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Stereotypes, Perceptions Of Similarity, And Cultural Identity: Factors That May Influence The Academic Achievement Of Immigrant Students.

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STEREOTYPES, PERCEPTIONS OF SIMILARITY, AND CULTURAL IDENTITY:
FACTORS THAT MAY INFLUENCE THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
OF IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

by

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ABSTRACT

For decades, the United States has been known as the nation of immigrants due to the increasing number of immigrant students in the public school system. Although the population of immigrant students steadily increases annually, American society still pressures immigrants into acculturation to fulfill the United States ideals of academic achievement despite the United States claim of multiculturalism (Malcolm & Lowery, 2011). This research focuses on 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students' strife of acceptance in U.S. culture, while sill preserving their own native culture, and the influence it has on academic achievement.

The researcher interviewed eight (8) adult participants who are either 1st- or 2nd generation immigrant college students. This qualitative case study research aims to determine if forced acculturation or assimilation using stereotypes and perceptions of similarity effects how immigrant students develop their cultural identity, and the influence it has on academic achievement. Four major themes emerged from the participants' responses: parental approval, peer pressure, environmental influence, and feelings about their ethnic group. Basic findings supported that immigrant students' cultural identity is threatened by stereotypes and perceptions of similarity.

This research study is dedicated to the one person that always believed in my dreams. He taught me to look beyond color, race, gender, social class, education, and cultural beliefs. Thank you Jonathan Edward Williams for raising me to shoot past the moon and stars, accept everyone that was born on this earth, and take God with me on every journey that I embark on. Daddy, I miss you more every day and will continue to love you ceaselessly.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In the United States academic achievement for students is usually determined by the quality of public education. "Demands for school accountability and concerns about racial performance disparities culminated in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the 2002 reauthorization and expansion of the Elementary and Secondary School Act" (Krieg, 2011, p. 654). The NCLB act established new laws across the country that requires standardized testing, incentives for districts with high performance students, and sanctions for failing schools. Even with the incentives given to school administrators that focus on improving standardized test performance of the five diverse ethnic groups (Caucasian, Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian) and three classes (low-income, bilingual, and special education) of students required by the NCLB, clearly there is a need for advancement when comparing the United States to other countries in the world. In 2009, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), reported that 15-year-olds' average scores in math and reading were worse than the average scores of students the same age in at least 5 countries which have mandated similar developmental laws in education (PISA, 2009). Research studies have proven that the implications for not meeting and improving academic performance of every student, in each ethnic group and social or economic class can be dire for students' lifelong academic and career achievement. "More than 1.2 million students drop out every year, forty-two percent of college freshmen require remedial courses to handle college work, and employers consistently express disappointment in the skills of new graduates" (Wise, 2008, p. 8).

Disinterest, discouragement, and disengagement are a few of the many problems that arise from students with low academic performance. These problems increase students' risk for

school dropout, low-paying jobs, involvement in criminal acts, and incarceration. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported in 2013 that in the school year of 2009-2010 dropout rates increased in 24 states in relation to each grade level from 9th grade to 12th grade (2.6% in grade 9 to 5.1% in grade 12). The highest dropout percentages were from students in ethnic groups classified as Native American, Hispanic/Latino, and African American which was reported at 5 percent. The lowest dropout percentage was from students in ethnic groups classified as Asian and White at 1.9 percent and 2.3 percent respectively (NCES, 2013). "In 2005, a high school dropout in the United States earned, on average, approximately $10,000 less annually than a high school graduate. On average, those with no high school diploma earn $260,000 less over the course of a lifetime than those who graduate from high school" (Rouse, 2005, p. 21).

Ikomi's (2010) study confirmed that youth who drop out high school are at an increased risk to engage in criminal activity than youth who complete a high school diploma. Education Week reported in 2013 that the percentage of crimes in the United States committed by a high school dropout was approximately 75 percent, which were mostly committed by youth categorized as African American, Hispanic, and immigrants (9.6%, 17.6%, and 33.7% respectively). These youth spend years in and out of local jails and state prisons. This data clearly states how imperative academic performance and achievement is for youth in the United States. The United States government, school districts, educators, and parents must demand as well as advocate for programs and curricula that support all the needs of our youth.

The NCLB act required that states, districts, and schools meet or exceed a goal for yearly progress in each student's ethnic group and socioeconomic class in standardized test scores. If

these goals are not met, then the schools, states, and at times districts are faced with sanctions. NCLB does provide incentives to school administrators. The incentives are meant to improve the performance of the particular failing ethnic group of students' academic performance in order to meet these yearly goals. Unfortunately, because so many educators are worried about losing their jobs and school administrators are concerned their school will be closed down from not meeting adequate yearly progress, corruption of the curricula is known to take place (Krieg, 2011).

"Brown and Clift (2010) present evidence that teachers abandon advanced material in favor of more basic material in hopes of aiding failing students which promotes a curricular ceiling on proficient students" (as cited in Krieg, 2011, p. 654). Below standard curricula and lowered expectations for students' academic performance only hinders students' rate of success after graduation. More and more students from all ethnic groups are unprepared for postsecondary education and must take remedial reading and math courses in college. "Specifically, 17-year old African-American and Latino students have skills in English, science and mathematics similar to those of White students who are 13-years old" (Reyna, 2008, p.439).

The United States has been deemed the *nation of immigrants* due to the increasing number of immigrants that are added to the public school system each year. The Center of Immigrant Studies (CIS) reported in 2013 that immigrants account for over 20% of the United States population of students ranging in ages from 5- to 19-years-old. "As schools face the challenge of educating linguistically, culturally, and racially diverse students, globalization imposes yet another set of demands on education" (Suarez-Orozco, Suarez-Orozco, & Sattin-Bajaj, 2010, p. 535). Immigrant students are at more risk for poor academic performance and

adult life success because they are disregarded, misunderstand, or deserted by federal mandates of education as well as educators and students in classrooms.

Immigrant students are faced with stereotypes, perceptions of similarity, and insensitivity in their development of cultural identity. These threats can obstruct their endeavors of academic achievement. Similar to minority students, the majority of immigrant students are expected to perform lower than other ethnic groups in academic performance. Research has proven educators are more likely to 'dumb-down' the curriculum for these students or even place them in special education classes as a result of stereotypes or perceptions of similarity (Brown & Clift, 2010). However, Cortes (2006) found that immigrant students who migrate to a country at a younger age, and attend school there for several years, perform just as well as native born students.

Regrettably, society forces acculturation or assimilation on immigrant students as the only way for them to be accepted (Souto-Manning, 2007). This stress forces the majority of immigrant students to abandon their native-born cultural beliefs or values and adopt those of the inhabited society's ethnic group with which they are perceived as similar. This not only accounts for immigrant students' failed academic success but also failed life success. "Acculturative stress has been associated with poor mental health outcomes such as depression and anxiety, feelings of marginality and alienation, increased psychosomatic symptoms, identity confusion, and poor health outcomes" (Ellis & Chen, 2013, p. 252).

In order for immigrant students to achieve academic and life success educators, peers, and the overall society in the United States must adopt the value of multiculturalism and integration. Immigrant students should be able to develop their cultural identity without coercion

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from stereotypes and perceptions of similarity that could categorize them as inadequate in intelligence or skill. Urdan and Munoz (2011) state that research has proven immigrant students, with a strong sense of cultural identity, have a tendency to possess higher academic motivation and educational aspirations.

<div align="center">Background and Need</div>

"In the United States, the country with the largest number of immigrants in the world, approximately one fourth of all youth are of immigrant origin (16 million in 2010), and it is projected that by 2040 more than one third of all children will be growing up in immigrant households" (Suarez-Orozco, Suarez-Orozco, & Sattin-Bajaj, 2010, p. 536). The majority of 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students will be categorized by their physical appearance, age, and even language by their educators and peers. Perceptions of immigrant students' skill and knowledge will be based on information society has experienced with other groups or individuals that appear to be similar. These threats of stereotypes and perceptions of similarity can cause immigrant students to struggle with their cultural identity. "In addition to this complex set of structural and contextual factors, the way that the children of immigrants think about themselves, both as students and members of their ethnic groups, can influence academic motivation and achievement" (Urdan & Munoz, 2011, p. 249).

Stereotypes: Research studies on student achievement have proven that "minority students with immigration backgrounds are underrepresented on the highest track whereas they are overrepresented on the lowest track" (Glock & Krolak-Schwerdt, 2013, p. 112). Educators and society frequently assume immigrant students are incapable of performing at the same level

of other non-minority students academically. When 1st and 2nd generation immigrant students believe in this negative-ability stereotypical behavior as being true, it is likely to cause them to lose interest and motivation in academic achievement. "Steele and Aronson (1995) call this type of disengagement, *disidentification,* because students stop identifying academic achievement as an indication of their self-worth" (Owens & Lynch, 2012, p. 305).

Guo's (2010) study in 2006 found in countries where members of society, organizations, and schools adopt the philosophy of multiculturalism, immigrant students were more successful at academic achievement and adult life success. The study revealed that ethno-cultural organizations, like *SUCCESS* in Canada, "programmes and services have helped immigrants ease the process of settlement and adaption. More importantly, it has created a home and a community to which immigrants feel they belong" (p. 444). When members of society in countries with immigrants commit to an ideology that accepts immigrants, diversity, and cultural homogeneity, then the negative effects of stereotypes diminish or even disappear, (Guo, 2010).

Perceptions of Similarity: Accepting immigrant students' diversity and cultural beliefs is very different than perceiving them as similar to a racial-ethnic group. Perceptions of similarity are most often performed by educators in an effort of assessing and meeting the needs of immigrant students. However, most perceptions are based on stereotypical characteristics and behaviors that may consequently deter academic success when assuming a relationship between groups and society. Oyserman (2008) state that "excluding the in-group from representations of larger society marks the in-group as lower status and reduces chance of success because success is seen as incongruent with group status among both low and high status group members" (p.

