

Spanking, Ethnicity, Gender, and Religion: The Development of a Spanking Scale

Furaha C. Engulu, BA
Graduate Student

Department of Social Work
The University of Texas – San Antonio

Kevin A. Harris, PhD, NCC
Assistant Professor of Psychology
The University of Texas of the Permian Basin

Abstract

Attitudes towards spanking vary widely. Prior research indicates there are consistent ethnic, gender, and religious differences in attitudes towards spanking. African Americans, Asians, men, and religious people tend to have more positive attitudes towards spanking than Caucasians, women, and nonreligious people. We wanted to see if undergraduate students in an area with favorable attitudes towards spanking differed in their attitudes towards spanking by three key demographics: ethnicity, gender, religion, or their interaction (and if they indeed had favorable attitudes towards spanking). To accomplish this task, we developed a brief, 6-item Spanking Scale for use in future research and surveyed an online incidental sample of 115 college students from a small west Texas university. Reliability, validity, and factor analyses conducted in SPSS support the internal consistency reliability, factor structure, and validity (face, concurrent criterion-related, content, and construct) of the Spanking Scale. A three-way (3 x 2 x 2) factorial ANOVA found no significant ethnic or gender differences in spanking attitudes and no significant interaction effects but marginally significant religious differences, with Christians having more favorable attitudes towards spanking, and people in the current sample had slightly positive attitudes towards spanking. Through answering only four questions about spanking (plus an optional demographic question about spanking frequently and an optional qualitative question about spanking attitudes), people's attitudes towards spanking can be quickly assessed in less than five minutes using a brief measure of spanking that is reliable, valid, and useful. We discuss implications for policy on spanking and corporal punishment.

Keywords: spanking; corporal punishment; attitudes; religion; ethnicity; gender

Attitudes towards spanking vary widely. While some people believe that spanking is good, normal, a valuable parenting tool, a parent's choice, a parent's right, or a formative part of their own upbringing, others believe that spanking is bad, ineffective, morally wrong, encouraging of violence, or related to many negative outcomes (Gershoff, 2002). Attitudes

towards spanking also differ among different demographic groups. While Caucasians generally have negative attitudes towards corporal punishment, African Americans, Asians, men, and religious people tend to have more positive attitudes towards corporal punishment (Flynn, 1994, 1998; Gershoff, 2002; Gershoff, Miller, & Holden, 1999; Grasmick, Bursick, & Kimpel, 1991; Grasmick, Morgan, & Kennedy, 1992; Kelley, Power, & Wimbush, 1992). Spanking attitudes further vary by different geographic regions (Flynn, 1994, 1996; Giles-Sims, Straus, & Sugarman, 1995). We wanted to see if undergraduate students in conservative west Texas – in an area with favorable attitudes towards spanking – differed in their attitudes towards spanking by three key demographics: ethnicity, gender, religion, or their interaction (and if they indeed had favorable attitudes towards spanking). To accomplish this, we decided to develop a brief spanking scale for use in future research.

Spanking and Corporal Punishment in the Research Literature

Spanking has become an increasingly controversial issue. Once widely practiced in many cultures, it has fallen into disrepute over the past two decades. While a considerable amount of research has connected corporal punishment to negative outcomes in Caucasians, the same has not been found in African American or Hispanic populations.

Spanking is a specific type of corporal punishment. Corporal punishment is defined as using physical methods to control or correct a child's behavior, using pain but not injury (Gershoff, 2002; Straus, 1994). The intention is corrective; by definition, corporal punishment is different from physical abuse, which involves behaviors that have the potential to cause injury, regardless of the person's intentions (Gershoff, 2002; National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, 2000). By contrast, spanking is a specific type of corporal punishment involving the striking of the buttocks with a hand, paddle, stick, or switch for the purpose of correction (Coley, Kull, & Carrano, 2014; Gershoff, 2002).

Some professionals argue that spanking is effective and helpful (e.g., Baumrind, 1996a, 1996b, 1997; Larzelere & Kuhn, 2005), while others maintain that spanking is ineffective and harmful (e.g., American Academy of Pediatrics, 1998; Lytton, 1997; McCord, 1997; Straus, 1994). Substantial research evidence has shown that corporal punishment is positively related to immediate compliance, moral internalization of values, and fewer short-term internalizing problems (Coley et al., 2014; Gershoff, 2002). Gershoff (2002) cited five studies providing evidence that corporal punishment does not harm children and that its benefits outweigh its risks, and a meta-analysis of 70 (mostly U.S.) studies by Paolucci and Violato (2004) noted that 40 years of research suggests that "exposure to corporal punishment does not substantially increase the risk to youth of developing affective, cognitive, or behavioral pathologies" (p. 197).

On the other hand, more than three dozen studies have found associations between spanking and several negative outcomes, including aggression, externalizing behaviors, criminal and antisocial behaviors, poor quality parent-child relationships, depression, helplessness, mental health problems, adult abuse of one's own child, adult abuse of a romantic partner, and being a victim of physical abuse (Gershoff, 2002). Corporal punishment has been linked to antisocial behavior, violence towards parents, dating violence, poor cognitive development, delinquent behavior, aggression, drug use and criminal behavior, animal abuse, depression, alcohol abuse, and suicidal thoughts, and aggression towards peers, parents, and dating partners in more than two dozen studies (Hicks-Pass, 2009). Spanking is also related to long-term internalizing and

externalizing problems (Coley et al., 2014).

Curiously, all of these negative consequences of spanking have been found in White populations. A literature review of spanking in parenting indicated that in White families, spanking leads to increased child behavior problems and child behavior problems lead to increased spanking, while in African American families, child behavior problems lead to increased spanking, but spanking is unrelated to increased child behavior problems (Baumrind, 1972; Deater-Deckard, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 1996; Gunnoe & Mariner, 1997; Whaley, 2000). Similarly, the increased aggression and lower cognitive development that has been found to be associated with spanking in Caucasian children has not been found in Mexican American children (Berlin, Ispa, Fine, Malone, Brooks-Gunn, Brady-Smith, Ayoub, & Bai, 2009).

Attitudes Towards Spanking

Attitudes towards spanking vary widely. Although a growing number of people believe that spanking is detrimental to children's health, many others in the United States and around the world believe that spanking is beneficial – or at least up to parents to decide whether to use. Many people believe that spanking is an essential disciplinary tool. Many adults claim they were spanked as children and they turned out just fine – that spanking was an effective part of their upbringing and increased their compliance and obedience (Dittman, Sibley, & Farrugia, 2013). On the other hand, many people argue that spanking is ineffective, negative, or detracts from the use of other disciplinary techniques. Many parents argue there are other ways of disciplining children which are just as effective or more effective than spanking, or that the benefits of “teaching a lesson” through spanking are mostly for adults (releasing anger) rather than for children (actually learning a lesson). Some people argue from the perspective of behavioral psychology that spanking positively reinforces the aggressive behaviors of children through operant conditioning by teaching children that aggression is how adults deal with their problems (Dittman et al., 2013). People on both sides of the spanking debate argue that spanking puts fear into the minds of children, although they differ as to whether this is a good thing or a bad thing for children.

Attitudes towards spanking and other forms of corporal punishment have changed over time. In the United States, corporal punishment decreased from 94% approval in 1968 to 68% approval in 1994 (Fontes, 2002, p. 32). A majority of psychologists in 1976 supported spanking, while few do today (Anderson & Anderson, 1976, p. 46). Child welfare practitioners in 2006 viewed spanking as more severe and less acceptable than did practitioners in 1977 (Whitney, Tajima, Herrenkohl, & Huang, 2006, p. 316).

