

Introduction

Racial disparities continue to persist in the child welfare system, resulting in disproportionate representation and differential treatment for children from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Understanding the root causes, systemic factors, biases, and consequences of these disparities is vital for discovering solutions to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all children. I synthesize existing research conducted on racial disparities in child welfare, delving into systemic factors, biases, and their consequences. The dataset I most utilized is from the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN). Correlation analysis was used to show the relationship between racial disproportionality and systematic factors such as teen pregnancy rates, minimum wages, and education levels.

Literature Review

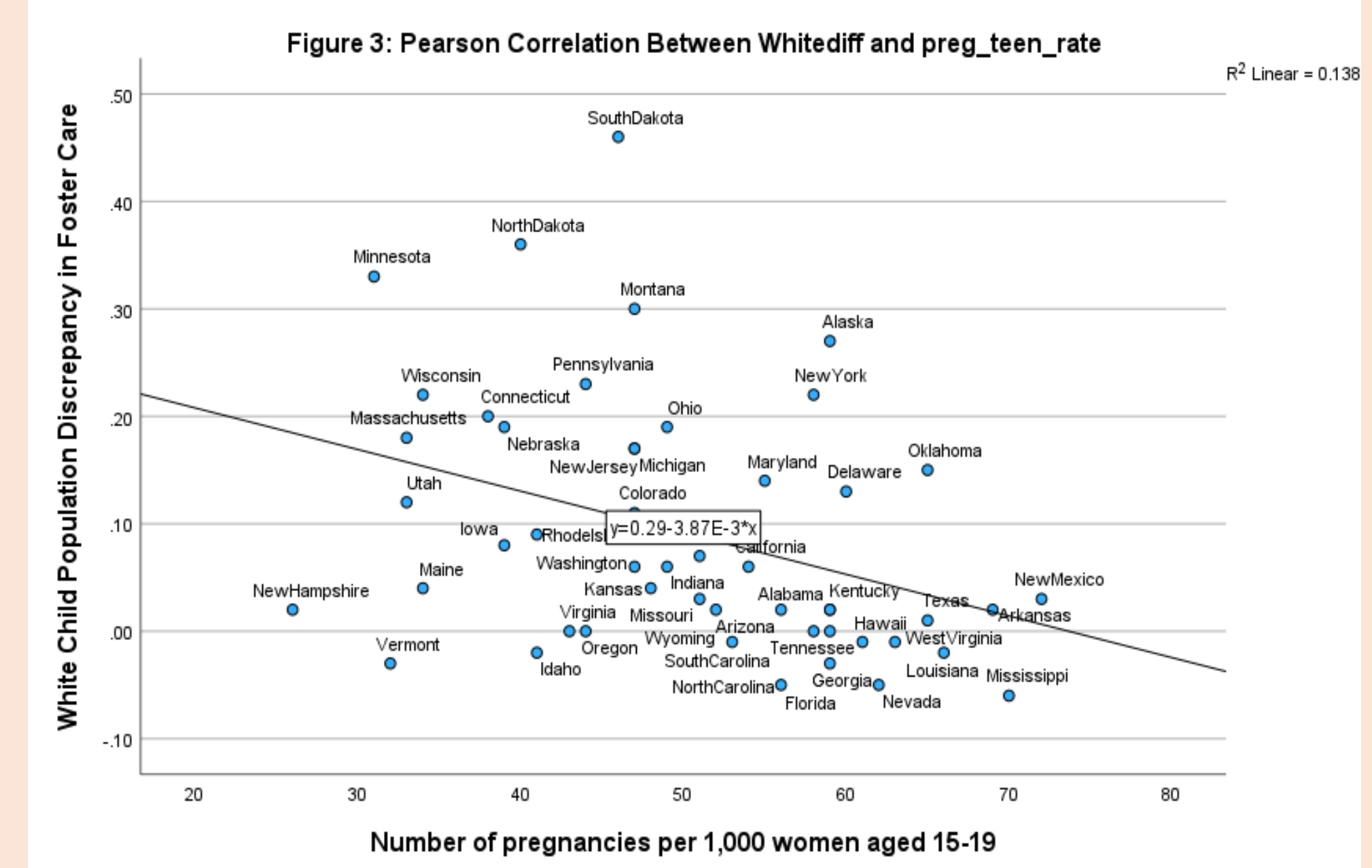
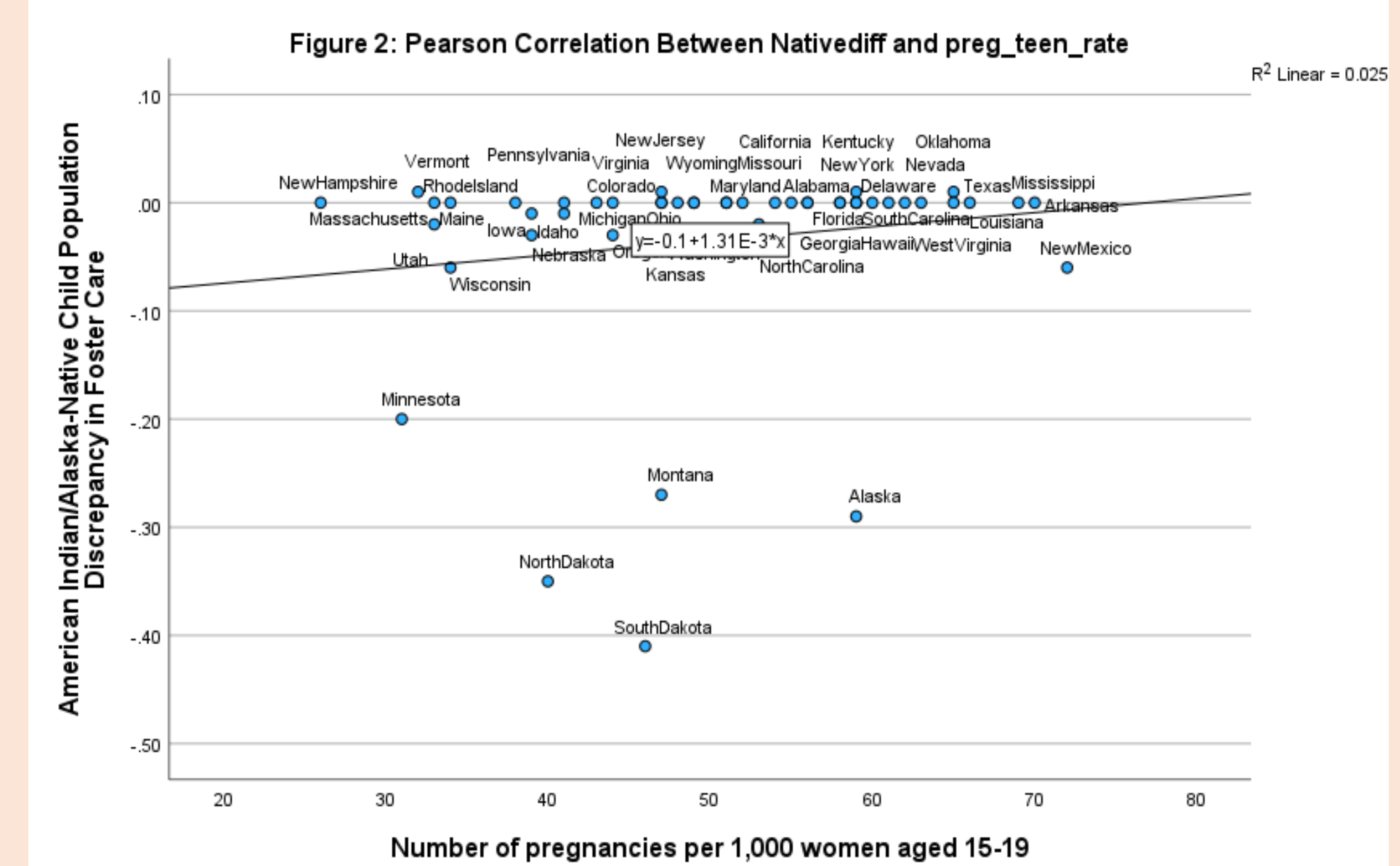
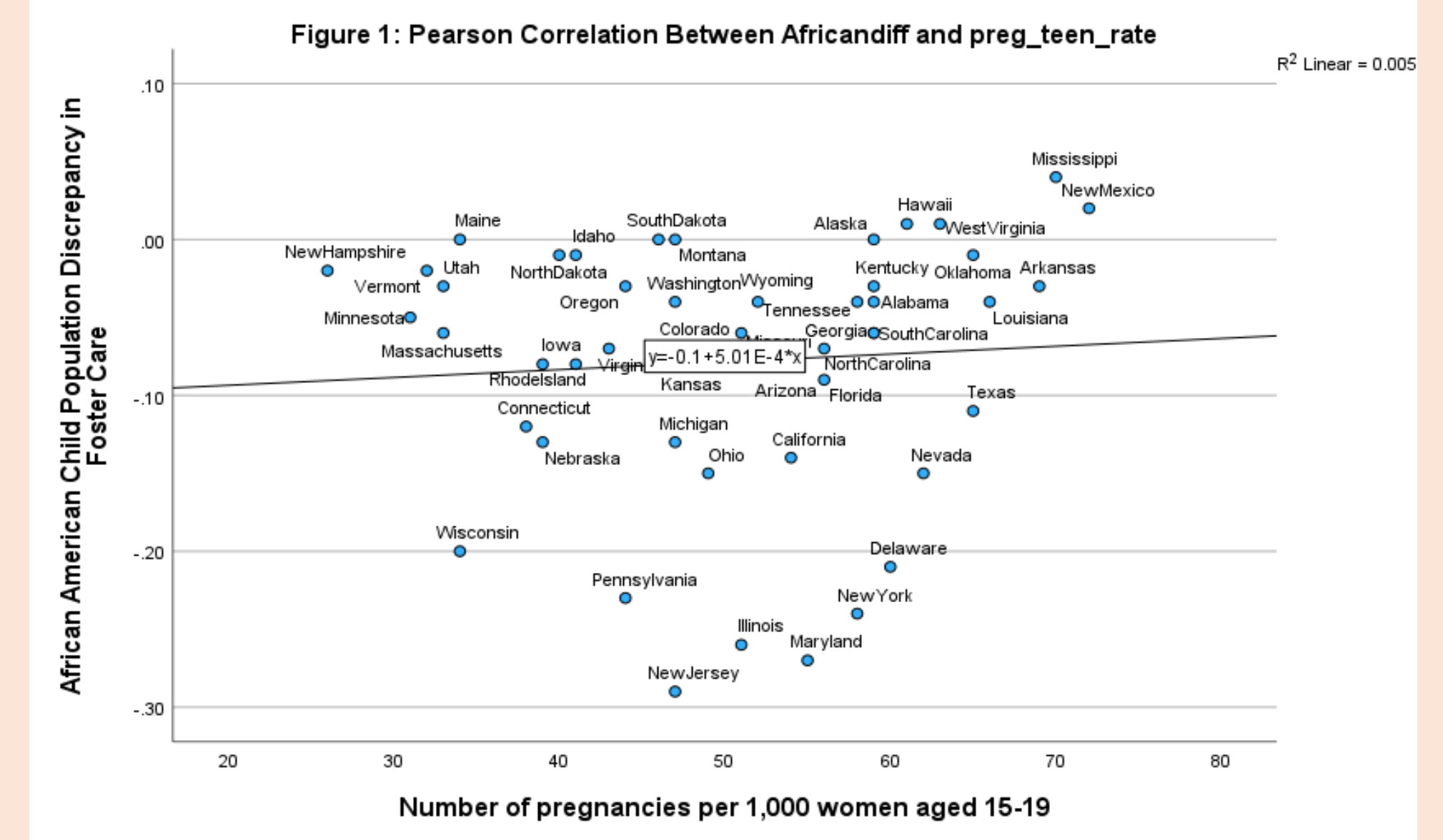
