

# The Moderating Effects of Gender and Ethnicity on Abuse and Childhood Problem Behaviors

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## Background

- In 2015, there were 683,497 victims of child abuse and neglect across the United States in the year (Tennessee CASA Association, 2020).
- Effects of abuse and neglect include brain damage, back problems, high blood pressure, arthritis, heart attack, malnutrition, vision problems, migraines, stroke, chronic fatigue, chronic bronchitis, lung disease, cancer, bowel disease, diabetes, and death (CDC, n.d.; Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2019; National Children's Alliance, 2019).
- The victims of childhood physical abuse are vastly different, and they deserve to have the proper support available that both acknowledges and accommodates for the diverse needs of victims from different ethnic gender groups.

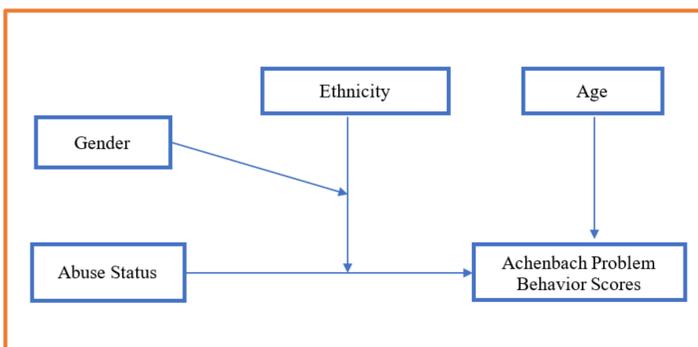
## Purpose of Study

To determine if there are differences in children's problem behaviors between students who have been exposed to physical abuse and those who have not, and if the problem behaviors are moderated by gender and ethnicity.

### Research Questions:

- Are there differences in children's problem behaviors as measured by the Achenbach CBCL (withdrawn, somatic, anxiety/depression, social problems, thought problems, attention problems, delinquent behavior, aggressive behavior) between students who have been exposed to physical abuse and those who have not, controlling for age?
- Will the relationship between children's problem behaviors as measured by the Achenbach CBCL, be moderated by gender and ethnicity, controlling for age?

## Study Conceptual Model



## Method

Data Source	NDACAN Data set 112: Social Relationships of Physically Abused Schoolchildren
Sample	100 physically abused children 100 non-abused children
Statistical Analysis	3-way Multivariate Analysis of Covariance
Dependent variables	Achenbach Problem Behavior Scores
Independent variables	Abuse Status
Moderator Variables	Gender & Ethnicity
Covariate	Age

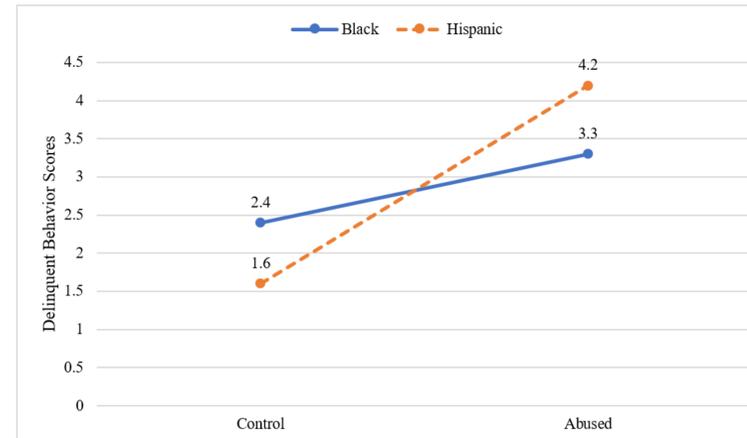
## Sample Demographics

	Age	
	Control Children	Abused Children
8	1% (n = 1)	0% (n = 0)
9	18% (n = 18)	14% (n = 14)
10	36% (n = 36)	41% (n = 41)
11	28% (n = 28)	31% (n = 31)
12	15% (n = 15)	12% (n = 12)
13	2% (n = 2)	2% (n = 2)
	Gender	
Male	65% (n = 65)	65% (n = 65)
Female	35% (n = 35)	35% (n = 35)
	Ethnicity	
Black	44% (n = 44)	50% (n = 50)
Hispanic	49% (n = 49)	41% (n = 41)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100% (n = 100)</b>	<b>100% (n = 100)</b>