Attitudes towards spanking also differ across cultures. In North America, 94% of U.S. parents spank their children (Gershoff, 2002, p. 539; Straus & Stewart, 1999, p. 55), and 70% of Canadian parents spank their children, but only 45% of Swedish parents spank their children (Durrant, Rose-Krasnor, & Broberg, 2003, p. 593). Cross-culturally, 74% of societies use physical punishment (Durrant et al., 2003, p. 586). In a survey of 1000 parents in Northern Ireland, many parents in the U.K. spank their children despite believing it to be ineffective, especially when stressed or angry (Bunting, Webb, & Healy, 2010, p. 359). In a sample of 365 American and 132 Swedish university students, 62% of U.S. men and 60% of U.S. women approve of spanking, while only 29% of Swedish men and only 19% of Swedish women approve of spanking (Deley, 1988, p. 425). In a sample of 5,752 New Zealanders, 82% oppose

criminalizing spanking, but 66% believe that it is not okay for parents to use smacking as a way to discipline their children (Dittman et al., 2013, p. 45). Corporal punishment has been outlawed in 42 countries worldwide, on every continent except for Antarctica (Gershoff, 2002; Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, n.d.; Kazdin & Benjet, 2003).

In the United States, attitudes towards spanking also vary among different geographic regions. Parents living in Southern states have the most positive attitudes towards spanking, while parents living in Northeastern states have the most negative attitudes towards spanking, even after controlling for race, religion, education, and income (Ellison & Sherkat, 1993; Flynn, 1994, 1996; Giles-Sims et al., 1995; Straus & Stewart, 1999). The 23 states that allow corporal punishment in schools are mostly in the south; those with the highest rates of corporal punishment in schools are Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, Texas, and Georgia (National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in the Schools, 2001).

There is considerable evidence from the research literature that attitudes towards spanking and other types of corporal punishment vary systematically by demographic variables. Three variables in particular merit further examination: ethnicity, gender, and religion. Consistent ethnic, gender, and religious differences have been found in attitudes towards corporal punishment.

Spanking and Ethnicity

Research has shown differences in the use of spanking by ethnicity. Ethnicity is defined as racial, national, linguistic, and cultural heritage (Betancourt & Lopez, 1993; Gershoff, 2002). Most studies have found that African American or Latino parents use corporal punishment more often than Caucasian parents (e.g., 10 studies cited in Gershoff, 2002), while other studies have found that Caucasian parents use corporal punishment more often than others (Escovar & Escovar, 1985; Straus, 1994) or Latino or Asian parents use corporal punishment less often than others (Hashima & Amato, 1994; Wissow, 2001). Some studies have found that African American children are spanked more often than Caucasian or Mexican American children (Dodge, McLoyd, & Lansford, 2005; Regalado, Sareen, Inkelas, Wissow, & Halfon, 2004; Slade & Wissow, 2004; Wissow, 2001), and that Black students receive more corporal punishment than White or Latino students, disproportionate to their rates of school enrollment or disciplinary problems (McFadden, Marsh, Price, & Hwang, 1992). Little research has been conducted on Latino populations, but the research suggests that Mexican American children are spanked less frequently than Caucasian or African American children, even when controlling for acculturation (Berlin et al., 2009; Slade & Wissow, 2004). One study found that Latino parents spank their children less often than Caucasian parents (Slade & Wissow, 2004, p. 1321), while another study found that foreign-born Latinos spank less than U.S.-born Latinos, and Latino mothers (but not fathers) who believe in traditional gender norms spank less than others (Lee & Altschul, 2015, p. 475). Finally, one study found that Asians used corporal punishment more often than Caucasians (Frechette & Romano, 2015, p. 507).

Research has also shown ethnic differences in attitudes towards spanking (Gershoff, 2002; Kelley et al., 1992). Most studies have found that African Americans have more favorable attitudes towards spanking than Caucasians (e.g., Alvy, 1987; Flynn, 1994, 1998), even when controlling for other variables. For example, Flynn (1994) found that 22.2% of Caucasians disagree with spanking, compared with 8.8% of African Americans (p. 318). Black parents had more favorable attitudes toward corporal punishment and used more corporal punishment than

White or Latino parents (Lorber, O’Leary, & Smith Slep, 2011, p. 1744). In a Canadian sample, Chinese immigrant mothers had more positive attitudes towards spanking than mothers of European descent (Mah & Johnston, 2012, p. 486).

A handful of studies found no differences among ethnic groups in use of spanking (e.g., three studies cited in Gershoff, 2002) or in attitudes towards spanking (Cazenave & Straus, 1990; Dittman et al., 2013). Some studies found no differences in attitudes towards spanking between Caucasian and African American mothers (Lansford, Wagner, Bates, Dodge, & Pettit, 2012, p. 224), between Caucasian and Latino parents (Regalado et al., 2004, p. 1952; Wissow, 2001, p. 118), or between African American and Latina mothers (Coley et al., 2014, p. 22). Vittrup and Holden (2010) found no ethnic differences between Caucasian and African American children’s ratings of spankings after controlling for SES and exposure to spanking (p. 211). This suggests that ethnicity alone is insufficient to account for differences in attitudes towards spanking. Perhaps other demographic variables better account for differences in spanking attitudes, such as gender or religion.

Spanking and Gender

The research has shown consistent gender differences in spanking, in terms of both the parents who use it and the children who receive it. In studies of gender differences in the *parental use* of spanking, most studies have found that women use spanking more than men (Day, Peterson, & McCracken, 1998; Gunnoe & Mariner, 1997; Nobes, Smith, Upton, & Heverin, 1999; Jackson, Thompson, Christiansen, Colman, Wyatt, Buckendahl, Wilcox, & Peterson, 1999; Straus, 1994, Straus & Stewart, 1999; Xu, Tung, & Dunaway, 2000). In studies of gender differences in *child receipt* of spanking, parents are more likely to use spanking and other forms of corporal punishment with boys than with girls (Clement, Bouchard, Jette, & Laferriere, 2000; Jackson et al., 1999; Straus & Stewart, 1999), and they use spanking (Berlin et al., 2009) and corporal punishment (Frechette & Romano, 2015) more often with male children than with female children. Boys, and especially African American boys, disproportionately receive corporal punishment in schools in the United States (Gregory, 1995). In schools, three-fourths of discipline referrals are for males, in spite of males only making up less than 50% of students – although males do show more externalizing behaviors in schools than females (McFadden et al., 1992, p. 140). Shaw and Braden (1990) noted that analysis of 6,244 disciplinary files revealed a large and statistically significant relationship between gender and corporal punishment, with male students being disciplined disproportionately more often than their rate in the student population, indicating evidence of gender bias in the use of corporal punishment (p. 378). Male children are more likely to receive corporal punishment than female children.

On the other hand, in studies of gender differences in attitudes towards spanking, men have generally been found to have more favorable attitudes towards spanking than women (e.g., Flynn, 1998; Grasmick et al., 1992). For example, Flynn (1994) reported that 23% of women disagree with spanking, compared with 17.3% of men (p. 318), while Flynn (1998) reported that a survey of 285 undergraduate students in the United States found that men endorse spanking as an appropriate method of discipline more often than women (p. 21). These findings suggest that while men have more positive attitudes towards spanking, women tend to actually use spanking more often than men do.

