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Racialized Perceptions of Anticipated School Belonging

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Abstract

Families indicate that fit and safety are priorities in school selections. It is not clear, however, whether school racial composition shapes families' perceptions of anticipated school belonging. Using a survey experiment with students and parents actively choosing NYC schools, I find that families expressed racialized judgments of belonging. Among schools that were otherwise similar, respondents anticipated feeling most welcome in schools with the highest proportion of their racial group and least welcome in schools with the lowest portions of their ingroup. Families' race-based assessments of school quality could be a key mechanism to explain racial segregation in school choice programs.

Keywords

social construction of school quality; school climate; race/racism; school choice; experimental design

Families across the United States actively engage in school choice, from enrolling in private, charter, or magnet schools to participating in intra-district choice programs and selecting residences zoned for desired neighborhood schools. Opportunities to choose non-neighborhood schools have increased over the past two decades and 13% of public school parents indicate that their student does not attend their district-assigned school (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019, 2020). Education policymakers have specifically elevated school choice as a solution to promote racial integration and educational equity (see discussion in Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). This equity aim rests partially on the premise that families will hold ideological high regard for diversity and will choose racially diverse schools (Posey-Maddox et al., 2014; Turner, 2018; Underhill, 2019).

However, evidence demonstrates that families' school selections often misalign with the desegregation aims of school choice policies and families' espoused diversity ideals. Charter, magnet, and other schools of choice are typically more segregated than their surrounding communities (Sohoni & Saporito, 2009). Furthermore, families are more likely to prefer and apply to, and children are more likely to attend, schools with larger proportions

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of students from their racial ingroup[1] (Billingham & Hunt, 2016; Denice & Gross, 2016; Hailey, 2021; Saporito & Lareau, 1999).

Scholars propose numerous explanations for racialized school selections. Some researchers emphasize that families' rational, colorblind preferences for academic quality, geographic convenience, safety, and fit motivate their school choices (Merrifield, 2001). As such, they propose that racial demographics relate to families' choices primarily because they correlate with other preferred school characteristics (Harris, 1999; Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). Other researchers challenge the assumption of colorblind preferences. They propose that families evaluate desired school characteristics, such as *safety* and *fit*, based on schools' racial makeup, on their personal racial biases, and in response to racial stereotypes and discriminatory practices perpetuated in educational systems (Billingham & Hunt, 2016; Cooper, 2005; Cucchiara, 2013; Hailey, 2021; Holme, 2002; Posey-Maddox et al., 2021). Few quantitative studies on school choice explicitly measure both families' perceptions and their racial biases, making it difficult to examine whether and how school racial composition influences families' evaluations of prospective schools.

To explore racialized beliefs about school quality, I examine families' anticipated belonging in potential schools. Building on conceptualizations of school climate, belonging, and social identity contingencies (Freidus, 2020; Murphy & Zirkel, 2015; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008; Thapa et al., 2013), *anticipated belonging* refers to families' expectations of physical, emotional, and symbolic safety; inclusion; and supportive relationships in future educational contexts. Given the influence of school safety and inclusion in students' socio-emotional and academic outcomes (Thapa et al., 2013) and in families' stated educational priorities (Kimelberg, 2014; Pattillo et al., 2014; Schneider et al., 2000), it is important to understand what shapes families' judgments of belonging in school settings.

Anticipated belonging in secondary schools, however, has rarely been examined. Research on safety and inclusion typically focuses on adolescents' feelings in their current school or adults' judgments of potential universities, workplaces, and neighborhoods. These studies consistently find that racial demographics shape expectations about belonging (Murphy & Zirkel, 2015; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008; Thapa et al., 2013; Zubrinsky & Bobo, 1996). Two questions guide this study's analysis of families' race-based judgments of prospective high schools: (1) How does school racial composition affect Latinx, Black, Asian, and White families' perceptions of anticipated belonging? (2) Are individuals with stronger biases toward racial outgroups more likely to express racialized perceptions of anticipated belonging?

To understand the influence of school racial demographics on anticipated belonging, I implemented a school-choice survey experiment with students and parents actively choosing New York City (NYC) high schools. Respondents were asked to read hypothetical school

[1]In this study, I conceptualize race as a social construction that categorizes individuals based on their phenotype and ancestry (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Omi & Winant, 2014). It is historically and socially situated. The United States' racial structure confers access to power and privilege based on individuals' proximity to Whiteness and generates patterns of racial inequality. Throughout the article, I refer to respondents' racial/ethnic identity as their racial group and schools' proportions of students in racial groups as racial demographics, composition, or makeup.

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profiles with randomized racial compositions, safety ratings, and graduation rates and to indicate how welcome they would feel if they attended the school. NYC families expressed race-based assessments of anticipated belonging. Latinx, Black, Asian, and White respondents believed they would feel the strongest sense of belonging in schools with the largest proportion of their racial group, followed by racially diverse schools, and rated schools with the smallest proportions of their racial group as being potentially least inclusive. Importantly, individuals' racial sentiments moderated the effect of racial demographics on anticipated belonging: respondents who expressed stronger negative feelings toward certain racial outgroups were more likely to believe that they would not feel included and safe in schools that had more students with those racial backgrounds. This study's results suggest that, as educational policymakers implement school choice policies with aims toward racial integration and equity, they should consider that families' race-based assessments of school quality could lead to racialized school choices and segregation.

Background

School Belonging as a Dimension of School Quality

Beyond their functions for building human capital, schools are primary spaces for adolescent interactions with peers and adults and for adolescent identity development (Crosnoe, 2011). Accordingly, over the past 30 years, education policymakers and scholars have increasingly emphasized the importance of schools' socio-emotional climates for student educational achievement and overall well-being (Thapa et al., 2013). The U.S. Department of Education (2019) specifically encourages schools to incorporate climate measures into accountability systems and identifies student safety, welcomeness, and inclusion as key elements of educational success.

In this study, I define school belonging as a multidimensional concept that includes students' protection from physical, emotional, and symbolic violence; connections to respectful, trusting, and supportive relationships with peers, teachers, and staff; and feeling of inclusion in a school community. This definition reflects school climate models' and policymakers' common identification of students' positive perceptions of safety, support, and relationships as paramount for academic achievement (Berkowitz et al., 2017; Soria, 2018; U.S. Department of Education, 2019). As such, the conceptualization of school belonging builds on researchers' interrelated definitions of school safety, supportive relationships, and inclusion. Safety refers to students' holistic physical, social, intellectual, and emotional security (Thapa et al., 2013) and students' protection from social-identity based devaluations, vulnerabilities, and hostilities in social settings (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008). Relatedly, researchers commonly understand positive school relationships as respect for diversity, connectedness, and support between community members (Thapa et al., 2013). Scholars define school inclusion as students' sense of acceptance, valuation, and encouragement in schools' social life and activities (Goodenow, 1993) and often interchangeably reference school belonging, connectedness, inclusion, and attachment (Korpershoek et al., 2020).

Scholars link school safety, relationships, and inclusion to a range of wellbeing and academic outcomes, including self-esteem, anxiety and depression, and physical health

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(Thapa et al., 2013) and attendance, engagement in class and extracurricular activities, standardized-test performance, and educational achievement (Berkowitz et al., 2017). A sense of connectedness in school may be especially important for Black and Latinx students' educational attainment and long-term well-being (Murphy & Zirkel, 2015).

