

Model Threat? Understanding White Racial Attitudes toward Asians

Yangzi Zhao & Julian Wamble, Department of Political Science, Stony Brook University

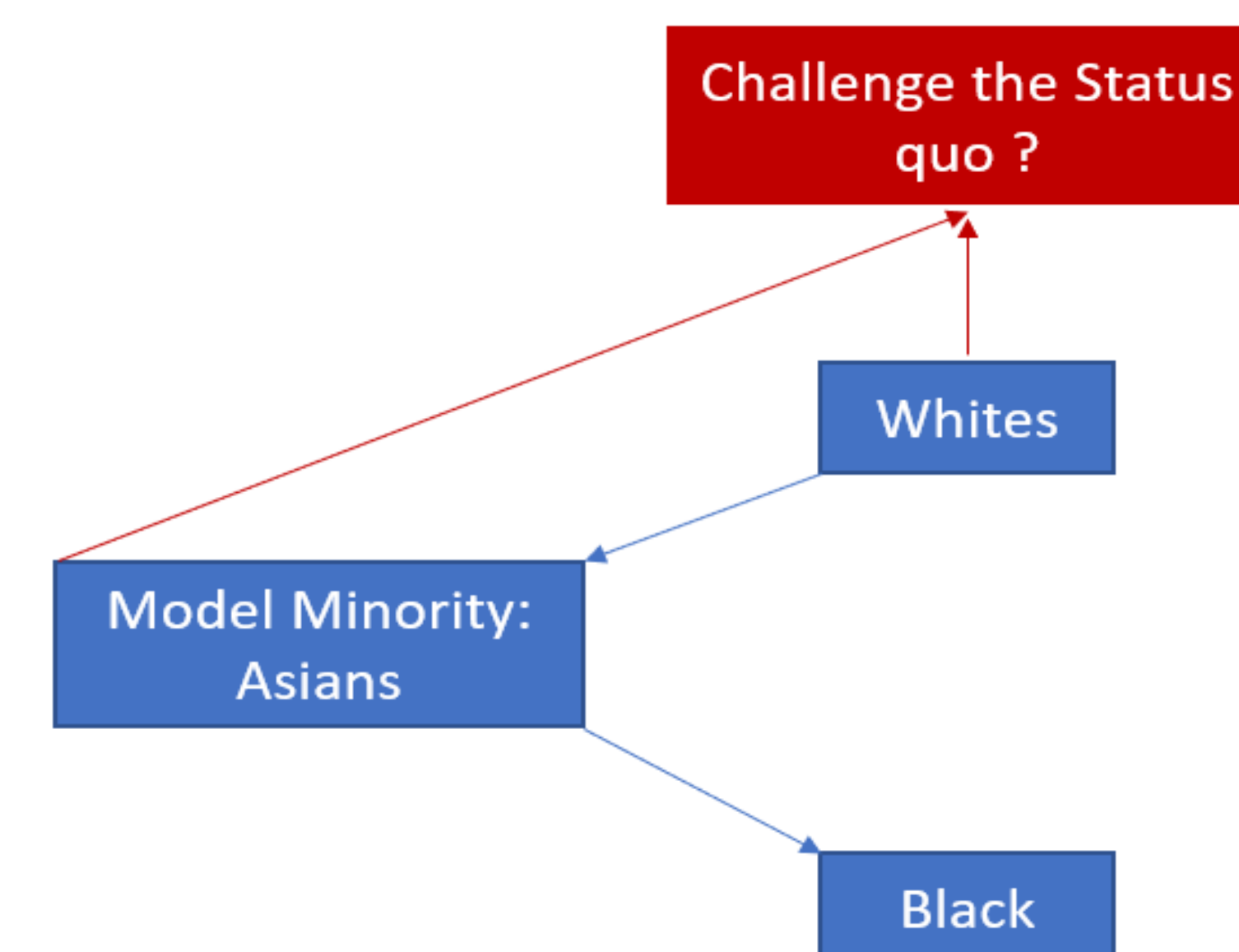
Objectives

- ❖ Understanding what underlies whites' attitudes on race consciousness policies (i.e. Affirmative Action) by reintroducing Asians into the picture.
- ❖ Empirically testing Kim's Racial Triangulation model (1999) by putting Whites in direct competition with competent Asians.

Backgrounds

- ❖ Why Oppose Affirmative Action: Negative Stereotype and Meritocracy Value
- ❖ The Model Minority myth of Asians since 60s Civil Rights Movements
- ❖ Harvard Case: Whites advocate Asians' interests?

