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1. Title page information
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4. The online appendix, which is separately paged. It includes an online appendix title page, appendix A, appendix B, appendix C, and references for citations in the appendix.

TITLE AND AUTHORS

TITLE

Title: **The Impact of Hispanic Last Names on Educational and Labor Market Outcomes**

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ABSTRACT

Do individuals with Hispanic surnames face discrimination in access to education and the labor market? This study analyzes the impact of likely Hispanic surnames on wages among Americans with one White and one Hispanic parent. Individuals who likely have Hispanic surnames (i.e. those with a Hispanic father) often complete less education and earn less, with a notable wage gap favoring those with white-sounding surnames. People born to Hispanic fathers and White mothers receive 0.39 fewer years of education than those born to White fathers and Hispanic mothers. Men born to Hispanic fathers and White mothers earn 5 percentage points less than those born to White fathers and Hispanic mothers, and they are 1 percentage point more likely to be unemployed. I also show that this gap can be largely explained by educational differences. **JEL:** J71; J64; J15; J31; I24; J62

KEYWORDS

Keywords: Discrimination and Prejudice; Wage Gap; Inter-ethnic Families

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Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study will be openly available to all researchers after the review process. For immediate information on the data and / or computer programs used for this study, please contact Hussain Hadah at hhadah@tulane.edu.

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Manuscript Text

1 Introduction

Hispanic Americans represent one of the fastest growing demographic groups in the United States, making their labor market experiences increasingly central to understanding the American economy. Although extensive research documents persistent earnings gaps between racial and ethnic groups (Bayer and Charles 2018; Charles and Guryan 2008), with native-born Hispanic White men earning 21% less than non-Hispanic White men (Duncan, Hotz, and Trejo 2006; Duncan and Trejo 2018a, 2018b), the specific mechanisms affecting Hispanic workers' employment prospects, wages, and career advancement require closer examination. These labor market outcomes extend far beyond individual earnings—they fundamentally shape patterns of assimilation, economic mobility, and intergenerational progress (Chetty et al. 2017; Chetty, Hendren, and Katz 2016; Chetty et al. 2014). Understanding how discrimination affects Hispanics offers valuable insight into both the obstacles they face and the possible routes for their socioeconomic advancement.

This paper examines whether having a Hispanic last name affects the educational and labor market outcomes of native-born Hispanics. I introduce a novel empirical strategy comparing children from interethnic families—those with likely Hispanic-sounding last names (HW) with those with White-sounding last names (WH). Specifically, I focus on US-born children with one foreign-born parent to

isolate the effect of surname-based discrimination from other confounding factors.¹ This comparison leverages the similarity of family backgrounds in interethnic marriages to identify discrimination's role in shaping economic outcomes. Simple comparisons between Hispanic and non-Hispanic groups overstate earnings gaps, because these populations differ systematically in education, work experience, immigration status, and other observable characteristics.² By examining individuals who share similar backgrounds but differ primarily in their surnames, I can better isolate the impact of ethnic signals on educational and labor market outcomes.³

My findings reveal significant penalties associated with Hispanic surnames. Native-born individuals who likely have Hispanic-sounding last names receive 0.39 fewer years of education than their counterparts with White-sounding last names, with particularly pronounced effects in higher education: they are 20% less likely to earn an associate degree and 22% less likely to earn a bachelor's degree. In the labor market, those with Hispanic surnames face a 14% higher

1. Following the approach of Antman, Duncan, and Trejo (2020a) and Hadah (2024), I define Hispanic individuals as people born in the US who self-identify as White and have at least one parent born in a Spanish-speaking country. This definition helps mitigate issues related to ethnic attrition. As demonstrated by Hadah (2024), ethnic attrition, particularly when associated with state-level bias, can result in an overestimation of the Hispanic-White gap in the most biased states. Additionally, focusing on White Hispanics provides cleaner estimates of discrimination based on Hispanic ethnicity by avoiding the confounding effects of racial discrimination that would complicate the interpretation of results.

2. Observable characteristics refer to factors that can be measured and quantified, such as education level, work experience, and immigration status.

3. This study's focus on US-born children with foreign-born parents means the findings may not generalize to Hispanic children with US-born parents, who likely face different socioeconomic and cultural circumstances. The analysis does not account for heterogeneity in immigrant characteristics in different Spanish-speaking countries of origin, such as variations in educational attainment, socioeconomic status, and gender-specific migration patterns, which could influence both parental selection in migration and subsequent child outcomes.

unemployment rate and earn 5% less annually than their peers with White surnames. These disparities are especially pronounced for women, who experience larger gaps in both educational attainment and labor market outcomes, highlighting how ethnic and gender discrimination intersect to compound disadvantages.

This approach builds on Rubinstein and Brenner (2014), who compared children of mixed Ashkenazi-Sephardic marriages in Israel, finding substantial wage penalties associated with Sephardic surnames. Previous work by Antman, Duncan, and Trejo (2020a) and Dávila and Mora (2008) has shown that differences in education, experience, and immigration status explain much but not all of the Hispanic-White gap, suggesting discrimination may play a role. Antman, Duncan, and Trejo (2020a) documents significant ethnic attrition among Hispanics and finds persistent gaps in education and health between native-born Hispanics and non-Hispanic Whites, with native-born Hispanics more likely to report poor health than their foreign-born counterparts.⁴

Discrimination against Hispanics in the US labor market undermines economic mobility and opportunity, reducing earnings and narrowing pathways to educational and professional advancement. These effects extend beyond wages to affect access to quality health care, residential choice, and occupational sorting (Chetty et al. 2014; Hurst, Rubinstein, and Shimizu 2024), potentially perpetuating inequality across generations. This paper’s methodological improvement is particularly timely given the rapidly changing demographics of the United States. The

4. For additional studies examining ethnic identity and outcomes among Hispanic populations, see Antman, Duncan, and Trejo (2016a), Antman, Duncan, and Trejo (2016b), and Antman, Duncan, and Trejo (2020a, 2020b), which collectively document the relationships between ethnic identification, assimilation patterns, and various socioeconomic outcomes.

proportion of non-Whites has increased by more than 10 percentage points from 13 percent in 1995 to 23 percent in 2019,⁵ making it crucial to understand how ethnic signals affect labor market outcomes in an increasingly diverse society.

My empirical strategy relies on one key identifying assumption: children of Hispanic-father/White-mother couples (HW) and children of White-father/Hispanic-mother couples (WH) are alike on every trait that matters in the labor market, both observable and unobservable. If this holds, surname is the only systematic difference between them. This approach accounts for the fact that couples are likely to have similar income, schooling, and socioeconomic background, so these factors are largely controlled for (Averett and Korenman 1996; Averett, Sikora, and Argys 2008).⁶ Indeed, children of HW and WH marriages have more similar observable characteristics than children of endogamous/homogamous marriages (that is, White-fathers/White-mothers and Hispanic fathers/Hispanic mothers), as I demonstrate in Section 4. It is probably true that offspring from interethnic unions have more comparable parental and cultural backgrounds with one another than those from endogamous Hispanic or White marriages do among themselves. In the US, children from households with a Hispanic father and White mother are overwhelmingly likely to have their father's Hispanic last name, allowing me to investigate how this ethnic signal affects labor market and educational outcomes (Davenport 2016).

My surname-based approach complements the audit study literature, which

5. The proportion of non-Whites and Hispanics is based on the author's calculations using the Current Population Survey (CPS).

6. For more on assortative mating see Becker (1973, 1974, 1993), Browning, Chiappori, and Lechene (2006), and Chiappori, Oreffice, and Quintana-Domeque (2012)

has documented discrimination but cannot observe actual wages. While Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) found that Black-sounding names received fewer callbacks, and education audit studies show 2-11 percentage point penalties for Hispanic names in school responses (Bergman and McFarlin Jr 2018; Gaddis et al. 2024), my method reveals the downstream consequences of such discrimination on actual earnings and educational attainment. Fryer Jr and Levitt (2004) established that names can be a predictor of a person's race, though they found that having a Black-sounding name, after controlling for the home environment at birth, does not affect labor market outcomes. These studies highlight the importance of understanding how such signals can capture both conscious and unconscious bias. The education audit experiments are particularly relevant, as discrimination can affect educational access through multiple channels: restricted access to advanced coursework as found by Janssen et al. (2022) with Asian students, biased academic counseling, and subtle institutional barriers documented by Bourabain, Verhaeghe, and Stevens (2023) in the Flemish education system. While Hispanic college enrollment has increased substantially in recent decades, discrimination within educational institutions may still impede degree completion, ultimately affecting labor market outcomes.

