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THE POLITICS OF PARTICIPATION: THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SCHOOL RACIAL  
COMPOSITION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT LATER IN LIFE

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## **ABSTRACT**

Civic engagement is a primary goal of education, the cornerstone of democracy; therefore inherently linked to diversity. In a nation experiencing multiculturalism and a resurgence of segregation simultaneously one might question how school racial context becomes the means to civic engagement. Researchers debate whether racial composition undermines or facilitates civic engagement, but there is consensus that it affects students' access to civic education resources and sense of community and belonging. Using data from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002 and The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey, this study examines the association between school racial composition and a person's likelihood to engage in civic behavior later in life.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	i
Chapter 1 Introduction .....	1
Chapter 2 Review of the Literature.....	5
Definitions of Civic Engagement .....	5
Civic Engagement and Racial Composition.....	7
School Diversity and Politics .....	9
Individual Factors.....	11
Chapter 3 Methodology: Chi-square Analysis.....	14
The Survey .....	14
Conceptual Framework .....	15
Research Questions .....	15
Hypotheses .....	15
Independent Variable .....	16
Dependent Variables .....	16
Moderating Variables.....	17
Analysis.....	18
Limitations .....	18
Chapter 4 Findings: Chi-square Analysis .....	19
Chapter 5 Methodology: Logistic Regression .....	29
The Data Independent .....	29
Independent Variable .....	29
Dependent Variable.....	32
Moderating Variables.....	33
Analytic Strategy.....	34
Limitations .....	36
Chapter 6 Findings: Logistic Regression.....	37
Chapter 7 Discussion .....	48
References.....	54

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

School racial segregation continues to impact American democracy; this phenomenon reinforces the importance of research on civic engagement. Recent landmark cases such as *Board of Education v. Dowell*, *Freeman v. Pitts*, and *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1* correlate with a significant increase in resegregated K-12 schools in the United States (Martin, 2004; Thro & Russo, 2009). Contrary to the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* ruling, contemporary Supreme Court decisions refuse to acknowledge the necessity of racial integration in schools and the workplace. These cases not only eliminate federal supervision of the integration efforts of public schools, but also make race-based admissions in primary and secondary schools illegal. As schools become more and more segregated, the role of school segregation on civic engagement remains an urgent concern for sociology researchers.

Dating back to its foundation, public school, or “common school” as it was originally named, was a political institution. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were both particularly concerned with finding the nations next great political leaders through the schooling process; public schools were charged with educating qualified leadership for a democratic government. Schools, in theory, were to act as miniature societies; places where citizens would learn to obey the law by obeying school rules; to accept a common set of political beliefs; to provide equal opportunity for all students to be elected into office; and to educate students to be involved in community activities (Spring 2012). Now, not only are schools designed to act as

miniature societies, but also as a remedy for many societal ills such as poverty, drugs and racial intolerance.

Several of these societal ills have been found to be assuaged by school desegregation. School desegregation has a host of benefits for students including increased academic achievement and aspirations, lower incarceration rates, higher graduation and employment rates, and tolerance and preference for mixed racial environments (Mickelson & Nkomo 2012). Since the ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education* during May of 1954 it has been a common ideology that the separation of the races has no place in the public domain, particularly in the area of education. It took many years, several policies and countless efforts- some fruitless, some successful- to attempt at desegregating our nation's public schools, because resisting to do so was now inherently unequal and unlawful. Desegregation did not take place immediately, however, it was not until a year later that the Court handed down a plan for how desegregation was to proceed and, for some states, over a decade before they were to lawfully abide by the order (*Alexander v. Holmes County Board of Education*). However, it was not long before desegregation orders had been federally abandoned as the result of several cases, a few being *Board of Education v. Dowell*, *Freeman v. Pitts*. These cases resulted in decisions that stated once a district reaches unitary status- once it has been successful in meeting part of the goals of a desegregation plan- the federal court's business in that portion of the plan is obsolete, in addition to rejecting the use of race in admitting students to public schools. These landmark cases spoke volumes to the peoples of our nation as schools were no longer legally required to desegregate, even if the result could be resegregation.

Over the past few decades there has been a resurgence of segregation in America's public schools. The effects of this segregation interest researchers and educators alike. The increasing

diversity in America and the increasing segregation in schools cause many to wonder how students can be trained as future citizens in a world that looks much different than their classrooms. Frankenberg (2013) contended that children who live in racially segregated communities, more often than not, attend racially segregated schools. From the perspective of the perpetuation theory, children who attend racially segregated schools will, by and large, experience racially segregated environments throughout their lives; likewise, those who experience schooling in a racially diverse context are more likely to experience racially diverse settings in the future (Stearns, 2010). As public schools undertake the task of preparing future active citizens, they must keep in mind how diversity and racial homogeneity in schooling contribute to that outcome.

Civic engagement allows citizens the freedom and space with which to exercise rights, such as petitioning, assembling and speaking- while also holding them accountable to take care of the less fortunate and tackle public issues (McBride, Sherraden, & Pritzker, 2006). The purpose of civic engagement is solidarity and social cohesion amongst the citizens of a nation. In a democratic country such as the United States the ways in which and the extent to which people participate in their communities is of utmost importance. Multicultural nations have a duty to ensure that citizens are well-equipped with the skills and experiences to live, work, and participate in a diverse milieu. Schools have played a major role in preparing students for life as future citizens. Because public schools are often charged with this task, integrated schooling becomes paramount to life in a nation where many cultures and ethnicities coexist. Schools that represent a diverse student body allow for more positive race relations between future voters and participators and are better equipped to prepare children for life in a multicultural society. In recent years there has been an ongoing debate between researchers about whether diversity or

racial homogeneity facilitates civic engagement. This study focuses on the aforementioned discord, and more specifically, whether diversity or homogeneity in schooling is associated with civic engagement later in life.

In this paper I will review the various definitions of civic engagement and the implications of such diverse definitions on the outcomes of studies. In addition, I will explore the relevant research on the competing perspectives of how the racial composition of schools and communities is associated with civic engagement. Because I am testing the effect of institutional characteristics on individual outcomes I account for the three individual characteristics that could impact my findings- race, socioeconomic status, and immigrant status. Finally, I will then move forward to an analysis of data from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002, a nationally representative sample of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, to find how school racial composition is associated students' propensity to engage in civic behavior later in life.



## Chapter 2 Review of the Literature

The literature review below will discuss the various definitions of civic engagement and explores how these definitions influence the way in which it is studied. It will then move forward to explore the literature on the association between civic engagement and racial composition. Because of the lack of extensive literature on civic engagement and racial composition in schools I have included literature on civic engagement and the racial composition of neighborhoods. I also argue that mixed racial composition in schools is associated with one's proclivity towards diverse settings later in life. Finally, I discuss the three moderating variables (race, socioeconomic status, and immigrant status) that may affect the relationship between school racial composition and civic engagement later in life.

### Definitions of Civic Engagement

Robert E. Putnam first brought the concept of civic engagement into contemporary scholarly conversation with his books *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2000) and *Making Democracy Work* (1993). Putnam was far from providing the conclusive work on civic engagement, but is cited by a preponderance of researchers studying the concept. Putnam asserts that since the post-war era Americans participate much less in the lives of their communities, thus becoming civically disengaged. This lack of civic engagement, he contends, has led to a weakened social capital, social networks necessary for community, collective action, and democratic participation (Boggs 2002). Sociological studies about civic

engagement vary widely in the ways in which it is both referred to and discussed. In particular, researchers debate about individual vs. collective action; informal vs. formal activity; and homogenous vs. heterogeneous participation.

First, researchers' definitions of civic engagement differ from study to study because of discord concerning the term's meaning. Some define civic engagement by the behavior of an individual; such as participating in service work. In contrast, various definitions deemphasize individual activity, instead focusing on collective action as the primary tenet of civic engagement; specifically the interfacing of individuals toward a public, community or political end. These definitions of civic engagement describe it as collaborating, solving problems through our political process, and influencing the larger civil society. Other definitions distinguish individual and collective action between 'civic' and 'service'. "Service implies doing for and civic implies doing with. Service is about meeting people's needs. Civic is about deliberations and public work aimed at some public issue or challenge." The lack of a clear-cut definition of civic engagement allows scholars the freedom to define it as they see fit; variance in definitions of civic engagement then leads to variance in findings concerning the term. For instance, Robert E. Putnam, renowned political scientist, discussed social capital as the by-product of civic engagement; therefore, his description of civic engagement largely included social activities such as club meetings, friend visits, card games and the like. How civic engagement is defined is dependent upon the perspectives and interests of the definer; this certainly impacts the ways in which it is researched (Adler & Goggin 2005).