1187). Immigrant students, as well as all other students, have strengths and weaknesses that are specific to them as individuals and not as members of a particular group.

Shpaizman & Kogut (2010) conducted two research studies on the effects of perceptions of similarity on immigrant students, and concluded that "great similarity and connectedness may hurt the ability to see the other's needs" (p. 438). The study discovered that perceptions of similarity resulted in either a reduction in needed services or an increase in detrimental services for immigrant students, both of which hindered academic performance. "Greater familiarity with the group and its needs may decrease false perceptions of similarity on relevant dimensions and therefore, promote better understanding of groups' difficulties and needs, and improve policies regarding its members" (Shpaizman & Kogut, 2010, p. 439).

Cultural Identity: Threats from stereotypes and perceptions of similarity cause immigrant students to feel stressed and question their cultural identity in a new country or unfamiliar environment. American society only offers immigrants three solutions in their transition: acculturation, assimilation, and integration. Acculturation and assimilation have a tendency to overlook immigrant students' needs to continue development of their identity as they transition between their native-born culture and the culture of a new society. Integration is an often misunderstood option that requires society to accept multiculturalism. Crafter & de Abreu (2010) indicate how development of a "meaning system" allows immigrant students to move between home and school, learning and developing their identity in each environment. This transition of learning is called *Sociocultural Coupling* and focuses more on the "aspects of both changing individuals and changing social activity" (Crafter & de Abreu, 2010, p. 106).

Sociocultural Coupling provides immigrant students with the skills to accept or defy the identities that American society forces upon them.

Immigrant students may be overlooked, misunderstood, and neglected in their needs as they migrate to countries all over the world (Glock & Krolack-Schwerdt, 2013). There are solutions that can assist with their academic achievement, life success, and acceptance into a new society in their journey from childhood to adult. The researched literature verified: (1) that the adoption of multiculturalism and creation of ethno-cultural organizations have the ability to diminish stereotypes of immigrant students, (2) that increased knowledge of immigrants and diverse cultures can assist society with understanding their needs, and (3) that the practice of *Sociocultural Coupling* can teach immigrant students' skills to buffer themselves from labels imposed upon them that cause them to question their cultural identity. Although there is very little research focused on immigrant students' adaptation in the United States, there is enough proof that there is a problem that is important and deserves further recognition and study.

Statement of Problem

The current challenges imposed on 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students' endeavors in academic achievement are related to three crucial components of integrating their native-born cultures with American society's culture: stereotypes (Owens & Lynch, 2012), perceptions of similarity (Shpaizman & Kogut, 2010), and cultural identity (Ellis & Chen, 2013). "The process of adapting to the new unfamiliar customs of a new culture often involves changes in values, behaviors, identity, and knowledge" (Ellis & Chen, 2013, p. 252). Immigrant students are often discriminated against due to stereotypes based on their age, skin color, physical features, and

language. Stereotypes can lead immigrant students to feel alienated, indifferent, or misunderstood. The behaviors immigrant students' may exhibit from the pressures of stereotypes usually causes American society to perceive certain groups of immigrants to be similar with a specific category of race that is known to have the same characteristics. This is known as perception of similarity. Immigrant students who fall prey to threats of stereotypes and perceptions of similarity are known to struggle with their cultural identity. "The transition process between home and school, as well as the meditational role of significant others (like parents, teachers, and friends) in multicultural settings, has a potentially powerful impact on the learner's identity" (Crafter & Abreu, 2010, p.103). It is vital for both academic achievement and adult life success that immigrant students know themselves and believe in their worth.

   Stereotypes: "One source of readily-available information about the causes of behaviors or outcomes is cultural stereotypes" (Reyna, 2008, p. 441). For decades, American society has used stereotypes of various racial groups to determine its members' ability, level of intelligence, and behaviors. The stereotypes that Asians are good at math or science, Caucasians have good credit, and African Americans are lazy or unintelligent not only describe how society feels about these different ethnic groups but can also determine their success in society. Immigrant students are usually characterized into a specific ethnic group based on the stereotypes of their physical appearance, academic achievement, and/or socioeconomic status. Studies have proven that many immigrant students, stereotyped as a member of a minority group, are given less opportunities to succeed academically. "Alternatively or in addition they are directed into non-academic courses or subject clusters within schools (*de facto tracking*), which reinforces or reduces their already weaker performance" (Marks, 2010, p. 134).

Perceptions of similarity: "In this age of wide migration waves all over the world, when schools' populations become more diverse, educators often make policies regarding groups of immigrant students (from the same origin) with unique needs" (Shpaizman & Kogut, 2010, p. 425). Perceptions of similarity are inclined to have considerable effects on the academic achievement of immigrant students. Perceptions of similarity characteristics educators place on immigrant students can be either positive or negative. Research has shown that perceptions of similarity can be the reason why educators value immigrant students' well-being and interests. However, mistaken perceptions of similarity sometimes lead educators to misunderstand the needs of immigrant students and enforce strategies that do not contribute to, or hinder academic performance and achievement (Shpaizman & Kogut, 2010).

Cultural Identity: Immigrant students' struggle in maintaining their native cultural identity while also adapting to the culture of a new country leaves them vulnerable to risks. Reynaga-Abiko (2012) agreed with studies proving assimilation caused immigrants to be "less healthy and well-adjusted." Whereas Oyserman (2008) claim immigrants who maintain a strong native cultural identity, and utterly reject the culture of the society in which they live, are susceptible to detachment and disinterest within school environments.

"Stereotypes about the child's cultural group, their own feelings about assimilation, acculturative stress from parents, and their success at developing comfortable bi-cultural identities can all contribute to their attitudes about school and their aspirations for higher education" (Urdan & Munoz, 2011, p. 250). Immigrant students either believe or challenge the cultural identity society has forced upon them through stereotypes or perceptions of similarity. Either way, immigrant students begin to question their own identity as it relates to their beliefs

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and values. This is likely to deter academic performance and achievement as the stress from the conflict of integrating two cultures can cause a lack of motivation and self-efficacy.

Immigrant students are at risk to stereotypes, perceptions of similarity, and decrepit development of cultural identity when migrating to a new country. These threats can hinder immigrant students' academic opportunities, cause educators to misunderstand their needs, and sever them from engagement or interest in academic performance and achievement. In order to give immigrant students a fighting chance, society must adopt the convictions of multiculturalism which accommodates diversity. Adopting multiculturalism is not an easy feat. James A. Banks, a multicultural theorist, emphasizes that a person must first have a concrete self-identity before the teachings of multiculturalism will be accepted (Bennett, 2006).

<u>Purpose of Study</u>

The purpose of this study was to explore how academic achievement is perceived by 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant college students and how they conquered the adversities of integration in the United States public school system while growing up.

The majority of immigrant students are faced with stereotypes, perceptions of similarity, and development of a cultural identity. Immigrant students will continue to be deterred from educational opportunities that can support their academic achievement and future life success if society doesn't learn how to accept and integrate their cultural beliefs and identities as equal. This will lead to immigrants being seen as unskilled, incapable human capital that are obstructing the United States from meeting their goals in academic and economic progress.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors that 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant college students characterize as being essential for academic achievement during their childhood?

2. How do 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant college students overcome the threats from stereotypes and perceptions of similarity in their development of cultural identity while growing up?

Significance of the Study

The proposed study will assist education professionals in their efforts to effectively support immigrant students and students from diverse backgrounds in their academic achievement and development, as well as in the establishment of programs provided to immigrant students. This study will also give professionals a cogent perceptive of multiculturalism, cultural identity, stereotype threat, and perceptions of similarity. The proposed study should encourage researchers to be more conscientious in their analysis of immigrant students' integration into American society. Hopefully there will be increased research on methods that warrant success in academics, and fewer studies on how immigrants are used as human capital to improve the United States economy.

Studies pertaining to factors that shape academic achievement and later life success of young immigrant students have been conducted, but not many over a long period of time or of accomplished immigrant college students who later reflect on their childhood. This study will provide awareness of immigrant student's perceptions as young children into adulthood.

Definitions of Terms

- 1st Generation Immigrant – a person who was born in a country other than the one in which they live.

- 2nd Generation Immigrant – a person who has a parent(s) that was born in a country other than the one in which they live.

- Academic Achievement – "the level of actual accomplishment or proficiency one has achieved in an academic area, as opposed to one's potential" (Durham Public Schools, 2012).

- Acculturation – the process of adopting the cultural traits and social patterns of another group different from one's native-born group (Zadeh, Geva, & Rogers, 2008).

- Assimilation – the process of giving up one's native-born cultural traits and social patterns for the adaptation of those in which one lives (Reynaga-Abiko, 2012).

- Critical Race Theory (CRT) – an analytical dissection of culture and society as it relates to race (Villenas & Deyhle, 1999).

- Cultural Identity – one's cultural traits, values, customs, and experiences regardless of ethnicity or nationality (Durand, 2010).

- Diversity – "the myriad of experiences and attributes that contribute to each person's uniqueness regardless of cultural heritage or ethnic heritage or community" (Durand, 2010, p. 837).

- Integration – the process of maintaining a person's native-born cultural traits and social patterns while also valuing the culture of others (Guo, 2010, p. 442).

- Marginalization – "when there is little possibility or interest in cultural maintenance and little interest in having relations with others" (Zadeh, Geva, & Rogers, 2008, p. 42).

- Multiculturalism – the process of accepting the cultural traits and social patterns of immigrants as individuals and challenging the representation that all are the same (Guo, 2010, p. 443).

- Perceptions of Similarity – "the ability to take the role of the target and identify with his/her emotions, including the targets' distress and perceived needs" (Shpaizman & Kogut, 2010, p. 426).

- Separation – the process of holding on to one's own cultural traits and social patterns and excluding those of the society in which one lives (Zadeh, Geva, & Rogers, 2008, p.42).

- Stereotypes – a common representation of a person based on characteristics such as skin color, facial features, behaviors, and/or language (Goclowska & Crisp, 2013).

