

## GLOBALIZATION, IMMIGRATION, AND EDUCATION: RECENT US TRENDS

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Over the last decade globalization has intensified worldwide economic, social, and cultural transformations. Globalization is structured by three powerful, interrelated formations: 1) the post-nationalization of production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services – fueled by growing levels of international trade, foreign direct investment, and capital market flows; 2) the emergence of new information, communication, and media technologies that place a premium on knowledge intensive work, and 3) unprecedented levels of world-wide migration generating significant demographic and cultural changes in most regions of the world.

Globalization's puzzle is that while many applaud it as the royal road for development (see, for example, Micklethwait & Wooldrige, 2000; Friedman, 2000, Rubin 2002) it is nevertheless generating strong currents of discontent. It is now obvious that in large regions of the world, globalization has been a deeply disorienting and threatening process of change (Stiglitz, 2002; Soros, 2002; Bauman, 1998). Globalization has generated the most hostilities where it has placed local cultural identities, including local meaning systems, local religious identities, and local systems of livelihood, under siege. Argentina is a case in point. After a decade of cutting-edge free market policies, the economy of the country that once was the darling of such embodiments of globalization as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, imploded. At the beginning of the 20th century Argentina was one of the 10 wealthiest countries in the world yet it ended it in default and with a poverty rate of about over 40 percent of the population. By early 2003 an estimated 50,000 *cartoneros* were living off the cartons they gathered every night in trashcans in one of the world's most elegant cities, Buenos Aires. The Argentine case is but one of an unmistakable Latin American pattern of discontent with the promise of globalization, and a general trend against the failed market liberalization policies of the 1990s known as the 'Washington

Consensus'. The recent election to the presidency in Bolivia of the vocal anti-globalization indigenous leader Evo Morales is yet another instance of the discontent with globalization in the region. The same can be said of recent political developments in Venezuela, Uruguay, and Chile where along with Brazil and Argentina leftist regimes, of various political and ideological leanings, have consolidated power. In all of these cases there is a tendency to envision a very different relationship between economy and society than that prescribed by the Washington Consensus.

But it is a mistake to reduce globalization to economic process and market reforms. Globalization is first and foremost about movement. Its emerging regime – mobile capital, mobile production and distribution, mobile populations, and mobile cultures – is generating deep paradoxes. Some regions of the world such as East Asia seemed to have prospered immensely under globalization's regime (see Table 1). Yet in the Argentinas of the world the forces of globalization have conspired to intensify patterns of inequality and human suffering (see Dussel, 2000; Mittelman, 2000; see also Nader, 1993). The last decade of the 20th century witnessed vast economic growth in the rich nations, especially the United States, while roughly twenty-five percent of the population of the developing world continues to live in desperate poverty – with less than a dollar a day (see Table 1). China's meteoric integration into the global economy has both significantly reduced poverty *and* increased inequality (World Bank 2001: 1). On the other hand, throughout much of Latin America, globalization has simply increased income inequality (World Bank 2001: 1).

TABLE 1. Population living below US\$1 per day in developing countries 1990 and 1998.

	Number of people below US\$1 a day (millions)		Poverty Rate (%)	
	1990	1998 (estimate)	1990	1998 (estimate)
East Asia	452.4	278.3	27.6	15.3
Excluding China	92.0	65.1	18.5	11.3
South Asia	495.1	522.0	44.0	40.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	242.3	290.9	47.7	46.3
Latin America	73.8	78.2	16.8	15.6
Middle East/N. Africa	5.7	5.5	2.4	1.9
Europe & Cent. Asia	7.1	24.0	1.6	5.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1276.4</b>	<b>1198.9</b>	<b>29.0</b>	<b>24.0</b>

Source: World Bank. Global Economic Prospects and the Developing Countries 2000. (2000).

There is a strong, somewhat amorphous and eclectic, anti-globalization ethos – ubiquitously named, articulated, and performed in varied contexts from Seattle, to Genoa, to Buenos Aires globalization is disorienting and threatening to large numbers of people the world over.

Yet, just as many hate what they see in globalization, others are seduced by its promise. Here is another paradox of globalization: as it continues to penetrate the local cultures of poor developing countries, even if it destabilizes local economies and livelihoods, it generates new desires and consumption fantasies that simply cannot be met by local economies. *These twin factors, globalization's uneven effects on the world economy and the emergence of a global imaginary of consumption are behind the largest wave of immigration in human history.* Globalization's paradoxical power is in that at once it manufactures despair and hope. But for millions of people, globalization's hope is to be realized elsewhere, as migrants.<sup>1</sup>

In this Chapter, we examine recent conceptual and empirical work in the area of large-scale immigration within the paradigm of globalization – a paradigm that shall continue to attract the attention of social scientists alike in the decades to come (see Inda and Rosaldo 2002; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2003). First, we explore the parameters of the phenomena called globalization. Then we turn to the topic of large-scale immigration, with a focus on the recent American experience. Lastly, we examine some of the recent work on the education of immigrant children.

<sup>1</sup> But globalization's discontent also visits the 'other half', the wealthy advanced post-industrial democracies that have arguably benefited the most under its reign. In the advanced post-industrial democracies, the unprecedented, growing, and seemingly uncontrollable migratory flows generated by globalization over the last decade are, alas, experienced as threatening and disorienting to local cultural identities and sensibilities. This is the case in most of Western Europe, the United States, and Australia where anti-immigrant sentiment and xenophobia have emerged as potentially explosive political and social concerns. The general move to the political right in Europe over the last few years can be linked to the fears and anxieties generated by globalization, immigration, and crime. Item: somewhat monomaniacal anti-immigrant parties in Western Europe have gained momentum over the last decade – *the Vlams Bloc* in Belgium, *the Freedom Party* in Austria, *the People's Party* in Denmark, and of course in May 2002, *the Front National* in France. Item: Voters in California overwhelmingly approved Proposition 187 a new law that would deny illegal immigrants a host of publicly funded services – including schooling children. Item: In mid-2001 Australia denies a ship in distress carrying hundred of asylum seekers entry to its ports. To paraphrase Tolstoy, globalization is making all the families of the world unhappy the same way.

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## HUMAN MIGRATION

Large-scale immigration is a world phenomenon that is transforming Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas. Sweden, a country of about 9 million people now has roughly one million immigrants. Approximately 30 percent of Frankfurt's population is immigrant. Amsterdam by the year 2015 will be 50 percent immigrant. Leicester, England is about to become the first city in Europe where 'Whites' will no longer be the majority. Japan, long held as the exception to the North American and European rule that immigrant workers are needed to maintain economic vitality, is now facing a future where immigrants will play a significant role (Tsuda, 1996).

