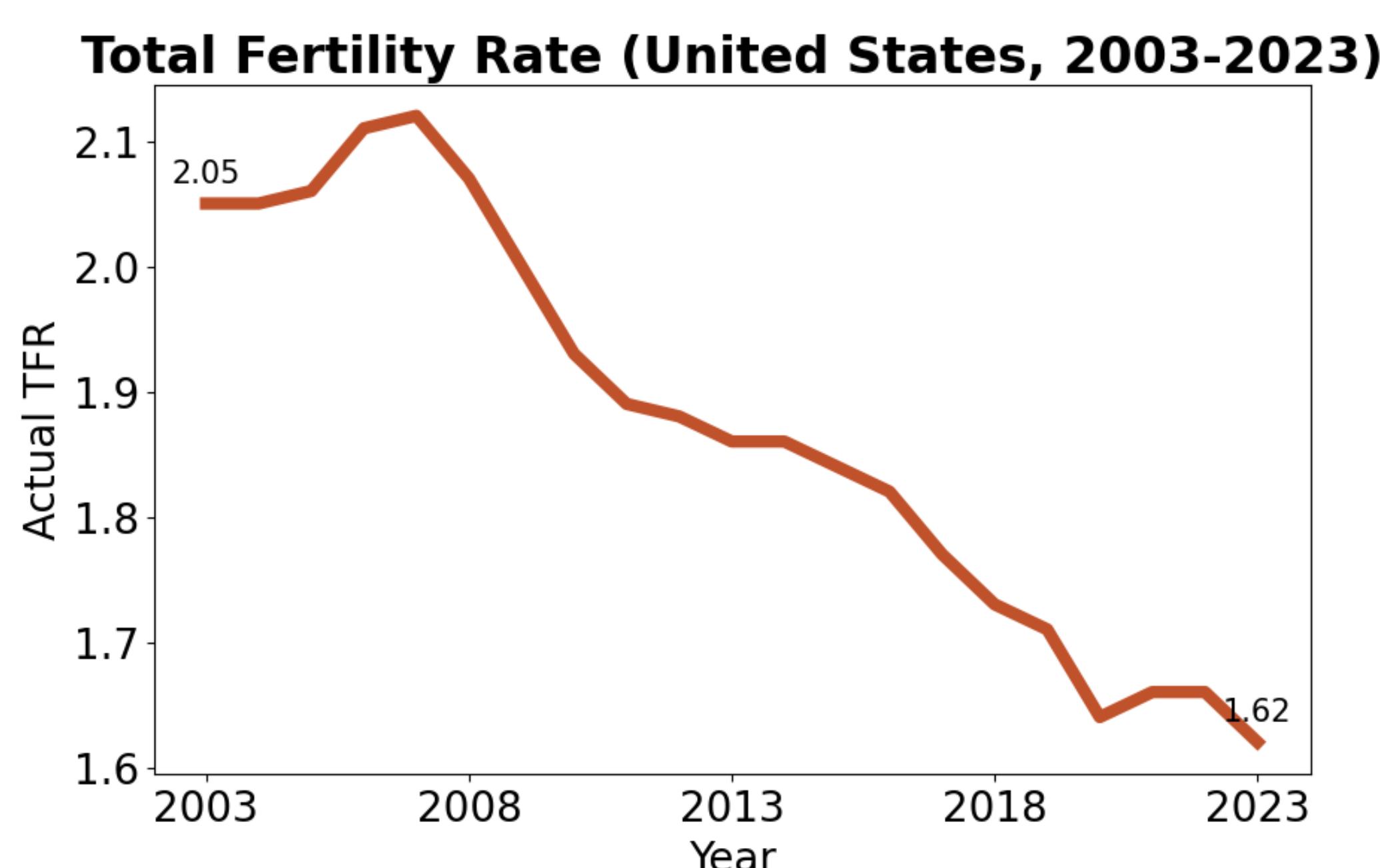


# Exploring Recent Fertility Predictors in the U.S.

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## Background

This research aims to explore recent predictors of fertility in the U.S. using American Community Survey (ACS) microdata.



