Capital Punishment

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Abstract

The politics of capital punishment in the United States are subtle. From a democratic view point, public opinion affects the policy making process. In a majoritarian democracy like the United States, death penalty issue has been a concern in a sense that if majority of people unilaterally support execution, the voice of the minority in the country becomes silenced and as a consequence, death penalty appears as if it is being forced on society by those who their voices and views dominated the public discourse. At the present, the death penalty support in the United States is not approached through the ballot box. Rather, discourse about death penalty have been through federal and states courts. On numerous occasions, the federal courts and states governments have sided with supporters of death penalty without putting the issue to the voters. The courts frequently uphold rulings that enforced death penalty on general public despites public opposition or objection to death penalty. In this report, death penalty will be examined in the context of education level, political views and race. In this analytical report, death penalty is treated as a dependent variable while education level, political views and race will be examined as independent variables to help explain the nature of division among American public over the death penalty issue.

Keywords: Death penalty, variables, jury bleaching, racial biases and prejudices

Literature Review

Several researches have been done to explain why support for death penalty polarized the American people. Gonzalez (2001) explored demographic variables of education, income, political party, liberal/conservative, race and their relationship to attitudes toward death penalty. After examining these variables, he concluded that there is a co-relationship between education level, income level, political party identification (liberal or conservative), race and the generated biased attitude toward death penalty (Gonzalez, 2001). Of the 331 people he surveyed, 49 % of the high school graduates strongly supported death penalty, 45 % of college graduates slightly supported death penalty and 17 % of those with professional degrees supported death penalty. From this finding, Gonzalez concluded that, "support for death penalty decreases as level of education rise." In addition, Gonzalez, linked the income variable to education, his hypothesis was, the higher the level of education one attains, the higher income one is likely to earn. After examining income distribution of his sample, he found that 39 % of the people earning an annual income of $ 15,000 or less strongly support death penalty, 44 % of those earning $15,000 to $ 30,000 indicated strong support, 48 % of those earning $30,000 to $ 45,000 slightly support, and 44 % of those earning $45,000 to $ 60,000 support death penalty. From the income variable, Gonzalez concluded that, "the biased attitudes toward support for death penalty decreases with increase in the level of income that individual earn.

In term of party identification and party ideology, Gonzalez study found 39 % of the people surveyed identified themselves as Democrats, and 39 % considered themselves Independents while 59 % of those surveyed considered themselves Republicans (Gonzalez, 2001). When they were asked about where they stand on death penalty, 39 % percent of the Democrats and 39 % of Independents said they support death penalty while 59 percents of the Republicans said they support death penalty. Gonzalez (2001) argued that the distinction on the level of attitudes of those who considered themselves liberals and conservatives indicated that those who identified themselves liberals expressed attitude similar to that of those who considered themselves as independents in regard to their level of support for death penalty. While those who considered themselves, conservatives expressed strong attitude in support of death penalty (Gonzalez, 2001).

Gonzalez research found that African Americans have strong opposition to death penalty due to their negative perception that death rows inmates are proportionally African Americans. While this may not necessarily mean that the system is racially discriminatory, it raises the role that race biased toward death penalty plays a part in the public discourse particularly among African American communities where there are perceptions that blacks convicted of murdering whites are likely to face death penalty whereas they are less likely to face death penalty if death involves a minority. Hurwitz et al (2007) research argued that this subtle biased is affected by things like '*jury bleaching'* which is a prosecutorial process that many district attorneys use to dismiss African Americans from jury pools in capital cases for reasons like their past felonies e.g. DUI and robberies. The perception about death penalty by far has become a racially charge given the nature of racial disparity that exists between whites and blacks and by the scope in which

death rows inmates are disproportionately composed of blacks. Therefore, because it is very difficult for many people in the United States to think of death penalty without thinking of its racial elements, it is necessary to analyze the attitudes of whites and African Americans by examining why each racial group hold such attitudes or beliefs about death penalty.