Second, civic activities include a variety of activities existing on a spectrum from informal to formal actions performed by individuals alone or individuals participating in a group. In their work *what do we mean by "civic engagement?"* Adler and Goggin (2005) created a

*continuum on civic engagement.* At the far left (informal) end of the spectrum are acts such as “helping a neighbor” and “engaging in political discussion with friends” while on the far right (formal) end of the spectrum is “sustained intensive service” (such as AmeriCorps) and “running for public office.” Predictably, informal measures of civic engagement would result in higher frequency of the acts performed, as the more formal activities require time, resources and networks that would not be available to those living within the constrained environment of an impoverished neighborhood. For instance, blacks as well as whites living in concentrated poverty neighborhoods are found to be less likely to vote, discuss national politics, and express an interest in political affairs (McLean et al. 2002). While many researchers are specifically interested in political behavior, neglecting to include other forms of engagement will certainly distort a study’s findings.

### **Civic Engagement and Racial Composition**

The last important area of civic engagement that researchers debate is how racial context affects participation in civic activities. This debate will be the focus of my study. Racial context has been found by several researchers to be associated with the likelihood that one will engage themselves civically; the racial composition of one’s surroundings has been found to either undermine or facilitate civic engagement (Oliver 2010; Matsubayashi 2010; Rogers & Chong 2005). Racial context influences citizens’ sense of community and belonging, therefore, leaving them feeling as if they are a part of the whole or ostracized. For example, whites and minorities feel a greater sense of community in homogenous neighborhoods (Oliver, year).

Most researchers agree that civic involvement in one’s community is dependent upon the racial composition of that community. The divergent viewpoints that follow, however, dispute whether diversity or homogeneity is a prerequisite for civic engagement. Several researchers

claim that homogeneity prompts civic participation (Matsubayashi 2010; Merry 2012; Oliver 2010). Others, however, hold the contrasting position that diverse surroundings foster various predictors of civic engagement such as political discussion, tolerance of other racial groups, and greater civic interest (Mickelson & Nkomo 2012; Campbell 2008; Bowman 2011). The ongoing scholarly debate regarding the racial composition under which civic engagement is best fostered make it an interesting topic to investigate.

A study titled *E pluribus unum: Diversity and Community in the 21st Century*, Putnam asserts that diversity poses a threat to social solidarity and social capital, the byproducts of civic engagement, and that there exists a tradeoff between diversity and community. In accordance with this theory of contextual effects, findings from similar studies contend that a person's likelihood to engage in politics depends largely on the racial composition of the community in which he/she lives. Matsubayashi, in his work *Racial Environment and Political Participation*, found that people's decision to vote depends significantly on the relative proportion of in-group and out-group members in their surroundings. Furthermore, his results show that those living in racially homogenous areas with few out-group members pay more attention to politics (Matsubayashi, 2010). Likewise, another study found that collective consciousness, typically in regards to race, influences political behavior (Rogers & Chong 2005).

Supporters of this theory of homogeneity reject integration as a means to promote civic engagement. The paradoxes of racial integration were explored in a book by J. Eric Oliver. He contended that, although integration is the best way to improve race relations in our nation, it is not an "irreducible good" (Oliver 2010). Citizens feel less of a sense of belonging in heterogeneous communities and so participate in those communities in much lower levels than they would if placed in a homogenous community surrounded by citizens of their own racial

group. For instance, Blacks express greater feelings of alienation as the percentage of Whites increase in their neighborhoods; moreover, Blacks civic participation is lower in predominantly White neighborhoods (Oliver 2010 & Wu et al. 2011).

The issue with this theory of homogeneity, however, is that it provides a quick fix for a problem that requires a long-term solution. It does not consider the perpetuation theory: those who experience racially integrated schools grow to have a liking for heterogeneous settings and further are inclined to live and work in more diverse communities (Stearns 2010). Several studies claim that not only is civic engagement weakened in racially heterogeneous communities but that it is best fostered under conditions of segregation. (Oliver 2010). If both racial intolerance and civic engagement are facilitated by segregation, then the founding principles of this nation are not only a falsehood, but a farce as well. Is the very heart of democracy best expressed under conditions which ultimately undermine and defy the concept? The homogeneous condition for civic engagement strengthens the idea of segregation and racial intolerance and isolation; therefore, promoting de facto segregation. Of these studies, few have explored alternatives to these theories, simply accepting segregation as a viable solution. If diversity is a hindrance to civic engagement, then the best proposed solution is to unearth the ways in which people actually do come together in diverse settings, such as within schools.

### **School Diversity and Politics**

Promoting civic values and activities while people are still in their youth is crucial. Schools are universal and are a huge socialization institution for children. Schools provide children with a context outside of home; they may, at times, provide the freedom for students to experience diversity. Schools allow children with limited environments to encounter people and opportunities they may not have otherwise. In this paper, I consider another, more ethical,

diverse and democratic way of fostering civic engagement- through the heterogeneous racial composition of schools. The concept of school diversity is consistent with democratic ideals as noted by philosophers Aristotle and John Stuart Mill. Even recently in landmark Supreme Court cases racial diversity has been found to be a compelling state interest upon grounds to integrate (Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1). Although many researchers agree that racial homogeneity bolsters civic engagement in communities, it also perpetuates racial isolation in schooling, therefore, possibly undermining civic engagement for future adults. Adults' likelihood to engage in activities that contribute to social cohesion depend largely on how well prepared they are to work with a diverse group of people, whether or not their racial fears and stereotypes have been challenged, and the quality of their intergroup relations and intercultural understanding (Mickelson & Nkomo 2012).

It is within the context of schools that children and adolescents learn to deliberate and collaborate with others that are like and unlike themselves. Kahne et al. (2013) found that discussion of societal issues prompts increases in behaviors such as voting and volunteering, commitment to civic participation, and interest in politics. However, according to John Stuart Mill's marketplace of ideas theorem, diversity in thought is essential for deliberation within a democracy (Mickelson & Nkomo 2012). Diversity within social institutions has also been said to be crucial for racial justice within a democracy. As mentioned earlier in this article, segregated schools, particularly schools with high concentrations of minorities, have been found to have injurious effects on the students who attend them; while integrated schools produce more positive outcomes on adults.

Schools can be effective institutions in cultivating democratic ideals within students. According to Mickelson and Nkomo (2012) integrated schooling is positively related to support

of democratic values and greater inclination for aspects of civic engagement. A diverse social environment in schooling gives students the skills necessary for positive interaction with other races and ethnicities later in life. For example, childhood and adult cross-racial contact increases the probability that Blacks will have White friends as adults. Students attending diverse schools are also able to better understand the perspectives of others. Integrated schooling produces cross-racial friendships and positive intergroup relations that are key for participation in a multicultural democracy.

Consistent with Mickelson and Nkomo's review, a study done by Bowman (2011) concluded that how adolescents experience diversity foreshadows their commitment to society as adults. He found that interpersonal interactions with racial diversity were effective in promoting civic engagement. What occurs in the classroom can have a significant impact on a student's commitment to civic participation (Kahne & Sporte 2008). Students' experiences with and exposure to diversity allows them the opportunity to better relate with others within the nation. Those who grow up in racially segregated environments and attend racially segregated schools hold prejudices and fears about others that are harmful to a civil society. Non-existent intergroup relationships perpetuate negative stereotypes which prevent people from getting along. Segregation in schools undermines civic engagement for future adults and defies the concept of democracy in a multicultural nation.

### **Individual Factors**

Historically, race has played a huge role in the civic engagement of Americans. Because of the United States' dark history of segregation and exclusion, minority citizens have been compelled to come together to fight existing inequalities. Grassroots civic engagement is the catalyst for much of the change in federal social policies, such as desegregation, miscegenation

laws, and voter ID laws. A study by Sinclair, Walker, and Gillion (2009) cites authors Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) who concluded that Black and White civic participation changes over time. Black civic participation was related to macro level changes in the political sphere such as Jesse Jackson's presidential bid. While Whites were found to engage in political activities such as writing a congressional representative and signing petitions in 1974, by 1994 these differences were cut in half. By 1994, of the 12 survey items measuring civic engagement, differences only existed in signing petitions, writing letters to representatives, and attending public meetings on local or school affairs. The authors predicted that over time, Blacks' civic engagement would be equivalent to Whites'.

Income level, like race plays a role in how and whether one engages him/herself civically in the community. Those who have higher income and higher levels of education are more likely to engage themselves in civic activities such as volunteering and group membership. A qualitative study done by McBride et al. (2006) examined the civic engagement of low-income families as well as barriers to civic engagement that these families may face. They contended that, although civic engagement is positively associated with socioeconomic status, this does not mean that low-socioeconomic families do not orient themselves to civic behavior in other ways that are not commonly measured. Over one-third of respondents indicated some involvement with a church, and about 26% discussed community involvement which included providing for the elderly, raising money for a charity, and spending time working with social organizations. Other responses included neighboring, involvement in children's activities, and voting. The primary barrier to civic engagement respondents often discussed was scarce free time. Some stated that they had jobs and family demands that prevented them from engaging themselves in the community. Socioeconomic status indeed plays a role in how people participate in their



communities, is often due to a lack of resources and multiple responsibilities that keeps people of low socioeconomic status from engaging in their communities as much as high socioeconomic status people.

