

# PADDLING UPSTREAM: AN ANALYSIS OF THE DISPARITIES IN SCHOOL CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BASED ON GENDER AND RACE

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## Abstract

*The use of corporal punishment in public schools has become increasingly controversial in recent years, particularly for the allegedly disproportionate use on male and African-American students. This study investigates whether there is a greater tendency on the part of educators to use physical force instead of non-corporal punishment on students of these demographics. To do so, this study looks at the statistical differences in the frequency of corporal punishment inflicted on males as compared to females and on African-American students as compared to white students. This research is then compared to data regarding how often students from each of these demographics receive nonphysical punishment, as represented by both in-school and out-of-school suspensions. Ultimately, this study concludes that male students are indeed disciplined using corporal punishment rather than suspension at a disproportionate rate. While African-American students do not appear to receive a disproportionate amount of corporal punishment overall, this study does conclude that African-American students usually receive both corporal punishments and suspensions at a higher rate than would be expected based on enrollment.*

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## Introduction

Jayden is an African-American boy in the fifth grade who attends a public school in rural Mississippi. His mother stretches her income to cover basic necessities, but new clothes and accessories are never at the top of the family shopping list. Still, she tries to dress her children as neatly as possible. One day, Jayden shows up to school without wearing a belt, violating the school's dress code. His teacher sends him to the principal for punishment. The principal picks up a shaved-down baseball bat propped up in the corner of his office, makes Jayden bend over and tuck his head between his legs, and swats him on the backside.<sup>1</sup>

Melissa is a young public school teacher in a Georgia district with a history of disciplinary issues. Her first-graders, especially the boys, show her little respect, and despite repeated suspensions and detentions, their behavior has not changed. Two of her male students get into a fistfight during recess. Melissa is powerless to physically restrain them; the instigator taunts her, jeering, "You can't do nothing to us." Every time the boys are suspended, they get further behind the class in their studies, making them even more likely to be distracted and disruptive in class.

The use of corporal punishment in schools is highly contested. Some advocate for its complete abolition; others debate when and how it can be appropriately used. In some cases, like Melissa's, supporters see corporal punishment as a necessary tool to restrain unruly students and to enable teachers to maintain order and authority. In other cases, such as Jayden's, it can be abused and unfairly used on particular demographic groups. Critics have alleged that teachers are more likely to use physical force against male and African-American students, linking it to a discriminatory perception of aggression. If these accusations are true, this is an unacceptable discrepancy within the American education system. However, if they are unfounded, this is a serious accusation to level against well-meaning teachers.

This study examines whether the proportions of males and African-American students who receive corporal punishment, as compared to females and white students, significantly differs from the proportion of males and African-American students who receive nonphysical punishments (represented by statistics on school suspensions). The hypothesis presented in this study is that the disparity in use of corporal punishment will not significantly differ from that of suspensions.

If the hypothesis is correct, that conclusion does not necessarily eliminate the possibility of discrimination, since both punishments could still be levied more

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<sup>1</sup> While fictitious, this story is not implausible. The use of corporal punishment on students who violate dress code by not wearing a belt was recorded in an interview by the Human Rights Watch (2018) with a fifth-grade girl in Mississippi in 2007, while the use of a shaved-down baseball bat was documented in another Human Rights Watch interview with former Houston teacher Jimmy Dunne in 2008.

frequently against male and African-American students. However, it would seem to indicate that there is not a specific inclination on the part of educators to use physical force (as opposed to nonphysical punishment) on males and students of color. A discrepancy could simply reflect the frequency of behavioral infractions, such as a general tendency on the part of boys to be rowdier in classroom environments. Conversely, it could also indicate situational discrimination.

If the hypothesis is incorrect and there is a visible difference between corporal and nonphysical punishment, it may suggest that these demographic groups more frequently commit the kinds of disciplinary infractions that teachers typically punish corporally, such as fistfighting. However, it may also show a discriminatory tendency on the part of educators to use physical force against students that they unfairly stereotype as rougher and more aggressive.