Globalization is the general backdrop for any understanding of the large scale of immigration. At the turn of the Millennium there are an estimated 185 million transnational migrants. Globalization has increased immigration in a variety of ways. First, transnational capital flows tend to stimulate migration because where capital flows immigrants tend to follow.<sup>2</sup> Second, the new information and communication technologies at the heart of globalization tend to stimulate migration because they encourage new cultural expectations, tastes, consumption practices, and life-style choices. Would-be immigrants imagine better opportunities elsewhere and mobilize to achieve them. Third, deeply globalized economies are increasingly structured around a voracious appetite for foreign workers. Fourth, the affordability of mass transportation has put the migration option within the reach of millions who heretofore could not do so – in the year 2000 approximately 1.5 billion airline tickets were sold. Fifth, globalization has stimulated new migration because it has produced uneven results.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See, *inter alia*, Sassen, Saskia, *The Mobility of Labor and Capital* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

<sup>3</sup> In Zhou and Gatewood's (2000) excellent summary,

Globalization perpetuates emigration from developing countries in two significant ways. First, ... capital investments into developing countries transform the economic and occupational structures in these countries by disproportionately targeting production for export and taking advantage of raw material and cheap labor. Such twisted development, characterized by the robust growth of low skilled jobs in export manufacturing, draws a large number of rural, and particularly female workers, into the urban labor markets. ... Second, economic development following the American model in many developing countries stimulates consumerism and consumption and raises expectations regarding the standard of living. The widening gap between consumption expectations and the available standards of living within the structural constraints of the devel-

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in the study of human migration (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2001, vol. 1). Indeed, during the last decades of the 20th Century, most major nation-states have seen the topic of immigration emerge as a significant issue with important public opinion, policy, and research implications. Migration, for the Latin *migrare* meaning to 'change residence', has been a defining feature in the making of humanity from our very emergence as a species in the African savanna. Social scientists have traditionally defined migration as the more or less permanent movement of people across space (Petersen, 1968). In the language of the social sciences people 'emigrate' out of one location and become 'immigrants' in a new setting.

The definition of migration as the more or less permanent movement of people across space suggests a number of important concerns. First is the matter of the relative permanence of immigrants in a new setting. For many, perhaps most, immigration represents a permanent move, for others it is a temporary state before eventually returning 'home'. A central feature of the great transatlantic immigration that took place between Europe and North and South America from the 1890's until the 1910's was the high proportion of people who returned to Europe. By some accounts, well over a third of all the Europeans who came to the Americas went back 'home' (Moya, 1998).

'Sojourners' represent yet another pattern of labor flow where temporality defines immigration. They are the large numbers of immigrants who move for well-defined periods of time, often following a seasonal cycle to eventually return home. Large numbers of migrant workers have followed this pattern – from African workers in the Sub-Saharan region to Mexican agricultural workers in California (Cornelius, 1992).

A third type is the constant shuttling back-and-forth that seems to define the lives of many new immigrants world-wide. In recent years, some scholars of immigration have argued that new transnational and global forces structure the journeys of immigrants in more complex ways that was previously seen. Anthropologists have been at the forefront of this conceptual and empirical work (see for example Basch, *et al.* 1994). This research

oping countries, combined with easy access to information and migration networks, in turn create tremendous pressure for emigration... Consequently, ... capital investments in developing countries have resulted in the paradox of rapid economic growth and high emigration from these countries to the United States (p. 10).

suggests that many immigrants remain substantially engaged (economically, politically and culturally) both in their newly adopted lands *and* in their communities of origin – moving ‘back and forth’ in ways seldom seen in previous eras of large-scale immigration (Suárez-Orozco, 1998).

The idea of immigration as movement across space also requires some elaboration. Immigration viewed anthropologically involves a change in residency and a change in community. Over the years, scholars have concentrated on two major types of large-scale migration: ‘internal migration’ (within the confines of a nation-state) and ‘international migration’ (across international borders). While many scholars would argue that the large-scale movement of people *within* a nation state is a phenomenon of a different order than the large-scale movement of people *across* international borders, the differences between these two broad types of migration are often quite blurred.

Internal migrants often share many characteristics with international migrants: many move from rural villages to urban centers, many experience linguistic and cultural discontinuities, and many face the same bureaucratic and legal restrictions and discriminations international migrants do. While much attention has been focused on international migration, most immigrants today are internal migrants staying within the confines of their nation-states – China, Egypt, and Brazil are countries that have experienced high levels of internal migration. Indeed, *contra* the impression that the majority of international migrants are heading to the developed world (i.e., Europe and North America), most immigration today is an intra-continental (i.e., within Asia, within Africa, etc.) phenomenon. China alone has an estimated 100 million internal migrants who, in many ways, experience similar circumstances as transnational migrants face when they move across countries (Eckholm 2001: 10). Some of the most important anthropological contributions to the study of immigration have focused on internal migration – see for example, Brandes (1975); Colson (1971); Morgan and Colson (1987); Scudder and Colson 1982; and Kemper (1977).

#### WHY DO PEOPLE MIGRATE?

Scholars of immigration have generally theorized patterns of migration flows in terms of economic forces, social processes, and cultural practices (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2001, vol. 1). Social scientists who privilege the economic causes of immigration have examined

how such variables as unemployment, underemployment, lack of access to credit, and especially, wage differentials are implicated in labor migration (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2001 vol. 2; Dussel, 1998). Anthropologist Jorge Durand working with an interdisciplinary team of colleagues has argued that international migration emerges as a risk management and diversifying strategy deployed by families and communities hoping to place their eggs in various territorial baskets (Massey, Durand and Malone, 2002). Changing cultural models about social standards and economic expectations have also been implicated in why people migrate (Moya, 1998). In many cases people migrate to actualize new consumption and life-style standards.

In nearly all advanced post-industrial economies, bifurcated labor markets have worked as a powerful gravitational field attracting large numbers of immigrants to work in the low wage, low status, and low-skilled secondary sector. Anthropologist T. Tsuda has noted that in Japan immigrant workers are sometimes called '3 k workers' for the Japanese words for 'dirty, demanding, and dangerous' jobs (Tsuda, 1996). When certain sectors of the opportunity structure are culturally coded as 'immigrant jobs', they become stigmatized and native workers tend to shun them almost regardless of wage dynamics. What would it take, in terms of wages, to make backbreaking work like strawberry picking in California, not an immigrant occupation?

