

# Exploring Gender Differences in Praise and Punishment of Children

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## Literature Review

- Praise can be tailored situationally and delivered in multiple formats. Person praise, process praise, social comparison praise, and tangible rewards are commonly used with children and thoroughly researched (Gunderson et al., 2013; Kamins & Dweck, 1999; Pomerantz & Kempner, 2013).
- The use of physical punishment can lead to children learning to use aggression as a means to deal with conflict, as well as, an increased tendency for suicidal thoughts in later adolescence (Kazdin, 2013; McKinney, Milone, & Renk, 2011).
- These associations, or gender schemas, vary between individuals and serve the individual by acting as a reference of how each gender should be presented (Martin & Halverson, 1983).
- An example of how gender-role beliefs can have long lasting effects is the finding that stereotypes can inhibit women from being able to see themselves as successful in non-typical female positions (Rudman & Phelan, 2010).
- The manner in which praise and punishment are employed can have a long-term implications for development (Henderlong Corpus & Ogle, 2006)
- Researchers hypothesized that participants would respond with more person praise than process with female vignettes and males will receive more discipline than females in the punishment vignette condition. It was also hypothesized that gender attitudes would predict endorsement of praise and punishment.

## Methodology

### • Procedure

- Convenience sampling was used to recruit participants in the North Texas area.
- Participants were randomly assigned into one of four conditions ( female misbehavior, male misbehavior, female prosocial behavior, or male prosocial behavior) consent was given and participants then took part in the survey. Vignettes were coded, and results were analyzed using SPSS.

### Praise Study

- 156 participants: 18-50 ( $M = 19.9$ ,  $SD = 3.8$ ).
- Population: 94% female, 6% male
- Ethnicity: 33% Hispanic, 30% Caucasian, 17% African american

### Punishment Study

- 173 participants: 18-48 ( $M = 19.9$ ,  $SD = 3.5$ )
- Population: 94% female, 6% male
- Ethnicity: 28% Hispanic, 27% Caucasian, 23% African American

### Materials:

#### • Praise Follow Up

- (Jonsson & Beach, 2012)
- “How likely are you to use the term good girl/boy with a child?”

#### • Punishment Follow Up

- Dimensions of Discipline Inventory (DDI; Strauss & Fauchier, 2012)
  - “How severe was your discipline used in this situation?”

#### • Gender Attitudes

- Attitudes Toward Women Scale (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp, 1978)
  - “Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than of a man.”