To help explain this racial attitudes and beliefs, Hurwitz et al (2007) conducted a survey on the issue of interracial differences on death penalty by examining 600 whites and 600 black's respondents. These respondents were randomly selected and were asked the same question (do you support death penalty for those convicted of committing murder?). Experiment condition one (baseline, no argument), experiment condition two (interracial condition) and experiment condition   three (innocent condition). African Americans respondents were strongly opposed to death penalty (34.17 % baseline condition, 43.60 % interracial condition, and 45.98 % innocent condition in all three experiment conditions while whites' respondents to the conditions (strongly oppose) were lower 17.95 % baseline condition, 11.38 % interracial condition and 20.09 % under innocent condition.

Hurwitz et al., research found that interracial differences between blacks and whites was affected by prejudice factors like anti-black stereotypes, fear of black crime, racial perception about the judicial system and desire for punitive punishment of crime. Hurwitz et al (2007) concluded on the survey of the sample that most blacks are receptive of arguments against death penalty that frame the issue in terms of fairness because of their belief that criminal justice system in the United States is racially unfair. Whites on other hand were found to have an immune attitude that frames the issue of death penalty in term of interracial unfairness (Hurwitz et al, 2007). In general, the research concluded that whites have predisposition desire- like for punitive crime punishment, fear of black crimes, black stereotypes that influence their strong support for death penalty while blacks are predisposed to perceptions like unfair judicial system anchored in historical sentiments against whites and the institutions that have systemically put people of color at judicial disadvantage.

Hurwitz et al (2007) finding is also supported by Gallup (2010) telephone survey of 1,025 randomly selected adults age 18 and older living in the continental United States. This Gallup survey asked a generic question, are you in favor of the death penalty for a person convicted of a murder? (Refer to table two below in the appendix section)

Based on this question, Gallup Survey found that race and party identification played role in people support level for death penalty. Of the 1,025 adults that Gallup interviewed, 69 % of white respondents approved death penalty for a person convicted of a murder crime while only 55 % of the nonwhites approved death penalty. In the case of party/political identification, 78 % of those who considered themselves Republicans approved death penalty for a person convicted of a murder crime while only 55 % of those who said are Democrats approved death penalty for people convicted of murder crimes. Thus, from this survey, Gallup concluded that support for death penalty is strong among men, whites, and Republicans than it is among women, nonwhites and Democrats segments of the U.S. Population (Gallup Survey, 2010).

Hurwitz et al, (2007) findings about blacks' beliefs that Justice System in the United States are also confirmed by Ogletree (2002) research. Ogletree argued that most of the blacks' sentiments is rooted in history of lynching of people of color in which they correlate lynching practices of Jim Crow era and current imposition of capital punishment to characterize unfairness of the white dominated judicial system. Ogletree research points to unfair practices like jury bleaching which is a process use by district attorneys to remove or excuse people with past felonies like DUI, robbery from a potential pool of jury.

Ogletree's research found jury bleaching carries discriminatory connotation in a sense black people are likely to be removed from serving on a jury due to pervasive nature of crimes distribution in the United States. This research pointed to history of criminal prosecution in Dallas county, Texas in which prosecutor's office in a Batson's murder case used a developed a jury selection process that carries discriminatory instructions like: Do not takes Jews, Negroes, Dagos, Mexicans or member of minority race on a jury no matter how rich or well educated they are Or in the case of Missouri v. Alexander where a prosecutor challenged the black juror because he was unemployed, did not understand one of the questions asked during the voir dire and lived in a high crime neighborhood (Ogletree, 2002). Whether these incidents are rare or unfortunately, they raised the racial aspect of the judicial system that many blacks and minorities see as another whites' dominated institution.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis one (H_1), the level of support for death penalty decreases as level of education rises.

Hypothesis two (H_2), Americans that hold conservative political views strongly support death penalty than those who hold liberal political views.

Hypothesis three (H_3), there is a substantial race gap in support for death penalty with whites supporting death penalty more than African Americans.