As gender and ethnic discrimination operate through distinct mechanisms, I separate out a portion of my results based on gender. As Bertrand (2020) notes, women's outcomes in the labor market are shaped by persistent norms around caregiving and motherhood. Antecol and Bedard (2002) found that in 1994, young Mexican women earned 9.5% less than young White women in the US, with differ-

ences in education largely explaining the gap. Goldin and Shim (2004) emphasizes the growing importance of professional identity and career continuity for women, while Darity Jr, Hamilton, and Stewart (2015) show how group-based hierarchies are perpetuated through both discrimination and intergenerational transfers. The breakdown of my results by gender therefore reveals how ethnic and gender biases intersect to shape educational and economic opportunities.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, I describe the data used in this paper. In Section 3, I present the empirical strategy. In Section 5, I present the results of the estimation of the two specifications. Finally, in Section 6, I conclude.

2 Data

I use three datasets: the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) Current Population Survey (CPS), CPS's Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) supplement, and CPS's outgoing rotation (Flood et al. 2020), and the 1960 to 2000 US censuses (Ruggles et al. 2020).

I use the 1994–2019 CPS data to study the effect of Hispanic surnames on labor market outcomes, as this period contains data on parents' place of birth. The place of birth of mothers and fathers is explicitly asked of all participants in the CPS starting 1994, and this information is essential for identifying interethnic marriages. Since the CPS lacks direct parental characteristics data, I construct 'synthetic parents' using the 1960–2000 US Census data, following Rubinstein and

Brenner (2014).⁷ This method links married couples in census data based on parents' places of birth and children's birth years, assuming that parents have children between ages 25 and 40.

2.1 Sample Construction

My sample includes US citizens aged 25 to 40 years born between 1960 and 2000. Using parents' place of birth data, I classify observations into four parental types:

1. **WW**: US-born father and US-born mother
2. **WH**: US-born father and Hispanic mother (comparison group, likely non-Hispanic surname)
3. **HW**: Hispanic father and US-born mother (treatment group, likely Hispanic surname)
4. **HH**: Hispanic father and Hispanic mother

Parents are classified as Hispanic if born in a Spanish-speaking country or Puerto Rico, and non-Hispanic White if US-born.⁸ This approach helps avoid biased estimates from ethnic attrition (Hadah 2024).⁹

7. For more on 'synthetic' parents see Aaronson and Mazumder (2008).

8. Spanish-speaking countries include: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Equatorial Guinea, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela.

9. Ethnic attrition occurs when US-born descendants of Hispanic immigrants fail to self-identify as Hispanic. See Antman, Duncan, and Trejo (2016b) and Antman, Duncan, and Trejo (2020b).

To illustrate the construction of synthetic parents more concretely, consider someone who was 35 years old in 1999, meaning they were born in 1964. If this person's mother was born in Mexico and their father was born in the United States, their 'synthetic parents' would be identified using the 1970 Census data, when the person was 6 years old. The 'synthetic mother' would have the average characteristics (education, income, etc.) of Mexican-born women who were married to US-born men and had children around 1964, when they were between 20 and 35 years old (meaning they were born between 1929 and 1944). Similarly, the 'synthetic father' would have the average characteristics of US-born men who were married to Mexican-born women and had children in that same year.

Importantly, these synthetic parent measures are constructed to show that interethnic couples are more comparable to each other in terms of observable characteristics, thereby reducing potential bias in comparisons. The synthetic parent variables are used exclusively for descriptive summary statistics and are not included as control variables in the main regression analyses.

This aggregation process introduces some heterogeneity, as individual parents vary considerably from these group-level measures. However, this approach provides valuable information on typical characteristics of family history that would otherwise be completely unobserved (Aaronson and Mazumder 2008; Rubinstein and Brenner 2014). The synthetic parents' characteristics serve as useful proxies for the socioeconomic environment in which these children were raised, allowing me to control for important background factors that influence educational and labor market outcomes. While the synthetic parents' characteristics provide useful

information about the socioeconomic environment in which these children were raised, they are not used as control variables in the regression analyses. More refined matching would be ideal, the publicly available data limit the potential matching dimensions. Nevertheless, the current approach provides meaningful information from the data on the different type of couples, i.e. interethnic versus endogamous.

The sample is restricted to Hispanic and non-Hispanic White individuals to avoid confounding racial factors. While this limits generalizability to the broader Hispanic population, it provides cleaner identification of surname effects—the study’s primary focus. While the United States has a long history of immigration, the probability that a US-born parent in this sample is a second-generation or later immigrant from a Spanish-speaking country is very low, as shown in Table 5. The majority of Hispanics in the US during this period were first- and second-generation immigrants. Only 3% of native-born Americans identified as Hispanic during this period, making it statistically unlikely that an interethnic child with a native-born parent is also a second-generation Hispanic immigrant.

2.2 Variables and Measures

Educational outcomes: Years of education, high school diploma, associate degree, and bachelor’s degree completion.

Labor market outcomes:

- Unemployment (binary indicator from civilian labor force status)

- Log annual earnings (from ASEC supplement)
- Log weekly earnings (from outgoing rotation for hourly workers)

Controls: Age, hours worked, and state-year fixed effects.

2.3 Sample Distribution

Table 1 shows that WW children comprise 96% of the sample, HH children 3%, and interethnic children (WH and HW) make up 1.35% with 90,325 observations—sufficient for robust analysis. Summary statistics and group comparisons are discussed in Section 4.

3 Empirical Approach

Let Y_{ist} be the outcome of interest for person i in state s at time t . HW_{ist} is an indicator variable equal to one if person i has a Hispanic father and US-born mother, and zero if person i has a US-born father and Hispanic mother. X_{ist} is a vector of controls that includes age, and hours worked, γ_{st} represents state-year fixed effects, and ϕ_{ist} is the error term. The equation for this strategy is written as follows, and the sample is restricted to individuals from WH and HW families:

$$Y_{ist} = \beta_1 HW_{ist} + X_{ist}\pi + \gamma_{st} + \phi_{ist} \quad (1)$$

β_1 is the coefficient of interest in this specification. β_1 represents the gap in outcomes between children of inter-ethnic marriages who likely have a Hispanic-

sounding last name versus those who likely have a White-sounding last name. If $\beta_1 > 0$, then people who likely have a Hispanic last name have better outcomes than people who likely have a White last name. If $\beta_1 < 0$, then people who likely have a Hispanic last name have worse outcomes than people who likely have a White last name. This strategy follows Rubinstein and Brenner (2014), comparing children from WH and HW interethnic families to estimate the effect of surname-based ethnic cues. As detailed in the Introduction, this isolates discrimination effects by holding family background constant.

The central assumption underpinning my estimation strategy is that individuals born to a HW person exhibit characteristics comparable to their peers of WH descent, especially in areas like educational background, skill sets, work experiences, family culture, and parenting styles, that are significant determinants in employment opportunities, salary levels, and career advancement.

A potential concern is measurement error in using CPS data to infer parental ethnicity, since it relies on place of birth rather than self-identified Hispanic origin. However, during the period studied, second-generation Hispanics were rare: only about 3% of native-born Americans identified as Hispanic, see Table 5. This makes it unlikely that US-born parents in interethnic unions are second-generation+ Hispanic immigrants.

Prior research documents strong assortative mating in interethnic unions, particularly across education and income lines (Becker 1973; Chiappori, Oreffice, and Quintana-Domeque 2012; Duncan and Trejo 2011). I confirm this pattern using synthetic parent data in Section 4.

I cluster standard errors at the state level. This approach accounts for correlation in the error terms within geographical regions, which is likely to capture much of the potential correlation structure. This clustering approach is common in the literature and helps ensure that the statistical significance of the results is not overstated due to correlated errors.

4 From the Data: The Differences Between HW and WH Couples

In this section, I explore the empirical data to affirm the validity of my empirical strategy. Table 4 details the educational and labor market outcomes of parents from four different ethnic groups—White White (WW), White Hispanic (WH), Hispanic White (HW), and Hispanic Hispanic (HH), revealing the average outcomes for each group and highlighting the impact of interethnic marriages on their children’s prospects. These results confirm the empirical strategy: HW and WH families are similar in background, making the outcome gaps between them more indicative of ethnic discrimination.