Not only do education policymakers center inclusion and safety as key to student success, but families also prioritize these dimensions of school quality in educational decision-making. In addition to schools' educational characteristics and geographic convenience, parents, and students cite safety, relationships with peers and staff, and overall school environments as paramount to their selections (Cooper, 2005; Freidus, 2020; Kimelberg, 2014; Lewis-McCoy, 2014; Pattillo et al., 2014; Phillippo, 2019). Importantly, families often consult their social networks to determine whether *people like them* feel that they fit in and are safe in schools (Holme, 2002; Posey-Maddox et al., 2014).

Freidus's (2020) framework of belonging is particularly useful for understanding families' expectations for school inclusion. When observing public discussions of school attendance zone redistricting, Freidus demonstrates that NYC parents expressed three concerns: *belonging in* schools, *belonging within* schools, and who a school *belongs to*. In the context of school choice, families' concerns with belonging could orient to four related questions: Do people like me attend this school? Will I feel safe? Will I feel included? Will I have social capital and power?

Examinations of families' actual school choices corroborates their stated desires for supportive school environments (Burdick-Will, 2017; Hailey, 2020; Saporito & Lareau, 1999). For example, Hailey (2020) demonstrates that, independent of schools' academic, demographic, and geographic characteristics, NYC families were less likely to choose high schools with disrespectful, hostile interactions between community members.

Belonging is not an inherently objective dimension of school quality; student perceptions of safety, inclusion, and relationships systematically vary across school contexts and between students attending the same school. Scholars demonstrate that school structures—such as school size, security apparatuses, and student body composition—influence students' sense of safety and connectedness (Crosnoe, 2011; Steinberg et al., 2011; Thapa et al., 2013). Furthermore, among students enrolled in the same school, judgments of that school's belonging, safety, and inclusivity differ by students' racial, class, and gender identity backgrounds, among other characteristics (Lacoe, 2015; Steinberg et al., 2011; Thapa et al., 2013; Voight et al., 2015). In the next section, I draw on theories of racial biases and schools as racialized organizations to propose how racial demographics could influence families' perceptions of anticipated belonging.

School Racial Demographics and Anticipated Belonging

Just as racial composition shapes beliefs about school academic quality (Goyette et al., 2012; Holme, 2002), race could influence families' judgments of anticipated safety and inclusion. Our understanding of this central question, however, is limited because previous work on race and belonging focuses on adolescents' perceptions of their current school and adults' beliefs about potential college, work, and residential spaces. Research on primary

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and secondary schools consistently demonstrate racial demographics' influence on students' sense of belonging at their current school. Students attending schools with larger proportions of same-race peers report higher levels of school attachment (Johnson et al., 2001). Black, Latinx, and Asian students indicate feeling isolated, marginalized, and heighted racial discrimination at predominately White schools (Bottiani et al., 2016; Ispa-Landa & Conwell, 2015; Lewis-McCoy, 2014). Some studies also document that White students have relatively lower perceptions of equity and Asian students experience heightened racial hostility in majority-Black and majority-Latinx schools (Bottiani et al., 2016; Conchas & Pérez, 2003). While *experienced* belonging relates to *anticipated* belonging, anticipated belonging taps into families' projections about an unknown future (Murphy & Zirkel, 2015; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008). Given the emotional, physical, and socioeconomic risks associated with school belonging (Berkowitz et al., 2017; Thapa et al., 2013), families may be particularly apt to use racial composition as a signal in their belongingness assessments (Quillian & Pager, 2010).

Research on adults' projected belonging corroborates the potential for families' use of race to signal safety, inclusion, and relationships. Adults typically believe they will feel more excluded in educational, employment, and residential spaces with fewer members of their racial ingroup and their race-associated assessments of exclusion guide their decisions to attend, work, and live in these social contexts (Murphy & Zirkel, 2015; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008; Zubrinsky & Bobo, 1996). For example, Black students' concerns with racial marginalization and discrimination at historically White universities often motivates their decisions to attend Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Baker & Britton, 2021; McLewis, 2021; Squire & Mobley, 2015). Although studies demonstrate adults' race-based expectations of belonging on college campuses, it is not clear whether families hold racialized perceptions of anticipated inclusion and safety for high schools.

Two theoretical frameworks—racial prejudice and schools as racialized organizations—suggest that school racial makeup would influence beliefs about anticipated belonging. First, racial prejudice theories emphasize that racial attitudes and stereotypes shape individuals' differential perceptions of contexts by their associated racial compositions (Krysan et al., 2008; Zubrinsky & Bobo, 1996). For example, scholars argue that individuals categorize schools by their easily-identifiable racial demographics (Ispa-Landa & Conwell, 2015; Kimelberg & Billingham, 2013). Individuals, subsequently, employ racial ingroup ethnocentrism, outgroup hostility, and cultural stereotypes to form opinions about students' abilities and behaviors and schools' environments (Billingham & Hunt, 2016; Holme, 2002; Kimelberg & Billingham, 2013). Research demonstrates these racial biases and stereotypical narratives. Individuals typically report feeling closer to their ingroup than racial outgroups (Bobo et al., 2002). Within stereotypical schemas, White and Asian students are assumed to be smart and peaceful, while Black and Latinx students are presumed as having low educational abilities and being disorderly and violent (Cvencek et al., 2015; Nasir et al., 2013). Latinx and Asian students are often further categorized as perpetual foreigners, who cannot speak English well (Lee et al., 2009).

Families choosing schools may use these racial attitudes and stereotypes to anticipate belonging, specifically, to determine whether people *like them* attend schools and whether

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they would *fit* as a school community member (Freidus, 2020; Roda & Wells, 2013). Families often express desires to foster a sense of valuation and inclusion, by attending schools with peers that have similar identities, values, and behaviors (Holme, 2002; Lareau & Goyette, 2014; Phillippo, 2019; Squire & Mobley, 2015). As such, if individuals hold ethnocentric attitudes, express positive assumptions about their racial groups' values and behaviors, and typically engage in racially homogenous social groups, then the presence of same-race students could imply acceptance and community inclusion. On the other hand, drawing on negative affect toward racial outgroups and stereotypical schemas, families may believe that there are symbolic, cultural, and social boundaries between themselves and racialized others. As such, the presence of students from those racial groups could signal potential social marginalization (Holme, 2002; Roda & Wells, 2013).

Families could furthermore employ racial stereotypes to presume students' risk for physical, emotional, and symbolic violence. Research demonstrates that a social context's racial composition influences individuals' perceptions of safety and victimization risk (Krysan et al., 2008; Quillian & Pager, 2010). Ethnographic and experimental evidence establishes this pattern in school assessments. Specifically, scholars find that families often draw on stereotypes of Black violence and criminality and assume schools with larger Black student populations to be potentially disorderly and dangerous (Billingham et al., 2020; Cucchiara, 2013; Evans, 2021; Hailey, 2020)

In addition to families employing racial storylines and attitudes to anticipate belonging, inclusion, and safety, families also recognize schools as racialized organizations (Ewing, 2018; Lewis-McCoy, 2014; McLewis, 2021; Ray, 2019; Shedd, 2015). As such, they could use racial demographics as an indicator for the threat of interpersonal and institutional racism (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008). For centuries, schools in the United States have served as central sites for racial exclusion, antagonism, and discriminatory practices as well as White social, cultural, and political capital (Dubois, 1973). Through this racialized educational system, White parents and students have secured opportunities for advanced classes and extracurricular activities and received deferential treatment during interactions with teachers and administration (Lewis & Diamond, 2015; Lewis-McCoy, 2014). This racial-educational structure could particularly shape Black and Latinx families' beliefs about marginalization at majority-White schools. Specifically, they could anticipate racial violence and discrimination in academic tracking, punitive discipline, and school policing and having to advocate for and protect students with hypervigilance (Brown, 2022; Cooper, 2005; Lewis-McCoy, 2014; Posey-Maddox et al., 2021). There are important reasons to expect that fear of racial violence may have been especially heightened in recent years when there was an increase in hate crimes and negative racist rhetoric (see Baker & Britton, 2021; Rushin & Edwards, 2018).

