5 Educational Achievement and Attainment Differences Among Minorities and Immigrants

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Abstract

The U.S. student population is increasingly comprised of racial/ethnic minority and immigrant students. Drawing on national-level data, we document the gaps in educational achievement and attainment for minority and immigrant students that are apparent at all levels of education, from early education through postsecondary schooling. These achievement gaps reflect, in part, the broader racial and ethnic hierarchy of the U.S., but the experiences of immigrant-origin minority students additionally contribute to the complexity of racial and ethnic stratification in education. Though research shows that socioeconomic status accounts for much of the differences in achievement, factors such as schools and teachers, peer relationships, and neighborhoods and communities may also contribute to the variation in academic outcomes.

5.1 Introduction

Recent estimates show that nearly half of the 50 million students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools in the U.S. are racial and ethnic minorities. Specifically, the student population in public schools is 51% White, 16% Black, 24% Hispanic, 5% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% American Indian/Alaska Native.[1] In some of the largest urban school districts in the U.S., the student population is already "majority minority" (Aud et al. 2010). Moreover, racial and ethnic differences in academic achievement and attainment are longstanding and continue to be the subject of much research and debate (Kao and Thompson 2003; Noguera 2008). The U.S. student population also includes a significant number of children of immigrants. Nearly one in four children have at least one immigrant parent (Fortuny et al. 2009), and by 2050, an estimated one in three children will come from immigrant families (Passel 2011). Further, the children of immigrants are highly diverse—about 58% are Hispanic, 19% are Asian, 16% are White, and 9% are Black (The Urban Institute n.d.).

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[1] The U.S. Department of Education is the source for much of the data presented in this chapter and typically combines Asian and Pacific Islander populations into one category. We recognize that this broad category masks considerable diversity and, where possible, we present data for sub-groups.

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Scholars have proposed various scenarios for how the U.S. racial and ethnic hierarchy might change due to the diversity of immigrants, and how such changes are likely to affect different groups (Lee and Bean 2010). However, the recent rise of anti-immigrant rhetoric and a new political administration that favors restrictive immigration policies have arguably made the U.S. less welcoming of immigrants more generally. As a result, immigrant children may face greater obstacles in the near future. While some cities such as San Francisco, Seattle, and Philadelphia and a number of college campuses have declared themselves as sanctuary sites, proposed policies that target individuals from specific countries and undocumented individuals threaten educational opportunities. Elsewhere, this volume examines undocumented children, who will suffer the greatest impact of the current administration's focus on the deportation of undocumented adults. A non-trivial share of native-born children from immigrant families come from families with mixed legal statuses (Fix and Zimmermann 2001). In such families, children with legal status may have a parent, sibling, or other close relative who is undocumented. Such families are at risk of being separated and face significant challenges that will likely affect their children's educational achievement.

Researchers commonly use educational achievement and attainment measures to gauge the integration of minorities and immigrants. It is critical to understand the educational outcomes of children of minority native-born and foreign-born parents, especially in the context of growing racial tensions. In this chapter, we compile data from U.S. Department of Education reports and studies to present an overview of racial, ethnic, and immigrant differences in achievement and attainment from early education to postsecondary completion. We then place educational outcomes in context by drawing upon prior reviews of literature and highlighting illustrative examples of current empirical research. We do not focus on gender differences or the experiences of undocumented youth because other chapters in this volume do so.

5.2 Early Education

Enrollment in early education helps children prepare academically for entry into formal schooling. In the fall of 2014, about 41% of White 3- to 5-year-olds were enrolled in preschool, followed by 40% of Asians, 39% of Blacks, 32% of Hispanics, and 31% of American Indians/Alaska Natives. Among children attending preschools, greater proportions of minority children did so for the full day compared to White children (Kena et al. 2016). Immigrant parents are less likely to enroll their children in center-based care (Karoly and Gonzalez 2011). For minority and immigrant children, access to early education may help them adapt to the "middle-class mainstream" norms expected by schools (Entwisle and Alexander 1993). Access to early education can strengthen the English language skills of children with immigrant parents (Karoly and Gonzalez 2011). Moreover, early childcare centers serve as important facilitators of social capital, providing mothers with access to a broader network of parents and resources (Small 2009). There is some evidence that Black children receive lower-quality care than White children in early education programs and that providing universal, quality early childhood education would substantially reduce early achievement gaps for both Black and Hispanic students (Magnuson and Waldfogel 2005).

The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Birth Cohort of 2001 (ECLS-B 2001) is a nationally representative study conducted by the Department of Education that administered tests of letter and number and shape recognition to a sample of children who were about 4 years of age in 2005–06. Overall, about 33% of children were proficient in letter recognition and 65% were proficient in number and shape recognition. Race and ethnic differences are already apparent at this early age. Asian children had the highest rates of proficiency in both letter (49%) and number and shape recognition (81%), followed by White children (37% and 73%, respectively). In letter recognition, Black children had a proficiency rate of 28%, followed by 23% for Hispanic children, and

19% for American Indian/Alaska Native children. For number and shape recognition, Black children had a proficiency rate of 55%, followed by 51% for Hispanic children, and 40% for American Indian/Alaska Native children (Aud et al. 2010).

Studies have linked parenting behaviors and infant health to racial and ethnic differences in early cognitive ability using ECLS-B data (Gibbs et al. 2016; Lynch 2011). Lynch (2011) found that Black infants had poorer health (e.g., premature birth, lower birth weight) than White infants. Asian infants had better health and Hispanic infants did not differ from White infants. Accounting for infant health explained a large portion of the Black, but not Hispanic, disadvantage in early educational outcomes and some of the Asian advantage. Other studies have found that when socioeconomic factors, such as family income and parents' education are taken into account, much of the gap in early educational outcomes for minority and immigrant children is accounted for (Entwisle and Alexander 1993; Glick and Bates 2010). Understanding early differences in child developmental outcomes has implications for achievement gaps that are found later in life, when children enter schools (Torche 2016).

5.3 Primary and Secondary Education

5.3.1 Test Scores

Trends in reading and math performance of 4th-graders in the main National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show persistent differences by race/ethnicity (Fig. 5.1). In 2015, Asian/Pacific Islander 4th-graders had the highest achievement, with an average NAEP reading score of 239 and an average NAEP math score of 257, followed by White students (232 and 248, respectively). In reading/math, Black (206/224), Hispanic (208/230), and American Indian/Alaska Native (205/227) 4th-graders scored similarly, but below their White and Asian/Pacific Islander peers. These differences have remained largely unchanged over the past decade.

