HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses, developed from the literature review presented above, concern the relationship of type of school to ethnic or national identification and social distance among Arabs and Jews.

Hypothesis 1A: Arabs attending mixed schools are more likely than those attending all-Arab schools to identify as Palestinian and/or Arab rather than Israeli. The logic is that in mixed settings one’s ethnic identity tends to be accentuated but is taken for granted in homogenous settings.

Hypothesis 1B: The same logic suggests that Jews attending mixed schools are more likely to identify in collective (rather than personal) terms than those attending all-Jewish schools,.

Hypothesis 1C: Multicultural schools promote the national identity of Palestinians. Therefore, we hypothesize that Palestinians who attend multicultural schools are more likely to identify as Palestinian than Arabs attending Hebrew mixed schools and all-Arab schools.

Hypothesis 2A: Arabs, members of a minority group, have more desire for interaction with Jews, members of the majority group, than vice versa.

Hypothesis 2B: Both Arab and Jewish students who attend mixed schools are more prone to interact with outgroup members outside of school.

Hypothesis 2C: Jewish and Arab students who attend multicultural schools are more likely to interact with outgroup members than students attending homogenous schools and Hebrew mixed schools because these schools advocate multicultural ideology.

Hypothesis 3A: Arabs who identify as Israelis interact with outgroup members more than those who identify as Palestinians because they see themselves as part of the broader inclusive category.  
Hypothesis 3B: Jewish students who emphasize their Jewish identity have less desire for social contact with Arabs than those who emphasize their Israeli identity because they choose an exclusive identity category.

1. DATA AND VARIABLES

The study population was of sixth, seventh, and tenth graders studying in 14 schools in schools in Israel: 4 multicultural, 4 Hebrew mixed schools, 3 all-Arab and 3 all-Jewish schools. Data collection was performed during the 2016–2017 and 2017–2018 school years. Five of the multicultural schools in Israel are elementary schools, where students study from kindergarten to the 6th grade. We focused on 6th graders in these schools because collective identification evolves with age, and 6th graders were the oldest cohort with sufficient cases. However, because research has shown that identity development changes over age and can be controlled by age, we included a small representation of high school ages. The final sample of 602 students consisted 55.8% girls, 44.2% boys, 44.4% Jews, and 55.6% Arabs.

I sampled sets of different types of schools in the same communities to help control for socioeconomic and geographical factors, although this was not always possible because there are very few multicultural and Hebrew-mixed schools, and they are not often located close to each other. In addition, the socioeconomic levels of the populations of these schools’ population differ, as has been shown in previous studies (Shwed et al., 2018, Levy & Shavit, 2015).

I approached all of the multicultural schools in Israel and chose four, two of which are part of the Hand in Hand group of schools, with the other two are belonging to other initiatives. The Hebrew mixed schools were selected according to their geographic location and their proportion of Arab students to match them as far as possible to the populations of the multicultural schools; in three out of the four Hebrew schools chosen, the student body was more than 30% Arab. In the fourth school, there were fewer Arab students, but it was located close to a multicultural school.

**Procedures**

The students completed a questionnaire that was phrased in a way that followed the regulations promulgated by the head education researcher at the Ministry of Education. Several rounds of pretesting and revision were conducted before the questionnaire was delivered to the target population, to check its accessibility, the time necessary to complete it, and the clarity of its language. The questionnaires were all self-administered.

The questionnaires were developed in Hebrew, translated into Arabic, and double-checked by native speakers of Arabic. The pretests were conducted in segregated schools (both Arab and Jewish schools). Problematic items were revised or removed so that the degree of language equivalence between the Hebrew and Arabic versions would be the best possible. The surveys were distributed in a class setting by the researcher (Jewish) and an Arab research assistant to allow students to ask questions and comment in their mother tongue. The response rate was high, about 95% in total, with no differences was detected for type of school or grade. Each student answered autonomously. In the segregated schools, whether Arab or Jewish, we distributed the questionnaires in only one language, Arabic or Hebrew respectively. In the mixed schools, the students were allowed to choose between the two versions. Many Arab students in Hebrew schools chose the Hebrew version, as some respondents were more fluent in written Hebrew than in Arabic.

**Variables, Measurement, and Descriptive Statistics**

**Independent variables**

Social identification

1. We used both open-ended and closed-ended questions to measure identification. The open-ended questions allowed respondents an opportunity to describe themselves without dictating answer categories to them. I employed a modification of the 20-statement test model (Watkins, Yau, Dahlin, & Wondimu, 1997) for children (reducing the number of statements to 7), following Garza and Ringer (Garza, 1987). The respondents received a page with seven blank lines headed by “I \_\_\_\_\_” that are to be completed freely in response to the prompt. After completing the first page, the respondent ranks his/her answers according to their subjective importance to him/her.

The respondents provided about 300 self-descriptions, according to the coding. The codes were grouped into five types, as follows. personal descriptions and characteristics (such as happy or strong), tastes, things that I do or do not like (I like football), relations or people I like or respect (such as Bibi), religious affiliation (am Muslim), and national affiliation (am Palestinian). Each description was coded independently by the researcher and the research assistant, and minor differences were resolved by discussion and consensus. We then created five dummy variables to reflect the categorization as personal, taste, relation, national, or religious.

2. The second measure of identity provided respondents with a list of five categories for self-identification, namely, Arab, Palestinian, Israeli, Muslim, Christian, and Jewish, and asked them to score how far they considered themselves to belong to each on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). Christian and Muslim categories were not included in the analysis because students were not asked directly which specific religion they belonged to, prohibiting us from comparing their sense of belonging to different groups with their sense of belonging to their religion.

3. The third measure was a single, exclusive ethno-religious identification. This item was based on Smooha’s index (2013, 2015, 2017). The respondents were asked to choose one of seven categories to describe themselves—Arab, Arab Israeli, Israeli, Jewish, Palestinian, Arab Palestinian, or Palestinian in Israel. Because the same questionnaires were presented to both Jewish and Arab students in all types of schools to allow the use of a uniform instrument for mixed settings, this question covers a wide range of categories that may be considered impossible in Israel. (For instance, presenting the category Jewish to an Arab in Israel or the category Palestinian to a Jew.)

