



The Association between Familial Income and Voter Decisions in the 2020 Election

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Introduction

- Socioeconomic status amongst voters has demonstrated its ability to dictate voter's decisions at the polls, however, the extent of this influence is currently unclear. (Wu, J.D., & Huber, 2021).
- The United States is diverse, and it is evident that different states will vary in the extent to which they experience income-based voting. (Hersh, E. D., & Nall, C. 2016)
- Studies have indicated that it is not necessarily income groups themselves, but variations within levels of income that are significant for predicting results at the polls. (Stonecash, J. M., 2017)

Research Questions

- What is the relationship between voter decisions at the polls and family income through the lens of the 2020 presidential election?
- Does this relationship differ when tested at the state level?

Methods

Sample

- Respondents (n=5377) were drawn from the American National Election Survey (ANES) of 2020, a continuation of the series of studies conducted since 1948 to support analysis of public opinion and voting behavior in U.S. presidential elections.

Measures

- Voter Decision (PostVote) was constructed into a binary response variable representative of selecting Trump (0) or Biden (1) in the election.
- Participants' Family Income (FamInc) was constructed into a categorical variable of five levels, each representing a different range of family income.

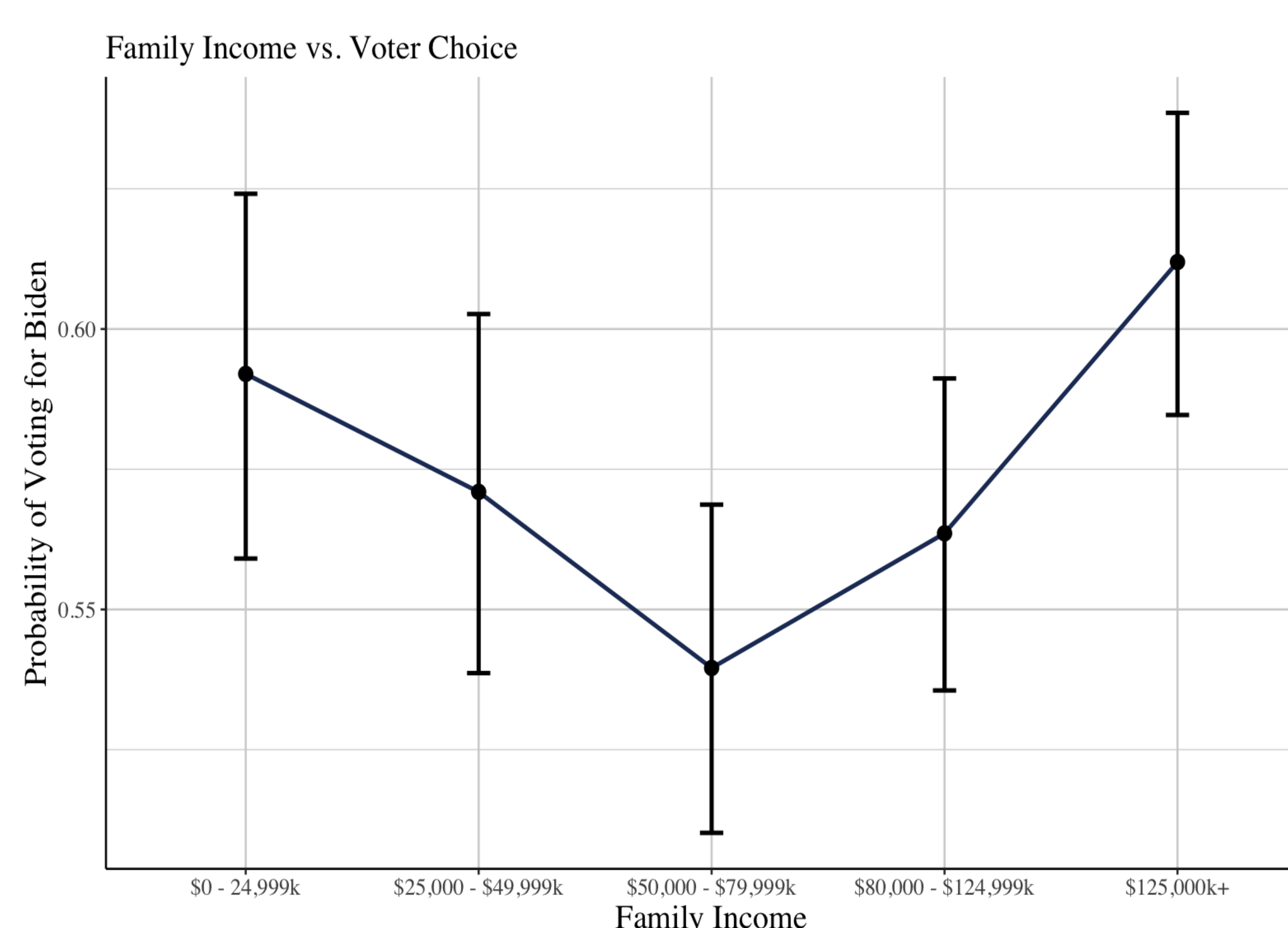
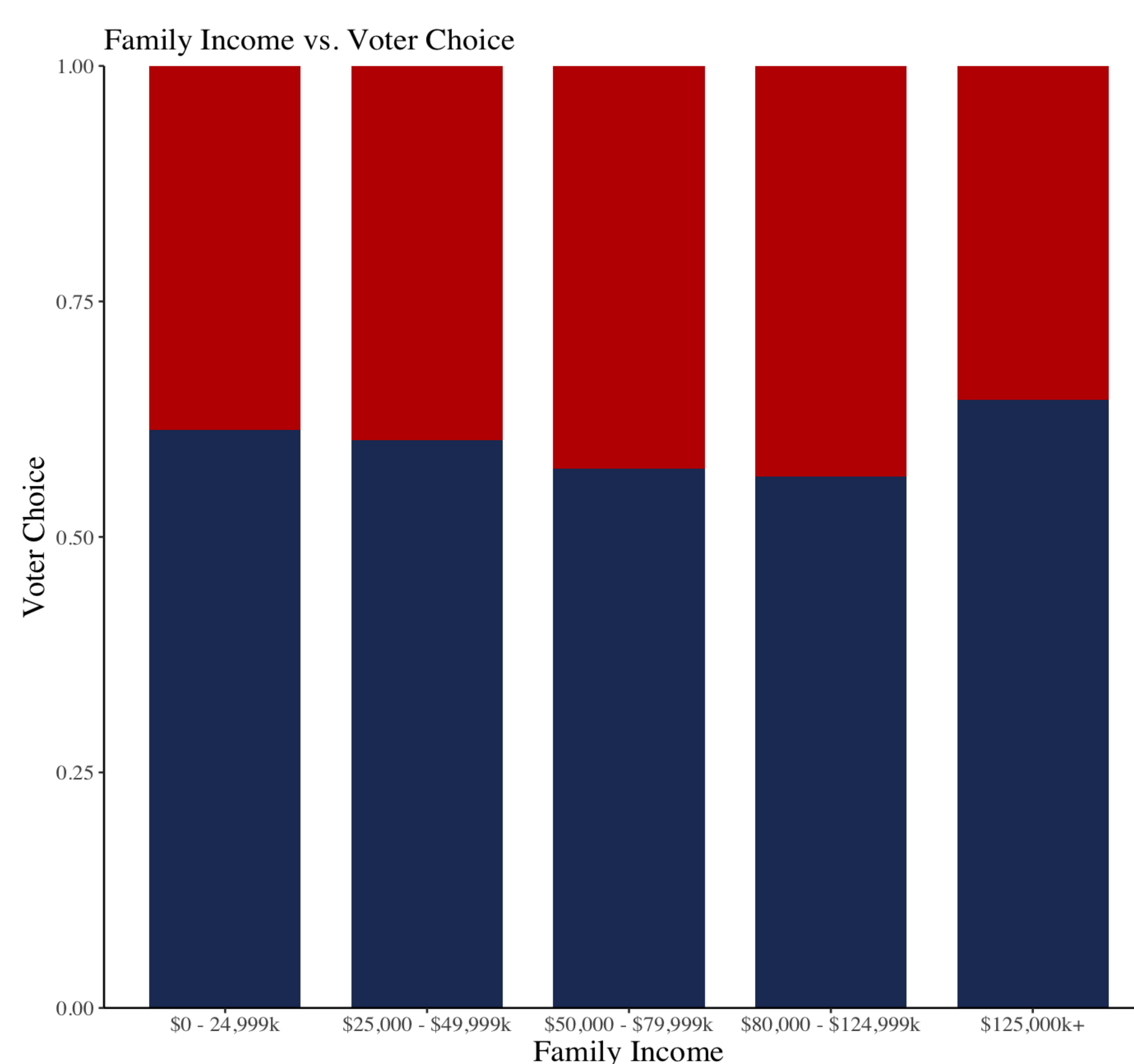
Results

Bivariate

- Chi-Square analysis showed that PostVotes were significantly associated with levels of family income ($p < 0.01$).
- While overall significant, after running a post-HOC test, the only significance between levels of FamInc was between level 3 and 5 of FamInc ($p < 0.01$).

Multivariate

- FamInc and PostVote logistic regression was ran again, but at the state level through a response variable coded to indicate the registration of the voter (StateReg).
- States tested: Texas, California, Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.
- Sample size was reduced (n=2350).
- Logistic regression analyses indicated similar results between each state, however all states yielded insignificant results.
- Unlike the primary logistic, all error bars overlapped when analyzed at the state level.



Discussion

- As FamInc increases or decreases from the center level of income, voters were more likely to vote for Biden and less likely to vote for Trump.
- These findings may contribute to political science research regarding family income and how voters act at the polls.
- Future research is needed to determine the role of other covariates (e.g. gender and race), and any nuances between each state.
- All states tested gave similar changes between levels of income, with the only difference being the initial positioning of the voters' likelihood to vote for Biden.

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