

# Preferences Constrained: Racial and Ethnic Variations in Parents’ Neighborhood Choice Considerations

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## Background

- Residential preferences are based on a variety of factors including life cycle and socioeconomic considerations, housing, and neighborhood racial composition (Woo and Morrow-Jones 2011; Farley, Fielding and Krysan 1997; Krysan and Farley 2002, Clark 2009)
- Less attention has been given to how other neighborhood characteristics, like neighborhood advantage, affect preferences
- Research suggests that whites and minorities have varying foci when choosing neighborhoods (Sigelman and Henig 2001; Lewis et al. 2011; Zonn 1984)

## Current Study

- Do demographic characteristics predict which neighborhood characteristics parents say were most important in their choice of their present neighborhoods?
- Are there are racial and ethnic differences in the salience of neighborhood characteristics by family socioeconomic status?
- Does neighborhood racial/ethnic composition moderate the associations between an individual’s race/ethnicity and parents’ reasons for living in the neighborhood?

## Data, Sample, & Methods

- National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health)
- Add Health respondents with completed parent questionnaire
- Analytic sample: 13,818 respondents
- Factor analyses and multilevel multinomial logistic regressions

## Measures

- Dependent Variable**  
Which one statement describes the **most** important reason why you live in this neighborhood?
- Less crime:** Less crime and less illegal activity by adolescents
  - Better schools:** Better schools or children of appropriate ages
  - Other:** Near old workplace, near current workplace, had outgrown previous housing, affordable good housing, close to friends or relatives, born here
- Focal Independent Variables**
- Neighborhood advantage:** Mean scale of prop. aged 25+ with a bachelor’s degree or more, prop. age 16+ employed in a managerial or professional occupation, and prop. earning \$50k or more
  - Proportion white**
  - Parent’s Race/Ethnicity**