Spanking and Religion

Religion is another demographic variable which is associated with differences in the use of and attitudes towards spanking. Religious conservatives use spanking more frequently (Day et al., 1998; Ellison, Bartkowski, & Segal, 1996; Gershoff, Miller, & Holden, 1999; Giles-Sims, Straus, & Sugarman, 1995; Stolley & Szinovacz, 1997; Xu et al., 2000) and have more positive attitudes towards corporal punishment (Gershoff et al., 1999; Ellison, Musick, & Holden, 1999) than nonreligious people. Fundamentalist and conservative Protestants use corporal punishment more often and have more positive attitudes towards corporal punishment than those from other religious backgrounds (Frechette & Romano, 2015; Grasmick et al., 1991, 1992; Grogan-Kaylor & Otis, 2007), and conservative Christians spank their children more than other Christians do, although religious people are less likely than others to physically abuse their children (Socolar, Cabinum-Foeller, & Sinal, 2008).

Religious people also tend to have more favorable attitudes towards spanking. People who have a literal interpretation of the Bible tend to support spanking more often than people who do not have a literal interpretation of the Bible, perhaps because of modern proverbs such as “spare the rod and spoil the child” which is based in the Biblical book of Proverbs (Wiehe, 1990, p. 173). Conservative Christians favor spanking more than others (Murphy-Cowan & Stringer, 2001, p. 55). Only 11.0% of conservative Protestants disagree with spanking, compared with 23.2% of members of other religions (Flynn, 1994, p. 318). Danso, Hunsberger, and Pratt (1997) found that religious fundamentalism and right-wing authoritarianism is related to greater approval of corporal punishment (p. 496). Ellison and Bradshaw (2009) found that identifying as an evangelical or fundamentalist Protestant, belief in Hell, hierarchical images of God, and sociopolitical conservatism were each related to positive attitudes towards spanking (p. 320). Only one study found that religious preference and frequency of church attendance did not influence the opinions of U.S. and Swedish adults on corporal punishment (Deley, 1988, p. 419).

Purpose

As the research literature indicates, there are consistent ethnic, gender, and religious differences in attitudes towards spanking. African Americans, Asians, men, and religious people tend to have positive attitudes towards spanking than Caucasians, women, and nonreligious people, although women are more likely than men to use corporal punishment on their children. There may also be significant interactions among ethnicity, gender, and religion. Further, in the United States, there are also regional differences in attitudes towards spanking. The purpose of this study was to explore people’s attitudes about spanking to see if undergraduate student attitudes in conservative west Texas – in an area with favorable attitudes towards spanking – differed by ethnicity, gender, religion, and their interaction (and if they indeed had favorable attitudes towards spanking). We decided to test three hypotheses. First, we proposed that African American students would have more positive attitudes towards spanking than Caucasian students, who would have more positive attitudes towards spanking than Latino students (the *ethnicity hypothesis*). Second, we predicted that male college students would have more positive attitudes towards spanking than female college students (the *gender hypothesis*). Third, we hypothesized that Christian students would have more positive attitudes towards spanking than non-Christian students (the *religion hypothesis*). We also tested two exploratory research

questions: do ethnicity, gender, and religion interact to influence attitudes towards spanking (the *interaction question*), and do the students we survey have more positive attitudes towards spanking due to the region of the country where we conducted our survey (the *region question*)?

To test these hypotheses and exploratory questions, we wanted to use a brief but valid and reliable scale on spanking. Consequently, we developed one, based on prior survey research on spanking. As Gershoff (2002) noted after an extensive review of existing measures of corporal punishment, “standardizing the measurement of corporal punishment” is one of the biggest “challenges for future research on corporal punishment” (pp. 564-565). One of the goals of this study, therefore, was to develop a psychometrically valid and reliable measure of attitudes towards spanking.

Method

Participants

A total of 115 college students participated in this survey. All participants were 18 years of age or older and comprised an incidental sample of students at a small west Texas university. There were 27 males (23.5%) and 88 females (76.5%), ranging in age from 18 to 55 ($M = 24.9$, $SD = 7.3$). In terms of ethnicity, 56 participants (48.7%) were White/Caucasian, 53 (46.1%) were Hispanic/Latino(a), 11 (9.6%) were Black/African American, and 2 (1.7%) were Asian/Asian American; 8 of these participants (7.0%) reported multiple ethnicities. In terms of religion, 91 participants (79.1%) identified as Christian and 24 (20.9%) identified as non-Christian. Of the Christians, 33 people (28.7% of the total sample) were Catholic, 9 people (7.8%) were Baptist, 5 people (4.3%) were other Protestant denominations, 3 people (2.6%) were Mormon/LDS, and 41 people (35.7%) were unspecified Christians. Of the non-Christians, 1 person (0.9%) was Atheist, 8 people (7.0%) were Agnostic, and 15 people (13.0%) were nonreligious.

Measures

Three independent variables were measured using three demographic questions on ethnicity, gender, and religion. Ethnicity was a categorical variable with three groups: Caucasian, Latino, and African American. (Other ethnicities were not analyzed in testing the *ethnicity hypothesis*.) Gender was a categorical variable with two groups: male and female. Religion was a categorical variable with two groups: Christian and Non-Christian. Each of these three independent variables was measured by a single demographic question with three or two levels.

There was one dependent variable: attitudes towards spanking. This was measured using the Spanking Scale, a 6-item measure of attitudes towards spanking, which was developed based on prior research, specifically for the current study. One item asked the participants, “How often have you spanked a child?” and gave five response options: *Never*, *Less than one time per year*, *More than one time per year but less than one time per month*, and *One time per month or more often*. This question was taken from Giles-Sims, Straus, and Surarman (2001). Four items were measured on a 10-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 10 = *Strongly agree* and asked participants to indicate their level of agreement with four statements: “I believe that spanking is an appropriate form of discipline for a child,” “I believe that it is okay to spank a child when he/she has done or said something bad,” “I believe that a child needs to be spanked when he/she has done or said something bad,” and “I believe that spanking is a helpful form of

discipline for a child.” These questions were taken from Lansford et al. (2012). The final item was an open-ended question asking participants how they felt about spanking. An overall score is obtained on the Spanking Scale by averaging the responses to the four 10-point Likert-type items. Higher scores on the Spanking Scale mean more positive attitudes towards spanking.

Procedure

Participants participated in the survey by logging onto an online survey website. Before taking the survey, all participants read and agreed to an informed consent form. Participants spent five to ten minutes answering three questions on ethnicity, gender, and religion, responding to an additional demographic question on age, and completing the 6-item Spanking Scale. All participant responses were kept anonymous.

Data Analysis

To evaluate the psychometric properties of the Spanking Scale, reliability, validity, and factor analyses were conducted in SPSS. To test the ethnicity, gender, and religion hypotheses and answer the interaction question, this study used a 3 x 2 x 2 factorial design. There were three categorical independent variables – ethnicity (White vs. Hispanic vs. Black), gender (male vs. female), and religion (Christian vs. non-Christian) – and one continuous dependent variable, spanking, measured by the overall score on the Spanking Scale. Consequently, the researcher used a three-way between-subjects Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Experimentwise alpha was set at .05. The same ANOVA was employed to answer the interaction question. To answer the region question, this study used a post-hoc one-sample *t*-test to determine if one continuous dependent variable, spanking (measured by the overall score on the Spanking Scale) differed significantly from a null value of 5.5 (indicating a totally neutral attitude towards spanking).

Results

After administering the Spanking Scale to a sample of 115 college students, psychometric data analyses were conducted to test the scale for reliability and validity, including a factor analysis. Then a three-way between-subjects ANOVA was conducted to test the hypotheses, and to answer the exploratory questions, the same ANOVA and a one-sample *t*-test were used as post-hoc exploratory tests. Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation scores on the Spanking Scale by ethnicity, gender, and religion. Table 2 shows the inferential tests for the spanking dependent variable: the results of the between-subjects ANOVA and the one-sample *t*-test.