## Literature Review

In a report on the prevalence and disparities of corporal punishment in public schools, Gershoff and Font (2016) noted that corporal punishment by public educators is permitted in 19 states, although it is only exercised on less than 0.5% of schoolchildren. The practice as it remains is controversial; it is publicly denounced by 34 prominent national organizations, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Bar Association, the Human Rights Watch, and the National Education Association (Gershoff & Font, 2016). Despite vocal condemnation, the Supreme Court has upheld corporal punishment in schools as constitutional. In *Ingraham v. Wright* (1977), the Court concluded that corporal punishment in schools does not constitute cruel and unusual punishment as long as it is reasonable and not excessive. The prerogative of educators to physically punish students has roots in the doctrine of *in loco parentis*, originally linked to school personnel by William Blackstone in 1770 and defined by Conte (2000) as “the right to act as parents would when responding to disciplinary problems” (p. 195).

Many recent studies and analyses have concluded that corporal punishment in schools disproportionately affects particular demographic groups, such as male and African-American students. A joint letter regarding nondiscriminatory administration of school discipline from the Department of Justice and the Department of Education listed corporal punishment as a potential example of “disparate impact,” a violation of federal law that occurs when schools “implement facially neutral policies and practices that, although not adopted with the intent to discriminate, nonetheless have an unjustified effect of discriminating against students on the basis of race” (Lhamon, 2014, para. 24). In an analysis of corporal punishment practices in Mississippi, Williams-Damond (2014) suggested that the number of incidents of corporal punishment applied to males and African-Americans “could be

considered indicative of a potential human and civil rights issue” (p. 132). An article by the Brookings Institution concluded that the racial discrepancy “is a reminder that some aspects of the ‘bad old days’ are not fully behind us” (Startz, 2016, para. 1). James Gregory (1995) asserted that “there may simply be a greater willingness on the part of school personnel to hit children who are Black and male” (p. 459).

Gershoff and Font (2016) noted the concentration of states that practice school corporal punishment in the South, placing the center of concentration in Arkansas, Alabama, and Mississippi. They considered the possibility that African-American children might simply be more likely to attend a school that practices corporal punishment. With a few exceptions, corporal punishment is generally more prevalent in the South, which historically has a larger African-American population. However, they found that white children were “generally more likely than Black children to attend a school that uses corporal punishment” (Gershoff & Font, 2016, p. 10). The Human Rights Watch (2008) noted that “some might argue that African-American students are punished more because they commit more serious disciplinary infractions, or because they commit a higher number of minor disciplinary infractions” (p. 75). However, they concluded that no information was available from the Department of Education regarding the ratios of major and minor infractions committed by African-American as opposed to white students.

Regarding the disparity between male and female students receiving corporal punishment, some have noted that males are more often perceived as aggressive while females are considered more physically fragile (Williams-Damond, 2014). Others cite common social aversions to hitting girls or an expectation that boys should be punished more harshly to prepare them for “different obstacles in life” (Human Rights Watch, 2008, p. 70). Gershoff and Font (2016) admitted to differences in the frequency of misbehavior between males and females but claimed it does not account for all of the disparity in physical punishment.

Additionally, Gershoff and Font (2016) drew a correlation between perceived discrimination in the application of corporal punishment and lowered self-esteem in affected students, as well as heightened rates of depression and anxiety. They also suggested that it negatively impacts school behavior, which “may in turn lead to exacerbation of discipline disparities” (Gershoff & Font, 2016, p. 13).

## **Data and Methods**

This study compares the data on racial and gender breakdowns of students receiving corporal punishment in public elementary and secondary schools to the data regarding the racial and gender breakdowns of students receiving school suspensions. As a result, this study will analyze two main data sets from the 2013-2014 school year, both provided by the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of

Education. It also will consider data on the national average between states that have reported use of corporal punishment, as well as from representative states which actually practice corporal punishment.

First, this study will compare the number and percentage of male students who received corporal punishment in the 2013-2014 school year to the number and percentage of female students receiving corporal punishment. This information will be contrasted with the numbers and percentages of male and female students receiving in-school or out-of-school suspensions, representing nonphysical punishment.