Social distance

4. To assess individual attitudes toward outgroup members, I used the Bogardus social distance scale (Bogardus, 1933). The respondents were asked to what extent they were willing to socialize in places where Jews/Arabs also spend their time, have a Jewish/Arab neighbor in their building or on their street, study in the same class with Jews/Arabs, host an Arab or a Jew in their home, and have a Jew/Arab as a good friend. Arabs were asked about Jews and vice versa. For easier treatment, I created a mean of the five items for each respondent.

**Control variables**

1. School type: Each school was coded according to its type: multicultural, Hebrew mixed, Arab segregated, or Hebrew segregated. In the next step, a dummy variable was created for each.
2. Parents’ education: We asked the students whether each parent had attended university/college, allowing the answers yes, no, and I do not know. A high rate did not know replied that they did not know, which is common, as young children do not always know their parents’ level of education. For each parent we created two dummy variables, one representing higher education and the other representing knowing or not. We first included both variables in the analysis (higher education and do not know) and then included only the higher education dummy variable. The results were similar between the analyses, indicating that most of the children who did not know had parents with no higher education.
3. Grade level: Sixth and seventh graders were coded as 0, and tenth graders were coded as 1.
4. Gender: Self-reported male (1) or female (0)
5. Standard of living: Respondents were asked eight questions regarding their standard of living, namely, whether a cleaning person worked in their home; whether they had traveled abroad in the last two years; and whether their home had each or any of a vacuum cleaner, a dishwasher, a dryer, air conditioning, satellite TV, and a tablet or PC. Each of these responses was assigned a value of 1 when it was in the possession of the household or had occurred (and 0 otherwise). The index was constructed by adding together the value of each item weighted by its relative scarcity: each item was given a weight calculated as 1–p, where p is the proportion of households in the total population who possess the item.
6. Nationality (Arab): The respondents were not to describe themselves as Jewish or Arab so that prior national affiliation that might affect their answers would not be activated. This was done to keep the questionnaire as free from contamination as possible. However, participants were identified by different means according to their school type. In segregated schools, participants were identified with the type of school, either Arab or Jewish. In mixed schools, participants were assessed according to the language they spoke at home: if they marked Arabic as one of the answers , they were coded as Arabs, if Hebrew, Russian, or English were given, the participants were coded as Jews.
7. Level of religiosity: Each respondent was asked to mark his/her level of religiosity on a scale from 1 (secular) to 5 (very religious).

The descriptive statistics for the data used in the analysis for the entire study sample, by school type, are presented in Table 1. It can be seen that segregated schools ere are completely homogenous in this sample. The proportion of Arabs in each school type varies greatly, with multicultural schools that aspire to parity exhibiting a mean of 63.9% per cent Arabs, and the Hebrew schools average 30.1% Arab students. The low number of Jews in multicultural schools reflect specific characteristics of some of the schools and cohorts. In the multicultural high school sampled (tenth graders), only 11.45% of the students were Jews, and in one of the multicultural schools located in an Arab settlement, only 38.3% of the students sampled were Jews. Class sizes were similar, with about 22 students on average. The tenth grade was oversampled in the Arab segregated schools, which affected the gender proportions, as the proportion of girls were higher with age. The Hebrew segregated schools also had higher percentages of girls due to the characteristics of particular cohorts and lack of balance in some schools.

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| Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the sample of students | | | | | |
|  | **Jewish segregated** | **Arab Segregated** | **Hebrew Mixed** | **Multicultural** | **Overall** |
| **Nationality (Arabs, %)** | 0 | 100 | 30.1 | 63.9 | 55.6 |
| **Gender (Boys, %)** | 37.5 | 39.8 | 49.3 | 50 | 44.2 |
| **Educated Parents (%)** | 34.8 | 23.5 | 26.7 | 58.1 | 34.9 |
| **Grade Level (tenth grade, %)** | 20.5 | 67.9 | 21.2 | 24.3 | 37 |
| **Respondents (number)** | 112 | 196 | 146 | 148 | 602 |
| **Distribution (%)** | 24.6 | 24.3 | 32.6 | 18.6 | 100 |

**SUPPLEMENTARY ANALYSIS FOR PARENTS**

1. DATA AND VARIABLES

Data were collected from parents was to understand selection effects. Because these data were not longitudinal and were not collected from the parents of the participants in the student sample, they were gathered to provide information in general terms about the population of parents who choose one school over another. The sample is constructed to be sufficiently large to be representative of each school and nationality.

The subjects were 264 respondents, 145 Jews and 119 Arabs, of whom the majority were women (77.1%). Data collection was carried out from November 2018 to June 2019, in 13 schools: 2 all-Arab schools, 3 all-Jewish schools, 4 mixed multicultural schools, and 4 Hebrew mixed schools. More parents were sampled from the mixed schools because both Jewish and Arab parents were sampled from them. In addition, the sampling yielded greater response in the multicultural schools because I also surveyed parents of children in the new Jaffa multicultural school whom I personally know.

Data were gathered in multiple ways. Parents were approached on a random basis at parents’ meetings at different schools and asked to complete a survey, either in Hebrew or Arabic (as they chose). Then school principals were asked to send an online survey to parents via email and ask them to complete the questionnaire. Last, parents were approached on the strength of personal relationships and were asked to complete the survey online.

**Procedures**

The parent questionnaires were based on the students’ questionnaires, which were originally developed in Hebrew and translated into Arabic, following with double-checking by Arab native speakers. Each parent had the option to complete the Arab or the Hebrew version, but many Arab parents preferred the complete the questionnaire in Hebrew (42% Arab parents in total; 36.7% of the Arab parents with students at multicultural schools did so, as did 88% of the Arab parents with students at Hebrew-mixed schools), as many were more fluent in written Hebrew than in Arabic. Each parent answered autonomously.

**Variables, Measurements, and Descriptive Statistics**

**Independent variables**

Social identification

1. Single ethno-religious identification: As in the children’s questionnaire, respondents were asked to choose one definition only to describe themselves, Arab, Arab Israeli, Israeli, Jewish, Palestinian, Arab Palestinian, or Palestinian in Israel. Since the same questionnaires were given to both Jews and Arabs (we did not want to create distinction among respondents during distribution in a mixed setting), the question allows for a wide range of categories that are considered mutually exclusive in Israel.
2. Sense of belonging: As with the children’s questionnaire, the second measure of identity provided respondents with a list of five identification categories, Arab, Palestinian, Israeli, Muslim, Christian, and Jewish, and asked them to score the extent they felt that they belonged to each on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much).

