



Immigration

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Synthesis on immigration

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How important is it?

According to the International Organization of Migration¹, approximately 200 million people are currently living outside of their country of origin. Reasons for this [physical relocation](#) include financial insecurity, political instability, educational opportunities, and demographic growth. Cultural and psychological changes in customs, language, and values (i.e., [acculturation](#)) resulting from contact with a different culture are likely to vary depending on the individual's wish to maintain their culture of origin and to adopt the culture of the mainstream society. People who are highly engaged in both the heritage and mainstream cultures (i.e., [integration](#)) tend to adapt more easily to the immigration process in comparison to those who have an exclusive orientation toward their heritage culture (i.e., separation). These two [acculturation strategies](#) are especially relevant for children and adolescent immigrants. Indeed, as immigrant children move into adolescence, they become increasingly engaged in the larger society and their relations with each cultural context play a considerable role in shaping their self and identity. Given that immigrant children will eventually represent a [considerable proportion](#) of workers in many affluent countries, it is important to promote their well-being, development, and success.

What do we know?

Data obtained in [longitudinal studies](#) conducted in Canada during the 1980s and 1990s² provide evidence that immigrant children may be less likely to experience emotional and behavioural problems than non-immigrant children (4- to 11-years-old). Despite their increased likelihood of experiencing social and economic adversity, first-generation immigrant children may be more resilient due to [protective individual, situational, and family factors](#). Examples include 1) a lower likelihood of affiliations with deviant peers; 2) a strong ethnic identity; 3) living in neighbourhoods with higher concentrations of first generation immigrants; 4) living in a two-parent home; and 5) low levels of parental mental health problems and risk-taking behaviours. However, these protective factors seem to [dissipate over time](#) and reach a level similar to non-immigrant children, therefore providing an explanation as to why there is generally declining mental health across successive generations of immigrant children. This loss in resilience may also be intensified by [parent-child conflicts](#). Parents and children do not always share the same attitudes and behaviours towards adopting the values and beliefs of the mainstream country. Because immigrant children are exposed to [socialization agents](#) other than their family members such as their peers, teachers, and professionals, they learn and adapt more rapidly the customs and language of the mainstream culture. In fact, results from a longitudinal study conducted in the United States suggest that immigrant adolescents who are fluent in both their parents' home language and the

¹ International Organization for Migration Website. Available at: <http://www.iom.int/jahia/jsp/index.jsp>.

² Ma X. The first ten years in Canada: A multi-level assessment of behavioural and emotional problems of immigrant children. *Canadian Public Policy* 2002;28:395-418.

language of the settlement country, and who navigate fluidly between the two social and cultural contexts [adjust more successfully](#).

Immigrant children's [integration](#) is also driven by their desire to be accepted by their peers. By forming friendships with children of the mainstream culture, immigrant children learn and adopt the customs and socio-cultural values of the mainstream society (e.g., engaging in unsupervised activities during adolescence). However, immigrant parents are often resistant to these changes and continue to value the importance of [cultural maintenance](#) (i.e., customs from the heritage culture). This [acculturation gap](#) is likely to complicate communication and mutual understanding between the two generations, in turn increasing tension and conflict.

Lastly, parents may experience further [loss in parenting practices](#) when dealing with the education, mental health, and child welfare system. Given that many immigrants arrive into countries where [school options, policies, and language differ from their country of origin](#), immigrant parents are likely to be misunderstood by service providers who are not familiar with the family's heritage culture, thereby undermining parents' capacity to help their children with school work.

What can be done?

Just as immigrant families learn the language and customs of the mainstream culture; it is important that service providers and policy makers increase their knowledge of immigrants' [cultural beliefs and expectations](#) about child development. The latter may have customs, rituals, and parenting practices different from the mainstream society and those may influence children's normative development. Clinicians should be aware of these differences to better understand immigrant children's needs and strengths. In order for immigrant families to benefit from [adequate community services](#), providers in education, health, and other organizations are also encouraged to provide [out-reach and interpretive services](#) in the home languages of children and their families. By reaching out to immigrant parents and orient them to their children's schooling in their new culture, school personnel may [reduce acculturation gaps](#) between the two generations. Not only would parents increase their knowledge about the school system, but also they would have a better idea of what is expected of their children. However, [education policies, programs, and curricula](#) for first generation adolescent immigrants with little or no experience in schools must address different issues than policies for first generation immigrants who obtained most or all of their education in the mainstream culture. Finally, [tolerance of cultural diversity](#) in the mainstream society, as reflected by policies, public discourse, and low perceived discrimination, is necessary in order to promote partnerships between two cultures.



Immigration and Acculturation in Childhood

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Topic

Immigration

Introduction

Immigration is the physical relocation of a person (and is typically thought of as relocation to another country), whereas acculturation refers to the psychological adjustment of the individual who has experienced relocation. Both immigration and acculturation are personally transformative experiences.¹ Thus, we would expect that the act of immigrating and the process of acculturating alter children's development in significant ways. This article briefly describes the state of our knowledge of immigrant children's psychological development.

Subject

It has been estimated that approximately 200 million people currently live outside their country of birth or citizenship for a variety of reasons, including demographic growth, climate change, educational opportunities, financial insecurity, or political instability.² Thus immigration and acculturation are relevant to the study of children's development. Despite the large numbers of immigrants and immigrant children worldwide, too little is known about how immigration and acculturation influence children's development. In addition, the overwhelming majority of research on children's development has been conducted with European and North American middle-class children. Thus, we know very little about how immigrant children's development is similar to or different from that of European or North American middle-class children, nor what the developmental significance of any differences might be.

Problems

The bulk of research on immigrant and minority children has focused on risk behaviours in adolescence, such as drug use, teen pregnancy, and school failure or failure to assimilate. For example, the majority of immigrants to the United States (using the Census designation "foreign-born") were from Latin America (using data from the 2000 Census),³ and Latino children in the United States have been described as being more likely to be born into single-parent households and to parent(s) with low levels of education and low levels of income.⁴ Although such descriptions may characterize most Latino children in the United States (who are primarily of Mexican origin), they do not accurately describe Latino children whose parents originated in other Latin American

countries. For example, Latino immigrants from South America to the United States tend to be well-educated professionals.³⁻⁶ Latinos in the United States differ not only in terms of culture of origin, but also reasons for immigration, socioeconomic status, and generational level, all of which can each influence children's development.⁷ Although the particular issues of concern regarding immigrant children's development may differ across countries, research typically deals with problem behaviours, regardless of country.

Two major problems with the body of research on immigration and acculturation in childhood are:

- It has focused on problem behaviours and not on how immigrant children experience normative developmental events. Thus, the research has not allowed for the discovery that immigrant children may be faring quite well in some areas.
- Second, the research on immigrant children has also often confounded ethnicity, immigrant status, and socioeconomic status. Failure to account for important sources of variability within "Latinos" or "Asian" Americans, for example, has led to tendencies to inaccurately group and unfairly stereotype immigrant children.

Research Context

Most research on immigrant children's development adopts a deficit model, focuses on adolescents and not infants or younger children, and suffers from small and/or demographically heterogeneous samples. Moreover, much research historically has been an extension of cultural stereotypes (e.g., looking at teenage pregnancy among American Latino youth, exploring academic performance among Asian American youth).

Key Research Questions

The key research questions with respect to immigration and acculturation in childhood that should be asked are:

- Do immigrant children differ from their non-immigrant peers with respect to attainment of important developmental milestones? (For example, learning to speak or learning to read, particularly when immigrant children reside in bilingual homes.)
- If so, what is the developmental significance of these differences? (For example, some research has suggested that the vocabulary development of immigrant toddlers lags behind that of their monolingual peers, but does that matter in the long run? In the short term, these children might be flagged for early intervention services with respect to language development, but in the long term they may benefit from the cognitive and social advantages that being able to speak/read/write two languages confers.)

Recent Research Results

Most research on younger immigrant children's development has centred on bilingual language acquisition and immigrant children's subsequent academic performance. However, recent research has also explored diverse topics such as immigrant children's beliefs about schooling,⁸ children's physical development and health,⁹ gender roles,¹⁰ temperament,¹¹ play,^{12,13} and immigrant parents' involvement with their children,¹⁴

beliefs about parenting,¹⁵⁻¹⁷ motherhood,¹⁸ and emotional health.¹⁹ For example, play among Latino immigrants from South America and Japanese immigrants is similar to each other and more like the play of European American mothers and toddlers (in the culture of destination) than mothers and toddlers in the cultures of origin (Argentina, Japan),^{12,13} suggesting that behaviours acculturate relatively quickly, at least for these two immigrant groups. In contrast, research on parenting beliefs suggest that South American-Latino immigrant and Japanese immigrant mothers' knowledge of parenting and infant development is dissimilar to European American mothers and more like mothers in the cultures of origin (Argentina, Japan),¹⁵ suggesting that beliefs acculturate relatively slowly.²⁰ Mother and infant play behaviours of similar kind were significantly positively related for South American- Latino immigrant and Japanese immigrant dyads, as well as for mothers in the cultures of origin (Argentina, Japan) and culture of destination (European-American mothers in the United States), suggesting that concordance in mother-infant play interactions may be cross-culturally universal (and unchanged by immigration).¹³ Finally, contemporary research has attempted to understand and explain results from the perspective of indigenous cultures of origin, rather than from a culture of destination (European or North American) perspective.