Anthropological scholars of immigration have long maintained that cultural and social practices can generate – and sustain – substantial migratory flows. In many regions of the world, such as Ireland and Mexico, migration has been an adulthood-defining *rite de passage* (see Durand 1998). In some cases, people migrate because others – relatives, friends, and friends of friends – migrated before them. Indeed, the best predictor of who will migrate is who migrated before. Transnational family re-unification continues to be a critical vector in immigration today. In the year 1996, 915,900 immigrants were formally admitted in the US. Among them, 594,604 were family-sponsored immigrants (Suárez-Orozco, 1999). Since the early 1970's family reunification is one of the few formal ways to migrate into Europe (Suárez-Orozco, 1994).

A number of studies have examined how transnational migratory social chains, once established, can generate a powerful momentum of their own. Gender is deeply implicated in the making of these chains. Each immigrant lowers the costs associated with migration for those coming after her. Established immigrants lower the costs of subsequent immigration

because they ease the transition of new arrivals by sharing crucial economic, linguistic and cultural knowledge – about job openings, good wages, fair bosses, and dignified working conditions (see Waldinger 1997).

Other recent research highly relevant to anthropological concerns engages the theoretical debate over the role of immigrant workers in the global, post-industrial economy. In the context of the increasingly advanced knowledge-intensive economies of today are low-skilled immigrant workers simply anachronistic? Are immigrant workers a left over from an earlier era of production?<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Few topics have generated as much controversy than the economic consequences of large-scale labor migration. Do immigrants help or hurt the economies of their new countries? Do immigrants carry their own weight or do they represent a burden to citizens and other established residents? Do complex post-industrial economies need low-skilled immigrant workers or have they become redundant? Much of the recent scholarship on immigration and the economy has tended to focus on such concerns as the fiscal implications of immigration, the issue of immigrant competition with native workers, and the related issue of immigration and wages. Another important theme has been the economic integration and progress of immigrants over time (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2001 vol. 2; Borgas, 1999; Espenshade, 1997; National Research Council, 1997).

The research findings on the economic consequences of immigration are somewhat contradictory – some economists claiming that immigrants are a burden to tax payers and an overall negative influence especially on advanced post-industrial economies (Huddle, 1993) and others suggesting that they continue to be an important asset (Simon, 1989).

A recent study on the economic, demographic, and fiscal effects of immigration by the US National Research Council (NRC) concludes that in the American setting ‘immigration produces net economic gains for domestic residents’ (NRC, 1997: 3). Not only do immigrants ‘increase the supply of labor and help produce new goods and services’ but their presence also ‘allows domestic workers to be used more productively, specializing in producing goods at which they are relatively more efficient. Specialization in consumption also yields a gain’ (NRC, 1997: 3-4). The NRC estimates that the immigration-related ‘domestic gain may run on the order of \$1 billion to \$10 billion a year’ (NRC, 1997: 5). Given the size of the US economy (about 7 trillion dollars) it is clear that immigrants will neither ‘make it’ nor ‘break it’.

In fiscal terms the NRC data suggest, ‘Immigrants receive more in services than they pay in taxes’. (NRC, 1997: 7). The panel estimates that ‘if the net fiscal impact of all US immigrant-headed households were averaged across all native households the burden would be ... on the order of \$166 to \$226 per native household’.

The NRC study and other studies conclude that while immigration is a plus in overall economic terms, low-skilled new immigrants have contributed to a modest drop in the minimum wage of low skilled workers. They found that a five-percent drop in wages since 1980 among high school dropouts could be attributed to the new immigrants.

The comparative research of Social Anthropologist Gaku Tsuda and Political Scientists Wayne Cornelius on the use of immigrant labor in two paradigmatic post-industrial economic settings, San Diego County, California, USA and Hamamatzu, Japan, suggests a remarkable convergence in patterns of growing reliance on immigrant labor – in spite of rather marked differences in national context (see, for example, Cornelius, 1998). These data reveal a pattern of enduring, indeed voracious, post-industrial demand for immigrant labor. Cornelius concludes ‘As immigrants become a preferred labor force, employers do more to retain them, even in a recessionary economy’ (Cornelius, 1998: 128).

These data suggest that immigrant workers become desirable to a wide variety of employers for three basic reasons. First, immigrants are willing to do low-pay work that is boring, dirty, or dangerous with little or no prospects for upward mobility and that even in firms involving highly advanced technologies such work is critical. Second, employers perceive

There is, however, no evidence to suggest that new immigration has ‘hurt’ the economic condition of native minority workers such as African-Americans (NRC, 1997: 5).

Other studies examine the issue of the socioeconomic progress made by immigrant workers. The research of Dowell Myers tracks, over time and across generations, various dimensions of the economic adaptations of immigrant-origin men in a region of the world heavily impacted by immigration: the state of California. His work explores three sequential outcomes: educational attainment, occupational mobility, and earnings. In some fundamental ways, the recent Mexican immigrant experience in Southern California seems to replicate earlier patterns of immigrant adaptation. Yet in other ways, Myers findings suggest new – and disturbing – patterns.

Myers’ research reveals that upon arrival Mexican immigrant men tend to be poorly educated, work in low-skilled occupations, and earn low incomes. Myers finds that over time immigrant men make modest improvements in their economic condition. However, he also suggests that important changes occur across younger cohorts within the first generation. These changes, according to Myers, are strongly related to the much higher educational attainment of immigrant children. In other words, Myers finds an old story with a new set of characters: poorly educated immigrant men make modest gains over time but their children are able to attain more education in the new country.

Still, Myers data reveal a disturbing new pattern: among the children of immigrants higher education ‘does not appear to fully convert into higher occupational status or earnings; and higher occupational status translates even less well into higher earnings. These under-returns are most pronounced for the more recent arrivals from Mexico and for young cohorts, including native-born, both of whom newly entered the labor market in the 1970s and 1980s’. Myers concludes ‘The social implications of these falling returns to education and occupation are regrettable, because the declining reward system may discourage other’ immigrant children from investing in schooling as the route for status mobility (Myers, 1998: 188).

them quite favorably – as reliable, flexible, punctual, and willing to work overtime. Indeed, employers often prefer them to native-born workers. And third, immigrant transnational labor recruiting networks are a powerful method for ‘delivering eager new recruits to the employer’s doorstep with little or no effort on his part’ (*Ibid.*).