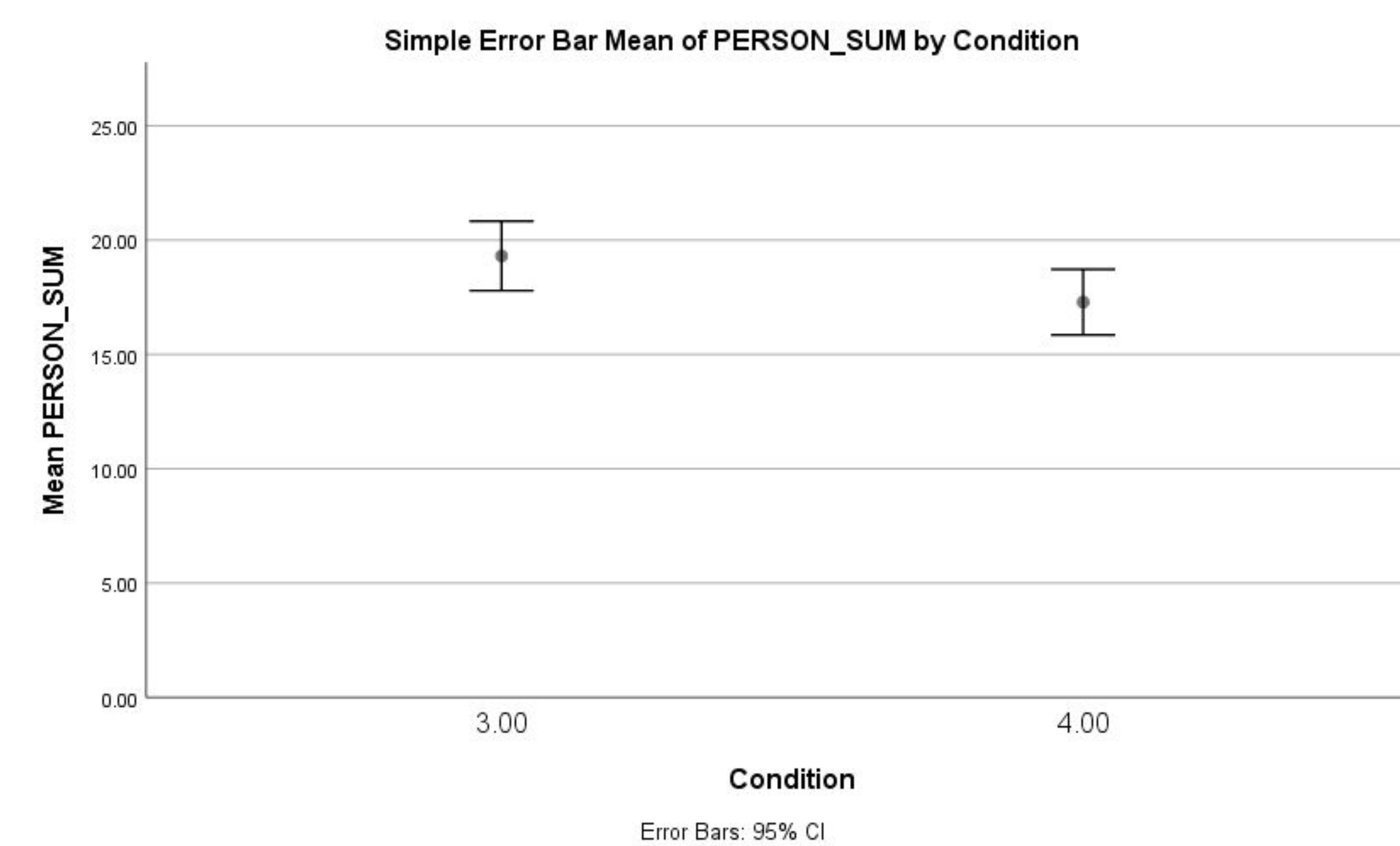
#### • Coding

- Praise (Bower & Casas, 2015)
  - Tangible Reinforcement, General Praise, Character Attribution, Parental Approval, Showing Love.
- Punishment (Van Leeuwen, Fauchier, & Straus, 2012)
  - Corporal Punishment, Deprivation of Privileges, Diversion, Explain/Teach, Ignore, Penalty Tasks, Psychological Aggression, Reward