Research Gaps

First, we need to know more about how immigrant children achieve normative developmental milestones, whether their developmental trajectories differ from those of majority children, and what the developmental significance of any differences may be. Second, research on immigrant children has tended to focus on adolescents, and we know less about the development of infants and young children from immigrant families (when intervention, if necessary, might prove most productive). Finally, we know less about within-group variability than desirable. For example, many times Latino youth are lumped together in American research studies, even though immigrants to the United States from different Latin American communities differ from each other in a variety of ways.

Conclusions

The large and growing numbers of immigrants around the world, and our dearth of knowledge about them, necessitate that we learn more about immigrant children's normative development, their needs and their strengths. These factors also require that we pay particular attention to areas of well-being that may not be as great an issue with non-migrant children and families. For example, the stress of migration may make immigrant mothers more susceptible to depression than non-migrant mothers, and depression affects parenting and children's development adversely. Immigrants may have a particularly difficult time adjusting to their new culture if the migration is not voluntary (as in the case of refugees) or if immigrants are socially isolated (from either family, friends or cultural community). What is known about immigrant families suggests that childrearing beliefs tend to be more consistent over time and slower to acculturate than either children's behaviours or parent practices.^{20,21} Most research results present a picture of strengths as well as areas for improvement in immigrant children's lives.

Implications for Parents, Services, and Policy

Perhaps the most important implication of immigration and acculturation for parents, service providers and policy makers is that we cannot assume that patterns of parenting and child development that are true for majority families are also true for immigrant families. Although the U.S., for example, prides itself on being “a nation of immigrants,” acculturation to majority group norms is no longer enforced, service providers are likely to find themselves with culturally-diverse groups of children, and policy makers with culturally-diverse groups of constituents. Thus, just as immigrants are learning about and adapting to their new country, it behooves practitioners and policy makers to learn more about the cultural beliefs and practices of their service population so that they may better support them. For example, the work of U.S. pediatricians (80% of whom are European-American) can be enhanced by better understanding of parents’ knowledge of children’s development, which varies greatly by culture.^{22,23} However, research suggests that physicians’ knowledge of other cultures is deficient. For example, in a survey of resident physicians, 25% reported that they felt ill-prepared to care for new immigrants, 25% felt insecure caring for patients who hold beliefs at odds with Western medicine, and 25% felt that they lacked skills to identify cultural customs that impact medical care.²⁴

Increasing parents’ knowledge of cultural beliefs and expectations about child development in the country of destination, and increasing service providers’ and policy makers’ knowledge of immigrant parents’ cultural beliefs about childrearing and normative child development, are key to creating partnerships that will foster the growth and well-being of all of children.

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Immigration and Acculturation in Adolescence

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Topic

Immigration

Introduction

Adolescents need to develop a socially-approved identity to ensure a healthy transition to adult life. This task is particularly challenging for immigrant youth growing into a social world where their home and host cultures differ considerably in terms of models of a healthy and acceptable identity. Immigrant adolescents need to acquire bicultural competence and flexibility as part of a secure and balanced identity and to function effectively in their multicultural world.¹ Psychological acculturation research is aimed to uncover factors that facilitate or complicate bicultural development and healthy adjustment in immigrant adolescents.

Subject

Acculturation refers to psychological changes in individuals as a result of migration. From the perspective of a bidimensional model of acculturation, immigrants are thought to differ in how strongly they wish to maintain their heritage culture and identity and how strongly they seek involvement with the mainstream society.² Placement in these terms results in four pathways, or so called acculturation strategies:

- Integration is present when high levels of engagement in both heritage and mainstream cultures are sought.
- Conversely, Marginalization is the case when there is minimal interest in involvement in either culture.
- Separation occurs when there is exclusive orientation towards the heritage culture and identity coupled with little or no interest in the mainstream society.
- In contrast, Assimilation exists when exclusive orientation towards the mainstream society is combined with disengagement from the heritage culture.

In general, integration has been found to be the most preferred strategy among immigrants, followed by separation and assimilation, and marginalization is the least frequent. Integration is also argued to be the most adaptive pathway because it implies bicultural competence and flexibility. Importantly, different acculturation strategies are related to variations in how well one feels about oneself (i.e., psychological adaptation)

and how well one does in intercultural settings, for example at school (i.e., sociocultural adaptation).³

Problem

The acculturation literature is dominated by research among adult immigrants with the assumption that acculturation strategies are personal choices that accompany changes in already existing attitudes and behaviours. However, acculturation is the fundamental aspect of psychological development for adolescents in migration.⁴ As children enter adolescence they become increasingly engaged in the larger society beyond their family and ethnic community. The quality of relationships within each cultural context shapes their self and identity, acculturative pathway and adaptation to culturally complex daily life.

Research Context

Findings reviewed here are generally obtained in acculturation research on first- and second-generation adolescents of visibly identifiable, low-skilled immigrants living in North America or Western Europe.

Key Research Questions

- Why is integration an advantageous acculturation strategy for adaptation to migration?
- Why do some adolescents adopt integration and others follow “less adaptive” acculturative pathways?
- What are the consequences of different acculturation strategies in adolescence?

Recent Research Results

- Adolescents integrate their heritage and mainstream cultures primarily by distinguishing between private and public spheres.⁵ Heritage culture maintenance occurs in family life and within the ethnic community, whereas intercultural contact often takes place in more public, social life. For example, adolescents speak their mother-tongue and celebrate the holidays of their heritage culture with their family, whereas they speak the national language and participate in national festivities at school. This flexibility helps them learn normative values and behavioural patterns of the mainstream culture, which facilitates sociocultural adaptation, and also allows them to rely on social support of the family and their ethnic community in times of stress, which enhances psychological adaptation.^{6,7,8}
- Researchers agree that integration is most likely when both immigrants and the mainstream society converge on their preference for immigrants’ integration and this preference is supported by multicultural policies and opportunity structures.⁹ If structural barriers and perceived discrimination are high, separation may override integration, particularly when the heritage culture encourages family bonds and interdependence. Adolescent children of immigrants are thought to explore a distinctive ethnic identity and related ethnic practices, traditions and ties, as part of their identity development.¹⁰ In the face of social exclusion and discrimination, adolescents may turn to their in-group defensively, due to increased sensitivity to social rejection in adolescence. Although they derive a sense of collective self-

esteem from their ethnic group membership, factor that promotes psychological adaptation, exclusive involvement with the in-group may also complicate the development of a flexible identity and sociocultural adaptation.^{6,11} Even though many adolescents might not have experienced discrimination personally, high group discrimination may still foster reactive in-group identification and separation.¹²

- Findings regarding the conditions and consequences of assimilation are mixed: Some studies report better sociocultural adaptation (or poorer psychological adaptation) in assimilated adolescents, whereas others fail to find these connections. In a segmented mainstream society, the key may be to examine to what segment immigrants assimilate: It is relatively easier for children of middle-class immigrants to assimilate into the middle class, but it is not uncommon among the children of low-skilled immigrants in inner cities to assimilate into the underclass of the mainstream society.¹³ The chances for the former group to attain higher education and move ahead in the society are greater than for the latter group. Assimilation to the underprivileged class may lead to the reproduction and persistence of socioeconomic impoverishment.
- Although marginalization is depicted in the bidimensional model as one of four major ways to acculturate, there is little research on marginalized adolescents. Recent cross-cultural research on immigrant adolescents in 13 countries validated the existence of three other acculturation pathways but not that of marginalization. Instead, the researchers reported a “diffuse” pattern to characterize adolescents who may want to integrate with the larger society but lack the necessary social skills.⁶ This pattern, which was common among new immigrants, implies indecisiveness about identity and continuing search for a place in the world.

Research Gaps

- Research on acculturation in adolescence is generally problem-focused. There is limited knowledge about positive aspects of acculturation, for example personal and situational factors associated with resilience and cognitive flexibility.
- Girls and boys experience acculturation differently.^{7,11} The fact that most acculturation research is gender-blind leaves a great deal of variation in acculturation and adaptation of adolescents unexplained.
- Young adolescents navigate between their social and cultural contexts more fluidly than do older adolescents possibly because they are developmentally more flexible and open to new experiences.⁸ Life-span studies, which are rare in the acculturation field, might uncover affordances and constraints on the development of flexibility and long-term consequences of different acculturation strategies.
- Little is known about the generalizability of findings from immigrant adolescents to adolescents of other, involuntary immigrant groups such as refugees and asylum seekers.

Conclusions

- Integration seems to be an advantageous pathway over other acculturation strategies as it allows adolescents to make the best of their home and host cultures and adapt optimally.
- Integration can be challenging for adolescents from culturally-degraded, socioeconomically-disadvantaged and socially-excluded immigrant groups.
- Acculturation strategies vary depending on age, gender, familial and structural resources, length of residence, the quality of intercultural relations, and so on; therefore, they should be seen as processes with different adaptive outcomes, rather than preferences or trait characteristics.

