DISCIPLINE AND EXTERNALIZING BEHAVIOR

MEXICAN-AMERICAN MOTHERS' DISCIPLINE BELIEFS AND PRACTICES AS PREDICTORS OF TODDLERS' EXTERNALIZING BEHAVIORS

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ABSTRACT

Objective. The goal of this study was to determine how the interaction of maternal parenting discipline beliefs and physical punishment behaviors was associated with externalizing behaviors in toddlers. Methods. Data was collected through in-person interviews with 80 Mexican-American mothers with toddlers, reporting about their beliefs about discipline, their use of physical discipline, and their toddlers’ externalizing behaviors. Hierarchal linear regression models were used to examine the relationship between the interaction of beliefs and behaviors and externalizing behaviors, while controlling for maternal depression. Results. The interaction of beliefs and behaviors were significantly correlated with externalizing behaviors. There was a positive correlation between spanking frequency and externalizing behaviors when mothers that reported high levels of discipline beliefs, and a negative correlation between spanking frequency and externalizing behaviors in mothers that reported low levels of discipline beliefs. Conclusion. Beliefs and behaviors must be considered together when examining how they predict externalizing behaviors. It cannot be concluded that spanking alone causes externalizing outcomes in children without examining the context of the punishment.
INTRODUCTION

Physical discipline is a controversial subject that demands attention due to its prevalence in society. According to Larzelere (2000), about 94% of 3 and 4 year-old children in the United States have been spanked by a parent in the last year. Physical discipline describes the act of using force to correct a child’s behavior, without inflicting injury (Berlin, Malone, Ispa, Fine, Brooks-Gunn, et al., 2009). The term “spanking” is used synonymously with physical discipline in this article. There is much debate regarding the outcomes of spanking on children’s development. One thing the literature agrees on, however, is that the context in which the punishment is administered greatly influences the outcomes the child experiences (Berlin, et al., 2009; Deater-Deckard & Dodge, 1997). Culture plays a large role in the context, and there are many areas lacking exploration in research regarding cultural differences in physical discipline. Mexican-American culture is one of the areas lacking attention. This is an important area of study in order to identify needs unique to Mexican-Americans and to devise specific recommendations and interventions for child rearing practices.

Negative outcomes of physical discipline

Many studies link physical discipline to negative outcomes in children, particularly aggression and externalizing behavior problems. Berlin and colleagues (2009) found that children who were spanked at age one had higher levels of aggressive behavior at age two, and lower cognitive development scores at age three, than those that were not spanked. Another study found that
children with early behavior problems are more likely to be spanked, and that these behavior problems will increase with physical punishment, thus encouraging more punishment. This is the danger of coercive cycles, in which the parent’s punishment escalates to match the misbehavior of the child, leading to increasingly negative outcomes (Lau, Litrownik, Newton, Black, & Everson, 2006). There are many that believe that physical punishment ought to be banned due to the principle that it teaches children that violence solves problems and evidence showing correlations between physical discipline and aggression, poor mental health outcomes, and anti-social behavior, and (Oates, 2011).

A review by Gershoff (2000) identifies many of the theories that explain possible processes by which physical punishment results in negative child outcomes. Through observational learning, parents model aggression to their children, teaching them that aggression is a normal, effective, and acceptable solution to problems. Attribution theory proposes that physical discipline is a “strong external pressure” for a child to behave, resulting in an underdevelopment of the child’s own internal motivation, including fully formed morals and values. Through social control theory, harsh punishment decreases the attachment between the parent and the child, decreasing the child’s identification with the parent and the parent’s values, leading to low self-control. Low self-control is linked to problematic decision-making in order to obtain easier gratification. Social information processing perspectives state that the experience of physical punishment affects how children process information, increasing the attention to hostile cues and intentions, and over assumption that aggression has
social benefits (Gershoff, 2000).

An additional consideration is the potential for child abuse. A main reason countries have established bans of physical discipline is to reduce child abuse. Child abuse can occur if parents increase physical methods of discipline when mild spanking loses effectiveness, especially if parents rely on physical punishment as a main discipline strategy (Fontes, 2002). Crouch and Behl (2001) found that there was a higher risk for child abuse by parents with high beliefs in physical discipline, when under stressful conditions. The sample was 78% female, 22% male. Stress was measured on the Parenting Stress Index, that summed parent-related and child-related self-reported stress. Child abuse potential was measured on the Child Abuse Potential Inventory, a self-report questionnaire designed to screen for physical child abuse, with three validity indexes to expose respondents that were faking-good, faking-bad, or randomly responding. The authors suggest people act automatically under stress, and if the parents underlying belief systems are such that physical punishment is acceptable, it is more likely to escalate to abuse. Parents with a low belief in physical punishment showed no association between stress level and abuse potential (Crouch & Behl, 2001).