Unlike traditional decomposition methods, this comparison directly isolates the role of surname signaling, reducing the confounding effect of background disparities. By focusing specifically on children from interethnic marriages with similar parental characteristics but different surname ethnicities, I use a more targeted comparison group that better isolates the effect of perceived ethnicity from family background. Traditional decomposition approaches would struggle to separate

discrimination effects from the broader socioeconomic gaps between Hispanic and White families overall. The smaller educational and income disparities between HW and WH families compared to HH and WW families, allowing for a clearer attribution of outcome differences to discrimination rather than unobserved heterogeneity. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that residual selection bias may remain, particularly regarding cultural and attitudinal factors that may systematically differ between HW and WH households despite similar educational and economic profiles.

Using synthetic parents constructed from Census data, I compare household educational attainment across ethnic pairings. WW households have 24.95 years of schooling, while HH households have 17.69. Interethnic couples fall in between: WH at 22.68 and HW at 21.50 years. Notably, HW mothers are more educated than WH mothers, which is critical for child outcomes, as maternal education is a strong predictor of human capital (Gould, Simhon, and Weinberg 2020).

In terms of labor market performance, WW households boast the highest log total family income, while HH households fall at the lower end. Among interethnic couples, WH households have a slightly higher total income compared to HW households—WH households earn 5% more than HW. The difference in husbands' log hourly earnings between HW and WH is marginal, with HW men earning 4% less than their WH counterparts. HW women earn 2% more than WH women. This reversal in the typical earning pattern highlights the closing economic disparities between these groups and implies potentially greater economic contributions from HW women to their families, which could benefit their chil-

dren when they enter the labor market.

The table also reveals that WW couples have fewer children than HH couples, reflecting broader socioeconomic and cultural patterns. The difference in number of children between HW and WH couples is positive but significantly lower than the difference between HH and WW couples.

These patterns reinforce the empirical strategy: HW and WH households are sufficiently similar to make surname-based differences informative about discrimination.¹⁰ Despite higher levels of education and income among HW mothers compared to WH mothers, HW children complete an average of 0.4 fewer years of education than their WH peers (Table 2). This gap may suggest potential discrimination or barriers in educational access for HW children.

5 Results

5.1 The Effect of Having a Hispanic Last Name on Educational Outcomes

I present the results from estimating equation 1 in Table 6. I estimate the mean educational outcomes of White Hispanic, US-born individuals ages 25-40. I also restrict the sample to children of HW and WH parents, and the omitted group is children of WH parents. Column 1 in Table 6 is the difference in total years of

10. I present in Tables A.1 and A.2 the summary statistics which detail the educational and economic profiles of parents from four different ethnic groupings—White White (WW), White Hispanic (WH), Hispanic White (HW), and Hispanic Hispanic (HH) on sub-samples of Hispanics of Mexican and non-Mexican ancestries. I find similar results that describe a selection into inter-ethnic marriages among the two groups.

education between HW children and their WH peers. Column 2 is the difference in the probability of dropping out of high school. Column 3 is the difference in the probability of having an associate degree. Column 4 is the difference in the probability of having a bachelor's degree. All regressions include controls for age and state-year fixed effects.

There is a significant gap in total years of education between HW and WH children. HW children receive 0.39 fewer years of education than WH children. The gap between HW and WH women is larger than the gap between HW and WH men. Women with a Hispanic last name receive 0.42 fewer years of education than WH women. The gap between HW and WH men is 0.38 years.

Although there is a modest yet statistically significant gap in total years of education between HW and WH children, there is no significant difference in the probability of dropping out of high school. The gap between HW and WH high school dropouts is statistically insignificant (1 percentage point). The gap between HW and WH women is statistically significant and equal to 2 percentage points, while the gap between HW and WH men is statistically insignificant.

Notable differences emerge for higher education outcomes. HW children are 3 percentage points less likely to earn an associate degree compared to their WH peers, representing a 20% reduction relative to the WH associate degree rate of 15%. Similarly, they are 6 percentage points less likely to earn a bachelor's degree, a 22.2% reduction. These differences are slightly larger for HW women, who are 4 percentage points less likely to earn an associate degree and 7 percentage points less likely to earn a bachelor's degree. For HW men, the gap is 3 percentage points

for an associate degree and 6 percentage points for a bachelor's degree.

These results suggest that while the overall educational gap between HW and WH children is small in terms of years of education, the disparities become more pronounced when considering higher education milestones, particularly for HW women. Given HW mothers are, on average, more educated, HW children's lower degree attainment may reflect structural barriers in higher education access—such as lower counselor encouragement, less access to AP courses, or name-based scholarship bias.

5.2 The Effect of Having a Hispanic Last Name on Labor Market Outcomes

I provide the results of the estimating equation 1 in Tables 7 and 8 on unemployment and log earnings. I estimate the mean unemployment and mean wages of White US-born Hispanic men aged 25-40 who are employed full-time. I also restrict the sample to children of HW and WH (omitted) parents. Column 1 in Table 8 is the average crude earnings gap in log annual earnings between HW workers and their WH peers. In the next 4 columns, I introduce the results with controls for hours worked, state fixed effects (FE), year FE, age FE, and education FE.

I also analyzed the effect of likely having a Hispanic last name on unemployment rates. Table 7 presents the results of this analysis. Column 1 shows that individuals who likely have Hispanic last names (HW) have a 1 percentage point higher unemployment rate compared to those with White last names. This discrepancy persists even after controlling for age, state FE, year FE, and state-year

FE (Column 2), though the significance is lower. When education is included as a control (Column 3), the gap remains at 1 percentage point. These results suggest that while there is an initial unemployment gap associated with likely having a Hispanic last name, much of this difference can be explained by factors such as educational background and does not necessarily reflect discrimination. The mean unemployment rate for individuals with Hispanic last names (HW) is 7% across all specifications.

Overall, the crude gap between HW and WH workers is equal to 5 percentage points (Table 8 column 1). An interethnic worker who likely has a Hispanic last name earns 5 percentage points less than an interethnic worker with a White last name. Even after controlling for hours worked, and including state, year, and age FEs in the estimation, the gap stays at 5 percentage points; however, the difference could be attributed to educational differences. An interethnic man with a likely Hispanic last name earns 1 percentage point less than one with a White last name, but the result is statistically insignificant.

5.3 Sensitivity Analysis

Since Hispanics are very heterogeneous, I conduct a sensitivity analysis on different groups. To increase the sample size of my analysis, I estimate equation 1 using weekly earnings as a dependent variable in Tables A.4, A.5, A.6, and A.7.

Tables A.3, A.6, and A.7 present results using weekly earnings as the dependent variable for the full sample, as well as for Mexican and non-Mexican Hispanic subgroups. Across all groups, individuals with likely Hispanic surnames

earn 3–4 percentage points less than their counterparts with White-sounding names. However, these gaps consistently shrink to statistical insignificance once education and parental background are included as controls, suggesting that socioeconomic differences, rather than surname-based discrimination per se, account for most of the observed earnings disparity.

I also present the results of the estimation of equation 1 using log annual earnings as the dependent variable but with occupation fixed effects instead of education fixed effects (Table A.9). I find that the gap between people with a likely Hispanic-sounding last names and those with a likely White-sounding last names is explained by differences in occupation, similar to my findings with educational controls. I find that a person with a likely Hispanic-sounding last name earns 5 percentage points less than a person with a likely White-sounding last name. This gap becomes an imprecise zero after controlling for occupation.

6 Conclusion

This study uses surname-based ethnic cues to show that individuals with Hispanic-sounding names face educational and earnings disadvantages, even when born into similarly situated interethnic families. By comparing children of interethnic marriages, I find that individuals who likely have Hispanic-sounding last names receive 0.39 fewer years of education than their counterparts who likely have White-sounding last names, representing a 2.9% reduction. This gap is larger for women (0.42 years, or 2.9%) than for men (0.38 years, or 2.8%). In labor market

outcomes, those with likely Hispanic surnames are 1 percentage point more likely to be unemployed (a 14.3% increase from the mean rate) and earn 5 percentage points (4.9%) less than their counterparts.

While the overall impact on total years of education appears modest, the disparities become more pronounced in higher education attainment—with a 15% reduction in associate degree completion and 22.2% reduction in bachelor's degree attainment. These patterns are especially pronounced for women with Hispanic surnames, who face larger discrepancies in both total education and degree completion (14.8% reduction in bachelor's degree attainment). This study highlights how surname—especially in interethnic families—can serve as subtle but powerful signals of ethnic identity that continue to shape educational attainment and labor market inequality in the United States.