Implications for Parents, Services and Policy

To the extent that the receiving society is intolerant of cultural diversity, as reflected by policies, public discourse and opportunity structures, and perceived discrimination is high, adolescents' adoption of acculturative pathways other than integration reflect situational constraints on integrating two worlds in identity development. Therefore, it is important for parents, policy makers, school authorities and service providers to gain insights for the normative developmental needs and tasks of adolescence as well as the complexity and dynamic nature of acculturation. This would also help them promote effective ways to maximize healthy adaptation in immigrant adolescents.

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Immigration, Acculturation and Parenting

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Topic

Immigration

Subject

Over 200 million individuals worldwide are international migrants. Immigration involves a displacement with significant effects on family life, not least because of the cultural shifts inherent in resettlement. An emergent body of research is focused on the implications of immigration and acculturation for parenting.

Introduction and Research Context

Parenting occupies a central node in the nexus between culture and adaptive human development.

Parents of each generation have the important and continuing task to enculturate the next generation: that is, to prepare children to function competently in the physical, economic, and psychosocial situations that are characteristic of their culture.¹ Optimal child adaptation is achieved through socialization processes that involve inculcating culture. Culture-specific patterns of parenting make for variations in childrearing practices that can be subtle, but are always meaningful in meeting a specific society's setting and needs. While parents in all societies are expected to nurture and protect young children,^{2,3} culture influences a wide array of family functions including roles, decision-making patterns, and cognitions and practices related to childrearing and child development.^{4,5,6} Parenting may be subjected to complex transformations when families emigrate from one society to settle in another.

Key Research Questions

- To what extent do immigrant parents' caregiving cognitions and practices change when they migrate from one culture to another?
- What unique challenges do immigrant parents face in acculturating?

- How do immigration and acculturation affect parenting and, so, child development?

Recent Research Results

Parental acculturation

Immigration requires acculturation. Acculturation entails processes of cultural and psychological change – for example in customs, language, values – that take place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members.⁷ Immigration and acculturation are disorganizing and reorganizing experiences, necessitating alterations of social identity and self-image. Immigrants must negotiate new cultures and learn to navigate multiple new and different systems, often without the support of familiar social networks. Acculturation requires adjusting responses of engrained life scripts to compensate for cultural differences and disruption of familiar family roles.

Immigrant parents bring with them on their journey from their original cultural context conceptual models of the successful parent and how to rear a child properly. When they migrate to a new culture, they find that socialization agents in the receiving culture, such as other parents, teachers and professionals, may possess different images of the successful parent and different strategies for childrearing.⁸ This circumstance prompts most acculturating parents to become bicultural in some degree, simultaneously adopting cognitions and practices of their new culture while retaining those of their old one.^{9,10} In acculturating, immigrant parents must decide which cognitions or practices to retain from their indigenous culture, which to modify, and which new conventions to adopt. Cultural adaptation (to conform to the receiving culture) is often preferred in the public domain and cultural maintenance (of customs from the old culture) in the private domain. For example, Turkish and Moroccan immigrant parents in the Netherlands attribute more importance to cultural maintenance in the home and family context but consider adaptation more important in work situations.¹¹

Research shows that immigrants do not always readily adopt cognitions of the receiving culture, and culturally significant parenting beliefs and norms tend to resist change.^{12,13} For example, Chinese Canadian transnational parents opt to allow grandparents to care for their infants, based on expectations of their culture of origin, despite emotional hardship and disapproval within the receiving culture.¹⁴ Generally, parenting practices appear to migrate more readily than cognitions. For example, Japanese immigrant mothers' cognitions remain close to the cognitions of mothers in Japan, or are intermediate between those of Japanese and European American mothers, whereas their practices change to resemble those of European American mothers more closely than those of Japanese.^{15,16,17,18} In addition, different immigrant groups retain and adopt culture-specific cognitions and practices differently.¹⁹ Immigrant mothers from South America share more cognitions and practices with U.S. American mothers in their culture of destination than mothers in their cultures of origin.^{15,16}

Additional challenges to immigrant parents

Immigrant parents may be misunderstood and judged for any unorthodox practices by educational, mental health, or child welfare services that are not familiar with the family's culture of origin.²⁰ They may routinely be evaluated based on culture-of-destination constructs and measures.²¹ Immigrant parents may further experience significant loss in their effectiveness – as a result of systemic constraints on their ability to influence their new environment on behalf of their children – for example when negotiating an unfamiliar educational system.²² Parents with high academic aspirations for their children but little education themselves may be less comfortable with the school system. They may not be in a position to help their children with school work, experience cultural constraints with regard to dealing with educational authority figures, and thus negotiate with teachers and administrators less effectively.

Moreover, peers and schools exert major socializing influences on youth, and this can result in children becoming more quickly acculturated than their parents.²³ Because immigrant families straddle two cultures, tension and conflict in the family might arise between parents, who wish to inculcate traditional beliefs in their offspring, and children, who wish to conform to and be accepted by peers in their culture of destination.²⁴

In the process of migration, parents typically undergo profound transformations that can be complicated by extended periods of potentially damaging separation from their children.²⁵ Rearing children transnationally entails special challenges.²⁶ When family separations have been protracted, attachment difficulties have been noted as children miss their known caregivers and withdraw from estranged biological parents upon reunification. Resulting parental disappointment, stress, and depression are common as are difficulties in re-establishing relationships with and authority over children. The ambivalence and guilt experienced by parents who separate from their children during migration is justified.¹⁴ Indeed, children who are separated from their parents are more likely to report depressive symptoms than children who have not been separated.²⁷

Impact of immigration and acculturation

Although relatively little is known about the influence of immigrant status and acculturation on the parenting of young children,²⁸ immigrant parents are exposed to numerous acculturative stressors and are often at heightened risk for parenting stress and other mental health vulnerabilities.^{29,30} Furthermore, migration often brings parental adaptation difficulty, lack of time with their children, and language barriers that may destabilize parent-child relationships.^{31,32} This is described as dissonant acculturation³³ – “when children’s learning of English and American ways and simultaneously loss of the immigrant culture outstrip their parents.” Dissonant acculturation often leads to increasing parent-child conflicts in immigrant families and adaptation challenges for children.^{34,35,36}

Research Gaps

The study of the interplay among family immigration, acculturation, and parenting is still novel and suffers many gaps and unanswered questions.

- Is there conclusive evidence that efficient parental acculturation to the receiving culture presents any advantages / disadvantages to the children of immigrants?
- If rapid acculturation is indicated, does a shift in parental cognitions have to precede behaviour for parenting practices to change?
- How do immigrant parents feel about changing their parenting beliefs and practices?
- What reasons do they give for holding on to – or for abandoning – cultural beliefs and practices from their culture of origin?
- Can cognitions and practices from the immigrant parents' culture of origin be integrated into their new life, and play a fully or partially useful role in the receiving culture?
- If so, what adaptations, if any, may be functional?
- How can receiving cultures be more open to the integration of cognitions and practices stemming from immigrants' cultures of origin into mainstream culture-of-destination beliefs about child development?

Conclusion

Immigration and acculturation are major transforming forces on families. Immigrant parents wish to promote their children's positive development by providing a better economic standard of living, good nutrition, access to health care, a safe living environment, and educational and employment opportunities. This is why parents make great sacrifices for their children, often moving to a new continent and culture at great economic, physical, and psychological costs.

When parents migrate to a new culture they carry with them from their culture of origin implicit knowledge of childrearing and goals for the development of their offspring, but they encounter new implicit cognitions and explicit practices concerning childrearing in their culture of destination. Acculturation therefore involves negotiation between the parenting cognitions and practices of the two cultures. There are large individual and group differences in the ways people go about acculturating, in the degree to which they achieve satisfactory adaptations, and in their types of adaptation. More research is needed about the impact of immigrant status and acculturation on parenting and child development.

Implications for Parents, Services and Policy

Adequate community support services must be made available for immigrant families, as parents who immigrate to enhance their children's circumstances may nevertheless initially find themselves confronted with unexpected parenting challenges, many of which are related to acculturation. In addition to internal struggles inherent in resettlement, and loss of existing social networks, migrating parents also often have to deal with the critical appraisal of their time-honoured practices by well-meaning authorities and their own children. Service providers who engage with immigrant parents need to strike a balance between supporting families in acculturating and respecting valued aspects of parents' cultural heritage. Clinicians should be aware of the limitations of the still largely Eurocentric tools and standards used in the fields of parenting and child development. They should have access to education in the meaning of parenting beliefs

and practices from cultures other than the mainstream culture. Organized efforts are needed to integrate into the mainstream – when appropriate – an acceptance of diverse, culture-specific parenting practices, most of which are ultimately designed to optimize children’s life chances. Last but not least, immigration policies should facilitate family reunification.