**Positive outcomes of physical discipline**

There appears to be an agreement in the literature about detrimental outcomes of physical punishment in children, but recently, researchers have begun to identify specific variables that when accounted for make it much less
clear that physical punishment is always a negative influence on child
development. For example, Larzelere (2000) found overall positive outcomes of
physical punishment when he excluded all studies that included cases of abusive
discipline. Positive outcomes were a range of behaviors that were desirable,
such as compliance or academic achievement.

Larzelere’s review specified that it was an effective discipline strategy in
decreasing noncompliance when used consistently, with reasoning, not out of
anger, and with 2-6 year old children (Larzelere, 2000). Larzelere also stated that
there is no need to ban the use of spanking in the United States because there is
no evidence that spanking under the conditions mentioned is detrimental to
children. Almost 30 other countries have prohibited physical punishment
completely, and while this had dramatically reduced the prevalence of physical
discipline, it has not reduced abusive physical discipline (Larzelere, 2000).

The normativeness of physical punishment affects how the child perceives
the punishment, which also influences the outcomes. A child can feel confused or
rejected if he/she perceives the punishment to be hostile or out of control. The
child’s view on the normativeness of physical punishment is influenced strongly
by his culture and parents. In communities in which physical punishment is
normative, it is often interpreted by the child as parental concern (Larzelere,
2000; Deater-Deckard & Dodge, 1997). Larzelere found consistently positive
outcomes of physical punishment in communities in which it is normative, which
in his review were African Americans and Conservative Protestants (Larzelere,
2000).
The findings in a study by Lau, et al. (2006) also showed important cultural differences in outcomes of physical discipline. They found that physical punishment and parenting style had different effects on African American and European American children’s outcomes. European American children showed a significant decrease in externalizing behavior when parents had high parental warmth, while the African American children showed a slight increase in externalizing behavior when parents had high parental warmth. The authors believed this was due to cultural differences- high parental warmth is inconsistent with the normative “no nonsense” African American style of parenting, which is less warmth and high belief in physical punishment, and therefore exacerbates externalizing behavior problems rather than decreasing them (Lau, et al., 2006).

The role of context in outcomes of physical discipline

Many studies have examined the differences between African American and European American physical punishment attitudes and practices and the related outcomes. The general findings show acceptance of physical punishment in African American communities and less positive views of physical punishment in Caucasian communities. Findings also show overall positive outcomes, such as compliance and academic achievement, associated with physical discipline in African American children, while there are still many mixed results in Caucasian children (Deater-Deckard & Dodge, 1997). One explanation for this is that African American parents require stricter discipline to allow children to succeed in harsh environments as minorities (Lau, 2006). Research has suggested that cultural
differences in African Americans’ use of physical discipline has less to do with their culture than their environment (Lansford, Deater-Deckard, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 2004; Deater-Deckard & Dodge, 1997). Another factor is the socioeconomic status of the families. Multiple studies have found that mothers reported less physical discipline if they had a higher SES (Lansford, et al., 2004; Lansford & Deater-Deckard, 2012). A cross-cultural study involving 24 countries and over 30,000 families by Lansford and Deater-Deckard found that parents’ self-report of using physically violent tactics as discipline was negatively correlated with the parents’ level of education and literacy, a pattern also found within the United States (Lansford & Deater-Deckard, 2012).