To explore how school racial composition influences families' anticipated school belonging, I implement a school choice survey experiment. In the experiment, respondents evaluated school profiles with randomized school racial demographics. Research demonstrates that families may use student racial composition as a signal for schools' academic quality, safety, and security apparatuses (Billingham et al., 2020; Cucchiara, 2013; Evans, 2021; Roda & Wells, 2013). As such, the profiles also included randomized graduation rates, safety ratings,

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and metal detector presence, enabling me to control for school attributes that respondents may use racial demographics to proxy.

Considering theories of racial prejudice and schools as racialized organizations, I propose the following expectations. I account for racial proxy school characteristics (i.e., graduation rates, safety ratings, metal detector presence) in both hypotheses.

> *Hypothesis 1*: Respondents will express differential perceptions of school belonging by schools' racial compositions. Respondents will anticipate feeling the strongest sense of belonging in schools with the highest proportion of their racial ingroup and least sense of belonging in schools with the lowest proportion of their racial ingroup.

In this study, I capture race-based perceptions of belonging among four broad racial groups —White, Black, Latinx, and Asian. Within these racial groups, however, individuals' racial attitudes vary (Bobo et al., 2002), potentially resulting in differential racialized judgments of belonging. To explore within racial group heterogeneity and whether individual's racial biases help explain the relationship between their expected belonging and school racial composition, I test the following hypothesis:

> *Hypothesis 2*: Within racial groups, respondents' personal racial biases will moderate the effect of school racial composition on anticipated school belonging. For respondents with stronger racial biases (i.e., more negative feelings toward racial outgroups compared to one's ingroup), the effect of school demographics on respondents' anticipated belonging will increase.

Data and Methods

To investigate whether parents and students hold racialized perceptions of anticipated school belonging and the role of racial biases in these perceptions, I draw on data from a school-choice survey experiment with NYC families. In the survey experiment, respondents reviewed hypothetical school profiles and indicated how welcome they believed they would feel in the school. To isolate the influence of schools' racial makeup on perceptions, I independently varied schools' racial compositions and other characteristics in each profile and randomly assigned respondents to review profiles. Table 1 outlines the five school profile characteristics, and the Online Appendix includes a set of example school profiles and survey questions.

Three goals motivate the survey experiment design: capturing the perceptions of families actively engaged in selecting schools, isolating school racial composition's role in families' school evaluations, and understanding the social psychological aspects related to families' perceptions. To the first aim, eighth-grade parents and students who attended NYC high school fairs in fall 2018 were recruited as experiment participants. The NYC Department of Education does not automatically assign students to neighborhood public high schools and, instead, mandates that all eighth-grade families submit an application ranking their most preferred schools.[2] About 20,000 parents and students attend the NYC fairs to learn

[2]See Hailey (2020) for details on the high school choice process in NYC.

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about public high schools. Aiming for a random draw of attendees, research assistants used an exit-poll sampling strategy and interviewed every fifth parent or parent-student dyad entering or exiting the fair. Given that parent consent was required for student participation, the sample is likely biased toward parents who collaboratively choose high schools with their adolescents.[3] Parents and students simultaneously and separately participated in the experiment, by answering the self-administered survey on tablets. Respondents could take the survey in English or Spanish.[4]

The survey experiment was designed to examine parents' and students' assessments of potential schools and particularly to isolate the role of school racial composition in their perceptions. Families may consider a number of characteristics when assessing schools, such as academic outcomes, safety, extracurricular activities, travel distance, and student body demographics (Denice & Gross, 2016; Saporito & Lareau, 1999). These school attributes often correlate with each other among families' schooling options, making it difficult to use observational data to evaluate the independent influence of particular characteristics on families' assessments and preferences. Addressing the methodological limitations of observational data, I employ a factorial survey experiment design. Factorial survey experiments solicit respondents' judgments of real-world scenarios, vary multiple dimensions experimentally across scenarios to estimate their independent effects on respondents' evaluations, and incorporate experiments into surveys to gather respondent background characteristics (Auspurg & Hinz, 2015). Billingham and Hunt (2016), Bonam et al. (2016), and Krysan et al. (2008) employ this methodology in their respective school and neighborhood survey experiments.

In this factorial survey experiment, parents and students were given and evaluated five hypothetical school profiles that included five randomized characteristics. The experimental randomization of the characteristics in each school profile and random assignment of participants to profiles allowed me to estimate the independent effect of every characteristic on respondents' beliefs about potential schools. To disentangle the influence of racial composition from other school attributes, the profiles included school racial demographics and four school attributes that families may have used school racial demographics to proxy: current students' perceptions of safety inside the school, current students' perceptions of safety in the surrounding neighborhood, graduation rates, and the presence of metal detectors at the school. Research demonstrates that school safety, academic achievement level, and security apparatuses relate to school racial makeup and to parents' and students' assessments of welcomeness, inclusion, and safety in their current schools (Billingham et al., 2020; Gastic, 2011; Lacoe, 2015; Steinberg et al., 2011; Thapa et al., 2013). Respondents also read instructions that ensured the consistency of factors with demonstrated association with families' evaluations of schools: location, school size, and extracurricular activities. See Online Appendix for survey instructions.

[3]Because this is a non-random sample of eighth-grade families who opted to attend the fair, I consider how features of my data and method may influence results and implications.

[4]Respondents who did not read English or Spanish were excluded from the sample frame. NYC families who spoke Haitian Creole, Chinese, Russian, Bengali, and other languages at home are under-represented in the sample.

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Within each school profile, I randomly varied safety and graduation rates in two increments that corresponded with NYC high schools in 2017. The school-safety rating indicated the percentage of current students "who feel safe in hallways, bathrooms, locker rooms, and the cafeteria." I set the school safety levels at 79% and 91% to correspond to the 25th and 75th percentiles of NYC high schools. I set the neighborhood safety levels, which considered whether students feel safe in schools' neighborhoods, at 70% and 87%, again representing the 25th and 75th percentiles. Graduation-rate levels were 75% and 89%, which aligned with the 50th and 75th percentiles of NYC high schools.

The racial makeup in the hypothetical school profiles corresponded with demographics of NYC high schools in 2017 and represented the mean racial composition of majority-White schools, majority-Black schools, majority-Latinx schools, and schools with racial composition of the NYC high school student population. See Table 1 for exact racial demographics. Throughout this manuscript, I refer to these schools as White, Black, Latinx, and mixed schools because they align with the prototypical NYC schools from these categories. Because less than 2% of NYC high schools were majority-Asian in 2017, I did not include Asian schools in this experiment.