Methodology

Samples

The sampling method utilizes in this report is based on 2008 General Social Survey. The 2008 GSS utilizes transitional design in which there was a new panel drawn and interviews attempted for about 2,000 cases based on 2006 panel. Of this 2,000 panel cases, there were 59 cases that were determined to be out of scope in which they have died or were not residing in the United States households anymore. In survey, 1,536 were interviewed, 405 were found to be nonrespondents. When survey decision was weighted to take the GSS sample design into consideration, 77.8% were respondents, 19.8 % were no respondents, and about 2.4 % were of scope having died or no longer live in the United States. Among the in scope, the weighted interviews, the responding rate was 79.7 %. In this 2008 general social survey of 2,023 adults age 18 and over, respondents were asked questions about several variables pertaining to major

topic e.g. age, religious beliefs, race, education, political party identifications etc. The samples were weighted to produce some findings deemed to be representatives of adults in the United States.

For this paper, the focus is going to be on three variables. The first is death penalty which is a dependent and measured as a nominal variable. In this report, respondents are asked the following question. Do you support or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murders?   The expected response options expected for this dependent variable are: 1= I support and 2 = I oppose

The first of the independent variables is education which is measured as a nominal variable. The respondents were given this statement to complete [highest degree completed] and the expected response options are: 0 = never finish high school, 1 = High school diploma, 2 = associate degree, 3 = bachelor degree and 4 = graduate degree. The second independent variable is political views measured as an ordinal variable. The respondents were given this statement to complete [I am going to show a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?] and the expected response options are: 1 = extremely liberal, 2 = liberal, 3 = slightly liberal, 4 = moderate, 5 = slightly conservative,6 = conservative and 7 = extremely conservative. The Last independent variable is race and was measured as nominal. Respondents are asked this statement to complete [Race or ethnicity of respondent] and expected response options are: 1 = White, 2 = Black, 3 = American Indian or Alaska Native, 4 = Asian American or Pacific Islander, 5 = Hispanic

To test the relationships that exists between independent variables of education, political views, race and death penalty, Chi Square was used as a statistical method of analysis. The essence of Chi Square was to test null hypothesis to confirm or reject it. To confirm or reject null hypothesis depends on whether there is a significant difference between the stated critical region which is area of sample distribution that includes unlikely sample outcomes and the obtained outcome of the Chi Square statistical tests (Healey, 2009, pp.272-292).

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One

Assumptions and meeting the test requirements steps

1.   First assumption is, these are random independent samples and are measured at nominal level

2.   Stated hypothesis

   Null hypothesis (H_0): The level of education doesn't affect people attitudes toward death penalty support

   Hypothesis one (H_1), the level of support for death penalty decreases as level of education rises.

3. To establish critical region, I set Alpha to be 0.05 and used chi square table to obtain the critical region. Based chi square, critical region starts at 3.841 with 1 degree of freedom.

4. To confirm or reject this hypothesis, I used SPPS version 18 software to do the Chi Square statistical testing (Refer to table 3 a, b & c in the appendix). The outcome of the SPSS Student 18 software calculation produced chi square value (Obtained) 27.191 and there was 4 degrees of freedom. The exact significance of chi square reported in the column labeled "Asymp. Sig (2 sided)," is .000.

5. Interpreting the test result. Based on the chi square obtained score (27.191) and critical region (3.841), there's a significant difference that cannot just occur by random chance. Therefore, this test rejected the null hypothesis [the level of education doesn't affect people attitudes toward death penalty support] and confirmed hypothesis one [the level of support toward death penalty decreases as level of education rises].

Hypothesis two (H_2), Americans that hold conservative political views strongly support death penalty than those who hold liberal political views.

Assumptions and meeting the test requirements steps

1. First assumption is, these are random independent samples and are measured at nominal level

2. Stated hypothesis

    Null hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference between liberal Americans and conservative Americans in the level of support on death penalty

    Hypothesis one (H_2), Americans that hold conservative political views strongly support death penalty than those who hold liberal political views.

3. To establish critical region, I set Alpha to be 0.05 and used chi square table to obtain the critical region. Based chi square, critical region starts at 3.841 with 1 degree of freedom.

4. To confirm or reject this hypothesis, I used SPPS version 18 software to do the Chi Square statistical testing (Refer to table 4 a, b & c in the appendix). The outcome of the SPSS Student 18 software calculation produced chi square value (Obtained) 83.777 with 6 degrees of freedom. The exact significance of chi square reported in the column labeled "Asymp. Sig (2 sided)," is .000.