- Stereotype Threat – "the negative-ability stereotypes that increase minority students' cognitive psychological load and reduce their academic effort, negatively affecting academic performance" (Owens & Lynch, 2012, p. 303).

Limitations of Study

This study does show signs of limitations. First, the sample size is quite small and more than likely has reduced the study's external validity because of limited generalizability to other groups as well as differentiated between 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students. Also, more time and an explanation of stereotypes, perceptions of similarity, and cultural identity could be valuable to the participants before their interview for a better understanding. The sample group

could have been comprised of participants from more diverse backgrounds and origins that aren't

simply identified by American society's categories of race.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

"Demands for school accountability and concerns about racial performance disparities culminated in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)" (Krieg, 2011, p.654). An upsetting number of students drop out of high school due to inadequate academic performance and a disturbing amount of students who do graduate have difficulty in college or in their adult career. As the number of immigrant students in the United States steadily increases, school districts and administrators are compelled to take action towards educating radically diverse students. Immigrant students are more subject to being misunderstood or mistreated. This could lead to poor academic performance due to their disinterest in academic achievement.

This literature review will address three areas related to the challenges 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students' face in their endeavors to achieve academically during their childhood. The first section will address research related to the impact stereotypes make on immigrant students' views and opportunities with respect to academic achievement. The second section will focus on research studies that demonstrate how perception of similarity can negatively obstruct the academic performance of immigrant students. Finally, the third section will discuss research related to cultural identity, or the lack thereof, and it's relation to academic performance and achievement.

Stereotypes

1st- and 2nd- generation immigrant students are increasingly categorized as being part of a minority group while attending college. Social scientists and education professionals are engrossed in understanding the rationale behind the achievement gaps between whites and racial

minorities. From a study conducted by Massey and Fischer (2005), it was discovered that stereotype threat is one of the leading speculations for discerning this achievement gap in college academic performance. "In a social context in which domestic minority students are the targets of negative-ability stereotypes, minority immigrants negotiate the boundaries of their primary identity ("in") group perhaps differently than their domestic minority peers" (Owens & Lynch, 2012, p. 304). The purpose of this study was to investigate two dispositional mechanisms that may influence susceptibility to stereotype threat with immigrant students in college (Owens & Lynch, 2012).

The researchers contacted 4,573 college students at 28 selective colleges or universities in the United States during the fall term of the 1999. This sample of college students were required to complete a face-to-face interview which decreased the participants to 3,924 students (86%). In the spring term of 2000, these students were required to complete a follow-up interview that decreased the number of participants to 3,767 (96%). Another follow-up interview was required in the spring term of 2001 that decreased the number of participants to 3,390 (90%). White and Asian students (55%) were excluded from the study as they are not considered to be in a minority group, and thus the participants were decreased again to 1,865. Of the 1,865 students that were used as the final participants in the study, 991 were categorized as African American (53%) and 874 were categorized as Hispanic (47%). The study did not reveal specific race, ethnicity, and generation due to subsample sizes that prevent detailed representation.

The data collection process included providing each of the 1,865 participants with a 17 question scaled survey from 0 to 10 to acquire the students' perspective on negative ability

stereotypes and their effects. Externalization was measured through four of the questions, internalization was measure by three of the questions, academic performance was measured by five of the questions, and academic effort was measured by four of the questions. The final question was for the students' to write down their grade point average (GPA) from the two years they had been in college.

The research was driven by two questions: (a) "Do immigrant minority students accept their own and others' race-based negative-ability stereotypes in the same way that lowers the grade performance of domestic blacks and Hispanics" and (b) "How can we reconcile differences in minority immigrants' susceptibility to negative-ability stereotypes with their comparably low grade performance relative to domestic minorities?" These variables in the form of participant scaled survey responses were transcribed and used in a multiple group structural equation modeling (SEM) approach for data analysis. "SEM methods allow for the investigation of relationships between theoretical concepts while simultaneously controlling for measurement error in observed measures" (Owens & Lynch, 2012, p. 310).

There was one dependent variable that was measured in this study: academic performance. This was determined by the students' GPA during the first two years of college enrollment. Externalization, internalization, academic performance burden, and academic effort were measured by a 16-item scaled survey questionnaire to calculate the key predictors of performance. The 16-item scaled survey questionnaire was formulated from a prior research model done by Massey and Fischer in 2005.

The results of this study revealed that 1st- and 2nd generation immigrants identified comparable levels of stereotypes about Hispanics and blacks. This identification renders related

levels of externalization, internalization, and performance burden for immigrant and domestic black and Hispanics. The study also revealed that 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students have higher academic effort than their same-race domestic equivalents. 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students' grades do not diminish from stereotype externalization or internalization. However, there was a statistically significant negative relationship between academic effort and stereotype internalization among 2nd generation immigrants and domestic minorities. The relationship between academic performance and academic effort is twice as strong for domestic minorities as it is for 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students.

Several conclusions can be made about 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students' receptiveness to grade dampened effects of stereotype threat compared to the effects it has on domestic minorities. First, the immigrants students have graduated from high school and been accepted to college, therefore they are grounded in their cultural identity which makes them appear resilient to stereotype threat. It is clear in the data that these 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students can identify stereotype threat from their responses. This provides support that these particular immigrant students have learned that negative ability stereotypes do not make them who they are through trial and error. Additionally, the researchers noted the challenges of the American racial classification system. Ethnic and cultural identity of minorities is more than the four groups of whites, Asian, Hispanics, and blacks. Numerous immigrant students could have been excluded from the study because they did not fall into these four racial classification groups. For future research in this area, providing a diverse racial classification of immigrant students, as well as survey responses in addition to the scaled survey

questionnaire, has the potential to change the results to show how immigrant students resist negative-ability stereotypes in their accomplishments of academic performance and achievement.

There were several limitations and weaknesses in this study that the current study addressed. First, there was a lack of how the researchers could measure the immigrant students' definition of their ethnic or cultural in-group. The only options that were given were white, black, Asian, or Hispanic. This could cause many immigrant students to be excluded from the study or not volunteer to participate. Another crucial limitation was in the deficient number of ethnically representative samples of each immigrant group. This would allow for a better analysis of the relationship between academic performance and stereotype threat based on each immigrant group's self-schemas. Instead, this study grouped Caribbean, West Indian, and Africans in the racial group of blacks as well as Cubans, Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans as Hispanics. Another weakness was the elimination of extracurricular activities, employment, and personal circumstances that could reduce students' results on academic effort because they would spend less time studying. Extracurricular activities could be the reason why these immigrant students are more resilient against stereotype threat because it increases their perception of their self worth and cultural identity.

Negative-ability stereotypes are not the only form of stereotypical expectation that can harmfully effect immigrant students' academic achievement and performance. Students all over the world, not just in the United States, are placed on educational paths based on educators' expectations of them. A majority of these expectations have been associated to students' nationality proven by research studies. High school students' success after graduation is greatly influenced by their access to quality based curricula. Educators, who expect that students from a

certain nationality perform lower than other students, tend to give these students less access to high quality based curriculum. The result accounts for these students being less prepared to succeed in college as well as in their desired career.

Stereotypical expectations from educators' judgment based on nationalities have caused immigrant students, along with minority students, to be overrepresented in high school educational tracks that lead to vocational school and limited jobs after graduation. One method to changing the negative stereotypical beliefs of educators into something positive is by providing them with opportunities to judge expectation-disconfirming students. The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine if educators who judged a student as positive or negative standard of a stereotypical class persuaded their stereotypical beliefs about students in that nationality (Glock &Krolak-Schwerdt, 2013).

The research took place in the Germany school system. The 40 participants included 27 female and 13 male student teachers from Saarland University, an elite university in Germany. The student teachers' average age was 22-years-old with a standard deviation of two to three years. The student teachers' average teaching experience was 2 months but ranged from no experience to 20 months of experience teaching in a classroom. The majority of the participants were German with the exception of two student teachers; one with a Hispanic backgrounds and another with Italian origins.

The data collection process included providing each of the 40 participants with two fabricated case reports; one case of a high performing student and a low performing student. In one case report, the student was German and the other the student was Turkish (stereotypical minority group in German society: equivalent to immigrants, Hispanics, or African Americans in

the United States). The 40 participants were divided into two random groups. One group was randomly given only negative example (expectation-confirming) case reports that illustrated a low performing Turkish student and a high performing German student. The other group was randomly given only positive example (expectation-disconfirming) case reports that illustrated a high performing Turkish student and a low performing German student. Each case report included 19 sentences describing the high performing student and 21 sentences describing the low performing student. The case reports were manipulated in a way that supplied the participants with sentences to exhibit realism and also present immigrant origins.

The research was driven by three questions: (a) Do student teachers' judgments differ depending the given information and on the nationality of the student in the case reports, (b) What stereotypical expectations were triggered by the given information of each student in the case reports, and (c) How does judging a high performing Turkish student or a low performing Turkish student as positive or negative examples of the stereotypical group have an impact on the stereotypical beliefs regarding Turkish students.

Each of the 40 participants were first tested individually on a computer where the sentences of the case report were granted one by one after the space key was pressed. A Likert scale ranging from 1 (low) to 7 (high) was used to assess the participants stereotypical beliefs of the case student's intelligence according to there being "no difference in the achievement levels of students with and without immigration backgrounds or students without an immigration background profit when there are no children with an immigration background in their class" (Glock & Krolak-Schwerdt, 2013, p. 116). The lexical decision task (LDT) was used after each participant judged the Turkish student's case report, whether the report was positive or negative.

The LDT, a procedure used in a majority of psychology experiments, was used in this study to evaluate how hastily the participants classified 25 words as a German word or not. Out of the 25 words, 5 were describing a high performing student, 5 were describing a low performing student, and 10 were words with no description. Lastly, the participants answered a 28-item questionnaire on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 6 which indicated if they fully disagreed or fully agreed, respectively, with the presented stereotypical statements.

