

Parental Veteran Status and Poverty among U.S. Children

Population Association of America
Atlanta, GA
April 6-9, 2022

Paul Hemez, Ph.D. | Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division | U.S. Census Bureau

BACKGROUND

Military service can act as an important turning point

- Service members receive unique opportunities and benefits^{1,2}

Service does not alter lives equally

- Military service can “springboard” members to economic levels similar to those from more advantaged backgrounds^{3,4}

Less is known about how service can influence the outcomes of veterans’ family members

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1: Do children coresiding with a veteran parent experience odds of living in or near poverty that are different from children who are not coresiding with a veteran parent?

RQ2: Among children coresiding with a veteran parent, do the odds of living in or near poverty differ across race and Hispanic origin groups?

DATA AND METHODS

2019 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement

- Sample: Children (under 18) coresiding with at least one parent, who are not a family reference person (or the spouse of a family reference person)
- Focal Independent Variable: at least one coresident parent is a veteran
- Dependent Variable: living in or near poverty ($\leq 150\%$ poverty level)
- Note: Children are considered Hispanic regardless of their race; for the purpose of this study White, Black, and Other children are non-Hispanic

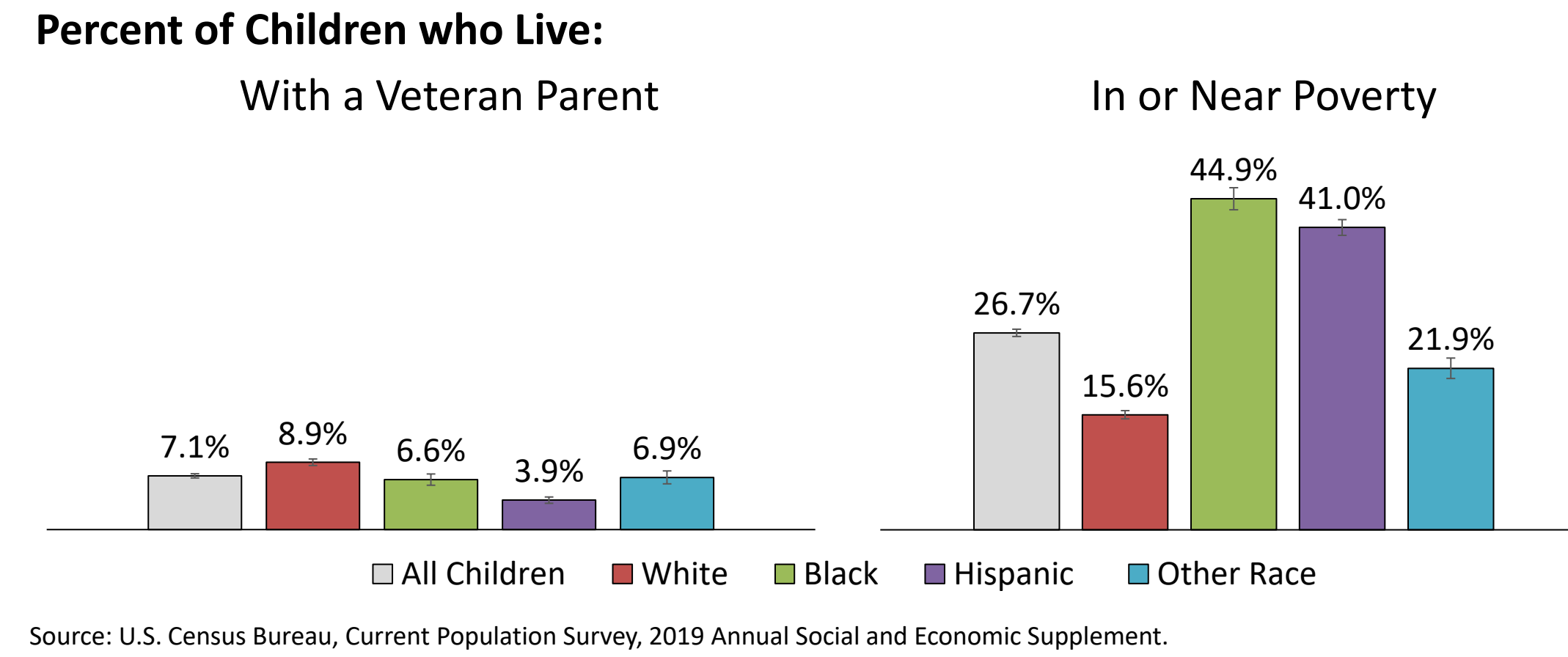
RQ1 - Logistic Regression Model

- Model controls for a range of demographic and economic characteristics

RQ2 - Interaction Terms

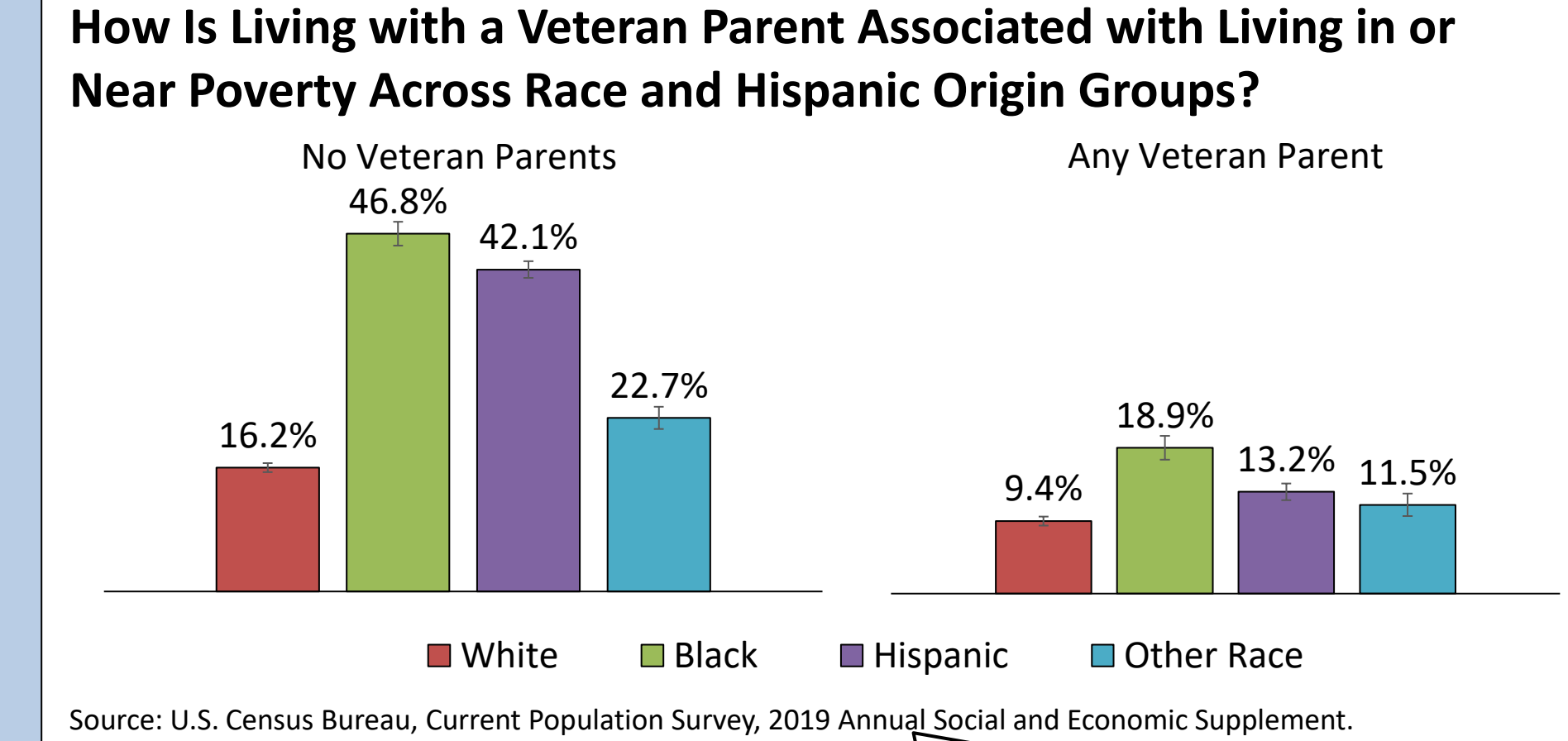
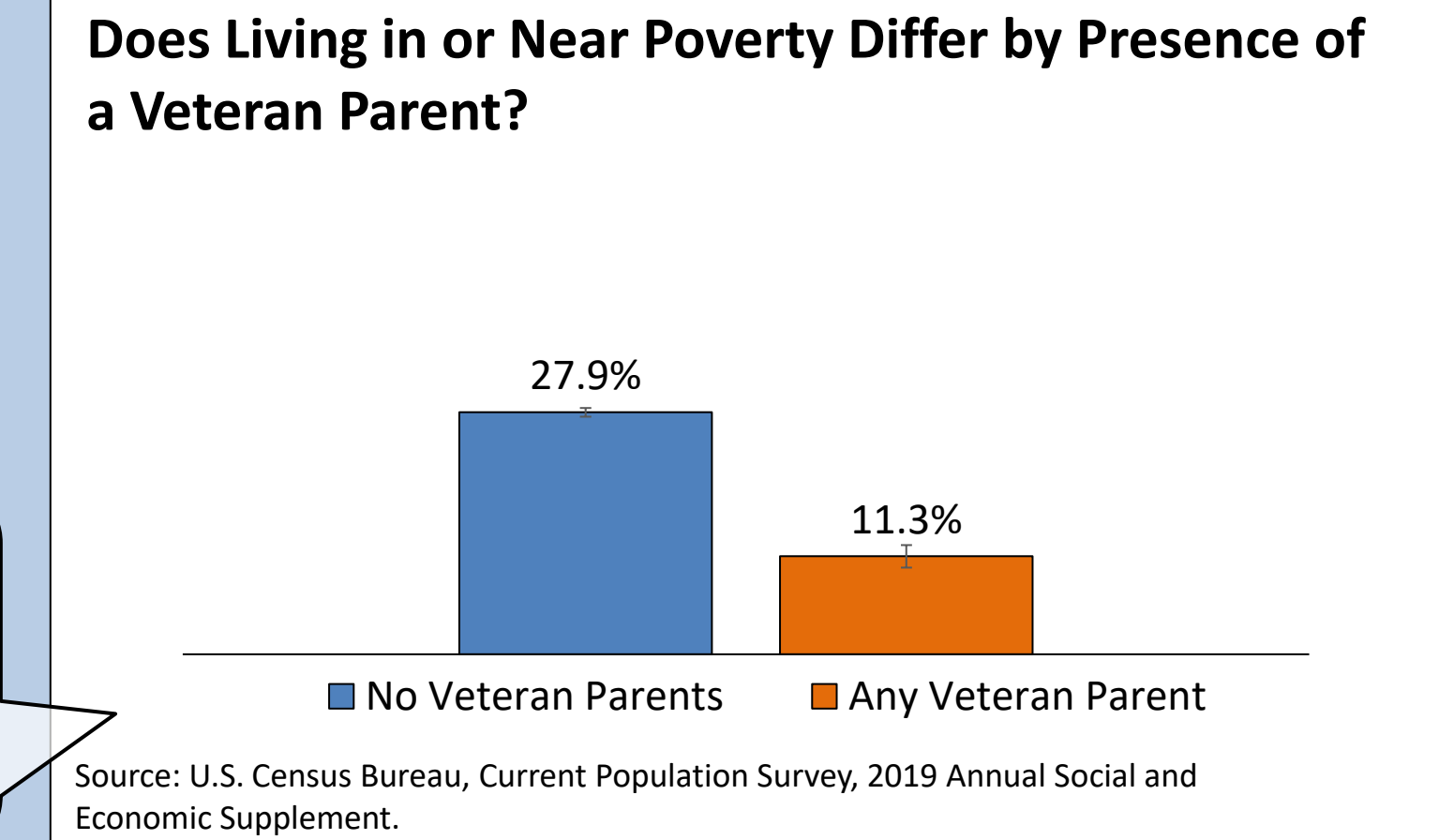
- (race and Hispanic origin)*(residence with a veteran parent)

DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS



In 2019, 7.1% of children lived with a veteran parent.
26.7% of children lived in or near poverty.