Immigrants in the United State have a unique experience compared to other racial minority groups in the country because of two significant barriers: language and citizenship status. In this sense, immigrants face a kind of double oppression. Immigrants in the U.S. are only studied specifically when it comes to immigration policy while other aspects of their incorporation into American life are ignored. The recent mobilization of Latin American immigrants has sparked an interest in civic engagement as it relates to immigrants in the country. Latin Americans, in some cases, are supported by local organizations, churches etc. to facilitate their incorporation into society. However, as previously contended in this paper, context matters. (Donnelly & Selee, 2010).

## **Chapter 3**

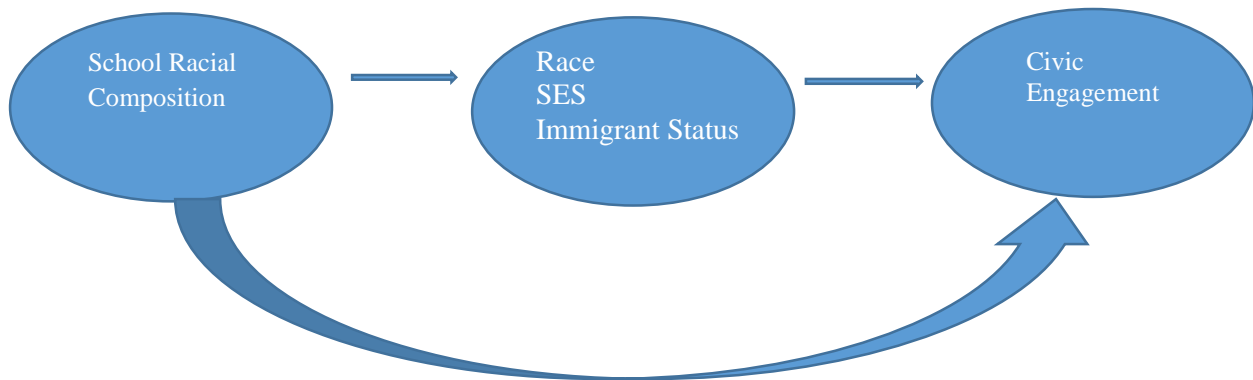
### **Methodology: Chi-square Analysis**

#### **The Survey**

The Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS 2002) is a nationally representative sample of 10<sup>th</sup> graders. ELS 2002 was administered to 750 schools and over 150,000 students during the spring term of the year. Students were initially surveyed in 2002 and completed a series of follow-up surveys afterwards until 2012. Surveys were also administered to parents, administrators, and Math and English teachers during the base year. ELS 2002 also includes student assessments in Math and English as well as high school transcripts.

The Study was created to serve the development and evaluation of education policies at various levels of policy-making. I chose this survey to complete my research because it helps me to understand the impact of various institutional and personal background features on student outcomes later in life. The strengths of using this survey include the following: its wide range of measures to analyze, its longitudinal feature, and its nationally representative feature. Many researchers studying civic engagement choose to use a specific school district or area, however, this limits the study's generalizability.

## Conceptual Framework



## Research Questions

1. Is the racial composition of the school associated with a person's likelihood to engage in civic behavior later in life?
2. Is this association moderated by race/ethnicity?
3. Is this association moderated by SES?
4. Is this association moderated by immigrant status?

## Hypotheses

H<sub>1</sub>: There will be a negative association between school racial composition and civic engagement later in life

H<sub>2</sub>: Blacks and Whites will have higher voting rates than Hispanics; there will be no differences for volunteering

H<sub>3</sub>: Students with high socioeconomic status backgrounds will have higher rates of civic engagement in both voting and volunteering

H<sub>4</sub>: Being an immigrant will weaken one's likelihood to vote and volunteer

### **Independent Variable**

Racial composition of schools was measured using the variable CP03MIN which indicated the percent minority within a school. From this variable I created a dummy variable PERCMIN, which broke down CP03MIN into quartiles of under 25% minorities in school, 25-49% minorities in school, 50-74% minorities in school and 75% or more minorities within the school. Using this variable over the initial, continuous variable was necessary for analyzing the data and creating graphs.

### **Dependent Variables**

The dependent variables for civic engagement were chosen from a list of variables in the third follow-up questionnaire related to civic engagement. Because some scholars separate political and civic involvement, the two variables were chosen so as to each represent one aspect of each. For each of the dependent variables, responses were coded 0 for “no” and 1 for “yes.” The variable chosen to identify political involvement was whether or not one voted in the 2008 presidential election. This variable was chosen very purposely, as this was a monumental time in American political history where macro-level changes affected the civic outcomes of individuals, specifically minority and youth voters. During the 2008 presidential election 23 million young voters cast their ballots, over two-thirds (68%) of whom voted in favor of President Barack Obama. This election caused an increase in young voters, Black and Hispanic voters, new voters, and women (CIRCLE Staff, 2008)

The second dependent variable chosen was whether or not one performed unpaid volunteer service in the past two years (F3D40). This variable was chosen because it includes all areas of service including religious and spiritual organizations, youth organizations, education organizations and more. This item in the questionnaire was the precursor to several items that

specify what kind of civic involvement the respondents were involved in and so has a high frequency and a diverse body of possible responses.

### **Moderating Variables**

I chose the public-use race/ethnicity composite variable (a variable that combines all races instead of separating them individually) over all other variable measures of race because it made my analysis of race consistent throughout the study. In addition, for the purposes of this study, I created a dummy variable WBHRACE so as to only look at Black/African-American, Hispanic, and White races; all remaining races are coded as “other.” All other races are very small in number, such as American Indian/Alaska Native, or not specific enough for the study (e.g., “more than one race”).

I chose Generational Status in order to determine whether or not a survey respondent was an immigrant. I then created a dummy variable IMMSTAT where 1 indicates that the survey respondent was born in Puerto Rico or a non-US country, and 0 indicates the survey respondent was a non-immigrant (i.e., born in the United States).

BYSES2QU was chosen to determine the socioeconomic status of the survey respondent at the time the initial questionnaire was administered. Socioeconomic status was determined by combining father’s/guardian’s education, mother’s/guardian’s education, family income, father’s/guardian’s occupation and mother’s/guardian’s occupation. Moreover, BYSES2QU was chosen over BYSES1QU because it includes more updated measures of occupational prestige from the 1989 General Social Survey over the 1961 Duncan SEI-version used in the first quartile coding variable for socioeconomic status.

**Analysis**

For this study I use Statistical Programming for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis was performed using a cross tabulation, which summarizes categorical data into percentages. These percentages indicate the percent of people within each group that answered “yes” and “no” to the questions about voting and volunteering. The chi-square test evaluates the statistical significance of the patterns observed in the cross-tabulation. In other words, if the p-value is less than .05, then the observed differences in the output are likely to occur in the real world; if the p-value is greater than .05, then the patterns observed in the output may be due to sampling error.

**Limitations**

The limitation of this study is that all answers provided by respondents are self-reported, therefore, a respondent could possibly answer “yes” to whether or not they performed volunteer work or voted. Both questions used in the dependent variables are subject to social desirability bias in which respondents ascribe to themselves characteristics that are socially desirable. Voting and volunteering are indeed socially desirable traits in a democracy, which depends on the participation of its inhabitants. Another limitation of this study is that, because it uses a nationwide sample, Whites are overrepresented, which could impact my results.

## Chapter 4

### Findings: Chi-square Analysis

I begin my analysis by performing a cross-tabulation of persons who voted in the 2008 presidential election by school racial composition as shown in Table 1. The percentage of people responding “yes” when asked whether or not they voted in the 2008 presidential election lessens as the percentage of minorities in the school increases. In other words, attending a high-minority school is associated with a lower likelihood that an individual will vote in the future. Based on the Pearson’s chi-squared test all results are statistically significant.

*Table 1. Frequencies of Persons Who Voted in the 2008 Election, by School Racial Composition in School*

Percent Minority	Yes	N
Under 25% minority	60.3%	3957
25%-49% minority	59.4%	1902
50%-74% minority	56.9%	1171
75% or more minority	55.5%	1559
<b>Total</b>	<b>41.2%</b>	<b>8589</b>

*Note: For all ( $p < .01$ )*

*Source: Education Longitudinal Study of 2002, survey question F3D38*

Table 2 shows cross-tabulation results of persons who performed unpaid service work during the last two years by school racial composition. Similar to voting, attending a school with 75% or more minorities is associated with a lower likelihood of performing unpaid service work. This table displays a negative relationship between school racial composition and likelihood of volunteering later in life. All results were statistically significant.

*Table 2. Frequencies of Persons Who Performed Unpaid Service Work During the Last 2 Years, by School Racial Composition*

Percent Minority	Yes	N
Under 25% minority	40.6%	3968
25%-49% minority	40.2%	1905
50%-74% minority	39.2%	1178
75% or more minority	33.9%	1566
Total	60.9%	8617

*Note: For all ( $p < .01$ )*

*Source: Education Longitudinal Study of 2002, survey question F3D40*

The subsequent tables reveal a more complex association between school racial composition and civic engagement by dividing the tables up by each individual factor described earlier in the paper. Table 3 shows the cross-tabulation results for persons who voted in the 2008 presidential election by school racial composition and individual race. In contrast to Table 1, the relationship between school racial composition and civic engagement is reversed in a few instances when moderated by individual race. An increase in the amount of minority students in a school, for Blacks and Whites, is associated with a higher likelihood of voting in the 2008 presidential election. Being Black or White, appears to significantly moderate the relationship between school composition and civic engagement. For example, schools with 75% or more minorities were associated with the highest likelihood of voting for both Blacks and Whites, although for Hispanics it was to be the lowest.