5. Interpreting the test result. Based on the chi square obtained score (83. 777) with 6 degrees of freedom, critical region starts at 12.592. This is a big significant difference that cannot just occur by random chance. Therefore, this test rejected the null hypothesis [There is no significant difference between liberal Americans and conservative Americans in the level of support on death penalty] and confirmed hypothesis two [Americans that hold conservative political views strongly support death penalty than those who hold liberal political views.

Hypothesis three (H_3), there is a substantial race gap in support for death penalty with whites supporting death penalty more than African Americans.

Assumptions and meeting the test requirements steps

1. First assumption is, these are random independent samples and are measured at nominal level

2. Stated hypothesis

    Null hypothesis (H_0): There is no substantial race gap in support for death penalty between whites and blacks

    Hypothesis one (H_3), there is a substantial race gap in support for death penalty with whites supporting death penalty more than African Americans

3. To establish critical region, I set Alpha to be 0.05 and used chi square table to obtain the critical region. Based chi square, critical region starts at 3.841 with 1 degree of freedom.

4. To confirm or reject this hypothesis, I used SPPS version 18 software to do the Chi Square statistical testing (Refer to table 3 a, b & c in the appendix). The outcome of the SPSS Student 18 software calculation produced chi square value (Obtained) 70.850 with 4 degrees of freedom. The exact significance of chi square reported in the column labeled "Asymp. Sig (2 sided)," is .000.

5. Interpret the result. Based on 4 degrees of freedom, the critical region starts at 9.448 which is quiet a significant different to just happen by chance. Therefore, this test rejected null hypothesis [There is no substantial race gap in support for death penalty between whites and blacks and confirmed Hypothesis one (H_3), [there is a substantial race gap in support for death penalty with whites supporting death penalty more than African Americans]

Table 1: Percentage Support for Death Penalty across Race and Experiment Conditions

	Baseline condition	Interracial condition	Innocent condition
	No Argument	Death penalty is unfairly because most people who are executed are African Americans]	[Death penalty is unfairly because too many people executed are innocent]
	Do you favor or oppose death penalty for those committed of murder?	Do you favor or oppose death penalty for those committed of murder?	Do you favor or oppose death penalty for those committed of murder?
White			
Strong oppose	17.95%	11.38%	20.09%
Somewhat oppose	17.09%	17.79%	45.63%
Somewhat favor	29.06%	25.20%	29.46%
Strongly favor	35.90%	51.63%	34.82%
Blacks			
Strong oppose	34.17%	43.60%	45.98%
Somewhat oppose	15.83%	18.48%	20.09%
Somewhat favor	22.50%	17.54%	18.75%
Strongly favor	27.50%	20.38%	15.18%

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Table 2: National Racial Opinion about Support for Death Penalty in the United States

	% approve	% Disapprove	% No opinion
National Adults	64	29	6
Men	71	24	6
Women	58	35	7
Whites	69	26	5
Nonwhites	55	37	8
Republicans	78	16	5
Democrats	55	42	3

Gallup Survey, October 2010

Table 3 (a) Education Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Favor Or Oppose Death Penalty For Murder * Rs Highest Degree	1398	94.1%	87	5.9%	1485	100.0%

Table 3 (b) Favor or Oppose Death Penalty for Murder* RS Highest Degree

			RS Highest Degree					
			Lt High School	High School	Junior College	Bachelor	Graduate	Total
Favor Or Oppose Death Penalty For Murder	Favor	Count	130	498	81	150	69	928
		% Within RS Highest Degree	61.3%	71.9%	68.6%	62.2%	51.5%	66.4%
	Oppose	Count	82	195	37	91	65	470
		% within RS Highest Degree	38.7%	28.1%	31.4%	37.8%	48.5%	33.6%
Total		Count	212	693	118	241	134	1398
		% within RS Highest Degree	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3 (c) Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.191[a]	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	26.694	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.615	1	.002
N of Valid Cases	1398		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 39.67.