11.3% of children with a veteran parent lived in or near poverty, compared to 27.9% of those with no such parent.



Across race and Hispanic origin groups, children living with a veteran parent were less likely to live in or near poverty.

MULTIVARIATE RESULTS

Are Children with a Veteran Parent More or Less Likely to Live in or Near Poverty?

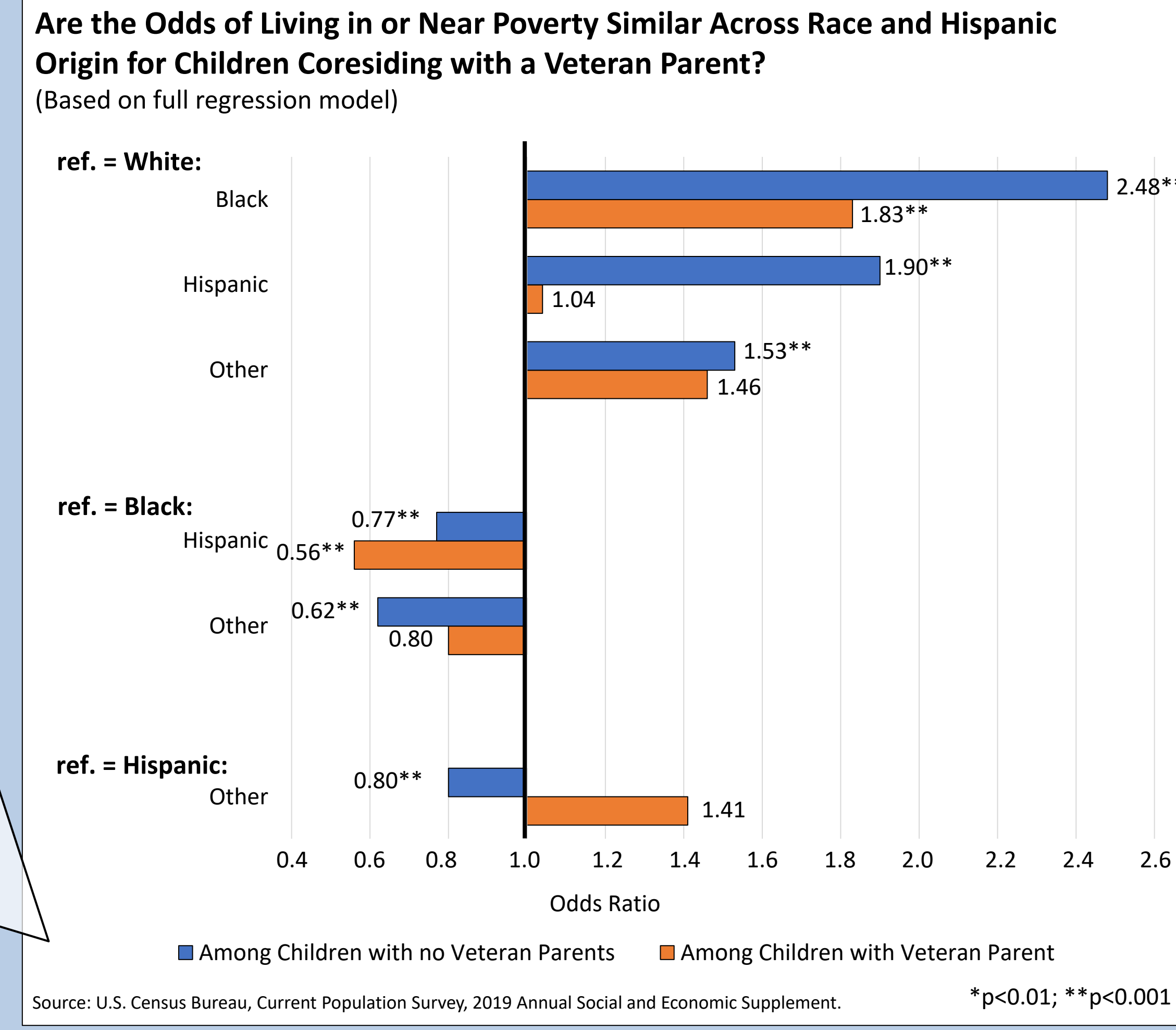
| Characteristic | Odds Ratios |
|--|---------------|
| Parent Veteran Status (ref. = Nonveteran Parents Only) | |
| Any Parent Veteran | 0.58** 0.69** |
| Race-Hispanic Origin (ref. = White) | |
| Black | 2.43** 2.48** |
| Hispanic | 1.86** 1.90** |
| Other | 1.52** 1.53** |
| Most Educated Parent (ref. = High School or Equivalent) | |
| Less than High School | 2.12** 2.11** |
| Some College | 0.58** 0.58** |
| Bachelor's or More | 0.19** 0.19** |
| Parent Employment Status (ref. = Only Employed Parents) | |
| Any Unemployed Parent | 4.51** 4.52** |
| Marital Status of Parents (ref. = Two Parents, Married) | |
| Two Parents, Cohabiting | 4.02** 4.02** |
| One Parent, Cohabiting | 4.32** 4.32** |
| One Parent, Previously Married | 3.96** 3.96** |
| One Parent, Never Married | 4.44** 4.44** |
| Parent Type (ref. = Biological/Adopted Only) | |
| Any Step Parent | 1.14* 1.14* |
| Age of Oldest Parent | |
| Region (ref. = South) | 0.98** 0.98** |
| Northeast | 1.00 1.00 |
| Midwest | 1.07 1.08 |
| West | 0.87** 0.87** |
| Race-Hispanic Origin & Parent Veteran Interactions | |
| Black*Parent Veteran | 0.74 |
| Hispanic*Parent Veteran | 0.54** |
| Other Race*Parent Veteran | 0.95 |