For schools with less than 25% minorities, when separated by individual race, two out of three of the racial categories have greater affirmative responses than when no individual factors are accounted for as in Table 1. Schools with 25%-49% minorities tend to hold some of the highest affirmative responses for voting in the 2008 election across all racial categories.



Interestingly, schools with 50%-74% minorities see a 5% drop in affirmative responses for two of the three racial categories in comparison to schools with 25%-49% minorities.

In all four categorizations of racial context, Hispanics fair much lower in voting than Blacks and Whites, especially in schools with 75% or more minorities where only 43.7% of respondents attested to voting in the election. Also, interesting to note is that the notion that Whites do not benefit from being in diverse schools is contradicted by the data presented below. Schools with 75% or more minorities are associated with a higher likelihood to vote in the election than schools with less than 25% minorities for Whites. Across all racial compositions Blacks hold the highest affirmative responses for voting. Individual race indeed moderates the association between school racial composition and civic engagement later in life. All differences were shown to be statistically significant across school composition.

*Table 3. Frequencies of Persons Who Voted in the 2008 Presidential Election, by School Racial Composition and Individual Race*

Percent Minority	Black	Hispanic	White	N
Under 25% minority	66.7%	49.2%	61.8%	3957
25%-49% minority	75.8%	49.6%	62.7%	1902
50%-74% minority	70.9%	50.2%	57.3%	1171
75% or more minority	74.5%	43.7%	23.5%	1559
Total	1076	1208	4556	8589

*Note: All other races excluded from table; For all ( $p < .01$ )*

*Source: Education Longitudinal Study of 2002*

Table 4 depicts the cross-tabulation results for persons who performed unpaid volunteer work by school composition and individual race. In schools with under 25% minorities Black and

White, respondents reported affirmative responses at similar rates with only a .5% difference between them. Respondents from schools with less than 25% minorities and 50%-74% minorities reported similar affirmative responses across the board for all racial categories. Schools with 25%-49% minorities produced the highest percentage of affirmative responses for Blacks and Hispanics. However, none of the above statistics were statistically significant.

Similarly to Table 2, Table 4, overall, depicts a negative relationship between school racial composition and civic engagement later in life. The only differences observed that were statistically significant were within schools with 75% or more minorities. Compared to the average shown in Table 2, Blacks and Whites reported higher affirmative responses for performing unpaid volunteer work. Hispanics, however, report the lowest percentage of affirmative responses. With majority of the racial contexts Hispanics reported almost identical percentages of affirmative responses.

Just as in voting, schools with 75% or more minorities reported a higher number of affirmative responses from Blacks over all other racial categories. According to the data, race tends to moderate the relationship between school composition and civic engagement later in life only in schools with 75% or more minorities.

*Table 4. Frequencies of Persons Who Performed Unpaid Volunteer Work During the Last 2 Years, by School Racial Composition and Individual Race*

Percent Minority	Black	Hispanic	White	N
Under 25% minority	41.5%	34.1%	41.0%	3968
25%-49% minority	46.2%	34.6%	40.3%	1905
50%-74% minority	41.2%	34.1%	39.9%	1178
75% or more minority	37.3%**	26.5%**	34.8%**	1566
Total	1082	1215	4564	8617

*Note: All other races excluded from table; \*\*( $p < .01$ )*

*Source: Education Longitudinal Study of 2002*

Table 5 displays the cross-tabulation results of persons who voted in the 2008 election by school racial composition and socioeconomic status. The data from Table 5 shows compelling results. The statistics for voting in the 2008 election are more similar across socioeconomic status than racial contexts and vary greatly by socioeconomic status. Within each racial context the patterns are similar, about 45% of students in the lowest quartile report voting in the 2008 election, about 55% of students in the second quartile report affirmative responses, about 56% of students in the third quartile, and around 67% of students in the highest quartile. The percentage of affirmative responses for voting deviates greatly from the averages shown in Table 1. There tends to be a negative relationship between school racial context and civic engagement later in life for those within the lowest and second quartiles while a positive relationship is shown for those in the third and highest quartiles. The statistics in the second quartile are the only percentages that come close to those depicted in Table 1.

In schools with 75% or more minorities, those in the third and highest quartiles have an identical likelihood of voting in the 2008 election. Socioeconomic status appears to moderate the

relationship between school racial composition and civic engagement significantly. There are few similarities across racial composition, for the differences exist mainly across socioeconomic status. Pearson's chi-squared test showed all results were statistically significant.

*Table 5. Frequencies of Persons Who Voted in the 2008 presidential Election, by School Racial Composition and Socioeconomic Status*

Percent Minority	Lowest Quartile	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quartile	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quartile	Highest Quartile	N
Under 25% minority	45.2%	56.2%	62.2%	73.8%	3836
25%-49% minority	48.7%	57.5%	60.4%	69.5%	1822
50%-74% minority	46.7%	59.6%	61.0%	65.4%	1117
75% or more minority	49.0%	58.3%	60.9%	60.9%	1417
Total	2081	2094	2026	1991	8192

*Note: For all ( $p < .01$ )*

*Source: Education Longitudinal Study of 2002*

Table 6 displays the cross-tabulation results of persons who performed unpaid service work by school racial composition and socioeconomic status. Like Figure 5, socioeconomic status is positively associated with performing service work regardless of school racial context, for all racial contexts show similar patterns. The differences exist between the quartiles, with there being about a 20% difference in percentage of affirmative responses between the lowest and highest quartiles. Students in schools with 75% or more minorities are at the biggest disadvantage, reporting the lowest percentage of affirmative responses within each quartile. This category of racial context deviates from the percentages of affirmative responses shown in all other racial context. All results were statistically significant.

*Table 6. Frequencies of Persons Who Performed Unpaid Volunteer Work During the Last 2 Years, by School Racial Composition and Socioeconomic Status*

Percent Minority	Lowest Quartile	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quartile	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quartile	Highest Quartile	N
Under 25% minority	32.2%	36.4%	40.5%	51.4%	3846
25%-49% minority	33.2%	33.3%	41.0%	51.5%	1825
50%-74% minority	32.7%	36.2%	44.3%	50.0%	1124
75% or more minority	29.3%	35.3%	36.8%	46.4%	1424
Total	2095	2097	2031	1996	8219

*Note: For all ( $p < .01$ )*

*Source: Education Longitudinal Study of 2002*

Table 7 displays the cross-tabulation results of persons who voted in the 2008 presidential election by school racial composition and immigrant status. Observations of the data show a negative relationship between school racial composition and civic engagement later in life. School racial context tends to make a significant difference in an immigrant's likelihood to vote. Only 31.1% of immigrant students within schools with 75% or more minorities reported voting in the 2008 election while 48.8% of immigrant students in schools with less than 25% minorities reported voting. In contrast, over 60% of non-immigrants attending schools within all racial contexts reported voting. Across each racial context the statistics vary greatly, with some showing 30% differences in voting between immigrants and non-immigrants. However, for non-immigrants.

Non-immigrants in schools with 25%-49% minorities reported the highest percentage of affirmative responses for voting in the 2008 election while immigrants in schools with 75% or more minorities reported the lowest percentage of affirmative responses. Being an immigrant exacerbates the negative relationship between school racial composition and civic engagement

later in life. Non-immigrants however, regardless of school racial context tend to report high percentages of affirmatives responses for voting. All results are statistically significant across racial context.

*Table 7. Frequencies of Persons Who Voted in the 2008 Presidential Election, by School Racial Composition and Immigrant Status*

Percent Minority	Immigrant	Non-immigrant	N
Under 25% minority	48.8%	61.9%	3463
25%-49% minority	37.2%	64.1%	1633
50%-74% minority	35.8%	62.1%	989
75% or more minority	31.1%	62.7%	1205
<b>Total</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>6469</b>	<b>7290</b>

*Note: For all ( $p < .01$ )*

*Source: Education Longitudinal Study of 2002*

Table 8 shows the cross-tabulation results for persons who performed unpaid volunteer service in the last two years by school racial composition and immigrant status. For immigrants, there was a lot of variation in affirmative responses by school racial composition. About 50% of immigrants in schools with under 25% minorities gave affirmative answers, while about 30% of immigrants in schools with 75% or more minorities gave affirmative. In contrast, this difference was not as big for non-immigrants whose affirmative answers varied only 4 percentage points from under 25% minorities in schools to 75% or more minorities in schools.

