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Born to Achieve: Educational Attainment Among Hispanics
Maren Christiansen, Bree Hernandez, Alan Swenson, Logan Theodore, and Emily Yager

Research Question
We predict that U.S.-born Hispanics will have higher educational achievement than foreign-born Hispanic immigrants in the United States.

Method
- We compared the means of standardized test scores, parent’s education, language acquisition, parental involvement, family composition, and income for U.S.-born Hispanics and foreign-born Hispanics.
- We created three linear regression models to measure the interactions between variables as well as to show the amount of variance in test scores that each explains.

Variables
- Educational Achievement: dependent variable created by looking at standardized test scores for reading and math.
- U.S. vs. Foreign-Born: moderator created by looking at where respondent was born.
- How Long Respondent has Been in U.S.: how long ago respondent came to U.S.
- Parental Educational Attainment: highest level or degree completed by father and mother.
- Mothers and fathers have both on average, graduated from high school and attended, but not completed, junior college.
- Respondent’s Language Acquisition: does respondent usually speak English or Spanish.
- Parental Involvement: created by looking at parental involvement in requiring homework and chores to be done as well as speaking to teachers and attending school events.
- Family Structure: who lives in same household as respondent.
- Majority of Hispanic students live with both birth parents.
- Parent’s Income: range of household income.
- For both U.S.-born Hispanics and foreign-born Hispanics their income range is $0 to $24,999.

Results
- Standardized Test Scores: There is no statistical difference between the standardized test scores of U.S.-born Hispanics and foreign-born Hispanics.
- Education: Father’s highest level of education completed is one of the best predictors of children’s standardized test scores.
- Parents of U.S.-born and foreign-born Hispanics both, on average, have equal level of education.
- Language Acquisition: The child’s primary language being English versus Spanish has no significant effect on standardized test scores.
- Parental Involvement: Parents who speak to teachers or counselors has a significant negative effect on standardized test scores.
- Family Composition: Family composition has no significant effect on standardized test scores.
- Income: Income is one of the best predictors of children’s standardized test scores.
- Parents of U.S.-born Hispanics have significantly higher income than parents of foreign-born Hispanics.

Discussion
- Our hypothesis that U.S.-born Hispanics would have higher standardized test scores than foreign-born Hispanics was incorrect - there is no difference.
- Future research should look at the correlation between family income and father’s education on standardized test scores for U.S. white children.
- If there is a correlation between family income and father’s education, then we should compare white children with Hispanic children (and look at other races as well) while controlling for father’s education and income.
- It may be that test scores among children are less affected by their race than they are by the income level of the child’s family and the child’s father’s education level.
- Rather than school programs to help minorities we would need to find a way to equalize opportunities for education and income.

Primary Conclusions
Our results indicated that U.S.-born Hispanics do not have higher levels of educational achievement than Foreign-born Hispanics.