*p<0.01; **p<0.001
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2019 Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

The regression model suggests children coresiding with a veteran parent experience odds of living in or near poverty that are 58% of those for children with no such parent.

Black children with a veteran parent were 1.8 times more likely to be in or near poverty than White children with a veteran parent.

However, among White, Hispanic, and Other children with a veteran parent, the odds of living in or near poverty did not significantly differ.



SUMMARY

RQ1: Children coresiding with a veteran parent experienced lower odds of living in or near poverty than those with no veteran parent

RQ2: Among children coresiding with a veteran parent, the odds of living in or near poverty did not significantly differ for some race and Hispanic origin groups

- Black children with a veteran parent, experienced higher odds of living in or near poverty than Hispanic and White children with a veteran parent

Findings suggest the experiences and benefits of veterans can influence the circumstances of their children

- Residing with a veteran parent appears to “springboard” children from certain groups to improved economic circumstances

REFERENCES

- MacLean, A., & Elder Jr, G.H. (2007). Military service in the life course. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33, 175-196
- Wilmoth, J. M., & London, A. S. (Eds.). (2013). *Life course perspectives on military service*. Routledge.
- Bennett, P. R., & McDonald, K. B. (2013). Military service as a pathway to early socioeconomic achievement for disadvantaged groups. In *Life course perspectives on military service* (pp. 143-167). Routledge.
- Lundquist, J. H. (2004). When race makes no difference: Marriage and the military. *Social Forces*, 83(2), 731-757.



U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

This poster is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion. Any views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau. The U.S. Census Bureau’s Disclosure Review Board and Disclosure Avoidance Officers have reviewed and approved this data product. DRB #: CBDRB-FY21-POP001-0239

More information on confidentiality protection, methodology, sampling and nonsampling error, and definitions is available at www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar19.pdf. Full methodological documentation is available at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/methodology.html>.