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Rationale



Success in integrating the children of immigrants, the second generation, is of enormous consequence for the United States and other economically advanced societies that have received millions of international migrants since the 1950s. At the beginning of the 21st century, a large second generation is entering adulthood, and studies of its characteristics have commenced throughout North America and western Europe. Yet in the US, these studies have remained mostly specific to the American context, despite the gains to be realized from comparative research. The reason is that few US scholars are equipped to conduct the kind of internationally comparative research necessary to explore the relationship between institutional differences and outcomes.

Of the institutional domains where the trajectories of the second generation can be observed, none at present holds greater significance for future integration than the educational system. The children of immigrants are still for the most part young, rendering conclusions from adult life choices, such as occupations and marriage partners, tenuous. The second generation now constitutes more than half of the student body in many urban schools and post-secondary educational institutions in Europe and North America, presenting new challenges to these systems as they seek to prepare young people for employment and citizenship.

We know from international surveys, such as PISA, that cross-national differences in education systems affect student attainment, and there is preliminary evidence that they also shape immigrants' economic and civic integration. Yet research on the ways by which national institutional arrangements and practices, as well as specific policies, prepare the children of immigrants for postsecondary education, employment and citizenship is still in an early stage.

Goals of the Projects

Research-- Programmatic, cross-national comparative research conducted by a group including ten senior U.S. and European scholars, together with fifteen postdoctoral and pre-doctoral students, will constitute a body of new knowledge that will improve our understanding of the role of educational institutions and policy in the integration of children of immigrants.

Training and professional development--The student researchers will receive intense professional development at a crucial point in their career, improving their ability to conduct high-quality cross-national studies in the future and to train students in their turn. The Social Science Research Council is our partner in managing the fellowship portion of the project, and an award from the Nuffield Foundation to SSRC has enabled us to add a European post-doc to each project.

Field capacity building—through the extended collaboration of twenty-five scholars, the program will build an international network that will have the capacity to endure beyond the life of the program, offering the potential for future collaborative research.





The originally intended comparison was limited to Mexican/Latino youth in California and Moroccan youth in Catalonia. Due to the rapid and recent increase in immigration to Spain from Ecuador and other countries of South America, Latino youth in Catalonia are now also included. The methods are exclusively qualitative. One component consists of comparative ethnographic fieldwork in four high schools (two schools in each country) and in the communities surrounding these schools; another of focus group interviews with students in 8-10 high schools. This work is being conducted primarily by Rios, Pàmies and Ponferrada, under the close supervision of Gibson and Carrasco.

Promising Schooling Practices for the Children of Immigrants

Senior Researchers: Carola Suárez-Orozco (New York University) and Mikael Alexandersson (Göteborg University)

Research Fellows: Lory Dance (University of Maryland), Margary Martin (New York University) and Johannes Lunneblad (Göteborg University)

While numerous scholars have identified ways in which educational settings fail to meet the needs of immigrant origin youth, little work has been done to date to identify promising practices that serve them well. This team seeks to shed light on the solutions that teachers, students and administrators have developed to meet the challenging educational demands of preparing immigrant origin youth for the global era. Rather than focus on immigrant groups, this team focuses on schools. It employs a case-study methodological strategy and has selected two schools in the New York metropolitan area (International School and School of the Future) and two schools in Sweden (Angered in Göteborg and Tensta in Stockholm) that have been noted for serving their immigrant-origin students unusually well.

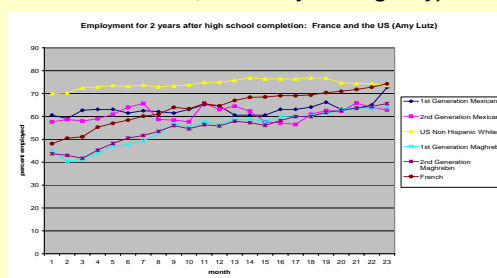
A variety of methods is being used to gather data. Ethnographic fieldwork is a primary data collection strategy in neighborhood, school, and class settings. Semi-structured interviews of students and teachers are being conducted as a means to assess school ethos, teacher/student, teacher/teacher, and student/student relationships. A school-wide structured survey to gather student perceptions of school climate as well as dimensions of student engagement has been administered in two of the sites. The performance of schools will also be linked to broad quantitative indicators, e.g., student attendance rates, retention rates, teacher recruitment and retention records, taken from school records and city education statistics. The team is conducting structured focus group interviews with a variety of stakeholders (e.g., students, teachers, faculty, parents) to contextualize emerging findings.

The Transition from School to the Labor Market in France and the U.S.

Senior Researchers: Richard Alba (Sociology, University at Albany, SUNY) and Roxane Silberman (Maurice Halbwachs Center, Centre national de la recherche scientifique, Paris)

Research Fellows: Dalia Abdel-Hady (Sociology, Southern Methodist University); Amy Lutz (Sociology and Education, Syracuse University); and Yaël Brinbaum (Sociology and Interdisciplinary Research Institute of Education, University of Burgundy)

This team is engaged in a comparison of the second generation from the largest contemporary immigrant population in each of the two countries, Mexicans in the US and Maghrebins (North Africans) in France. The focal point of the comparison is on the transition from school to the labor market, since this transition is a key determinant of adult social mobility. The methods are both quantitative and qualitative. Lutz and Brinbaum are working with large-scale, longitudinal data sets from the two countries (Génération 98 in France, National Educational Longitudinal Study in the US). Abdel-Hady is conducting the in-depth interviews, in the Paris and Dallas areas, that are essential to gain deeper insight into the quantitative differences the research is uncovering.



Future Plans

Most of the teams are now in, or about to enter, a writing phase, having collected a substantial amount of empirical materials during the last year. The group will meet next spring to draw up plans for a collective volume, to which each team will contribute an overall report. Apart from this collective volume, teams and their individual members are free to make their own writing plans. Two papers are already in the publication pipeline:

Richard Alba and Roxane Silberman, "The children of immigrants encounter host-society educational systems: Mexicans in the U.S. and North Africans in France," forthcoming in *Teachers College Record*.

Maurice Crul and Jennifer Holdaway, "Children of immigrants in schools in New York and Amsterdam: The factors shaping attainment," forthcoming in *Teachers College Record*.

The plans for the fourth and final year of the project include a workshop led by the current fellows that will pass on what they have learned to a new cohort of junior scholars interested in cross-national research on the children of immigrants.