Results

Descriptive statistics of Hypotheses Tests

Educational Level: The data analysis of variables found in the 2008 GSS data base supported both three hypotheses. In the case of the first Hypothesis (H1) which stated that level of death penalty support decreases as the level of education rises. Of the 1,398 valid cases interviewed, the total percentage number of people who favored death penalty was 66.4 %. When this was examined in the context of people educational level, there was a clear trend that supported hypothesis (H1) with an exception of those who don't have high school degrees in which 63.4 % favor death penalty. However, the level of support for death penalty decreased with each level of education as follows from high school degree (71.9 %), junior college degrees (68.6 %), Bachelor Degrees (62.2 %), Graduate degrees (51.5 %). This same trend was replicated among those who opposed death penalty for those who committed murders. The opposition to death penalty was found to be higher among those with higher degrees and it declined as level of education decreases as follows: Graduate degrees (48.5 %), Bachelor degrees (37.8 %), Junior college degrees (31.4 %), and high school degree (28.1 %). (Refer to table 3 (a) for more details). As such, this data analysis supports the chi square statistical test of hypothesis one (H1), and more importantly, the data analysis supported findings found in the literature review section. Hence, it was sufficient to conclude that level of support toward death penalty decreases as the level of education increases.

Political views: The data confirmed that there was a relationship between political views and the level of support for death penalty. Of the 1, 349 valid cases interviewed, the percentage of those who favor death penalty in general was found to be 66.3 %. Of these number, those who considered themselves slightly conservative, conservative, extremely conservative accounted for 70.7 %, 81.8 % and 81.3 % respectively while those who considered themselves extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal constituted 44.0 %, 44.9 % and 58.5 % respectively. This same trend was observed even among those who opposed death penalty. The percentage of those who opposed death penalty was higher among those who considered themselves liberal average 52.2 % while those who opposed death penalty among conservative constituted an average of 22.1 %. Therefore, based on the analysis of this data, it was concluded that support for death penalty is higher among those who hold conservative political views and lower among those who hold liberal political views. Moreover, this data analysis also confirmed what the literature suggested regarding how the conservative Americans tend to favor death penalty for those convicted of murder crimes (Gonzalez, 2001) (Refer to table 4 a, b & c for more details).

Table 4 (a) Political View Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Favor Or Oppose Death Penalty For Murder * Think Of Self As Liberal Or Conservative	1349	90.8%	136	9.2%	1485	100.0%

Table 4 (b) Favor or oppose death penalty* Think of self as liberal or conservative

			Think Of Self As Liberal Or Conservative							
			Extremely Liberal	Liberal	Slightly Liberal	Moderate	Slightly Conservative	Conservative	Extremely Conservative	Total
Favor Or Oppose Death Penalty For Murder	Favor	Count	22	80	86	339	135	193	39	894
		% Within Think Of Self As Liberal Or Conservative	44.0%	44.9%	58.5%	67.9%	70.7%	81.8%	81.3%	66.3%
	Oppose	Count	28	98	61	160	56	43	9	455
		% Within Think Of Self As Liberal Or Conservative	56.0%	55.1%	41.5%	32.1%	29.3%	18.2%	18.8%	33.7%
Total		Count	50	178	147	499	191	236	48	1349
		% Within Think Of Self As Liberal Or Conservative	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4 (c) Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	83.777[a]	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	83.975	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	78.433	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1349		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.19.

Table 5(a) Death Penalty Case Process Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Favor Or Oppose Death Penalty For Murder * What Is Rs Race 1st Mention	1388	93.5%	97	6.5%	1485	100.0%

Table 5 (b) Favor Or Oppose Death Penalty for Murder * What Is Rs Race 1st Mention

| | | | What Is Rs Race 1st Mention | | | | | |
			White	Black Or African American	American Indian Or Alaska Native	Asian And Pacific Islander American	Hispanic	Total
Favor Or Oppose Death Penalty For Murder	Favor	Count	765	89	12	28	29	923
		% Within What Is Rs Race 1st Mention	72.1%	44.9%	66.7%	60.9%	44.6%	66.5%
	Oppose	Count	296	109	6	18	36	465
		% Within What Is Rs Race 1st Mention	27.9%	55.1%	33.3%	39.1%	55.4%	33.5%
Total		Count	1061	198	18	46	65	1388
		% Within What Is Rs Race 1st Mention	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 5(c) Chi-Square Tests