There are also stark differences in NAEP scores by English language learner (ELL) status (Fig. 5.2).[2] On average, non-ELL 4th-graders outperform their ELL peers in both reading and math, though differences are larger in reading scores. In reading, non-ELL 4th-graders scored an average of 226 compared to 189 for their ELL peers. In math, non-ELL students had an average score of 243 while ELL students had an average score of 218. The ELL disadvantage is present across racial/ethnic groups. Further, racial/ethnic differences in ELL student performance mirror those of non-ELL students, with Asian/Pacific Islander and White ELL 4th-graders outperforming their Black and Hispanic ELL peers.

Similar racial and ethnic patterns are seen in NAEP 8th-grade reading and math assessment trends (Fig. 5.1). Results from the 2015 assessment show that Asian/Pacific Islander students have the highest average reading and math scores (280/306), followed by White students (274/292). Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native students had similar reading and math scores (253/270 and 252/267, respectively) while Black students had the overall lowest scores (248/260). These racial/ethnic differences in reading and math achievement are also found among high schoolers (Fig. 5.1). In the 2013 NAEP reading assessment of 12th-graders, White students had the highest average score (297), followed by Asian/Pacific Islander (296), American Indian/Alaska Native (277), Hispanic students (276), and Black (268) students. In math, Asian/Pacific Islander students had the highest average score (172), followed by Whites (162), American

[2]We acknowledge that the term English language learner (ELL) is an imprecise measure of students' immigrant status. Unfortunately, the federal data used in this chapter do not provide measures of student or parent place of birth. There may be immigrant students who are fluent in English and thus not classified as ELL and native-born students who are classified as ELL. An ELL student, as defined by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), is one who has "sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language."

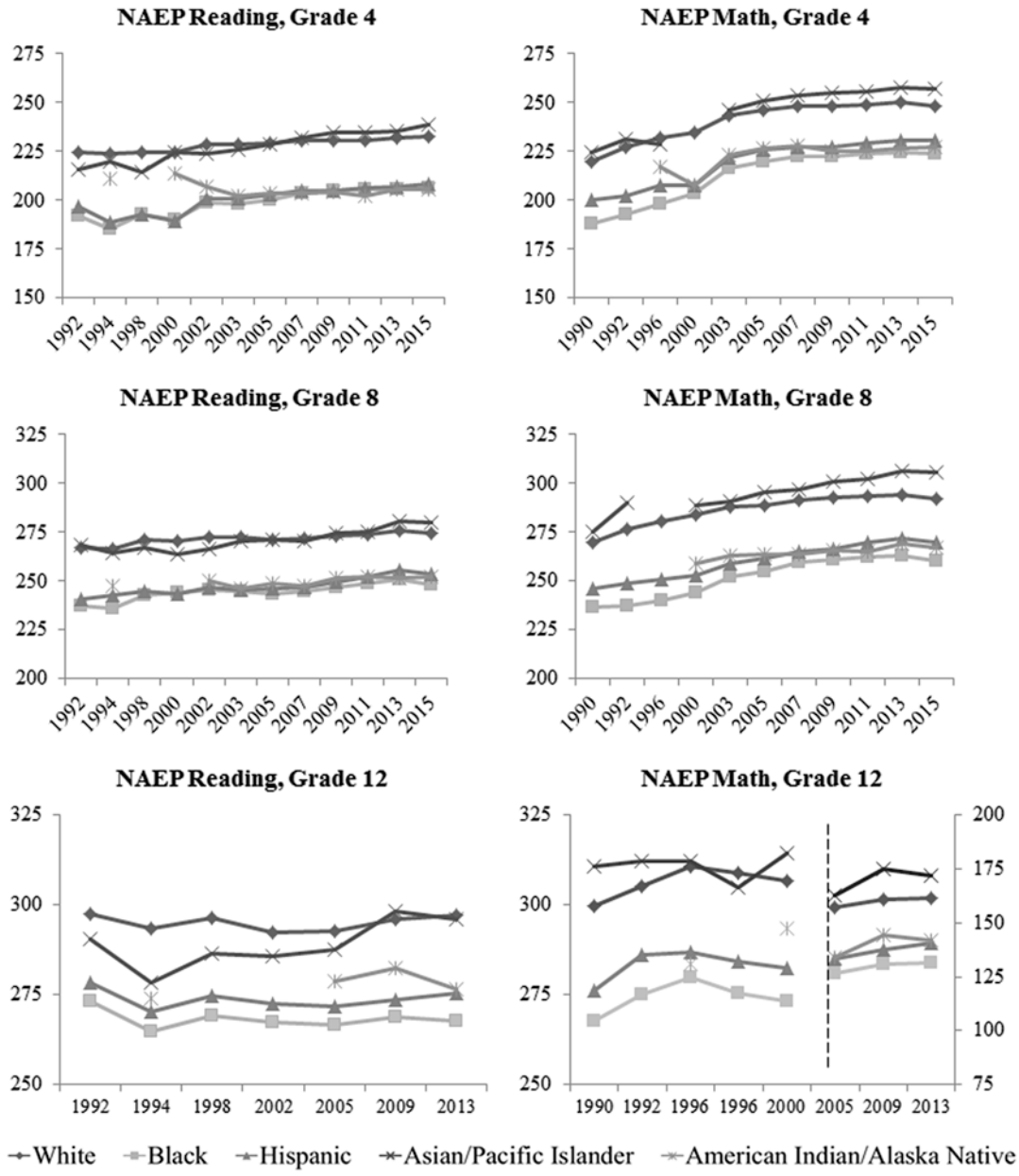

Fig. 5.1 Trends in NAEP reading and math scores by race/ethnicity. (*Broken lines* are due to lack of data for that year. In 2005, the math portion of the NAEP for 12th-graders was redesigned with a new scoring scale—scores from 2005 onwards are graphed on the secondary axis to the right. Authors' compilation of data from the NAEP Data Explorer (NDE), U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/))

Indian/Alaska Native (142), Hispanic students (141), and Black students (132).

