



Demographic Characteristics Of HPV Infections and Reporting Among Women In The United States



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Objectives

This study sought to characterize the prevalence and characteristics associated with women in the United States who report being told they were infected with HPV.

Introduction

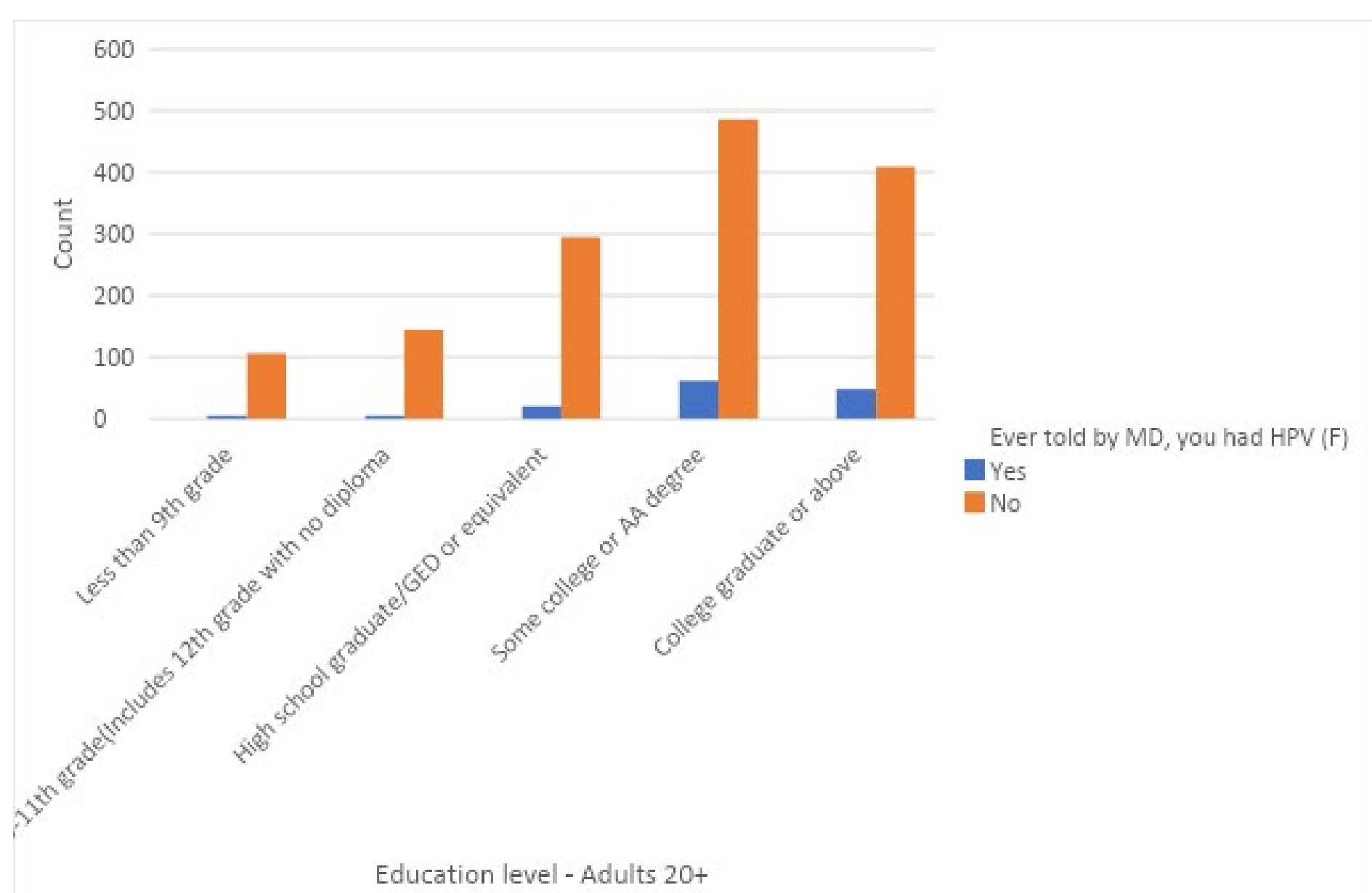
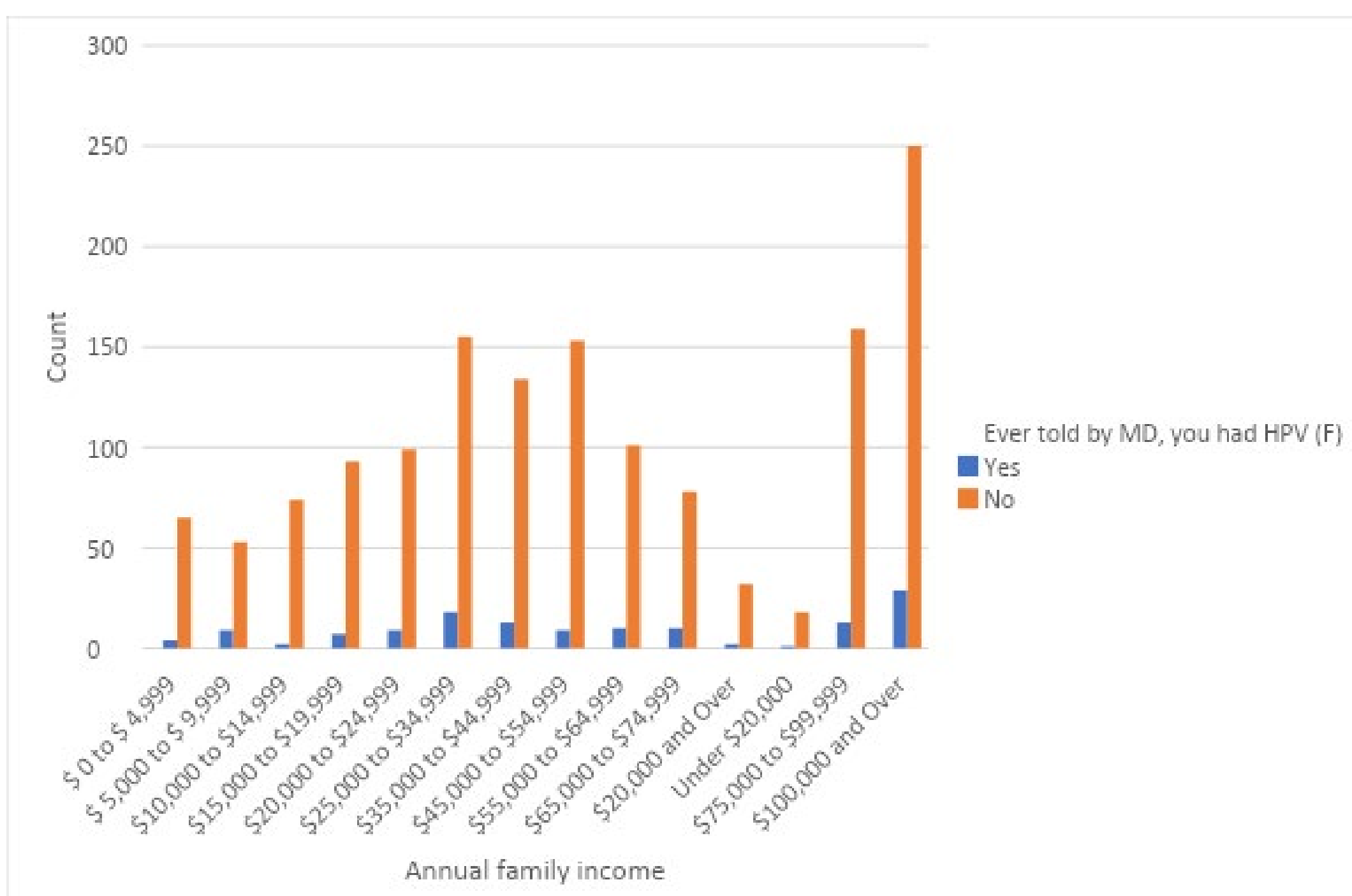
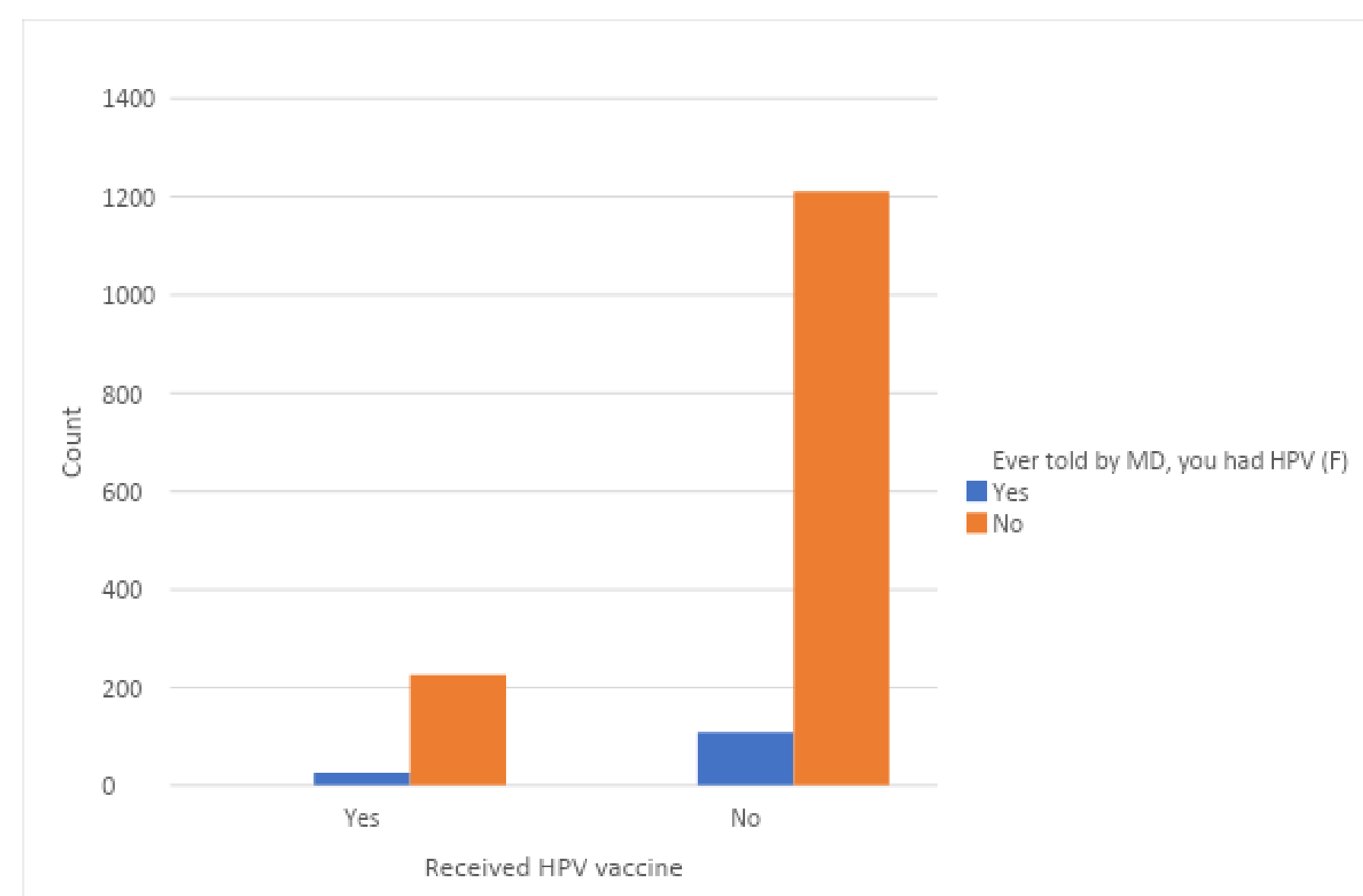
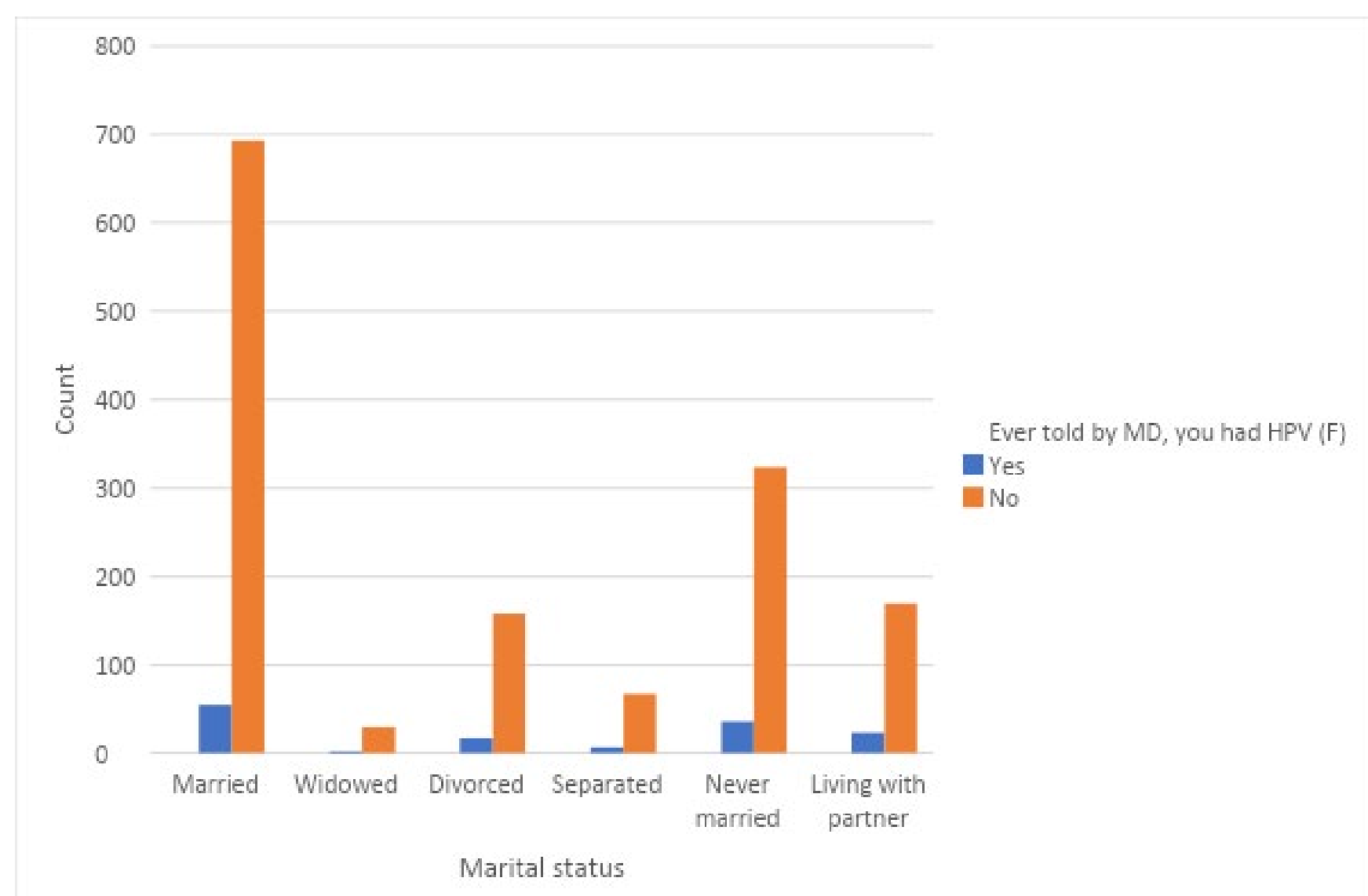
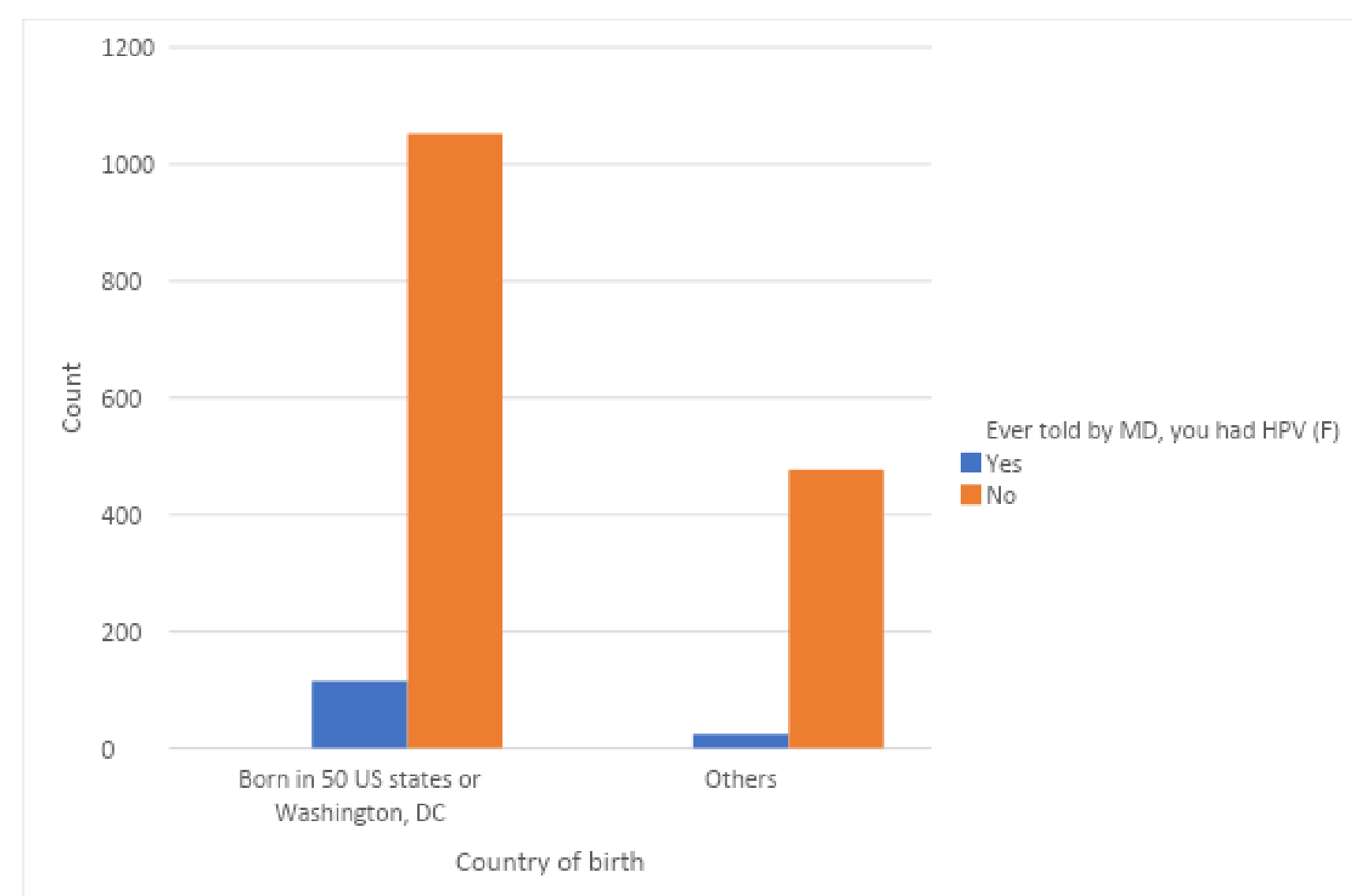
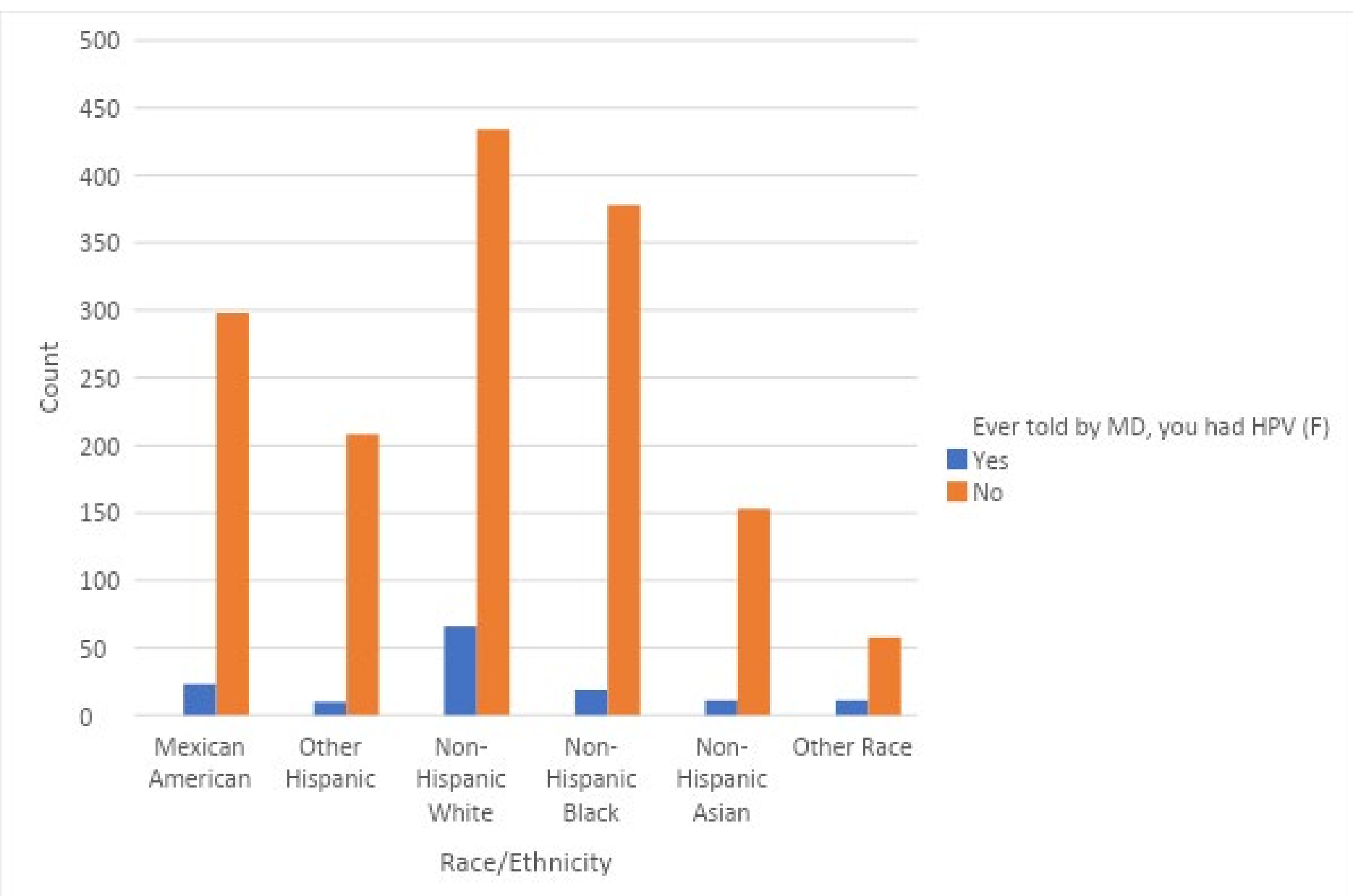
Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a small double stranded DNA virus that is the most common sexually transmitted infection. Spread by skin to skin contact, HPV genital infections in women can be divided into lower risk types that may lead to genital warts and benign cervical changes or higher-risk types associated with cervical and other genital cancers. While most HPV infections resolve without significant clinical consequences, research beginning in the 1970s established HPV, especially subtypes 16 and 18, as the main cause of cervical cancer. In 2020, an estimated 13,000 women would be diagnosed with cervical cancer in the United States and more than 4,000 women could die from it. However, the incidence rates of cervical cancer are changing in part because of better screening and HPV vaccination. Trends in HPV infection in men also affect HPV prevalence in women, and the 2011 ACIP recommendation to vaccinate males age 9 to 26 years of age impacts women as well as men. Evaluation of the characteristics and prevalence associated with this virus will help to treat and prevent contraction of HPV.