Second, this study will examine the data regarding African-American students who were corporally punished in the 2013-2014 school year and contrast these statistics with the numbers and percentages of African-American students receiving in-school or out-of-school suspensions. In doing so, it will take into account the representation of African-American students in overall enrollment. The students surveyed in this study include those without disabilities, as well as those with disabilities served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and those with disabilities served under Section 504.

Corporal punishment, as defined by the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (2014a), “refers to paddling, spanking, or other forms of physical punishment imposed on a student” (p. 20). In-school suspension occurs when “a child is temporarily removed from his or her regular classroom(s) for at least half a day for disciplinary purposes, but remains under the direct supervision of school personnel” (United States Department of Education, 2014a, p. 20). Out-of-school suspension occurs when “a child is temporarily removed from his/her regular school for at least half a day (but less than the remainder of the school year) for disciplinary purposes to another setting (e.g., home, behavior center)” (United States Department of Education, 2014a, p. 20).

## **Research**

### *Parameters of Corporal Punishment*

The use of corporal punishment in public schools has decreased over the past half-century, affecting less than 0.5% of students today compared with 4% of students in 1978 (Gershoff & Font, 2016). Historically, the geographical distribution of corporal punishment has been clustered in the South. For the 2006-2007 school year, all states that corporally punished more than 1000 students were in a single contiguous block in the southeast: Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and North Carolina (Breshears, 2014). However, not every district within a particular state practices corporal punishment; Gershoff and Font (2016) observed

that states such as Oklahoma, Tennessee, Louisiana, Texas, and Georgia reported “only a small percentage of districts that corporally punish more than 25% of its students” (p. 7). They also noted that corporal punishment is significantly more widespread in Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas.

Corporal punishment is normally administered by a school administrator such as a principal, assistant principal, vice principal, or coach, according to a report from the Human Rights Watch (2008). These actions are usually at a teacher’s referral, although in some cases teachers themselves will administer punishment, especially in younger grades. Schools may also coordinate with parents, allowing them to come to the school to spank their own children for infractions. In some districts, misbehaving children are given the opportunity to choose between receiving corporal punishment or a nonphysical punishment such as suspension (Human Rights Watch, 2008). Motivations for children choosing corporal punishment include avoiding the academic consequences of suspension, keeping punishment from their parents’ knowledge or their academic record, or (especially in the case of male students) presenting a tough appearance.

The infractions for which corporal punishment can be prescribed vary from minor to severe. A list of “Punishments Recommended for School Offenses” from 1928 provides a historical example of corporally punishable behaviors; it includes infractions such as “impertinence,” “purposeful misbehavior in classroom,” and “open rebellion” (James, 1928, pp. 130-131). Based on interviews with students and school personnel, the Human Rights Watch (2008) found record of corporal punishment being applied to students for untucked shirts, tardiness, disrupting class, running in the hallway, talking back to a teacher, and failing to turn in homework. The same study also found that corporal punishment had been employed against students who committed more serious infractions such as fighting, becoming intoxicated, or setting off firecrackers. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (2015), for example, reported that for the 2013-2014 school year, 36% of cases of corporal punishment dealt with “disruptive behavior,” while 20% were for fighting, aggression, bullying, or other disorderly conduct (p. 105). The remaining 44% were for bus misbehavior, disrespect of staff, cell phone use, inappropriate language, or other infractions. Corporal punishment is used predominantly on elementary school students (Gershoff & Font, 2016).

### *Gender Disparities in Application of Corporal Punishment*

Among all the states which reported use of corporal punishment to the Department of Education (2014b) for the 2013-2014 school year, 106,055 students received some sort of corporal punishment. Of these students, 79.9% were males,

while female students made up only 20.1%.<sup>2</sup> For context, 51.4% of public school students in the U.S. that year were male, while 48.6% were female (United States Department of Education, 2014e). Combining this data reveals that 0.33% of male students experienced corporal punishment, compared to 0.09% of female students: a percentage nearly four times as high for male students.