To capture parents' and students' perceptions of schools, after reviewing each school profile, I asked respondents their beliefs about the schools' potential belonging and their willingness to attend each school. I inquire about respondents' sense of belonging because, as articulated in the literature review, families indicate that they prioritize students' potential relationships with peers and staff and their protection from physical and socio-emotional harm when selecting schools (Billingham et al., 2020; Cooper, 2005; Freidus, 2020; Kimelberg, 2014; Lewis-McCoy, 2014; Pattillo et al., 2014; Phillippo, 2019; Posey-Maddox et al., 2021; Rhodes & Deluca, 2014; Schneider et al., 2000). This study focuses on respondents' anticipated belonging.[5] To capture respondents' assessment of this characteristic, they answered the question *In general, how welcome do you think you [your student] would feel in this school?* on a Likert scale ranging from one (very unwelcome) to seven (very welcome). They also had the option to select don't *know*.

After assessing five school profiles, respondents answered questions on their racial attitudes and demographic backgrounds. I calculated outgroup racial bias scores to understand whether racialized perceptions of anticipated belonging operated through individual racial attitudes. Using visual analog scales and question wording from the General Social Survey, respondents reported how they felt about four racial groups (Latinx, White, Black, and Asian) on a line from cool (0) to warm (100). Racial bias scores measure the differences in respondents' feelings toward their racial ingroup and racial outgroups, with positive scores representing more negative feelings toward racial outgroups. On average, respondents expressed stronger negative affect toward racial outgroups than their ingroup. See Appendix Table A1. At the end of the survey, participants indicated their age, gender, race/ethnicity, language spoken at home, whether the student had failed a seventh-grade class, and their current school's name. The Supplemental Appendix and Hailey (2021) include further details on survey methodology.

[5] See Hailey (2021) for analysis of respondents' willingness to attend schools.

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Sample

Over 1,000 parents and students completed the survey, including 370 parent-student dyads. Excluding respondents with missing responses to key variables and those who did not identify as Latinx, Black, Asian, or White, the analytic sample includes 781 respondents.[6] Table 2 outlines summary descriptors of the total sample, analytic sample, and the population of NYC students choosing high schools. The sample has similar racial composition to NYC: 40% Latinx, 30% Black, 20% White, and 10% Asian.[7] The sample is more socio-economically advantaged than the NYC student population. While approximately 87% of parents in the sample had some college experience and were working, about half of NYC student parents attended college and three-quarters were employed. Respondents who speak English at home are overpresented in the sample and those who speak Spanish, other Indo-European languages, Asian and Pacific Islander languages, and other languages are underrepresented. See Appendix for more details on sample.

Analytic Approach

The experimental variation in school characteristics displayed to respondents allowed me to isolate the influence of school racial composition on respondents' anticipated school belonging (Auspurg & Hinz, 2015). Because respondents each evaluated five school profiles, I estimated two-level hierarchical linear random effects regressions to account for the school profiles being nested within respondents. First-level predictors randomly varied across school profiles: racial demographics, metal detector presence, neighborhood safety, school safety, and graduation rate. Second-level predictors were fixed within respondents but varied between respondents: parent v. student indicator, gender, language spoken at home, current school's borough, self-report of student failing a class in seventh grade, and controls for experiment/experimenter effects (i.e., profile order and administration in English or Spanish).[8]

To determine how school characteristics influenced respondents' expectations of school belonging, I stratified the sample into racial groups and estimated their anticipated belonging as a function of the five school-profile characteristics and a vector of respondent-level predictors outlined above. To assess whether respondent racial biases moderated the influence of school racial composition on anticipated belonging, I interacted the profile school racial composition and respondents' racial bias scores when predicting respondents' anticipated belonging.

While this analysis includes both parent and student respondents, it is possible that they may have divergent race-based perceptions of belonging. Throughout the manuscript, I note when

[6]·Of the full sample, 8.5% of respondents replied *don't know* to the question about how welcome they think they/their student would feel in a school for at least one of the five schools in their survey. About 4% of the full sample answered *don't know* to one school, 1.4% to two schools, 1% to three schools, 1% to four schools, and 1.2% to all five schools. If a respondent replied *don't know* to four or less schools then they were included in the analytic sample for the schools with valid responses. Fourteen respondents were completely dropped from the analytic sample because they answered don't know for all five schools (1.2% of full sample).

[7]·Within these broad racial/ethnic categories, there is important heterogeneity in country and region of origin. The Latinx sample includes Puerto Rican, Dominican Republican, Central/South American, and Mexican-American respondents. The Black sample was African American, Caribbean, Afro-Latinx, and from African countries. The Asian sample included Chinese, South Asian, Japanese, and Korean respondents.

[8]·I control for students failing a seventh-grade class to account for the potential influence of students' academic achievement on their perceptions of potential schools.

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the influence of racial composition on parents' and students' anticipated belonging differ. Future analyses will focus on within-race heterogeneity between parents and students. See Appendix for further detail on the analytic approach.

Defining Anticipated School Belonging

In this study, I conceptualize parents' and students' responses to the survey question about welcomeness as their anticipated school belonging. To understand how respondents may have interpreted welcomeness in this experiment, I conducted a cognitive pre-test survey with 84 parents on Amazon MTurk in the summer of 2018. Pre-test parents completed the survey experiment, then responded to the following prompt with open-ended answers: *When you responded to the question* "In general, do you think your student would feel welcome in this school?," *what did the term* "welcome" *mean to you?*

To explore the patterns in pre-test parents' interpretation of *welcome*, I first determined the most used words in respondents' definitions. Based on this word list, an initial review of respondents' definitions and this study's conceptualization of school belonging, I developed a subset of 13 codes. These codes relate to safety, inclusion, supportive relationships, and other school characteristics. I coded and calculated the proportion of pre-test respondents whose interpretations of *welcome* corresponded with the descriptors. See Table A2.

Pre-test parents' definitions of *welcome* centered on school inclusion, supportive relationships, and socio-emotional safety. About half of parents mentioned peer-acceptance and parents specifically voiced concerns about their students finding friends, feeling comfortable and happy, and being outcast or bullied. According to parents, in welcoming schools adolescents have positive relationships with teachers and staff and *all* students' success is supported.

Only 13% of pre-test parents explicitly mentioned race when defining the term *welcome*. These parents articulated desires for racial diversity and apprehensions about their student being a numerical racial minority, fitting in, and being the victim of racist hostility. For example, a White mother explained:

> Honestly, I felt that based on my child's race they might not be welcome if one race was overwhelmingly dominant. It had nothing to do with safety, but rather if my child, because of their race, would be welcomed and viewed as having something positive to contribute to friendships.

Taken together, pre-test parents defined *welcome* as having supportive relationships with peers and staff, a sense of inclusion, and socio-emotional security; they seldom discussed school racial composition.

Results

Although few pre-test parents explicitly referred to school racial demographics when defining welcomeness, school racial composition influenced Latinx, Black, White, and Asian parents' and students' beliefs that they would belong in prospective high schools. Among schools with similar graduation rates, safety ratings, and security apparatuses, NYC

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families anticipated that adolescents would be most accepted and supported at schools with the highest proportion of their racial ingroup, followed by schools whose racial makeup reflected that of NYC public schools overall (i.e., mixed). They believed that schools with the smallest proportion of their ingroup would offer the least belonging. Further substantiating the probability that families' reactions to school racial demographics inform their judgments, the survey revealed that respondents with more negative affect toward racial outgroups typically anticipated less belonging in schools with more students from those racial groups. In this section, I highlight results from regression models predicting the isolated influence of school racial demographics on respondent expectations of inclusion.