We have a reasonable understanding of how ‘love’ (family reunification) and ‘work’ drive immigration. On the other hand, the role of war and its relations to large-scale migratory flows has been generally neglected. Yet throughout history war and international migration have been closely linked. The threat of labor shortages during World War II led to the creation of temporary labor recruiting efforts to attract much needed immigrant workers to the United States (Calavita, 1992). The resultant ‘bracero’ program became a powerful force in building – alas, via family reunification – a Mexican migration momentum that eventually turned into the largest and most powerful immigration flow into the United States this century (Suárez-Orozco, 1998).

In the aftermath of WWII, many of the major Northwestern European democracies, such as Germany and Belgium developed ‘guest worker programs’ to recruit foreign workers – initially in southern Europe, and subsequently in the Maghreb region of North Africa and in Turkey (Suárez-Orozco, 1994). These programs came to an end in the early 1970s. Yet family-reunification and chain migration continued to bring immigrants from North Africa into Europe for years.

The Cold War both deterred immigration – because of strict Iron Curtain controls – and generated large population displacements. The robust Cuban diaspora in the United States can be traced more or less directly to the Cold War (Molyneux, 1999). The low-intensity warfare in Central America during the 1980’s generated the largest wave of emigration in the region’s history. As a result, there are now well over a million Central Americans immigrants in the United States (Suárez-Orozco, 1989). In the 1990s, the ongoing conflicts in Zimbabwe and Angola have generated large-scale migratory flows especially into South Africa. The recent war in Afghanistan has resulted in major population displacements – perhaps up to two million Afghans have been displaced from their homes.

Natural disasters have also displaced populations and started new migratory flows. The 1999 hurricanes, which devastated much of Central America, initiated significant flows of emigrants into North America.

## IMMIGRANTS ADAPT TO CHANGE

Once settled in a new country, how do immigrants fare? The United States as the *ûir* country of immigration provides an interesting case study. It is the only advanced post-industrial democracy where immigration is at once history and destiny. The intensification of globalization in the last decade – arguably responsible for the greatest peacetime expansion of the US economy ever – coincided with the largest number of immigrants in history.<sup>5</sup> By the year 2000 the ‘foreign-stock’ (foreign born plus the US born second generation) population of the United States was nearly 55 million people – over 34 million of them are foreign born.<sup>6</sup> Two dominant features characterize this most recent wave of immigration: its intensity (the immigrant population grew by 60 percent in the 1990s) and the somewhat radical shift in the sources of new immigration (up to 1950, nearly 90 percent of all immigrants were Europeans or Canadians) today over 50 percent of all immigrants are from Latin America and over 25 percent are from Asia – the regions of the world where globalization has generated especially uneven results (see Chart 1, page 289).

Immigrants to the United States today are a heterogeneous population – defying easy generalizations (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001). They include highly educated, highly skilled individuals drawn by the explosive growth in the knowledge-intensive sectors of the economy. They are more likely to have advanced degrees than the native born population (see Chart 2, page 289).

These immigrants come to the United States to thrive. Immigrants now, especially those originating in Asia, are among the best-educated and skilled folk in the United States. They are over-represented in the category of people with doctorates. Fully half of all entering physics graduate students in 1998 were foreign-born.<sup>7</sup> Thirty-two percent of all scientists and engineers working in California’s Silicon Valley are immigrants (Saxenian, 1999). Roughly a third of all Nobel Prize winners in the United States have

<sup>5</sup> See for example *Profile of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 1997* (Washington, DC: US Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> See Portes, A. and R. Rumbaut, *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> See ‘Wanted: American Physicists’, *New York Times*, July 23, 1999, p. A27. Of course not all of these foreign-born physics graduate students are immigrants – some will indeed return to their countries of birth while others will surely go on to have productive scientific careers in the US.

been immigrants. In 1999, all (100%!) US winners of the Nobel Prize were immigrants. Perhaps with the exception of the highly educated immigrants and refugees escaping Nazi Europe, immigrants in the past tended to be more uniformly poorly educated and relatively unskilled than they are today.<sup>8</sup> Never in the history of US immigration have so many immigrants done so well so fast. Indeed, these immigrants are bypassing the traditional transgenerational modes of status mobility establishing themselves in the well remunerated sectors of the US economy within a generation.

At the same time, the new immigration contains large numbers of poorly schooled, semi-skilled or unskilled workers – many of them in the US without proper documentation (i.e., as illegal immigrants). In the year 2000, over 22 percent of all immigrants in the US had less than a ninth grade education (see Chart 3, page 290).

These are workers, many of them from Latin America, drawn by the service sector of the US economy where there seems to be an insatiable appetite for foreign folk. They typically end up in poorly paid jobs often lacking insurance and basic safeties. Unlike the low-skilled factory jobs of yesterday, the kinds of jobs typically available to low skilled immigrants today do not hold much realistic promise for upward mobility.<sup>9</sup> These immigrants tend to settle in areas of deep poverty and racial segregation.<sup>10</sup> Concentrated poverty is associated with the ‘disappearance of meaningful work opportunities’.<sup>11</sup> When poverty is combined with racial segregation, the outcomes can be dim (Massey & Denton, 1993: 3).

#### IMMIGRATION AND EDUCATION

Immigrants entering the educational system are extraordinarily diverse and their experiences resist facile generalizations. While the ‘old’ immigrants who arrived to the US at the turn of the 20th century largely originated from a dozen or so countries, the ‘new’ immigrants arrive from hun-

<sup>8</sup> See for example, George Borjas, ‘Assimilation in Cohort Quality Revisited: What Happened to Immigrant Earnings in the 1980s?’, *Journal of Labor Economics* 13, n. 2, pp. 211-245.

<sup>9</sup> See for example Alejandro Portes, *The New Second Generation*, especially pp. 1-15.

<sup>10</sup> See Gary Orfield, ‘Commentary’, in Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco and Mariela Paez, eds. *Latinos: Remaking America* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2002).

