

# Differences On Views of Spanking Across Ethnicity and Education Level

## Research Questions

- Are there differences in U.S. adults' views on spanking by race/ethnicity?
- Do such racial/ethnic differences depend on education levels?

## Significance

- There has been a debate on the effects of spanking on children's aggressive behavior and mental health. Spankings should show children what is and isn't acceptable behavior.

## Background

- Four out of every five Americans agree with spanking (Gibson & Fagen, 2018).
- African American parents more strongly endorse and frequently use spanking more than White or Hispanic parents (Coley et al. 2014).
- Foreign-born Hispanic parents are less likely to use spanking than White parents, whereas native-born Hispanic parents are similar to White parents (Lee & Altschul, 2015).

## Hypothesis

- African Americans will approve spanking children for discipline methods more often than any other race.
- This difference will be greater among those without college education.

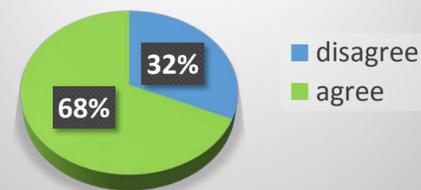
## Data and Sample

- 2016 General Social Survey (GSS), Ages 18-89, N=2,867.
- Americans 18 and older living in noninstitutionalized households

## Dependent Variable

**Attitudes towards Spankings.** "Is it sometimes necessary to discipline a child with a good, hard spanking?"

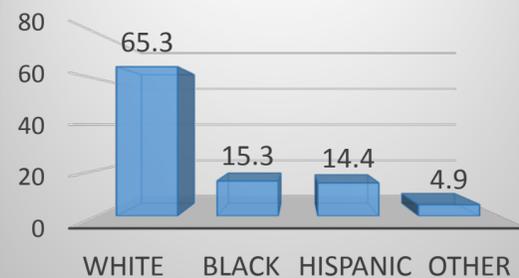
Figure 1. Distribution on views of Spanking



## Independent Variable

### Race and Ethnicity

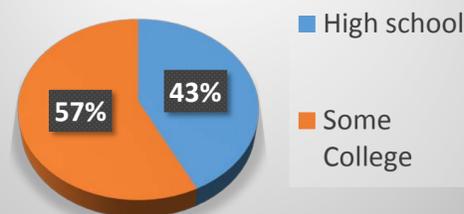
Figure 2. % Distribution across Race/Ethnicity



## Control Variable

### Level Of Education

Figure 3. % Distribution for Education levels



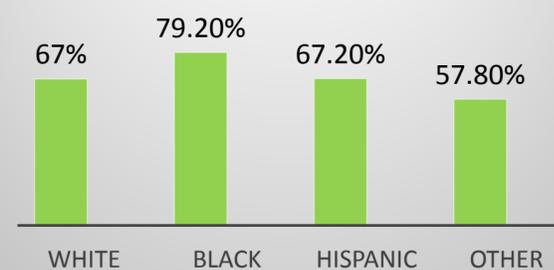
## Analysis

- Cross tabulation and Chi-square test using SPSS

## Results

### Racial/Ethnic Differences

Figure 4. Americans who Approve Spanking by Race/Ethnicity



### Racial/Ethnic Differences By Education

Figure 5. Americans who Approve Spanking by Race/Ethnicity: For High School Diploma or Less

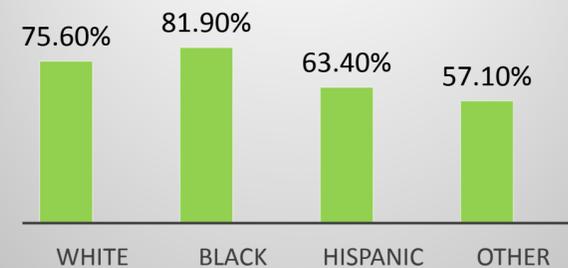
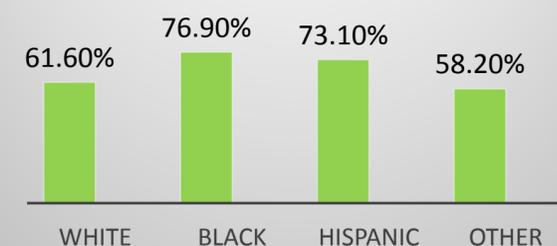


Figure 6. Americans who Approve Spanking by Race/Ethnicity: For Some College or More



## Summary and Concluding Thoughts

- My hypothesis was supported: African Americans are more likely than three other racial-ethnic groups to approve spanking children for a discipline method.
- Among Whites and Blacks, those with higher levels of education are less likely to approve the use of spanking.
- This may be because those with higher levels of education are more likely to learn other methods of discipline.

## Policy Implications

- Racial/ethnic differences in views of spanking exist within the same level of education. Such differences may reflect cultural norms that are rooted in structural inequalities (e.g., slavery, discrimination) in countries of origin (e.g., foreign-born Hispanics).
- Children in different racial/ethnic groups may respond differently to different forms of punishments.

## References

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- Gibson, C. L., & Fagan, A. A. (2018). An Individual Growth Model Analysis of Childhood Spanking on Change in Externalizing Behaviors During Adolescence: A Comparison of Whites and African Americans Over a 12-Year Period. *American Behavioral Scientist, 62*(11), 1463-1482.
- Lee, S. J., & Altschul, I. (2015). Spanking of young children: Do immigrant and US-born Hispanic parents differ?. *Journal of interpersonal violence, 30*(3), 475-498.