Respondents, on average, anticipated feeling somewhat included in the hypothetical schools. On a scale from one (very unwelcome) to seven (very welcome), participants rated schools on average at 5.06 with a standard deviation of 1.49. Figure 1 presents the adjusted means and corresponding 95% confidence intervals for respondents' anticipated belonging at the majority-Latinx, majority-Black, majority-White, and mixed schools. These averages derive from the hierarchical random effects regressions that estimate respondents' projected belonging by school racial composition; account for schools' graduation rates, safety ratings, and metal detector presence; and control for respondent background characteristics and experimental effects. See Table A3 for full regression results.[9] Given the experimental randomization of characteristics to school profiles and school profiles to respondents, the differences between scores represent the independent influence of racial demographics on respondent anticipated belonging. In this analysis, I identify differences greater than 0.15 as substantively significant given that it corresponds with 0.1 standard deviations on the school belonging scale and with difference in respondent perception of inclusion in schools with higher and lower graduation rates; see Table A3. The chi-square tests in Figure 1 measure statistical significance of the overall influence of school racial composition on respondent anticipated belonging.

Corroborating the expectations outlined in *Hypothesis I*, NYC parents and students anticipated having the strongest sense of belonging in high schools with the largest proportion of their racial ingroup and feeling most excluded in schools with the smallest proportion of their racial group. Latinx respondents expressed racialized projections of inclusion and safety. Independent of schools' graduation and safety ratings and metal detector presence, the schools' racial makeup displayed in the hypothetical profiles significantly influenced Latinx families' beliefs about potential inclusion ($\chi^2(3) = 39.16$ and $p < .001$). Figure 1 illustrates that Latinx families rated the Latinx and mixed schools that had 65% and 44% Latinx students 0.39 and 0.36 points higher respectively than the White school with 15% Latinx students ($p < .001$). They also rated Latinx and mixed schools 0.44 and 0.41 points higher than the Black school that had 18% Latinx students ($p < .001$).[10]

[9]Notably, school graduation and safety ratings signaled anticipated belonging to respondents. Parents and students believed that schools with higher graduation rates and where current students reported feeling more secure would offer more belonging. Fully interacted models demonstrate that neighborhood safety had stronger effects on Black respondents' assessments of belongingness than on Latinx respondents' assessments. Metal detector presence did not affect respondents' perceptions of inclusion.

[10]Additional analyses demonstrate that, compared to Latinx students, Latinx parents were more likely to hold racialized perceptions of school belonging. Latinx parents anticipated more substantial differences in belonging between the mixed and the Black schools.

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Black respondents also differentiated between anticipated belonging by schools' racial demographics ($\chi^2(3) = 41.82$ and $p < .001$). They believed that they would feel most included at the Black school where three-fourths of the student population was Black (adjM = 5.54), followed by the mixed and Latinx schools that were one-third and one-quarter Black (adjM = 5.35 and adjM = 5.18). They perceived the White school, with a 7% Black population, as potentially the least inclusive, rating it 0.75, 0.56,0.39 points below the Black, mixed, and Latinx schools respectively ($p < .001$).[11]

White and Asian respondents expressed similar racial hierarchies of anticipated school belonging and inclusion. The chi-square tests demonstrate the overall influence of racial makeup on their perceptions of school belonging ($\chi^2(3)^{\text{White Respondents}} = 77.74$ and $\chi^2(3)^{\text{Asian Respondents}} = 34.33$ and $p < .001$). Figure 1 illustrates that White and Asian respondents anticipated belonging most at the White school that had the largest proportion of their respective racial ingroups, followed by the mixed school, and least belongingness at the Latinx and Black schools that enrolled less than 6% of their racial ingroups. The distinctions between their judgments of belonging by these racial composition typologies were substantively large, between 0.28 and 1.06 points, and most were statistically significant at the 0.001 level.[12]

Anticipated Belonging and Individual Racial Biases

Individuals with more negative sentiments toward racial outgroups were more likely to express racialized beliefs about school belonging. Table 3 shows interaction coefficients from the regression models that estimate whether respondents' racial biases moderate the influence of school racial demographics on anticipated belonging. Results are stratified by respondents' racial backgrounds and racial bias scores are in standard deviation units. The general pattern of negative interaction term coefficients between school racial composition and respondents' racial bias scores suggests that respondents with more negative feelings toward racial outgroups expressed more dispersive race-based perceptions of inclusivity.

Latinx and Black respondents with stronger anti-White sentiments believed they would feel less included in the White school. Panel A, Column 3 demonstrates that as Latinx respondents' White-racial-bias score increases by one standard deviation, the difference in Latinx parents' and students' feelings of exclusion at the White school versus the Latinx school also increases by 0.29 points ($p < .05$). Similarly, compared to Black respondents who felt similar affect toward Black and White people, Black respondents with stronger negative feelings toward White people distinguished more between potential belonging at the White and Black schools ($b^{\text{White v Black School}} = -0.29$; $p < .05$). See Panel B, Column 3.

The negative relationship between racial sentiment and racialized projections of school belonging was most apparent among the White respondents. The regression coefficients in Panel C demonstrate that anti-Latinx, anti-Black, and anti-Asian biases moderated the likelihood that White respondents expressed racially disparate anticipations of school

11. School demographics had stronger effects on Black students' perceptions of school belonging: the difference in anticipated belonging for the Black and White schools was more pronounced for Black students.
12. The difference between Asian respondents' anticipated belongingness at Latinx and mixed schools ($b = 0.28$) approached but did not reach statistical significance ($p = .054$).

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inclusion and safety. For every standard deviation increase in the anti-Latinx bias, White respondents on average anticipated that the Latinx, Black, and mixed schools would feel 0.44, 0.55,0.43 points less inclusive than the White school ($p < .01$); and for every standard deviation increase in the anti-Black bias score, they rated Latinx, Black, and mixed schools as 0.53, 0.72,0.48 points lower than the White school in anticipated belonging ($p < .001$).

Results particularly suggest that pro-White sentiments may underlie White respondents' racialized assessments of anticipated belonging. Given that the Latinx, Black, and mixed schools had proportionally fewer Asian students than the White school, we would expect that White respondents with more negative feelings toward Asian people would find these schools more welcoming than the White school. Contrary to this expectation, Panel C, Column 4 demonstrates that White respondents with stronger biases toward Asian people rated Latinx, Black, and mixed schools as potentially less inclusive than White schools. This unexpected finding may reflect the collinearity between anti-Asian, anti-Latinx, and anti-Black sentiments. A Cronbach's alpha test reveals that White respondents' negative racial sentiments likely represent an underlying construct of pro-White/anti-other racial group feelings ($\alpha = .89$). I interact the school racial demographics with a pro-White/anti-other racial group score to predict anticipated belonging. See Supplemental Table A5. Figure 2 illustrates results from that analysis. It demonstrates that White respondents, with stronger pro-White sentiments, typically rated mixed, Latinx, and Black schools as having less belongingness than White schools. In sum, these results suggest within-racial-group heterogeneity in racialized beliefs about school belonging and corroborate the hypothesis that respondents' reactions to school racial composition inform their race-associated judgments of anticipated belonging.

