

Income, Poverty, and Education

Census 2000 continues to provide new information to data users. The U.S. Census Bureau recently released data in Summary File 4 that details the ratio of income in 1999 to poverty level by educational attainment for each race. The Census Bureau uses established federal guidelines to determine the official measure of poverty every year. The federal poverty thresholds are based on certain money income levels and vary by the size and composition of a family. The poverty level is defined as 1.00 poverty level, or 100% of poverty.

Data in this article focuses on the educational attainment of the population living below the poverty level and on the population living at or above 200% or 2.00 of the poverty level. This study reflects both the population with a bachelor's degree and those without a bachelor's degree (does not include those with higher than a bachelor's degree).

Poverty status was determined for all people 18 and over excluding the institutionalized population, military group quarters, college dormitories, and unrelated individuals under 15 years old. These groups are considered neither "poor" nor "nonpoor." This article analyzes the data for Utah only.

Population Without a Bachelor's Degree

For the population age 18 and over who did not have a bachelor's degree in 2000, the American Indian Alaskan Native (AIAN) population had the highest percent living below the 1.00 poverty level at 38.2%. The AIAN population was followed by Black or African Americans at 27.9%, those who selected Some Other Race at 21.0%, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) at 15.3%, Asians at 14.3%, and Whites at 9.5%. For Hispanics in Utah without a bachelor's degree, 20.7% lived under the 1.00 poverty level in 2000, compared with 9.7% of those who marked White not Hispanic on the Census.

The White race had the highest percent of its members who had not received a bachelor's degree living at or above the 2.00 threshold (71.3%), followed by Asians (67.8%), NHPIs (56.3%), Black or African Americans (52.2%), the Some Other Race population (46.4%), and AIANs (38.8%). Of the Hispanics without a bachelor's degree, 48% lived at or above the 2.00 threshold, compared to 71.7% of White non-Hispanics.

Population With a Bachelor's Degree

For the population 18 years and older who earned a bachelor's degree, NHPIs had the lowest percent living under the 1.00 poverty level at 2.4%, followed by Whites (3.5%), AIANs (6.8%), Black or African Americans (8.4%),

Asians (12.1%), and the Some Other Race population (13.1%). In 2000, 3.9% of White non-Hispanics with a bachelor's degree lived under the 1.00 level, compared to 9.9% of Hispanics.

For those with a bachelor's degree in Utah, Whites had the highest percent (87.9%) living at or above the 2.00 poverty threshold, followed by AIANs (76.7%), Black or African Americans (75.4%), Asians (74.9%), NHPIs (74.6%), and the Some Other Race population (63.0%). In 2000, 70.4% of Hispanics with a bachelor's degree lived at or above the 2.00 threshold, compared to 87.5% of White non-Hispanics.

The Difference of a Degree on Poverty Status by Race

The percentage of the 18 and over population within each race living under the 1.00 poverty level was higher for those without a bachelor's degree compared to those who earned a bachelor's degree. For some races the difference was small, but for other races the difference was more pronounced. The difference was found by subtracting the percentage of the population of those with a bachelor's degree living under the 1.00 poverty level from those without a bachelor's degree living under the 1.00 poverty level.

The largest difference was found among AIANs where the percentage of those living under the 1.00 poverty level dropped 31.4%. The percentage dropped 19.4% for Black or African Americans, 12.9% for NHPIs, 7.9% for the Some Other Race population, and 6.0% for Whites. The smallest difference was found among Asians, dropping by only 2.2%. The Hispanic or Latino population experienced a drop of 10.8%.