Trends on Overall Fertility Trends: United States, 1990–2023. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 74(3), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.15620/cdc/174576>

The above graph shows that the Total Fertility Rate in the U.S. has gone down by about 0.4 points in the last 20 years.

Research (see table below) indicates that fertility rates in the U.S. are influenced by various factors, especially educational and socio-economic conditions.

Authors	What Their Research Found
Hofmann et al. (2017) and Seltzer (2019)	Job displacement and labor market polarization negatively impact birth rates in the U.S.
McDonald (2000)	In advanced societies, fertility is lowest when women have equal access to education (but still face low equality at home).
Bernhardt et al.	In Europe, higher education is linked to starting a family later.

## Data and Methods

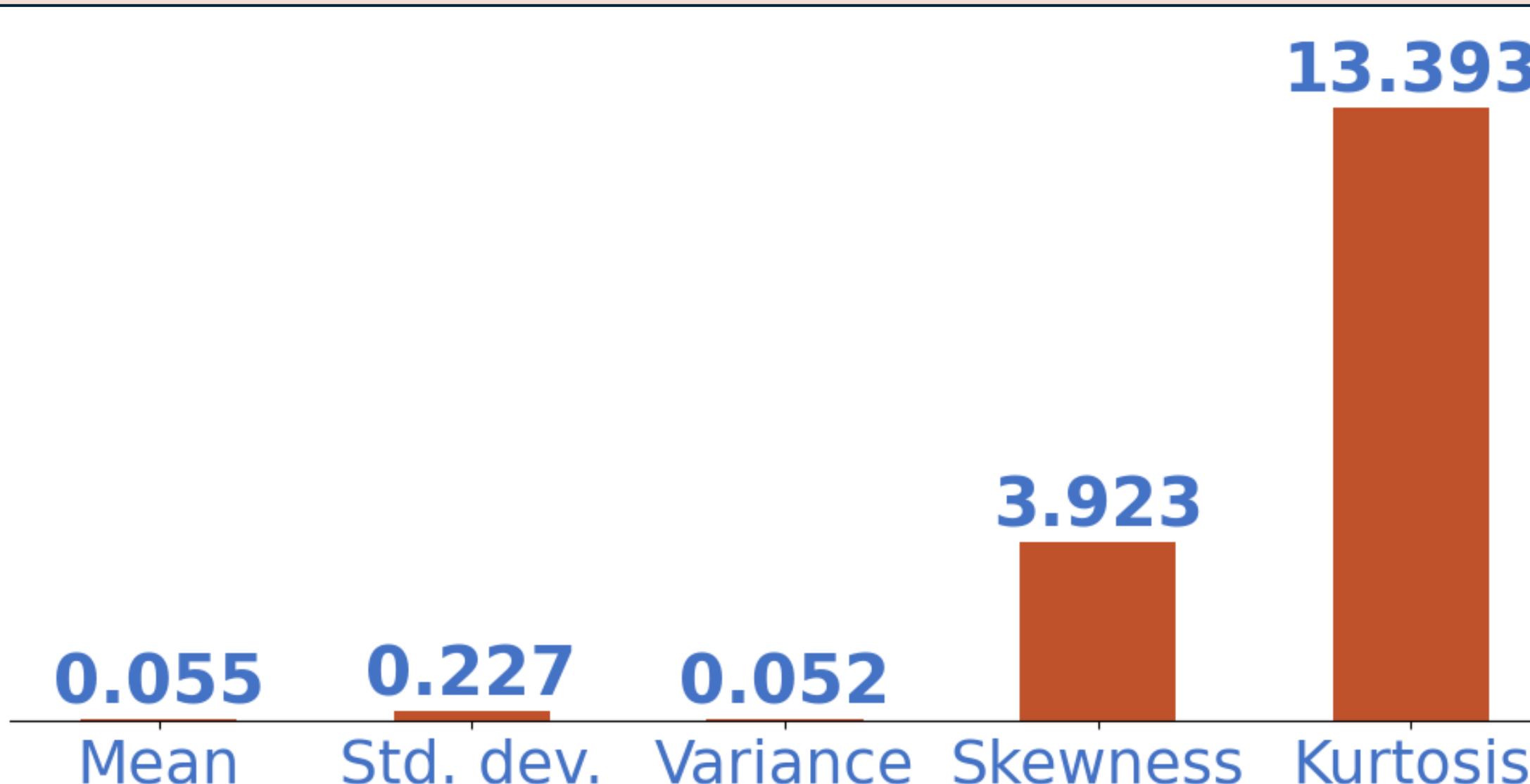
The American Community Survey samples about 3.5 million U.S. households. This analysis uses the **2023 American Community Survey data** and focuses on **women aged 15–49**, yielding a sample of 574,766 respondents.