- ❖ Black, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and multiracial children all had significantly greater odds of substantiation and out-of-home placement when compared with non-Hispanic White children. Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic children had greater odds of substantiation, but not out-of-home placement (Maguire-Jack et al., 2020).
- ❖ Mothers who were younger than 18.5 years and mothers that gave birth before 18.5 years were at greater risk for placement (Zuravin & DePanfilis, 1997).
- ❖ Logistic regression results discovered that participants' race and education and a family's level of engagement significantly predicted satisfaction with FTDM outcomes.
- ❖ Poverty is cited as a reason for the removal of children from their natural homes (Miller et al., 2012).

Hypotheses

1. Elevated rates of teen pregnancy rates correlate positively with heightened racial disproportionality in child welfare.
2. States with lower minimum wages are associated with increased racial disproportionality in child welfare.
3. States with higher education levels (bachelor's degree or more) are linked with decreased racial disproportionality in child welfare.

Results & Implications

The study revealed weak to moderate correlations between socioeconomic factors and racial disproportionality. Higher teen pregnancy and lower minimum wage rates correlated with increased disproportionality among African American and Native American children. Higher education levels were linked to lower disproportionality among African American children, with mixed results for other racial groups. These results confirm the ongoing challenge of achieving equality in foster care and child welfare and highlights the urgency for solutions and interventions addressing socioeconomic disparities to mitigate racial disproportionality in the child welfare system.



Isabella Gallardo

Political Science Senior Thesis
Bemidji State University
Dr. Patrick Donnay; Advisor

**Analyzing the Intersectionality of Race and Socioeconomics
in Foster Care and Child Welfare**



BEMIDJI
STATE UNIVERSITY