There are large differences in both reading and math scores between non-ELL students and their ELL peers in both 8th and 12th grade, on average and across racial/ethnic groups (Fig. 5.2). Among 8th-graders, non-ELL students had an average reading score of 268 compared to a score of 223

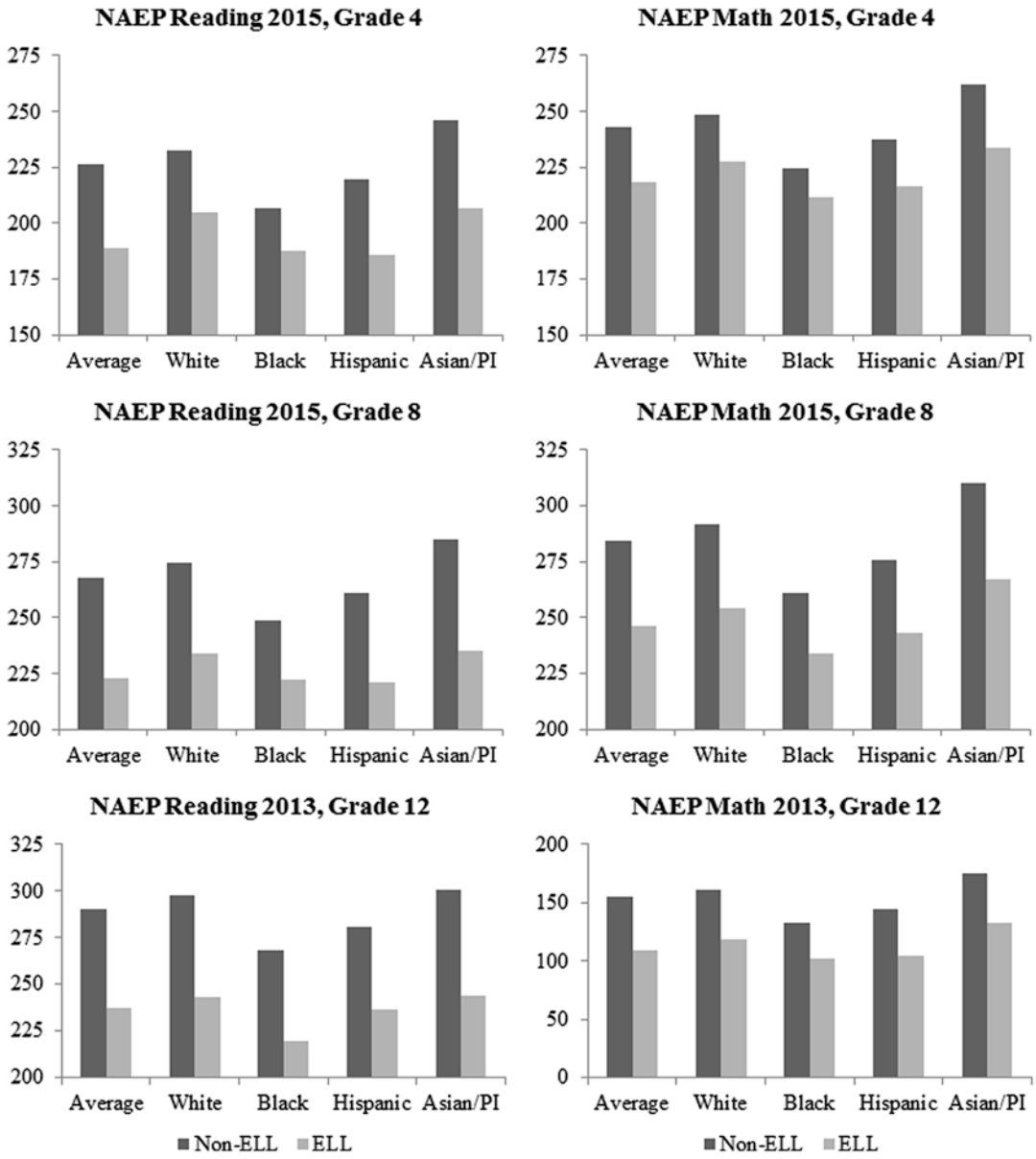

Fig. 5.2 Average NAEP reading and math scores in 2015 by ELL status and race/ethnicity. (Authors' compilation of data from the NAEP Data Explorer (NDE), U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/))

for ELL students. In math, non-ELL students had a score of 284 compared to 246 for their ELL peers. Among 12th graders, non-ELL students had an average reading score of 290 compared to 237 for their ELL peers. In math, non-ELL students scored an average of 155 compared to 109 for ELL students. This pattern of ELL disadvantage holds across racial and ethnic groups in both 8th and 12th grade. However, racial and ethnic gaps among ELL students are generally smaller than those found among non-ELL students.

5.3.2 High School Grades and Coursework

The NAEP High School Transcript Study (HSTS) collects transcript data on a nationally representative sample of graduating U.S. high school students. Data from HSTS show that the racial and ethnic and immigrant differences in test scores are mirrored in students' grades and coursework as well. Between 1990 and 2009, the average GPA of all students increased slightly, but racial/ethnic differences persist (Fig. 5.3). Asian/Pacific Islander students maintain the highest GPAs (3.26 in 2009), followed by White (3.09), American Indian/Alaska Native (2.87), and Hispanic (2.84) students, while Black students, on average, have the lowest GPAs (2.69).

ELL students earn somewhat lower grades than their non-ELL peers (Fig. 5.4). The average GPA for ELL students in 2009 was 2.75, 0.25 points lower than that of non-ELL students. For some racial/ethnic groups, ELL students earn comparable or even higher grades than their non-ELL peers. For example, Black ELL students have an average GPA of 2.75, higher than the 2.69 average for non-ELL Black students. Hispanic ELL students have an average GPA that is 0.18 points lower than their non-ELL counterparts, smaller than the average non-ELL/ELL difference, and much smaller than the 0.30 point

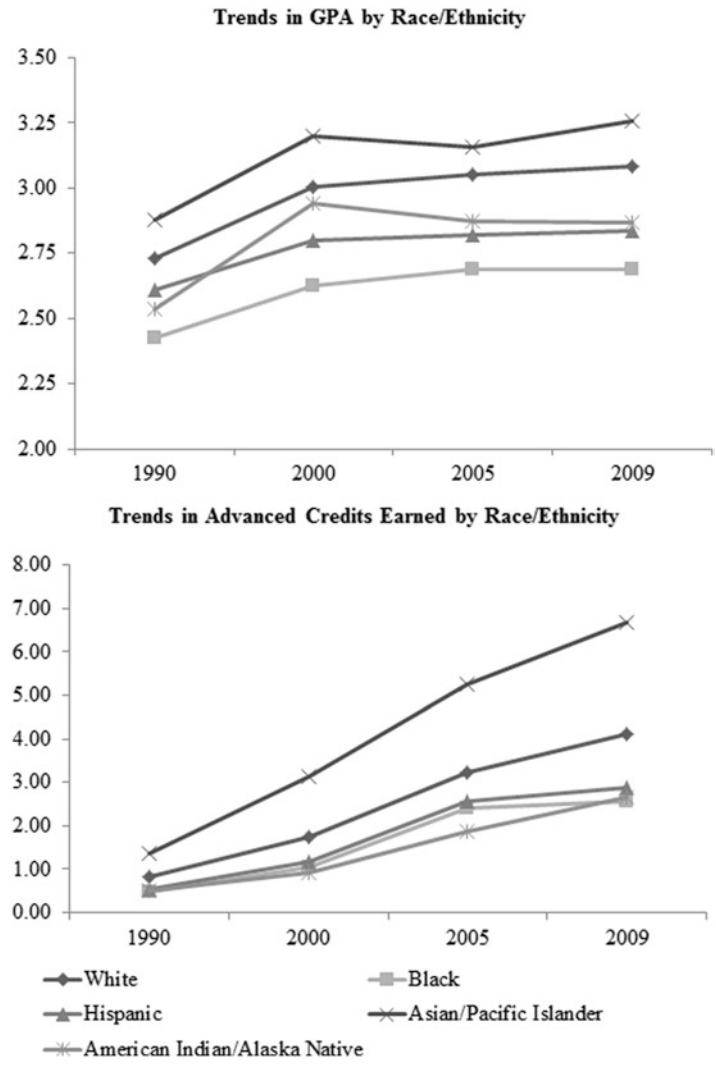

Fig. 5.3 Trends in high school achievement by race/ethnicity. (Authors' compilation of data from the NAEP Data Explorer (NDE), U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/))