The present study focuses on the variation that can be explained by cultural differences in a Mexican-American population. Besides African Americans, there is little research in specific minority groups. This is an important area of consideration because of the diverse backgrounds that make up the United States, of which Hispanics are the largest (Varela, et al. 2004). Much of the research discussed is regarding Latino and Hispanic populations, which are defined by the 2010 Census as someone “of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race” (Census Briefs, 2010). Mexican Americans are a subgroup of these, accounting for over 60% of the United States’ Hispanic population, almost 32 million. This fast growing group demands more research, particularly in the area of raising children, so that we may better understand how to shape programs and interventions for unique cultural needs.
Discipline beliefs of Mexican-Americans

In order to understand cultural and contextual differences in the effects of physical discipline, the unique characteristics of Mexican culture must be examined. Generally, Mexicans emphasize the closeness of family and respect for elders. A well-raised child is obedient and respectful, and loyal to one’s family (Dixon, et al. 2008). One study showed that Latino parents use stricter discipline practices than European Americans, and also that Latino children reported having more respect for parental authority than European American children (Dixon, Graber, & Brooks-Gunn, 2008). Because parents expect to be respected, they react harshly to misbehavior. However, there is mixed literature on whether or not they use more physical punishment than Caucasians.

A study of Hispanic and Anglo mothers found that Hispanic mothers reported using more discipline, and more corporal punishment specifically, than the Anglo mothers. The authors suggested this could be due to a greater need for control and discipline over minority children to ensure that they are successful growing up in a white society, a similar explanation to one suggested for African Americans endorsement of physical discipline (Cardona, Nicholson, & Fox, 2000; Lau, et al. 2006). This theory is supported by the findings of another study that found that Mexican Americans reported more use of authoritarian parenting than did Caucasians or Mexicans living in Mexico, suggesting that it is the minority status rather than the culture that is associated with use of physical discipline (Varela, Vernberg, Sanchez-Sosa, Riveros, Mitchell, et al., 2004).
In contrast to those studies, Berlin and colleagues found that Mexican American mothers not only spanked less often than White mothers, but also used less verbal punishment, which the authors defined as “scolding, yelling, or derogating”. They also found that use of verbal punishment by Mexican American mothers at age two was positively related to cognitive development scores a year later (Berlin, et al., 2009). It is possible that the Mexican American mothers use of verbal punishment is associated with positive outcomes because it is obeyed immediately by their children due to the cultural value of parental respect.

**Interaction between behaviors and beliefs**

There are two sides to the literature discussing whether children exhibit worse outcomes when their parents’ beliefs and behaviors are consistent, or if they are mismatched, such as if they do not believe in physical punishment, yet they still use it. One consideration is that parents that do not believe in physical punishment and still spank their children do it when the parent is stressed or angry, as opposed to as a consistent form of discipline, and therefore would be confusing and detrimental to the child (Barnett, Shanahan, Deng, Haskett, & Cox, 2010). Further evidence for this argument was found by McLoyd and colleagues (2007) in a study comparing mothers that endorsed physical discipline and those that did not. Their results showed much more covariation between maternal psychological distress and the use of physical discipline in the nonendorsing mothers than in the endorsing mothers. They also found that found that physical discipline was only associated with depressive symptoms in children of the
nonendorsing mothers (McLoyd, Kaplan, Hardaway, & Wood, 2007). These findings imply that mothers who use physical discipline when they do not believe in it do so emotionally, resulting in worse effects on their children. As previously mentioned, positive outcomes occur out of physical punishment when it is normative in a community, and the same logic follows for normativeness in a family. If spanking is not consistent within a family, the child is more likely to be confused by it.

The other consideration is that there is a greater risk for the child if parents’ beliefs and behaviors are matched, as shown in the study by Crouch and Behl. As previously mentioned, these findings were that under stress, parents who strongly believed in physical discipline were more likely to abuse their children than those who did not believe in physical discipline (Crouch & Behl, 2001). Deater-Deckard found a similar conclusion, that parents that believe in physical discipline and were quick to anger were at an increased risk for child abuse, especially when under stress (Deater-Deckard, Ivy, & Petrill, 2006).

**Study goals**

The present study addresses three research goals. First, to identify the nature of the relationship between the use of physical punishment and externalizing behavior in Mexican American toddlers. Second, to identify the nature of the relationship between maternal endorsement of physical punishment and the externalizing behaviors. And third, to identify the role of the interaction
between maternal beliefs and behaviors toward physical discipline in the prediction of externalizing behaviors. Due to the Mexican cultural norms that emphasize children’s obedience to their parents, and the theory that minorities require stricter punishments, I expect the data to show a negative relationship between the use of physical punishment and externalizing behaviors in toddlers. I expect that the endorsement of physical punishment will be negatively associated with toddlers’ externalizing behaviors as well, due to the trend that mothers who agree with physical punishment use it more often than those who do not. I expect that a mismatch between maternal beliefs and behaviors will be positively correlated with toddlers’ externalizing behaviors, because if it is not a deliberate form of punishment, it could be detrimental to the child. Specifically, I expect elevated externalizing behaviors from toddlers with mothers that do not endorse physical discipline and still use it.