After the participants were tested, several statistical tests were used to analyze the data. A 2 x 2 ANOVA, repeated measures of analysis of variance, was performed to determine the participants' judgment as negative or positive as well as a relationship between expectation and student nationality on four dimensions: (1) German reading comprehension, (2) German spelling competency, (3) German language comprehension, and (4) mathematics achievement. A 2 x 2 mixed MANOVA, multivariate analysis of variance, was utilized to examine the participants' judgment and response latencies of their negative or positive expectation of achievement in relation to nationality of each student.

The results indicated that the majority of participants in both groups discerned the low performing Turkish student to be less competent than the low performing German student in all four dimensions mentioned above. However, the participants found no difference in the high performing Turkish student and high performing German student in the same four dimensions. The results also confirm that the majority of participants who read case reports on high performing Turkish students believed that there was no difference in achievement between students with and without immigrant backgrounds. Furthermore, the majority of participants who read the case reports of low performing Turkish students believed that students with

immigrant backgrounds need more tutoring and those students without immigrant origins would benefit more from being in class with less immigrant students.

The implications of these results attest a need for aspiring educators during their academic studies to be familiarized with not only the ramification of stereotypical beliefs and expectations of immigrant or minority students, but also research proves all students have the ability to attain academic achievement. This can be accomplished with workshops, internships, and field experience with experience educators who believe in cultural diversity and full inclusion classroom environments.

The researchers admitted there were some limitations involved in the study. First, participants needed more time to judge the positive student than the negative student as the participants recognized that stereotypical judgments are not accepted in the field of education. Another limitation is the participants were only disclosed to either one positive or negative example of a Turkish student. It is possible that presenting multiple examples of high performing Turkish students could positively impact the participants' stereotypical beliefs of immigrant students' academic achievement over time. In the future, studies regarding the impact of stereotypical expectations on educators' judgment can be completed with participants in different countries that have more experience and interaction with culturally diverse students in classrooms. This will further prove if there really is a significant statistical relationship between expectation and student nationality.

Prejudice resulting from stereotypes is also displayed in the attitudes and behaviors of peer adolescents of immigrant students. There is proof in studies that direct contact can improve the relationships between non-immigrant and immigrant students when performed in an ideal

environment. Because an ideal environment is difficult to provide, the issue has been tackled by studies using indirect forms of contact. Indirect contact has the possibility to provide the same, if not better, results of improving conditions where there is unwillingness to engage in direct contact or in conditions of severe segregation and conflict between non-immigrant and immigrant students. The purpose of this study was to assess if intergroup relationships can be improved by the theory of indirect contact from non-immigrant students reading a book on intercultural subject matter (Vezzali, Stathi, & Giovannini, 2012).

The study took place in a public secondary school located in Northern Italy. The participants included 96 Italian students from seven classes (48 males, 45 females, and 3 missing from data). The average age of each student is 12-years-old.

The seven classes were randomly divided into three groups where each group was randomly distributed one of three types of reading over the summer: intercultural, non-intercultural, or no reading. Books were selected from the library for two of the three groups of participants' summer reading. These books were placed on two lists; one list included intercultural reading and the other list contained non-intercultural reading. The participants were not aware of which list contained what or that the books were part of a study. Each list of books was randomly given to two of the three groups of participants, and they were given the choice to choose one book to read over the summer. A questionnaire pertaining to the participants attitudes towards immigrants was administered roughly a week after the new school year began.

Each of the 96 participants was required to write a summary of the book(s) they read during the summer as part of a class assignment before being administered the questionnaire. The summary writing assignment's purpose was to make it salient for those who were assigned

to read an intercultural or non-intercultural book. The majority of the questionnaire items (36) were on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all* or *none*) to 7 (*very* much or *almost* all). These questions asked about their feelings on the book, words describing Italians and immigrants to measure stereotypical expectations, intergroup attitudes, in-group and out-group behavioral intentions, desire for future contact, and in-group identification. There were two open ended essay questions that the participants were asked to respond to in an essay format with words to describe Italians and immigrants. These were placed on a Likert scale to assess stereotypical expectations of the participants.

One-way analysis of variance, ANOVAs using the Bonferroni adjustment, was completed as the statistical test to analyze data from the questionnaire. ANOVA test were conducted to determine the students' mean attitude and behavioral intentions towards immigrants after the indirect contact intervention.

The results indicated that students who were assigned to read an intercultural or non-intercultural book read one of the books included on the list. The students who were not assigned to read a book did not read a book at all during the summer. The results also indicated that there was a statistically significant improvement in the reduction of stereotypes, more positive in-group behavioral intentions, increased desire to engage in future contact, and improved intergroup attitudes of those students who read an intercultural book compared to those who read a non-intercultural book or no book at all. In addition, those students who read an intercultural book increased their self-schema and decreased their group identification.

The researchers proved that previous studies were correct in their results and conclusions on the theory of indirect contact being valuable in improving intergroup relations. The theory of

indirect contact can prove to be advantageous for preliminary procedures to prepare students for real life, direct contact occurrences with immigrants. This is also an effective intervention that can be used to supplement other interventions used to educate students as well as others, on cultural diversity in an effort to reduce stereotypes. The only weakness or limitation evident is that some students could refuse to read books or deny seeing the content of the book as reality.

The research literature not only validates the issues regarding negative stereotypical attitudes towards immigrants, but also effective methods that can diminish these clichéd expectations to eliminate the harmful effects. The three research articles that were evaluated in this section provide support for using different types of interventions like indirect contact, professional development, and internships. The educators and students with stereotypical expectations and attitudes in this study were informed of the ideals of multiculturalism in an ever-growing culturally diverse world. Nevertheless, each study had its weaknesses and limitations. The sample sizes in all three studies were small and limited in the area in which the study took place. It is uncertain if the results will work in area where in-group stereotypical behaviors, intentions and expectations are accepted as true by non-immigrants and immigrants. Also, there is doubt that the theory of indirect contact will work on adults as well as it works on children, or if it has long-lasting effects. These limitations and weaknesses were all controlled in the studies.

Perceptions of Similarity

Stereotypes influence how people perceive and treat others that are similar as well as those that are different than them. These perceptions are more likely comprised of traits that are

familiar to particular groups of people such as skin color. "If it is assumed that people use homogeneity ratings to indicate the extent to which groups possess traits, then this stereotype effect may be interpreted as an expression of perceived trait possession (i.e., ingroups possess ingroup stereotypical traits and outgroups possess outgroup stereotypical traits)" (Rubin & Badea, 2007, p. 31). The purpose of the study was to investigate if the aforementioned declaration of stereotypical characteristics existence or vacancy would restrain stereotype effect, (Rubin & Badea, 2007).

The two experiments in this study took place at a French university in Paris. The participants included 104 undergraduate psychology students of French decent in their freshmen year. The participants' ages ranged between 19 to 57 years. Eight-nine percent of the sample group was women and eleven percent was men. Seventy-five of the students participated in the first experiment. Twenty-nine more students were recruited for the second experiment with the intent of boosting the legitimacy of the results.

In the first experiment the undergraduates were given bogus background information about "how people view people who overestimate and underestimate the number of physical stimuli that they perceive" (Rubin & Badea, 2007, p. 35). The participants were told that research had proven that people consistently overestimate or underestimate stereotypical characteristics. Participants were also given fabricated references to validate the research that proved the above statement to be true. The fabricated stereotypical characteristics given to the participants are generally perceived as socially advantageous or detrimental. After the participants reviewed this information, they were shown five projections of slides that contained dots. They were asked to estimate how many dots were on the screen. Each slide was shown for

three seconds. The participants were then separated into random groups to complete a questionnaire. Half were allowed to speak to one another, and the other half were told not to discuss the questionnaire. The participants were told that the questionnaire was a scale for them to rate which characteristics were overestimates and underestimates.

In the second experiment, the undergraduates were given new bogus background information of the same type as in the first experiment, along with fabricated references to prove the research. They were still shown the five slides of dots on the projectors for three seconds. However, this time around the questionnaire changed. Instead of the participants ratings characteristics as *not at all* or *extremely*, they used the ratings of *very typical underestimates* to *very typical overestimates*. "This new procedure provided participants with a more specific and direct method for expressing trait stereotypicality to the researcher than the method used in Experiment 1" (Rubin & Badea, 2007, p. 38). The questionnaire consisted of 100 marked group members. Participants were asked to designate which group members fell into each characteristic. Numbers were given to each group and must add up to 100 at the end.

Several statistical tests were used to analyze the data. A 2 x 2 x 2 mixed-model analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if the participants perceived each of the given eight characteristics to be stereotypical. The variables were the participants' group over-underestimates, variability measure of range in similarity, and the target group's over-underestimates. A one-sample *t* test was conducted to show if there was a statistical significant difference of the mean value. A range of measures was used to analyze the out-group homogeneity (OH) compared to the in-group homogeneity (IH) effects on these perceptions of characteristics. The last test was a 2 x 2 x 2 mixed model ANOVA on the OH and IH index

using range of similarity, stereotypical characteristics of in-groups and out-groups, as well as positive and negative characteristic valence.

The results proved the authors' hypothesis that "stereotype effect only occurred in the absence of preceding expressions of trait stereotypicality" (Rubin & Badea, 2007, p. 38). This means that when people express their knowledge of stereotypical characteristics, they do not characterize diverse group members by traits. But when no expression of stereotypes is given then stereotype effect occurs.

Several conclusions can be made about the perceptions of stereotypical characteristics by the participants when they were free to communicate these traits versus when they were denied. The results confirm that knowledge and awareness of stereotypes caused stereotype effect to diminish or be completely eliminated among the participants. With the sample size being a decent size, the results of this study could easily be applied to the full population. However, the results from the study could be overstated due to in-group partiality which would cause the participants to rate members of certain groups with more socially acceptable traits than others.

The one and only limitation for this study is that the results are not credible to conclusions regarding out-group homogeneity because there is no data or logic that members of groups that are not well-known could possess more characteristics than in-groups.