Analyses applied ACS person weights to produce nationally representative estimates. The primary outcome of interest is fertility (births in last 2 years). Predictor variables included demographic characteristics such as age, race/ethnicity, education level, and income.

## Results

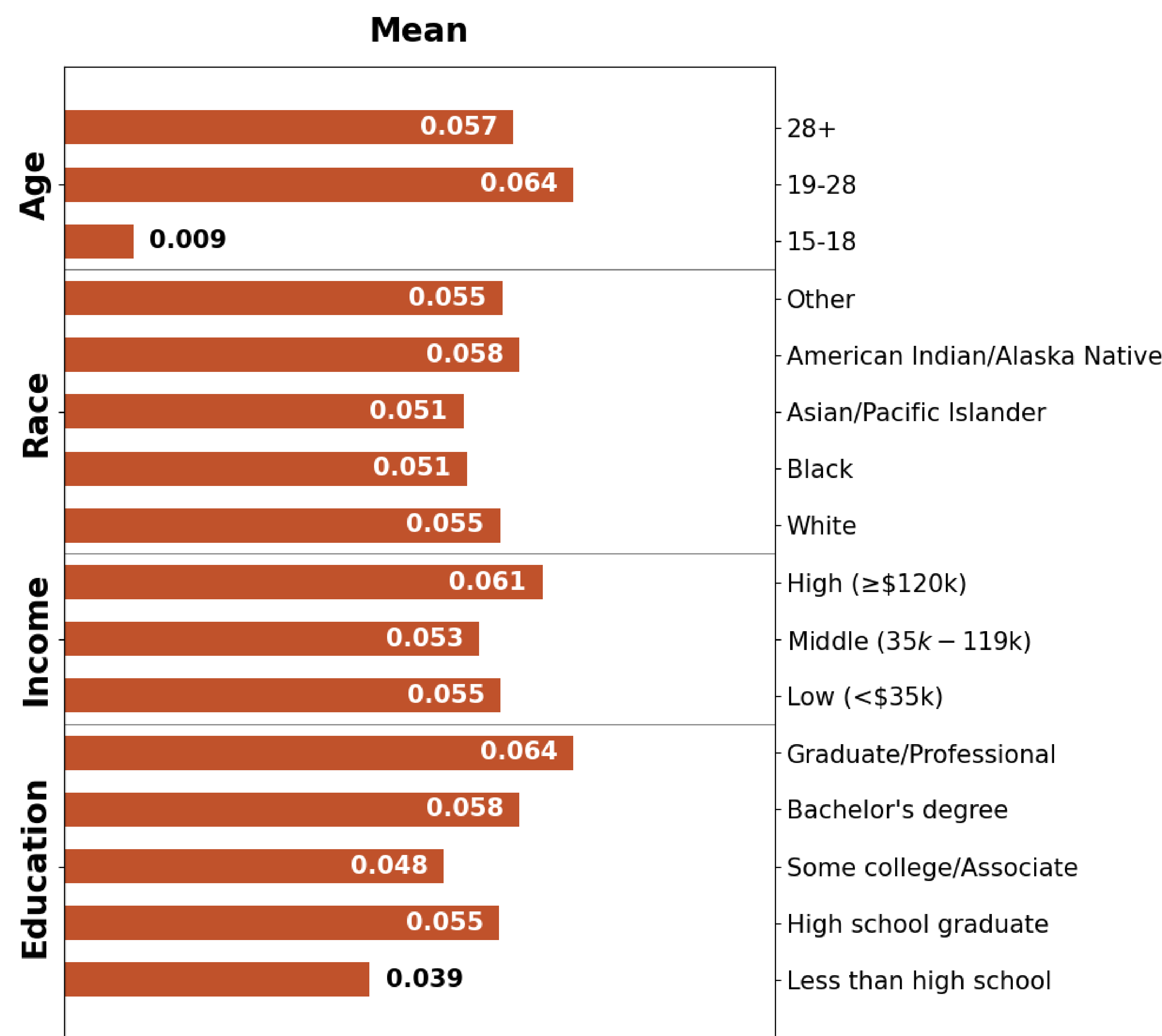
### Descriptive Statistics of Fertility

- Dependent variable has a mean of 0.055
- Mild variability (SD = 0.227)
- Positively skewed (3.923), indicating a lean towards less children
- Many outliers (kurtosis = 13.393).



### Bivariate Analysis of Recent Fertility

- **Highest fertility:** Ages 19–28, American Indian/Alaska Natives, those with high income levels, and those with Graduate/Professional degrees
- **Lowest fertility:** Ages 15–18, Asian/Pacific Islanders and Blacks, those with middle income levels, and those with less than a high school degree.



## Logistic Regression Output

- **Age is the strongest driver of fertility:** women aged 19–28 (OR = 12.36,  $p < 0.05$ ) and 28+ (OR = 11.05,  $p < 0.05$ ) are much more likely to have recorded fertility compared to the 15–18 base group.
- **Higher education and income reduces fertility for the most part.** Women with an associate's (OR = 0.76,  $p < 0.05$ ) or bachelor's degrees (OR = 0.91,  $p < 0.05$ ) are less likely to have recent fertility, and middle (OR = 0.80,  $p < 0.05$ ) and high-income women (OR = 0.92,  $p < 0.05$ ) are less likely to have recent fertility.