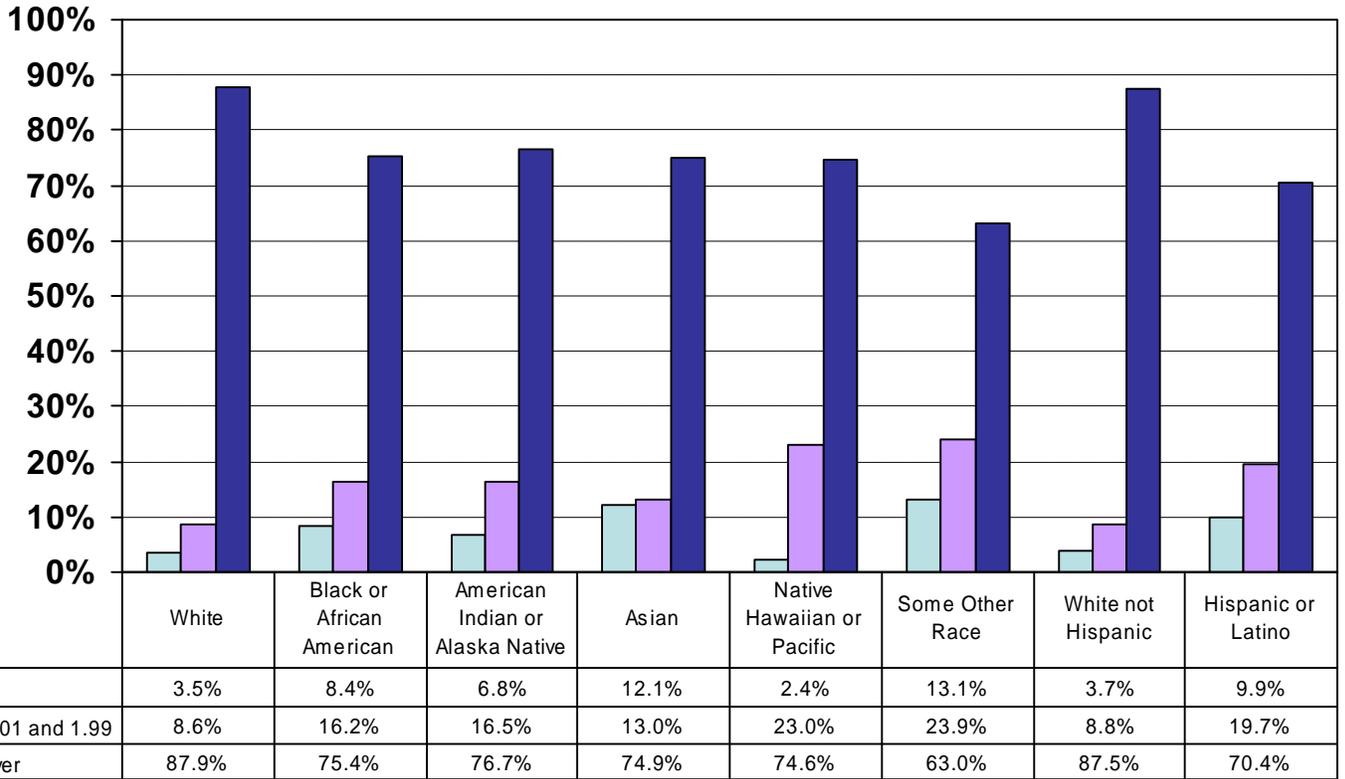
Likewise, those that earned a bachelor's degree were more likely to live above the 2.00 threshold than those who did not have a bachelor's degree. AIANs experienced the largest difference with an increase of 37.9%. Black or African Americans increased 23.1%, followed by NHPIs (18.2%), those who selected Some Other Race (16.6%), Whites (16.6%), and Asians (7.1%). Hispanic or Latinos increased 22.4%.

Although other factors in addition to educational attainment are involved in determining poverty status, these data present evidence that there is a strong correlation between educational attainment and poverty level.

More information on income and educational attainment from Census 2000 can be found at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/income/earnings/earnings.html>.