"Schools the world over are being transformed by growing numbers of immigrant-origin children" (Suarez-Orozco, Suarez-Orozco, & Sattin-Bajaj, 2010, p. 536). As a result, student population has become more diverse, which can often lead educators to perceptions of similarity in order to construct policies concerning the interest of immigrant groups and their members. Perceptions of similarity are proved in this study to be harmful to immigrant students only when

they are associated with low expectations. The purpose of this study was to "examine the effect of perceived homogeneity and similarity on immigrant integration policy in schools" (Shpaizman & Kogut, 2010, p. 425).

The two studies in this research took place in Israel. The first at various universities and the second by a mail survey sent to all middle and high schools, both in cities that deal with the integration of immigrants. The participants were informed that the definition of a FSU immigrant is one that migrated to Israel within the last 10 years. The first study included 92 undergraduate students who received course credit. Seventy percent of the sample was students from the department of education. Thirty percent of the sample was students from other social studies departments. Of the 92 undergraduates, 69 were female and 23 were male undergraduate students. The second study included 63 principals from various middle and high schools in Israel, with the average age of 52 and an average of 9 years of experience in education. Of the 63principals, 44 were female and 19 were males.

The undergraduate students were given questionnaire, consisting of four pages, concerning their attitudes towards Former Soviet Union (FSU) immigrants. The questionnaire was divided into three parts: (1) two scales that measured the participants' perceptions of similarity and connection with immigrants from FSU, (2) participants' perceptions of homogeneity of immigrants' concerning origin and education, and (3) participants' suggestion concerning the policy of integration for immigrant students in their school. The questionnaire included the Inclusion of Other in Self (IOS) Scale which is scored from 1 (no overlap) to 7 (complete overlap) using two circles to indicated the measure of overlap of self to other. It also included animations that were used to measure the participants' connection to immigrants and a

five point scale that evaluated the degree of familiarity the participants' have with FSU immigrants. Lastly it included the participants' perceptions of where immigrants came from, their belief of what it cost to provide programs used to assist immigrant students, and their perceptions of immigrants' academic skills. The middle and high school principals received a similar questionnaire also consisting of four pages.

To analyze the data, the same statistical tests were used for both studies. A one way ANOVA test was used to examine the participants' perceptions of academic skills. The Inclusion of Other Self (IOS) Scale and Cronbach's Alpha of the two similarity scales where used for the perceptions of homogeneity and perceptions of similarity, respectively.

The results indicated that undergraduate students, identified as persons with no professional knowledge of this particular subject, perceive FSU immigrants to be educated with strong academic performance skills. Undergraduate students still conclude that FSU immigrants originate from big cities, even though it is well-known that immigrants are from the outskirts of urban areas and are deemed less educated. There is a decrease in the amount of programs recommended for immigrants and the need for programs exclusively constructed for immigrants due to a high perception of similarity. This also results in perceptions of familiarity that immigrants do not need study assistance and social or cultural integration.

The results also provided evidence that high perceptions of similarity and familiarity by education professionals lead to less hours devoted to immigrants need for proper integration and focus on language needs. In spite of principals' perceptions that immigrants from FSU are from big cities and are well education, this didn't result in a significant influence on devoted programs to assist immigrants in the process of integration.

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The authors concluded from this study "that perceptions of great similarity and connectedness may hurt the ability to see the others' needs" not only with peers of immigrants but also with educational professionals, (Shpaizman & Kogut, 2010, p. 438). This hinders immigrants' access to programs as well as opportunities that can be extremely helpful to assisting them in their goals for high academic achievement and performance. Even though the study proved that school principals are less influenced by the perceptions of similarity, there was still an effect on the decisions regarding policies related to immigrants. "In such cases, although decision makers are willing to help the group and its members and feel connected to them, they may fail to see the groups' diverse needs which are not similar to their own" (Shpaizman & Kogut, 2010, p. 438). Understanding of the needs of immigrants as a group and as individuals, eliminating the feelings of likeness, is a step towards providing immigrants with policies and programs that support their needs during integration.

Education professionals' perception of academic achievement is not always similar to that of immigrant students or their parents. This dissonance is why perceptions of similarity have the ability to be very harmful to the academic performance and achievement of immigrant students. Education professionals and researchers cannot truly identify what attributes to immigrants' academic performance and achievement without an understanding of how it is perceived my immigrant students and their parents. As immigrants migrate and start acculturation their perceptions of success and failure may or may not change to adopt the beliefs of their new society. This study sought to address the definitions and attributions of academic success and failure of diverse cultures and the impact acculturation has on immigrant mothers and their children (Zadeh, Gava, & Rodgers, 2008).

The researchers in this study used criterion sampling to select the 70 participants. The three criteria that needed to be met to participate in the study were (a) parents needed to have at least a high school diploma, (b) Iranian and Iranian-Canadian children had to be enrolled in junior in high school, and (c) Iranian-Canadian children had to have lived at least five years in Canada. The 70 participants consisted of 41 Iranian parents and their children living in Shiraz, Iran and 29 Iranian-Canadian parents and their children living in Canada. The average ages of the children were 12 to 13-years-old.

The data collection process incorporated interviewing the mothers and children separately in Persian. Four open-ended questions were asked during the interview pertaining educational achievement and lasted about 40 minutes. The interview was driven by two research questions: (a) "How do you define school success/failure" and (b) "In your opinion, what are the reasons for being a successful/unsuccessful student?" These variables from the participant interview responses were transcribed and coded using a semi-structured approach.

The results of the study revealed that Iranian mothers based school success and failure on their children's grades while Iranian-Canadian mothers based school success on perception of their children's academic learning and development but failure on moral and social factors. Both Iranian and Iranian-Canadian students agreed with their mothers' perceptions pertaining to school success. Iranian mothers felt effort was the most important factor attribute in determining success and failure. Iranian-Canadian mothers felt family was the most important factor in determining success and failure. However, Iranian student felt school, family, persistence, and attentiveness as factors attributing to success and effort as the attributing factor to failure, unlike their mothers. Iranian-Canadian students also were opposite of their mother's perception of what

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attributing factors determined success and success, as they mentioned interest, effort or ability. Iranian students voiced anxiety regarding if what they learned in school would be beneficial to them in their adult life. Iranian students hardly expressed any concern relating to non-academic factors.

The implications of these results indicate that "if definitions of success or failure are not the same across cultures, it is difficult to understand what is being attributed to that factor" (Zadeh, Gava, & Rodgers, 2008, p. 62). This communicates a need for education professionals and researchers to understand the influence of acculturation and even assimilation on immigrant students. The findings show that both Iranian and Iranian-Canadian mothers preserved the cultural beliefs they grew up with however, their children accepted the beliefs of the culture they had contact with.

Although the authors justified many significant and relevant issues regarding immigration and acculturation, there are some clear limitations. First, there were almost twice as many Iranian participants than Iranian-Canadian participants. This could explain the higher percentages based on the researcher's method of using Chi-square tables to investigate the difference. Another limitation is that the students in the study are fairly young and will probably express different responses when they finish school or if they move to a different country. The percentage of Iranian immigrants that move to Canada is small compared to the percentage of immigrants that move to the United States (Zadeh, Gava, & Rodgers, 2008).

These three articles amalgamated present three different means in which perceptions can group, stereotype, and impede the academic performance and achievement of immigrant students just by the similarity of characteristics in members of diverse groups. The studies in this

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segment supply evidence that education, awareness, and acceptance is a few of the numerous techniques that can be used to counter negative perceptions of similarity. Although one of the studies presented some proof that positive perceptions of similarity can occasionally be helpful to immigrant students in random instances, it isn't proportionate with the impediment caused by negative perceptions of similarity. The researchers' studies illustrated unequivocal data that multiculturalism and integration can diminish the perceptions of stereotypical traits, educate society to view everyone as an individual with significant needs, as well as encourage immigrants and non-immigrants to value the cultural identities of everyone.

<u>Cultural Identity</u>

All children must grow up and learn how to behave and adapt in diverse environments. The way children operate at home is likely different than their behavior at school or at a social event with friends. As young children develop into adults, they are not just challenged by academia but also challenged with adopting values, traits, and customs through their experiences they identify with. With the accelerating increase of immigrant students into the United States public school system, these challenges are amplified with the addition of diverse cultures. Studies have proven that immigrants, children and adults, strife of academic achievement is more strenuous than that of non-immigrants.

People migrate in search of a place that has more opportunity for increased performance, achievement, and advancement in education as well as in careers for themselves and their children. "Although the act of immigrating in itself can be considered a hopeful act as immigrants sacrifice relationships and familiarity with the culture in their native country for

greater opportunities in the new country, there is evidence that the children of immigrants often

struggle to take advantage of these opportunities" (Urdan & Munoz, 2011, p. 248). This study

aimed to investigate the correlation among academic motivation and cultural identity for

immigrant children (CIPs) and non-immigrant children (non-CIPs) (Urdan & Munoz, 2011, p.

248).

The researchers in this study employed criterion sampling from various universities in the

United States to select 93 participants. The participants included 52 students who stated their

mother was born outside of the United States and 41 students who stated that their mother was

born in the United States. The entire sample group included 69 freshmen, 16 sophomores, and 7

juniors of which 58 were females and 35 were males. The 52 immigrant participants were

required to meet four conditions: (1) be enrolled in a preliminary psychology course, (2) speak

English fluently, (3) be born in the United States, and (4) be accepted as well as actively enrolled

in a selective 4-year university. The parents of the 52 immigrant participants' homelands

accounted for 22 diverse countries.

The data collection began with a female research assistant giving instructions to 93

participants assembled in a computer lab. The research assistant advised that the point of the

research was to analyze how they perceived themselves as students and as members of an ethnic

group. After every participant signed an informed consent form they were split randomly into

two groups. One group completed the survey first then the implicit associations test second. The

other group did the opposite. Participants completed each measurement instrument

confidentially with only a research assistant present. Both the survey and the implicit

associations test were administered to the participants on a computer in the computer lab. If a

participant fulfilled every question of both measurement instruments they were then asked to volunteer for a one-on-one interview at a later date.