Interrupting the Triangulation



Study Design

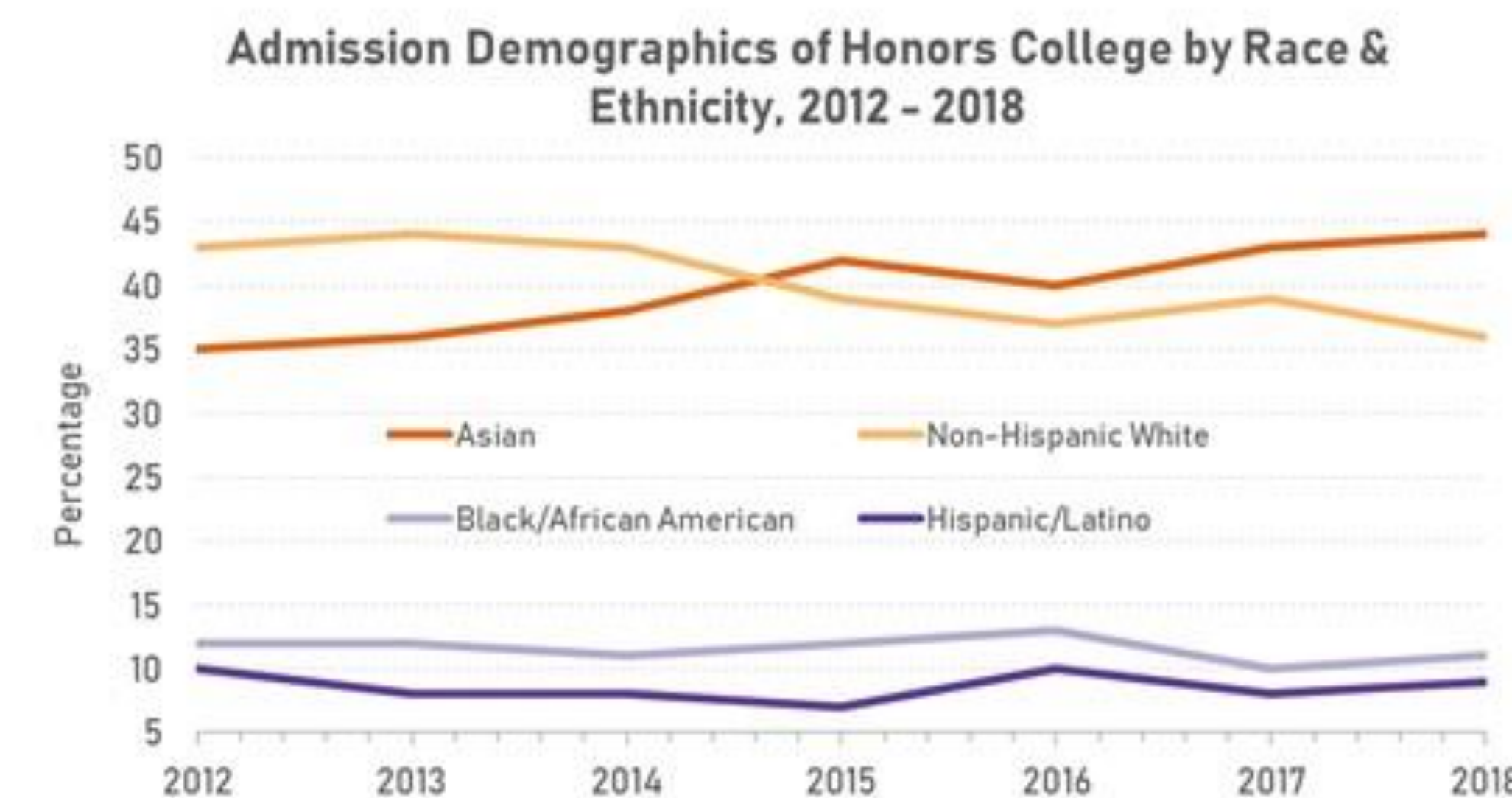
- ❖ Survey Experiment: One-by-Three plus control condition
- ❖ Cover story: Asian students overrepresented in the Honor College
- ❖ Treatment Conditions: **students/white students/black students** demand school make Affirmative Action alike initiative to promote education equality and take factors beyond standardized test score

Sample Treatment Vignette

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

SECTIONS FEATURED: Where Thousands of College Grads Start Their Careers The Books That Wouldn't Die How to Set the Stage for Major Change