<sup>11</sup> See William Wilson, *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997).

dreds of points of origin. New immigrants add new threads of cultural, linguistic, and racial difference to the American tapestry of diversity. Some are the children of highly educated professional parents, while others have parents who are illiterate, low skilled and struggling in the lowest paid sectors of the service economy. Some have received schooling in exemplary educational systems while others arrive from educational systems that are in shambles. Some families are escaping political, religious, or ethnic persecution; others are motivated by the promise of better jobs and the hope for better educational opportunities. Some are documented migrants while others are in a documentation limbo. Some come with the intention to settle permanently while others engage in transnational strategies living both 'here and there'. Some arrive in well-established receiving communities with dense informational and tutoring networks that ease the entry of immigrant youth into the new educational system while others move from one migrant setting to another forcing students to often change schools. The educational outcomes will thus vary substantially depending upon the specific constellation of resources and the ethos of reception.

How immigrant youth fare academically has long term implications for their future wellbeing. While at the turn of the 20th century there were occupational avenues that allowed social mobility for migrants who had little education, the new economy is largely unforgiving to those who do not achieve post-secondary education. Immigrants who are poorly unschooled or unskilled will encounter dim odds in today's economy. Many will be facing a life below the poverty line in the lower rungs on the service sector of the economy. Today more than ever, schooling processes and outcomes are a powerful barometer of current as well as future psycho-social functioning.

Immigrants defy easy generalizations in terms of educational outcomes. Some outperform their native born peers. Children of immigrants are often the valedictorians of their schools and they tend to be over-represented as the recipients of prestigious scholarly awards. Other immigrant youth demonstrate persistent school-related problems and high drop-out rates. These immigrants tend to be 'overlooked and underserved' particularly when they enter US schools at the secondary level (Urban Institute, 2001). Findings from a number of recent studies suggest that while some are successfully navigating the American educational system, large numbers struggle academically, leaving schools without acquiring the tools that will enable them to function in the highly competitive knowledge intensive economy.

In addition to a pattern of variability of performance among diverse immigrant groups, some studies have identified a counter-intuitive trend in

data from a variety of disciplines. These studies have shown that newly arrived students from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia display highly adaptive attitudes and behaviors to succeed in school. Yet, the longer some immigrant youth are in the United States, the more negative they become in terms of school attitudes and adaptations. Rumbaut and Portes surveyed more than 5,000 high school students comparing grade point averages and aspirations of first and second generation students. They found that length of residence in the United States was associated with declining academic achievement and aspirations. Research by Steinberg, Brown, and Dornbusch based on a national study of over 20,000 adolescents uncovered a similar trend of adverse academic and health trajectories across generations.

Most of the studies suggesting academic and health-related declines over time have relied on cross-sectional (cross-generational) data. Data from the Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation (LISA) study we co-directed at Harvard (1997-2003) assessed the academic performance and engagement of recently arrived immigrant youth and then examined changes over time. Quite strikingly, the Grade Point Average (GPA) of students coming from Mexico, Central America, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti all declined slightly but in a statistically significant manner (and while a similar trend emerged for the Chinese-origin students, the decline did not reach significance). The GPA of immigrant boys declined significantly more than that of girls for all groups. For both girls and boys, their grades in the first two years are considerably higher than their grades in the last three years. The second year both girls and boy's GPA peaked and from the third year on, both girls and boys experience steady decrease in their GPA. And girls consistently have statistically significant higher GPA than boys throughout the five-year period (see Chart 4, page 290).

These data and other data suggest that the new immigrant experience may complicate the predictions of unilineal 'assimilation' models that argue that over time and across generations, immigrants tend to do substantially better eventually reaching parity with the mainstream population. Exposure to certain aspects of American socio-economic structure and culture today appear to be negatively associated with academic, physical, and psychological well-being of immigrant youngsters.

In this chapter we will explore the factors implicated in the variability and decline in schooling performance and social adaptation of immigrant children. We do so by examining interdisciplinary contributions to a topic of growing importance.

## WHY CONTEXTS MATTER

### *Educational Background*

Immigrant youth arrive into American neighborhoods and schools with varied educational skills. On one end of the spectrum, we find youth from upper-class urban backgrounds. These youth are typically highly literate, and have well-developed study skills. Their more educated parents are well-equipped to guide their children in how to study, access data and information, structure essays, and can provide necessary resources including additional books, a home computer, and tutors. In sharp contrast are those youngsters whose parents have little or no formal educational experience. Equally disadvantaged are the children who arrive from countries with compromised educational infrastructures who have missed critical years of classroom experience and often cannot read and write in their native language. Such varied experiences and backgrounds will have profound implications for their transition to the US setting.

### *Poverty*

Although some immigrant youth come from privileged backgrounds, large numbers of immigrant youth today must face the challenges associated with poverty. Immigrant children are more than four times as likely as native-born children to live in crowded housing conditions and three times as likely to be uninsured. Poverty has long been recognized as a significant risk factor for educational access. Not only does it limit opportunities but it frequently coexists with a variety of other factors that augment risks – such as single-parenthood, residence in violent neighborhoods saturated with gang activity and drug trade, as well as schools that are segregated, overcrowded, and understaffed. Children raised in circumstances of poverty are also more vulnerable to an array of psychological distresses including difficulties concentrating and sleeping, anxiety, and depression as well as a heightened propensity for delinquency and violence all of which have implications for educational outcomes.

### *Segregated Neighborhoods and Schools*

Where immigrant families settle will strongly shape the immigrant journey and the experiences and adaptations of children. Latino immigrants in particular tend to settle in deeply segregated and impoverished

urban settings – indeed Latino-origin youth are now the most segregated students in American schools. In such neighborhoods with few opportunities in the formal economy, informal and underground activities tend to flourish. Immigrants of color who settle in predominantly minority neighborhoods will have virtually no direct, systematic, and intimate contact with middle-class White Americans which in turn affects a host of experiences including cultural and linguistic isolation from the mainstream.

Segregated and poor neighborhoods are more likely to have dysfunctional schools characterized by ever-present fear of violence, distrust, low expectation, and institutional anomie. These schools typically have limited and outdated resources and offer an inferior education. Buildings are poorly maintained and as a rule, classrooms are over-crowded. Textbooks and curriculum are outdated; computers are few and obsolete. Many of the teachers may not have credentials in the subjects they teach. Clearly defined tracks sentence immigrant students to non-college destinations. Lacking English skills, many immigrant students are enrolled in the least demanding and competitive classes that eventually exclude them from courses needed for college. Such settings undermine students' ability to sustain motivation and academic engagement.