The research was driven to prove three hypotheses: (1) "Cultural identity is a more salient feature of overall self-concept for children of immigrants than for children of non-immigrants" (2) "Because cultural identity is a salient part of the overall self-concept of children of immigrants, it will be associated with motivational constructs such as academic self-concept and valuing of academics with feelings belonging in school more strongly for the CIPs than non-CIPs" and (3) "As children of immigrants become increasingly acculturated to societal norms in the USA, their implicit attitudes about who succeeds and who fails will resemble the attitudes of children of non-immigrants" (Urban & Munoz, 2011, p. 251).

The survey given to all 93 participants was divided into four parts. The first section consisted of demographic questions that deduced each participant's ethnic and cultural identity. The second section consisted of questions to analyze how each participant valued their ethnic and cultural identity. The third section contained questions that indicated what factors supported academic motivation. The last section was comprised of a "Likert-like scale" where participants were asked to rate how factors (culture, motivation, family) affected their decision to pursue higher education. 77 of the students completed all ten trails of an *implicit associations test* with the purpose of concluding if the population perceives Caucasians or Hispanics to encompass the most substantial connection linking success with cultural identity. Finally, the researchers selected 11 of the volunteers, who were children of immigrant parents, to be interviewed. The interview took place within four weeks of the date the survey and the implicit associations test administration. Each of the 11 participants was requested to provide a more detailed response of

their answers from the survey and implicit associations test in the presence of an examiner and a research assistant. Each interview lasted between 20 to 40 minutes. The objective of these interviews was to comprehend how they assessed their cultural identity, how belonging to two cultures influenced their academic performance, and how they mastered integrating two cultures.

Several methods of data analysis for the different instruments took place. The data from the survey was analyzed in two methods. The first method used a series of independent t tests to determine whether ethnic identity and academic motivation constructs were significantly dissimilar between immigrant and non-immigrant participants. The second method was two analysis using bivariate correlations of the survey data relating to ethnic identity and academic motivation variables. The first analysis using bivariate correlation was used to find a relationship between the two variables for the total sample. The survey data was then analyzed again to find a relationship among the two variables after separating the sample into two groups; immigrants and non-immigrants.

A 2 x 2 repeated measures and mixed model analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine the differences in reaction times as well as stereotypical and astereotypical pairings between the immigrant and non-immigrant participants. The transcribed data from the interviews was analyzed three different times by the two researchers. The analysis of the data produced three themes with reference to factors that influence the children of immigrant parents in their endeavors of integration.

The results imply that children of immigrant parents value their ethnic and cultural identity more than children of non-immigrant parents. This value of self significantly correlated with academic motivation variables such as academic self-concept, value of education, and the

right to belong. There is implication of a slight statistical significance in the relationship connecting the value of ethnic group and the value of academics for children of non-immigrant parents. Surprisingly, the results indicated that both groups expressed stereotypical perceptions of pairing Caucasians with words and images of success and Hispanics with failure. Lastly the results from the interviews revealed three factors that support the development of a solid cultural identity and academic motivation to achieve in children with immigrant parents: (a) "parental stress on cultural or personal characteristics" (b) "community influence" and (c) "strategies for balancing cultural identities in different contexts" (Urdan & Munoz, 2011, p. 257-259).

The implications of these results indicate a need for the adoption of multiculturalism as well as society's acceptance of integration. This can be achieved by training educators to employ more culturally diverse instructional curricula in early childhood classrooms and continue these teachings in college courses. Also, educators should be required to complete professional development programs that teach an appreciation of culturally diverse groups.

The authors acknowledged several limitations in the study. First, the sample of children of immigrant parents was too diverse. The issue here is stereotypes may be more concentrated regarding their perceptions of academic achievement among their ethnic group, which could cause them to be almost identical to Caucasians with regards to analyzing the results. Another limitation is the sample is of students attending universities that most 1st and 2nd generation immigrants, studied by other researchers, couldn't afford. Lastly, all of the participants spoke fluent English, have been doing well academically since childhood and are attending a scrupulous university implies they all complied to some form of acculturation to be socially acceptable in the United States.

Urdan and Munoz (2011) exemplify some proof that immigrant students that develop a strong cultural identity are more likely to succeed in their quest of academic achievement. However, this is only true if these immigrant students are born in the United States, have immigrant parents who stress a worth in their cultural origins, and have an established strategy for union of two cultures in place. It is important to remember that most immigrant students are not afforded with such resources and must struggle to unearth a compromise between cultural identity, acculturation and academic achievement.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the process immigrant college students, who live in the United States without legal documentation, undertake in their development of cultural identity as they pursue academic and life success (Ellis & Chen, 2013).

The researchers in this study used purposive sampling to select 11 participants. The three characteristics each participant was required meet were (a) to be eligible for citizenship under the DREAM Act, (b) migrated to the US prior to the age of 16, and (c) enrolled or graduated from a US college at the time of the interview. Recruitment of the undocumented immigrant students was done through organizations that accommodate such populations. The participants included eight females and three males who migrated from Poland, Mexico, South Korea, and Central/Latin America.

Each participant was asked to complete a demographic questionnaire before the interview in order to verify that inclusion standards were met. Participants were assured confidentiality and informed on the measures that would be taken to protect preserve their identity. After consenting to the interview, participants individually answered 36 questions in the presence of the two researchers. The duration of each interview lasted between 70 to 100 minutes. The

questions related to but were not limited to acculturation, connection of two cultural groups, cognitive control, coping strategies, conflicts of being undocumented, and experiences. Each interview was audio taped and transcribed into four themes. A model of the initial results was shared with the participants. Participants then had the chance to request the removal of any transcribed data they didn't approve of.

The statistical analysis of the transcribed data was conducted through the grounded theory method. "The grounded theory method is well tailored to a multicultural perspective in that it seeks to understand participants by examining how members of marginalized groups in society derive meaning from their experiences" (Ellis & Chen, 2013, p. 253). The goal of analysis using grounded theory was to determine undocumented immigrant students' theory of identity development.

The results indicated that these immigrant students were exceptionally influenced by the cultures of the society in the country in which they live and those from where they were born in their pursuit of academic achievement and development of cultural identity. Participants' identity fluctuated as they encountered encouraging and hindering experiences in their endeavors to be successful in social, cultural, and academic aspects of their lives. Typically, encouraging incidents produced positive influences and constraints produced negative influences. However, there were few occurrences where the participants strived to overcome obstacles regarding stereotypes correlating to their ethnicity.

The implications of these results sustain the theory that cultural identity is developed from the effects of immigrant students' home culture and the culture in which they live. The results suggest that immigrant students overcome the hurdles of stress from acculturation with

unyielding individual traits, beliefs and values. This study addresses the need for educators to provide a school environment conducive to multiculturalism so that immigrant and non-immigrant students know their worthy of success.

The authors noted several limitations in this study. First, the participants volunteered to partake in the study. This could skew the validity of the data as each participant would probably give similar responses to the questionnaire regarding their experiences. Another potential inadequacy to the data is that each participant was recruited because they had already achieved some type of academic success. This would also threaten the validity of the study as it doesn't address the issues that may occur with immigrant students who didn't get the opportunity to attend college.

The synthesis of the two above articles clearly illustrate that experiences during integration, assimilation, and acculturation influence immigrant students' development of cultural identity during their pursuit of academic achievement. These three studies offer means for more research of how cultural identity influences academic achievement and the significant role that multiculturalism plays in the success of immigrant students. The immigrant students in these studies all experienced some type stress from integration, acculturation, or assimilation. Nevertheless, they all overcame the obstacles they encountered with a developed sense of self and strategies for maintain harmony of their origin culture and the culture in the United States. However, there are several limitations that confine the results from being generalized to all populations and environments. The sample sizes and achievement levels of the participants are the main elements of these limitations. All participants volunteered freely to complete

interviews and all the participants had already succeeded in the endeavors to attend higher education.

Summary

Immigrant students are influenced by many different factors in their endeavors for academic achievement. Stereotypes and perceptions of similarity often deter immigrant students' motivation in performing and achieving successfully in academics. It is evident that immigrant students have a complicated time integrating an unfamiliar culture with the culture that they were raised in, regardless of their place of birth. The research studies reviewed in this chapter signify that immigrant students prevail over the restrictions that stereotypes and perceptions of similarity place on them with a developed cultural identity. Researchers note that a solid cultural identity is formed from growing up in a learning environment that adopts the principles of multiculturalism as well as a family and community that stresses the importance of valuing your personal traits. The small sample sizes and participation of only college immigrant students limit generalization to the entire population of immigrant students, yet the studies exhibit a demand for further research in factors that influence academic achievement. This current study contributes to existing examination of factors by concentrating on three factors; stereotypes, perceptions of similarity, and cultural identity.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The following two research questions guided this study:

1. What are the factors that 1ˢᵗ- and 2ⁿᵈ generation immigrant college students characterize as being essential for academic achievement during their childhood?

2. How do 1ˢᵗ- and 2ⁿᵈ generation immigrant college students overcome the threats from stereotypes and perceptions of similarity in their development of cultural identity while growing up?

Participants

Selection of Participants:

The sampling procedure used by the researcher was convenience sampling. The participants were limited to those at the researcher's university and surrounding sites who identified themselves as being an immigrant student in college with a willingness to cooperate in the procedures of the study. The eight participants are 1ˢᵗ- or 2ⁿᵈ generation immigrant students currently enrolled or completed a degree in an accredited college or university. The participants were also selected because they were all from diverse cultural origins and have attained or were pursuing academic achievement despite the challenges they have faced during their development.