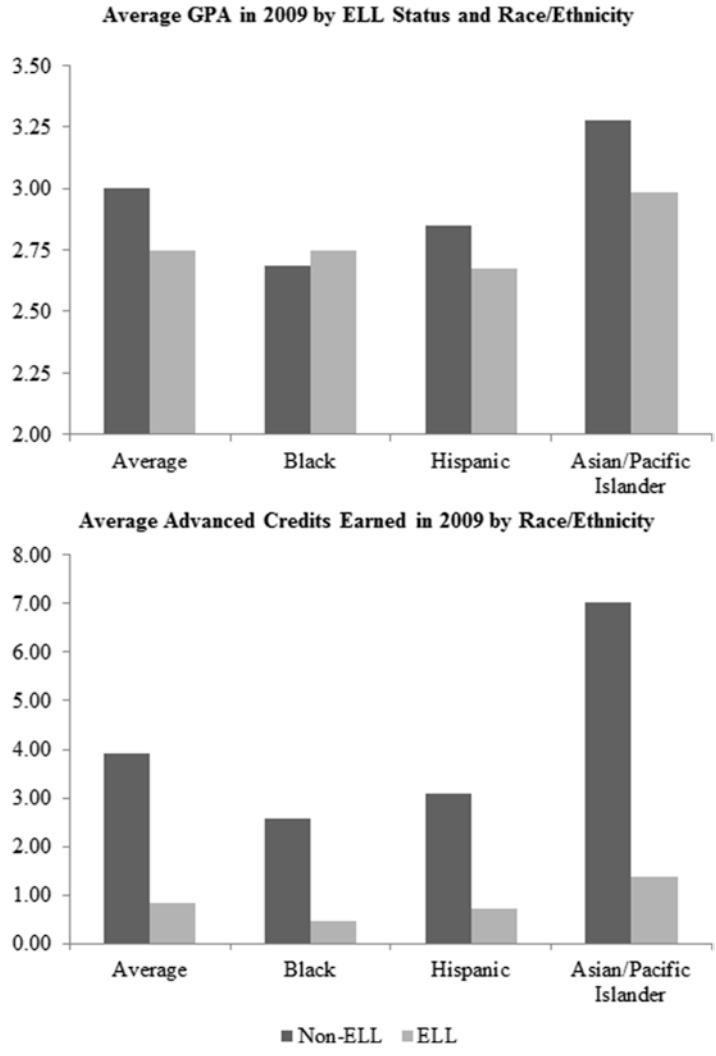

Fig. 5.4 High school achievement in 2009 by ELL status and race/ethnicity. (Authors' compilation of data from the NAEP Data Explorer (NDE), U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. Data for White students did not meet reporting standards and are thus not shown (https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/))

difference between Asian/Pacific Islander ELL and non-ELL students. Moreover, among ELL students, racial/ethnic differences in grades are less pronounced. Black ELL students have an average GPA comparable to the ELL student average while Hispanic ELL students have an average GPA just 0.08 points lower than the ELL average. In contrast, among non-ELL students, Black and Hispanic students have average GPAs that are 0.31 and 0.15 points lower than the non-ELL average, respectively.

Because students are likely to encounter some form of tracking once they enter formal schooling, it is important to examine differences in coursework. For high school students, enrolling in honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses can give them access to higher-quality instruction and indicate their college readiness to postsecondary institutions. The increasing relevance of advanced coursework for high school students is evident in the steep growth over the past two decades in the average number of advanced credits earned by students (Fig. 5.3). In 1990, with the exception of Asian/Pacific Islander students who earned slightly less than 1.5 credits, all student groups accumulated on average less than one advanced course credit, defined as an honors, pre-AP/AP, or pre-IB/IB course. By 2009, all racial and ethnic groups of students on average had more

advanced course credits. However, the gaps between racial/ethnic groups also sharply increased. Asian/Pacific Islander students earned an average of nearly seven advanced course credits, while White students earned an average of just over four credits. Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaskan Native students all accumulated on average between 2.5 and 3 advanced course credits, less than half that of Asian/Pacific Islander students.

The gap in advanced course credits between non-ELL and ELL students is also substantial (Fig. 5.4). On average, non-ELL students had about four advanced course credits, compared to less than one credit for ELL students. Black and Hispanic ELL students earned an average of less than one advanced course credit, while their non-ELL counterparts accumulated an average of between 2.5 to 3 credits, respectively. The ELL to non-ELL gap in credits earned is especially large among Asian/Pacific Islander students—non-ELL students earned about seven credits compared to fewer than two for ELL students. Thus, though ELL students had GPAs that were fairly comparable to their non-ELL peers, they are less likely to accumulate advanced credits.

5.4 High School Completion and College Readiness

The Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR) is a measure used by the Department of Education that estimates on-time high school graduation with a regular diploma. In 2013–14, the overall AFGR was estimated to be 82%. Asian/Pacific Islander students had the highest AFGR—89%—followed by White students, at 87%. Hispanic students had an AFGR of 76%, followed by Black (73%) and American Indian/Alaska Native (70%) students (Kena et al. 2016).

Another measure of high school completion is the "status dropout rate" (SDR) which relies on census data to estimate the percentage of 16- to 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and who have not received either a regular high school diploma or an equivalent credential, such as a GED certificate. In 2014, the average SDR was about 7%, but this varied significantly by race, ethnicity, and nativity. Overall, Asian youths had the lowest average SDR (3%), followed by Whites (5%), Blacks (7%), and Hispanics (11%). However, among Hispanic and Asian subgroups, average SDRs varied considerably. Among Hispanics, Central American groups, such as Guatemalans (29%) and Hondurans (20%), generally had average SDRs higher than the Hispanic average while South Americans, such as Colombians and Peruvians (both 3%), generally had lower average SDRs. The average SDR for Mexicans (11%) was similar to the Hispanic average. Among Asians, average SDRs for Nepalese (20%) and Burmese (28%) were much higher than the average Asian SDR. Hmong (6%), Cambodian (8%), and Laotian (9%) youth also had average SDRs higher than the Asian average (Kena et al. 2016). These widely varying estimates highlight the limitations of broad racial/ethnic categories such as Hispanic and Asian when analyzing educational outcomes, although data limitations often preclude disaggregation by subgroups.