## Results

Figure 1. Crime as the Focal Consideration by Parent’s Race/Ethnicity

Figure 2. Schools as the Focal Consideration by Parent’s Race/Ethnicity

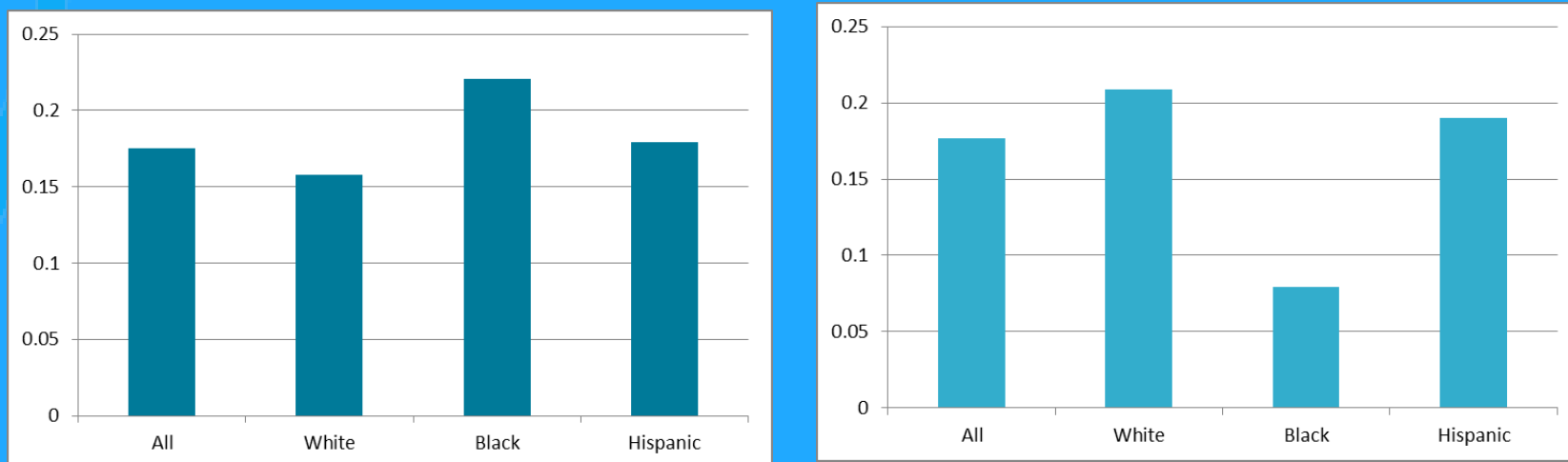


Figure 3. Centrality of Crime by Neighborhood Proportion White

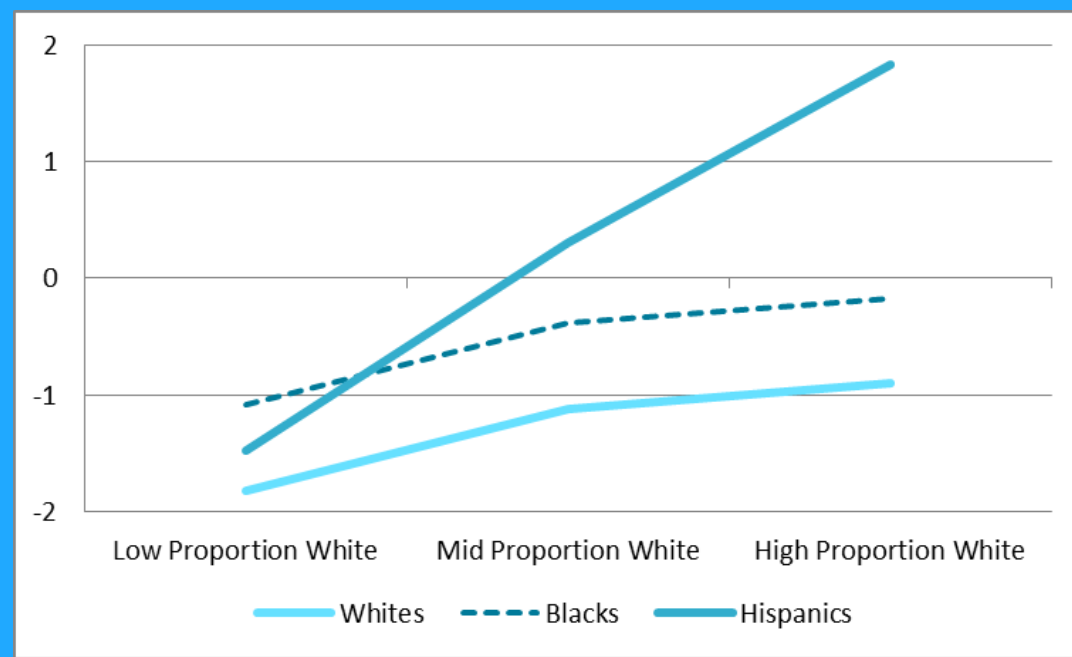


Figure 4. Centrality of Schools by Neighborhood Advantage

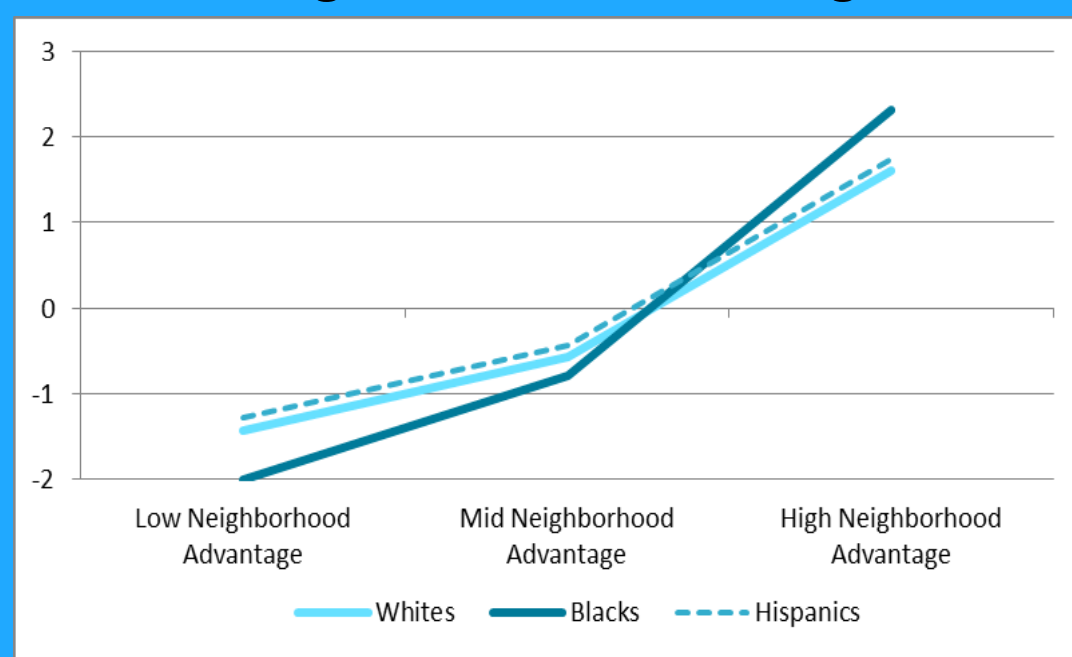
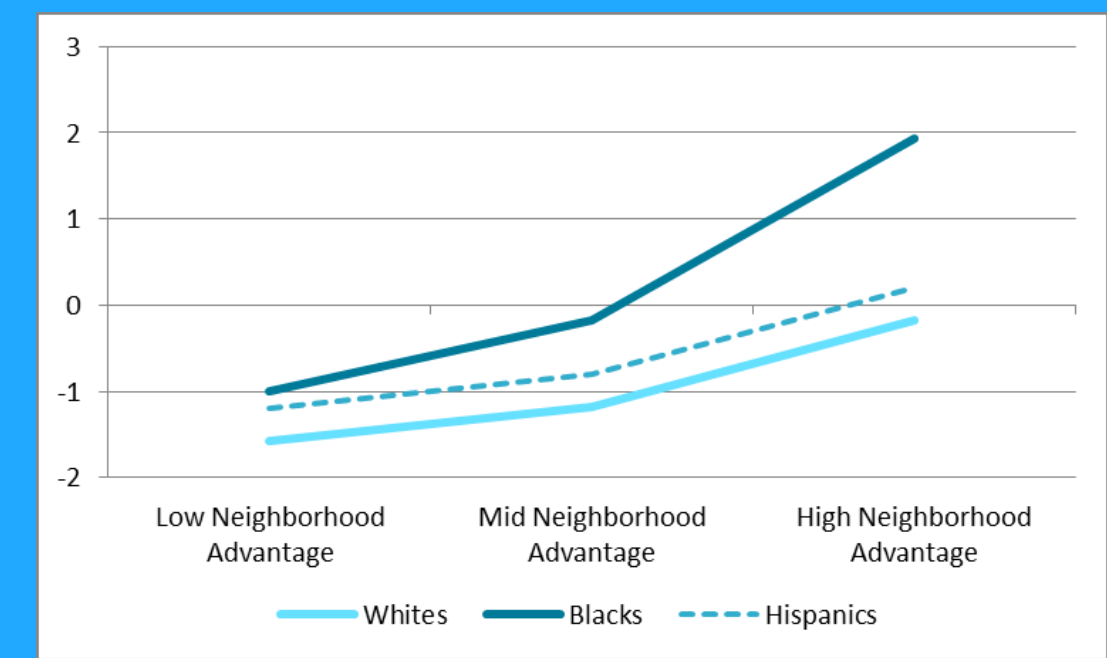


Figure 5. Centrality of Crime by Neighborhood Advantage



All models include control variables; dashed lines indicate non-significant differences

Table 1. Multinomial Multilevel Models of Parents’ Focal Consideration in Choice of Neighborhoods

Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Schools	Crime	Schools	Crime	Schools	Crime
	vs. Other	vs. Other	vs. Other	vs. Other	vs. Other	vs. Other
Level-1	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.
Black	-0.73***	0.47***	-0.31**	0.80***	-0.59***	0.55***
Hispanic	0.01	0.32***	0.15	0.43***	0.16	0.39***
Level-2						
Urban	0.13	-0.32***	0.30**	-0.20**	-0.03	-0.40***
Prop. White N’Hood Advantage			1.62***	1.07***	0.04***	0.02***
Intercept	-1.47***	-1.62***	-1.81***	-1.85***	-1.44***	-1.59***

\*p<0.05, \*p<0.01, \*p<0.001; Includes controls for parent’s age and gender, child’s age and gender, family SES, years in residence, two biological parents, and number of children in household

## Conclusions

- Black and Hispanic parents are more likely to choose neighborhoods on the basis of crime
- Black parents are much less likely (than whites) to choose neighborhoods based on schools
- Neighborhood advantage of chosen neighborhoods moderates associations between race/ethnicity and neighborhood considerations

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