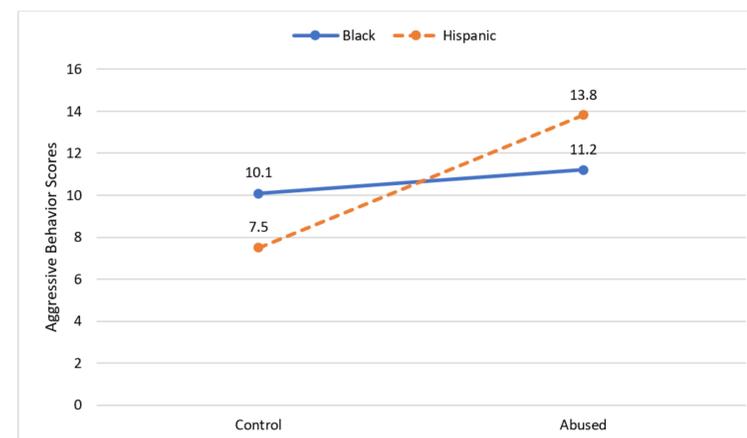
## Three-Way MANCOVA Results

- The main effect of gender was significant [Pillai's Trace = .113,  $F(8, 168) = 3.110$ ,  $p = .008$ ,  $\eta^2 = .113$ ]. The main effect of abuse was also significant [Pillai's Trace = .119,  $F(8, 168) = 2.840$ ,  $p = .006$ ,  $\eta^2 = .119$ ].
- Ethnicity significantly moderated the effect of abuse status on the CBCL total scores of delinquent behavior [ $F(1, 175) = 4.867$ ,  $p = .029$ ,  $\eta^2 = .027$ ]. Abused Hispanic children had higher total scores of delinquent behavior than Black abused children.
- Ethnicity significantly moderated the effect of abuse status on the CBCL total scores of aggressive behavior [ $F(1, 175) = 4.494$ ,  $p = .035$ ,  $\eta^2 = .025$ ]. Abused Hispanic children had higher total scores of aggressive behavior than abused Black children.
- Gender significantly moderated the effect of abuse status on the CBCL total scores of aggressive behavior [ $F(1, 175) = 3.665$ ,  $p = .057$ ,  $\eta^2 = .021$ ]. Abused males tended to have higher total scores of aggressive behavior than abused females.

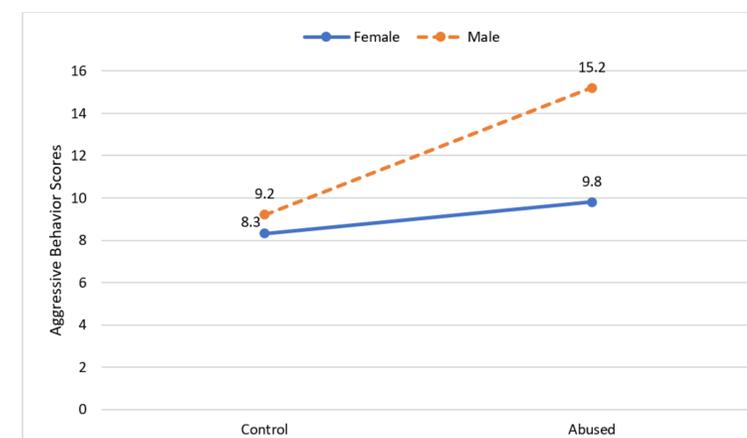
## Moderating Effect of Ethnicity on Delinquent Behavior



## Moderating Effect of Ethnicity on Aggressive Behavior



## Moderating Effect of Gender on Aggressive Behavior



## Conclusion & Recommendations

- These results begin to identify a few of the different factors that moderate the impact of physical abuse on adolescent behaviors.
- This research could also lead to earlier intervention, differentiated programming, and proactive interactions between schoolchildren and the adults around them.
- Further research on how to best mitigate the outcomes of physical abuse based on these demographic factors will help to better prepare adolescents socially and emotionally for adulthood.
- Longitudinal research on the lasting effects of such interventions based on individualized demographic factors would greatly contribute to the research on best practices for combating the physical abuse of schoolchildren.
- Research investigating the mediating factors of this relationship would greatly contribute to the research on best practices for combating the physical abuse of schoolchildren.

## References

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