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Table 1: Number of Children by Parental Type

	Parental Type			
	White Father	White Father	Hispanic Father	Hispanic Father
	White Mother	Hispanic Mother	White Mother	Hispanic Mother
Observations	6,421,328	39,048	51,277	179,827
Share	0.96	0.01	0.01	0.03

¹ Source: Current Population Surveys (CPS) 1994-2019

² The sample includes Whites, who are married, and are between the ages 25 and 40. Ethnicity of a person's parents are identified by the parent's place of birth. A parent is Hispanic if she/he was born in a Spanish-speaking country. A parent is White if she/he was born in the United States.

Table 2: Summary Statistics of Outcomes Using Parent's Place of Birth

Variables	Father's and Mother's Ethnicities				Differences	
	White	White	Hispanic	Hispanic	HH - WW	HW - WH
	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic		
	(WW)	(WH)	(HW)	(HH)	(5)	(6)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
Panel A: Children's						
Education						
Men's education (Total	13.82	13.57	13.22	12.9	-0.92***	-0.36**
Years)	(2.42)	(2.4)	(2.34)	(2.31)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Women's education	14.06	13.79	13.42	13.24	-0.82***	-0.37**
(Total Years)	(2.37)	(2.44)	(2.38)	(2.39)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Men's High School	0.35	0.42	0.43	0.44	0.09***	0***
Dropout Rate	(0.48)	(0.49)	(0.49)	(0.5)	(0)	(0)

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Table 2: Summary Statistics of Outcomes Using Parent's Place of Birth (*continued*)

Variables	White	White	Hispanic	Hispanic	HH - WW (5)	HW - WH (6)
	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic		
	(WW)	(WH)	(HW)	(HH)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
Women's High School Dropout Rate	0.36 (0.48)	0.43 (0.49)	0.45 (0.5)	0.46 (0.5)	0.09*** (0)	0.02*** (0)
Men's Associate Degree Rate	0.15 (0.36)	0.15 (0.36)	0.12 (0.33)	0.12 (0.32)	-0.03*** (0)	-0.03*** (0)
Women's Associate Degree Rate	0.19 (0.39)	0.17 (0.38)	0.14 (0.35)	0.15 (0.36)	-0.04*** (0)	-0.03*** (0)
Men's BA Degree Rate	0.32 (0.47)	0.26 (0.44)	0.22 (0.41)	0.17 (0.38)	-0.15*** (0)	-0.05*** (0)

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Table 2: Summary Statistics of Outcomes Using Parent's Place of Birth (*continued*)

Variables	White	White	Hispanic	Hispanic	HH - WW (5)	HW - WH (6)
	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic		
	(WW)	(WH)	(HW)	(HH)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
Women's BA Degree	0.36	0.31	0.25	0.22	-0.14***	-0.07***
Rate	(0.48)	(0.46)	(0.43)	(0.42)	(0)	(0)
Men's Professional	0.09	0.07	0.06	0.04	-0.05***	-0.02***
Degree Rate	(0.28)	(0.26)	(0.23)	(0.19)	(0)	(0)
Women's Professional	0.1	0.09	0.07	0.06	-0.04***	-0.01***
Degree Rate	(0.3)	(0.28)	(0.26)	(0.24)	(0)	(0)
Panel B: Children's						
Employment and						
Earnings						

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Table 2: Summary Statistics of Outcomes Using Parent's Place of Birth (*continued*)

Variables	White	White	Hispanic	Hispanic	HH - WW (5)	HW - WH (6)
	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic		
	(WW)	(WH)	(HW)	(HH)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
Men's Unemployment Rate	0.04 (0.8)	0.05 (0.77)	0.07 (0.75)	0.07 (0.75)	0.02*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)
Women's Unemployment Rate	0.04 (0.81)	0.05 (0.22)	0.06 (0.76)	0.06 (0.76)	0.02*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)
Men's Log Hourly Earnings	2.51 (0.45)	2.44 (0.47)	2.43 (0.45)	2.42 (0.43)	-0.09*** (0)	-0.01** (0.01)
Women's Log Hourly Earnings	2.32 (0.49)	2.32 (0.46)	2.28 (0.46)	2.31 (0.42)	-0.02*** (0)	-0.03** (0.01)

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Table 2: Summary Statistics of Outcomes Using Parent's Place of Birth (*continued*)

Variables	White	White	Hispanic	Hispanic	HH - WW (5)	HW - WH (6)
	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic		
	(WW)	(WH)	(HW)	(HH)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
Men's Log Annual Earnings	10.29 (1.01)	10.12 (1.05)	10.08 (1.01)	10.01 (1.04)	-0.28*** (0.01)	-0.04** (0.03)
Women's Log Annual Earnings	10.13 (0.78)	10.07 (0.78)	10.04 (0.73)	10.01 (0.73)	-0.12*** (0.01)	-0.03** (0.02)
Panel C: Children's Hispanic Identity						
Men	0.04	0.74	0.83	0.96		

Women	0.05	0.78	0.81	0.97
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¹ Source: The 1994-2019 Current Population Surveys (CPS) for children's outcomes

² The data is restricted to native-born United States citizens between 1994 and 2019 who are also White and between the ages of 25 and 40. I identify the ethnicity of a person's parents through the parent's place of birth. A parent is Hispanic if they were born in a Spanish-speaking country. A parent is White if they were born in the United States.

Table 3: Couples' Type

	Couples Type			
	White Husband White Wife	White Husband Hispanic Wife	Hispanic Husband White Wife	Hispanic Husband Hispanic Wife
Observations	5,141,737	33,097	37,847	119,749
Share	0.96	0.01	0.01	0.02

¹ Source: 1960-2000 Census

² The sample includes Whites, who are married, with kids, and are between the ages 25 and 40. Ethnicity of a person's parents are identified by the parent's place of birth. A parent is Hispanic if she/he was born in a Spanish-speaking country. A parent is White if she/he was born in the United States.

Table 4: Summary Statistics of Synthetic Parents by Couple Type

Variables	Father's and Mother's Ethnicities				Differences	
	White	White	Hispanic	Hispanic	HH - WW (5)	HW - WH (6)
	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic		
	(WW)	(WH)	(HW)	(HH)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
Husband's education (Total Years)	12.58 (2.88)	11.82 (3.75)	10.33 (4.40)	8.91 (4.25)	-3.67*** (0.01)	-1.49** (0.02)
Wife's education (Total Years)	12.36 (2.40)	10.71 (3.97)	11.01 (3.44)	8.68 (4.00)	-3.68*** (0.01)	0.29** (0.02)
Total Household education (Total Years)	24.95 (4.77)	22.68 (6.91)	21.50 (6.99)	17.69 (7.40)	-7.26** (0.01)	-1.18** (0.04)
Log Total Family Income	10.75 (0.57)	10.65 (0.67)	10.60 (0.68)	10.42 (0.66)	-0.33*** (0.00)	-0.05*** (0.01)
Husband's Log Hourly Earnings	1.74 (0.83)	1.76 (0.87)	1.72 (0.88)	1.55 (0.80)	-0.19*** (0.00)	-0.04*** (0.01)
Wife's Log Hourly Earnings	1.60 (0.93)	1.73 (0.88)	1.75 (0.89)	1.51 (0.79)	-0.09*** (0.01)	0.02** (0.02)
Fertility	3.84 (1.44)	4.05 (1.70)	4.28 (1.84)	4.29 (1.72)	0.44*** (0.00)	0.23** (0.01)

¹ Source: The 1960-2000 Census for synthetic parents, and 1994-2019 Current Population Surveys (CPS) for children's outcomes

² The data is restricted to native-born United States citizens who are also White, between the ages of 25 and 40, and have kids. I identify the ethnicity of a person's parents through the parent's place of birth. A parent is Hispanic if they were born in a Spanish-speaking country. A parent is White if they were born in the United States.

Table 5: Self-reported Hispanic Identity Among First-Generation Hispanic Immigrants and Native-Born

	Spanish-Speaking		Spanish-Speaking	
	Native Born Husband	Place of Birth Husband	Native Born Wife	Place of Birth Wife
Proportion White	0.97	0.03	0.97	0.03
Proportion Hispanic	0.03	0.97	0.03	0.97

¹ Source: 1960-2000 Census

² The sample includes Whites, who are married, and are between the ages 25 and 40.

