

# The Impact of Highest Educational Level on Donation Behaviours.



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## Introduction

- Charitable giving is a common form of pro-social behaviour (Wiepking & Maas, 2009). There are many factors that affect charitable giving such as level of income (Wiepking, 2007), church attendance (Borgonovi, 2008), and level of education (Wiepking & Maas, 2009). Wiepking & Maas (2009) found that the higher the level of education a person has, the more money they are likely to donate to a charity. However, they only split level of education into 3 options: primary, secondary and tertiary education. Some people may attend school but gain no qualifications. Also, there are many levels within tertiary education, ranging from A-levels to a Doctorate degree.
- The current study was also interested in the effect of educational level on charitable giving, referred to in this study as 'donation behaviours', but measured the participants education level on a 9 point scale (see materials and methods).
- The method and variables were taken from Fong & Luttmer (2007).
- It was predicted that there would be a positive correlation between the level of education and the average donation amount (\$).

## Materials and methods

- 620 participants were asked to complete a questionnaire about their demographics, including their highest level of education they had received.
- Level of education was ranked 1-9:
  - Less than high school
  - Some high school, no diploma
  - Diploma or equivalent
  - Some college, no degree
  - Associate degree
  - Bachelors degree
  - Masters degree
  - Professional degree
  - Doctorate degree
- The participants were then shown a video presentation about a food pantry charity in Tuscaloosa, AL.
- Participants were then asked to complete a decision making task where they had to decide whether, if they were to be selected out of all the participants to win £100, how much of this money they would give to the charity in Tuscaloosa.

## Results

- Data from 102 participants was removed from the analysis as they failed to provide an answer.
- Single linear regression analysis was used to test if the participant's level of education significantly predicted participants donation behaviours. The results of the regression indicated the two predictors explained 1% of the variance ( $R^2=.01$ ,  $F(1,516)=6.48$ ,  $p=.01$ ). It was found that educational level significantly predicted donation behaviours ( $\beta = .11$ ,  $p=.01$ ).
- There was a significant positive correlation between highest level of education and the amount participants were willing to donate if they were to win \$100 on the lottery :  $r(516)=.111$ ,  $p=0.01$ . However, it was only a small positive correlation (displayed in figure 1).
- The main effect of level of education was significant,  $F(1, 516) = 6.48$ ,  $p = 0.01$
- Figure 2 shows the average amount of donations given by each group based on their highest level of education.