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Intergenerational Differences in Acculturation

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Topic

Immigration

Introduction

A major issue confronted by immigrant children and their families is the acculturation gap that emerges between generations over time. The process of acculturation begins when immigrants enter a new country and involves changes in language, behaviour, attitudes and values. Children become involved in the new culture relatively quickly, particularly if they attend school, but their parents may never acquire sufficient comfort with the new language and culture to become socially integrated into their new country. In addition, immigrant children may have few opportunities to participate in and learn about their heritage culture. As a result, immigrant parents and children increasingly live in different cultural worlds.^{1,2} Such “acculturation gaps”^{3,4,5} have been linked to family conflict and adjustment.^{1,2,6,7,8}

Subject

Acculturation gaps are problematic because they make family communication and mutual understanding difficult. For adult immigrants their native language will remain primary, even many years after resettlement. Yet most children learn the new language very quickly, becoming conversationally proficient within 1-2 years, and attaining academic mastery of the language within 5-7.⁹ When immigrant children have no formal educational instruction in their heritage language, it becomes increasingly difficult for them to discuss abstract concepts and complex issues with their parents as they mature.

Parents and children may also misunderstand one another because of cultural differences in expectations for parent and child behaviour and family relationships. Immigrant parents may endorse cultural beliefs that children must put family needs before their own, and that adolescents should delay dating or even avoid friendships with members of the opposite sex. Immigrant parents may also have strict and controlling parenting styles that in their heritage culture are considered warm and attentive to the child,¹⁰ but that in the host culture are considered authoritarian. At the same time, adolescents may embrace the opportunity to engage in unsupervised activities and behaviours that may be normative in the host society (such as dating) but unacceptable in their heritage culture and to their parents. They may also resent strict parenting styles when they see their peers’ parents practice more permissive parenting.

The “acculturation gap hypothesis” stipulates that acculturation discrepancies between parents and children create family conflict and discord. Such family conflict, in turn, leads to difficulties in children’s adjustment psychologically, at school and in other life domains.

Problems

A growing number of studies assess acculturation gaps in immigrant families, but some have argued that acculturation gaps may not always occur in the direction stipulated by the acculturation gap hypothesis, and the negative impact of acculturation gaps may be overstated.¹¹ There is a range of ways that researchers have operationalized the acculturation gap. Measures of acculturation dissonance ask adolescents to report on their perceptions of cultural differences or conflict between them and their parents.¹²

Other studies assess acculturation of adolescents and parents and then compute the gaps, most often by subtracting one from the other. Some studies ask parents to report on their perceptions of their children’s acculturation;¹³ others ask adolescents to report on their perceptions of their parents’ acculturation.^{14,11} Increasingly, researchers ask parents and children to report on their own acculturation independently and then compute the gaps.^{2,8}

When computed by researchers, gaps do not always occur in the expected direction. The acculturation gap hypothesis stipulates that parents are more acculturated to the heritage culture than their children, and adolescents are more acculturated to the new culture than their parents. However, some studies have found families where adolescents are more attached to the heritage culture than their parents¹¹ and/or parents are more acculturated to some aspects of the new culture than their adolescents.¹ Thus, it is either the case that acculturation gaps do not occur as stipulated by the theory, or existing measures of the gap do not capture the phenomenon accurately.

Research Context

The majority of acculturation gap research is based on questionnaire studies of immigrant families. This research has largely focused on adolescents because they are in a developmental stage when many of them are embarking on gaining independence from their parents. For immigrant youth, gaining independence is also associated with forging a new cultural identity.

Studies include first, second or later generation immigrant adolescents. Some restrict their samples to first generation immigrant children and their parents;¹ some focus on children of immigrant parents born in the host culture;¹⁵ still others include mixed samples and do not specify generational status or conduct separate analyses by generational status.^{16,8}

Key Research Questions

- Do acculturation gaps predict difficulties in adolescent adjustment?
- Do acculturation gaps predict family conflict or other problems in family adjustment?
- Is the impact of acculturation gaps on adolescent outcomes mediated by family adjustment, such that acculturation gaps lead to family conflict, which in turn contributes to problems in adolescents’ adjustment?

Recent Research Results

- Do acculturation gaps predict difficulties in adolescent adjustment?

Research shows that both acculturation gaps and cultural dissonance between parents and adolescents are linked to adolescent adjustment, including depression, problem behaviours and academic achievement. Symptoms of depression were linked to parent-child acculturation dissonance for Chinese-American adolescents.¹² Two studies found that gaps in Chinese language proficiency or use were linked to symptoms of depression for Chinese-Canadian⁷ and Chinese-American adolescents.¹⁶ Past-year and lifetime incidence of depression were predicted by acculturation gaps in studies of Muslim-American college students,¹⁷ Chinese-American adolescents, and parents of Chinese descent.¹⁸

With respect to problem behaviours, acculturation dissonance predicts self-reports of violent behaviours in Chinese and Southeast-Asian heritage youth in the United States.¹⁹ Youth who reported acculturation dissonance were more likely to associate with delinquent peers, and this in turn was linked to violent behaviour. In another study, alcohol and tobacco use was also associated with acculturation gaps in heritage culture for Mexican-American adolescents.²⁰ Discrepancies between Latino adolescents' acculturation and how acculturated they thought their parents wanted them to be have been studied.²¹ When this discrepancy increased from Grade 9 to 10, substance abuse also increased.

Academic achievement has been predicted by acculturation gaps in several studies. Gaps in Chinese language proficiency predict lower academic achievement for Chinese-Americans.¹⁶ Gaps in Chinese language use and media use predict decreased achievement motivation for Chinese-Canadian adolescents.⁷

Contrary to expectations, Indian adolescents in Britain who were less Western-oriented than their mothers and more heritage culture-oriented than their fathers were more likely to have symptoms of internalizing disorders.²² Similarly, Mexican-American adolescents who were more aligned with their heritage culture than their parents experience more conduct problems.¹¹ These studies affirm the importance of cultural gaps between parents and children for adolescent adjustment, but the nature of these gaps is opposite to what is predicted and raises questions about acculturation gap theory.

- Do acculturation gaps predict problems in family adjustment?

Family conflict has been linked to acculturation gaps in a number of studies with different populations. Family conflict was predicted by acculturation gaps in Chinese language use⁷ and behavioural and psychological acculturation²³ for Chinese-Canadian adolescents. Father-child gaps in degree of assimilation were related to parent-child conflict for Mexican-American families.²⁴ Conflict was also higher in Indian-American families when parents and adolescents were not matched on acculturation style.¹⁵ Gaps in heritage language competence predicted conflict in former Soviet¹ and Vietnamese⁶ American families. In addition, gaps in Vietnamese and American identity were linked to conflict in Vietnamese and former Soviet families, respectively. Finally, Chinese-

American immigrant mothers who perceived larger gaps with their pre-adolescent children were more likely to report less success in parenting.¹³

Two studies, did not find clear evidence of impact of gaps on several measures of family adjustment. In a study of Mexican-American adolescents, acculturation gaps in heritage culture and American acculturation did not predict family adjustment.⁸ In families where parents were very involved with their heritage culture, high involvement with American culture by adolescents was linked to lower family cohesion, adaptability and endorsement of Latino cultural beliefs about familism.⁸ A test for impact of parent-adolescent acculturation gaps on family conflict or adolescent adjustment problems yielded no significant findings.²⁵

- Is the impact of acculturation gaps on adolescent outcomes mediated by family adjustment, such that acculturation gaps lead to family conflict, which in turn contributes to problems in adolescent adjustment?

Family conflict appears to mediate the relation between acculturation gaps and adolescent adjustment. Discrepancies in acculturation were linked to more family conflict, which was negatively related to less family bonding; less bonding was in turn related to more problem behavior for Cambodian- and Vietnamese-Americans.²⁶ For Asian-American college students, family conflict was a mediator so that adolescents in families with more acculturative dissonance experienced more conflict, which contributed to worse psychological adjustment.²⁷ For Mexican-American adolescents, family conflict and familism mediated the relations between parent-child acculturation conflicts and adolescent aggression.²⁸

Parenting practices also mediate the relation between acculturation gaps and adolescent adjustment. For Chinese-American adolescents, discrepancies in heritage and American acculturation between parents and adolescents predicted fewer supportive parenting practices (inductive reasoning techniques, parental monitoring), which mediated the relations between gaps and adolescent depressive symptoms.²⁹ For Latino-American adolescents, acculturation gaps were associated with greater family stress and less effective parenting practices, which both mediated the relation between gaps and likelihood that adolescents use alcohol and tobacco in the future.³⁰

Research Gaps

Additional factors need to be explored that may influence the dynamics of relations among acculturation gaps, family conflict and adolescent outcomes. Conflict and poor adolescent outcomes in immigrant families may be a function, not of acculturation gaps per se, but of other contextual factors. It is plausible that well-functioning families with good communication and close relationships are able to handle acculturation gaps without disrupting family functioning. Family functioning alone is a better predictor of adolescent delinquency than acculturation gaps.¹⁸ The gap predicted father-child conflict only in families with low father-child relationship quality.²⁴ So acculturation gaps may function as a stressor, but well-functioning relationships between parents and children may buffer their effects. These complexities need to be unraveled through longitudinal and qualitative research that aims to understand the dynamics of acculturation gaps in immigrant families.