Conclusion

Families leverage residential decisions and school choice policies to actively select schools that could potentially support their students' educational and socioemotional wellbeing. Policymakers have particularly elevated school choice as a solution to persistent racial disparities in educational opportunities and racial segregation (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). Despite these policy intentions, racial segregation is pronounced in non-neighborhood schools of choice (Sohoni & Saporito, 2009). Previous research also establishes that racial demographics affect families' school preferences and choices (Billingham & Hunt, 2016; Hailey, 2021; Saporito & Lareau, 1999) and that families express priorities for belonging, inclusion, and safety when searching for schools (Freidus, 2020; Kimelberg, 2014; Pattillo et al., 2014). Prior studies have not made clear, however, whether families use *belonging, fit*, and *safety* as coded language for racial preferences or whether racial composition influences families' assessments of school belonging .

To understand the relationship between school racial demographics and anticipated belonging, I conducted a survey experiment with parents and students actively choosing NYC high schools. In the survey, respondents indicated their expected belonging in hypothetical schools with experimentally varied racial compositions, graduation rates, safety ratings, and security apparatuses. Findings suggest that families express race-based perceptions of anticipated school belonging. Accounting for school attributes that families

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may have used race to proxy, Latinx, Black, White, and Asian parents and students anticipated that they would sense most belonging in the school with the largest proportion of same-race students, followed by the racially diverse school, and anticipated feeling least included in schools with the smallest proportions of their ingroup. Results furthermore suggest that individuals' racial attitudes may underlie race-based projections of belonging. Respondents with more negative feelings toward racial outgroups reported that they would anticipate less belonging in schools with more students from those racial groups. By employing an experimental design in this study, I isolate the role of race in families' school evaluations and demonstrate that, all else equal, racial demographics shape how families think about *belonging, fit*, and *safety* in potential educational contexts.

Limitations

This study has several notable limitations. First, survey respondents only included parents and students considering NYC public high schools. Given this sample, results likely underestimate the effects of school racial composition on anticipated belonging for the population of NYC families and families across the United States. Families like the ones in my sample, who live in a metropolitan areas and attend public schools, often identify as liberal, urban people who value racial diversity (Posey-Maddox et al., 2014; Roda & Wells, 2013). By their attendance at the school fair, it also likely that these families did not exclusively consider NYC's more racially homogenous private, charter, or suburban public schools (Sohoni & Saporito, 2009). As a consequence of their potential identities and search decisions, I expect racial composition to effect sample members' anticipated belonging less than families who exclusively opted out of NYC's public schools. Even if the racialized perceptions evidenced in this experiment do not directly extrapolate to all families, they represent over 80,000 applicants to NYC public high schools each year. Future experiments should determine whether families in other cities who are searching for charter and private schools also express race-based anticipated school belonging.

Secondly, the experiment conditions may also limit interpretation. Using distinct school racial distributions allowed me to incorporate multiple racial groups in school demographics and imitate the NYC school-choice portfolio. However, this design restricted my ability to distinguish the precise racial makeup that provokes families to express racially disparate perceptions of anticipated belonging. It is unclear whether the respondents interpreted school racial compositions as representing majority-White, Black, and Latinx schools and whether the predominating racial group in a school or the overall school racial makeup informed their perceptions. It is noteworthy, however, that although the hypothetical majority-Black and majority-Latinx schools had similar proportions of White and Asian students, Latinx and Black respondents expressed distinct predictions of belonging in the two schools. This finding could signal that differences in the schools' Latinx and Black populations motivated respondents' beliefs about belonging. Future research should employ a larger sample of respondents to better capture the exact racial thresholds by which families would feel welcomed and included at prospective schools.

In the theoretical section of this article, I propose three motives for families' racialized perceptions of belonging: concerns with students' fit, racially-biased and stereotypical

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images of student violence, and apprehensions about racial discrimination. While the patterns of judgments align with this framework, I cannot distinguish between the plausibility of each mechanism. Furthermore, although I use results from the pre-test survey to conceptualize NYC respondents' answers to the survey question about welcomeness as their anticipated school belonging, it is possible that this conceptualization may not fully represent all survey participants' intentions. For example, I define belonging as multi-dimensionally including safety, inclusion, and relationships, but each respondent could have emphasized one or more dimension over another. Some respondents may have just considered students' ability to find friends and others may have holistically evaluated peer fit, teacher-student relationships, and schools supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. In addition, this study does not identify potential heterogeneity in parents' and students' conceptualization and racialization of belonging. To uncover the mechanisms underlying families' race-associated beliefs more fully, scholars should conduct interviews with parents and students and should implement experiments that estimate individuals' desires for same-race friendships, endorsements of racial stereotypes, and perceptions of school racial climates.

Discussion

Families' racialized perceptions of anticipated school belonging evidenced in this survey experiment have important implications for school-choice research and policy. This study provides further evidence that judgments of school quality are contingent upon schools' racial compositions and assessed through individuals' racial biases (Ewing, 2018; Hailey, 2020; Holme, 2002; Roda & Wells, 2013). By demonstrating the causal effect of school racial composition on anticipated belonging, the results also suggest that families' expressed concerns with school fit, belonging, and safety may indeed be coded language signifying student racial demographics and race-based school preferences (Brown, 2022; Evans, 2021; Freidus, 2020; Holme, 2002; Kimelberg, 2014).

Given the stated importance of school fit to families' school and residential selections, it is likely that parents' and students' racialized assessments of anticipated belonging contribute to larger patterns of school and neighborhood racial segregation. These findings suggest that the persistence of school racial segregation and families' racially divergent selections of non-neighborhood schools is not just rooted in disparate academic resources and outcomes across school contexts (Harris, 2001). Instead, parents' and students' race-based assumptions about non-academic school quality factors may underlie their preferences and choices for schools and neighborhoods with larger same-race populations. These finding support the literatures on racialized evaluations of residential and educational spaces (Billingham et al., 2020; Bonam et al., 2016; Ispa-Landa & Conwell, 2015; Krysan et al., 2008), contribute to our understanding of how racial demographics influence assessments in subtle, cognitive ways, and have consequence for reproducing racial segregation and stratification.

Many families idealize racially diverse schools as being spaces in which all students are safe, included, and empowered (Cooper, 2005; Kimelberg & Billingham, 2013; Roda & Wells, 2013). NYC families, however, did not believe that the hypothetical diverse school

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in the survey, whose racial makeup reflected the NYC student population, would be the most inclusive and safe environment. Corroborating studies on students' sense of belonging in their current schools (Johnson et al., 2001), NYC families anticipated belonging most in schools with disproportionately more students from their racial ingroup. This finding suggests that families judge schools not through an idealized diversity lens, but through their personal biases as well as racial ideologies and practices perpetuated in educational systems (Freidus, 2020; Turner, 2018).

If school districts aim to racially integrate schools through choice policies, administrators must recognize that families employ racialized assessments of schools when engaging with *colorblind* school choice programs. The success of desegregation aims and choice programs' racial equity rests on both measuring and shifting schools' racial climates. Policymakers should address educational contexts where students' limited cross-race peer interactions in segregated elementary and middle schools, perpetuate biases toward racial outgroups; where racist rhetoric, hostility, and violence harm students and parents; and where discriminatory policies and power dynamics reify stereotypes that Black and Latinx students are unintelligent and dangerous. To hold individual schools accountable and provide families with information on racialized belonging and safety, school districts should explicitly measure and publish information on racial disparities in academic tracking, exclusionary discipline, and students' sense of safety, inclusion, and support—as well as community members' perceptions of school racial relations, biases, and hostilities (Bryk et al., 2015; Voight et al., 2015). Continued expansion of government-subsidized school choice programs without addressing individuals' racial biases and schools' racist practices will only exacerbate racial segregation and inequality.