Table 6: Effect of Having Hispanic Last Name on Educational Outcomes

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Years of Education	High School Dropout	Associate Degree	Bachelor Degree
<i>Panel A: Full Sample</i>				
HW _{ist}	-0.39*** (0.04)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.06*** (0.01)
Observations	106905	108777	79157	108777
<i>Panel B: Women</i>				
HW _{ist}	-0.42*** (0.05)	0.02* (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.07*** (0.01)
Observations	56115	57009	40322	57009
<i>Panel C: Men</i>				
HW _{ist}	-0.38*** (0.06)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.06*** (0.01)
Observations	50790	51768	38835	51768
Full Sample's Mean	13.57	0.42	0.15	0.27
Women's Mean	13.68	0.43	0.16	0.29
Men's Mean	13.45	0.41	0.14	0.25
p-value test Women - Men	p =0.48	p =0.12	p =0.46	p =0.41

* p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01

¹ This table includes the estimation results of equation (1). All regressions include state-year fixed effects.

² HW is an indicator variable that is equal to 1 if a person is the child of a Hispanic-father and White-mother.

³ Standard errors are clustered on the state level.

Table 7: Effect of Having Hispanic Last Name on Employment

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Unemployment	Unemployment	Unemployment
HW _{ist}	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01* (0.00)
Constant	0.05*** (0.00)		
<i>Controlling for:</i>			
Age		X	X
State FE		X	X
Year FE		X	X
State-Year FE		X	X
Education			X
HW's Mean	0.07	0.07	0.07
Unemployment			
Observations	38 204	38 204	38 204

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

¹ This table includes the estimation results of equation (1).

² HW is an indicator variable that is equal to 1 if a person is the child of a Hispanic-father and White-mother.

³ The sample is restricted to prime-age men.

⁴ Standard errors are clustered on the state level.

Table 8: Effect of Having Hispanic Last Name (Log Annual Earnings)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Log annual earnings	Log annual earnings	Log annual earnings	Log annual earnings
HW_{ist}	−0.05*** (0.02)	−0.05** (0.02)	−0.05* (0.02)	−0.02 (0.02)
Constant	10.42*** (0.04)	9.46*** (0.07)		
<i>Controlling for:</i>				
Hours Worked		X	X	X
Age			X	X
State FE			X	X
Year FE			X	X
State-Year FE			X	X
Education				X
Observations	3621	3621	3621	3621

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

¹ This table includes the estimation results of equation (1).

² HW is an indicator variable that is equal to 1 if a person is the child of a Hispanic-father and White-mother.

³ The sample is restricted to men working full-time full-year and are wage and salary workers.

⁴ Column one has the regression results when controlling for hours worked, age, education, year and state fixed effects. Column two has the results after controlling for education.

⁵ Standard errors are clustered on the state level.

A Responses to Editors and Referee

I would like to thank the editor and the anonymous referees for their insightful comments, suggestions, and effort and time in reviewing this paper. I have addressed all the comments and suggestions in the revised manuscript. Below, I provide a summary of the changes made to the manuscript in response to the comments and suggestions.

B Responses to Referee One

I would like to thank referee one for the insightful comments and suggestions. Below is a detailed response to the comments and suggestions.

R1: 1. My first concern relates to the threats to identification. It is feasible that children born to HW couples may differ systematically to children born to WH couples, particularly with respect to unobservable characteristics important for labor market outcomes. For example, HW pairs may exhibit differing parental characteristics related to parenting styles, parental preferences for education, gender norms and beliefs. The paper would be improved by including an expanded discussion around the threat to identification. In light of these issues, the paper would be improved by providing a more thorough discussion of the relative advantages of the current approach, compared to the conventional Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition.

Thank you for raising these concerns. I have significantly expanded the discussion of identification threats and the advantages of my approach compared to traditional methods. In Section 4 (“From the Data: The Differences Between HW and WH Couples”), I now explicitly acknowledge that “Unlike traditional decomposition methods, this comparison directly isolates the role of surname signaling, reducing the confounding effect of background disparities. By focusing specifically on children from interethnic marriages with similar parental characteristics but different surname ethnicities, I use a more targeted comparison group that better isolates the effect of perceived ethnicity from family background. Traditional decomposition approaches would struggle to separate discrimination effects from the broader socioeconomic gaps between Hispanic and White families overall. The smaller educational and income disparities between HW and WH families compared to HH and WW families, allowing for a clearer attribution of outcome differences to discrimination rather than unobserved heterogeneity. Nevertheless,

I acknowledge that residual selection bias remains a concern, particularly regarding cultural and attitudinal factors that may systematically differ between HW and WH households despite similar educational and economic outcomes.”

However, I argue that this approach offers distinct advantages over traditional Oaxaca-Blinder-Kitagawa decomposition methods. First, by focusing specifically on children from interethnic marriages with similar parental characteristics but different surname ethnicities, I use a more targeted comparison group that better isolates the effect of perceived ethnicity from family background. Traditional decomposition approaches would struggle to separate discrimination effects from the broader socioeconomic gaps between Hispanic and White families overall. Second, the smaller educational and income disparities between HW and WH families compared to HH and WW families, allowing for a clearer attribution of outcome differences to discrimination rather than unobserved heterogeneity.

The empirical evidence supports this approach: Table 4 shows that interethnic couples are much more similar to each other than endogamous couples are to each other, which is exactly why comparing children of interethnic couples provides a better comparison than comparing children of endogamous marriages. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that residual selection bias remains a concern, particularly regarding cultural and attitudinal factors that may systematically differ between HW and WH households despite similar educational and economic outcomes. Moreover, it is likely that the parenting and cultural backgrounds of interethnic children are more similar to each other than those of children of endogamous marriages.

R1: 2. The analysis sample is restricted to individuals who self-

identify as 'White'. It is likely that this self-identification of ethnicity is endogenous to labor market outcomes. Importantly, the unobservable determinants of racial identification are potentially correlated with labor market outcomes. The paper would be improved by including a more thorough discussion of this (sample) selection issue. Related to this is the depiction of parents born in the United States as 'White'. This seems particularly over-simplifying and ignores the long history of immigration. A more accurate description would be to refer to this group as US born.

Thank you for your comments and suggestions. I have addressed both concerns raised by the reviewer. First, regarding the endogeneity of self-identification, I now explicitly discuss this issue in the data section. I explain that "The sample is restricted to Hispanic and non-Hispanic White individuals to avoid confounding racial factors." I argue that including those who do not identify as White could contaminate the estimate of bias against Hispanics due to racial signals. Moreover, as shown by Hadah ([2024](#)), there exists strong correlation between bias against Hispanics and self-reported Hispanic identity, and excluding Hispanics who experience ethnic attrition could lead to overestimated bias in the most discriminatory states. To address the comment on the long history of immigration in the US, I updated the manuscript to make clear that the interethnic children I am studying are US born. I also added the following: "This study's focus on US-born children with foreign-born parents means the findings may not generalize to Hispanic children with US-born parents, who likely face different socioeconomic and cultural circumstances. The analysis does not account for heterogeneity in immigrant characteristics in different Spanish-speaking countries of origin, such as

variations in educational attainment, socioeconomic status, and gender-specific migration patterns, which could influence both parental selection in migration and subsequent child outcomes.”

Second, regarding the characterization of US-born parents, I have revised the language throughout the manuscript to make it clear that the analysis focuses on US-born individuals. I now explicitly address this concern: “While the United States has a long history of immigration, the probability that a US-born parent in this sample is a second-generation or later immigrant from a Spanish-speaking country is very low, as shown in Table 5. The majority of Hispanics in the US during this period were first- and second-generation immigrants. Only 3% of native-born Americans identified as Hispanic during this period, making it statistically unlikely that an interethnic child with a native-born parent is also a second-generation Hispanic immigrant.” I have also changed terminology throughout to use “US-born” rather than “White” when referring to native-born parents, and I clarify that this approach “provides a cleaner identification of surname effects, which is the primary focus of this study.”

R1: 3. The discussion on the construction of the ‘synthetic parents’ is somewhat brief. The paper suggests that the potential parents are matched using the birth year of the child and the parent’s place of birth to the children’s information collected in the CPS sample. While not explicitly stated in the paper, I assume that this sample of synthetic parents is used to construct mean parental education and family income at the time of the birth of the child. The process for matching the potential parents to the children is somewhat aggregated and

there is likely considerable heterogeneity in the mean educational attainment of the potential parents within the set of children with the same birth year with the same parent's country of birth. The paper could be improved by exploring the possibility of improving the quality of the match of potential parents by including further characteristics to match the potential parents to their children.