The statistics are similar in representative states. In Texas, of the 18,367 students corporally punished, 82.3% were male and only 17.7% were female (United States Department of Education, 2014b). In Oklahoma, 82.1% were male, compared with 17.9% female. Of the states analyzed, the disparity was highest in Florida, where 84.4% were male and only 15.6% were female (United States Department of Education, 2014b). Mississippi had the highest total number of corporally punished students in the 2013-14 school year at 24,882; of this total, 74.9% were male compared with 25.1% female (United States Department of Education, 2014b). Corporal punishment is less common in Indiana, affecting only 212 students in the 2013-14 school year, but the proportion (81.1% male compared with 18.9% female) is still comparable. While the disparity in many of these states is slightly above the national average, they all fall close to or slightly above 80%, as demonstrated in Figure 1.

The gender gap in the frequency of corporal punishment is significantly larger than the gender gap visible in statistics on school suspensions. However, suspensions are by no means applied evenly. Among the states that utilize corporal punishment,

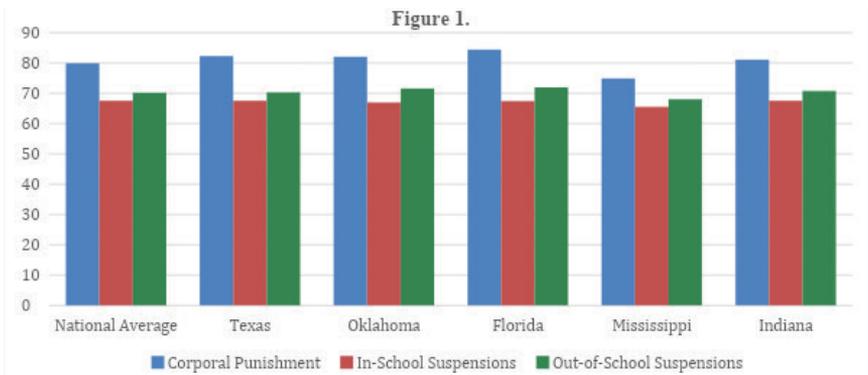


Figure 1. Male representation (by percentage) among students receiving corporal punishment compared to male representation among students receiving suspensions (United Department of Education, 2014b; 2014c; 2014d).

<sup>2</sup> This research is presented largely in percentages; for a complete comparison of both percentages and raw numbers of male and female students receiving various forms of punishment, see Appendix A.

67.6% of students who received one or more in-school suspensions during the 2013-2014 academic year were male, while 32.4% were female (United States Department of Education, 2014c). The gender disparity in each of the states surveyed was the same or slightly lower—but still within just over two percentage points of the average. In Texas, 67.5% of students receiving in-school suspensions were male, along with 67.0% in Oklahoma, 67.4% in Florida, 65.5% in Mississippi, and 67.6% in Indiana. On average, then, the percentage of in-school suspended students that were male was more than ten percentage points lower than the percentage of corporally punished students that were male (79.9%, as determined above).

Although the gender disparity in application of out-of-school suspensions is slightly higher than that of in-school suspensions, it is still noticeably lower than the disparity in application of corporal punishment. Among the states analyzed in this study, 70.2% of students who received out-of-school suspensions were male, compared with 29.8% who were female (United States Department of Education, 2014d). The disparities in representative states were within four percentage points: 70.3% male in Texas, 71.6% in Oklahoma, 72.0% in Florida, 68.0% in Mississippi, and 70.7% in Indiana. As indicated in Figure 1, although the representation of males among students receiving in-school and out-of-school suspensions is still noticeably higher than that of female students, it is significantly lower than the representation of male students receiving corporal punishment.

This disparity in use of corporal punishment against male students is consistent with a study performed by James Gregory of St. John's University (1995), which examined data from the Office for Civil Rights in 1992 and found that males accounted for 81.6% of students receiving corporal punishment. Williams-Damond (2014), in a study of corporal punishment in Mississippi, also found it to be disproportionately applied to male students. She theorized that school administrators might be more inclined to corporally punish males due to traditional assumptions of females as physically more delicate or due to a perception of male students as more aggressive.