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Spanking Scale by Ethnicity, Gender, and Religion

Variable	Level	Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>n</i>
Ethnicity	Caucasian	5.81	2.72	49
	Latino	5.80	2.79	48
	African American	7.25	2.07	9
Gender	Male	6.84	2.83	24
	Female	5.66	2.63	82
Religion	Christian	6.17*	2.73	84
	Non-Christian	5.00*	2.48	22
Total Spanking Scale		5.99	2.65	115

* *Significantly different means*

Table 2.1

Between-Subjects ANOVA for Spanking Dependent Variable

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncentrality Parameter	Observed Power ^b
Corrected Model	111.655 ^a	10	11.165	1.609	.116	.145	16.088	.748
Gender	11.365	1	11.365	1.638	.204	.017	1.638	.245
Ethnicity	9.159	2	4.579	.660	.519	.014	1.320	.158
Religion	27.419	1	27.419	3.951	.050	.040	3.951	.503
Gender * Ethnicity	18.345	2	9.172	1.322	.272	.027	2.643	.279
Gender * Religion	10.521	1	10.521	1.516	.221	.016	1.516	.230
Ethnicity * Religion	1.240	2	.620	.089	.915	.002	.179	.063
Gender * Ethnicity * Religion	13.479	1	13.479	1.942	.167	.020	1.942	.281
Error	659.315	95	6.940					
Total	4497.500	106						
Corrected Total	770.969	105						

a. R Squared = .145 (Adjusted R Squared = .055)

b. Computed using alpha = .05

Table 2.2

One-Sample t-Test for Spanking Dependent Variable

<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Cohen's <i>d</i>
				<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>	
1.998	114	.048	.49348	.0042	.9828	.374

Test Value = 5.5

Reliability

A reliability analysis was conducted in SPSS to evaluate the main scale questions – the five 10-point Likert-type items – for integrity and contribution to the overall scale. The scale has a Cronbach alpha of 0.91 with a standardized item alpha of 0.89, indicating very strong internal consistency. All items are strongly and positively correlated with each other, with inter-item correlations ranging from 0.80 to 0.89 – with the exception of one item asking, “How often have you spanked a child?”, which had an average inter-item correlation of 0.24 with the other four items. The Cronbach alpha if this item is deleted was 0.96, suggesting that this item is a good candidate for deletion from the Spanking Scale. It may better serve as a demographic question. Using the Spearman-Brown formula, the split-half reliability between the first and second halves

of the test ($r_{SB} = 0.95$) also indicated strong internal consistency reliability.

Validity

Evidence was obtained for four types of validity for the Spanking Scale: face validity, concurrent criterion-related validity, content validity, and construct validity. First, to establish face validity of the Spanking Scale, two expert raters – a psychologist and an educator – evaluated the scale’s five items and judged all five (100%) to be about spanking or attitudes towards spanking. Second, to establish criterion-related validity – specifically, concurrent validity – each participant’s Spanking Scale total score was compared to any qualitative responses they gave on the open-ended item. For those participants who gave qualitative responses, there was good agreement between participants’ qualitative responses and total scores. Third, to establish content validity, a panel of nine different raters rated how essential all six items were and constructed content validity ratios (CVR) for each item. For three of six items, their CVRs were 1.00, indicating that they are essential items. For the quantitative item asking for agreement with “I believe that a child needs to be spanked when he/she has done or said something bad” and for the qualitative item asking “how do you feel about spanking?”, their CVRs were 0.11, indicating that nearly half of the panel of raters thought these two items were nonessential. (Some indicated in comments that they felt these items were redundant.) For the item asking, “How often have you spanked a child?”, its CVR was -0.78, indicating that most raters thought this item was nonessential – again indicating that this item is a good item for deletion. Finally, to evaluate the construct validity of the Spanking Scale, a factor analysis was conducted.

Factor Analysis

To evaluate the construct validity of the Spanking Scale, the items comprising the main scale – the five 10-point Likert-type items – were factor-analyzed in SPSS using principal components extraction and varimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.86, well above the recommended 0.60 value, indicating that the variables are measuring a common factor. Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was significant ($\chi^2(10) = 541.66, p < .001$), indicating that sphericity was not a problem for the current sample and that the variances of the items was approximately equal. Inspection of the scree plot and a finding of only one initial Eigenvalue greater than 1 (Eigenvalue = 3.66) both suggest that this scale measures only one factor, which explains 73.16% of the variance in the scale. Inspection of the component matrix indicates that all items contribute to this one factor, with contributions ranging between 0.96 and 0.92 – except for one item (“How often have you spanked a child?”), which had a contribution of only 0.34. Once more, this suggests that this item is a good candidate for deletion.

Tests of the Hypotheses

Table 1 shows the Spanking Scale mean and standard deviation scores by ethnicity, gender, and religion. Table 2 shows the results of the between-subjects ANOVA. A three-way (3 x 2 x 2) factorial ANOVA found no main effect for ethnicity, $F(2,95) = 0.660, p = .519, \eta^2 = .014$, which meant that there were not significant ethnic differences in spanking attitudes among

Caucasians ($M = 5.81, SD = 2.72$), Latinos ($M = 5.80, SD = 2.79$), and African Americans ($M = 7.25, SD = 2.07$). Although African Americans appeared to score notably higher than non-African Americans, only 9 African Americans completed surveys, so this difference was not significant due to the very small sample size. There was also no main effect for gender, $F(1,95) = 1.638, p = .204, \eta^2 = .017$, which meant that there were not significant gender differences in spanking attitudes between men ($M = 6.84, SD = 2.83$) and women ($M = 5.66, SD = 2.63$). There was, however, a marginally significant main effect for religion, $F(1,95) = 3.951, p = .050, \eta^2 = .040$, which meant that there was a significant religious difference in spanking attitudes. Christian participants had a higher score on the Spanking Scale ($M = 6.17, SD = 2.73$) and a better attitude towards spanking than non-Christian participants did ($M = 5.00, SD = 2.48$).

Post-Hoc Exploratory Tests

The three-way interaction ANOVA was not significant, $F(1,95) = 1.942, p = .167, \eta^2 = .020$, and all two-way interaction ANOVAs were not significant, gender-ethnicity $F(2,95) = 1.322, p = .272, \eta^2 = .027$; gender-religion $F(1,95) = 1.516, p = .221, \eta^2 = .016$; ethnicity-religion $F(2,95) = 0.089, p = .915, \eta^2 = .002$. This indicated that ethnicity, gender, and religion did not interact in any way to influence attitudes towards spanking. The average Spanking Scale score was 5.93 (indicating slight agreement; $SD = 2.71$). A post-hoc one-sample t -test found that the average Spanking Scale score ($M = 5.99, SD = 2.65$) was marginally significantly different from a neutral attitude towards spanking (5.50), $t(114) = 1.998, p = 0.048$, Cohen's $d = .374$, indicating that people in the current sample did indeed have slightly positive attitudes towards spanking. Table 2 shows the results of the one-sample t -test.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was twofold: to examine ethnic, gender, and religious differences in attitudes towards spanking in a sample living in an area of the country with favorable attitudes towards spanking, and to develop a valid and reliable scale that measures attitudes towards spanking. We wanted to see if African American, Caucasian, and Latino students have decreasingly positive attitudes towards spanking (the *ethnicity hypothesis*), if male college students have more positive attitudes towards spanking than female students (the *gender hypothesis*), if Christian college students have more positive attitudes towards spanking than non-Christian students (the *religion hypothesis*), if ethnicity, gender, and religion interact to influence attitudes towards spanking (the *interaction question*), and if students in conservative west Texas have generally positive attitudes towards spanking (the *region question*). These hypotheses and questions were investigated using a newly-developed instrument: the Spanking Scale.