Thank you for raising this point. I have significantly expanded the discussion of synthetic parents construction and provided a detailed concrete example. In the data section, I now include: "To illustrate the construction of synthetic parents more concretely, consider someone who was 35 years old in 1999, meaning they were born in 1964. If this person's mother was born in Mexico and their father was born in the United States, their 'synthetic parents' would be identified using the 1970 Census data, when the person was 6 years old. The 'synthetic mother' would have the average characteristics (education, income, etc.) of Mexican-born women who were married to US-born men and had children around 1964, when they were between 20 and 35 years old (meaning they were born between 1929 and 1944). Similarly, the 'synthetic father' would have the average characteristics of US-born men who were married to Mexican-born women and had children in that same year."

I acknowledge the reviewer's suggestion about including additional characteristics to improve the matching quality. While incorporating more matching variables (such as parent's age at birth) could potentially reduce heterogeneity within the synthetic parent groups, the current approach balances precision with sample size considerations. Adding more matching criteria would create increasingly small cells in the Census data, potentially leading to unstable estimates or

empty cells, particularly for less common parent birthplace combinations. Moreover, since the synthetic parent characteristics are used exclusively for descriptive summary statistics and not as control variables in the main regression analyses, the current level of aggregation is appropriate for the paper's empirical strategy.

R1: 4. The description of the estimated model is somewhat brief. However, there are two main issues associated with statistical inference on the estimated parameters in model (1). First, there is a 'generated regressor' issue associated with using estimated group-level parental education. A failure to account for this sampling variation will lead to misleadingly small standard errors. Second, given this group structure for parental education, it seems reasonable to assume that the model errors are uncorrelated across clusters but correlated within (potential parents) clusters. It is well understood that failing to account for this 'clustering' problem can lead to misleadingly small standard errors, narrow confidence intervals, and low p-values.

I am grateful to the referee for raising this important concern. I have expanded the discussion of these methodological issues in the empirical approach section. Regarding the generated regressor issue, I updated the regression results in the manuscript with results that do not include the specification where 'synthetic parents' are included in the controls. This alleviates the concern regarding generated, as they are no longer in the regression. I also updated the manuscript to make sure that it is clear that 'synthetic parents' parents are only used for descriptive summary statistics to enhance comparability between interethnic families and are not included as control variables in any of the main regressions.

R1: 5. The paper would be improved through an expanded discussion of the impact of measurement error on the reported estimates. While there is a well understood result in the measurement error literature that measures of group mean parental education will provide estimates that are more robust to the presence of measurement error in individual level measures of parental education, there is still an issue with the non-random attrition of potential parents. Specifically, not all potential parents have children in the CPS sample, nor do all children in the CPS sample have parents in the sample of potential parents. Moreover, the non-random attrition of potential parents implies that mean parental education may be systematically higher or lower than the actual parental education of the children in the CPS sample. The paper would be improved by providing an expanded discussion of the likely impacts of measurement error on the reported estimates.

Thank you for your comments. I have clarified this methodological point and expanded the discussion of measurement error concerns. First, I want to clarify that the concern about attrition does not apply to my analysis: Synthetic parents are constructed using the birth year of the child and are not based on actual parents in the CPS sample at the time of the survey. The place of birth of parents—mothers and fathers—are questions asked of all participants in the Current Population Survey (CPS) starting 1994. Therefore, I do not use the information of parents who are in the CPS sample at the time of the survey, and I construct synthetic parents from Census data. Because this approach uses Census data rather than contemporaneous parent-child pairs, concerns about non-random attrition of parents from the CPS sample do not apply to my analysis.

Regarding measurement error more broadly, I have expanded the discussion in the empirical approach section to include the following: “A potential concern is measurement error in using CPS data to infer parental ethnicity, since it relies on place of birth rather than self-identified Hispanic origin. However, during the period studied, second-generation Hispanics were rare: only about 3% of native-born Americans identified as Hispanic (see Table 5, which presents Hispanic identification rates by nativity). This makes it unlikely that US-born parents in interethnic unions are second-generation+ Hispanic immigrants.”

C Responses to Referee Two

I would like to thank referee two for the insightful and constructive comments and suggestions. Below is a detailed response to the comments and suggestions.

R2: 1. The paper needs to be more clearly motivated in the introduction. There are a lot of reasons why studying discrimination by race and ethnicity is important and the paper would benefit from clearly articulating this, including discussing the implications of this discrimination. You mention economic mobility and I think there is more you can say about this. I also think clearly stating the contributions of the paper earlier on would be important.

Thank you for the important suggestion. I have expanded the introduction to better motivate the study. I have included a discussion of the implications of discrimination on economic mobility and the contributions of the paper. I have also included a discussion of the importance of studying discrimination

R2: 2. I would also like to see a clearer theory and review of the literature on the topic. For example, why should we expect that discrimination will affect educational attainment? Hispanics are one of the fastest growing groups entering college, but the extent to which they complete an associate or BA degree may reflect discrimination that happens when students are in school that ultimately translates into differences in attainment. Why might we expect differences in employment and years of education? Why might we expect differences by gender?

I appreciate this suggestion. Here are my replies to the different comments.

First, regarding including more on why discrimination could affect educational attainment. I have expanded the part of the introduction that discusses

differences in education and the channels in which discrimination can affect educational attainment. The literature on discrimination and education shows that discrimination can affect educational attainment of minorities through various channels, including differences in school quality and bias from teachers, administrators, counselors, etc. These biases could lead to differences in educational attainment by preventing students access to some schools, recommendation letters, or counselors restricting access to more advanced courses, etc. Consequently, these biases could lead to differences in educational attainment. For example, having access to advanced courses in high school or better recommendation letters could affect the likelihood of attending college.

Second, if minorities face discrimination in access to education and the labor market, then we would expect differences in employment and years of education. The literature shows that discrimination can affect labor market outcomes through various channels, including differences in access to jobs and wage differences.

Finally, to address the comment here, and in other places, on why we might expect differences between genders. I added a discussion of why we might expect differences between men and women in the results section. I believe that showing that there might be heterogeneity in gaps between men and women in educational outcomes to be an important contribution of the paper since the literature studying gaps in earnings mainly focuses on the average gap between men. Moreover, showing that couples with a Hispanic husband and a White wife do not invest differently in their children than couples with a White husband and a Hispanic wife could be a way to test for cultural differences between the two groups.

R2: 3. Occupational segregation can also reflect discrimination in the labor market with important implications for economic mobil-

ity and other outcomes, and it would be important to mention this in the literature review. In general, the review of the literature needs to provide more details about the different studies and how your paper contributes to that literature above and beyond using a cleaner comparison.

Thank you for this suggestion. I have included a discussion of occupational segregation in the literature review and added how my paper contributes to the different strands of the literature.

R2: 4. There are places throughout the paper where additional references are needed. For example, when you state in the introduction on page 3 that discrimination can lead to lower wages, reduced opportunities, and hinder assimilation this statement needs references.

Thank you for pointing this out. I have added references to such statements.

R2: 5. Can you explain why you discuss assimilation and in what ways this is connected to your theory given that you are focusing on U.S. born children? If this matters because you are focusing on U.S. born Hispanic children with one foreign-born parent, then you need to clearly state this.

Thank you for the comment. I added a footnote to the introduction to address it.

R2: 6. You also need to state clearly and early in the paper that your study focuses on children with a foreign-born parent. Children with U.S. born Hispanic parents may be different than those with foreign-born parents and you could more explicitly discuss this in the paper.

I appreciate this comment. I made it more clear throughout the paper that I focus on children with a foreign-born parent.

R2: 7. Also given the differences in the characteristics of immigrants from different Spanish-speaking countries living in the U.S. (differences in socioeconomic status, education, etc.), you probably want to mention that your study is not capturing this. Further, to the extent that men and women migrate from different countries and have different pre- and post-migration characteristics then this might affect your results.

One possible way to address this is to conduct sensitivity analyses limited to Children whose parents were likely born in Mexico or who respond themselves that they are Mexican. Given that immigrants from Mexico are the largest immigrant group from a Spanish speaking country in the U.S., this may offer an even cleaner comparison. There could still be differences in the characteristics of Mexican mothers and fathers, but you could potentially check this in the data.

Thank you for this suggestion. I made it clear in the paper that I do not capture differences in the characteristics of immigrants from different Spanish-speaking countries. I also added some results and discussion as a sensitivity analysis breaking down the results for Hispanic children with Mexican parents versus Hispanic children with non-Mexican parents.

R2: 8. There are several sections that are repeated in the paper and I would suggest you streamline the text. For example, you review results twice, but this isn't necessary.