Supplementary Material

Refer to Web version on PubMed Central for supplementary material.

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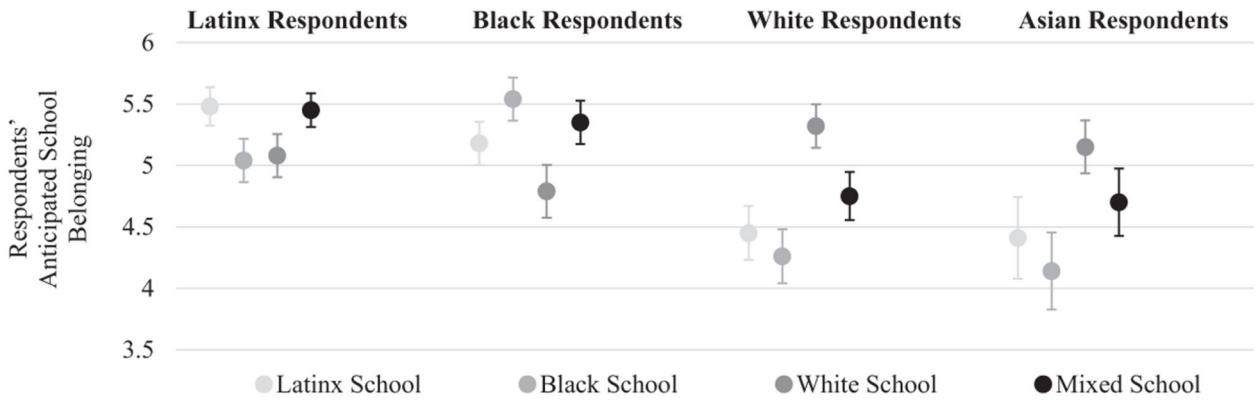

	Latinx Respondents	Black Respondents	White Respondents	Asian Respondents
Latinx School	5.48(0.08)^{BW}	5.18(0.09)^{BWM}	4.46(0.12)^{WM}	4.41(0.17)^{W}
Black School	5.04(0.08)^{LM}	5.54(0.09)^{LWM}	4.27(0.12) ^{WM}	4.14(0.16)^{WM}
White School	5.09(0.08) ^{LM}	4.79(0.11)^{LBM}	5.32(0.09)^{LBM}	5.15(0.11)^{LBM}
Mixed School	5.45(0.07)^{BW}	5.35(0.09) ^{LBW}	4.75(0.10)^{LBW}	4.70(0.14)^{BW}
Test of School Racial Demographics Fixed Effect	$\chi^2(3)$=39.16***	$\chi^2(3)$ =41.82***	$\chi^2(3)$ =77.74***	$\chi^2(3)$ =34.33***
Observations	1451	1068	719	363
Respondents	319	233	153	76

Figure 1. Adjusted Mean Respondent Anticipated School Belonging, by Respondent Racial Background from HLM Models

Source. NYC survey experiment, 2018. *Note*: Adjusted means and 95% confidence intervals from HLM Models in Table A3. Regressions include controls for vignette characteristics, respondent gender, current school borough, language spoken at home, if they failed a seventh grade course, parent or student indicator, and experiment conditions (profile order, Spanish language survey). Standard errors are clustered to account for students and parents being nested within one household. School perception of belonging scale ranges from 1 to 7, very unwelcome to very welcome.

^{LBWM} Significant difference between reference category and Latinx^{L} Black^{B} White^{W} Mixed^{M} schools ($p < .05$).

***$p < .001$.

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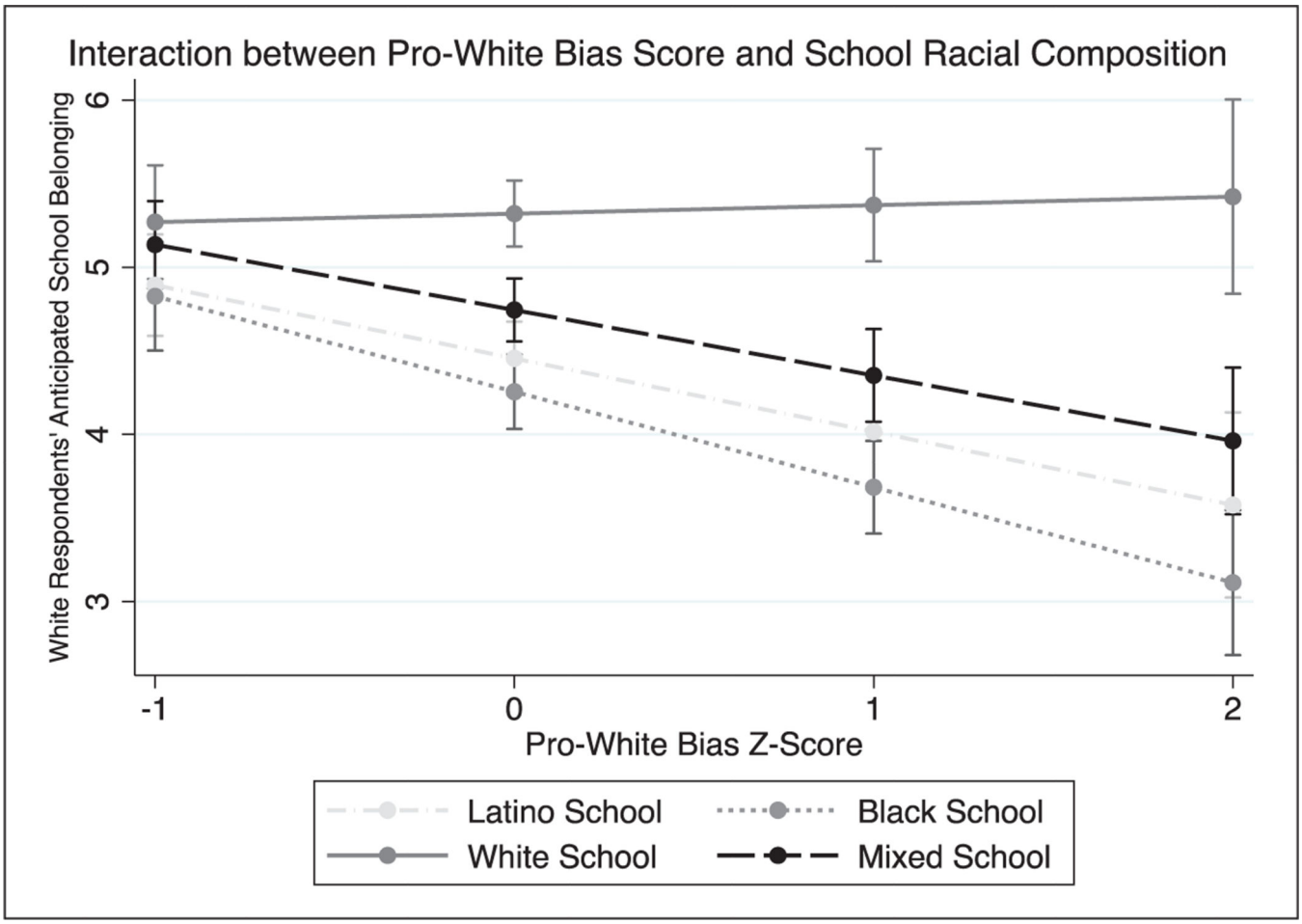

Figure 2. White Respondents' Adjusted Mean Anticipated School Belonging by Pro-White Racial Bias

Source. NYC survey experiment, 2018.