Schools with less than 25% minorities showed the highest percentage of affirmative responses for both immigrants and non-immigrants. Surprisingly, about 10% more immigrants reported performing unpaid volunteer service than non-immigrants. Schools with 75% or more minorities show the lowest percentage of affirmative responses. This exemplifies a negative

relationship between school racial composition and civic engagement later in life as shown in Table 2. In schools with 50%-74% minorities there was only a .9% difference in affirmative responses between immigrants and non-immigrants, with non-immigrants reporting more.

Immigrants in schools with under 25% minorities are more likely to perform unpaid volunteer work than non-immigrants under the same school racial context. Because of the variation in affirmative responses by school racial context, I can conclude that racial composition matters more for immigrants than non-immigrants in terms of their likelihood to perform volunteer work in the future. Results from the chi-square test show statistical significance only across schools with less than 25% minorities and 75% or greater minorities.

*Table 8. Frequencies of Persons Who Performed Unpaid Volunteer Work During the Last 2 Years, by School Racial Composition and Immigrant Status*

Percent minority	Immigrant	Non-immigrant	N
Under 25% minority	50.6%*	41.3%*	3471
25%-49% minority	42.2%	40.8%	1635
50%-74% minority	40.0%	40.9%	995
75% or more minority	29.4%*	37.1%*	1211
Total	822	6490	7312

*Note: \*(p<.05)*

*Source: Education Longitudinal Study of 2002*



## Chapter 5

### Methodology: Logistic Regression

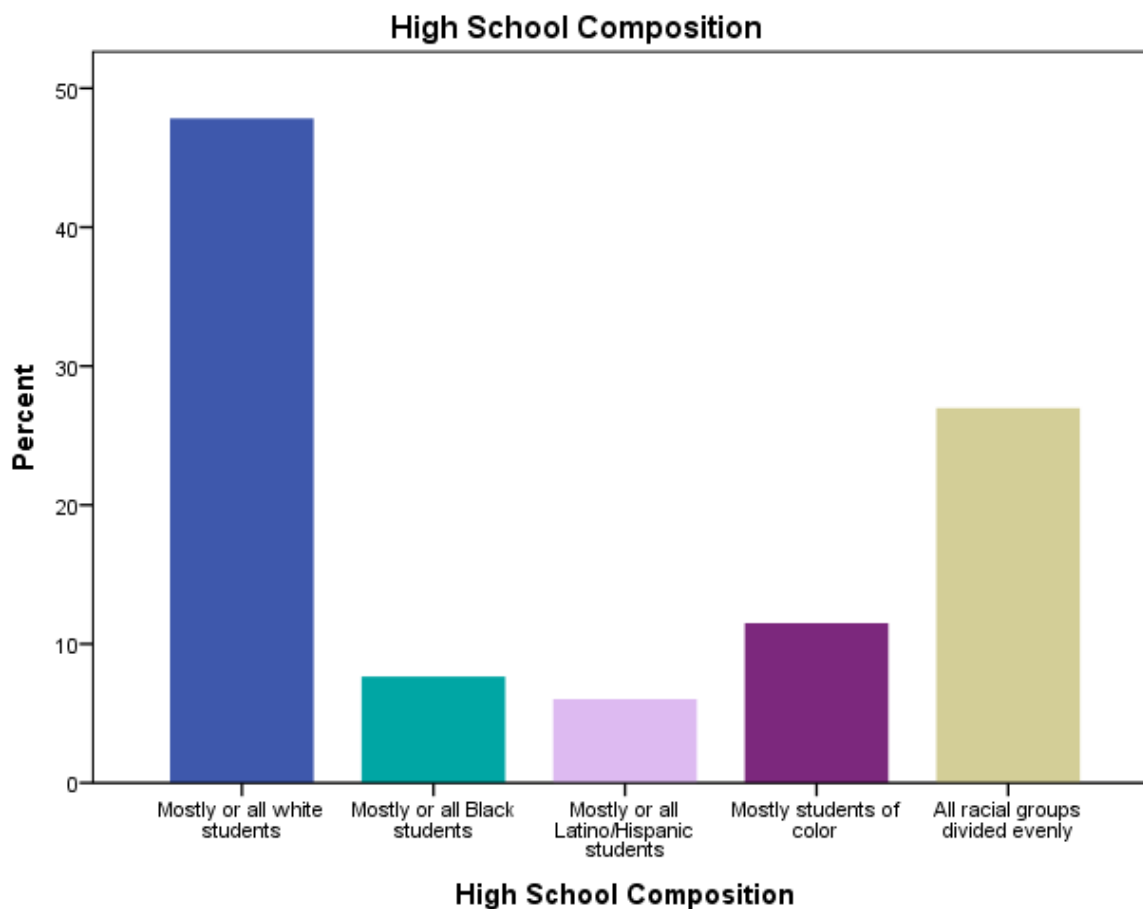
#### The Data Independent

The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012 was designed by The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) who contacted survey respondents asking them a series of 90 questions via random digit dialing. The sample consisted of 4,483 persons who ranged from ages 18-24 and were asked several questions about their civic participation and educational experiences. The survey was a great fit for this study because it focuses exclusively on questions related to both High School and individual characteristics and youth involvement in their communities and schools. Additionally, the Youth Post-Election Survey included a number of background variables found to moderate or mediate the relationship between school racial composition and civic engagement later in life. Each of the interaction variables used in the chi-square analysis- race, socioeconomic status, and immigrant status- were incorporated into this list.

#### Independent Variable

High School racial composition was measured using a variable which indicated whether a respondent attended a school with mostly or all White students, mostly or all Black students, mostly or all Latino/Hispanic students, mostly students of color, or a school in which all racial groups were divided evenly. Undefined racial compositions such as “other” were excluded from this analysis. As shown in Figure 1 1,967 (47.8%) of respondents reported attending a mostly or

all-white institution; 315(7.7%) of students were from mostly or all-black schools; and even less attended mostly Latino/Hispanic schools with only 248(6.0%) of total participants. 473(11.5%) of students stated their schools were mostly students of color and 1,110(27.0%) were enrolled in schools in which all racial groups were evenly divided.



I then ran frequencies for an interaction variable that told a student's school context with relation to his/her own race. Results are displayed in the tables below. The data tells whether a student attended a High School in which his/her race was dominant within the school, if the school was predominantly white, or mostly students of color. Because White students are the

reference group they were coded for an additional category of whether the races in their respective schools were divided evenly.

Table 8. Frequencies for Student Race by HS Racial Composition

Student's race	Dominant race in HS	Predomin. White HS	Predomin. Students OC	Total
Black	193	175	416	784
Hispanic/Latino	142	193	422	757
Total	335	368	838	1541

Source: The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012

Table 9. Frequencies for White Students by HS Racial Composition

Student's race	Dominant race in HS	Races divided evenly in HS	Predomin. Students OC	Total
White	1471	555	292	3102

Source: The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012

According to the results shown in Tables 8 and 9 White students taking the survey were about twice as likely as Blacks and almost three times as likely as Hispanic students to attend a school in which they were the dominant race. In fact, Whites only attended schools that were predominantly students of color 9% of the time while approximately 55% of both Black and Hispanic students attended schools in which people of color were numerically the dominant group. Striking enough, Hispanics were more likely to attend a predominantly white school than one in which Hispanics represented the dominant group. These interaction variables help me better understand and predict the demographics of the schools that the respondents attended. For instance, I could infer, from Tables 9 and 10, that predominantly colored institutions will have a great distribution of both Blacks and Hispanics with a minority of white students.

## Dependent Variable

Civic engagement was measured using several variables including voting in the national election; serving in an AmeriCorps program, YouthBuild, or some similar program; volunteering for a political campaign or candidate; attendance at any public meetings in which there was a discussion of community affairs; and working with other people in one's neighborhood to fix or improve something. I chose these variables because they constitute a wide range of activities considered to be civic engagement. Unlike the variables from the chi-square analysis that only addressed voting in the 2012 election and volunteering broadly, these variables show aspects of civic engagement that include long term engagement, meetings, voting and also engagement within one's community.

Table 10 depicts the frequencies and percentages of political participation of the survey respondents from the Youth Post-Election Survey. Out of the five items used to measure civic engagement the greatest number of participants stated that they had voted in the 2012 national election, comprising approximately sixty percent of the total group. Voting in the 2012 election was the only activity listed in which those who carried out the act outnumbered those who did not. The activity with the second largest number of affirmative responses only constituted just above half the number of participants who indicated "yes" to voting in the election. 33.4% of participants answered "yes" when prompted with the question "In 2012, have you worked with other people in your neighborhood to fix or improve something?" Attending public meetings and volunteering long-term had similar results with 21.6% of respondents having attended a meeting focused on community affairs and 25.5% of respondents having served in a large service

organization. The least amount of participants gave an affirmative response to having volunteered for a politician, only 10.1%. All responses are based on post-high school activities.