Conclusions

The acculturation gap hypothesis states that, because immigrant children and their parents acculturate at different rates, acculturation gaps emerge between them. In particular, acculturation gaps are expected to occur such that parents are more acculturated to the heritage culture than their children, and children are more acculturated to the host culture than their parents. Such acculturation gaps (or acculturation dissonance) are thought to give rise to family misunderstandings and conflict, which in turn have negative impact on immigrant children. Dissonance or gaps between parents and children predict adolescent adjustment, family conflict or parenting difficulties. Furthermore, family conflict mediates the relation between acculturation dissonance or gaps and adolescent adjustment. Thus, existing research largely supports the acculturation gap hypothesis. However, a few studies report no evidence of the negative impact of the gap on family adjustment²⁵ or that gaps between parents and children exist in opposite directions than predicted by the theory.^{11,22} Other family factors may moderate the negative impact of acculturation gaps on family and child functioning.^{18,24} This suggests the need to further explore the nature and impact of acculturation gaps in the context of other extra- and intra-familial factors.

Implications for Parents, Services and Policy

The implications of this line of research are that reducing acculturation gaps between parents and children may also reduce family conflict and improve child and adolescent adjustment in immigrant families. In particular, several studies have noted the importance of gaps in heritage language proficiency or use for family conflict^{1,6} and adolescent adjustment.^{7,16} In particular, the less likely children were to be proficient or use their heritage language relative to their parents, the more negative were the outcomes for the adolescents and their families. This finding suggests the potential importance of helping immigrant children retain their heritage language. It further suggests that parents and schools should support children's heritage language development. Services designed to reduce acculturation gaps can take a variety of forms. Schools may reach out to immigrant parents to orient them to schooling in their new culture, and in this way help reduce gaps in knowledge and understanding between the generations.³¹ Therapeutic family interventions designed specifically to reduce the culture gap between parents and children have been shown to be effective at reducing youth substance abuse and conduct problems.³² Finally, policies that expect children to acquire new language skills without heritage language support may be counter-productive because they create acculturation gaps that lead to family conflict and youth maladjustment.

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The Sociodemographic Picture of Contemporary Immigrant Families

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(Published online April 12, 2011)

Topic

Immigration

Introduction

Most affluent countries around the world have experienced large increases in the number and diversity of immigrant families during recent decades. The first study drawing on population census and registration system data to present internationally comparable estimates for eight affluent countries found, for example, that children in immigrant families as a proportion of all children ranges from 10% in Italy and 16-17% in France and the United Kingdom to 22-26% in Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States, with still higher proportions of 33% in Australia and 39% in Switzerland.¹

Because the children of today (ages 0-17 in 2010) will be in the prime working ages of 40-57 in 2050, they will form a very substantial portion the workers, taxpayers and voters who will support the elderly, retired and mainly non-immigrant populations in these countries at mid-century. Hence, the well-being, development and success of children in immigrant families – particularly those from non-western developing countries who often differ in race, ethnicity, language, religion or culture from older non-immigrant population – are important to all residents in affluent countries. Their successful integration into the culture, schools and other institutions in the neighbourhoods, towns, cities and countries where they live is in the interest of everyone living in these countries.

Demographics

Among these immigrant families, many have origins in low- or middle-income countries (LMICs), which often differ in culture, religion and linguistic or ethnic background from the native population. Among these eight affluent countries, the proportion of immigrant families who have origins in LMICs ranges between about 50-80% (Germany at 10%).

- The largest proportion of children in immigrant families with LMIC origins in eight affluent countries are typically from Africa, Asia or Latin America, and the Caribbean. Nearly all children in immigrant families (95-100%) with LMIC origins are from these regions in Australia, the United Kingdom and the U.S., and with very large proportions also in France (88%), the Netherlands (70%) and Italy

(67%). These origins account for smaller proportions of the total with LMIC origins in Switzerland (36%) and Germany (20%), because LMIC countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are the predominant sources.¹

- Many immigrants in specific affluent countries are drawn from lower income countries which are geographically proximate or share a common colonial past or other geopolitical circumstances leading to high concentrations of immigrants from a small number of countries. For example, one country, Mexico, accounts for nearly one-half (46%) of children the LMIC origins in the United States, and two countries account for two-thirds (69%) of children in immigrant families with LMIC origins in France (34% from Algeria, 35% from Morocco), for one-half (50%) in Germany (31% from Russia, 19% from Turkey), and for nearly one-half (47%) in the Netherlands (23-24% each from Morocco and Turkey).
- Although the concentrations are lower in the four other affluent countries, they are substantial at two-in-five (40%) in Switzerland (29% from the Republic of Yugoslavia, 11% from Turkey), one-third (35%) in the UK (15% from India, 20% from Pakistan), and more than one-in-five in Australia (24%, with 10% from the Philippines, 14% from Vietnam) and Italy (22%, with 10% from Albania, 12% from Morocco). At the same time, affluent countries also are typically the destination for immigrants from an extremely wide range of origins, leading to enormous diversity in the immigrant population of specific countries.

Sociodemographic Strengths of Immigrant Families

Immigrants often must overcome enormous obstacles and challenges in their adopted homeland. Decisions to immigrate are driven by powerful motivations, including the search for improved economic opportunities, the desire to be reunited with parents, children, or other family members who already live in the new country, and the need to escape war or persecution because of their religion, social group or political opinions. It should, therefore, also not be surprising that immigrants bring great strengths and commitment to their new homelands.

- Families are a critical source of care, nurturance and support for children, and research in the U.S. and the UK has shown that children living with two parents are, on average, more likely than children in one-parent families to be somewhat advantaged in their educational success.^{2,3} In 7 of 8 countries, children of immigrants are about as likely, or more likely, to live in families with two parents than are children in native-born families.¹ The proportions are nearly identical in Italy (92%), and slightly higher for immigrants in France (89% vs. 88%) and in Switzerland (91% vs. 88%); the immigrant group is more likely than the native-born group to have two parents in the home, with a difference of 8-9%, in Germany (87% vs. 79%) and in the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom (83-84% vs. 74-75%).
- Immigrant parents have a strong commitment to work.¹ Despite the difficulties immigrants may experience in finding employment because of differences in language, education or culture, immigrant fathers are more likely, or only slightly

less likely, compared to native-born fathers to be employed; in most countries at least 4 in 5 immigrant families have an employed father.

- Immigrant parents are not only committed to work, but to their adopted homeland, as reflected in statistics regarding length of residence and citizenship in the settlement country. The proportion of immigrant families with a parent who has lived in the country less than five years is only 16-17% in Italy and Switzerland, and still less at 11-12% in the U.S., Australia and the Netherlands.¹ Thus, the vast majority of parents have lived in their new homeland 5 years or more. In fact, many parents are citizens of the new country.¹
- The vast majority of children in immigrant families are second generation born in their parents' adopted homeland.¹ The proportion generation rises from 40% in Australia, to 71% in Italy, 75% in Switzerland, 76% in the U.S., 79% in the UK, 84% in the Netherlands, and 86% in France and Germany. The proportions of children in immigrant families who are citizens of the parents' country of settlement are about the same in Italy (71%) or higher in the US (85%) and Australia (89%). In two countries where citizenship is not a birth right, however, the proportions who are citizens are substantially lower at 59% in Germany and 44% in Switzerland, creating a situation for many children of immigrants that they were residents of the settlement country from birth, but are not citizens of their birth country. Children in immigrant families who were born in the parent's settlement country are likely to spend most or all of their lives in this country, attending school and learning the language and customs as they grow older.
- The strong commitment of immigrant families to their adopted homeland also is reflected in high rates of homeownership in the settlement country.¹ More than one-third of children in immigrant families live in family-owned homes in France, and this rises to one-half or more in Italy and the U.S. to about two-thirds in the UK and Australia. These results suggest that many immigrants are putting down deep roots, tangibly investing in their communities by purchasing homes and showing a strong commitment to the local neighborhoods, towns and cities in their adopted homelands.

Challenges for Many Immigrant Families

The socioeconomic integration of immigrants may be a key to successful acculturation, and two important indicators of socioeconomic status for immigrants are educational attainments and family income.⁴ Skill in the language of the settlement society also has long been used as an indicator of social integration or acculturation.⁵ These indicators not only reflect the current level of social integration or acculturation, they also represent resources that are valuable for children as they seek to become integrated in their parents' adopted homeland. However many children of immigrants live in families that experience challenges associated with limited parental education, poverty and learning the settlement society language.