In a study of punishments in a “large, urban midwestern public school district” from 2005-2006, Butler, Lewis, Moore, and Scott (2012) noted that female students were more likely to be disciplined using “exclusionary sanctions” such as suspension, theorizing that the infractions of female students traditionally tend to be nonphysical while male students more often engage in physically aggressive disobedience (p. 13, 19). The tendency of male students to engage in more physical misbehaviors is one suggested explanation for their overrepresentation among corporally punished students.

However, Gershoff and Font (2016) noted that while “boys have been found to be twice as likely as girls to be referred to the school office for discipline,” they are four times as likely to be corporally punished, a number consistent with the findings of this study (p. 11). The Human Rights Watch (2008) cited one teacher in

Mississippi who said of the gender disparity in corporal punishment at her school, “I guess [girls are] more fragile, and a lot of them could be pregnant and we wouldn’t know it” (p. 70). A father interviewed in the same study commented that while he would not permit his daughter to be physically punished, he was harder on his sons as a way to prepare them for “different obstacles in life” (Human Rights Watch, 2008, p. 70).

### *Racial Disparities in Application of Corporal Punishment*

Gender is not the only demographic where disparities in the application of corporal punishment exist. Among the 106,055 recorded instances of corporal punishment in the 2013-2014 school year, 37.7% involved African-American students compared with 50.0% involving non-Hispanic white students (United States Department of Education, 2014b). The other 12.2% involved students of American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian, Latino, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander heritage, or students of two or more races; these demographics are outside the limits of this study. While there were numerically less African-American students corporally punished than white students, the disparity becomes evident when contextualized by the number of African-American students enrolled in the states which practice corporal punishment. Overall, African-American students make up only 19.7% of public school students in these states, whereas white students represent 50.6% of enrollment (United States Department of Education, 2014b). The representation of African-Americans among corporally punished students is then almost twice as high as their representation among total students enrolled.<sup>3</sup>

Though the extent of the disparity varied in the representative states surveyed, African-American students were represented among corporally punished students at a higher percentage than they were represented in total enrollment in every state but Oklahoma. In Texas, African-Americans made up 17.2% of corporally punished students compared to 12.6% of total students enrolled (United States Department of Education, 2014b). Oklahoma, notably, had a lower percentage of corporally punished students who were African-American (5.7%) than students enrolled who were African-American (9.1%). African-American students in Florida were represented approximately equally in enrollment and corporal punishment, composing 25.3% of corporally punished students and 22.9% of total enrollment (United States Department of Education, 2014b). Representation of African-American students among corporally-punished students was highest in Mississippi, where they accounted for 64.3% of corporally punished students and 49.6% of students enrolled. The disparity was greatest in Indiana, although the number

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix B for a complete comparison of percentages alongside raw numbers of African-American students receiving various forms of discipline.

of corporally punished students was relatively small. Of the students corporally punished, 60.8% were African-American, although African-American students compose only 11.8% of Indiana public school students (United States Department of Education, 2014b). Unsurprisingly, based on studies referenced above, African-American students were overrepresented among corporally punished students in the majority of the states surveyed, as well as on average between the states which practice corporal punishment.

What was unanticipated by the hypothesis of this study was that African-American students were sometimes *more* overrepresented among suspended students than corporally punished students. Among the states which practice corporal punishment, African-American students composed 34.6% of students receiving in-school suspensions and 45.2% of students receiving out-of-school suspensions (compared to 37.7% of corporally punished students, as reported above) (United States Department of Education, 2014c, 2014d). In Texas, they composed 22.1% of in-school suspensions and 31.0% of out-of-school suspensions, both percentages higher than the representation of African-American students among those receiving corporal punishment in that state (United States Department of Education, 2014c, 2014d). Likewise in Oklahoma, African-American students composed a greater percent of students receiving in-school and out-of-school suspensions (19.6% and 27.3%, respectively) than of students receiving corporal punishment. The same was

