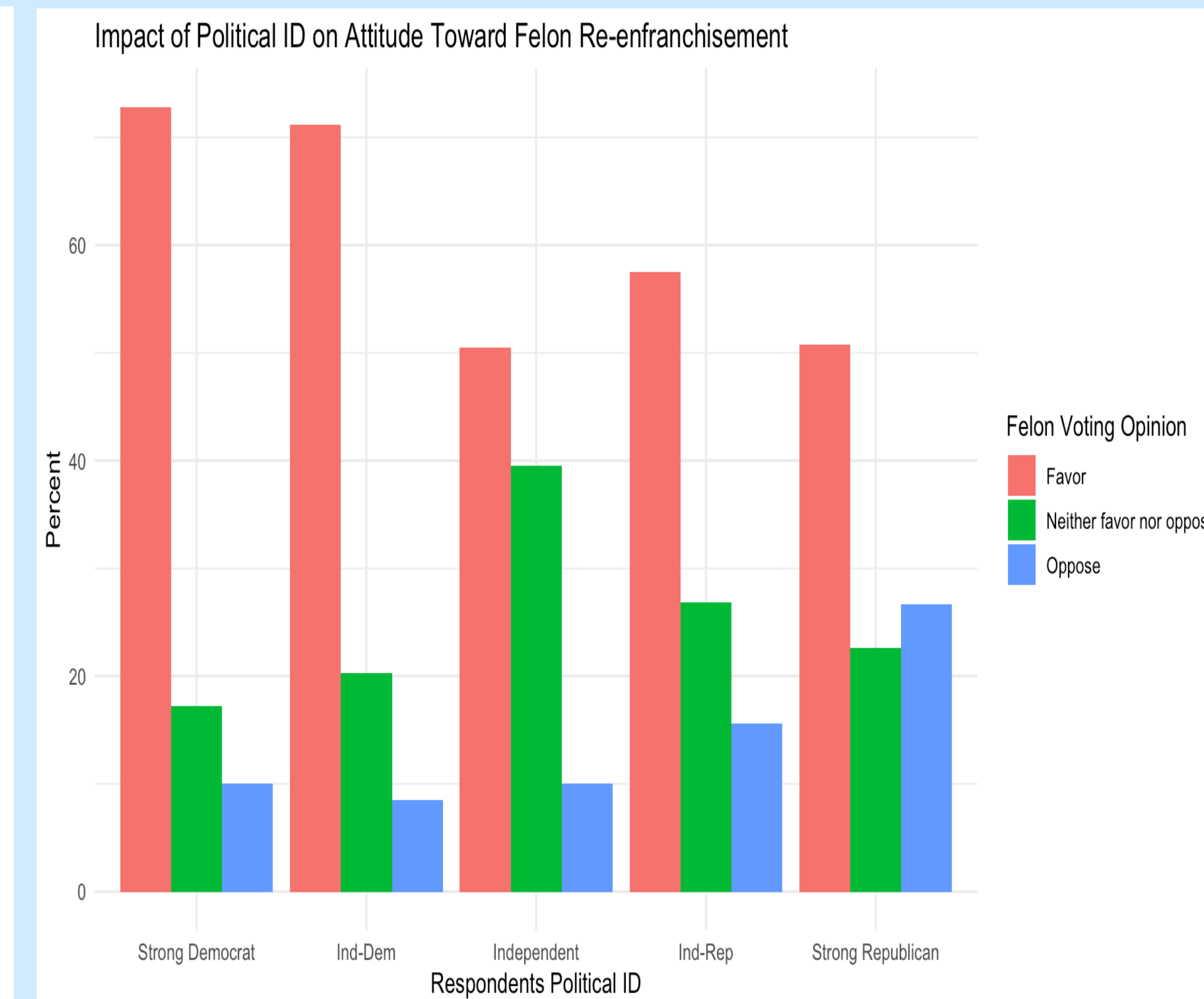
H0: Education level is not associated with support for felon voting rights after sentence completion, across political identification, age, and gender.

H1: In comparison of survey respondents, those with a college degree or higher will show higher levels of support for felon re-enfranchisement than those who attained a high school education or less