The ethnicity hypothesis was not supported. In spite of some prior research finding ethnic differences in spanking attitudes (e.g., Alvy, 1987; Flynn, 1994, 1998; Lorber et al., 2011), the current study found no differences in attitudes towards spanking among Caucasians, African Americans, and Latinos. This is consistent with the handful of studies finding no ethnic differences in attitudes towards spanking after controlling for other variables (e.g., Cazenave & Straus, 1990; Dittman et al., 2013; Vittrup & Holden, 2010). Perhaps this main effect was not significant because of the small sample size, or because of how widely attitudes toward spanking

vary within different members of the same ethnic group, obscuring any differences among ethnic groups.

The gender hypothesis was not supported, either; there were no differences in attitudes towards spanking between men and women. This is inconsistent with the prior research showing gender differences in attitudes towards spanking. While men have been previously found to have more favorable attitudes towards spanking than women (e.g., Flynn, 1988; Grasmick et al., 1992), the same was not found to be true in the current sample. According to Petts and Kysar-Moon (2012), though, men were predicted to have more positive attitudes towards spanking for religious reasons – namely, Christians tend to stress the importance of the father as the head of the household primarily responsible for disciplining children. Perhaps the significant gender difference findings in prior research have been due to religious factors.

On the other hand, the religion hypothesis was supported; Christians in the current sample had more positive attitudes towards spanking than non-Christians. This is consistent with prior research showing religious differences in attitudes towards spanking (e.g., Danso et al., 1997; Flynn, 1994; Murphy-Cowan & Stringer, 2001). Perhaps because of religiously-based sayings like “spare the rod and spoil the child,” Christian parents expect to spank their children more frequently than non-Christian parents (Ellison et al., 1996).

The interaction question was answered in the negative; the current sample found no evidence that ethnicity, gender, and religion interact to influence attitudes towards spanking. It is likely, though, that the current sample lacked the power to test two-way or three-way interactions.

Finally, the region question was answered in the affirmative. Participants’ attitudes towards spanking in the current study were slightly positive overall, as predicted by prior research (e.g., Gershoff, 2002). As expected, by surveying people in a conservative area of west Texas where people have generally positive attitudes towards spanking, our sample shared those positive attitudes. Although we have no normative data for the Spanking Scale against which to compare this sample, it is predicted that other regions of the United States (and world) would have lower scores on the Spanking Scale, indicating less positive attitudes towards spanking.

Religion seems to be a common denominator predictive of spanking attitudes. Many characteristics have been found to be related to attitudes towards spanking, including religious fundamentalism, evangelism, right-wing authoritarianism, images of God, belief in Hell, political conservatism, gender, and ethnicity (Danso et al., 1997; Ellison & Bradshaw, 2009; Gershoff, 2002; Petts & Kysar-Moon, 2012). Religion is a variable which is correlated with many of the other variables that predict attitudes towards spanking. The current study suggests that religion may be the single biggest variable predicting spanking attitudes.

Gershoff (2002) proposed a process model of 30 variables hypothesized to determine how corporal punishment may influence child outcomes (see Figure 1). Two of those variables are race-ethnicity and religion-religiosity. We propose that some of these variables may potentially influence attitudes about spanking. Although it was not our intention to test Gershoff’s (2002) model as applied to spanking attitudes, we did find evidence to support one variable in the model (religion), while we failed to find evidence to support a second variable in the model (race-ethnicity) and a third variable not in the model (gender).

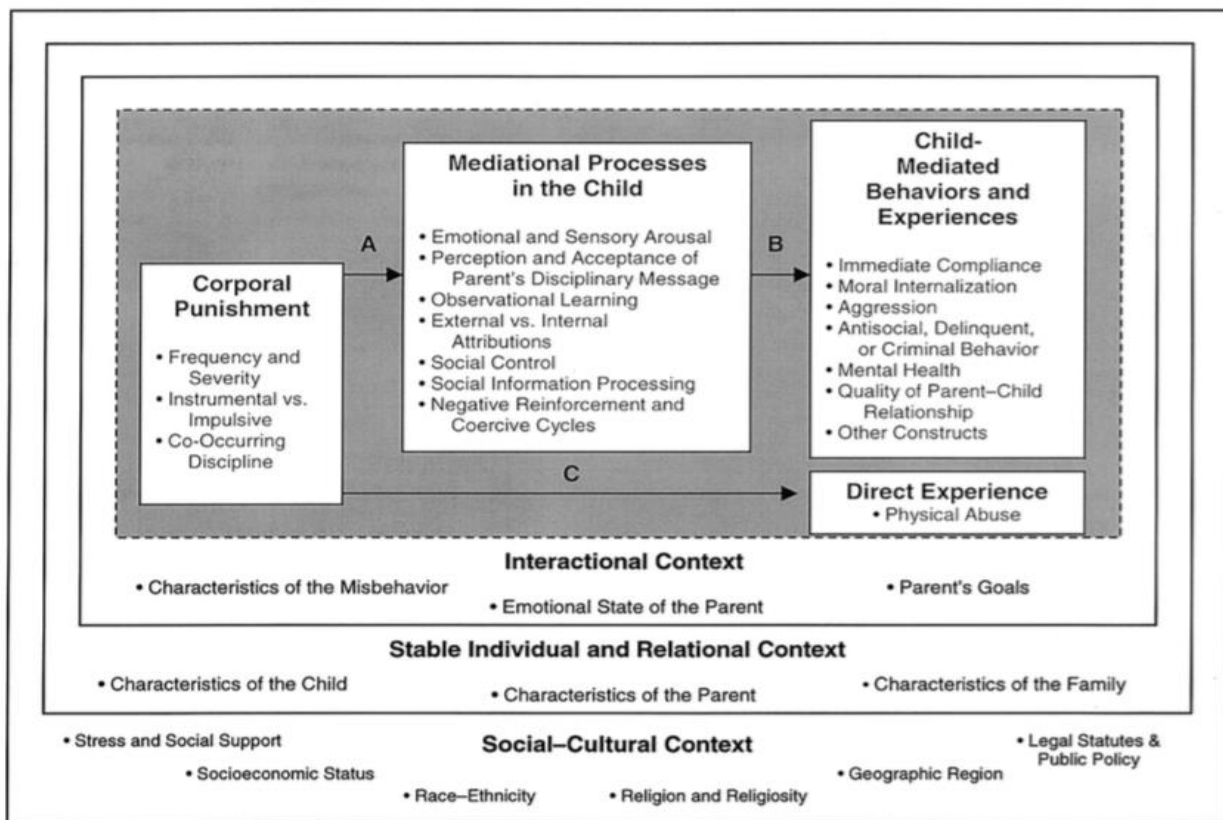


Figure 1. Gershoff's (2002) proposed process model of 30 variables hypothesized to determine how corporal punishment may influence child outcomes. Reprinted from "Corporal punishment by parents and associated child behaviors and experiences: A meta-analytic and theoretical review," by E. Gershoff, 2002, *Psychological Bulletin*, 128, p. 552. Copyright 2002 by the American Psychological Association. Reprinted with permission.