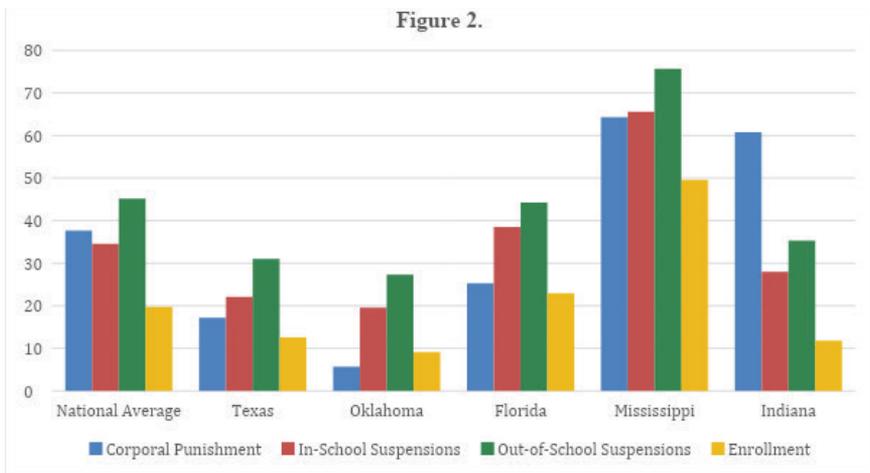


Figure 2. African-American representation (by percentage) among students receiving corporal punishment, in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and enrollment (United States Department of Education, 2014b; 2014c; 2014d; 2014e).

true in Florida, with African-Americans receiving 38.5% of in-school suspensions and 44.3% of out-of-school suspensions, and in Mississippi, where African-Americans received 65.6% of in-school suspensions and 75.7% of out-of-school suspensions. Among the representative states surveyed, only in Indiana were African-American students less represented among suspended students than corporally punished students; there, African American students made up 28.0% of students receiving in-school suspensions and 35.3% of students receiving out-of-school suspensions. Although the high rate of African-American students receiving corporal punishment in Indiana may be suspect, it should be noted that corporal punishment in Indiana is relatively infrequent (with 212 cases reported for the 2013-2014 school year), so the percentages may be more subject to annual variation.

With the exception of Indiana, corporal punishment does not appear to be applied to African-American students at a higher rate than suspensions. However, in most cases, the representation of African-American students among both corporally punished students and suspended students is greater than might be expected based on enrollment.

The overrepresentation of African-Americans among corporally punished students appears to have decreased over time. Gregory (1995) conducted a study analyzing data reported by the Office for Civil Rights in 1992 and found that African-American students accounted for 44.4% of the recipients of corporal punishment. The Human Rights Watch (2008) also reported that the overrepresentation of African-American students among corporally punished students has continued over the past 30 years despite an overall decrease in the prevalence of physical punishment in schools.

In an article published by Brookings, Startz (2016) noted that African-American students statistically tend to live in states that are more likely to practice corporal punishment, positing that this may be one explanation for their overrepresentation among students who are corporally punished. A report by the Human Rights Watch (2008) found this to be an unconvincing argument, noting that African-American students are still overrepresented even when research is limited to the 13 states that paddled more than 1,000 students in 2006. Gershoff and Font (2016) also researched this possibility, comparing by state the percentages of both African-American and white students who attend schools where corporal punishment is practiced. They found that it was actually more likely for white students to attend corporally-punishing schools. Additionally, Gershoff and Font (2016) found that whether African-American students are in the minority at their school had no effect on the likelihood of racial disparity in the application of corporal punishment. One Mississippi teacher suggested to the Human Rights Watch (2008) that corporal punishment was applied disproportionately to students based on their skin color because marks and bruising would be less visible on darker skin.

In an analysis of the disparate rate of suspensions applied to African-American students, Butler et al. (2012) noted that other variables which were “closely intertwined with race” such as “low socioeconomic status, underachievement, urban residence, and school desegregation” contributed to the frequency of suspensions (p. 12). J. Wallace, Goodkind, C. Wallace, and Bauchman (2008), in a study of disciplinary disparities among high school students, noted several potential reasons for disproportionate application of discipline based on race. They first posited that African-American students might have more behavioral infractions, noting their higher likelihood to bring a weapon to school than white students. However, they observed that the disparities in infractions such as these or even in the racial makeup of students “sent to the office” or detained were not as severe as the disparities for punishments such as suspension or expulsion. The Department of Education has not comprehensively collected data on the kinds of offenses students commit, so it is indeterminable whether African-American students (or male students, for that matter) commit more serious disciplinary offenses that might be perceived as deserving of corporal punishment.