- Highly educated parents are well-positioned to help their children with homework and to negotiate on behalf of their children with teachers and school administrators; parents with limited education may lack the experience and knowledge to

effectively provide such support. Many children in immigrant families, ranging from 11% in Italy to 42% in the UK, live with a father who has graduated from college.¹ But the proportions with fathers who have not graduated from high school are much higher and substantially exceed the levels experienced by children in native-born families in each country (except in Australia and Italy). The gap with the immigrant group more likely to have a father who did not graduate from high school grows to 20% in France and in the U.S., Switzerland and Germany. (Results for mothers are broadly similar.) These low levels of parental education are a concern because it has long been known that children with less educated parents tend themselves of experience less success than other children in school and when they reach adulthood in the job market.^{6,7,8,9}

- Family income provides essential resources to children, and those with low family incomes tend to experience less success in school and lower earnings when they become adults.^{8,10,11} Most family income in most families comes from earnings that parents and other family members receive for their paid work in the labor force. Social transfers from government also can be important, particularly for families with low incomes. Taking into account both labor market earnings and government social transfers, the proportions living in poverty for children in immigrant families range from about 1-in-7 for Germany to nearly 1-in-5 in France and Australia, to more than 1-in-4 in the UK, and 1-in-3 in the U.S.. The poverty rates for children in native-born families are 6-13% lower in Australia and Germany and France, the UK, and the U.S. Thus, poverty rates, after taking account of the effect of social transfer programs, are lowest for both the immigrant and native-born groups in Australia, France and Germany, intermediate in the UK (29% and 16%), and highest in the U.S. Speaking the settlement society language is necessary for children enrolled in schools that teach in this language and for parents in the labour market and other settings that include schools, where parents may be the primary advocates for their children, and where they are the primary source, after teachers, of academic support and guidance. Learning the language of the settlement society presents a substantial challenge for many parents and children in immigrant families, although many others speak the new homeland language. For three countries with comparable data, the proportion of children in immigrant families speaking a non-local language at home is only 34% in Australia, but this rises to 62% in France, and 66% in the U.S.
- Most children in immigrant families learn the settlement country language as they make friends, attend school and engage in other aspects of social life. Children in immigrant families often learn the language of the settlement society more quickly than their parents; in the U.S., for example, 4 in 5 children in immigrant families (81%) speak English exclusively or very well. One-half of children in immigrant families (52%) speak another language at home and speak English very well. Thus, many children in immigrant families are well-positioned to become fluent bilingual speakers, writers and readers – if they receive formal training in both English and the native language of their parent or parents.
- Overall, most children in immigrant families grow up in complex language environments that can help promote the development of English language skills,

although a smaller proportion lives with parents and other family members who speak little or no English. These families, and their schools, confront both special challenges and opportunities. The challenges include the need for policies and programs that will most effectively educate children with immigrant parents.

- Results of a recent longitudinal study in the U.S. and a recent cross-national study of 13 countries including the U.S. suggest that adolescents who have fluency in both their parents' home language and the language of the settlement society, and who identify with and participate in both the culture of the society of origin and the society of settlement adjust more successfully than do those with other acculturation profiles.^{12,13} Measures of adjustment in these two studies include higher self-esteem, higher education and occupation expectations, higher academic achievement, lower levels of mental health problems (e.g., anxiety, depression, and psychosomatic symptoms) as well as higher satisfaction with life, and lower levels of antisocial behaviour.

Policies That Foster Integration

Policies and programs in four arenas (education, income and economic resources, health care, language outreach) can help to assure that immigrant families have the resources they need to succeed.

- **Education.** Children in immigrant families should have access to high quality early education programs. Such programs may be particularly valuable for the cognitive and language development of children in immigrant families with English language learner parents.^{14,15,16,17} Socioeconomic barriers play a critical role in limiting access of immigrant groups to early education programs.¹⁸ There is a need for education policies, programs and curricula that foster bilingual spoken fluency and literacy (reading and writing). Education policies, programs and curricula for recent first generation, adolescent immigrants with little or no experience in schools must address a very different set of issues than policies for first generation immigrants who arrived at younger ages and who obtained most or all of their education in the culture of destination.
- **Economic resources and access to public benefits.** Insofar as the exclusion of some immigrant parents from eligibility for welfare programs acts to deprive children of important public benefits and services, and insofar as most of the children and parents are or will become citizens, the elimination of eligibility exclusion rules is in the interest of immigrant children and families and of all members of a society, including the baby-boom generation who will benefit from having a healthy and productive labor force to support them during retirement.
- **Health insurance coverage.** Children and their families require good health to succeed in school and in work. Many children in immigrant families who come from countries of origin with high poverty rates are not covered by health insurance. The substantial risk of not being insured remains even after controlling for parental education as well as for reported health status, number of parents in the home, and having a parent employed full-time year-around.¹⁹ The main reason

reported by parents for lack of insurance coverage for children is the same for both immigrant and native-born groups: the lack of affordability of insurance coverage.

- **Health care, language and professional cultural competence.** Home language outreach and interpretive services, as well as the culturally-competent provision of health care, are essential because many children and parents are still language learners, and many come from cultures with different traditions of health care provision. It is critical that education, health and other organizations provide outreach and interpretive services in the home languages of children and their parents. Without these efforts, these organizations may be cutting themselves off from the rapidly growing client population of immigrant children and families.

Conclusions and Implications for Immigrant Services and Policy

Children of immigrants, particularly with LMIC origins, will become increasingly prominent during adulthood in the economic and social life of affluent countries because of their growing numbers and because non-immigrant populations are rapidly aging as a consequence of their low rates of natural increase. Recent population projections for the period between about 2000 and 2050 indicate, for example, that the non-Western population as a share of the total will approximately double from 9% to 25% in England and Wales, 7% to 18% in Germany, and 9% to 17% in the Netherlands, with a similar increase for the race-ethnic minority population of the U.S. from 31% to 50%.^{20,21} There is wide agreement that immigration laws should be enforced, but there are many possible approaches to enforcement, and the manner in which enforcement occurs should not bring harm to children.

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Assessment of Immigration and Acculturation

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Topic

Immigration

Introduction

Immigration has affected and will continue to affect all societies. Acculturation refers to changes that an individual experiences as a result of contact with one or more other cultures and of the participation in the ensuing process of change that one's cultural or ethnic group is undergoing. From a psychological perspective, children may belong to their culture of origin, to the culture of the country of settlement, or to a combination. The basic argument of this article is that factoring adequate assessment into the acculturation process will improve its validity and quality.

Subject

Insight in the acculturative status of a person can provide valuable information in itself and it can help to interpret results of regular assessment procedures. For (recent) immigrants who often lack a good knowledge of the dominant society language, the use of standard assessment procedures is problematic.

Problems

A conceptual framework for studying acculturation that can guide assessment is given in Figure 1. Acculturation has three components: conditions, orientations (also called strategies), and outcomes. Acculturation conditions refer to (semi-)permanent factors in the environment as well as personal factors that have a bearing on how immigrants deal with the heritage and mainstream culture. Examples are cultural distance (i.e., distance between country of origin and settlement as evaluated by social indicators like national affluence levels or by self-reports in scales about experienced differences), intergroup relations, and personality traits. Acculturation orientations involve attitudes toward the culture of origin and the culture of the dominant society. Acculturation outcomes are usually split into psychological and sociocultural outcomes.¹ The latter refer to “doing well” in the new culture (e.g., speaking the dominant language, school grades, and friendships with host national children), whereas the former refer to “feeling well” (e.g., depression and happiness).

A recurring issue in the assessment of acculturation is the focus on knowledge of the dominant language, either as self-reported skill level or as vocabulary knowledge and

reading comprehension. The main problems with this approach are that language is just one aspect of acculturation, that language knowledge depends on time and schooling in the host culture, that language is often assessed with very few items (which makes it difficult to establish the reliability of the measure), and that a good knowledge of the language does not imply an exclusive orientation to the host culture.

Research Context

Views on acculturation orientations have largely moved from unidimensional to bidimensional models. Unidimensional models view acculturation as adjustment to the mainstream culture, with the simultaneous loss of the original culture.² It has become increasingly clear that complete absorption in the mainstream culture and loss of the original culture are not inevitable endpoints of immigration. Bidimensional models are usually based on two underlying dimensions: Does the immigrant want to maintain the heritage culture and does the immigrant want to establish contacts with or want to adopt the culture of the country of destination?³

Key Research Questions

Much work in acculturation assessment has focused on orientations.^{4,5} Important research questions involve the design and validation of instruments to assess and their link with other psychological variables, ranging from school grades to clinical assessment.

Recent Research Results

Recent research has led to a number of insights about how to design instruments to measure acculturation orientations. It is important to cover both “public” and “private” domains in assessment procedures.⁶ Public domains involve life areas where immigrants have contacts with the dominant groups, such as education. Private domains refer to the life within the family and personal spheres of life, such as language use with parents and socialization patterns. Many immigrant groups show more cultural maintenance in the private domain and more adjustment in the public domain. Published acculturation scales often contain items that deal with both attitudes and behaviours. If a split is made between these types, items dealing with attitudes are usually part of orientation questionnaires and behavioural items are more commonly found in outcome measures.