The current study also provided psychometric support for the reliability, validity, and factor structure of the Spanking Scale, a brief measure of attitudes towards spanking. Through answering only four questions about spanking (plus an optional demographic question about spanking frequently and an optional qualitative question about spanking attitudes), people's attitudes towards spanking can be quickly assessed in less than five minutes using a brief measure of spanking which is reliable, valid, and useful. This scale can be administered orally, in a paper-and-pencil format, or online. The Spanking Scale could serve as a useful tool for researchers, clinicians, teachers, administrators, demographers, and others. As Gershoff (2002) noted, a challenge for future corporal punishment research is standardizing the measurement of spanking and other forms of corporal punishment. This scale serves as a step in the right direction in meeting that challenge.

The biggest limitations of the current study relate to the small, nonrandom, geographically limited sample of participants. The sample was small, limited to participants from west Texas, heavily Christian, and contained few African Americans, Asians, or non-Christians. The results presented here may not generalize well to other parts of the United States or even to other samples of college students. The religious findings in the current sample also apply only to Christianity; they do not generalize to other religions. Future research should focus on the

generalizability of the current findings. Future research should also focus on the test-retest reliability, predictive validity, and convergent and discriminant validity of the Spanking Scale, as well as collecting normative data against which to compare subsequent Spanking Scale scores.

Implications for Spanking Policy

Existing policy on spanking varies widely. As noted previously, 49 countries worldwide have laws banning parents from using any form of corporal punishment (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, n.d.). In the United States, 27 states have legislation that bans corporal punishment by schools and non-parent guardians (National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in the Schools, 2001), but when performed by parents, corporal punishment is legal in all 50 states (Davidson, 1997).

The findings of the current study have implications for policy on spanking and corporal punishment. While prior research suggests that spanking of minority children may not be related to the same negative outcomes as spanking of White children, the current study suggests that attitudes about spanking do not differ by ethnicity. Contradicting prior studies supporting gender differences, the research presented here also indicates that attitudes about spanking do not differ by gender. On the other hand, the current research provides evidence for religious differences in spanking attitudes. For school administrators, legislators, and policy analysts wanting to craft research-based policy which is sensitive to cultural differences in attitudes towards spanking, gender and ethnicity do not factor into the diversity of people's attitudes nearly as much as religion does. Consequently, policies that ban spanking outright are likely to be supported equally by men, women, Whites, Blacks, Latinos, and people with low religiousness, but such policies may meet with opposition in religious communities. Spanking also remains part of the policy of many elementary, secondary, and religious institutions. While most states have banned the use of corporal punishment in educational settings, there remain 23 states that still use spanking or a similar form of corporal punishment in schools (Gershoff, 2002). Additionally, many religious institutions promote the use of corporal punishments such as spanking because it is believed to teach moral behavior (Gershoff, 2002) – although research indicates that spanking actually interferes with the internalization of moral behaviors (Hoffman, 1983; Lepper, 1983). Culturally-sensitive spanking policy may then need to be more tolerant of corporal punishment with religious folks or in religious settings.

Not surprisingly, we found the predicted positive attitudes towards spanking we expected to find in this geographic area of the United States. This points to the importance of knowing demographic differences in attitudes from prior research and how helpful this knowledge can be in determining what a particular group believes about spanking in the real world.

The attitudes of the authors of this study may be instructive. Both authors of the current research study came into this project with set attitudes about spanking. The first author was born in a country where spanking was commonplace, was spanked regularly as a child, and came into this research project with the assumption that spanking was something positive that most people supported. The second author, on the other hand, grew up with parents who seldom spanked him, was familiar with the literature on spanking indicating its relationship with negative outcomes, and came into this research project with the assumption that spanking was something negative to be avoided. Neither of us was fully aware of the variability in people's attitudes towards spanking, particularly when those attitudes differed from our own.

By surveying others, we discovered how widely attitudes towards spanking range in both the United States and worldwide. It is our hope that others may use our Spanking Scale to learn about the attitudes of stakeholders in a particular area and to keep those attitudes in mind when making policy decisions about spanking and other forms of corporal punishment. We hope that policymakers will keep in mind cultural differences (and similarities) in attitudes, as there is variability between cultures but even more variability within groups of people in their attitudes towards spanking. We especially hope that policymakers will take the time to learn the individual attitudes of the people who will be affected by new policies. As Gershoff (2002) wrote,

Current U.S. law emphasizes both the rights and interests of parents as well as the “best interests” of children, and in some circumstances the interests of parents and children do not correspond... Individual belief in and use of corporal punishment in the United States is supported by public policies that sanction the use of physical means of disciplining young children and that view children as the property of parents who have the “right” to raise them as they choose... [Nevertheless,] the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) explicitly requires that

parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has the care of the child. (Article 19, para. 1, p. 564)

Therefore, the views and attitudes of parents and other individuals towards spanking should be respected, while above all else protecting the welfare of children.

Keeping in mind what we have learned from this study, we would like to conclude this manuscript by offering some research-based recommendations about spanking. Based on our findings, we propose the following 20 spanking recommendations:

1. Spanking is not abuse. It is a form of discipline – corporal punishment.
2. It should be left up to parents to decide if spanking is appropriate for their children, and only parents or guardians should spank.
3. Spanking should be done calmly, never in anger.
4. Spanking should be used sparingly so it does not lose its effectiveness.
5. Spanking should only be used after first trying other behavioral techniques (like grounding or taking away privileges).
6. Spanking should only be used to educate a child – not to hurt, scare, intimidate, get revenge, or make the punisher feel better.
7. When spanking a child, a parent should let the child know why they are being spanked.
8. If spanking causes physical harm to a child, uses hard or sharp objects, or is done in anger, it is not spanking – it is abuse.
9. Spanking can lead to immediate compliance, moral internalization of values, and fewer short-term internalizing problems.
10. Spanking can have negative effects on children, including aggression, externalizing behaviors (acting out), mental health problems, criminal and antisocial behaviors, physical violence towards others, drug use, and criminal behavior.

11. The negative effects of spanking have not been found in African American or Latino children.
12. 94% of U.S. parents spank their children but only 45% of Swedish parents do.
13. Spanking is legal in every U.S. state but has been outlawed in 42 countries worldwide.
14. Some states prohibit spanking in public.
15. African Americans, Asians, men, and religious people tend to have more positive attitudes towards spanking than Caucasians, women, and nonreligious people do.
16. People in conservative areas of the United States (like west Texas) have more positive attitudes towards spanking than people in other parts of the country.
17. Spanking attitudes can be assessed using a brief 6-question scale:
 1. How often have you spanked a child?
 2. Is spanking an appropriate form of discipline for a child?
 3. Is it okay to spank a child when he/she has done or said something bad?
 4. Does a child need to be spanked when he/she has done or said something bad?
 5. Is spanking a helpful form of discipline for a child?
 6. How do you feel about spanking?
18. We found no differences in attitudes towards spanking between men and women, or among Caucasians, African Americans, and Latinos.
19. We found that Christians had more positive attitudes towards spanking than non-Christians.
20. Spanking can be a useful tool, but it should be used sparingly, always keeping in mind the best interests of the child.