Wallace et al. (2008) noted that some of the disparity may be due to discriminatory bias on the part of school administrators, although they admitted that proof of such bias is outside the limits of their study. They did suggest that language and cultural gaps between African-American students and school personnel may create an environment where teachers sometimes punish for behavior that was exaggerated by a cultural disconnect. Arcia (2007), in a study of suspensions of African-American students, suggested that teachers might misunderstand an “adolescent Black culture of toughness and defiance” as disruptive or aggressive (p. 598).

### *Reporting Corporal Punishment*

In considering the above data, it should also be noted that not every usage of corporal punishment is necessarily reported. Interviews conducted by the Human Rights Watch (2008) indicated that corporal punishment often occurs “in a chaotic environment in which many instances of the practice are not recorded” (p. 3). Gregory (1995) noted that the stigma and controversial political environment surrounding corporal punishment may also discourage school administrators from accurately reporting every instance of corporal punishment. Especially if school administrators are aware of the suspicion surrounding the disproportionate application of corporal punishment to male or African-American students, they may fail to report instances which could increase the appearance of discriminatory bias. As a result, the proportional imbalance may actually be higher than indicated by the statistics above.

## Conclusion

This study finds that the disproportionate rate at which male students are corporally punished is more pronounced than the disproportionate rate at which they are suspended. It also finds that in most states analyzed, the overrepresentation of African-American students among corporally punished students is not as high as their overrepresentation among suspended students. However, both male students and African-American students receive corporal punishment and suspensions at a higher rate than would be expected based on percentage of total enrollment.

The hypothesis presented in this study, that the disparity in use of corporal punishment would not significantly differ from that of suspensions, was incorrect regarding male students. As applied to African-American students, data was less uniform across states; the hypothesis was correct when compared to the average of all states which practice corporal punishment, but the percentages in each state varied.

The fact that male students and African-American students are corporally punished at a greater rate than their female or white counterparts does not necessarily prove discriminatory tendencies on the part of school administrators. However, the apparent imbalance should encourage parents and educators to critically examine the exercise of discipline in public schools. Especially given the greater discrepancy in application of corporal punishment to male students, there may be some foundation for the claim that school administrators are more disposed to use physical force against male students due to perceptions of aggression, founded or otherwise.

If there are implications of discrimination in the use of corporal punishment in public schools, this is a worthwhile area for further research. It would be helpful to examine the kinds of misbehaviors children who are corporally punished commit and to research whether male and female students are corporally punished for the same kinds of offenses. Likewise, it would be worthwhile to note whether African-American students are corporally punished for the same kinds of offenses as white students or Hispanic students. Such research could help shed light on whether the findings of this paper suggest discriminatory practices on the part of educators. It would also be interesting to research the representation of other racial or ethnic minorities, such as Native American or Hispanic/Latino students, among students who are corporally punished. Finally, the application of corporal punishment to students with disabilities is another notable area for further research.

If the discrepancies noted by this study are indicative of discriminatory tendencies, then these implications make it an area of study well worth further investigation. Punishment for wrong behavior is a crucial, if unpleasant, aspect of a child's upbringing, but it should cultivate desires and habits of right behavior.

If punishment is executed improperly, its repercussions can follow a child for the rest of his life. A student should be punished out of a tempered and earnest desire to train him in acting rightly—if this motivation is supplanted by discrimination, punishment ceases to serve its proper aim.

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**Appendix A**

*Male Students Compared to Female Students Receiving Corporal Punishment, In-School Suspensions, and Out-of-School Suspensions in the 2013-2014 School Year*

	Number of Students Corporally Punished	Male Students Corporally Punished	Percentage of Corporally Punished Students that are Male	Female Students Corporally Punished	Percentage of Corporally Punished Students that are Female
Total in states with corporal punishment	106,055	84,738	79.9%	21,317	20.1%
Texas	18,367	15,109	82.3%	3,258	17.7%
Oklahoma	6,348	5,212	82.1%	1,136	17.9%
Florida	1,936	1,634	84.4%	302	15.6%
Mississippi	24,882	18,649	74.9%	6,233	25.1%
Indiana	212	172	81.1%	40	18.9%

*Table A1.* Students receiving corporal punishment in the 2013-2014 school year (United States Department of Education, 2014b).