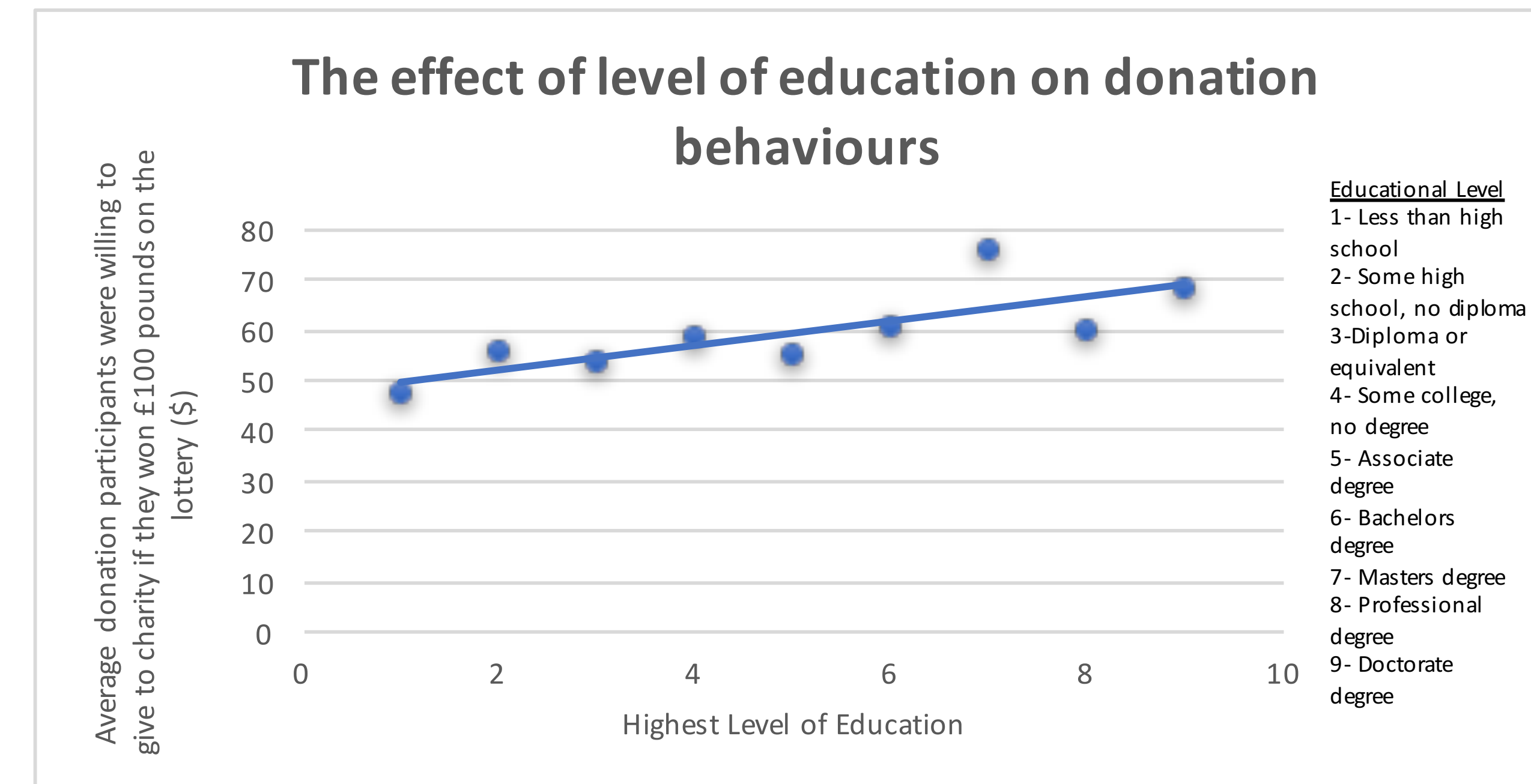


Figure 1 (Left). A scatter graph to show the correlation between the highest level of education participants received and the average amount they were willing to donate to charity out of a \$100 lottery win.

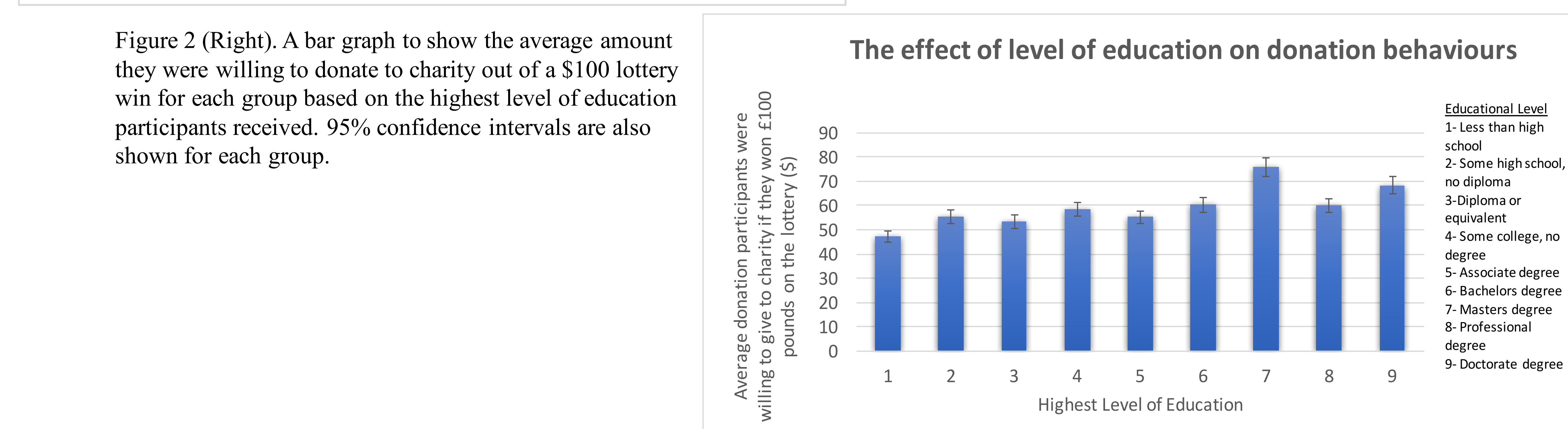


Figure 2 (Right). A bar graph to show the average amount they were willing to donate to charity out of a \$100 lottery win for each group based on the highest level of education participants received. 95% confidence intervals are also shown for each group.

## Literature cited

- Wiepking, P., & Maas, I. (2009). Resources that make you generous: Effects of social and human resources on charitable giving. *Social Forces*, 87(4), 1973-1995.
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## Conclusions

- The results showed a significant correlation between level of education and donation behaviours (\$). This supports the hypothesis that the higher the level of education, the higher the donation amount would be.
- However, the results revealed a very small positive correlation, supporting the idea that other variables have an impact on donation behaviours. For example, a higher education often means a higher income with more disposable income, which could explain why they are more willing to donate a higher amount of money from a \$100 lottery win. This could explain some of the variance in the data so income could be included as another variable in similar future research.
- In addition to this, if it were a perfect correlation, participants in group 9 (the highest level of education- a Doctorate degree) on average would have been willing to donate the most money to charity.
- However, the scatter graph and bar chart show that the group with the highest average donation was group 7: participants educated to a Masters degree level.
- Research into why this is the case could be carried out in the future, investigating why masters students may be willing to donate a higher amount of money from a lottery win to charity, than those educated to a doctorate degree level who may have more disposable income.

## Further information

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