

Socioeconomic Status and Ethnicity: How Does it Affect Civic Engagement?

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Introduction

The purpose of this research study is to analyze civic engagement and how it relates to socioeconomic status and ethnicity. The overall voting rate in the United States has varied from 1996 to 2012 (Bureau, 2018). The lowest rate, which was in 1996, was 58.4% with the highest being in 2004 and 2008 at 64%. In 2012 it was recorded that 60% of the population voted (2018). One thing that has been observed is that there are factors that impede those who are part of ethnic minorities. For example, in a study conducted searching the effects of socioeconomic status on work salience, it was found that experiences of structural racism and socioeconomic inequality play a significant negative role in work salience and sociopolitical development (Diemer et al., 2010).

Hypothesis

Ethnic minorities will have a significantly different rating in civic engagement when compared to White Americans.

Null Hypothesis: There will not be a difference in rating for ethnic minorities when compared to White Americans.

Research Questions

1. How often did participants exercise their right to vote in the last presidential election?
2. Have subjects participated in community outreach in the past 6 months?
3. Have subjects participated in zoom community activities in the past 6 months?

Methods and Materials

Method

A total of 50 participants were recruited through convenience sampling. Each participant was over the age of 18 years or older and was taken from students at Southern Adventist University. The students were recruited from a variety of classes while also being approached on the Promenade. The incentive was that those who complete the survey will be entered into a raffle to win a \$20 amazon gift card.

Materials

The questionnaire that was used was the *Pinero Civic Engagement questionnaire*. Because this questionnaire has not been used before, this was pilot study, and the reliability and validity will be measured after the analysis. Topics such as class standing, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status were measured. The questionnaire is measured using a self-report method. The participants answered questions regarding if they voted in the presidential candidacy of 2020, and if they involved themselves in a community outreach in the past six months.

Results

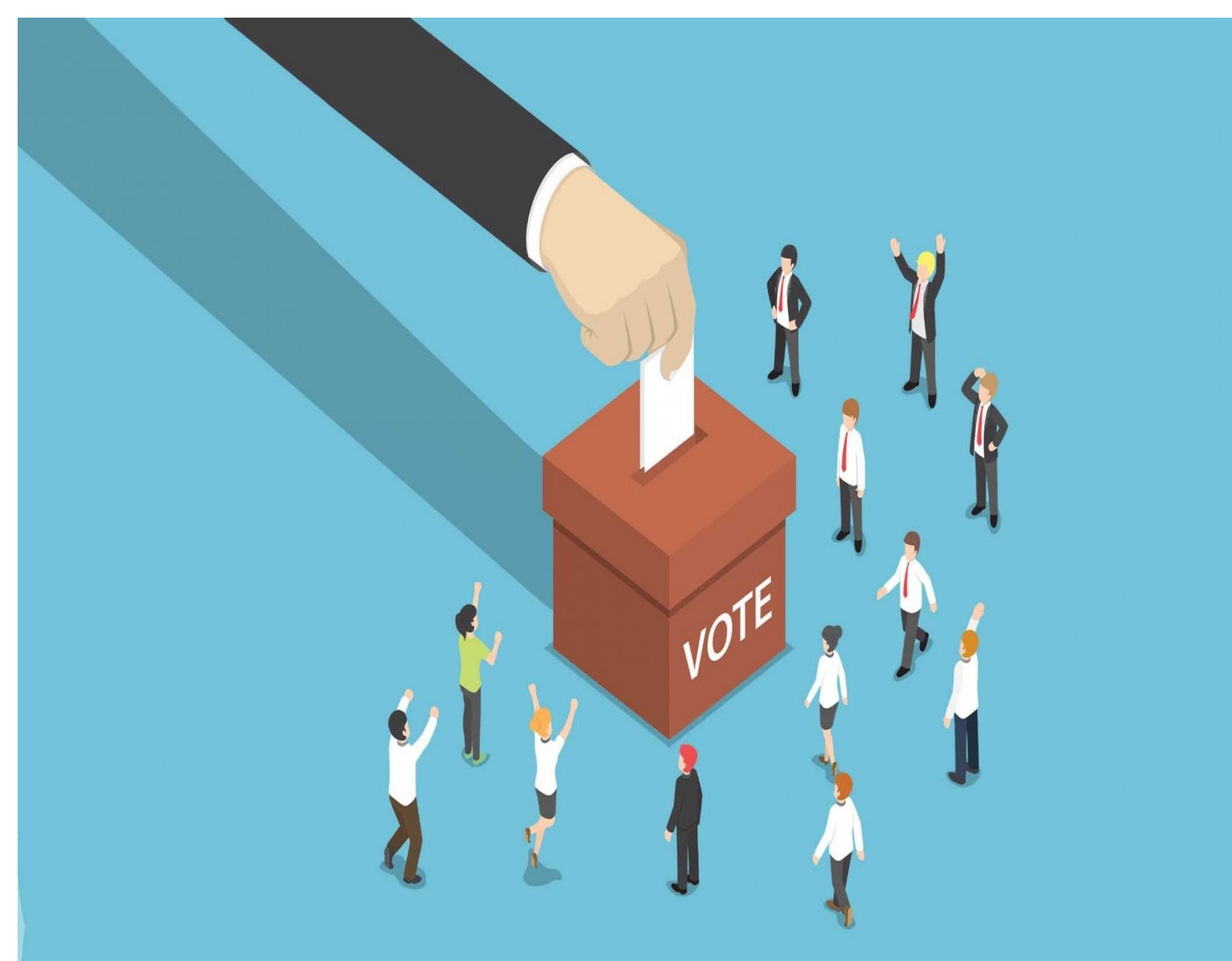
The results of the study showed that there was not a statically significant difference in civic engagement of Ethnic minorities when compared to White Americans. $P= 0.874$.

Upon further inspection using the tukey's analysis, it was concluded that the group were unequal. Because of this, it was difficult to guarantee the Type I error levels.



Discussion

Although this study was not able to support the researcher's hypothesis, this information can be useful in different ways. People and organizations that are interested in civic engagement trends can use this study as a basis for further research and endeavors. Furthermore, this could be beneficial to those who are studying minorities to study their motivations and actions when it comes to civic activities. Future research in this topic could benefit from a larger sample size and include multiple states and districts across the country. This would strengthen the study and give an opportunity to generalize the American population.



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References

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Diemer, M. A., Wang, Q., Moore, T., Gregory, S. R., Hatcher, K. M., & Voight, A. M. (2010). Sociopolitical development, work salience, and vocational expectations among low socioeconomic status African American, Latin American, and Asian American youth. *Developmental Psychology*, 46(3), 619–635. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017049>