Common methods to assess acculturation orientations, using self-reports, are listed in Figure 2. The most common item formats to assess self-reports of acculturation are the one-statement method, two-statement method, four-statement method, and vignettes. The choice of a bidimensional acculturation model makes a one-statement method less attractive, given that this method treats preferences for the two cultures as incompatible. The four-statement method has been criticized on psychometric and substantive grounds: all questions are by definition double barreled.^{7,8} For example, the item “I like to have American friends but I do not like to have Mexican friends” asks two questions at once. Children may have problems to express their endorsement when they agree with one part of the item and disagree with the other. Moreover, many acculturation items contain negations, which may be cognitively complex for some immigrants, especially children. Vignettes can also be challenging and contain specifics that trigger unwanted responses.

There is evidence that the “two-statement method” is slightly better than other question formats to assess acculturation using self-reports.

“Hard” measures of acculturation involve generation status (e.g., first or second generation), country of schooling (in the country of origin or settlement), and language use. Psychological scales that measure acculturation orientations are examples of “soft” measures. Both types of measures have advantages and disadvantages. Strengths of “hard” measures are their brevity, ease in administration, high reliability, and the clarity of causal status (e.g., generation status cannot be an outcome variable). Weaknesses are their limited variation at individual level and their sometimes elusive links with acculturation-related psychological processes. These variables are often better seen as proxies that have a bearing on the acculturation that still needs “unpackaging.” “Soft” measures have converse pros and cons. More work is needed to integrate the two types of measures.

Research Gaps

The literature is replete with studies of ethnic groups in a single country. Comparative studies of acculturation are needed. Good examples are longitudinal studies, studies comparing a single ethnic group in different countries (e.g., Turkish immigrants in Canada and the United States), and studies comparing different groups in a single country (Turkish and Chinese immigrants in the United States). Comparative studies provide more scope for evaluating the role of antecedent conditions, such as ethnic vitality, which typically show little or no variation in current acculturation studies.

Conclusions

Acculturation assessment should become a standard part of procedures to evaluate immigrants. Acculturation test scores, in particular scores on sociocultural adjustment, can be important moderators of performance in other domains. There is no easy rule of thumb to establish when assessment of acculturation is no longer needed and the immigrant can be viewed as adjusted to the mainstream culture.

Implications for Parents, Services and Policy

Immigrants are in psychological flux, and changes are small for some and large for others. It is important for caregivers and professionals to appreciate the nature and dynamics of the acculturation process. Aspects such as duration of the stay, heritage and host language, distance between cultures, and preferences as to how to deal with both cultures, should be factored into service delivery. We need to move from “colorblind” applications of routine assessment procedures to culture-informed assessments. Much assessment, notably in education, is based on a deficiency view on cross-cultural differences. Focusing on knowledge of the dominant language and culture seems inevitably to define children from an immigrant background as deficient. This perspective may be useful for designing educational counseling, although it neglects attitudes toward and knowledge of native language and culture. By including information about acculturation in psychological assessment procedures we can do more justice to the cultural heterogeneity of immigrants and improve the validity of assessment and counseling.

IMMIGRATION

Figure 1. Acculturation framework⁶

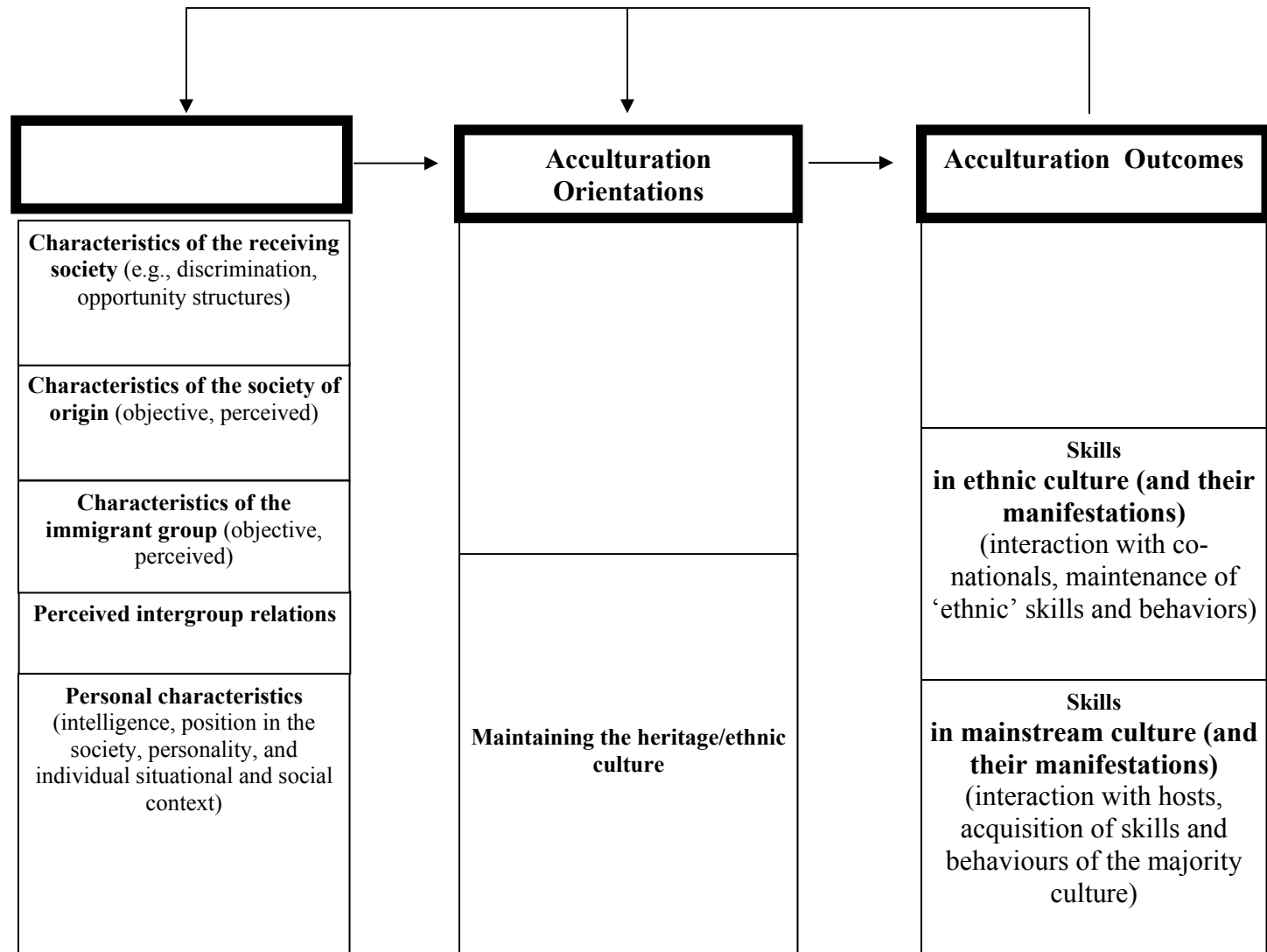


Figure 2. Common methods to assess acculturation orientations

1. One-Statement Method: One scale extreme defined by heritage culture, other extreme defined by mainstream culture

Example: Which of the following statements is closest to how you feel about the cultural backgrounds of your friends?

- I like to have only Turkish friends
- I like to have more Turkish than American friends
- I like to have as many Turkish as American friends
- I like to have more American than Turkish friends
- I like to have only American friends

2. Two-Statement Method: One statement deals with heritage culture, one statement deals with mainstream culture

Example: Indicate your agreement with the following statement (each statement is followed by response alternatives expressing level of agreement):

- I find it important to have Turkish friends.
- I find it important to have American friends.

3. Four-Statement Method: A specific topic, such as having friends, is dealt with in four items representing the four acculturation orientations

Example: Indicate your agreement with the following statement (each statement is followed by response alternatives expressing level of agreement):

- I find it important to have Turkish friends and I find it important to have American friends.
- I find it important to have Turkish friends but I do not find it important to have American friends.
- I do not find it important to have Turkish friends but I find it important to have American friends.
- I do not find it important to have Turkish friends and I do not find it important to have American friends.

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Immigration and Acculturation, Child Care and Schooling

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Topic

Immigration

Introduction

Many immigrants must cope with difficult decisions regarding how to provide care and education for their offspring in their country of destination. In some ways involvement with child care and school can help foster acculturation in both parent and child. A child care provider or teacher can become a conduit to the ways of the new country and to potentially helpful social organizations and networks. However, advantages that might accrue to this new relationship can come at the expense of maintaining family style or values prevalent in the culture of origin. As a consequence, immigrant children may not be launched on a pathway that leads to academic success, personal well-being, productive employment, and good citizenship.

Subject

With more women around the world entering the workforce, the use of non-parental care has increased in most countries.^{1,2} Arranging suitable child care can be critical for families recently arrived in a new country as it enables them to find and maintain employment in communities where new immigrants are typically in the minority and may have limited opportunities to obtain desirable jobs. In such circumstances, children's academic success is also a high priority, as it enables children (and sometimes other members of their families) to connect to the society of destination and to obtain the resources necessary for long-term well-being.