Social distance

1. Attitudes toward outgroup members: Using the Bogardus Social Distance Scale (Bogardus, 1933), respondents were asked to what extent they were willing to socialize in places where Jews/Arabs also socialize, have a Jewish/Arab neighbor in their building or street, work in the same place as Jews/Arabs, host an Arab or Jew in their home, and have a Jew/Arab as a good friend. Arabs were asked about Jews and vice versa. The mean was calculated for each respondent.

**Control variables**

1. Education: Respondents gave their level of education as one of the following: graduated from primary school, graduated from high school, possession of a matriculation diploma, graduated from non-academic high school, studied undergraduate but did not graduate, received bachelor’s degree, received master’s degree, or received another diploma.
2. Gender: Self-reported mother (1) or father (0).
3. Income: Respondents were asked to indicate whether their total net income was (1) much higher, (2) higher, (3) similar, (4) lower, or (5) much lower than the average net income of Israeli households (15,000 NIS).
4. Religiosity: Respondents were asked to choose their level of religiosity on a scale from 1 to 5.
5. Nationality (Arab):
6. School type: Each school was coded according to its multicultural type: Hebrew mixed, Arab segregated, and Hebrew segregated. Then, a dummy variable was created for each.

Descriptive statistics of the data used in the analysis, sorted by type of school, are presented in Table 2. It can be seen that the parents of students at segregated schools sampled were completely homogenous by nationality. The multicultural schools were oversampled, as noted, and the ratio of Jewish and Arabs parents in that group approached equality. The similar proportions of Arab and Jewish parents in the Hebrew-mixed school sample as not representative of such schools as a whole but was an artifact of the effort to reach a minimum viable sample for this study. The low percentages of men in the sample for all groups were due to the central role that mothers tend to take in their children’s education and in Israeli Arab society. The academic education variable showed a great difference among the school types. In particular, parents who sent their children to multicultural schools were more educated than parents whose children attended Hebrew-mixed schools. However, the high percentage of educated parents in the Jewish-segregated schools was not representative of the Israeli Jewish population; the overall rate of academic education in the population is 32%. The income and religiosity variables showed the same pattern, with the parents of students at Arab-segregated schools being more religious having incomes below the Israeli average. The population of parents for the Hebrew-mixed schools was not very religious (1.87 on average), similar to the level for multicultural schools and the Jewish-segregated schools (these values were not representative of the general population).

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| Table 2. Control variables by school type | | | | | |
|  | **Jewish Segregated** | **Arab Segregated** | **Hebrew Mixed** | **Multicultural** | **Jewish segregated** |
| **Nationality (Arab, %)** | 0 | 100 | 41 | 45.1 |  |
| **Gender (men, %)** | 22 | 6 | 24 | 28 |  |
| **Academic Education (%)** | 86.1 | 18.18 | 15.25 | 72 |  |
| **Income (level)** | 2.28 | 4.06 | 3.51 | 2.72 |  |
| **Religiosity (level)** | 1.47 | 3.69 | 1.87 | 1.75 |  |
| **Respondents (number)** | 36 | 34 | 60 | 133 |  |

The variables broken in Table 3 down by nationality for the parents whose students are in mixed schools show the differences and similarities between the Jews and Arabs who attend these institutions. First, the percentage of Jewish and Arab parents who were academically educated were similar by school type. For multicultural schools, 86.3% of Jewish parents and 76.7% of Arab parents were academically educated, but for the Hebrew mixed schools, the percentages were much lower, 13.89% of the Arabs and 17.39% of the Jewish parents.

In addition to academic education, the income levels of the Jewish and Arab parents are similar by school. For multicultural schools, the Jewish parents rated their incomes at 2.66, slightly higher than average income, and the Arab parents rated themselves at 2.77 average, whereas at the Hebrew-mixed schools, Jewish parents rated their incomes at 3.42, a bit lower than average, and the Arab parents rated their incomes at 3.67. The religiosity level of Arab parents for both school types was relatively low compared to the general Arab population but higher than the level of the Jewish parents.

This data revealed a socioeconomic difference between the parents of students at the Hebrew-mixed schools and the multicultural schools population: the former were less educated and had lower income levels than the latter. In addition, it seems that while Arabs in general tended to report being more religious than the Jews, the Arab parents who enrolled their children at mixed schools were less religious (albeit more so than the Jewish parents at those schools), which may explain their choice to integrate with Jewish majority.

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| Table 3. Proportions of control variables in mixed schools by ethnicity | | | | | |
|  | **Jews Multicultural** | **Arab Multicultural** | **Jews Hebrew Mixed** | **Arabs Hebrew Mixed** | **Total** |
| **Academic Education (%)** | 86.3% | 76.7% | 13.89% | 17.39% |  |
| **Income (level)** | 2.66 | 2.77 | 3.42 | 3.67 |  |
| **Religiosity (level)** | 1.25 | 2.37 | 1.56 | 2.36 |  |
| **Respondents (N)** | 73 | 60 | 36 | 24 |  |

**RESULTS**

**Differences between students attending mixed and homogenous schools**

The analysis begins with an examination of variables related to the type of school attended.

The multinomial logit model shown in Table 4 indicates that, among Arabs, educated families and those with higher standards of living were significantly more likely to enroll their children in multicultural schools than in segregated Arab schools (the reference category for the dependent variable).

Arabs with non-academically educated families and those with a low level of religiosity were more likely to enroll their children in Hebrew mixed schools. It appeared that less-religious Arab families were more open to encounters with Jews and their supposedly more liberal culture. In addition, families of Arab children at Hebrew schools tended to have a higher standard of living than those at segregated schools (but lower than those whose children were at multicultural schools), which may be because they live in mixed communities and were more closely integrated into Israeli lifestyles.