Among U.S.-born youth, Asians had the lowest average SDR (2%), followed by Whites (4%), Blacks and Pacific Islanders (both 7%), Hispanics (8%), and American Indians/Alaska Natives (11%). Among foreign-born youth, Asians and Whites had average SDRs comparable to their U.S.-born counterparts (3% and 4%, respectively). Black immigrant youth had a slightly lower average SDR (6%) than their U.S.-born peers while immigrant Hispanics and Pacific Islanders had much higher average SDRs (21% and 23%, respectively) (Kena et al. 2016). However, because the SDR measure is population-based and includes a broad age range, it likely includes many immigrants who never attended schools in the U.S. (Aud et al. 2010; Oropesa and Landale 2009).

Students who intend to enter postsecondary schooling usually have to take the SAT and/or the ACT. Across SAT test subjects, White and Asian/Pacific Islander students have higher average scores than Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native students (The College

Board 2015). For the ACT, the percentage of 2015 high school graduates who met ACT college readiness benchmarks also varied by race/ethnicity, with a higher percentage of White and Asian students meeting benchmarks than other racial/ethnic minority students (ACT, Inc. 2015). Factors such as high school coursework and track placement likely shape students' preparedness for college entrance tests.

Researchers have also examined access to resources such as SAT/ACT test preparation courses and private tutors. Some studies have shown that minority students are more likely than their White peers to use such strategies to improve their performance (Alon 2010; Buchmann et al. 2010; Byun and Park 2012; Espenshade and Radford 2009). However, studies of low-income urban Black and Hispanic youth show that such students generally report limited knowledge about college entrance exams and their importance in college admissions and have less access to test preparation resources (Deil-Amen and Tevis 2010; Walpole et al. 2005). While special programs that seek to improve the college readiness of underrepresented minority students may be helpful, they likely offer fewer resources than what is available to students in high academic tracks (Ochoa 2013). Cram schools often found in Chinese and Korean ethnic communities may offer even less wealthy Asian American students access to supplementary education services (Byun and Park 2012; Lee and Zhou 2015), but these resources are less readily available to other minority students (Zhou and Kim 2006).

5.5 Postsecondary Enrollment and Completion

5.5.1 Postsecondary Enrollment

The immediate college enrollment rate, or the percentage of graduating high school students enrolled in 2- or 4-year colleges the following fall, was approximately 68% in 2014. Asian students had the highest immediate enrollment rate (85%), followed by Whites (68%), Blacks (63%), and Hispanics (62%). The college participation rate is an estimate of the percentage of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college. In 2014, the average college participation rate was about 40%. Asians had the highest college participation rate (65%), followed by Whites (42%), Pacific Islanders (41%), Hispanics and American Indians/Alaska Natives (both 35%), and Blacks (33%) (Kena et al. 2016). Studies using nationally representative longitudinal data find that differences in college enrollment between White and minority students are largely explained by differences in socioeconomic status and family background (Bennett and Xie 2003; Charles et al. 2007).

Among White students enrolled in college in 2013, about 35% attended a 2-year public institution. This is in contrast to 49% of all Hispanic students enrolled in college who attended 2-year public institutions. About 45% of American Indian/Alaska Native college students, 39% of Black students, and 38% of both Asian and Pacific Islander students attended public 2-year colleges. About 40% of White and 44% of Asian college students were enrolled in 4-year public institutions compared to 31% of both Pacific Islander and Black students and 34% of both Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native students. About 18% of White college students enrolled in private, not-for-profit 4-year institutions, followed by 14% of Asian students, 13% of both Black and Pacific Islander students, 11% of American Indian/Alaska Native students, and 10% of Hispanic students. Pacific Islander students had the highest rate of enrollment in private, for-profit schools (19%), followed by Black students (15%), American Indian/Alaska Native students (10%), Hispanic students (9%), White students (6%), and Asian students (4%) (Musu-Gillette et al. 2016).

In 2007–08, nearly one quarter of undergraduates had at least one immigrant parent. For some groups, immigrant generational status is especially salient to their postsecondary experiences. For example, among Asian college students, more than half (55%) were foreign-born and another 38% had at least one immigrant parent. Among Hispanic college students, 21% were foreign-born and 45% had at least one immigrant parent. Enrollment patterns among first and

second generation immigrant Hispanic college students were comparable—for both groups, 51% were enrolled in community college, 36% in nonprofit 4-year schools, and 12% in for-profit schools. Among foreign-born Asian college students, 54% were enrolled in community colleges and 38% in nonprofit 4-year schools, compared to 40% and 55%, respectively, of second generation Asian college students. About 7% of foreign-born and 5% of U.S.-born Asian college students were enrolled in for-profit schools (Staklis and Horn 2012).

The type of institution students attend matters for their graduation rates—when comparing similar students attending differently selective institutions, researchers found that minority students have a higher likelihood of graduating if they attend a more selective institution (Alon and Tienda 2005). Some research has shown that Black and Hispanic applicants to highly selective schools receive an admissions advantage in terms of their ACT/SAT scores (though Asians do not) (Espenshade and Radford 2009). However, high schools vary in the amount of support they provide to students to help them navigate the transition to postsecondary schooling, which may result in underrepresented minority students applying to less selective schools than they are actually qualified for (Roderick et al. 2011). The concentration of immigrant students in community colleges is also an area of ongoing research concern, including issues of access, affordability, and language learning (Teranishi et al. 2011).

5.5.2 Postsecondary Completion

For students attending a 4-year college full-time for the first time in 2006, the average graduation rate after 4 years was 39%. About 46% of Asian students and 43% of White students graduated within 4 years. Hispanic students had an average 4-year graduation rate of 29%, and for Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Black students, the corresponding rates were 24%, 22%, and 21%. Not surprisingly, 6-year graduation rates are higher overall (60%) and for all racial/ethnic groups compared to 4-year graduation rates. Asian students had the highest 6-year graduation rate (71%), followed by Whites (63%), Hispanics (53%), Pacific Islanders (50%), Blacks (41%), and American Indian/Alaska Native students (41%) (Snyder et al. 2016). Another measure of college attainment is the percentage of adults over the age of 25 who have a postsecondary degree. In 2013, about 30% of adults had a bachelor's degree or higher. Among Asians, 52% earned a bachelor's or higher, followed by Whites (33%), Blacks (19%), Pacific Islanders (16%), American Indian/Alaska Natives (15%), and Hispanics (14%). The broad categories of Hispanic and Asian mask considerable variation by sub-groups. For example, 32% of South Americans and 25% of Cubans are college graduates compared to 10% of Mexicans and 8% of Salvadorans. Among Asian sub-groups, 73% of Asian Indian and 52% of Chinese adults have a college degree compared to 28% of Vietnamese adults (Musu-Gillette et al. 2016).