Education Level and Felons Voting



Controlling for Political ID

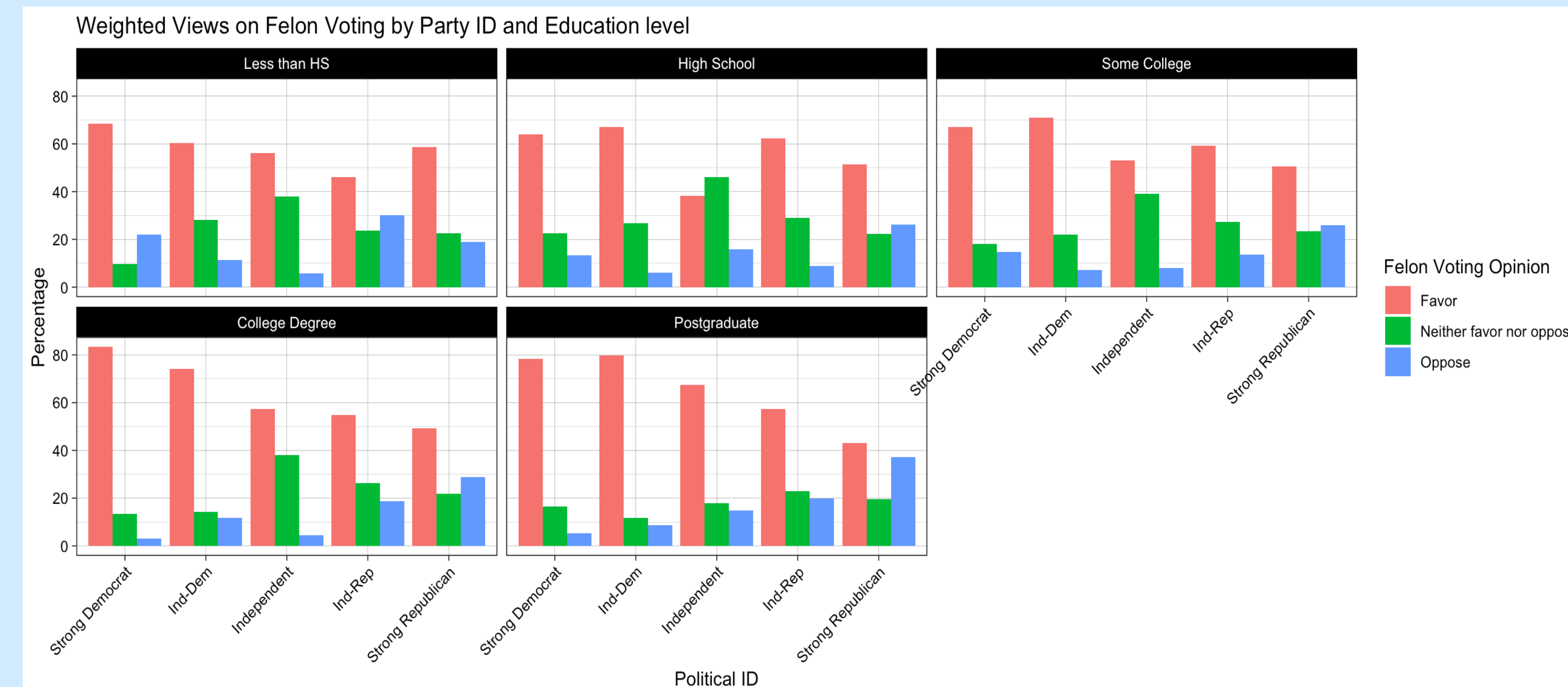


Literature Review

There is substantial research examining how legal frameworks impact the formerly incarcerated, fewer studies have thoroughly explored the **attitudes** and have yet to identify variables behind supporting the reintegration of rights. The themes in literature identifies institutional structures and individual level demographics as primary factors. **Manza et al. (2004)** noted that while a majority of Americans support re-enfranchisement after a sentence is served, opinions shift based on an individuals legal status. In contrast, **Mauer (2000)** argues that these policies act as a “collateral consequence” of mass incarceration that is set to silence specific communities and groups. Based on research by **Kim (2023)**, individual characteristics, such as educational attainment are heavy predictors of political knowledge, which directly affects attitudes towards understanding voting policies. This project data from 2024 to analyze how education and political ID interest to shape contemporary support for felon voting rights.

Data Set Variables	Type
Education Level	Independent (recoded into five distinct tiers)
Felons Voting	Dependent (Measures attitudes towards restoring rights after a sentence is served)
Political ID	Control (Recoded into 5 distinct categories)
Gender	Control
Age	Control (Recoded into 3 distinct categories, not shown on poster)

Attitudes Towards Felons Voting Controlling for Political ID & Education



References

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Conclusion

Research shows educational attainment and political identification are critical in shaping the public's opinion on felon re-enfranchisement. Higher education increases the support for voting rights restoration. Although this study focused on Education and political ID, controlling for age and gender revealed a generational pattern and support for restoring felons rights stayed fairly consistent. While, educational growth in the U.S. population may boost support for re-enfranchisement, political polarization will likely continue to moderate the speed of this change.

These findings are relevant to policymakers and political shareholders that are interested in reforming felon disenfranchisement laws. Possible next steps to further this research, future studies could examine how media exposure or personal experience with the justice system serves as an influence on attitudes beyond the very general variables given

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