Among Jews, it appeared that students from highly educated families were more likely to attend multicultural schools than segregated schools, while Jewish enrollment in Hebrew mixed schools is associated with a lower standard of living. This confirmed previous findings that the population of the parents who enroll their children in multicultural schools, both Jews and Arabs, are generally from the middle and upper classes (Bekerman & Tatar, 2009).

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| **Table 4. Binary logit regression of the log odds studying in a Hebrew mixed or multicultural school, by nationality** | | | | | | | | |
|  | **Arabs Multicultural** | **SE** | **Jews Multicultural** | **SE** | **Arabs Hebrew Mixed** | **SE** | **Jews Hebrew Mixed** | **SE** |
| **Intercept** | -3.065\* | .600 | -1.316\* | .549 | .587 | .608 | .597 | .430 |
| **Gender (male)** | .011 | .331 | .338 | .387 | .711 | .384 | .310 | .291 |
| **Educated Parents** | 1.296\* | .300 | 1.123\* | .347 | -1.529\* | .539 | -.090 | .302 |
| **Standard of Living** | 1.378\* | .321 | 0.20 | .278 | .389 | .393 | -.1544\* | .268 |
| **Religiosity** | -.053 | .132 | -.547\* | .244 | -1.033\* | .184 | .209 | .175 |
|  | **17.8%** |  | **7.5%** |  | **16%** |  | **16.9%** |  |

1. **Hypothesis testing**

I now turn to test the hypotheses, beginning with those predicting differences between ethnic identification by school type.

Hypothesis 1A stated that Arabs attending mixed schools are more likely than those attending all-Arab schools to identify as Palestinian and/or Arab rather than Israeli, and Hypothesis 1B states that Jews attending mixed schools are more likely to identity in collective terms. Hypothesis 1C states that Arabs who attend multicultural schools are more likely to identify as Palestinian.

Figure 1 displays the proportions of Arabs and Jews who responded to the open-ended questions with each of the five different identification categories. It is seen that both Arab and Jewish students, when answering freely, identified themselves in terms of their personal attributes, tastes, and relationships with friends and families. Only a minority identified in terms of religion or nationality. However, a significant difference (p < 0.05) was found between Jews and Arabs in terms of these latter identifications: 19.9% of the Arab students mentioned national identification and 20.8% religious identification, only 3.4% and 2.2%, respectively, of the Jews did so. One possible explanation for this is that because Jews are the majority in Israel, their national and religious identity is taken for granted, and they do not feel the need to mention it.

Figure 2 exhibits the national and religious identification of Arabs and Jews by school type. As seen, Arab students at multicultural schools mentioned their national identification more often than Arabs at other types of school, and Arabs at segregated schools mentioned religious identity somewhat more often than their peers at other school types. However, the differences among the three groups in the free-form national and religious identifications were statistically nonsignificant.

It was found that while Arabs at Hebrew mixed schools used the term Arab to identify themselves, Arab students at multicultural and segregated school used both Arab and Palestinian. Self-identification as an Arab is considered less radical and more tied to culture, but identification as a Palestinian is perceived to be more nationalistic and radical in Israeli society.

This finding was consistent with the hypothesis because the Arab minority group did tend to distinguish itself, although the terms of this distinction differed by school type.

Very few Jewish students mentioned national categories, but the percentage of students who did so in segregated schools was lower than that in mixed schools, where Jews and Arabs encounter each other daily. This is consistent with Hypothesis 1B.

Table 5 presents a binary logistic regression estimating the effect of school type on the log odds of mentioning national or national and religious identifications in the open questions. The regression is estimated for Arabs. The number of Jews who mentioned either national or religious affiliation was too low to estimate a comparable regression for them. The regression controlled for respondent’s age, gender, religiosity, and parents’ education.

The first column examines the effects of school type on the log odds of national–religious identification (whether the respondent mentioned either national or religious identification), and the second column examines the effect of school type on the log odds of national identification.

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| **Table 5. Binary logit regression of the effect of school type on log odds for mentioning national or national–religious identification among Arab students** | | |
|  | 1. **National–Religious** | 1. **National Only** |
| **Age** | 1.445\* (.316) | 2.495\* (.436) |
| **Male** | -.410 (.268) | -1.065\* (.339) |
| **Educated Parents** | .691\* (.291) | .792\* (.336) |
| **Multicultural** | .383 (.348) | 1.239\* (.414) |
| **Hebrew Mixed** | .780 (.482) | 1.472\* (.606) |
| **Religiosity** |  | .000 (.155) |
| **Constant** | -2.110\* (.574) | -3.433\* (.728) |
| **Pseudo R2** | 14.7% | 24.7% |

Studying in a nonsegregated school (whether multicultural or Hebrew mixed) was associated with higher odds of for mentioning national or religious identification, however this result was only significant for national affiliation. The findings supported social identity theory, which predicts that daily intergroup contact emphasizes the collective identification of the members of Arab groups.

Older age was also associated with identification with collective affiliation (national–religious and national), which was consistent with the literature on self-identification noted above (E. Erikson, 1968; Jean S. Phinney, 1989). However, when younger and older groups were modeled separately, the other coefficients pointed in the same direction.

In addition, the relative odds of mentioning either national–religious or national identification were higher among girls and children whose parents held academic degrees. Girls were more associated with mentioning national affiliation than boys; however, when religious and national components were combined, the effect of gender was small and nonsignificant. Girls therefore can be considered carriers of ethnic–national heritage but not religious identity.

1. **Second measurement: Sense of belonging**

In the second measurement of identification, students rated their sense of belonging to successive groups: Arab, Israeli, Jewish, and Palestinian. As seen in Figure 4, Arab students’ reported highest belonging to the Arab group (4.40) and lowest belonging to the Israeli group (2.55). There were significant differences found between Arab students at multicultural and segregated Arab schools and those at Hebrew mixed schools in their sense of belonging to the three national categories. In the multicultural and Arab schools, Arab students expressed a strong sense of belonging to the Palestinian group (4.15 and 4.30, respectively), but their Arab peers at the Hebrew mixed schools scored this much lower (2.07). By contrast, Arab students at Hebrew mixed schools exhibited a greater sense of belonging to the Israeli category (4.16), much higher than the equivalent number among Arab students at the multicultural and segregated schools (2.41 and 2.24). The degree of belonging to the Arab group, considered a politically neutral category, was similar for the three school types.