**METHOD**

**Participants**

This study consists of 80 self-identified Mexican American mothers living in Tucson, AZ, with toddlers aged 22-32 months. The mean age of children was 26.2 months and the mean age of mothers was 30.7 years. 43.2% of the mothers were born in the United States. 72.8% of the mothers graduated high school or had received a GED. 62.7% of the mothers chose to complete the interview in English. 70.4% of the mothers were either married or living with a romantic partner. The mean income per capita was $5,673.00.
Procedure

Families were recruited for the study through community locations, such as libraries, child care centers, preschools, WIC offices, and apartment complexes. Data was collected through an in-person interview in Spanish or English at the participant’s home or another location of their choice. Enrollment requirements included self-identification as Mexican or Mexican American and a child 22-32 months with no diagnosed chronic illnesses or disorders.

Measures

Demographics. Mothers reported level of education, country of birth, age of child and mother, and marital/relationship status.

Child Externalizing Behaviors. The Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2000) was used to assess child externalizing symptoms at age of interview (22-32 months). Mothers rated their child’s behavior during the past two months on 76 items, ranging from 0 (not true) to 2 (very true/often true). To create an externalizing subscale, 25 aggressive and attention syndrome items were summed. A high score signifies greater behavior problems.

Maternal Discipline Beliefs. The measure of discipline beliefs came from an adapted version of the Parent Beliefs Survey (PBS; Luster et al., 1989), in which mothers reported the importance of discipline and control on 12 items ranging in score from 0 (strongly disagree) to 3 (strongly agree). Sample items include “the most important part of being a parent is disciplining children,” and
“teaching obedience is one of the best ways to prepare preschool children to be a good student.” Higher scores imply stronger belief in disciplining and controlling children.

**Spanking Frequency.** To assess physical discipline behaviors, mothers completed a short version of the Parent Behavior Checklist (PBC; Fox, 1994). The PBC assesses parent behavior on three subscales: discipline, nurturing, and expectations. Spanking frequency was calculated by summing six questions regarding spanking from the discipline subscale. Mothers rated the frequency of the behaviors on a range of 1 (almost never/never) to 4 (almost always/always). Sample items include “I would spank my child in public for bad behavior” and “I get so angry with my child, I spank him/her on the bottom.” Higher scores indicate more frequent use of spanking.

**Maternal Depression.** Other variables were calculated to be accounted for in the regression model. Maternal depression was assessed on the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977) that asked participants to rate their frequency of 20 depressive symptoms from a scale ranging from 1 (none of the time) to 4 (most of the time). Sample items include “you could not shake off the blues even with help from your family or friends” and “you had crying spells.” A high score indicates high depression.

**Negative Child Affect.** Child temperament was calculated by scoring the subscale of negative affect from the Early Childhood Behavior Questionnaire - Very Short Form (ECBQ-SF; Putnam, Gartstein & Rothbart, 2006). This a common measure of temperament for young children based on parent reports.
The negative affect score is a sum of a rating ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always) on 12 items describing negative emotion behaviors. A high score indicates high negative affect.

Language of Interview. Participating mothers had the option of completing the interview in English or Spanish (English = 0; Spanish = 1).

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations

Table 1 shows the correlations between all variables analyzed. This analysis gave information as to which variables should be controlled for in the regression model to see the interaction between maternal discipline beliefs and practices with externalizing behavior. As expected, maternal discipline beliefs and spanking frequency were significantly positively correlated, indicating that the stronger a mother feels toward the use of physical discipline, the more often she uses it. Maternal discipline beliefs were also significantly positively correlated to child’s externalizing behavior. Spanking frequency was marginally significantly correlated to externalizing behavior (p = .054).

Maternal depressive symptoms were positively significantly correlated with externalizing behaviors, spanking frequency, discipline beliefs, and negative affect. A mother that reports more depressive symptoms is more likely to report more behavior problems, and more likely to react more harshly (Berlin, 2009).