Table 10. Frequencies of Political Participation of Survey Respondents

Civic Engagement	Yes	No	N
Voted in election	2691(60.2%)	1779(39.8)	4470
Volunteered long-term	750(25.5%)	2195(74.5%)	2945
Attended public meetings	952(21.6%)	3460(78.4%)	4412
Volunteered for politician	300(10.1%)	2668(89.9%)	2968
Helped neighborhood	1478(33.4%)	2948(66.6%)	4426

Source: The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012

### Moderating Variables

For this analysis I chose the same three moderating variables- race, socioeconomic status, and immigrant status-- to determine whether the main relationship between the dependent and independent variable is affected in some way by these individual characteristics. From the previous analysis I can predict that these variables will indeed interact with the main relationship.

Of the students that participated in the Youth Post-Election Survey, 2,437 (56.1%) were white; 835 (19.2%) were Black; 90 (3.8%) were Native American; 166 (3.8%) were Asian; and 816 (18.8%) were Hispanic. In an attempt to create a sample with large numbers of respondents from all racial groups, and as nationally representative as possible Hispanics and African-

Americans were oversampled. To remain consistent with my previous analysis I will again focus on White, Black, and Latino/Hispanic peoples in this latter portion of the study.

The survey item I chose to determine a respondent's immigrant status was "Were you born in the United States, or in another country?" with "1" indicating that a respondent was born within the U.S. and 2 signaling that he/she was born in some other country. Similar to the previous analysis with ELS, a great majority of respondents were U.S. born citizens. Of these respondents 4,025 (93.6%) were born within the U.S. and 274 (6.4%) were born outside of the country.

I used the survey item that asked "Thinking of a female relative or a parent figure who raised you the most while you were growing up, what was the last year of school this person completed?" as a proxy to measure respondents' socioeconomic status. 186 respondents were raised by a guardian who had not attended High School; 328 answered that their guardian had completed some High School; 1133 guardians had completed High School; 721 of them had attended college for at least some time; 1132 of respondents' guardians had been reported as having graduated from college; and 496 reported as having a graduate or professional degree.

### **Analytic Strategy**

Following my descriptive analysis of the variables relevant to this study I decided to perform a logistic regression analysis which is used to model binary outcome variables. The model predicts the probability of an event occurring (dependent variable(s)) based on the predictor or independent variable. Binary logistic regression tests create a model for the relationship, calculates the fit of the model- whether or not the model is a good fit for the outcome variable(s), provides an odds ratio, and determines the significance of the relationship between the dependent

and independent variable(s)- whether or not the event is likely to occur in real life. To begin, I created dummy variables for the independent variable so that each variable will now represent a specific racial composition. “Mostly or all white students” was selected as the reference group to which all other groups were compared based on results from the chi-square analysis showing evidence that those attending schools with lesser amounts of minorities tended to engage in civic behavior more often post-high school.

A logistic regression analysis was performed for each of the dependent variables- voting, involvement with long-term service organization, volunteering for a political campaign or candidate, attendance at public meetings, and collaborating with others to improve something in one’s neighborhood. The regression analyses are displayed in Tables 11-19. I will analyze the p-value, which tests the significance of the observed correlations; and the exponential B ( $e^B$ ), which gives me the odds ratio- the change in the odds of Y given a unit change in X. For the purposes of this analysis I chose reference groups for each predictor variable. The reference group for High School composition is “mostly or all white students”; the reference group for race is “white”; the reference group for immigrant status is “born in the U.S.”; and the reference group for socioeconomic status is “graduate or professional degree.” I tried to remain as consistent as possible in regards to the reference groups, therefore they each represent an ideal or normative group. Though all statistics are reported, I will focus only on these statistics as they are the most informative and pertinent to this study.

**Limitations**

The limitations of this methodology were that all of the data reported from the survey was self-response. Additionally, the variable chosen to represent socioeconomic status does not capture all facets of socioeconomic status such as education, income, and geographic location.



## Chapter 6 Findings: Logistic Regression

To begin my logistic regression analysis I first tested the four racial composition variables alongside the five predictor variables without any additional controls. The table below depicts the regression analysis for voting in the 2012 national election predicted by school racial composition. The baseline for each analysis is “yes” meaning that the model predicts the probability of someone having answered “yes” to voting during the survey. All but “mostly or all Black” schools seem to predict voting with statistical significance. Those attending mostly or all Latino/Hispanic schools were 47% (almost half) less likely to have voted in the election than those attending predominantly white institutions. Those who attended schools filled mostly with students of color were 26.6% less likely to vote than whites and those who were enrolled in schools in which all racial groups were evenly divided were 37.6% less likely to vote than Whites.

Table 11. Logistic Regression Analysis for School Racial Composition Predicting Voting in the 2012 National Election

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup> Mostly/all Black	.153	.131	1.363	1	.243	1.165
Mostly/all Hispanic/Latino	-.634	.136	21.808	1	.000**	.530
Mostly of color	-.309	.105	8.697	1	.003**	.734
Evenly divided races	-.472	.077	37.872	1	.000**	.624
Constant	.642	.047	183.077	1	.000	1.901

Note: \*(p<.05), \*\*(p<.01)

Source: The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012

Table 12 displays the regression analysis results for school racial composition predicting involvement in a large service organization such as AmeriCorps. The only factor to predict this kind of engagement with significance was having attended a school in which the students were mostly or all Black. In fact, I can infer from the exponential B that persons who attend predominantly black schools are 1.5 times more likely than those attending schools in which whites are a majority to volunteer for large service organizations. Schools with mostly Hispanic/Latino students and those with mostly students of color were found to be less likely to produce people who would be involved in this type of activity while schools in which all races were divided evenly were found to be just as likely to produce participants who engaged in these service organizations as schools made up of mostly White students.

Table 12. Logistic Regression Analysis for School Racial Composition Predicting Involvement in Large Service Organization

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup> Mostly/all Black	.382	.159	5.742	1	.017*	1.465
Mostly/all Hispanic/Latino	-.071	.206	.118	1	.731	.932
Mostly of color	-.033	.149	.050	1	.823	.967
Evenly divided races	.018	.108	.027	1	.869	1.018
Constant	-1.165	.066	315.654	1	.000	.312

Note: \*(p<.05), \*\*(p<.01)

Source: The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012

Table 13. Logistic Regression Analysis for School Racial Composition Predicting Volunteering for Political Campaign or Candidate

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>						
Mostly/all Black	.315	.220	2.054	1	.152	1.370
Mostly/all Hispanic/Latino	-.189	.304	.387	1	.534	.828
Mostly of color	-.176	.221	.631	1	.427	.839
Evenly divided races	.037	.151	.059	1	.808	1.037
Constant	-2.195	.092	563.388	1	.000	.111

Note: \*(p<.05), \*\*(p<.01)

Source: The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012

Table 13 displays logistic regression results for high school composition predicting volunteering for a political campaign or candidate. Though none of these proved to be significant respondents from both schools with mostly Black students and those with all races divided evenly were more likely to produce adults who engaged in this type of activity than respondents from schools composed mostly of White students. On the other hand, participants from Latino/Hispanic schools and those from schools with mostly students of color were found to be less likely to volunteer for political campaigns.

Table 14 below provides regression results for attendance at public meetings in which there are discussions of community affairs predicted by high school racial composition. The analysis shows that schools with mostly Hispanic/Latino populations and those in which all racial groups are evenly divided have statistical significance. Persons who attended school with mostly Hispanics/Latinos were 48.6% times less likely to attend these community meetings than those who were enrolled in predominantly white institutions while those attending schools in which all races were evenly divided were only 17.1% times less likely to be present at such

meetings than respondents coming from mostly white institutions. Respondents from schools with mostly Black students were almost just as likely to attend public meetings as those from schools with mostly White students. Participants who had been previously enrolled in schools with mostly students of color were about 17% times less likely to attend such meetings as participants who had been enrolled in predominantly white institutions.

Table 14. Logistic Regression Analysis for School Racial Composition Predicting Attendance at Public Meetings

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup> Mostly/all Black	-.029	.145	.041	1	.840	.971
Mostly/all Hispanic/Latino	-.666	.195	11.681	1	.001**	.514
Mostly of color	-.182	.126	2.089	1	.148	.833
Evenly divided races	-.188	.092	4.172	1	.041*	.829
Constant	-1.180	.053	489.040	1	.000	.307

Note: \*( $p < .05$ ), \*\*( $p < .01$ )

Source: *The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012*

School racial composition proved to be a significant predictor of the likelihood of one collaborating with others within his/her own neighborhood to improve or fix something in all cases except in schools whose composition was described as “mostly or all Black.” Similar to Table 14, respondents from High Schools in which most students were Black just as likely to collaborate with neighbors in order to improve something in one’s neighborhood as those respondents who had attended a High School with mostly White students. Table 15 gives evidence that as the amount of colored students in a school lessens the greater one’s likelihood to engage in neighborhood improvement. Persons from schools in which most or all of the students were Latino or Hispanic were 31.3% times less likely than those from white schools to

participate in neighborhood improvement. Respondents who reported that they had come from a school with mostly students of color were 24.2% times less likely and those from schools in which all racial groups were divided evenly were 17.6% times less likely to work for neighborhood improvement than persons coming from majority white institutions.