The sense of belonging among the Jewish students to the Israeli and Jewish groups (Figure 5) was quite similar and relatively high (4.47 and 4.29), and there were small differences between the school types. The most striking one is that Jewish students at multicultural schools are less likely to exhibit a strong degree of identification with either of the two categories than Jews in the other two school types are. There are several possible explanations for these results: first, it may be that Jewish parents who enroll their children in multicultural schools are more secular and tend to oppose Israel’s nationalist–Jewish regime; second, the agenda of the bilingual schools agenda strengthens Palestinian identification and to some extent de-legitimizes the identification as either Jewish or Israeli.

Table 6 presents a binary logistic regression estimating differences among school types for Arab students’ sense of belonging to the Arab, Palestinian, and Israeli groups, controlling for respondent’s age, gender, religiosity, and parents’ education. The degree to which respondents expressed a sense of belonging was recoded into binary categories representing high and low senses of belonging (1, 2, 3 = 0; 4, 5 = 1).

The results were consistent with the descriptive results. Arab pupils at Hebrew mixed schools had higher odds of having a stronger sense of belonging to the Israeli group and a weaker sense of belonging to the Palestinian group, relative to their peers in the multicultural and Arab segregated schools. Religiosity however, was associated with sense of belonging to the Arab and Palestinian groups.

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| **Table 6. Binary logit regression of odds for sense of belonging to Arab, Palestinian, and Israeli groups among Arab students** | | | |
|  | **Belonging to the Palestinian Group** | **Belonging to the Israeli Group** | **Belonging to the Arab Group** |
| **Age** | -.021 (.308) | -.826 (.299) | -.328 (.352) |
| **Multicultural**  **School** | -.172 (.358) | .295 (.350) | -.232 (.410) |
| **Hebrew Mixed** | -2.189\* (.490) | 1.787\* (.461) | -.464 (.498) |
| **Male** | .162 (.283) | .099 (.279) | -.147 (.311) |
| **Religiosity** | .341\* (.128) | -.169 (.126) | .394\* (.146) |
| **Educated Parents** | .319 (.324) | -.447 (.330) | .129 (.360) |
| **Constant** | -.023 (.531) | -.121 (526) | .739 (.598) |
| **Pseudo R2** | 15.7% | 15.5% | 4.2% |

These results strengthened the finding indicated above regarding SIT. Although studying in a segregated or multicultural school was quite similarly associated with a higher level of identification with the Arab and Palestinian groups, students at multicultural schools were more likely to emphasize their national category when asked freely about their identity, which may have been a result of their daily encounter with Jewish students.

Table 7 presents binary logistic regression coefficients that estimate the odds of having a sense of belonging to Jewish and Israeli groups among Jewish students, as a function of school type, while controlling for the respondent’s school type, age, gender, religiosity, and parents’ academic education. Religiosity and parents’ education were the main determinants for predicting students’ sense of belonging to the Jewish group, and they indicated, as expected, opposite directions: being more religious was associated with a higher sense of belonging to the Jewish group, and higher parents’ education was less associated with a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish group, as academic education goes hand in hand with secular and liberal beliefs. In the Israeli group, none of the effects were statistically significant.

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| **Table 7: Binary logit regression of odds for sense of belonging to Jewish and Israeli groups among Jewish students** | | |
|  | **Belonging to the Jewish Group** | **Belonging to the Israeli Group** |
| **Age** | .011 (.589) | -.600 (.597) |
| **Multicultural**  **School** | .242 (.530) | -.522 (.611) |
| **Hebrew Mixed** | .464 (.496) | .383 (.613) |
| **Boys** | -.584 (.370) | .179 (.425) |
| **Religiosity** | .795 (.294)\* | .203 (.278) |
| **Educated Parents** | -.757 (.375)\* | -.029 (.435) |
| **Constant** | .221 (.562) | 1.337 (.632) |
| **Pseudo R2** | 10.6% | 2.8% |

1. **Third measurement: Choosing one identification**

Figure 6 shows that the most common identification of Arab students in general (the total is presented in the right column) was Arab-Palestinian (33%). However, it is also shown how distribution according to type of school correlated with differences in identification. The most common identification among students at multicultural and Arab schools was Arab-Palestinian (33% and 37.2%, respectively), and the most common identification among the students at Hebrew schools was the hyphenated Arab-Israeli category (61.4%). In other words, Arab students at Hebrew schools tended to perceive themselves as both Israeli and Arab and to choose a less politically radical identification in the Israeli context than the Arab students at multicultural and Arab schools.

The category Palestinian in Israel, which combines both national affiliations, was chosen by the highest percentage by students at segregated schools (26.5%), and it was chosen much less often by students at Hebrew mixed and multicultural schools (2.3%, 7.7%).

Next, I created dummy variables to indicate whether the respondents incorporated Israeli or Palestinian components in their identification.Incorporating an Israeli component would reflect a recognition of belonging to Israel, whether essentially or formally (e.g., by citizenship). A Palestinian component, then, would suggest affiliation with the Palestinian people. Figure 7 shows the results in total and by school type:

While 81.8% of the Arab students at Hebrew-mixed schools incorporated Israeli components into their self-identification, only 44.4% of those at segregated schools did so, and, surprisingly enough, even fewer of those at multicultural schools: only 30.8% incorporated an Israeli component into their self-identification.

Smooha’s (2017) annual indices for 2015 indicate that a clear majority (81.5%) of Arab citizens incorporate an Israeli component into their identity, with only 17.6% who deny their Israeliness; further, 58% of Arabs incorporate a Palestinian component into their identity, while 42.5% do not. Smooha finds a correlation between choosing an exclusive Palestinian identity and having no Jewish friends and being harmed by Jews. The results in our sample suggest that not choosing an Israeli identification and choosing a Palestinian identification may not be related to the amount of contact with Jews, as many multicultural school students who study with Jews daily choose a Palestinian identity nonetheless. Both groups of students who study in mixed settings identified in ways that differed from the pattern suggested by Smooha. Evidently, a different assessment is necessary, perhaps one related to students’ political and multicultural perceptions, where Palestinian identity, as that of the oppressed minority, should be maintained and strengthen to an even greater degree due to cross-ethnicity interactions. These students, in spite of their regular close contact with Jews, eschewed Israeli identification, as the boundary between the Palestinian and Israeli identifications is rigid, and the categories are mutually exclusive.