Negative affective temperament was positively significantly correlated with externalizing behavior and spanking frequency. Children who regularly display
more reactive negative affect may be more difficult to control, encouraging harsher discipline from parents. Negative temperament is also positively correlated with maternal depressive symptoms. There are a number of possible explanations for this: depressed mothers rate their children as more problematic; the mothers’ inadequate responsiveness to their children increases their problem behaviors; or because the mothers’ symptoms increase as they are unable to soothe their child. The correlation found in this study is consistent with the literature (Lau, et al., 2006; Berlin, 2009).

No correlations were found between spanking and the gender or age of the child. Therefore, these variables were not included in the regression models used to test the study hypotheses.

Hierarchical Linear Regression Predicting Child Externalizing Behaviors

Next, hierarchical linear regression equations were computed to test the three hypotheses: 1) the association between spanking and externalizing behavior, 2) the association between discipline beliefs and externalizing behavior, and 3) the association between the interaction of spanking and discipline beliefs and externalizing behavior. As shown in Table 2, including maternal depression, spanking frequency, and maternal discipline beliefs accounted for 79% of the variance in externalizing behaviors. Model 1 produced $R^2 = .79$, $F(4, 74) = 74.93$, $p < .01$. When controlling for each of the three independent variables, only maternal depression has a significant correlation with children’s externalizing behaviors. This finding fails to support the first two hypotheses of this study, that
both spanking frequency and maternal discipline beliefs would be negatively correlated with externalizing behavior. It shows that the bivariate correlations initially show relationships between them possibly because they are confounded with maternal depression.

Model 2 shows the addition of the interaction between maternal parenting beliefs and behaviors and its relationship with externalizing behavior. The interaction of the spanking frequency and discipline beliefs and maternal depression together accounted for 81% of the variance in externalizing behaviors. Model 2 produced $R^2 = .81$, $F(5, 73) = 67.05$, $p < .01$. Including the interaction between maternal beliefs and behaviors significantly increased the amount of variability explained in children’s externalizing behaviors, $R^2$ change $= .02$, $p < .01$. The interaction between the two had a significant positive correlation with externalizing behaviors, while the two independently did not.

In order to interpret the interaction, the simple slopes defining the lines between spanking frequency and externalizing behaviors at the mean discipline beliefs, one standard deviation above the mean (representing high discipline beliefs), and one standard deviation below the mean (representing low discipline beliefs) were calculated (Preacher, Curran, & Bauer, 2006). The results showed a positive relationship between physical discipline and children’s externalizing behaviors for mothers with high levels of belief in physical discipline. For mothers with low levels of belief in physical discipline, there was a negative relationship between use of physical discipline and children’s externalizing behaviors. For mothers with an average belief in physical discipline, there was no relationship
between physical discipline and children’s externalizing behaviors (See figure 1). These findings provide partial support for my third prediction that there would be high levels of externalizing behavior in children whose mothers use physical discipline but do not endorse it.

**DISCUSSION**

The goals of this study were to investigate the independent relationships between physical discipline and maternal beliefs about physical discipline and children’s externalizing behaviors, and then to investigate the interaction of the two and that relationship with externalizing behaviors.

**Bivariate correlations**

The relationship between externalizing behaviors and spanking frequency was only marginally positively significant ($p < .06$). This is interesting because it is a relationship that is often statistically significant in the literature (Gershoff, 2002; Lansford, et al., 2004). This suggests that although there is somewhat of a relationship between the two, they often also exist independently of one another. It does not support the theory that spanking causes externalizing behavior problems, and thus, does not support the idea of banning physical discipline. The relationship between externalizing behaviors and discipline beliefs was positively significantly correlated. Although spanking frequency and discipline beliefs were significantly correlated, a mother’s high discipline score does not guarantee that she will spank her child. Therefore, the fact that discipline beliefs has a stronger relationship with externalizing behaviors than does spanking frequency may
suggest that there are other strict discipline strategies that are more detrimental for children than simply spanking. The relationship between spanking frequency and discipline beliefs was positively significantly correlated. This was an expected correlation as it is predictable that mothers that have higher beliefs in discipline and control would use more physical discipline with their children (McLoyd, et al., 2007).

However, after computing the regression analysis, there was no longer significant relationships between discipline beliefs or behaviors with externalizing behaviors. When each one was being controlled for, only maternal depression had a significant relationship with externalizing behaviors. This correlation was positive.