Table 15. Logistic Regression Analysis for School Racial Composition Predicting Collaboration for Neighborhood Improvement

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup> Mostly/all Black	.093	.126	.544	1	.461	1.097
Mostly/all Hispanic/Latino	-.376	.151	6.185	1	.013*	.687
Mostly of color	-.278	.112	6.197	1	.013*	.758
Evenly divided races	-.193	.080	5.788	1	.016*	.824
Constant	-.590	.047	156.550	1	.000	.554

Note: \*( $p < .05$ ), \*\*( $p < .01$ )

Source: *The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012*

After measuring the High School racial composition variables against each dependent variable for civic engagement I performed additional analyses in which the moderating variables- race, socioeconomic status, and immigrant status- are controlled for. Table 16 depicts the first of these analyses. In regards to the 2012 national election respondents who reported attending a majority white school were more likely to vote than those coming from schools with other racial compositions. Interestingly enough, and in alignment with my previous chi-square analysis, Blacks were 1.8 times more likely to vote in the national election than Whites. Surprisingly enough, those with some or no high school had the lowest odds ratio in terms of voting when compared with participants who had obtained a graduate or professional degree. All measures for socioeconomic status proved to be significant predictors of voting.

Table 16. Logistic Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Voting in the 2012 National Election

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>						
Mostly/all Black	-.052	.152	.116	1	.733	.950
Mostly/all Hispanic/Latino	-.469	.157	8.952	1	.003**	.626 37 47
Mostly of color	-.280	.123	5.201	1	.023*	.756 24 26
Evenly divided races	-.460	.089	26.605	1	.000**	.631 36 37
Black	.575	.104	30.356	1	.000**	1.776
Hispanic/Latino	-.212	.101	4.382	1	.036*	.809
Immigrant	.056	.164	.115	1	.734	1.057
College grad	-.317	.129	6.017	1	.014*	.729
Some college	-.391	.139	7.899	1	.005**	.676
High School grad	-.688	.129	28.572	1	.000**	.502
Some High school	-1.043	.164	40.538	1	.000**	.352
No High School	-.781	.204	14.663	1	.000**	.458
Constant	1.052	.193	29.672	1	.000	2.862

Note: \*( $p < .05$ ), \*\*( $p < .01$ )

Source: *The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012*

Table 17 depicts the logistic regression results for involvement in large service organizations. Once controlling for the moderating variables, no High School composition proved to be a significant predictor for this type of civic activity. Within the sample, only those previously enrolled in schools in which Blacks were the dominant race were shown to be more likely to involve themselves in large service organizations than those previously enrolled in mostly White institutions. Similar to the voting odds ratio, Blacks were approximately 1.5 times more likely to be a part of an organization like AmeriCorps or YouthBuild than Whites and Hispanic/Latinos 1.2 times more likely, though this value was proven not to be statistically significant. Generally, higher socioeconomic status was associated with a greater likelihood that one would participate in these service organizations. Additionally, immigrants were 30% times

less likely to partake in this particular activity than nonimmigrants.

Table 17. Logistic Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Involvement in Large Service Organization

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>						
Mostly/all Black	.309	.182	2.866	1	.090	1.362
Mostly/all Hispanic/Latino	-.206	.235	.766	1	.381	.814
Mostly of color	-.166	.171	.941	1	.332	.847
Evenly divided races	-.038	.123	.096	1	.756	.962
Black	.381	.132	8.291	1	.004**	1.464
Hispanic/Latino	.199	.140	2.039	1	.153	1.221
Immigrant	-.347	.207	2.828	1	.093	.706
College grad	-.109	.158	.477	1	.490	.897
Some college	-.252	.176	2.040	1	.153	.778
High School grad	-.323	.164	3.865	1	.049*	.724
Some High school	-.123	.210	.343	1	.558	.885
No High School	-.541	.290	3.488	1	.062	.582
Constant	-.692	.240	8.327	1	.004	.501

Note: \*( $p < .05$ ), \*\*( $p < .01$ )

Source: *The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012*

According to Table 18 respondents coming from schools in which all races were represented equally and those in which Blacks were mostly represented were equally as likely to volunteer for a political campaign as those coming from schools in which Whites were mostly enrolled. Blacks were 1.6 times more likely to engage in such an activity than their White counterparts. Hispanics were only 8% less likely than Whites to volunteer for these campaigns. Following previous trends, immigrants were less likely than nonimmigrants to participate in political campaigns and the more education a respondent's female guardian received correlated with greater odds of volunteering for respondents.



Table 18. Logistic Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Volunteering for a Political Campaign or Candidate

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>						
Mostly/all Black	-.024	.267	.008	1	.930	.977
Mostly/all Hispanic/Latino	-.285	.376	.575	1	.448	.752
Mostly of color	-.107	.247	.186	1	.666	.899
Evenly divided races	.068	.173	.154	1	.695	1.070
Black	.488	.181	7.300	1	.007**	1.629
Hispanic/Latino	-.081	.214	.144	1	.704	.922
Immigrant	-.136	.310	.192	1	.662	.873
College grad	-.314	.213	2.172	1	.141	.731
Some college	-.375	.238	2.491	1	.114	.687
High School grad	-.515	.223	5.332	1	.021*	.597
Some High school	-.486	.304	2.548	1	.110	.615
No High School	-1.062	.498	4.545	1	.033*	.346
Constant	-1.786	.346	26.695	1	.000	.168

Note: \*( $p < .05$ ), \*\*( $p < .01$ )

Source: *The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012*

In Table 19 as in Table 16 every level of schooling attained by respondents' guardians growing up is a significant predictor of attendance at public meetings in which those attending discuss community affairs. Generally, the more education a female guardian had, the more likely a respondent was to attend public meetings. In addition, compared to those from schools in which white students are the majority, those respondents from schools predominantly Hispanic/Latino were 42.8% times less likely to engage themselves in meetings to discuss local affairs while participants from schools with mostly Black or mostly students of color were almost just as likely as participants from white schools to do so. Immigrants were about half as likely to attend such meetings as nonimmigrants.

Table 19. Logistic Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Attendance at Public Meetings

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>						
Mostly/all Black	-.018	.167	.012	1	.912	.982
Mostly/all Hispanic/Latino	-.558	.220	6.456	1	.011*	.572
Mostly of color	-.021	.141	.022	1	.881	.979
Evenly divided races	-.168	.106	2.524	1	.112	.846
Black	.101	.114	.774	1	.379	1.106
Hispanic/Latino	-.178	.127	1.987	1	.159	.837
Immigrant	-.130	.194	.450	1	.502	.878
College grad	-.367	.127	8.335	1	.004**	.693
Some college	-.664	.145	20.867	1	.000**	.515
High School grad	-.632	.133	22.710	1	.000**	.532
Some High school	-.871	.195	19.999	1	.000**	.419
No High School	-.715	.249	8.219	1	.004**	.489
Constant	-.563	.214	6.940	1	.008	.569

Note: \*( $p < .05$ ), \*\*( $p < .01$ )

Source: *The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012*

Table 20 reveals the regression analysis results for the measure of civic engagement, working with others to improve something in one's neighborhood. Coordinating with several of the other tables, socioeconomic status is a significant predictor in civic behavioral outcomes. In this specific analysis, the highest level of school completed by one's guardian is significantly related to collaborative practices aimed at improving something in one's community. Respondents from all categories of racial composition were about just as likely as those from schools composed of mostly White students to improve the conditions of one's neighborhood, though none of these proved to be statistically significant.

Table 20. Logistic Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Collaboration for Neighborhood Improvement

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>						
Mostly/all Black	.136	.145	.886	1	.347	1.146
Mostly/all Hispanic/Latino	-.087	.169	.264	1	.607	.917
Mostly of color	-.109	.126	.749	1	.387	.896
Evenly divided races	-.070	.091	.594	1	.441	.932
Black	-.016	.100	.027	1	.871	.984
Hispanic/Latino	-.347	.109	10.172	1	.001**	.707
Immigrant	-.042	.170	.063	1	.802	.958
College grad	-.188	.118	2.548	1	.110	.829
Some college	-.523	.131	15.887	1	.000**	.593
High School grad	-.477	.121	15.624	1	.000**	.621
Some High school	-.371	.162	5.269	1	.022*	.690
No High School	-.523	.214	6.004	1	.014*	.593
Constant	-.180	.191	.888	1	.346	.835

Note: \*( $p < .05$ ), \*\*( $p < .01$ )

Source: *The Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge Youth Post-Election Survey 2012*

## Chapter 7 Discussion

This paper intends to explore and address the problem of school racial segregation. As explained in Chapter 2, school racial segregation tends to be negatively correlated with positive life outcomes such as higher graduation and employment rates, lower incarceration rates, greater academic achievement and aspirations, and a greater proclivity towards aspects of civic engagement such as voting, volunteering, and being involved with civic organizations. This country's long history of law mandated and de facto racial segregation has led particular ethnic groups, such as Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos, to be laden with the burden of overcoming such widespread societal ills. It is within schools and because of formal education that people of color have, in some instances, been capable of prevailing against all odds. School racial integration then is one of many methods proven to actually assuage such consequences.

