

BELIEFS ABOUT INTERGENERATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOLLOWING DIVORCE
AND REMARRIAGE: DOES RACE AND ETHNICITY MATTER?

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ABSTRACT

Most researchers who have studied beliefs about intergenerational assistance have studied primarily white European Americans living in nuclear families rather than diverse racial and ethnic groups. The purpose of this thesis was to compare racial and ethnic similarities and differences in beliefs and reasoning about intergenerational assistance following divorce and remarriage. A nationally representative sample (n = 3316) was drawn using random digit dialing. White European Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos responded to vignettes in which older (step)parents needed help from adult (step)children. Overall, results indicated more similarities than differences in beliefs and reasoning about intergenerational assistance between the four groups. Future studies should examine more diverse tasks and contexts that may elicit different responses between groups; how familism may be applied differently to kin versus step-kin; and the influence of acculturation on Latinos' and Asian Americans' beliefs about intergenerational assistance.