In 2008, the percentage of U.S.-born adults over the age of 25 with at least a bachelor's degree was about 28% and 24% for the foreign-born. Among Hispanics, about 13% of the U.S.-born and 12% of the foreign-born earned a college degree. U.S.- and foreign-born Asians students also had comparable rates of college degree attainment overall (50% and 49%, respectively). Though there are considerable variations in college degree attainment among both U.S.-born and foreign-born Hispanic and Asian sub-groups, within sub-groups rates of college degree attainment by nativity are similar. For example, 10% of U.S.-born and 9% of foreign-born Hondurans earned a college degree, and about 50% of U.S.-born and 51% of foreign-born Korean adults are college graduates (Kao et al. 2013).

5.6 The Importance of Race, Ethnicity, and Nativity

At every level of education and across multiple educational outcomes, patterns of racial and ethnic stratification are apparent. In general, Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native students experience poorer educational outcomes

relative to more advantaged groups such as White and Asian students. Students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) on average also fare worse than non-ELL students, although racial and ethnic differences among ELL students typically, though not always, mirror those found among non-ELL students. In this section, we describe how these racial, ethnic, and immigrant differences in educational outcomes fit into the larger debates around racial relations in the U.S. We also highlight some of the issues that set children of immigrants apart from their peers with native-born parents.

Scholars envision various ways in which the U.S. racial and ethnic hierarchy may shift due to demographic changes, including the growing size and diversity of the immigrant population. Some scholars believe that "[c]hildren of Asian, black, mulatto, and mestizo immigrants cannot escape their ethnicity and race, as defined by the mainstream" and that discrimination will likely affect these students' academic performance (Portes et al. 2005). Others argue that boundaries between Whites and Asian and Latino groups are more likely to erode over time than Black–White lines (Lee and Bean 2010), suggesting more positive outcomes for non-Black minorities. Still others believe that a tri-racial hierarchy is more likely—with lighter-skinned minorities (such as East Asians and White Latinos) earning "honorary White" status and darker-skinned minorities forming a disadvantaged "collective Black" group (Bonilla-Silva 2004).

How the minority children of immigrant parents adapt to the U.S. racial and ethnic hierarchy is important for understanding their educational outcomes (Kao et al. 2013). Some research suggests that academically successful first and second generation minority youth assert a more "traditional" identity that they contrast with the "Americanized" values of their less successful co-ethnics (Lee 2005; Louie 2012; Matute-Bianchi 1986; Waters 1994). In interviews with West Indian and Haitian youths in New York, Waters (1994) found that although second generation youth all realized they were likely to be perceived as native Blacks by others, those from middle-class backgrounds tended to emphasize their ethnic identity and immigrant origins, distancing themselves from native Blacks. These students believed that doing well in school would pay off. Poorer second generation youths tended to identify with native Black peers and believed they would have limited opportunities for upward mobility and did not do as well in school. Matute-Bianchi (1986) found similar patterns among Mexican-descent students in central California—academically successful first and second generation students used their immigrant and ethnic culture to distinguish themselves from less academically successful Chicanos and "cholos." In contrast to the negative stereotypes about Black and Hispanic students' academic abilities, the general academic success of Asian students has led to the "model minority" stereotype that paints all Asian students as naturally high-achieving. However, the stereotype can be harmful to Asian groups that do not fare as well academically because their struggles may be overlooked in schools (Lee 2005; Ngo and Lee 2007; Teranishi 2010), and also contributes to perceptions of Asian students as overly competitive academically and less well-rounded (Jiménez and Horowitz 2013; Kao 1995; Oakes and Guiton 1995; Ochoa 2013).

In addition to their experiences with the racial and ethnic hierarchy of the U.S., children of immigrants are also affected by generational status. The proportions of first, second, and third generation and higher varies considerably across groups. Among Hispanic youth, about 6% are first-generation, 51% second generation, and 42% third generation or higher. For Asian youth, the corresponding estimates are 13%, 65%, and 20%; for Black youth 2%, 12%, and 86%; for White youth less than 1%, 7%, and 92%. These generational differences matter for student outcomes. Among first-generation youth, the age of arrival matters for language acquisition and socialization (Rumbaut 2004). Research is mixed on whether the first or second generation immigrants experience better educational outcomes (Baum and Flores 2011; Coll and Marks 2012; Crosnoe and Turley 2011; Duong et al. 2015; Kao and Tienda 1995; White and Glick 2009). An ongoing research concern is the notion of "immi-

grant paradox," where greater acculturation is associated with poorer health, behavioral, and educational outcomes, and the mechanisms behind the paradox (Coll and Marks 2012; Crosnoe and Turley 2011). Evidence of the paradox often depends on the population studied and how researchers define and measure acculturation. Some scholars argue that immigrant parents and their children experience assimilation differently and that when children acculturate to American norms and lack ties to their ethnic communities, "dissonant" acculturation may result, leading to conflicts with parents and lower achievement. Dissonant acculturation, such scholars argue, is more likely among immigrant groups that arrive with fewer socioeconomic resources and who perceive little chance of upward mobility (Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

5.7 Academic Outcomes in Context

Prior reviews of research have concluded that family socioeconomic status (SES) accounts for a significant portion of differences in educational outcomes for racial/ethnic minority students (Kao and Thompson 2003; Lee 2002; Magnuson and Duncan 2006; Sakamoto et al. 2009; Sewell et al. 1969). However, an ongoing research concern is to understand what factors beyond SES contribute to remaining academic gaps (Hallinan 1988). Below, we review several bodies of literature on non-familial resources that may influence educational outcomes, and focus on how these factors might matter in particular for minority and immigrant students.