Similarly, I think you can more systematically organize the section describing your empirical strategy and clearly explaining your identification strategy, the concerns that it helps you overcome, your assumptions, and how you are testing whether these assumptions likely

hold. Currently this is explained in multiple sections throughout the paper.

I appreciate this comment. I have streamlined the text and reorganized the paper to address these concerns.

R2: 9. Can you provide an example that illustrates how you link individuals in the CPS to the synthetic parents?

I added an example to the data section that illustrates how I link individuals in the CPS to the synthetic parents.

R2: 10. I would like more details about the sample and the decisions you make. For example, you identify your sample as U.S. born children who identify as White in the CPS but some of these may also identify as Hispanic no? Do you restrict your sample to respondents who identify as White Hispanic or not? How many individuals in your sample identify as White non-Hispanic even if they have a parent born in a Spanish speaking country and how many do not? If someone has a Hispanic parent but do not identify as Hispanic those may be different than people with a Hispanic parent who identify as Hispanic.

If there are people who identify as White non Hispanic in your sample even though they have a parent born in a Spanish speaking country, can you do a sensitivity analysis removing them?

For example, on page 18 you say “I also find a significant earnings gap between those that identify as Hispanic.” Can you explain this statement? Is this related to the point I made above?

Thank you for the comment. I added more description of the sample to the data section and the reasoning of why I chose those who self-identify as White.

R2: 11. If there are people who identify as White non Hispanic in your sample even though they have a parent born in a Spanish speaking country, can you do a sensitivity analysis removing them?

Thank you for the comment. I added more description of the sample to the data section and the reasoning of why I chose those who self-identify as White.

R2: 12. For example, on page 18 you say “I also find a significant earnings gap between those that identify as Hispanic.” Can you explain this statement? Is this related to the point I made above?

Thank you for the comment. I added more description of the sample to the data section and the reasoning of why I chose those who self-identify as White.

R2: 13. You report results for men and women and, I am sorry if I missed it, but I would like to see this motivated in the paper as there are many reasons for doing the analyses separately. See my earlier point on the lit review/theory.

Please see my response to the earlier comment on why we might expect differences between men and women.

R2: 14. It would also be important to discuss effect sizes. Some of the findings seem to be small and you should discuss whether they are economically meaningful. Further, there should be more discussion about what your findings mean to understand discrimination for Hispanics and how it plays out, including by gender and in what ways they fall short in answering this question.

Thank you for the suggestion. I have included a discussion of the effect sizes and the economic meaning of the results. I have also included a discussion of

what the findings mean for understanding discrimination against Hispanics and how it plays out.

R2: 15. How are you measuring the different outcomes? I don't believe you discuss in the paper. This may be obvious, but I think it is still important to mention for clarity.

Thank you for the comment. I have included a discussion of how I measure the different outcomes in the data section.

R2: 16. When you control for education in models that examine earnings, the effect becomes statistically insignificant, what happens if you include industry or occupation fixed effects? Can you do that? Then you'd be comparing people within the same industry or occupation.

I appreciate this comment. I have added a discussion of the results when I include occupation fixed effects to the sensitivity analysis section.

R2: 17. The conclusion repeats much of what was said in the body of the paper, and I would like to see more discussion about the implications of your findings to understand disparities in education and labor outcomes between people with different ethnic background, and to what extent you can conclude these differences can be attributed to discrimination. It would also be important to compare your results with other literature on this topic.

Thank you so much for this comment. I have expanded the conclusion to include more discussion about the implications of the findings and how they can be

attributed to discrimination. I have also included a discussion of how my results compare to the literature on this topic.

R2: 18. On page 14, this sentence seems to be incomplete: “Consequently, comparing WH and HW children to each other to analyze discrimination against Hispanics in the labor market.”

Thank you for pointing this out. I have corrected this sentence.

R2: 19. Throughout the paper you refer to people with a parent born in a Spanish speaking country as “children who have a Spanish-sounding last name” I would encourage you to soften this language and say “who likely have” a Spanish sounding last name. First, you do not know if a person actually does have the last name of their father. Second, while it is true that Spanish sounding last names are very common in Spanish-speaking Latin American countries and among Latinos in the U.S., this may not be true across the board and many people born in Spanish speaking countries, who are Spanish speakers and Hispanic, may not have a traditionally sounding Spanish last name.

Thank you for your comment. I changed the mention of "children who have a Spanish-sounding last name" to "children who likely have a Spanish-sounding last name" throughout the paper.

D Responses to Referee three

I would like to thank referee three the comments. Below is a detailed response to the comments and suggestions.

R3: 1. As the author states on page 4, the key identifying assumption is that people born to HW parents are similar to their WH peers. Only when this assumption is fulfilled can the author attribute the estimated coefficients to evidence of discrimination. However, Table 4 clearly shows that the differences between HW and WH synthetic parents' characteristics, such as the father's/mother's education and total family income, are all significantly different. More specifically, HW families exhibit lower levels of education and income compared to their WH counterparts. Based on this, it is not clear whether the estimated coefficients are indeed evidence of discrimination or they merely reflect the fact that HW children grew up in an environment with less resources/educated parents.

The manuscript heavily adopts the methodology of Rubinstein and Brenner (2014), which examines the impacts of having a Sephardic-sounding surname on wages by comparing the Israeli-Jewish men born to Sephardic fathers and Ashkenazi mothers (SA) with those born to Ashkenazi fathers and Sephardic mothers (AS). They too find that the AS and SA families have statistically different educational and labor market outcomes. However, in their case, despite the fact that Sephardic Israelis face tougher labor market conditions, SA parents exhibit better education and labor market outcomes than AS parents. Therefore, any evidence indicating that SA offspring have worse labor market outcomes provides convincing (and potentially a lower bound) evidence of discrimination.

Thank you for the comment. Even though the synthetic parents have different characteristics, the estimation strategy rests on the fact that selection in the marriage market decreases the differences between HW and WH couples. This is the reason why comparing children of intermarried couples provides a better com-

parison than comparing children of endogamous marriages, i.e. marriages where both parents are either non-Hispanic White or Hispanic. I also included a discussion of the relative advantages of the current approach compared to the conventional Oaxaca-Blinder-Kitagawa decomposition. I argue that the current approach provides a more accurate estimate of gaps that are due to discrimination. In fact, the concern the reviewer raises is one of the reasons why my approach is preferred over the Oaxaca-Blinder-Kitagawa since children of endogamous marriages are more likely to have different characteristics than children of intermarried couples, including those that are unobservable. I argue, and show from the data, that children of intermarried couples are more likely to have similar characteristics than children of endogamous couples.

ONLINE APPENDIX

The Impact of Hispanic Last Names on Educational and Labor Market Outcomes

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A Tables

Table A.1: Summary Statistics of Synthetic Parents by Couple Type (Mexican Hispanics)

Variables	Father's and Mother's Ethnicities				Differences	
	White	White	Hispanic	Hispanic		
	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic	HH - WW	HW - WH
	(WW)	(WH)	(HW)	(HH)	(5)	(6)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
Husband's education (Total Years)	12.58 (2.88)	10.82 (3.78)	9.17 (4.22)	7.87 (3.94)	-4.71** (0.01)	-1.66** (0.03)
Wife's education (Total Years)	12.36 (2.40)	9.58 (4.00)	10.23 (3.36)	7.75 (3.77)	-4.62*** (0.01)	0.65** (0.02)
Total Household education (Total Years)	24.95 (4.77)	20.57 (6.88)	19.56 (6.60)	15.70 (6.73)	-9.25** (0.02)	-1.01** (0.04)
Log Total Family Income	10.75 (0.57)	10.52 (0.67)	10.48 (0.66)	10.33 (0.64)	-0.42*** (0.00)	-0.04*** (0.01)
Husband's Log Hourly Earnings	1.74 (0.83)	1.58 (0.85)	1.56 (0.84)	1.46 (0.79)	-0.28*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.01)
Wife's Log Hourly Earnings	1.60 (0.93)	1.56 (0.87)	1.63 (0.87)	1.40 (0.77)	-0.20*** (0.01)	0.07** (0.02)
Fertility	3.84 (1.44)	4.36 (1.81)	4.53 (1.91)	4.58 (1.80)	0.73*** (0.01)	0.17** (0.01)

¹ Source: The 1960-2000 Census for synthetic parents.

² The data is restricted to native-born United States citizens who are also White, between the ages of 25 and 40, and have kids. I identify the ethnicity of a person's parents through the parent's place of birth. A parent is Hispanic if they were born in a Mexico. A parent is White if they were born in the United States.