Characteristics of Participants:

The 8 participants in this study are immigrant college student from culturally diverse origins. All of the participants are either 1ˢᵗ- or 2ⁿᵈ generation born immigrants; three males, and five females. The first male student was born and raised in Jamaica, served two terms in the United States Marine Corps, and is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in

Architectural Engineering. The second male student is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Graphic Design Technology who was born and raised in the Virgin Islands. The third male is a student born and raised in Peru who recently completed a bachelor's in Business Administration. He also plans to pursue a MBA in the near future. The first female student was born in Germany, raised in Spain, and currently lives on a military base in North Carolina where she is pursuing a degree in Radiological Technology. The second female was born in the United States, raised by parents who were born and raised in Jamaica, has Asian origins with Jamaican customs, and is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film. The third female was born and raised in the United States by parents who were born and raised in India. She just recently completed a MBA. The fourth female is a female born and raised in Saudi who is pursuing a master's in Education. The last participant is a female who was born in the United States, raised by parents who were born and raised in Haiti and recently completed a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting. She is now pursuing a MBA in a similar field.

Instruments

Interview Questions:

Focused interviews were used to collect data from immigrant college students' on their perceptions and behaviors during their childhood, as well as factors that effected their development into adulthood. A 20-item interview was created by the researcher and used with all participants. A copy of the interview questions is included in Appendix A.

Demographic Questionnaire:

A 9- item demographic questionnaire, also created by the researcher, was used to collect information regarding the participants' age, gender, ethnic background, home country, length of stay in the United States, educational background, language spoken in home, and religion. A copy of the questions is included in Appendix B.

Procedure

The informed consent was given to each participant before the interview began. Each interview was conducted at a convenient location and time selected by each individual participant. The interviews were conducted with participants individually using the interview protocol. Each interview was tape-recorded and lasted between one to two hours.

Data Analysis

The collected data was transcribed and categorized in terms of research questions and four emergent themes. Specific interview questions were matched to answer the two research questions. A coding method was used to organize interview data into a limited number of themes and issues around these questions. Quotes were selected from the interviews that enlighten the four themes. A table was created and placed in the findings which represent each participant as a number while also giving specifics on some of each participant's demographic information. This will ensure that each participant's information is kept confidential.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Through analysis, the researcher was endowed with ample insight regarding the immigrant students' perceptions of threats that may influence successful academic achievement. The participants' actions and responses to questions during the interview were group into themes that correspond to the two research questions. Although there are 20 questions in Appendix A and Appendix B, some participants were asked follow-up questions to allow them to speak freely and openly with the guarantee of confidentiality.

There were two research questions that guided the study and questions:

1. What are the factors that 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant college students characterize as being essential for academic achievement during their childhood?

2. How do 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant college students overcome the threats from stereotypes and perceptions of similarity in their development of cultural identity while growing up?

A fraction of the questions probed what factors can be characterized as being essential to immigrant students' academic achievement during their childhood. The remaining questions explored what factors assisted immigrant students in conquering the threats of stereotypes, perceptions of similarity, and constraints in developing cultural identity while growing up. The researcher's analysis surfaced four themes from the participants' responses: *parental approval, peer pressure, environmental influence,* and *feelings about their ethnic group*.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Participants

	AGE	GENDER	NATIONALITY	ORIGIN	LENGTH IN US	1ST/2ND GEN	LANGUAGES	STATUS
PARTIC 1	20	FEMALE	JAMAICAN	U.S.	LIFE	2ND	ENGLISH/PATOIS	UPPER/MIDDLE
PARTIC 2	23	MALE	PERUVIAN	PERU	9 YRS	1ST	SPANISH/ENGLISH	UPPER/MIDDLE
PARTIC 3	25	FEMALE	HAITIAN	U.S.	LIFE	2ND	ENGLISH/CREOLE	MIDDLE
PARTIC 4	28	FEMALE	SAUDI	SAUDI ARABIA	7 YRS	1ST	ARABIC/ENGLISH	MIDDLE
PARTIC 5	29	FEMALE	INDIAN	U.S.	LIFE	2ND	ENGLISH/GUJARTI	UPPER/MIDDLE
PARTIC 6	30	MALE	JAMAICAN	JAMAICA	13 YRS	1ST	PATOIS/ENGLISH	LOWER/MIDDLE
PARTIC 7	31	MALE	CRUCIAN	VIRGIN ISLANDS	14 YRS	2ND	ENGLISH/SPANISH	WORKING
PARTIC 8	33	FEMALE	GERMAN	GERMANY	18 YRS	1ST	GERMAN/ENGLISH	MIDDLE

Research Question 1

Parental Approval:

Several questions relating to what factors participants characterized as being essential for academic achievement were posed. The data revealed that the approval of their parent(s) played a big part in their academic motivation to achieve. All of the participants contributed their good grades, decision to pursue higher education, and academic motivation to their parents. PARTIC 7 stated, "My mom ingrained the importance of education into my head." PARTIC 5 felt her cultural identity played no part in affecting her assessment of academic success when asked about how her ethnicity shaped her value of success. She gave this credit to her family by saying, "my parents were much more disciplined about doing well in school. It was more a family value than a cultural value." Three of the eight participants stated that they made good grades during their childhood because they feared punishment or disapproval from their parents. This is a clear indication that each participant felt their parents' approval was essential for academic achievement.

Peer Pressure:

Even though all the participants credited their parents as the motivating factor in their academic motivation, more than half of the participants shared a story regarding a peer's involvement in their decision to pursue higher education. PARTIC 1, a film student, told about her yearly production of a video that highlighted the biggest moments of the school year with pictures of her and her peers. She shared the video in her class at the end of every year starting in the second grade. The responses of participants also revealed that peer pressure was more prevalent with peers that were not similar to their own ethnic group. When asked if their interaction with peers not of their ethnic group was different than those that were of a similar group, PARTIC 4 stated that, "there was more pressure to perform around non immigrants."

Environmental Influence:

Numerous questions associated with elements crucial to academic achievement yielded the theme of environmental influence. Participants either decided during their childhood or adult life that they would pursue higher education due to influences in their environment. PARTIC 7 accredited his need to pursue higher education on the type of jobs he was qualified and hired for. PARTIC 5 thought they everyone must go to college so that's why she decided that college was a requirement since 2nd grade. PARTIC 3 doesn't look at grades to define academic achievement but declared, "Grades are still important due it is the only way the *system* knows how to categorize achievement." PARTIC 1 felt that she only cared about grades because she knew that teachers, colleges, and jobs cared about grades. She also stated, "I would go to class and just learn, without the need to be graded, if it was possible." The data revealed that participants didn't give any credit to teachers as being crucial to their academic achievement or performance.

Feelings about their Ethnic Group:

The responses revealed that all of the 1st generation participants spent more time with people that were of, or similar to, their own ethnic group and 2nd generation participants spent time with peers that were non-immigrants. This could be an indication on why 3 of the 1st generation participants felt they wouldn't have pursued higher education if they were born and raised in the United States by non-immigrants parents, as well as why 3 of the 2nd generation participants felt there would be no change. The only exception is with PARTIC 7 and PARTIC 8.

When asked how his perception of academic performance and achievement would be different if he was born and raised in the United States, PARTIC 7 stated, "I think I would be spoiled and not able to appreciate anything." It is also important to note that PARTIC 7 first said that "a shiver ran up his spine" after I asked the question. Also, that to most of American society PARTIC 7 is categorized and perceived as similar to an American and not immigrant, even though he sees and experienced the same stereotypical threats as immigrants in school when he moved from the Virgin Islands to Florida.

PARTIC 8, without hesitation, stated "I don't think it would be different at all" when asked the above question.

<u>Research Question 2</u>

Parental Approval:

Numerous questions explored how each participant conquered stereotype threat and perceptions of similarity during their development of a solid cultural identity. The majority of

the participants' definition of academic performance and achievement differed from their parents once they were adults. Even though all the participants declared that during their childhood they agreed with their parents' measurement of academic achievement and performance on the grades they received, six participants' definition changed as they became adults. PARTIC 6 proclaimed that, "grades tell a lot of lies. Understanding the material and applying it in the real world is real academic achievement and performance." PARTIC 8 gave a solid definition to the terms saying, "Academic performance is trying to apply what you learned and academic achievement is successfully applying what you have learned."

It wasn't that the participants no longer sought their parents' approval once they became adults; they just sought it in a different method. PARTIC 5 confessed that she started pursing a degree in Engineering when she first began attending college, because "that's what my parents told me that Indians who were good at math did." The data from the participants' responses indicated proof that as they grew older they only gave into stereotypes and perceptions of similarity regarding their ethnic group when it pleased their parents.

Peer Pressure:

Question 12 corresponded to threats from stereotypes, perceptions of similarity, and the development of cultural identity from peer pressure. Three participants felt that during their childhood they competed with their peers to be the best in class, two participants acknowledged that their peers would influence them to not study or skip class to hang out, two participants declared that their peers didn't influence them at all, and one participant stated that he felt he influenced his peers to do better academically. Although only one question related to the influence of peers in conquering the threats of stereotypes and perceptions of similarity in the

development of cultural identity, the theme reappeared in other questions relating to academic achievement.

Environmental Influence:

There was no significant data from the responses of the participants that correlated with environmental influence in their endeavors to prevail the threats of stereotypes and perceptions of similarity in their development of cultural identity. Participants either embraced their cultural identity no matter the attempts of external factors to deter them into acculturation, or they adopting assimilation in order to fit in. It didn't matter if the participants were 1st or 2nd generation immigrant students.

Feelings about their Ethnic Group:

There were positive and negative responses when participants were asked about their perception of their ethnic group, words to describe their ethnic group, how others reacted when they learned of their background, and in what ways they felt that their perception of academic performance and achievement would change if they as well as their parents were born and raised in the United States.