### *Undocumented Status*

LISA data suggest that undocumented students often arrive in the United States after multiple family separations and traumatic crossings. Once settled, they may continue to experience fear and anxiety about being apprehended, being again separated from their parents, and being deported. Such psychological and emotional duress can take their toll on the academic experiences of undocumented youth. Undocumented students with dreams of getting graduating from high school and going on to college will find that their legal status stands in the way of their access to post-secondary education.

### *Seasonal Migrants*

Data suggest that approximately 600,000 children travel with their migrant parents in the US each year. Youth in seasonal migrant families face particular challenges. They experience multiple moves, frequent interruptions in schooling, as well as harsh working and living conditions. Migrant children are the least likely to be enrolled in school. The lack of continuity in schooling (because of interruptions during the school year, the difficulty of transferring school records, health problems, and lack of English language skills) contributes to their low attendance and to the high

dropout rate among seasonal migrant children. The dropout rate after 6th grade among these children is twice the national average and typically they only reach the 8th grade.

### *Late-Entry into American Schools*

Immigrant youth who arrive during adolescence tend to be at a particular disadvantage in their schooling. Although many immigrants arrive during their secondary school years, most school based programs targeting immigrant youth are designed for primary school students. Many immigrants who arrive in adolescence must overcome several obstacles. Frequently, they are not awarded credits for previous course work completed in their countries of origin. They will face high-stakes testing not designed with second language learners in mind. Older immigrant youth may have had long gaps in their previous schooling and enter schools far behind their age levels. Not surprisingly the dropout rates among older immigrant youth is disconcertingly high.

### *English Language Acquisition*

Most immigrant youth are second language learners. English language difficulties present particular challenges for optimal performance on high stakes tests. Performance on tests such as the TAAS in Texas, the Regents exam in New York, or the MCAS in Massachusetts has implications for college access. SAT's are also a challenge that serves to limit access to the more competitive colleges. Second language acquisition issues can serve to mask actual skills and knowledge particularly around vocabulary as well as subtle 'trick questions' using double negatives. Even when immigrant students are able to enter colleges while they are still refining their language skills, they may miss subtleties in lectures and discussions. They may read more slowly than native speakers and may have difficulty expressing more complex thoughts on written assignments. This is likely to bring down their grades in turn impacting access to graduate or professional schools.

### *Access to Higher Education*

Many immigrants who complete high school graduate without the necessary credentials to be accepted into college. They are less likely than their native-born counterparts to have taken advanced science and mathematics courses. Among those who perform well academically, immigrants of Latino

origin are least likely to have taken the SAT or to receive high scores on the test; they are also least likely to apply to college. Even when immigrant origin students have the necessary academic credentials to enter college, many encounter strong socio-economic and structural barriers that jeopardize their college attendance. They tend to be awarded less financial aid, are more likely to attend community college than four-year college, to study part time rather than full time, and to work rather than to take out student loans. These factors limit their ability to earn a bachelor's degree, and many of them leave college before completing their degree. Although college enrollment rates for high school graduates in the past decades have risen for both white and black students there has been no consistent growth for Latino students (two-thirds of whom are of immigrant origin). They are also less represented in graduate school than all other racial/ethnic group and are less likely to receive financial aid to support their graduate studies.

#### ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

Many immigrant youth face a myriad of structural obstacles that all too often truncate their academic trajectories. There is no doubt that such obstacles play a critical role in academic outcomes. Focusing exclusively on such structural issues, however, overlooks the critical role of agency in the schooling experience.

In order to perform optimally on the educational journey, the student must be engaged in learning. When a student is engaged, she is both intellectually and behaviorally involved in her schooling. She ponders the materials presented, participates in discussions, completes assignments with attention and effort, and applies newfound knowledge to different contexts. Conversely, when academically disengaged, the student is cognitively bored, learns sub-optimally, and tends to receive lower grades than he is capable. In its most extreme form, academic disengagement leads to a pattern of multiple failures. In such cases, the student has stopped engaging in his schooling – he is habitually truant, rarely completes assignments, and shows little or no cognitive arousal by the materials presented.

We claim that academic engagement has three discrete dimensions – cognitive, behavioral, and relational. Cognitive engagement refers to the student's intellectual or cognitive involvement with schoolwork. This dimension includes both the elements of intellectual curiosity about new ideas and domains of learning as well as the pleasure that is derived from the process of mastering new materials. Behavioral engagement refers to the degree to

which students actually engage in the behaviors necessary to do well in school – attending classes, participating in class, and completing assignments. Relational engagement is the degree to which students report meaningful and supportive relationships in school with adults as well as peers. These relationships can serve both emotional as well as tangible functions.

Cognitive and behavioral engagements are viewed as the manifestations of engagement, while relational engagement is viewed as mediator of these engagements. Relational supports can serve to mediate the effects of family and contextual risks on individual attributes.

LISA data suggest that patterns of academic engagement have implications for academic outcomes among immigrant youth – with relational engagement playing an important role in the academic trajectories of immigrant students. Academic engagement is a particularly important dimension of schooling as it would appear to be malleable and hence a promising level for intervention.

#### SOCIAL DISPARAGEMENT, IDENTITY, & ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

Immigrant youth who are subject to negative expectations will suffer in their academic performance. Cross-cultural data on a variety of socially disparaged immigrant minorities in a number of contexts suggest that social disparagement adversely affects academic engagement. The evidence suggests that the social context and ethos of reception plays an important role in immigrant adaptation. Ogbu and his colleagues have done seminal work in the comparative study of immigration, minority status, and schooling in plural societies. Inspired by George De Vos' comparative studies of social stratification and minority status, Ogbu argued that long term, cross generational patterns of structural inequality and social disparagement tend to generate cultural models and social practices that seem to further remove some minorities from investing in schooling as the primary strategy for status mobility.

In cases where racial and ethnic inequalities are highly structured, such as for Algerians in France, Koreans in Japan, or Mexicans in California, social disparagement often permeates the experience of many minority youth. Members of these groups are not only effectively locked out of the opportunity structure (through segregated and inferior schools, and work opportunities in the least desirable sectors of the economy) but also commonly become the objects of stereotypes of inferiority, sloth, and proneness to violence – stereotypes then used to justify the sense that they

are less deserving of partaking in the opportunity structure. Facing such charged attitudes socially disparaged youth may come to experience the institutions of the dominant society – and most specifically its schools – as alien terrain reproducing an order of inequality. While all groups face structural obstacles, not all groups elicit and experience the same attitudes of social disparagement. Some immigrant groups elicit more negative attitudes – encountering a more negative social mirror – than others do. In US public opinion polls, for example, Asians are seen more favorably and Latinos more negatively.