	Number of Students Suspended	Male Students Suspended	Percentage of Suspended Students that are Male	Female Students Suspended	Percentage of Suspended Students that are Female
Total in states with corporal punishment	1,944,540	1,315,303	67.6%	629,237	32.4%
Texas	514,312	347,039	67.5%	167,273	32.5%
Oklahoma	44,476	29,810	67.0%	14,666	33.0%
Florida	163,592	110,330	67.4%	53,262	32.6%
Mississippi	58,561	38,375	65.5%	20,186	34.5%
Indiana	73,781	49,869	67.6%	23,912	32.4%

*Table A2.* Students receiving one or more in-school suspensions in the 2013-2014 school year (United States Department of Education, 2014c).

	Students Suspended	Male Students Suspended	Percentage of Suspended Students that are Male	Female Students Suspended	Percentage of Suspended Students that are Female
Total in states with corporal punishment	1,561,637	1,095,659	70.2%	465,978	29.8%
Texas	246,474	173,302	70.3%	73,172	29.7%
Oklahoma	38,622	27,667	71.6%	10,955	28.4%
Florida	136,931	98,570	72.0%	38,361	28.0%
Mississippi	47,813	32,503	68.0%	15,310	32.0%
Indiana	69,891	49,417	70.7%	20,474	29.3%

*Table A3.* Students receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions in the 2013-2014 school year (United States Department of Education, 2014d).

## Appendix B

### *African-American Students Receiving Corporal Punishment, In-School Suspensions, and Out-of-School Suspensions in the 2013-2014 School Year, Proportional to Enrollment*

	African American Students	Percentage of African American Students	Students Corporally Punished	Corporally Punished African American Students	Percentage of Corporally Punished Students that are African American
Total in states with corporal punishment	6,558,899	19.7%	106,055	40,023	37.7%
Texas	649,428	12.6%	18,367	3,150	17.2%
Oklahoma	62,481	9.1%	6,348	359	5.7%
Florida	622,750	22.9%	1,936	490	25.3%
Mississippi	245,151	49.6%	24,882	16,010	64.3%
Indiana	121,446	11.8%	212	129	60.8%

*Table B1.* Students receiving corporal punishment in the 2013-2014 school year (United States Department of Education, 2014b; 2014e).

	African American Students Enrolled	Percentage of African American Students	Students Suspended	Suspended African American Students	Percentage of Suspended Students that are African American
Total in states with corporal punishment	6,558,899	19.7%	1,944,540	673,188	34.6%
Texas	649,428	12.6%	514,312	113,598	22.1%
Oklahoma	62,481	9.1%	44,476	8,731	19.6%
Florida	622,750	22.9%	163,592	62,973	38.5%
Mississippi	245,151	49.6%	58,561	38,411	65.6%
Indiana	121,446	11.8%	73,781	20,650	28.0%

*Table B2.* Students receiving one or more in-school suspensions in the 2013-2014 school year (United States Department of Education, 2014c; 2014e).

	African American Students	Percentage of African American Students	Total Number of Students Suspended	Suspended Students that are African American	Percentage of Suspended Students that are African American
Total in states with corporal punishment	6,558,899	19.7%	1,561,637	705,081	45.2%
Texas	649,428	12.6%	246,474	76,431	31.0%
Oklahoma	62,481	9.1%	38,622	10,549	27.3%
Florida	622,750	22.9%	136,931	60,625	44.3%
Mississippi	245,151	49.6%	47,813	36,188	75.7%
Indiana	121,446	11.8%	69,891	24,674	35.3%

*Table B3.* Students receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions in the 2013-2014 school year (United States Department of Education, 2014d; 2014e).