**Mothers with high discipline beliefs**

For mothers with high discipline beliefs, children’s externalizing behavior was positively associated with physical discipline. One explanation for this is the coercion cycles previously discussed in this paper. The relationship does not identify which direction it acts- whether children with more externalizing behavior get spanked more frequently, or if more frequent spanking causes externalizing behavior. This could be due to coercive cycles in which a child with a difficult temperament encourages more discipline from his/her parent, which in turn exacerbates the behavior problems (Deater-Deckard, et al., 1997; Lau et al., 2006). The other direction could be that the behavior problems develop as a result of a parent’s use of physical discipline. There are a number of explanations
for this: the parent models aggression to the child; the child fails to develop appropriate self-control; or the child learns to over-attribute experiences as hostile (Gershoff, 2002).

**Mothers with low discipline beliefs**

For mothers with low discipline beliefs, children’s externalizing behavior decreased as physical discipline increased. Thus, for mothers with low discipline beliefs, the interaction between beliefs and behaviors is associated with less externalizing behavior in toddlers. One explanation for this is that a mother that does not firmly believe in spanking would only use it in serious situations, and so the child would immediately comply. Mothers with lower discipline beliefs spank their children less often than mothers with high discipline beliefs, and so they might regularly use different discipline strategies. If they are used to using reasoning strategies, for example, then it is likely that they would continue to do so even if the situation called for physical discipline. Literature has shown that the context of the spanking influences the outcomes on the child, and use of reasoning accompanying the spanking would allow the child to understand the punishment and the parent (Larzelere, 2000; Lau, et al., 2006).

**Limitations and Future Directions**

A primary strength of this study is that is specifically a Mexican-American sample. There is a lack of research on minorities’ discipline beliefs, practices, and outcomes on children outside of African Americans, and Mexican-Americans
are one of these under researched minorities. The language of the interview is an estimated measure of the mother’s acculturation. This was significantly positively correlated only with income, but also marginally correlated with maternal discipline beliefs, suggesting that the less acculturated the mother was, the stronger her belief in physical discipline. This could support the theory that minorities believe in harsher discipline because the environment demands it in order for their children to grow up successful (Varela, et al., 2004).

This study was conducted with a relatively small sample from the Tucson community, limiting generalizability. Externalizing behaviors are fairly stable throughout the lifespan, but not until early school years (Deater-Deckard & Dodge, 1997). The children in this study were young; and it is possible that these behavioral tendencies would not be fully developed. It is also possible that mothers who intend to use physical discipline would not have been spanking their children for long enough for this study to detect effects on externalizing behavior. A majority of parents begin spanking after children are aged two (Larzelere, 2000; Berlin, 2009). In addition, the cross-sectional design of this study allows only a look at the associations between externalizing behavior and discipline beliefs and behaviors at one point in time, preventing us from knowing information about the causation in the relationship. A longitudinal design would allow researchers to further understand the direction of the relationship between the interaction of discipline beliefs and behaviors with externalizing symptoms. A longitudinal study would also show the stabilization of externalizing behavior as the children got older.
Another limitation was that this study was completed only with mothers. Further research investigating discipline beliefs and behaviors should examine both parents’ responses. All information was mother-reported, and so, all findings are relying on the honesty and accuracy of mothers’ assessments. Maternal depression was included as a covariate in the regression models in order to help account for this bias.

**Implications**

This study highlights the importance of knowing multiple factors about a parent, such as a mother’s beliefs about discipline as well as her actual discipline behaviors. The outcomes of physical punishment have many factors that need to be considered before research concludes that it is an overall negative experience for children. This study shows that maternal discipline beliefs and practices need to examined as they interact with each other, not simply as they correlate with child externalizing behaviors. More research is needed to understand why the relationship between spanking and externalizing behaviors is opposite in mothers with high discipline beliefs versus mothers with low discipline beliefs. There also needs to be more research in more specific populations, examining context of the discipline, in order to understand when and for whom it is appropriate. Child development experts and programs must be contextually sensitive in order to provide the most assistance, because depending on the situation, similar parenting strategies can have different outcomes in children.
REFERENCES


Table 1. Bivariate Correlations

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* \(p<.05\), ** \(p<.01\), + \(p<.10\)

\(^a\) 0 = English, 1 = Spanish
Table 2. Hierarchical Regression Models

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<td>74.93**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p <.05, ** p < .01
Figure 1

$y = \text{Externalizing behaviors}$

MLR 2-Way Interaction Plot

High beliefs
Mean beliefs
Low beliefs