Note. Adjusted means and 95% confidence intervals from HLM Models in Table A5. Regression includes main effect of school racial demographics and pro-White racial bias score, interaction between school racial demographics and pro-White racial bias scores, and controls for vignette characteristics, respondent gender, current school borough, language spoken at home, if they failed a seventh grade course, parent or student indicator, and experiment conditions (profile order, Spanish language survey). Pro-White racial bias score is in standard deviation units and corresponds to White respondents' positive feelings toward White people and negative feelings toward Latinx, Black, and Asian people. School perception of welcomeness scale ranges from 1 to 7, very unwelcome to very welcome. Standard errors are clustered to account for students and parents being within one household.

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Table 1.

Experimentally Varied School Characteristics on Vignette School Profiles.

School characteristics	Levels			
School racial demographics	**Majority Latinx**	**Majority Black**	**Majority White**	**Mixed**
Latinx (%)	63	18	15	44
Black (%)	25	74	7	36
White (%)	4	2	58	8
Asian (%)	5	3	15	10
School safety	79% of students feel safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker room, and cafeteria			
	91% of students feel safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker room, and cafeteria			
Neighborhood safety	70% of students feel safe in the school's neighborhood			
	87% of students feel safe in the school's neighborhood			
Graduation rate	75% of students graduate in 4 years			
	89% of students graduate in 4 years			
Metal detector	Yes			
	No			

Note. The student racial demographics for the majority Latinx, Black, and White schools and mixed schools represent the demographics of NYC public high schools within each of these categories in 2017. School and neighborhood safety ratings are set at the 25th and 75th percentile of all NYC schools and graduation rates are at the 50th and 75th percentiles of all NYC schools.

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Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics.

	Full sample	Analytic sample	NYC
N	1,030	781	
Anticipated School Belonging (range: 1–7)	5.08 (1.51)	5.06 (1.49)	
Respondent Race (percent)			
Latinx	38	40	41
Black	27	30	27
White	18	20	13
Asian	8	10	17
Other Race	9		2
Respondent Parental Status (percent)			
Parent	52	50	
Student	48	50	
Language Spoken at Home (percent)			
English	72	72	54
Spanish	20	20	26
Haitian Creole	1	2	8
Chinese	0	2	6
Russian	0	0	2
Bengali	0	1	2
Other	4	4	7
Respondent Gender (percent)			
Male	33	33	51
Female	66	66	49
Other	1	1	
Student Failed a seventh Grade Class (percent)	5	5	
Student Middle School Borough (percent)			
Bronx	18	16	23
Brooklyn	29	29	31
Manhattan	22	21	15
Queens	31	32	31
Staten Island	0.2	0.2	0
Does Not Attend School in NYC	1	1	0
Parent has Some College	86	87	52[a]
Experience or More (percent)			
Parent Currently	86	87	72[a]
Employed(percent)			

Source. NYC survey experiment, 2018; Research Alliance for NYC Schools, 2017.

Note. Standard deviations in parentheses. Full sample includes all survey respondents. Analytic sample only includes respondents with non-missing values for key variables and Latinx, Black, White, or Asian respondents.

NYC eighth grade student population data drawn from 2017 NYCDOE Data on High School Applicants. I exclude Staten Island from NYC demographics because the survey was not conducted in Staten Island.

[a]Data are from American Community Survey (2012–2016) Education Demographic Geographic Estimates for families in NYC public schools.

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Table 3.

Anticipated School Belonging: Interaction between School Racial Demographics and Racial Bias Scores.

	Bias toward Latinx people	Bias toward Black people	Bias toward White people	Bias toward Asian people
Panel A: Latinx Respondents				
Latinx School × Racial Bias Score				
Black School × Racial Bias Score		−0.255$^{\wedge}$ (0.138)	0.006 (0.132)	0.065 (0.088)
White School × Racial Bias Score		−0.117 (0.106)	−0.289* (0.130)	−0.133 (0.087)
Mixed School × Racial Bias Score		−0.027 (0.085)	0.005 (0.080)	0.045 (0.065)
Test of School Racial Demographics × Racial Bias Score Fixed Effect		$\chi^2(3) = 6.22$	$\chi^2(3) = 9.69^{*}$	$\chi^2(3) = 6.91^{\wedge}$
Panel B: Black Respondents				
Latinx School × Racial Bias Score	−0.099 (0.083)		−0.125 (0.101)	−0.140 (0.092)
Black School × Racial Bias Score				
White School × Racial Bias Score	−0.169 (0.109)		−0.294* (0.131)	−0.202$^{\wedge}$ (0.112)
Mixed School × Racial Bias Score	−0.149 (0.094)		−0.181$^{\wedge}$ (0.108)	−0.068 (0.114)
Test of School Racial Demographics × Racial Bias Score Fixed Effect	$\chi^2(3) = 3.57$		$\chi^2(3) = 5.93$	$\chi^2(3) = 4.36$
Panel C: White Respondents				
Latinx School × Racial Bias Score	−0.438** (0.144)	−0.529*** (0.136)		−0.361** (0.112)
Black School × Racial Bias Score	−0.552*** (0.135)	−0.722*** (0.124)		−0.338** (0.127)
White School × Racial Bias Score				
Mixed School × Racial Bias Score	–0.432*** (0.121)	–0.48*** (0.101)		–0.274* (0.111)
Test of School Racial Demographics × Racial Bias Score Fixed Effect	$\chi^2(3) = 17.96$****	$\chi^2(3) = 44.47^{***}$		$\chi^2(3) = 13.16^{***}$
Panel D: Asian Respondents				
Latinx School × Racial Bias Score	–0.294 (0.226)	–0.315$^{\wedge}$ (0.175)	–0.075 (0.158)	
Black School × Racial Bias Score	–0.107 (0.198)	–0.248 (0.189)	0.022 (0.181)	
White School × Racial Bias Score				
Mixed School × Racial Bias Score	–0.203 (0.187)	–0.243$^{\wedge}$ (0.135)	–0.019 (0.139)	
Test of School Racial Demographics × Racial Bias Score Fixed Effect	$\chi^2(3) = 3.33$	$\chi^2(3) = 4.15$	$\chi^2(3) = 1.20$	

Source. NYC survey experiment, 2018.

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Note. Interaction coefficients between school racial demographics and racial bias scores are from HLM models predicting respondent perceptions of school belonging in Table A4. Regressions include main effect of school racial demographics and racial bias scores, interaction between school racial demographics and racial bias scores, and controls for vignette characteristics, respondent gender, current school borough, language spoken at home, if they failed a seventh grade course, parent or student indicator, and experiment conditions (profile order, Spanish language survey).

Racial bias scores are in standard deviation units and correspond to respondents' negative feelings toward Latinx, Black, White, or Asian people compared to their ingroup. Standard errors are clustered to account for students and parents being nested within one household.

^ $p < .10$.

* p < .05

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$.

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