References

- Alvy, K. T. (1987). *Black parenting: Strategies for training*. New York, NY: Irvington.
- American Academy of Pediatrics. (1998). Guidance for effective discipline. *Pediatrics*, *101*(4), 723-728.
- Anderson, K. A., & Anderson, D. E. (1976). Psychologists and spanking. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, *5*(2), 46-49, 70. doi: 10.1080/15374417609532712
- Baumrind, D. (1972). An exploratory study of socialization effects on Black children: Some Black-White comparisons. *Child Development*, *43*(1), 261-267. doi: 10.2307/1127891
- Baumrind, D. (1996a). A blanket injunction against disciplinary use of spanking is not warranted by the data. *Pediatrics*, *98*(4), 828-831.
- Baumrind, D. (1996b). The discipline controversy revisited. *Family Relations*, *45*(4), 405-415.
- Baumrind, D. (1997). Necessary distinctions. *Psychological Inquiry*, *8*(3), 176-182. doi: 10.1207/s15327965pli0803_2
- Berlin, L. J., Ispa, J. M., Fine, M. A., Malone, P. S., Brooks-Gunn, . . . , & Bai, Y. (2009). Correlates and consequences of spanking and verbal punishment for low-income White, African American, and Mexican American toddlers. *Child Development*, *80*(5), 1403-1420. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2009.01341.x
- Betancourt, H., & Lopez, S. R. (1993). The study of culture, ethnicity, and race in American psychology. *American Psychologist*, *48*(6), 629-637. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.48.6.629

- Bunting, L., Webb, M. A., & Healy, J. (2010). In two minds? Parental attitudes toward physical punishment in the UK. *Children & Society, 24*, 359-370. doi: 10.1111/j.1099-0860.2009.00245.x
- Cazenave, N. A., & Straus, M. A. (1990). Race, class, network embeddedness, and family violence: A search for potent support systems. In M. A. Straus and R. J. Gelles (Eds.), *Physical violence in American families: Risk factors and adaptations to violence in 8,145 families* (pp. 321-339). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Clement, M.-E., Bouchard, C., Jette, M., & Laferriere, S. (2000). *La violence familiale dans la vie des enfants du Quebec, 1999*. Quebec, QC: Institut de la Statistique du Quebec. Retrieved from www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/publications/conditions/violence.htm
- Coley, R., Kull, M., & Carrano, J. (2014). Parental endorsement of spanking and children's internalizing and externalizing problems in African American and Hispanic families. *Journal of Family Psychology, 28*(1), 22-31. doi: 10.1037/a0035272
- Danso, H., Hunsberger, B., & Pratt, M. (1997). The role of parental religious fundamentalism and right-wing authoritarianism in child-rearing goals and practices. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 36*(4), 496-511. doi: 10.2307/1387686
- Davidson, H. (1997). The legal aspects of corporal punishment in the home: When does physical discipline cross the line to become child abuse? *Children's Legal Rights Journal, 17*(1), 18-29.
- Day, R. D., Peterson, G. W., & McCracken, C. (1998). Predicting spanking of younger and older children by mothers and fathers. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 60*(1), 79-94.
- Deater-Deckard, K., Dodge, K. A., Bates, J. A., & Pettit, G. S. (1996). Physical discipline among African American and European American mothers: Links to children's externalizing behaviors. *Developmental Psychology, 32*(6), 1065-1072. doi: 10.1037/0012-1649.32.6.1065
- Deley, W. W. (1988). Physical punishment of children: Sweden and the U.S.A. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 19*(3), 419-431.
- Dittman, C. K., Sibley, C. G., & Farruggia, S. P. (2013). Attitudes toward smacking in a New Zealand probability sample: Psychological and demographic correlates. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology, 42*(2), 41-50.
- Dodge, K. A., McLoyd, V. C., & Lansford, J. E. (2005). The cultural context of physically disciplining children. In V. C. McLoyd, N. E. Hill, & K. A. Dodge (Eds.), *African American family life: Ecological and cultural diversity* (pp. 245-263). New York, NY: Guilford.
- Durrant, J. E., Rose-Krasnor, L., & Broberg, A. G. (2003). Physical punishment and maternal beliefs in Sweden and Canada. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 34*(4), 585-604.
- Ellison, C., Bartkowski, J., & Segal, M. (1996). Do conservative protestant parents spank more often? Further evidence from the national survey of families and households. *Science Quarterly, 77*(3), 663-673.
- Ellison, C. G., & Bradshaw, M. (2009). Religious beliefs, sociopolitical ideology, and attitudes toward corporal punishment. *Journal of Family Issues, 30*(3), 320-340. doi: 10.1177/0192513X08326331
- Ellison, C. G., Musick, M., & Holden, G. W. (1999, November). *The effects of corporal punishment on young children: Are they less harmful for conservative Protestants?* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Boston, MA.

- Ellison, C. G., & Sherkat, D. E. (1993). Conservative Protestantism and support for corporal punishment. *American Sociological Review*, *58*(1), 131-144.
- Escovar, L. A., & Escovar, P. L. (1985). Retrospective perception of parental child-rearing practices in three culturally different college groups. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *9*(1), 31-49. doi: 10.1016/0147-1767(85)90019-7
- Flynn, C. P. (1994). Regional differences in attitudes toward corporal punishment. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *56*(2), 314-324. doi: 10.2307/353102
- Flynn, C. P. (1996). Regional differences in spanking experiences and attitudes: A comparison of northeastern and southern college students. *Journal of Family Violence*, *11*(1), 59-80. doi: 10.1007/BF02333340
- Flynn, C. P. (1998). To spank or not to spank: The effect of situation and age of child on support for corporal punishment. *Journal of Family Violence*, *13*(1), 21-37. doi: 10.1023/A:1022808716048
- Fontes, L. A. (2002). Child discipline and physical abuse in immigrant Latino families: Reducing violence and misunderstandings. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *80*(1), 31-40. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2002.tb00163.x
- Frechette, S., & Romano, E. (2015). Change in corporal punishment over time in a representative sample of Canadian parents. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *29*(4), 507-517. doi: 10.1037/fam0000104
- Gershoff, E. (2002). Corporal punishment by parents and associated child behaviors and experiences: A meta-analytic and theoretical review. *Psychological Bulletin*, *128*(4), 539-579. doi: 10.1037//0033-2909.128.4.539
- Gershoff, E., Lansford, J., Sexton, H., Davis-Keasn, P., & Sameroff, A. (2012). Longitudinal links between spanking and children's externalizing behaviors in a national sample of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian American families. *Child Development*, *83*(3), 838-884. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01732.x
- Gershoff, E. T., Miller, P. C., & Holden, G. W. (1999). Parenting influences from the pulpit: Religious affiliation as a determinant of parental corporal punishment. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *13*(3), 307-320. Doi: 10.1037/0893-3200.13.3.307
- Giles-Sims, J., Straus, M. A., & Sugarman, D. B. (1995). Child maternal, and family characteristics associated with spanking. *Family Relations*, *44*(2), 170-176. doi: 10.2307/584804
- Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children. (n.d.). Global initiative to end all corporal punishment of children. Retrieved from www.endcorporalpunishment.org
- Grasmick, H. G., Bursik, R. J., & Kimpel, M. (1991). Protestant fundamentalism and attitudes toward corporal punishment of children. *Violence and Victims*, *6*(4), 283-298.
- Grasmick, H. G., Morgan, C. S., & Kennedy, M. B. (1992). Support for corporal punishment in the schools: A comparison of the effects of socioeconomic status and religion. *Social Science Quarterly*, *73*(1), 177-187.
- Gregory, J. F. (1995). The crime of punishment: Racial and gender disparities in the use of corporal punishment in U.S. public schools. *Journal of Negro Education*, *64*(4), 454-462. doi: 10.2307/2967267
- Grogan-Kaylor, A., & Otis, M. (2007). The predictors of parental use of corporal punishment. *Family Relations*, *56*(1), 80-91. doi: 10.1111/j.1741-3729.2007.00441.x

