

Parental cultural attitudes and beliefs associated with child's media viewing and habits

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Differences in parental beliefs and attitudes regarding the effects of media on early childhood development may help explain increasing racial/ethnic disparities in child media viewing/habits, according to a study by Wanjiku F. M. Njoroge, M.D., of Seattle Children's Hospital and the University of Washington, Seattle, and colleagues.

A total of 596 parents of children ages 3 to 5 years completed demographic questionnaires, reported on attitudes regarding media's risks and benefits to their children, and completed one-week media diaries in which they recorded all of the programs their children watched.

According to study results, children watched an average of 462.0 minutes of TV per week, with African American children watching more TV/DVDs per week than did children of other racial/[ethnic backgrounds](#). The relationship between child race/ethnicity and average weekly media time was no longer statistically significant after controlling for socioeconomic status (parental [educational attainment](#) and reported annual family income), indicating that the observed relationship between race/ethnicity and media time was significantly confounded by socioeconomic (SES) status. Significant differences were found between parents of ethnically/racially diverse children and parents of non-Hispanic white children regarding the perceived positive effects of TV viewing, even when [parental education](#) and family income were taken

into account.

"These findings point to an important relationship between parental attitudes/beliefs about child media use and time that could be useful for intervention work." The study concludes, "Because of the strong relationship between SES and [media exposure](#) in our sample, future research with larger samples of children from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds is warranted to better understand the complexities of race/ethnicity, family SES, and parental beliefs and attitudes on child media exposure."

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