

# No "white" child left behind: The academic achievement gap between blacks and whites

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The issue of racial inequality in education has consistently been addressed through government policy in an attempt to solve the problem of discrimination rampant in the American school system. The latest government stab at establishing equal education in America is the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). This study examines the relationship between race and composite reading and math test scores with secondary data analysis from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002) with composite model consisting of four segments: student role performance (SRP) measured with variables such as sex, race, and disabilities; schools measured with variables such as student/teacher ratio and number of school rules; families measured with variables such as family structure and socioeconomic status; and peers measured with variables such as peer influence and number of peer dropouts. Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analyses are used to examine the independent effects on test scores. Mean composite test scores show an 82.8% gap in test scores between black (44.42) and white (53.64) non-Hispanic 10th grade students. The examination of each model segment and path analysis shows student role performance factors and family factors explain more of the variance on test scores and have more of an effect on test scores than other model segments. This suggests that racial discrimination within the school setting contributes to the academic achievement gap between blacks and whites.