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	70.850[a]	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	67.670	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	35.938	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1388		

Based on the mean scores and the standard deviation scores between those who considered themselves conservatives and liberal, it was observed that they were similarities. The average means for conservatives in general was 1. 56 and for liberal, it was 1.22 and their standard deviations were 0.498 and 0.498. The closeness in the mean scores showed that the number of people who favor or oppose death penalty on each side was almost the same which supported whites and blacks' division on the issue of death penalty. This was also supported by closeness of the standard deviation which was virtually tied at 0.498 for each race based on ANOVA table 7 (a). That being said, the ANOVA data analysis raised some doubt about hypothesis two [Hypothesis two (H2), Americans that hold conservative political views strongly support death penalty than those who hold liberal political views]. If means score and standard deviations are equal, it suggests that blacks and whites are equally divided and that hypothesis two may need to be revisited because of the doubt raised by data regarding mean scores and standard deviations of those who considered themselves either conservatives or liberals.

Race: The data confirmed that there is a relationship between one's racial identity and the level of support toward death penalty. Of the 1,388 valid cases interviewed, it was found that 66.5 % of the total respondents favored death penalty. When this is broken down into race, support for death penalty was 72.1 % among whites, 66.7 % among American Indians, 60.9 % among Asian and Pacific Americans, 44.9 % among blacks and 44.6 % among Hispanic Americans. As this percentages indicated, the results were consistent with the literature findings about whites having tendency to favor death penalty for those convicted of murder crimes than the blacks.

Therefore, based on this data analysis, the hypothesis three [there is a substantial race gap in support for death penalty with whites supporting death penalty more than African Americans] was accepted and the conclusion was, there is indeed a substantial racial gap between whites and blacks in their level of support for the death penalty for those who are convicted of murder crimes (refer to table 5 a, b & c for more details). Looking at the ANOVA analysis results

table 6 (a) & (b), standard deviations were almost similar (0 .449 for whites, 0.449 for blacks). The standard deviation indicated that there was no diversity in the distribution of the samples and this led to this conclusion that, blacks and whites are evenly divided on their level of support toward death penalty for those who convicted of murder crimes. Moreover, the mean for whites was 1.28 and the mean for blacks was 1.55 which suggested another sharp division along racial division on the issue of death penalty. This conclusion challenges the hypothesis three which states that there is a substantial gap race gap between whites and blacks with whites supporting death penalty more than blacks. If ANOVA scores of the means and standard deviations are true then, this constituted a partial rejection of the hypothesis (H_3), [there is a substantial race gap in support for death penalty with whites supporting death penalty more than African Americans].

Table 6 (a) Analysis of Dependent Variable Favor or Oppose Death Penalty for Murder Using One- Way Anova

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
White	1061	1.28	.449	.014	1.25	1.31	1	2
Black Or African American	198	1.55	.499	.035	1.48	1.62	1	2
American Indian Or Alaska Native	18	1.33	.485	.114	1.09	1.57	1	2
Asian And Pacific Islander American	46	1.39	.493	.073	1.24	1.54	1	2
Hispanic	65	1.55	.501	.062	1.43	1.68	1	2
Total	1388	1.34	.472	.013	1.31	1.36	1	2

Table 6 (b) Favor or oppose death penalty

ANOVA

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.784	4	3.946	18.598	.000
Within Groups	293.434	1383	.212		
Total	309.218	1387			

Table 7 (a) Analysis of Dependent Variables Favor or Oppose Death Penalty Using One-Way ANOVA

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Extremely Liberal	50	1.56	.501	.071	1.42	1.70	1	2
Liberal	178	1.55	.499	.037	1.48	1.62	1	2
Slightly Liberal	147	1.41	.494	.041	1.33	1.50	1	2
Moderate	499	1.32	.467	.021	1.28	1.36	1	2
Slghtly Conservative	191	1.29	.456	.033	1.23	1.36	1	2
Conservative	236	1.18	.387	.025	1.13	1.23	1	2
Extrmly Conservative	48	1.19	.394	.057	1.07	1.30	1	2
Total	1349	1.34	.473	.013	1.31	1.36	1	2