- Gunnoe, M. L., & Mariner, C. L. (1997). Toward a developmental-contextual model of the effects of parental spanking on children's aggression. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, *151*(8), 768-775. doi: 10.1001/archpedi.1997.02170450018003
- Hashima, P. Y., & Amato, P. R. (1994). Poverty, social support, and parental behavior. *Child Development*, *65*(2), 394-403. doi: 10.2307/1131391
- Hicks-Pass, S. (2009). Corporal punishment in America today: Spare the rod, spoil the child? A systematic review of the literature. *Best Practices in Mental Health*, *5*(2), 71-88.
- Hoffman, M. L. (1983). Affective and cognitive processes in moral internalization. In E. T. Higgins, D. N. Ruble, & W. W. Hartup (Eds.), *Social cognition and social development* (pp. 236-274). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Jackson, A. P., Thompson, R. A., Christiansen, E. H., Colman, R. A., Wyatt, J., . . . , & Peterson, R. (1999). Predicting abuse-prone parental attitudes and discipline practices in a nationally representative sample. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, *23*(1), 15-29. doi: 10.1016/S0145-2134(98)00108-2
- Kazdin, A. E., & Benjet, C. (2003). Spanking children: Evidence and issues. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *12*(3), 99-103.
- Kelley, M. L., Power, T. G., & Wimbush, D. D. (1992). Determinants of disciplinary practices in low-income Black mothers. *Child Development*, *63*(3), 573-582. doi: 10.2307/1131347
- Lansford, J. E., Wager, L. B., Bates, J. E., Pettit, G. S., & Dodge, K. A. (2012). Forms of spanking and children's externalizing behaviors. *Family Relations*, *61*(2), 224-236. doi: 10.1111/j.1741-3729.2011.00700.x
- Larzelere, R. E., & Kuhn, B. R. (2005). Comparing child outcomes of physical punishment and alternative disciplinary tactics: A meta-analysis. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, *8*(1), 1-37. doi: 10.1007/s10567-005-2340-z
- Lee, S. J., & Altschul, I. (2015). Spanking of young children: Do immigrant and U.S.-born Hispanic parents differ? *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *30*(3), 475-498. doi: 10.1177/0886260514535098
- Lepper, M. R. (1983). Social control processes and the internalization of social values: An attributional perspective. In E. T. Higgins, D. N. Ruble, & W. W. Hartup (Eds.), *Social cognition and social development* (pp. 294-330). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Lorber, M. F., O'Leary, S. G., & Smith Slep, A. M. (2011). An initial evaluation of the role of emotion and impulsivity in explaining racial/ethnic differences in the use of corporal punishment. *Developmental Psychology*, *47*(6), 1744-1749. doi: 10.1037/a0025344
- Lytton, H. (1997). Physical punishment is a problem, whether conduct disorder is endogenous or not. *Psychological Inquiry*, *8*(3), 211-214. doi: 10.1207/s15327965pli0803_9
- Mah, J. W. T., & Johnston, C. (2012). Cultural variations in mothers' acceptance of and intent to use behavioral child management techniques. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *21*(3), 486-497. doi: 10.1007/s10826-011-9502-z
- McCord, J. (1997). On discipline. *Psychological Inquiry*, *8*(3), 215-217. doi: 10.1207/s15327965pli0803_10
- McFadden, A. C., Marsh, G. E., Price, B., & Hwang, Y. (1992). A study of race and gender bias in the punishment of school children. *Education and Treatment of Children*, *15*(2), 140-146. doi: 10.1007/BF01108358

- Murphy-Cowan, T., & Stringer, M. (2001). Religious affiliation and attitudes toward the use of corporal punishment in Northern Ireland. *The Irish Journal of Psychology, 22*(1), 55-62. doi: 10.1080/03033910.2001.10558263
- National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information. (2000). *What is child maltreatment?* Retrieved from www.calib.com/nccanch/pubs/factsheets/childmal.cfm
- National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in the Schools. (2001). *Facts about corporal punishment.* Retrieved from www.stop hitting.com/disatschool/facts.php
- Nobes, G., Smith, M., Upton, P., & Heverin, A. (1999). Physical punishment by mothers and fathers in British homes. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 14*(8), 887-902. doi: 10.1177/088626099014008006
- Paolucci, E. O., & Violato, C. (2004). A meta-analysis of the published research on the affective, cognitive, and behavioral effects of corporal punishment. *The Journal of Psychology, 138*(3), 197-221. doi: 10.3200/JRLP.138.3.197-222
- Petts, R., & Kysar-Moon, A. (2012). Child discipline and conservative Protestantism: Why the relationship between corporal punishment and child behavior problems may vary by religious context. *Review of Religious Research, Inc. 54*(4), 445-468. doi: 10.1007/s13644-012-0080-3
- Regalado, M., Sareen, H., Inkelas, M., Wissow, L. S., & Halfon, N. (2004). Parents' discipline of young children: Results from the National Survey of Early Childhood Health. *Pediatrics, 113*(6 Suppl), 1952-1958.
- Shaw, S. R., & Braden, J. P. (1990). Race and gender bias in the administration of corporal punishment. *School Psychology Review, 19*(3), 378-383.
- Slade, E. P., & Wissow, L. S. (2004). Spanking in early childhood and later behavior problems: A prospective study of infants and toddlers. *Pediatrics, 113*(5), 1321-1330. doi: 10.1542/peds.113.5.1321
- Socolar, R., Cabinum-Foeller, E., & Sinal, S. H. (2008). Is religiosity associated with corporal punishment or child abuse? *Southern Medical Journal, 101*(7), 707-710. doi: 10.1097/SMJ.0b013e3181794793
- Stolley, K. S., & Szinovacz, M. (1997). Caregiving responsibilities and child spanking. *Journal of Family Violence, 12*(1), 99-112. doi: 10.1023/A:1021902101990
- Straus, M. A. (1994). *Beating the devil out of them: Corporal punishment in American families.* New York, NY: Lexington Books.
- Straus, M. A., & Stewart, J. H. (1999). Corporal punishment by American parents: National data on prevalence, chronicity, severity, and duration, in relation to child and family characteristics. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 2*(2), 55-70. doi: 10.1023/A:1021891529770
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. (1989, Nov. 20). G.A. Res. 44/25, U.N. GAOR, 44th Sess., at 3, U.N. Doc. A/RES/44/25. Retrieved from www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm
- Vittrup, B., & Holden, G. W. (2010). Children's assessments of corporal punishment and other disciplinary practices: The role of age, race, SES, and exposure to spanking. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 31*(3), 211-220. doi: 10.1016/j.appdev.2009.11.003
- Whaley, A. L. (2000). Sociocultural differences in the developmental consequences of the use of physical discipline during childhood for African Americans. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 6*(1), 5-12. doi: 10.1037/1099-9809.6.1.5

- Whitney, S. D., Tajima, E. A., Herrenkohl, T. I., & Huang, B. (2006). Defining child abuse: Exploring variations in ratings of discipline severity among child welfare practitioners. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 23*(3), 316-342. doi: 10.1007/s10560-006-0051-z
- Wiehe, V. R. (1990). Religious influence on parental attitudes toward the use of corporal punishment. *Journal of Family Violence, 5*(2), 173-186. doi: 10.1007/BF00978518
- Wissow, L. S. (2001). Ethnicity, income, and parenting contexts of physical punishment in a national sample of families with young children. *Child Maltreatment, 6*(2), 118-129. doi: 10.1177/1077559501006002004
- Xu, X., Tung, Y., & Dunaway, R. G. (2000). Cultural, human, and social capital as determinants of corporal punishment: Toward an integrated theoretical model. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 15*(6), 603-630. doi: 10.1177/088626000015006004