In past generations, assimilationist trajectories demonstrated a correlation between length of residence in the US and better schooling, health, and income outcomes. While assimilation was a goal and a possibility for immigrants of European origin resulting in a generally upwardly mobile journey, this alternative may be more challenging for the new immigrants of color. Indeed, the increasing ‘segmentation’ in American economy and society seems to be shaping new patterns of immigrant adaptation

A number of theorists of the new immigration have examined how race and color are complicating the process of adaptation among new immigrants. Mary Waters data suggests that West Indians are shocked by the level of racism against blacks in the US. Though they arrive expecting structural obstacles (such as discrimination in housing and job promotions) they find particularly distressing the intensity of both overt and covert prejudice and discrimination. Yet these black immigrants tend to share a number of characteristics that are protective and that contribute to their relative success in the new setting. Their children, however, after encountering sustained experiences of social disparagement, racism, and limited economic opportunity, begin to respond in cultural ways similar to African Americans who have faced generations of exclusion and discrimination.

While cross-sectional data have been used to identify this transgenerational pattern, data from the LISA study suggest that among many immigrant youth of color, a process of racialization that further excludes many immigrant youth from academic options is unfolding at a rapid pace within a few years of migration. How is identity implicated in these rapid shifts?

### *Immigrant Identities*

Some immigrant origin youth develop and maintain a co-ethnic identity. Some do so because they have limited opportunity to make meaningful contact with other groups in the new culture. Others may be responding to an

understanding that other groups, such as native minorities, are even more socially disparaged than they are as immigrants. Caribbean immigrants may distinguish themselves from African Americans in an attempt to ward off social disparagement and seek better opportunities.

Other immigrant youth may develop an adversarial stance constructing identities around rejecting – after having been rejected by – the institutions of the dominant culture. These children of immigrants are responding in similar ways to that of other marginalized youth – such as many inner-city, poor African-Americans or Puerto Ricans, Koreans in Japan, or Algerians in France. Likewise, gazing back to previous waves of immigration, many of the disparaged and disenfranchised second-generation Italian-American, Irish-American, and Polish-American adolescents, demonstrated a similar dynamics – including the development of elaborate delinquency-oriented gangs.

Like other disenfranchised youth, children of immigrants who develop adversarial identities tend to encounter problems in school, tend to drop-out, and consequently face unemployment in the formal economy. Among youth engaged in adversarial styles, speaking the mainstream language of the culture and doing well in school may be interpreted as a show of hauteur and as a wish to ‘act White’. When immigrant adolescents acquire cultural models and social practices that view doing well in school as an act of ethnic betrayal, it becomes problematic for them to develop the behavioral and attitudinal repertoire necessary to succeed in school.

The children of immigrants who are not able to embrace their own culture and who have formulated their identities around rejecting aspects of the mainstream society may be drawn to gangs. In the absence of productive academic engagement and meaningful economic opportunities, gang membership can provide a sense of identity and cohesion for marginal youth during a turbulent stage of development. Adversarial identities when combined with gang-orientation severely compromise the future opportunities of immigrant origin youth who are already at risk of school failure because of poverty, segregation, and discrimination. Such immigrant origin youth face greater odds of imprisonment: roughly half of all youth under the supervision of the California Youth Authority (for homicide, robbery, assault, burglary, theft, rape, drugs, arson, kidnap/extortion) come from immigrant origin Latino homes, the delinquency rate among the youth of Korean origin in Japan is four times the rate among majority Japanese, and approximately half of the French prison population is of north African immigrant origin.

*Ethnic Flight*

The children of immigrant origin youth who shed their cultures structure their identities most strongly to identify with the dominant mainstream culture. Taking ethnic flight, these youth may feel most comfortable spending time with peers from the mainstream culture rather than with their less acculturated peers. For these youth, learning to speak standard English serves not only an instrumental function of communicating; it also becomes an important symbolic act of identifying with the dominant culture. Among these youth, success in school may be seen not only as a route for individualistic self-advancement, but also as a way to symbolically and psychologically move away from the world of the family and the ethnic group. The rapid abandonment of the home culture implied in ethnic flight almost always results in the collapse of the parental voice of authority. Furthermore, lack of group connectedness can result in feelings of anomie and alienation.

Identification with the mainstream culture often results in weakening of co-ethnic ties. These young people frequently are alienated from their less acculturated peers; they may have little in common or may even feel they are somewhat superior to them. While they may gain entry into privileged positions within mainstream culture, they will still have to deal with issues of marginalization and exclusion. They may find their peer group unforgiving of any behaviors that could be interpreted as 'ethnic betrayal'. It is not necessary for the child of an immigrant to consciously decide to distance himself from his culture.

In an earlier era of scholarship, this style of adaptation was termed 'passing'. While there were gains for the children of immigrants who managed to 'disappear' into the mainstream culture, there were also hidden costs – primarily in terms of unresolved shame, doubt, and even self-hatred. While 'passing' may have been a common style of adaptation among those who phenotypically 'looked' like the mainstream, it is not easily available to today's immigrants of color who visibly look 'Other'.

*Transcultural Identities.* In between the co-ethnic and ethnic flight gravitational fields, we find the large majority of children of immigrants. The task of immigration for these children is the crafting a transcultural identity. These youth creatively fuse aspects of two or more cultures – the parental tradition and the new culture or cultures. In so doing, they synthesize an identity that does not require them to choose between cultures –

rather they are able to develop an identity that incorporates traits of both cultures all the while fusing additive elements.

Among these youth the culturally constructed social strictures and patterns of social control of their immigrant parents and elders maintain a degree of legitimacy. Learning standard English and doing well in school are viewed as competencies that do not compromise but enhance their sense of who they are. These youth network, with similar ease, among members of their own ethnic group as well as with students, teachers, employers, colleagues, and friends of other backgrounds. A number of studies suggest that immigrant youth that manage to forge transcultural identities tend to be more successful in schools.

Many who successfully 'make it' perceive and appreciate the sacrifices loved ones have made to enable them to thrive in a new country. Rather than wishing to distance themselves from their group, these youth come to experience success as a way to give back to their parents, siblings, peers, and other less fortunate members of the community. Transcultural identities adaptively blend the preserving of the affective ties of the home culture with the acquisition of instrumental competencies required to cope successfully in the mainstream culture. Transcultural identities are most adaptive in this era of globalism and multiculturalism serving both the individual as well as society at large. By acquiring competencies that enable them to operate within more than one cultural code, these youth are often effective cultural interpreters and bridge-builders between disparate groups.