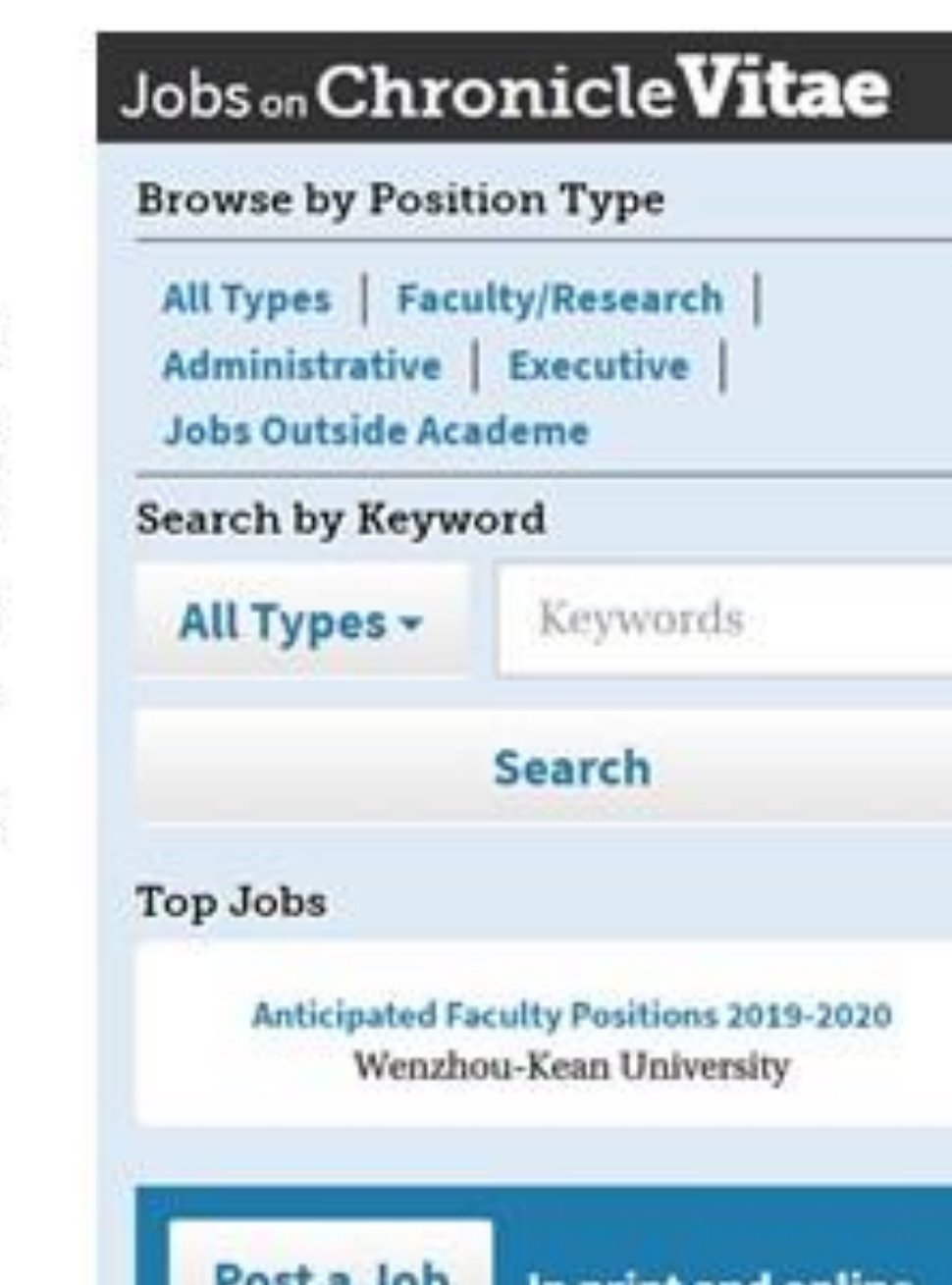
Students



Overrepresentation of Asians in Honors College Prompts Concerns among White Students, who Demand New Initiatives to Promote Equality.

MARCH 07, 2019

White students from a local college are demanding new initiatives to promote equality in the Honors College, which has a legacy of placing students in competitive post-graduate positions, after the release of its admission demographics. Students claim Asians are overrepresented in the Honors College because of their consistently high SAT scores and GPAs. Students are pushing the Honors College to initiate a new program to ensure that their backgrounds, and not only their standardized test scores, will be factored into the decision making process.



Expected Results

- ❖ Whites oppose Affirmative Action alike initiatives more relative to the race neutral condition when black students make the demand
- ❖ Whites less likely to oppose/more likely to support Affirmative Action alike initiatives relative to the race neutral condition

Implication

- ❖ Adding group status-based threat as an alternative explanation beyond racial stereotype and meritocracy explanations
- ❖ Uncover the political root of the Model Minority myth
- ❖ Better understand the controversy about Affirmative Action

Contact Information

Yangzi Zhao

Email: yangzi.zhao@stonybrook.edu

Website: yangzizhao.com

Julian Wamble

Email: julian.wamble@stonybrook.edu

Website: julianwamble.com