In Figure 8, Jewish students’ single identification by school type is presented. The distribution shows that, while majority of students at multicultural schools chose the Israeli identification, students at Hebrew-mixed and segregated schools chose the Jewish identification. Smooha’s (ibid) indices indicate that those who prefer Israeli to Jewish identity are more secular and politically left wing; this may explain the differences among types of school.

In sum, the three measurements of identification (free form, sense of belonging, and one identification) show similar patterns. Arab students at multicultural schools tended to identity as Palestinians, and Arabs at Hebrew mixed schools tended to identify as Israelis. Jews at multicultural schools identified less as either Israeli or Jewish than their peers in Hebrew mixed or segregated schools.

Nevertheless, both Jews and Arabs at mixed schools, tended to emphasize their national identification more than their peers in segregated schools. However, the Arab students emphasized different collective affiliations at different schools, namely, Arab at Hebrew mixed schools and Palestinian at multicultural schools. This finding confirmed the prediction of Social Identity Theory that identity should be more salient at sites of encounter.

Students’ identification with various categories can be accounted for in two ways to understand differences across types of schools. The first is a selection effect: certain types of families choose certain types of schools. The second is that schools socialize their students to develop identifications of one type or another. To decide between these, I measured parents’ attitudes and identifications to establish whether there is any correlation between parents’ and students’ data. It is important to mention that the data we are using are not optimal because they are not longitudinal, and the parents surveyed are not related to the student sample.

**PARENTS DATA**

**First measurement: Single ethno-religious identification among parents**

Figure 9 shows the percentages of parents’ single identification, distributed by type of school. The most common identification among Arab parents who send their children to study in Hebrew-mixed schools was the hyphenated Arab-Israeli category (73.9%), and for multicultural schools, we can identify more diversity in parental identification.

Among the Jewish parents, Figure 10 shows that for multicultural schools, parents chose the Israeli category as their main identity, considered the more secular option, and in the Hebrew-mixed schools, the division between identities is much more equal, indicating a stronger importance for Jewish identity among them.

**Second measurement: Sense of belonging**

Descriptive results (by nationality) indicated that Arab parents reported a stronger sense of belonging to the Arab group (82.4%) and a much weaker one to the Israeli group (31.6%) (Figure 10).

Nevertheless, the comparison of the results for different school types showed significant differences between the parents of students at multicultural and segregated Arab schools and at mixed Hebrew schools in their sense of belonging to the three national categories. For multicultural and Arab segregated schools, the Arab parents expressed a strong sense of belonging to the Palestinian group (4.24 and 4.36) and to the Arab group (4.61 and 4.82).Arab parents who sent their children to study at Hebrew school score expressed lower belonging to bot the Palestinian and Arab groups (3.0, 3.95). The opposite was true, however, for belonging to the Israeli group: the average score for Arab parents of students at Hebrew-mixed schools was 4.09, those sending their children to study at multicultural and segregated schools scored this much lower (3.09, 3.19).

The sense of belonging to the Arab group, however, although it was quite similar for students at all school types, differed starkly among parents, and those sending their children to study at Hebrew mixed schools scored this lower than others. This could indicate a desire to distance themselves from Arab culture.

The sense of belonging to Jewish and Israeli groups among Jewish parents was lowest among the parents of students at multicultural schools, as they were less likely to exhibit a strong degree of identification with either of the two categories than others.

This result indicated that the selection effect is very strong: Arab parents who sent their children to multicultural schools tended to incorporate Palestinian components into their identity, while those who sent their children to study at Hebrew mixed schools tended to incorporate Israeli components. Jewish parents who sent their children to study at multicultural schools felt less belonging to the Israeli or Jewish group.

To sum, the students’ identification patterns were likely transmitted from their parents, who largely chose school type in a manner that would be consistent with their own identification. Most Arab parents, due to geographic segregation in Israel, have few scholastic options apart from sending their children to all-Arab schools. However, the other two school types allow parents to socialize their children’s identity in a manner consistent with their attitudes.

1. **Attitudes towards outgroup members**

I now test Hypotheses 2A–2C. Hypothesis 2A states that Arabs have more desire for interaction with Jews than vice versa. Hypothesis 2B states that both Arab and Jewish students at mixed schools are more prone to interact with outgroup members than students at homogenous schools. Hypothesis 2C states that students who attend multicultural schools, both Jews and Arabs, are more likely to interact with outgroup members than students at homogenous schools and Hebrew mixed schools.

Figure 13 shows the means of the attitudes expressed by Jews and Arabs toward contact with each other, giving an average score out of 5, sorted by school type and students’ nationality.

It was found that in general, Arabs expressed more willingness to interact with Jews than the opposite (3.77, 3.47), which resonates with the literature on minority–majority relations and the asymmetric desire to have contact. However, sorting these data by school types produced meaningful differences.

The willingness to interact with outgroup members of both Arab and Jewish students was lowest at segregated schools, but Arabs’ willingness was higher than that of Jews (3.45 and 3.09, respectively). The desire of Jewish students at Hebrew mixed schools for interaction with Arabs was much lower than that of their Arab peers (3.41 and 4.76). However, Jewish students at Hebrew mixed schools were nevertheless more willing to have interactions than Jews in segregated schools, suggests that having contact might decrease social distance. Another possibility is that those who attend Hebrew mixed schools were already more willing to interact with Arabs, meaning that school differences could reflect a selection effect.

The Arab minority group in the Hebrew mixed schools was much keener to have contact with outgroup members than their Jewish peers and more than the Arab students at segregated schools, either due to their minority position at school and their small numbers or because of selection effects.

In multicultural schools, however, the pattern appeared reversed. Jewish students were not only more open to interactions with Arabs than their Jewish peers in segregated and Hebrew-mixed schools (4.41), but surprisingly, they were also more willing to have contact with outgroup members than their Arab peers (4.030). The trend in minority–majority relations, known from publications worldwide, was overturned in multicultural schools, where the hegemonic majority group showed greater willingness to decrease social distance than the minority group. In addition, Arab students attending multicultural schools differed significantly in their attitudes from their Arab peers in both Hebrew-mixed and segregated schools. Their desire for contact was higher than those at segregated schools, but it was still lower than those that at Hebrew-mixed schools.