PARTIC 4 believed that immigrants value education more than non immigrants. She stated, "Immigrant parents place a better emphasis upon educational success regardless of their country of origin compared to American born parents even with the same ethnic and socioeconomic background." However, six participants described their ethnic groups using only negative words, yet gave positive responses when asked about their perceptions of their ethnic group in relation to academic, social and cultural aspects. PARTIC 8 declared that "pretty much everyone she went to school with is successful" when asked if her academic performance and

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achievement reflected the perceptions of her ethnic group. But, PARTIC 8 used the words

stubborn, rude, and *stingy* to describe members of her ethnic group. PARTIC 5 stated "I don't

associate myself with any ethnicity." She used the words *closed-minded, ignorant,* and *anti-*

social to describe member of her ethnic group. But she also stated that people in her ethnic

group were good at math and appreciated their inherited culture through extravagant

celebrations.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Immigrant students typically face challenges that influence their endeavors in performing and achieving academically. Immigrant students are faced with stereotype threat, perceptions of similarity, and dissonance in the development of their cultural identity. Even though the United States is known as the nation of immigrants, all the members of its society has not adopted multiculturalism. Society's biased view of diversity causes indifference, misunderstanding, and alienations between immigrant and non immigrant students.

Very few studies have focused on the development and academic motivation of immigrant students. Research has proven that immigrant students are overrepresented in remedial classes and drop-out rates. This manipulates educators, other students, and sometimes even immigrant students themselves to believe that they are incapable of academic performance and achievement at the same level as non immigrant and non minority students. Immigrant students are negatively stereotypes, perceived to have similar needs to members of other ethnic groups due to unfamiliarity, and struggle to develop a concrete cultural identity due to the stress of assimilation and acculturation.

The purpose of this study was to explore how academic achievement is perceived by 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant college students and how they conquered the adversities of integration in the United States public school system while growing up. The researcher also looked for evidence that displayed if immigrants students must renounce their cultural identity in order to be successful academically.

Summary of Findings

The four major themes that emerged from the interviews with the immigrant college students are parental approval, peer pressure, environmental influence, and feelings about their ethnic group. Based on the responses, immigrant students' academic motivation derived from their desires for their parents' approval during childhood. The participants' academic motivation usually changed once they were adults. For example, six of the participants, declared that even though their parents measured academic performance and achievement by the grades they received, each now measured it from experience, understanding of the material and application of that knowledge in their career. It is surprising that all the participants couldn't give an example of how a teacher influenced their academic achievement during their childhood.

Peer pressure played a huge role in the participants' aspiration to achieve during childhood. Most of the participants thought of their years in elementary school as a competition when it came to grades. Two participants stated that they skipped class or didn't study because their friends swayed them to. All the participants acknowledged that they had no issues with stereotypes or perceptions of similarity during their childhood. They kept home and school separate. When the peers of the participants discovered they were immigrants, most were surprised, others thought it was "cool" but no one changed their view of the participant as incapable or unequal.

A positive factor that promoted academic performance and achievement among immigrant students was environmental influence. This emerged theme takes on a new discernment on the nature versus nurture theory. Personal experiences as a child and as an adult were displayed as a vital facet of each participant's decision to pursue higher education. For

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example, an immigrant student with Jamaican origins and an immigrant student born in Saudi, both credit elements like television as well as the unknown for their reasoning to attending college. An immigrant born in the Virgin Islands contributes his decision to the lack of good jobs in the workforce. Another immigrant with Indian origins attributes her decision to attend college to all the college students she saw day to day. She stated, "I thought that was what everyone did. Always thought you must go to college…it was the next step."

Stereotype threat and perceptions of similarity did influence the development of the participants' cultural identity, but it also affected the way the participants perceived members of their own ethnic group. PARTIC 5 chose to not associate with any cultural identity unless someone purposely questions her about the subject. She referenced members of her own ethnic group with negative stereotypical characteristics like anti-social and ignorant. It can't be said that she has succumb to the full process of assimilation as she still eats Indian food, participates with her family in Indian customs, and has visited India several times in her life.

However, the same can't be said for PARTIC 1. When asked her nationality, she responded, "American." All other immigrant participants, whether born in the U.S. or in another country, responded with their country of origin for their family. PARTIC 1 also stated that when she completes applications, she marks the boxes that ask for race as Asian, because of her physical features. Her parents speak Patois, a broken-English language spoken in Jamaica, and she can understand it but she does not consider it a "real" language. Lastly, PARTIC 1 does not eat West Indian food, visit Jamaica with her parents, or listens to reggae. This is can be viewed as her surrender to assimilation from the stress American society places on immigrants to achieve because her parents own one of the biggest reggae production companies ever known.

<u>Implications</u>

The findings from this study provide a context from which to understand the influence of stereotype threat and perceptions of similarity on the development of cultural identity of immigrant students. For education professionals in the United States this framework can provide a need for teachings in multiculturalism. Educators can also benefit from the results a better understanding of the value of diversity. Educators should look past society's view of what is considered normal for immigrant students and delve deep into how immigrant students see and want for themselves. This will allow immigrant students more opportunity to develop a more solid cultural identity that can't be hindered by stereotypes or perceptions of similarity. For researchers around the world, this displays a need for more research to unearth more solid evidence pertaining to the factors that promote academic achievement and later life success of young immigrant students.

<u>Recommendations for Future Research</u>

Based on the results of the study, there are several recommendations for future research. First, some of the limitations outlined in this study may be diminished or eliminated with a larger sample size of a more diverse population. To improve or verify the accuracy of the data collection of a larger sample size, more than one researcher or interview would be necessary. Several analyses of the data with a larger sample size would be required in order to find major themes that emerged for all the researchers. Second, to verify an in-depth perceptive of what factors immigrant students characterize as being essential to academic achievement and performance as well as how immigrants conquered stereotype threat and perceptions of similarity

during the development of their cultural identity while growing up, a more thorough survey with numerous interview would need to be conducted. This would allow the researcher to ask participants follow-up questions as issues occurred. Finally, this research only measures the factors of stereotypes, perceptions of similarity, and cultural identity as it relates to academic achievement and performance. Future research should allow the participants to express the factors that they feel influenced their academic achievement and performance. Supplementary research could educate us on rationale in the role ethnicity has in influencing immigrant students across more diverse groups if compared to non-immigrants. It could also examine differences between 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant students in relation to all these variables.

Conclusions

Immigrant students should be afforded the same opportunities academically as non immigrant students. The threats of stereotypes and perceptions of similarity in hindering the development of their cultural identity shouldn't be an issue that immigrants must endure or conquer. Educators and other students should adopt the value of multiculturalism and understand how vital diversity is in the learning process. Immigrant students should be proud to share their beliefs and customs without being stressed to conform to assimilation or acculturation.

Several conclusions can be made from this study. Surprisingly, teachers had no influence, positive or negative, on the participants during childhood. Several questions probed the memory of teachers' involvement in the participants' academic motivation and performance. All of the participants could not remember any teacher influencing them to do better. Some of

the participants stated that teachers seemed surprised when they out-performed other students in the class. PARTIC 2 stated, "As long as I was passing, teachers didn't care how or why." It is also important to note that the researcher noticed that most of the participants seem to respond more politically correct when asked follow-up questions that were not on the initial questionnaire. The participants stopped talking about an event that occurred, asked why a question not on the questionnaire was asked, and/or responded quickly with one to three word answers.

Secondly, immigrant students who seem discontented about their cultural background or have had bad experiences with members of their own ethnic group tend to give in to assimilation and acculturation in order to fit in or to be successful. Lastly, the threats of stereotypes and perceptions of similarity don't just effect immigrant students' development of cultural identity but also how they perceive members of their own ethnic group. It seems that peer pressure and environment influences immigrant students to think negatively about their ethnic group which forces them to have more meaning relationships with members of groups that are not stereotyped.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What are the factors that 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant college students characterize as being essential for academic achievement during their childhood?

1. How did your parent(s) measure academic achievement and performance when you were a child in elementary school?
2. Did your teachers' perception of academic achievement and performance differ than that of your parent(s)?
3. Was your interaction with teachers and students that were non-immigrants different than with those who were immigrants?
4. When and what influenced your decision to pursue higher education?
5. How do you feel your ethnicity affects your value of academic success?
6. Did you spend more time with members of your own or similar ethnic group or with non-immigrants? Why?
7. What motivated you to do well academically in your childhood?
8. Why did you choose your specific field of study?
9. How do you now define academic performance and achievement? Is this different than when you were a child?
10. In what ways do you feel that your perception of academic performance and achievement would differ if you were born and raised in America?

How do 1st- and 2nd generation immigrant college students overcome the threats from stereotypes and perceptions of similarity in their development of cultural identity while growing up?

1. How or did your peers influence your academic life during your childhood?
2. How did your teachers influence your perception of the importance of academic achievement and performance during your childhood?
3. What ethnicity do you consider as your own?
4. Explain your perception on how students and teachers who originated from the United States view your ethnicity.
5. What do you consider the difference between ethnicity, nationality, and race?
6. Do you feel your academic performance and achievement reflect the perceptions of your ethnic group?
7. What is your perception of your ethnic group and its members relating to academic, social and cultural aspects?
8. What are some words you use to describe members of your ethnic group?
9. Are other people shocked or surprised to learn of your background, nationality, or beliefs?
10. Have you ever felt stereotyped or perceived in a negative way relating to your academic ability or social status during your childhood or adulthood? If yes or no, do you feel it was related to your ethnicity or nationality?

APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

- What is your age?
- What is your gender?
- What is your nationality?
- What country were you and your parents born in?
- What is your educational background?
- How long have you (and your parents) lived in the United States?
- What is your religion?
- What languages are spoken in your household as a child and as an adult?
- What is your socioeconomic status?

APPENDIX C: APPROVAL OF EXEMPT HUMAN RESEARCH

University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1**
          FWA00000351, IRB00001138

To: **Tamara Fagan**

Date: **September 18, 2013**

Dear Researcher:

On 9/18/2013, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Exempt Determination
Project Title:	Stereotypes, Perceptions, and Cultural Identities: Factors That May Influence the Academic Achievement of Immigrant Students
Investigator:	Tamara Fagan, Early Childhood Dev & Ed
IRB Number:	SBE-13-09596
Funding Agency:	
Grant Title:	
Research ID:	N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 09/18/2013 01:58:06 PM EDT

IRB Coordinator

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