Table 7 (b) Favor or Oppose Death Penalty for Murder
ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	18.726	6	3.121	14.810	.000
Within Groups	282.808	1342	.211		
Total	301.534	1348			

Conclusion

The results obtained through the analysis of three independent variables (educational level, political views, race) in conjunction with the dependent variable (death penalty) partially supported the finding of the literature reviews. In the review section, the findings suggested three fundamental outcomes of it findings. First, it acknowledged that there is a relationship between one education level and his or her level of support toward death penalty. Gonzalez (2001) concluded that level of support for death penalty declines as level of education increases. This finding is supported by the result from the data analysis of educational level variable. Based on the results produced by SPSS Student Software on education level, the findings confirmed that level of support toward death penalty decreases as one level of education increases (Refer to table 3 (a) for more information on this relationship).

The SPSS data analysis on political views reflected what the literature reviews section suggested. Of the respondents interviewed, it was found that level of support for death penalty was higher among those who considered themselves conservatives (slightly conservatives = 70.7 %, conservatives = 81.8 %, extremely conservatives = 81.3 % and lower among those who considered themselves liberals (extremely liberal = 44.0 %, slightly liberal = 44.9 %, liberal = 58.5 %). These results clearly confirmed that there is a relationship between one's education level and his or her attitude toward death penalty. Third, data analysis on race produced mixed outcomes. First, it was found that both whites (72.1 %), American Indians (66.7 %) and Asian and Pacific Americans (60.9 %) highly favored death penalty compared to blacks (44.9 %), and Hispanics (44.6).

Although these findings are consistent with the literature reviews findings, they also suggested that Americans of all races are divided by the issue of death penalty for those convicted of murder crimes as the ANOVA analysis indicated. The ANOVA analysis revealed partial rejection of hypothesis three. Based on scores of the means and standard deviations, only hypothesis one and hypothesis two [the level of support for death penalty decreases as level of education rises] were full supported and confirmed by the data analyses but still, there were some doubts about the validities of these findings that supported the hypothesis one and two based on the ANOVA analyses. However, there was mixed results over the issue of race. First, without ANOVA scores of the means and standard deviations finding included, data produced by SPPS Student Version 18 supported hypothesis three (H3) [there is a substantial race gap

in support for death penalty with whites supporting death penalty more than African Americans]. But when results from ANOVA analyses of the scores and means were included, there was a different conclusion which suggested that whites and blacks are evenly divided equally along racial lines on the issue of death penalty. In other words, ANOVA findings suggested no racial group supports death penalty more than the other (s). Refer to table 8 (a & b) for more details.

Table 8 (a) Analysis of Dependent Variable Favor or Oppose Death Penalty for Murder Using One- Way ANOVA

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Lt High School	212	1.39	.488	.034	1.32	1.45	1	2
High School	693	1.28	.450	.017	1.25	1.31	1	2
Junior College	118	1.31	.466	.043	1.23	1.40	1	2
Bachelor	241	1.38	.486	.031	1.32	1.44	1	2
Graduate	134	1.49	.502	.043	1.40	1.57	1	2
Total	1398	1.34	.473	.013	1.31	1.36	1	2

Table 8 (b) Favor Or Oppose Death Penalty For Murder
 ANOVA

	Sum Of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.068	4	1.517	6.908	.000
Within Groups	305.920	1393	.220		
Total	311.989	1397			

Recommendation for Future Studies

The findings (results) from this report did not address few things. There was no way to know why those with higher education level and conservatives possess such attitudes toward the death penalty for those convicted of murder crimes. In the future, it is recommended that research be done on why conservatives show strong support for death penalty and more importantly, why Americans with higher degrees oppose death penalty. Research like this would give people clear understanding about death penalty debate. To better understand death penalty in relationship to whites and blacks, it is recommended that a research be done in which both whites and blacks are independent variables. This would provide better understanding pertaining rationales behind each racial group support certain position on the death penalty debate in America. Doing so would help people understand the sharp division that existed between whites and blacks over the death penalty discourse.

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