Among the population of Arab parents (Figure 14), no significant differences were found by type of school, and the desire to interact was similar. The difference among students could have resulted from their schools’ effects on their mutual attitudes.

I now test Hypotheses 3A–3B. Hypothesis 3A states that Arab students who identify as Israelis are more likely to desire interaction with outgroup members than those who identify as Palestinians because the former they see themselves as part of a broader, inclusive category.

Hypothesis 3B states that Jewish students who emphasize their Jewish identity have less desire for social contact with Arabs than those who emphasize their Israeli identity because the former choose primarily exclusive category. To examine the effects on attitudes among outgroup members, I used a linear regression (Table 5). Segregated schools were the reference category.

The first **Jews for Arabs** equation presents the linear regression coefficients predicting Jewish students having positive attitudes toward contact with Arabs. The first model shows, unsurprisingly, that Jews at mixed schools, especially multicultural ones, were more likely to express positive attitudes toward contact with Arabs, to a much greater extent than their Jewish peers who study at segregated schools. Age seems to be an important factor: tenth-grade students were significantly more likely to express positive attitudes. Gender, parents’ education, and religiosity did not seem to have significant effect on positive attitudes. It may be that religiosity had no effect because both the segregated and mixed schools belong to the public school system and are not religious schools, the lack of effect. In the second model, no significant effect was found of the Jewish/Israeli component (one identification) on attitudes.

The first model in the **Arab for Jews** equation presents linear regression coefficients predicting positive attitudes to contact with Jews. The results showed that studying in Hebrew mixed schools contributed the most to positive attitudes toward contact with Jews, much more than studying at multicultural or segregated schools. Age appeared important because studying in tenth grade significantly contributed to positive attitudes. The level of religiosity significantly reduced positive attitudes. Arab boys with greater religiosity tended to have less positive attitudes toward contact with Jews. However, having educated parents contributed to positive attitudes (neither variable was significant).

Models 2 and 3 present identification variables as explanatory variables for positive attitudes towards contact with Jews. Model 2 controls for Palestinian and Israeli components (whether the respondent chose a single ethno-national identity that included an Israeli or Palestinian component), and model 3 incorporates the sense of belonging to the Israeli or Palestinian group (the extent to which the respondents expressed a sense of belonging to either group).

The results of model 2 indicate that when controlling for Israeli/Palestinian identification components, studying at a mixed school, especially Hebrew-mixed, contributed to positive attitudes towards contact with Jews among Arabs. Educated parents and being in the tenth grade contributed to positive attitudes. The level of religiosity, on the other hand, reduced the odds of positive attitudes. A Palestinian component in identification reduced the odds of having a positive attitude toward Jews, but the result was not statistically significant. However, the inclusion of the Israeli component significantly increased the odds for positive attitudes toward contact with Jews. Boys tended to have worse attitudes toward contact, but this result was not statistically significant.

Model 3 adds another identification measurement (sense of belonging to the Israeli/Palestinian group) and shows that the effects of mixed schools were positive (positive attitudes toward interaction with Jews) and statistically significant (although to a lower degree) in both types of schools. The effects of age, gender, parents’ education, and religiosity were similar to the first model and significant. The additional measurements of identification showed the same trend: a higher sense of belonging to the Israeli group increased positive attitudes toward contact with Jews. The measurement of the sense of belonging to the Israeli group had a stronger effect on attitudes than the Israeli component. The higher sense of belonging to the Palestinian group decreased positive attitudes toward contact (but the coefficients were very small and nonsignificant).

In the comparison of the Jewish and Arab groups, the effect of age shows the opposite pattern: Jewish children at older ages had less desire for contact with outgroup members, but Arab children at older ages had greater desire to have contact with Jews. This might reflect the status quo relations between the groups. The perspective of the Jewish majority reflects the ethnic status quo, while the preferences of the members of the Arab minority reflect how they would like the status quo to be.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 5: Linear regression predicting desire to have contact with outgroup members as a function of type of school** | | | | | |
|  | **Jews for Arabs, Model 1** | **Jews for Arabs, Model 2** | **Arabs for Jews, Model 1** | **Arabs for Jews, Model 2** | **Arabs for Jews, Model 3** |
| **Multicultural School** | 1.161\* (.208) | 1.190\* (.208) | .482\* (0.163) | .492\* (.162) | .484\* (.154) |
| **Hebrew Mixed** | .343\* (.163) | .377\* (.164) | 1.128\* (0.218) | .949\* (.222) | .811\* (.231) |
| **Age** | -.534\* (.194) | -.503\* (.194) | .308\* (0.140) | .370\* (.141) | .407\* (.134) |
| **Boys** | -.042 (.150) | -.039 (.151) | -.153 (0.126) | -.157 (.127) | -.150 (.121) |
| **Educated Parents** | .145 (.158) | .137 (.157) | .256 (0.144) | .280 (.142) | .385\* (.136) |
| **Religiosity** | -.058 (.093) | -.024 (.098) | -.233\* (0.059) | -.196\* (.058) | -.191\* (.056) |
| **Jewish Component** |  | -.913 (.537) |  |  |  |
| **Israeli Component** |  | -.716 (.545) |  | .388\* (.133) | .314\* (.133) |
| **Palestinian Component** |  |  |  | -.182 (.145) | -.087 (.143) |
| **Belonging to the Palestinian Group** |  |  |  |  | .040 (.054) |
| **Belonging to the Israeli Group** |  |  |  |  | .202\* (.045) |
| **Constant** | 3.263 (0.211) | 3.993 (.556) | 4.023 (0.251) | 3.815 \* (.285) | 3.095\* (.354) |
| **R2** | **17.1%** | **18.5%** | **21.2%** | **24.2%** | **31.4%** |

Hypothesis 3A is confirmed, as Arabs who identified with the Israeli category expressed more positive attitudes toward contact with Jews. However, Hypothesis 3B is rejected because identification with the Jewish or Israeli category had no significant impact on attitudes toward contact with Arabs.

**Discussion**

This study investigated the relationship of social identification to social distance between Arabs and Jews and school type, as well as whether social identification is related to social distance.