5.7.1 Schools and Teachers

The role schools play in minority student outcomes is an area of ongoing research. Researchers have used seasonal comparison studies—in which student achievement is measured when schools are in session and out of session—to try to isolate the effects of schooling on student outcomes. Such studies have shown that while schools help "equalize" class differences in educational outcomes (Downey and Condron 2016), Black–White achievement gaps actually grow during the school year (Condron 2009; Downey et al. 2004). Using data from the nationally representative Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–99 (ECLS-K), Downey et al. (2004) measured kindergarten, summer, and first-grade learning rates. After accounting for socioeconomic status, the authors found that Black and Hispanic students learned at similar rates to White students, and Asian students at a faster rate, during the summer between kindergarten and first grade. However, during the kindergarten and first-grade school years, Black students learned at slower rates than White students, and Asian students lost their advantage, suggesting that early schooling experiences are a source of racial/ethnic inequality. In another seasonal study using ECLS-K data, Condron (2009) found that school characteristics, such as having a predominantly minority student population and using ability grouping, explained more of the Black–White achievement gap in first grade than non-school factors, although the exact mechanisms through which these school factors impact minority students is less clear.

In a review of research on school segregation and its effects on students, Reardon and Owens (2014) argue that while much research has focused on the extent of school racial segregation, which has remained largely unchanged for the past 25 years, research has not yet provided solid theoretical models for how segregation affects educational outcomes. While studies on the effects of early desegregation policies showed improvements for Black students, and no harmful effects for White students, more contemporary studies have yielded mixed findings on the link between segregation and achievement. For example, Black high school students in predominantly White schools are less likely to take higher-level math courses than Black students in predominantly Black schools (Kelly 2009), but racially balanced schools appear to provide more equitable access to higher-level English courses than schools that are predominantly White or Black (Southworth and Mickelson 2007). Reardon and

Owens (2014) suggest that the mechanisms through which racial segregation affects student achievement may have changed over time—for example, differences in school resources might have been a primary reason for Black–White educational inequality in the past but such a mechanism might not be as applicable today if school resources are distributed more evenly. They argue that to better understand how segregation affects student outcomes, researchers should examine the links between segregation and the availability, distribution, and impact of various school resources.

School policies such as ability grouping and tracking may contribute to racial and ethnic differences in educational outcomes. Studies have shown that Black and Hispanic students are less likely to be placed in higher-level academic tracks compared to Asian and White students (Dauber et al. 1996; Oakes et al. 1990; Oakes and Guiton 1995; Ochoa 2013) and that ELL students may be isolated from mainstream courses while they gain English fluency, preventing them from participating in higher-level coursework in other subjects (Callahan 2005). While there are mixed findings on whether minority students remain at a disadvantage in course placement once prior achievement is accounted for (Van de Werfhorst and Mijs 2010), it is important to note that racial and ethnic differences in academic outcomes are present from an early age and can grow over time due to a variety of both school and non-school factors. These early differences likely shape students' track placements, which can be based on a variety of subjective criteria, including teacher beliefs about student abilities—beliefs that may be influenced by students' race/ethnicity (Gamoran 1992; Oakes and Guiton 1995). Studies have shown that generally there are few opportunities for students to move into higher-level tracks once placed into low-level tracks (Dauber et al. 1996; Hallinan 1996). Access to advanced coursework is associated with higher achievement (Gamoran 1987) and being in a higher-level track can benefit students through greater access to school resources, such as regular meetings with counselors (Oakes and Guiton 1995; Ochoa 2013).

Research also points to the important role teachers' expectations can play in shaping student outcomes. In their influential model of the educational and occupational attainment process, Sewell et al. (1969) included teachers alongside parents and peers as "significant others" whose expectations are likely to influence students' own aspirations and attainment. Their model suggested that students' prior academic achievement would be a strong influence on teacher expectations, but other researchers have since pointed out the importance of race. Alexander et al. (1987) found that White and Black teachers from higher-SES backgrounds tended to rate Black first-graders more negatively than White children, while student race did not seem to matter for ratings among teachers from lower-SES backgrounds. These ratings mattered for students' grades, with Black children performing worse than White children in the classrooms of high-SES teachers but not in the classrooms of low-SES teachers. Some research suggests that once family background and academic performance is controlled for, there are no racial differences in how high school students perceive teacher expectations (Cheng and Starks 2002), although Alexander et al. (1987) suggest that differences in teacher expectations may be most apparent at earlier stages of schooling, when expectations and academic trajectories are first formed.

One of the mechanisms through which teacher expectations may influence student performance on tests is "stereotype threat"—the theory that negative stereotypes, such as those about the academic abilities of minority groups, can cause students to feel threatened, out of fear of being judged by that stereotype or conforming to it, and hamper performance (Steele 1997). Another perspective is that "positive" stereotypes can cause students to "choke under pressure." In an experimental study, researchers primed some Asian American female students, a group that would fall under the "model minority" stereotype, about their ethnic identity prior to a math test and found this group performed lower than the control group (Cheryan and Bodenhausen 2000). Most studies of the stereotype threat have been done in lab settings (Spencer et al. 2016), so it is not

always clear how it would operate in classroom settings.

5.7.2 Peer Relationships

Research has shown that adolescents' friendships are important for their emotional well-being (Giordano 2003) and educational outcomes (Cherng et al. 2013; Hallinan and Williams 1990). Using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, which followed a nationally representative sample of middle and high school students, Cherng et al. (2013) found that students benefitted academically in terms of college completion from having best friends with college-educated mothers, above and beyond their own family resources. The authors suggested that friendships are an "underrecognized" resource for students. In an earlier study using different nationally representative data, Hallinan and Williams (1990) found evidence that interracial friendships between Black and White students were related to positive outcomes, such as higher educational aspirations. However, the influence of peers on students' educational outcomes remains understudied, particularly the roles of "structuring" variables such as race/ethnicity (Giordano 2003) and nativity (Cherng 2015).

One of the most prominent theories about the importance of student attitudes and peer groups is Ogbu's cultural-ecological theory (Ogbu 2004; Ogbu and Simons 1998). Though Ogbu took into account the broader context or "ecology" of education for minority students—including educational policies and practices, societal rewards for educational achievement, and the treatment of minorities in school—it is the "cultural" component of his theory that has received the most attention. Ogbu argued that because they have experienced discrimination, Black students (as well as other "involuntary minorities" such as Puerto Ricans and Mexicans in the Southwest) do not believe education will help them achieve upward mobility. As a result, these students embrace an "oppositional culture" that hinders academic achievement because high achievement is considered "acting White" (Downey 2008; Ogbu 2004; Ogbu and Simons 1998; Warikoo and Carter 2009).

More recent work has argued that what is considered an "oppositional" attitude in minority students is actually a more general youth culture concerned with not appearing to be too overly studious, and that minority students do strongly believe in the value of education (Carter 2005; Goldsmith 2004; Harris 2011; Tyson et al. 2005; Warikoo 2011). Harris (2011) used survey data collected from Black and White families in Maryland and found that Black students are not embedded in peer groups that engage in negative behaviors or that hold negative academic attitudes. After accounting for SES, Black students' friends actually hold more positive attitudes toward school than White students' peer groups, a finding consistent with earlier research (Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey 1998; Hallinan and Williams 1990). Carter (2005) found that minority students who culturally "straddle" school and peer culture are successful academically and socially, offering a different approach to understanding minority youth culture.