Table A.2: Summary Statistics of Synthetic Parents by Couple Type (Non-Mexican Hispanics)

Variables	Father's and Mother's Ethnicities				Differences	
	White	White	Hispanic	Hispanic		
	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic	HH - WW	HW - WH
	(WW)	(WH)	(HW)	(HH)	(5)	(6)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
Husband's education (Total Years)	12.58 (2.88)	13.40 (2.88)	12.68 (3.38)	10.47 (3.95)	-2.11** (0.01)	-0.72** (0.03)
Wife's education (Total Years)	12.36 (2.40)	12.70 (2.81)	12.57 (2.76)	10.20 (3.67)	-2.16** (0.01)	-0.14** (0.03)
Total Household education (Total Years)	24.95 (4.77)	26.12 (4.99)	25.28 (5.51)	20.75 (6.84)	-4.20** (0.02)	-0.84* (0.05)
Log Total Family Income	10.75 (0.57)	10.84 (0.60)	10.82 (0.62)	10.51 (0.66)	-0.24*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.01)
Husband's Log Hourly Earnings	1.74 (0.83)	2.00 (0.82)	1.96 (0.87)	1.48 (0.87)	-0.27*** (0.00)	-0.04** (0.01)
Wife's Log Hourly Earnings	1.60 (0.93)	1.93 (0.82)	1.90 (0.89)	1.55 (0.84)	-0.05*** (0.01)	-0.03** (0.02)
Fertility	3.84 (1.44)	3.52 (1.28)	3.66 (1.42)	3.95 (1.62)	0.10*** (0.01)	0.14** (0.02)

¹ Source: The 1960-2000 Census for synthetic parents, and 1994-2019 Current Population Surveys (CPS) for children's outcomes

² The data is restricted to native-born United States citizens who are also White, between the ages of 25 and 40, and have kids. I identify the ethnicity of a person's parents through the parent's place of birth. A parent is Hispanic if they were born in a Spanish-speaking country other than Mexico. A parent is White if they were born in the United States.

Table A.3: Effect of Having Hispanic Last Name (Log Weekly Earnings)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Log weekly earnings	Log weekly earnings	Log weekly earnings
HW _{ist}	−0.04*** (0.01)	−0.06*** (0.01)	−0.03** (0.01)
Constant	6.65*** (0.03)		
<i>Controlling for:</i>			
State FE		X	X
Year FE		X	X
State-Year FE		X	X
Age		X	X
Education			X
Observations	7444	7444	7444

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

¹ This table includes the estimation results of equation (1) where the dependent variable is log weekly earnings.

² HW is an indicator variable that is equal to 1 if a person is the child of a Hispanic-father and White-mother.

³ The sample is restricted to men working full-time and are wage and salary workers.

⁴ Column one has the regression results when controlling for hours worked, age, education, year and state fixed effects. Column two has the results after controlling for education.

⁵ Standard errors are clustered on the state level.

Table A.4: Effect of Having Hispanic Last Name on Educational Outcomes: Hispanics with Mexican Ancestry

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Years of Education	High School Dropout	Associate Degree	Bachelor Degree
<i>Panel A: Full Sample</i>				
HW _{ist}	-0.31*** (0.04)	0.00 (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)
Observations	74926	76499	61273	76499
<i>Panel B: Women</i>				
HW _{ist}	-0.35*** (0.05)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.05*** (0.01)
Observations	39867	40608	31761	40608
<i>Panel C: Men</i>				
HW _{ist}	-0.28*** (0.05)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.02*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)
Observations	35059	35891	29512	35891
Full Sample's Mean	13.15	0.46	0.14	0.2
Women's Mean	13.26	0.46	0.15	0.22
Men's Mean	13.03	0.45	0.13	0.18

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

¹ This table includes the estimation results of equation (1). All regressions include state-year fixed effects.

² HW is an indicator variable that is equal to 1 if a person is the child of a Hispanic-father and White-mother.

³ Standard errors are clustered on the state level.

Table A.5: Effect of Having Hispanic Last Name on Educational Outcomes: Hispanics with non-Mexican Ancestry

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Years of Education	High School Dropout	Associate Degree	Bachelor Degree
<i>Panel A: Full Sample</i>				
HW _{ist}	-0.39*** (0.07)	0.03*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.07*** (0.01)
Observations	45492	46007	28517	46007
<i>Panel B: Women</i>				
HW _{ist}	-0.48*** (0.11)	0.05*** (0.02)	-0.04** (0.02)	-0.09*** (0.02)
Observations	23508	23797	14222	23797
<i>Panel C: Men</i>				
HW _{ist}	-0.38*** (0.09)	0.03* (0.01)	-0.05*** (0.02)	-0.07*** (0.02)
Observations	21984	22210	14295	22210
Full Sample's Mean	14.18	0.37	0.17	0.38
Women's Mean	14.29	0.37	0.18	0.4
Men's Mean	14.06	0.37	0.16	0.36

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

¹ This table includes the estimation results of equation (1). All regressions include state-year fixed effects.

² HW is an indicator variable that is equal to 1 if a person is the child of a Hispanic-father and White-mother.

³ Standard errors are clustered on the state level.

Table A.6: Effect of Having Hispanic Last Name: Hispanics with Mexican Ancestry

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Log weekly earnings	Log weekly earnings	Log weekly earnings
HW _{ist}	−0.01 (0.02)	−0.04*** (0.01)	−0.02 (0.01)
Constant	6.57*** (0.03)		
<i>Controlling for:</i>			
State FE		X	X
Year FE		X	X
State-Year FE		X	X
Age		X	X
Education			X
Observations	5105	5105	5105

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

¹ This table includes the estimation results of equation (1) where the dependent variable is log weekly earnings.

² HW is an indicator variable that is equal to 1 if a person is the child of a Hispanic-father and White-mother.

³ The sample is restricted to men working full-time and are wage and salary workers.

⁴ Column one has the regression results when controlling for hours worked, age, education, year and state fixed effects. Column two has the results after controlling for education.

⁵ Standard errors are clustered on the state level.

Table A.7: Effect of Having Hispanic Last Name: Hispanics with Non-Mexican Ancestry

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Log weekly earnings	Log weekly earnings	Log weekly earnings
HW_{ist}	-0.05* (0.03)	-0.07*** (0.02)	-0.04** (0.02)
Constant	6.75*** (0.03)		
<i>Controlling for:</i>			
State FE		X	X
Year FE		X	X
State-Year FE		X	X
Age		X	X
Education			X
Observations	3225	3225	3225

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

¹ This table includes the estimation results of equation (1) where the dependent variable is log weekly earnings.

² HW is an indicator variable that is equal to 1 if a person is the child of a Hispanic-father and White-mother.

³ The sample is restricted to men working full-time and are wage and salary workers.

⁴ Column one has the regression results when controlling for hours worked, age, education, year and state fixed effects. Column two has the results after controlling for education.

⁵ Standard errors are clustered on the state level.

Table A.8: Descriptive Statistics About Selection Into Occupation by Type

Occupation	Hispanic Last Name	White Last Name	Difference-in-means: WH - HW	
	Hispanic-White	White-Hispanic	Difference	p value
Management and Business	0.111	0.129	-0.018	0.000
STEM Occupations	0.030	0.040	-0.009	0.000
Healthcare Occupations	0.063	0.058	0.005	0.002
Education and Social Services	0.062	0.064	-0.002	0.237
Arts, Media, and Entertainment	0.028	0.034	-0.006	0.000
Service Occupations	0.107	0.099	0.008	0.000
Manual and Industrial Labor	0.199	0.171	0.028	0.000

¹ Source: Current Population Survey (CPS) 1994-2019.

Table A.9: Effect of Having Hispanic Last Name (Log Annual Earnings)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Log annual earnings	Log annual earnings	Log annual earnings	Log annual earnings
HW_{ist}	-0.05*** (0.02)	-0.05** (0.02)	-0.05* (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)
Constant	10.42*** (0.04)	9.46*** (0.07)		
<i>Controlling for:</i>				
Hours Worked		X	X	X
Age			X	X
State FE			X	X
Year FE			X	X
State-Year FE			X	X
Occupation FE				X
Observations	3621	3621	3621	3487

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

¹ This table includes the estimation results of equation (1).

² HW is an indicator variable that is equal to 1 if a person is the child of a Hispanic-father and White-mother.

³ The sample is restricted to men working full-time full-year and are wage and salary workers.

⁴ Column one has the regression results when controlling for hours worked, age, education, year and state fixed effects. Column two has the results after controlling for education.

⁵ Standard errors are clustered on the state level.