Our first hypothesis states that Arab children at mixed schools are more likely to identify as Palestinian and/or Arab rather than Israeli, that Jews at mixed schools are also more likely to identify in collective terms, and that Arabs at multicultural schools are more likely to identify as Palestinian, following their school’s multicultural approach.

The results were partially in line with these hypotheses. In general, due to their position as a minority group, Arab students had a more salient collective identification, especially in multicultural schools, much more so than Jewish students. Nevertheless, Arabs who studied at Hebrew mixed schools tended to identify as Arabs and Israelis, two categories that are perceived as less oppositional in the current Israeli political climate. This marks their ethnic uniqueness on the one hand while also denoting an inclusive civil component, intimating their desire for integration. Arab respondents at multicultural or segregated schools, by contrast, tended to identify as Palestinians and to eschew the Israeli civil component. Palestinian identification is considered a negation of Israeli identity and a radical political act. In practice, the two definitions contradict one other, and it appeared that Arab students chose sides, depending on their school type. In Hebrew mixed schools, Palestinian identification is less legitimized because the school ideology is biased toward Hebrew–Jewish–Zionist logic. By contrast, in multicultural schools, Palestinian identity is considered to be a desired identification, so Israeli and Jewish identification are less dominant.

Jewish students’ collective identification was not found to be salient for any school type because they are the hegemonic majority in Israel, meaning that their identification is taken for granted. In addition, data showed significant differences in their identification patterns between Jewish and Arab students at different types of schools. However, Jewish students at mixed schools differed extensively from each other. Those at multicultural schools expressed less attachment to collective identification than their peers at segregated and Hebrew mixed schools. These schools tend to discourage collective Jewish identification because Jewish and Israeli identities are considered less legitimate and to be oppressive.

To determine whether school or selection effects contributed to the noted trends, parents’ data were also reviewed; these data indicated that the identification trends existing among students at different school types resembled those of the parents, implying the existence of a selection mechanism that operates differently for different school types. Nevertheless, the fact that both Jews and Arabs at mixed schools tended to emphasize their national identification when asked freely to describe themselves, to a greater degree than their peers at segregated schools, reinforces social identity theory, which holds that encounter between groups contributes to a more marked sense of social identity.

The second hypothesis states that the surveyed Arabs in general, as members of a minority group, had a greater desire for interaction with majority group members than the opposite, and students who attend mixed schools in general, both Jews and Arabs, were more prone to interact with outgroup members, especially those who attend multicultural schools.

At first glance, the results for social distance follow ed our hypothesis: Arabs were found to be more willing to interact with members of the majority group than the opposite, as expected, and students at segregated schools were less keen on interaction with outgroup members than their peers at mixed schools. Contact theory was thus seemingly reaffirmed. However, a closer examination of the trends within mixed schools produced quite surprising results. The gap between the Arab and Jewish desire to interact in students at Hebrew mixed schools was wide, but the trend in itself was consistent with the pattern reported in the literature. However, the reverse pattern at the multicultural schools was interesting, wherein Jews expressed a greater desire to have contact with minority members than the opposite, especially in relation to the parents’ data, which showed that each group held very positive views of the other, without significant differences between Jews and Arabs. This trend indicated that while identification patterns were related to the parents’ selection effects, Arab parents’ a priori attitudes towards interaction with Jews were similar, although the attitudes among the children were different. It is difficult to determine whether school type affected identification patterns, it appeared that school context was meaningful for ideas of social distance.

This finding is interesting, in relation to the friendship patterns found by Shwed, Kalish, and Shavit (2018), who identified more homophily among students at multicultural school than among their peers at Hebrew mixed schools. On the one hand, it appeared here that less homophily does not necessarily go hand in hand with positive attitudes, at least from the majority’s point of view, since cross-national friendships were more common in Hebrew mixed schools, while students at Jewish segregated schools were far more reluctant to make contact with outgroup members than their Jewish peers at multicultural schools. Behavior and attitudes may not be closely tied to each other, which contradicts Pettigrew’s fifth condition of contact theory: the need for friendships. Nevertheless, the more moderate attitudes of Arabs t multicultural schools toward Jews contributes to the understanding of the counter-intuitive findings of Shwed et al.

The third hypothesis is that Arabs who identify as Israelis are more likely to interact with outgroup members, and Jewish students emphasize their Jewish identity have less desire for social contact with Arabs than those who emphasize their Israeli identity.

The data indicated that identification with the Jewish category indeed predicted lower desire for contact with outgroup members, but the relationship was not significant. The type of school that students attended seemed to be more significant, and this was probably a mediating variable.

The first part of the hypothesis regarding Arabs seemed to be confirmed: social distance decreased among respondents who included an Israeli component in their identification or felt a strong sense of belonging to the Israeli group. On the other hand, the inclusion of the Palestinian component or a sense of belonging to Palestinian group showed a negative but nonsignificant effect. It appeared that, supporting existing theories, identification with majority group increased the desire to have contact with its members. The mission of multicultural schools is therefore complex: they intend to develop and preserve the distinct identities of their students, while also reducing social distance among identities. It was found that these schools do succeed to a certain extent because their students were much more prone to support outgroup contact than their counterparts at segregated schools, although the effect was not symmetrical. Jewish students at multicultural schools declared a desire for more contact with their Arab peers than the opposite, and because social distance is related to Israeli identification, we can assume that the preservation of the Palestinian identity in school might cancel or damage the desire to interact with Jews.

The results of this study invite more thorough research on the connection between demographic factors (education, income, and religiosity) and the varying strategies adopted by minority and majority group parents. On the surface it appeared here that a multicultural approach attracted Jewish middle-class families, who may gain symbolic assets from interacting with minority members, and Arab families who are willing to pay the price of an accentuated and declared Palestinian identity for their children. Arabs from the lower classes, however, perceive integration with Israeli culture and identity to be a source of power and strength and therefore may encourage their children to integrate in those aspects as well.

The most important limitation of this study is the weakness of cross-sectional studies in general that the inherent selection bias makes causal conclusions difficult, highlighting the need for longitudinal studies to clarify the nature of developmental effects of schools’ ideology on students in terms of social identification and distance.