	Odds Ratio	Linearized Std. Err.	t	P> t	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
<b>Age</b>						
15–18	1 (base)					
19–28	12.36	0.90	34.44	0.00	10.71	14.257
28+	11.05	0.79	33.56	0.00	9.61	12.72
<b>Education</b>						
Less than high school	1 (base)					
High school graduate	0.95	0.03	-1.58	0.11	0.89	1.01
Some college/Associate	0.76	0.03	-7.70	0.00	0.71	0.81
Bachelor's degree	0.91	0.03	-2.78	0.01	0.84	0.98
Graduate/Professional	1.08	0.04	2.05	0.04	1.00	1.16
<b>Race</b>						
White	1 (base)					
Black/African American	1.03	0.03	0.94	0.35	0.97	1.08
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.06	0.07	0.88	0.38	0.93	1.20
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.95	0.03	-2.00	0.05	0.90	1.00
Other race	1.03	0.02	1.56	0.12	0.99	1.07
<b>Income</b>						
low	1 (base)					
middle	0.80	0.015	-12.15	0.00	0.77	0.83
High	0.92	0.03	-2.78	0.01	0.86	0.97
_cons	0.01	0.0004	-77.52	0.00	0.01	0.01

## Implications

Finding predictors of fertility can provide an explanation for why fertility rates have been decreasing in the US and allow people to create policies accordingly.

## References

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