## Results

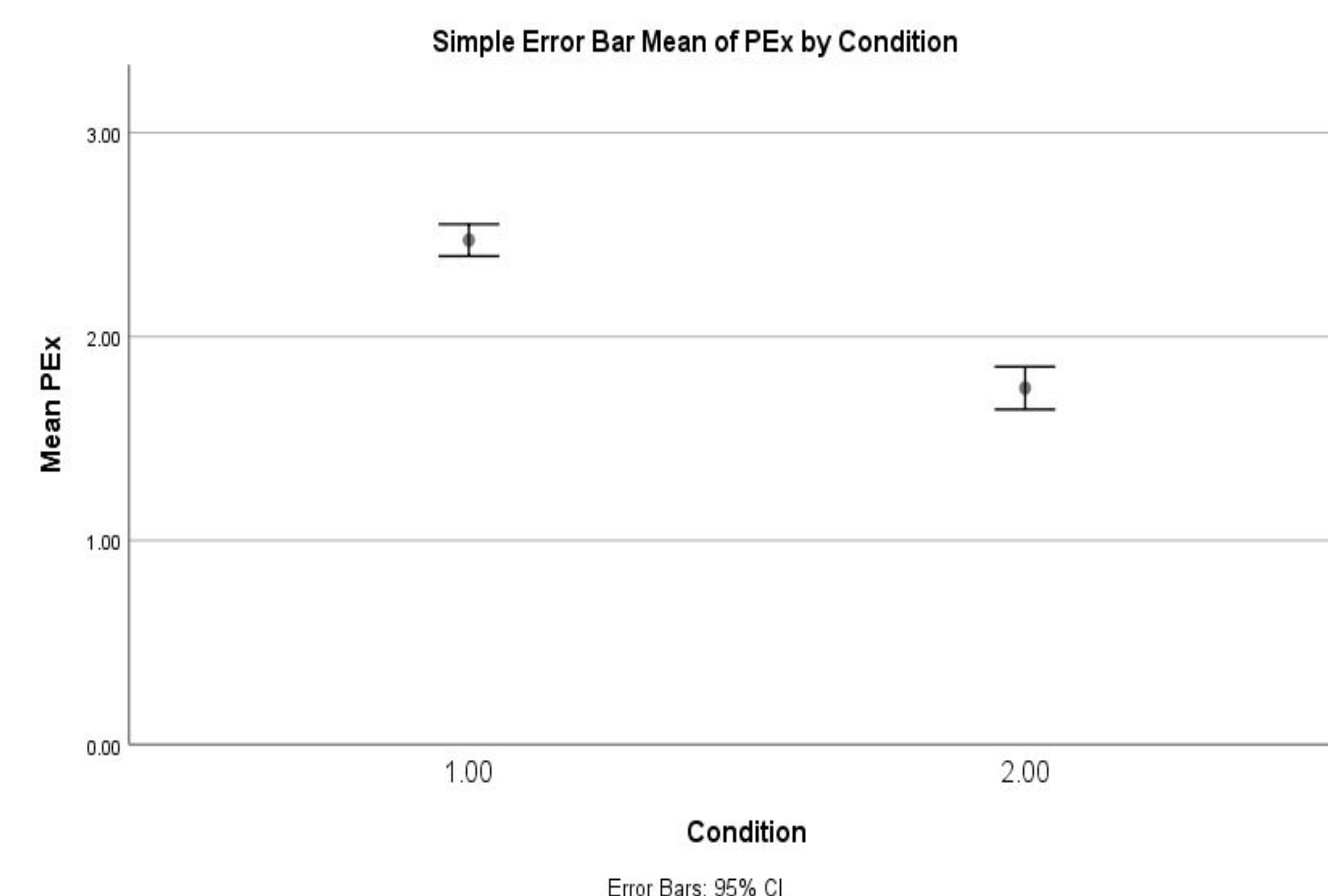
### • Praise Condition

- On average, participants endorsed person praise in the female child condition more ( $M=19.3$ ,  $SE=.76$ ) than the male child condition ( $M=17.29$ ,  $SE=.72$ ),  $t(153)=1.9$ ,  $p=.058$ .
- Gender attitude score on the AWS did not predict person praise endorsement ( $\beta= -.104$ ,  $p=.072$ ).



### • Punishment Condition

- On average, participants endorsed the use of punishment significantly more in the female child condition ( $M=63.3$ ,  $SE=.99$ ) than the male child condition ( $M=45.15$ ,  $SE= 1.37$ ),  $t(148)= 10.71$ ,  $p<.001$ . Equal variance assumption was violated.
- Gender attitude score on the AWS significantly predicted punishment endorsement ( $\beta= .017$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Attitudes scores explained 12% of the variance in punishment endorsement,  $R^2=.128$ ,  $F(1, 165)= 24.27$ ,  $p<.001$ .



## Discussion

- Results did not support original hypotheses.
- This study found female children to receive more punishment overall, than male children.
  - This finding could also lend support to the idea that female children tend to be talked to more than male (Henderlong- Corpus & Lepper, 2007).
- This study also found that participants were not more likely to receive person over process praise.

### Limitations

- Primarily female samples

### Strength

- Wide range of ethnicities

### Future Directions

- Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) will be used to analyze for psychological content, and expand understanding of these results.

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