Methods

- Data from the 2015-2016 National Health and Nutritional Examination Survey (NHANES) were used to examine the prevalence and characteristics related to women age 18 to 59 years who report ever being told they had an HPV infection.
- Descriptive statistics were computed on study variables and multiple logistic regression analysis and conducted on the association of the study variables with the outcome variable.
- Sampling weight was applied to produce national estimates.

Results

- The sample consisted of 1,669 females, representative of 75,107,170 females in the United States population aged 18 to 59 years old.
- 11.5% reported being told that they had an HPV infection, 60.9% were White, 53.1% were married and 82.9% were born in the United States.
- Females with college degree or above had 259% greater odds than those with some high school education but without a high school diploma in contracting HPV (Odds Ratio = 3.592; 95% Confidence Interval = [1.349, 9.563]; $p < 0.05$).



Discussion

- Using NHANES, this study found that among United States women, less than 12% reported ever having been told they have had an HPV infection.
- Epidemiologic findings suggest gaps between ever being told of a previous infection and being diagnosed with a clinically relevant HPV infection.
- Despite higher prevalence rates, less educated and women of color reported lower HPV infection rates than White women and those with college degree or higher.
- The gap between women who are infected with HPV and those who are told by a physician that they have HPV can be narrowed with better training on recognition and diagnosis of HPV.
- Dentists can be a bridge to this gap with proper recognition and referral to physicians for oral HPV infections that may be connected to genital infections.

Acknowledgement

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