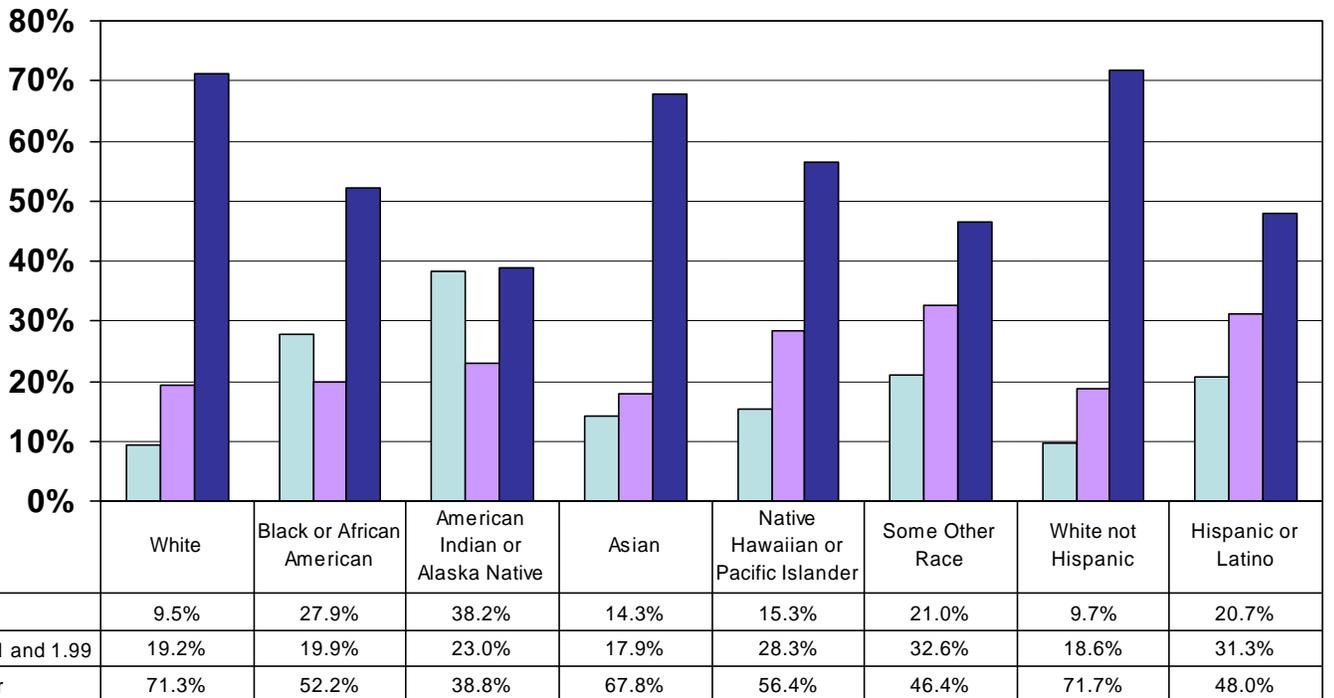
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Population With a Bachelor's Degree



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 4

Population Without a Bachelor's Degree



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 4

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Income Difference by Obtaining a Bachelor's Degree

Race or Ethnic Origin	% of Population Below the 100% Poverty Level			% of Population Above 200% of Poverty Level		
	No Bachelor's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Decrease in % Living below Poverty Level	Bachelor's Degree	No Bachelor's Degree	Increase in % Living Above 200% of Poverty Level
White	9.5%	3.5%	6.0%	87.9%	71.3%	16.6%
Black or African American	27.9%	8.4%	19.4%	75.4%	52.2%	23.1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	38.2%	6.8%	31.4%	76.7%	38.8%	37.9%
Asian	14.3%	12.1%	2.2%	74.9%	67.8%	7.1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	15.3%	2.4%	12.9%	74.6%	56.4%	18.2%
Some Other Race	21.0%	13.1%	7.9%	63.0%	46.4%	16.6%
White not Hispanic	9.7%	3.7%	6.0%	87.5%	71.7%	15.9%
Hispanic or Latino	20.7%	9.9%	10.8%	70.4%	48.0%	22.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 4