The findings from the chi-square analysis in Chapter 4 suggest that, as the percentage of minorities in a school increases, an individual's likelihood to engage in civic behavior later in life diminishes. However, this relationship is moderated greatly by individual characteristics such as race, socioeconomic status, and immigrant status. Although there appears to be a negative relationship between school racial composition and civic engagement later in life, in various instances this relationship becomes positive depending on individual characteristics. For instance, Blacks reported more affirmative responses for voting in the 2008 election as the percentage of minorities in their school increased. Hispanics tended to be most impacted by school racial composition because

there was greater variance in the percentages of affirmative responses between school racial composition. In addition, Hispanics had a significantly lower likelihood of voting in the 2008 election than Whites and Blacks. Because the three individual factors are not mutually exclusive it is possible that many of the Hispanic respondents could have been immigrants without voting rights and thus unable to vote.

In fact, when looking at Table 7 which depicts frequencies of persons who voted by school racial composition and immigrant status there are great disparities between the affirmative responses for voting of immigrants and non-immigrants. These differences are exacerbated as the percentage of minorities in the schools increases. In contrast, there were not huge differences in volunteering between immigrants and non-immigrants.

Volunteering is an activity that requires no American citizenship but is free and open to all who live in the country. Immigrants in schools with less than 25% minorities reported more affirmative responses for volunteering than non-immigrants. For immigrants especially, school context matters, as there is more variance in affirmative responses for volunteering by school composition. This finding suggests that ability to engage in civic activities should be taken into account when studying the topic.

Socioeconomic status appeared to be a significant moderating factor. The percentage of affirmative responses for voting and volunteering did not vary much by school racial composition but rather by socioeconomic status. Respondents within each quartile were more similar by socioeconomic status than school racial composition. A respondent's socioeconomic status almost defies racial composition making its effects negligible. Higher socioeconomic status is associated with a significant increase in

affirmative responses for both voting and volunteering, while the opposite is true for those of low socioeconomic status. Important to note is that many minority students attend minority-segregated schools of low socioeconomic status which places them at the biggest disadvantage in regards to civic engagement later in life.

There were several compelling findings presented in the logistic regression analysis regarding the association between High School racial composition and predicted civic behaviors later in life. Firstly, in any instance there was no High School racial composition to be more likely to engage in any civic behavior with greater odds than those previously enrolled at majority white institutions except those who had previously attended majority black institutions. This difference was observed when analyzing respondents' involvement in large service organizations. In addition, on no occasion were respondents from majority black high schools proven to be less likely to engage in any of the five measures of civic behavior than those from majority white High Schools, this was not observed for any other cases of racial composition. Though in several cases the null hypothesis was to not be rejected for lack of statistical significance, however not rejecting the null hypothesis is not tantamount to accepting it. These findings combat previous research asserting that schools with high concentrations of minorities, specifically Blacks have a lower likelihood to engage in civic behaviors later in life.

Secondly, I found it quite interesting that for three out of the five measures of civic participation Blacks were found to be 1.5 times or more likely to engage in such activities than Whites when controlling for High School composition, socioeconomic status, and immigrant status. Again, another finding that contrasts with present research findings. It

was not surprising, however, that socioeconomic status proved to be a significant predictor of civic behavior for each measure of civic engagement. The higher the socioeconomic status, the more likely a respondent was to perform a civic activity when compared to the reference group (those whose guardians obtained graduate or professional degrees).

Finally, for most cases, High School racial composition became negligible as a significant predictor of civic engagement once race, socioeconomic status, and immigrant status were controlled for except in the case of voting in the 2012 election. High School racial composition proved to be a significant predictor of voting regardless of either of these factors. Before controlling for individual factors those who attended schools with majority Latino/Hispanic populations, students of color, or schools in which all racial groups were divided evenly were more likely to engage in this particular act when compared with the reference group.

The findings from both analyses suggest that schools with a lower amount of minorities tend to produce adults who have a greater proclivity towards civic engagement. In the first analysis, schools with less than 25% minorities were associated with a greater likelihood of voting and volunteering; comparable to this, findings from the logistic regression analysis showed that respondents previously enrolled in High Schools with mostly or all White students were associated with a higher likelihood to engage in civic activities such as voting, volunteering, attending public meetings, being involved in service organizations and working to improve one's neighborhood. In both the chi-square and logistic regression analyses Black respondents were shown to have been associated with a higher likelihood of voting in the 2008 and 2012 national elections. The logistic

regression results showed more dynamic results as, in all cases, respondent from mostly or all Black schools were either more likely than or just as likely as respondents from White schools to engage in civic behaviors. While in the chi-square analysis being an immigrant had a significant impact on the likelihood of whether or not one was civically inclined, in the second analysis this was not shown to be true. Perhaps, controlling for socioeconomic status and race impacted the results of this variable. Lastly, in both analyses the moderating variables- race, socioeconomic status, and immigrant status- had an impact on the association between the independent variable, High School composition, and the dependent variable, civic engagement. For in the logistic regression analysis, beyond the voting aspect of civic engagement almost all significance of school composition was erased when individual factors were accounted for.

Students who attended schools with high concentrations of minorities consistently displayed lower levels of civic engagement. For these reasons, integrated schooling, as a means to positive life outcomes, is still vital. The success of American democracy relies tremendously on the civic participation of its citizens; multiculturalism, therefore, is a fact that must be embraced and encouraged by school administrators in order for there to truly exist a united, active citizenry. Promoting civic engagement amongst our citizens will prove for better race relations, solidarity, and high levels of social capital. The malady of segregation inhibits diversity and so inhibits the civic participation of Americans in the life of their communities. Integrated schooling could very well prepare our youth to be concerned with the welfare of those within their communities and nation by exposure to different races and ethnicities. This, then, will allow them to peacefully live, work and



learn collectively. Integration is not simply a question of the welfare of minority students, but a question of the health of our nation.

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### **EDUCATION:**

The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA  
Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, Minors: Spanish and Education Policy Studies  
Ronald E. McNair Scholar  
Schreyer Honors Scholar  
Graduation: 05/2015

### **LEADERSHIP:**

#### ***Keep A Child Alive: Treasurer, 2012- present***

- Keep A Child Alive is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing life-saving treatment and support to children and families in Africa and India with HIV/AIDS
- As Treasurer it is my duty to ensure handle all the organization's finances

#### ***National Council of Negro Women, Inc.: President & Co-founder, 2013-present***

- The National Council of Negro Women, Inc. is an organization whose mission is to lead, develop, and advocate for women of African descent by way of community-based service projects and programs on issues of health, education, and economic empowerment
- As President it is my duty to ensure the success of the organization while overseeing all members

### **WORK EXPERIENCE:**

#### ***Campus Campaign Coordinator: Teach for America Recruitment Team, 07/2014- present***

- Promote Teach for America and its mission, encourage Penn State students to apply to Teach for America, oversee all physical marketing on campus, and present to student organizations and classes

#### ***McNair Scholars Program: Intern, 06/2014-08/2014***

- Completed a summer research project with the Education Policy Studies Department at Penn State with Erica Frankenberg Ed.D. and Suet-ling Pong, Ph.D. on the association between school racial composition and civic engagement later in life

#### ***The Association of Religion Data Archives, 3/2014-6/2014***

- Ran statistical programming, created labels files from codebooks for over one thousand variables, and tested out new website features

#### ***The Center for Global Studies at Penn State: Intern, 8/2013-1/2014***

- Assisted with organizing data and learning workshops for Centre County youth while also leading an after school club at the Young Scholars of Central Pennsylvania Charter School

#### ***America Reads Program: Teaching Assistant, 3/2013-8/2013***

#### ***Service Sites: Daybridge Childcare Center, Bennett Family Center***

A federal work-study program that provides college students with the opportunity to serve in

schools, libraries, and childcare centers as aids to teachers and care takers in order to enrich childrens' language learning and reading skills

- Assisted classroom teachers in reading to children, helping them write, and perform other classroom activities

***Science-U: Lab Coordinator & Extended Day Caretaker, 6/2013-8/2013***

Science-U science summer camp designed to enhance science literacy in youth by way of scientific inquiry, focusing primarily on critical thinking skills

- Helped prepare lab experiments for children and assisted with the implementation of experiments

***HONORS AND AWARDS***

Dean's List, **Spring 2012- present**

Student Leader Scholarship, **Fall 2013**

Ronald E. McNair Scholar, **Spring 2013- present**

The Carlton and Sandra Miller Scholarship, **Fall 2013- present**

Paterno Fellow, **Fall 2013- present**

Schreyer Honors Scholar, **Fall 2013- present**

Gene and Roz Chaiken Trustee Scholarship, **Spring 2013- present**

Schreyer Scholarship for Philadelphia Residents, **Fall 2014- present**

Penn State National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc. Scholarship, **Spring 2015**

***SKILLS***

- Proficient Spanish speaker: 5 years' experience in high school as well as at the collegiate level
- Able to effectively work in a team
- Exceptional management, interpersonal, and communication skills
- Experience with SPSS (computer programming used for statistical analysis)