#### SOCIAL CONTEXTS OF LEARNING

Healthy social support networks provide a number of functions that are linked to better adjustment. Companionship, a basic human need, serves to maintain and enhance self-esteem and provides acceptance, approval, and a sense of belonging. Instrumental social support provides individuals and their families with tangible aid (such as running an errand or making a loan) as well as guidance and advice (including information, job and housing leads). These instrumental supports are particularly critical for disoriented immigrant newcomers. Indeed, LISA data demonstrates the critical role relational engagement plays in moderating negative influences such as school violence and low self-esteem.

### *Affiliative Motivations*

For many immigrants, social relations play a critical role in initiating and sustaining motivations. While for mainstream white American students achievement is often motivated by an attempt to gain independence from the family, immigrant students are typically highly motivated to achieve *for* their families. Further, we have found that Latino students (more so than for Asian or Caribbean students) perceive that receiving the help of others is critical to their success.

### *The Family*

Family cohesion and the maintenance of a well-functioning system of supervision, authority, and mutuality, are perhaps the most powerful factors in shaping the well-being and future outcomes of all children. For immigrant families, extended family members – grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, are critical sources of tangible instrumental and emotional support.

Families can support children's schooling by maintaining a value of education and establishing a standard of expectation. Families establish expectations about appropriate behaviors and attitudes vis-à-vis school authorities and peer interactions. They can also actively scaffold children as they complete assignments. Immigrant parents who work long hours and may have limited schooling are at a distinct disadvantage in this regard. Immigrant parents are often unable to tangibly support their children in ways that are congruent with American cultural models and expectations. Further, many come from traditions that revere school authorities and expect parents to keep a distance from the day-to-day workings of their child's education. This can lead to misunderstandings as such view stands in sharp contrast to US expectations of parental involvement.

### *Communities & Community Organizations*

Because no family is an island, family cohesion and functioning are enhanced when the family is part of a larger community displaying effective forms of what Felton Earls has termed 'community agency'. Culturally constituted patterns of community cohesion and supervision can 'immunize' immigrant youth from the more toxic elements in their new settings. When communities are cohesive and when adults within the community

can monitor youngsters' activities, they will tend to do better. Children who live in such communities are less likely to be involved with gangs and delinquency and are more focused on their academic pursuits.

Youth-serving organizations, much like ethnic-owned businesses and family networks can enrich immigrant communities and foster healthy development among its youth through the support they provide to parents and families. Such urban sanctuaries, often affiliated with neighborhood churches or schools, provide youth out-of-school time that is not spent in isolation, unsupervised, or on the streets with one's peers. These programs can provide safe havens from the pressures of the streets or 'second homes' settings. Community program staff can serve as 'culture brokers' for youth 'bridging' the disparate norms in place in children's homes and those in place at school. Adults who work in community programs can provide tutoring, educational guidance, advice about the college application process, and job search assistance, information which is often inaccessible to immigrant youth whose parents have not navigated the academic system in the US and who attend schools with few guidance counselors. Such programs can aid in counteracting embittered school personnel and toxic inner city schools' impact on the educational trajectories and academic achievement of immigrant youth.

### *Mentoring Relationships*

In nearly every story of an immigrant youth's success there is a caring adult who took an interest in the child and became actively engaged in her life. Connections with non-parent adults – a community leader, a teacher, a member of the church, a coach – are important in the academic and social adaptation of immigrant adolescents. These youth are often undergoing profound shifts in their sense of self and are struggling to negotiate changing circumstances in relationships with their parents and peers. Protective relationships with nonparent adults can provide immigrant youth with compensatory attachments, safe contexts for learning new cultural norms and practices, and information that is vital to success in schools.

Mentoring relationships may have special implications for immigrant youth as during the course of migration, loved ones are often separated from one another and significant attachments are ruptured. Mentoring relationships can give immigrant youth an opportunity to be involved in reparative relationships engendering new significant attachments. Since immigrant adolescents' parents and other adult relatives may be unavail-

able due to long work hours or emotional distress, the guidance and affection of a mentor may help to fill the void created by parental absence. The mentor, as an adult who has been in the United States longer than the protégé, can also provide information about and exposure to American cultural and educational institutions, and help as the adolescent negotiates developmental transitions. If the mentor is of the same ethnic background as the protégé, he or she can interpret the rules of engagement of the new culture to parents and hence, help to attenuate cultural rigidities. Furthermore, bicultural mentors can serve as role models in the challenging process of developing a bicultural identity, exemplifying the ways in which elements of the ethnic identity can be preserved and celebrated even as features of the more mainstream culture of the United States are incorporated into youth's lives.

### *Peer Relationships*

Peers can also provide important emotional sustenance that sustain and support the development of significant psychosocial competencies in youth. In a variety of ways, peers can specifically serve to support *or* detract from academic engagement. By valuing (or devaluing) certain academic outcomes and by modeling specific academic behaviors, peers establish the 'norms' of academic engagement. Peers may further support academic engagements through conversations and discussions where ideas are exchanged. Peers tangibly can support academic engagement by clarifying readings or lectures, helping one another in completing homework assignments, and by exchanging information (about SAT's, helpful tutors, volunteer positions, and other college pathway knowledge). Because, however, immigrant youth often attend highly segregated poor schools, they may have limited access to knowledgeable networks of peers.

Taken together, these networks of relationships can make a significant difference in educational outcomes. They can serve to help immigrant youth develop healthy bicultural identities, engender motivation, and provide specific information about how to successfully navigate schooling pathways.

Immigrant origin youth are the fastest growing sector of the student population in a variety of advanced post-industrial democracies. This is one of the results of globalization. The preponderance of evidence suggest that they arrive sharing an optimism and hope in the future that must be cultivated and treasured – almost universally they recognize that schooling is

the key to a better tomorrow. Tragically, over time however, many immigrant youth, especially those enrolling in impoverished and deeply segregated schools, face negative odds and uncertain prospects. Too many leave our schools without developing and mastering the kinds of higher order cognitive skills and cultural sensibilities needed in today's global economy and society. Those who do acquire the skills are often rejected in the labor market due to racial prejudice. The future of our world will in no small measure be tied to the constructive harnessing of the energies of these new young players on the global stage.

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