5.7.3 Neighborhoods and Communities

More recently, there has been an increase in research on the role of neighborhoods in shaping educational outcomes. Broadly, neighborhoods are theorized to influence children's outcomes through both structural (e.g., unemployment, racial segregation, poverty rates) and social processes (e.g., social disorganization, social networks). Poorer neighborhoods might lack community institutions that provide extracurricular and enrichment activities for children (Bennett et al. 2012) and can be more "culturally heterogeneous" in regards to youth's educational goals, which plays a role in college enrollment patterns (Harding 2011). A number of studies have found the prolonged exposure to poorer neighborhoods, both across generations and within a child's own

lifetime, is associated with lower academic performance and greater risk of dropping out of high school (Sharkey and Elwert 2011; Wodtke et al. 2011). However, on the whole, neighborhood effects literature has yielded mixed findings regarding children's academic outcomes, in part because it is challenging to separate neighborhood effects from important factors, such as family background and school characteristics, and because of inconsistencies in how researchers define and measure neighborhood characteristics (Arum 2000; DeLuca and Dayton 2009; Johnson 2010; Robert J. Sampson et al. 2002; Small and Newman 2001).

One of the ways researchers have sought to measure neighborhood effects is through housing mobility programs, which offer low-income, usually minority families the opportunity to move into neighborhoods with less poverty. Studies of the Gautreaux program, an early housing mobility program in Chicago, found benefits for children in families who moved to suburban areas through the program, including lower school dropout and higher college enrollment rates, compared to students whose families moved but stayed in urban neighborhoods. However, studies of later programs such as the Yonkers Family and Community Project in New York and the multicity Moving to Opportunity (MTO) program have shown mixed results or even negative outcomes stemming from children changing neighborhoods (DeLuca and Dayton 2009; Johnson 2010). Researchers continue to debate outcomes from MTO, such as the relative importance of racial and social class segregation and the best way to measure individual-level outcomes (Clampet-Lundquist and Massey 2008; Ludwig et al. 2008; Sampson 2008), with some researchers arguing that the age at which children change neighborhoods and the length of exposure to different types of neighborhoods matter for educational outcomes (Chetty et al. 2016; Clampet-Lundquist and Massey 2008).

In studies of immigrant families and schooling, researchers have emphasized the role of ethnic communities for some immigrant groups. Segmented assimilation theory posits that assimilation paths are influenced in part by the strength of co-ethnic communities. Depending on their context, immigrant youth might assimilate into under-achieving minority communities, high-achieving mainstream communities, or they may selectively assimilate by maintaining ties to their ethnic community while striving for high educational achievement (Portes and Rumbaut 2001, 2006; Portes and Zhou 1993). Research has found that the average level of education of immigrant groups prior to migrating influenced immigrant children's educational expectations independent of their parents' own level of education, suggesting the importance of ethnic communities (Feliciano 2006). Ethnic communities can be useful resources for members, by providing access to information and resources for navigating school systems (Kasinitz et al. 2008). Ethnic communities can also define and enforce social norms in ways that both help and hinder academic achievement (Lee and Zhou 2015; Portes 1998; Zhou and Bankston 1994). Portes (1998) suggests that group solidarity might lead to "negative social capital" in the form of "downward leveling norms"—similar to "oppositional culture" arguments. Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou (2015) suggest that the ethnic communities of more highly selective immigrant groups, such as those of East Asians, are characterized by narrow definitions of success that emphasize high achievement, while less selective immigrant groups, such as Mexicans, define success more broadly. However, it can be difficult to measure individuals' embeddedness in ethnic communities, and measures are not always consistent across studies.

An emerging area of research for immigrant scholars has been the growth of immigrant populations in areas that previously experienced little immigration, particularly in parts of the South and Midwest (Massey 2008; Singer 2013; Tienda and Fuentes 2014; Waters and Jiménez 2005). Many of these new immigrant destinations are in rural and suburban areas, contexts that differ from the urban environments on which much of our theoretical understanding of immigrant assimilation is based. While there has been some research into the integration of immigrant families in these new destinations (Marschall et al.

2012; Massey 2008; Winders 2013), more research is needed to understand how communities and schools respond to new and growing immigrant populations and how immigrant children fare in these environments. Of course, what may matter most moving forward is the impact of anti-immigrant sentiments and policies in the U.S. on these vulnerable populations.

5.8 Conclusion

Growing far-right movements and anti-immigrant sentiments have imperiled many minority and immigrant families worldwide. A recent report from the United Nations notes that, globally, more than half of the nearly six million school-aged refugee children are not in school (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2016). In the U.S., the changing demographics of the student population and the continued salience of race, ethnicity, and immigrant status for social stratification underscore the need for continued research on persistent racial, ethnic, and immigrant differences in educational achievement and attainment. At all levels of education, Black, Latino, and American Indian students experience poorer outcomes than their White and Asian peers. However, broad racial categories mask considerable variations by ethnicity and nativity, especially among Asian and Latino students. Moreover, how the racial and ethnic hierarchy both influences and is influenced by minority immigrant-origin youth has implications for students' educational outcomes.

Socioeconomic status consistently accounts for a sizeable share of the academic gap for minority and immigrant students but researchers are also interested in the ways other factors, such as schools and teachers, peer relationships, and neighborhoods and communities, influence student achievement. Research in these areas is important, particularly research focusing on how and why the effects of these factors vary across racial/ethnic and immigrant groups.

Though beyond the scope of this review, we note that how education pays off for different racial/ethnic and immigrant groups is an important area of research. Among young adults with a bachelor's degree or higher, racial/ethnic minorities and immigrants have lower rates of employment than Whites and the native-born (Snyder et al. 2016). A recent audit study of job applications found that Black graduates of elite institutions receive fewer responses than Whites and the responses they do receive are for lower pay and less prestigious positions (Gaddis 2015). Some research finds that at all levels of higher education White males receive higher returns than Asian, Hispanic, and Black males (Hout 2012). Sakamoto et al. (2010) found that first and second generation immigrant Black males earn less than similarly educated White males, but more than non-immigrant-origin Black men. Zeng and Xie (2004) compared the earnings of U.S.- and foreign-educated Asian males to those of Whites, and found no earnings disadvantage among the former but a significant disadvantage among the latter. While a college education seems to protect Whites and Asians from economic downturns, it does not seem to do so for Blacks and Hispanics (Emmons and Noeth 2015). Future research should seek to connect earlier schooling experiences to later outcomes, with particular attention to how outcomes vary among individuals with similar educational levels.

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