Problems

Finding child care options that fit family needs and parenting beliefs about what is good for children can be challenging for immigrants. The care of young children by someone other than the parent remains non-normative in many societies. Extended kith and kin networks are more commonly used if parents need help caring for their children. What it means to leave one's child in the care of non-family members (or others well-known to the parent) is hard for many newly immigrated parents to fathom. The options for child care may not be well understood and parental expectations regarding what caregivers do with children may well not match what is likely to happen.^{3,4}

The same is true of schools. Many immigrants arrive into countries where school options and policies are vastly different from those in the country of origin, as are the expectations and practices of school personnel. In many countries there is a patchwork of governmental policies which are confusing and hard to negotiate, beginning with preschool and continuing through higher education.^{5,6,7} In most countries the transition to school is easier for some immigrant populations and more difficult for others.^{8,9} Part of this challenge derives from family economic circumstances and part from cultural variations as regards goals for children and their role in family life.^{10,2} There remain considerable discrepancies even in the extent to which different immigrant populations take advantage of free government-sponsored preschool opportunities.^{11,12}

Research Context

Because children of immigrants represent a significant portion of the school population and because immigrants as a group tend to have higher birth rates than long-term citizens in many countries, there is considerable interest in research that addresses factors connected to the utilization of non-parental care and early education and to school engagement and academic success for immigrant children,^{12,13} as well as their involvement once children enter school.¹⁴ There is interest both in research that has policy implications (especially in a time of changing political and economic climates) and in research that has implications for practice (e.g., how to achieve a better fit between the needs and proclivities of immigrant children/families and the strategies used to engage them).⁶ Studies of early education represent a kind of bridge between these two bodies of research in that studies of early education often address basic caregiving and educational issues as well as child and family issues in the sense that for some immigrant children entry into child care constitutes the first transition into social institutions in the new country.¹⁵ The framework for research on child care and schools has broadened over the last two decades, becoming both more biologically and culturally informed.¹⁶

Key Research Questions

Numerous questions remain to be addressed for both child care and schools as regards immigrant families. They include:

- What policies should local, state and federal governments implement so as to increase access to affordable, high quality non-parental care for immigrant families, both prior to and after children enter school?
- How can child care providers more fully and successfully engage immigrant parents so that child and family needs are met?
- Are there ways in mixed group (immigrant plus non-immigrant) child care and education settings to adjust practice so that the needs of all children are well met?
- During the primary grades, what practices (e.g., monolingual versus dual language) best promote long-term school engagement and academic success?
- Throughout the school years, what socialization practices and attributes of school climate promote a sense of well-being and dedication to school and community engagement for immigrant children?

- To what extent should interventions broaden their focus beyond target settings (e.g., child care providers, schools, family, housing) to address community conditions and receptivity so as to achieve goals in behalf of immigrant children?

Recent Research Results

- Family values, preferences (including the nationality of the care providers) and level of acculturation help determine child care choices for immigrant families.³
- Immigrant families tend to make less use of non-parental care than natives, even accounting for other demographics;¹⁷ and when they do, family, friend and neighbour care (informal care done in someone's home) is the most prevalent form of non-parental care.^{18,19} This is especially true when children are infants and toddlers and especially when families are poor or language minority.^{17,18,20}
- Although there is some evidence that early education benefits immigrant children from low-income families,^{11,21} the evidence is less compelling for more recent immigrants and those who enter programs without English proficiency.^{22,23}
- Part of failure of schools to fully promote academic success may derive from misunderstandings on the part of school personnel as to the goals of immigrant families and the behaviour of their children.²⁴ There is evidence that this disconnect may contribute to long-term distress in immigrant children.²⁵
- Neighbourhood factors seem to play a role, but it is not always easy to isolate neighbourhood from school composition factors when trying to understand academic success.^{26,27}
- Ability to form social connections seems to play a role in how well families use the resources of the community and engage the schools.²⁸
- Efforts have been made to characterize family, community, and school environments that contribute to academic success and positive adaptation.^{26,29,30,31,32,33,34}

Research Gaps

- There remains insufficient attention to the full array of ecological factors implicated in academic success and community engagement on the part of immigrant parents and children, including community conditions and patterns of receptivity.³⁵ This is paired with lack of tightness in sampling designs and measurement strategies.³⁶
- There are few longitudinal investigations of community based and school interventions, ones that can provide good estimates of impact as they relate to various academic, health, and life choice outcomes.³⁷
- There remains insufficient attention to most immigrant groups and to differences in nativity, and levels of acculturation and bicultural competence.³
- Too few studies are structured so that they have clear policy or programmatic implications.⁶

- There remains insufficient attention to how child care and school environments can promote the set of competencies children need to facilitate “self productivity.”³⁸

Conclusions

Children of immigrants represent a large and growing share of the population in many countries. Research has begun to document the strains produced in the process of immigration and acculturation, strains at child and family levels, strains at community and governmental levels, and strains at the level of institutions such as child care and school. There is evidence of success at all levels as regards the process of adaptation; but there is also evidence of uncertainty and failure. As is often the case with complex processes of adaptation, research lags real-world change. The research cannot offer either precise or complete explanations for most of the things observed – indeed, many are not even adequately described. Neither can it offer the kind of detailed information needed to inform policy or practice. Thus, decisions to be made by parents, providers, advocates, and politicians await findings from a new generation of research that is guided by better integrated theories of human behaviour and child development.

Implications

Given the current state of knowledge, current conditions that face immigrant children and families, and current socio-political circumstances, the research community (including those who fund research) would do well to simultaneously step back and move forward. Specifically, researchers need to pull back in the sense of moving away from the frameworks that originally guided their research. Too often the initial forays into research betray limited understanding of the issues involved and a narrow ideology as regards what’s important and how to address a set of problems. There is need to move forward with respect to using more inclusive frameworks that attempt to integrate ideas, variables, and theories that address child, family, community, and institutional processes and to conduct studies that have a longer time scope. In that regard the research community (including funders) would do well to consider two things:

- practicality – can the findings be turned into useful policies and practices in a reasonably straightforward way, and
- synergy or leveraging – sets of variables or processes that have functional connections that drive children’s development or provider practices in more than small additive ways over short time intervals.

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STRATEGIC KNOWLEDGE
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child development





Childhood Immigration and Acculturation in Canada

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Topic

Immigration

Introduction

According to Canada's 2006 Census, 20% of the country's population is foreign-born – the highest proportion in the past 75 years.¹ Whereas immigrants used to come almost exclusively from Europe, they now come from Asia and the Middle East (58.3%), Europe (16.1%), the Caribbean, Central and South America (10.8%), and Africa (10.6%).¹ This shift has led to a four-fold increase in the visible minority population – from 4.7% in 1981 to 16.2% in 2006 – and to a growing proportion of recent immigrants who speak a language other than English or French in their homes (81%).²

These high levels of immigration have resulted in immigrant children representing the fastest growing segment of the child population in Canada.³ In the past 35 years, the percentage of youth reared in immigrant families grew from 24% in 1971 to 34% in 2006.³ Compared to non-immigrant children, these children are far more likely to experience social and economic adversity, and growing evidence suggests that disparities between immigrant and native-born peoples are widening.⁴⁻⁹ The increasing number of immigrant children, shifts in their ethnic and linguistic background, and their disproportionate exposure to adversity call for closer examination of individual and contextual influences that may promote or hinder their adjustment.

Subject and Problem

The emergence of mental health problems during childhood and adolescence represents a major public health concern. Approximately 20% of children and adolescents in the general population in Ontario are affected.¹⁰ The consequences of mental health problems are profound, causing significant distress and impairment in academic and interpersonal functioning concurrently and over the life course.¹¹⁻¹⁴ Stressful experiences arising from migration and resettlement may compromise immigrant children's capacities to achieve and maintain optimal psychological functioning and well-being.

Research Context

Ecological contexts (i.e., families, schools, communities) exert important influences on developmental outcomes in children and youth.¹⁵⁻¹⁶ However, little is known about the extent to which these contexts influence immigrant children's mental health. Ecological systems theory¹⁷⁻²⁰ posits that human development arises from a dynamic interplay between the developing child and the nested ecological contexts in which children are embedded. Influences arising from these contexts can be conceptualized broadly as structural versus social. Structural influences refer to the organization and composition of elements that define a context, and include the availability and quality of institutional resources, public infrastructure, and the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of a given context (e.g., immigrant concentration and ethnic diversity). Social influences refer to transactional processes that take place between individuals in a given context (e.g., parenting in families and peer relationships in schools). Ecological theory poses as fundamental the interplay between the structural characteristics of ecological contexts and the social processes that occur therein.

Our knowledge of the relative role of different contextual influences on immigrant children's mental health is nascent. Research examining the independent and interactive influences of individual and contextual level effects on immigrant children's mental health can enhance our understanding of the potential mechanisms that link context, individual experiences and mental health. Furthermore, it can inform the development of interventions that support the mental health of immigrant children and youth by providing insights into potential targets for intervention.

Key Research Questions

- 1) Are immigrant children at elevated risk for mental health problems, relative to non-immigrant children?
- 2) What individual and contextual factors influence mental health problems among immigrant children?

Recent Research Results

This review focus primarily on Canadian studies that have used the following methodological approaches: secondary analyses of general population or school-based studies and specialized studies that focus exclusively on immigrant children and adolescents.

Evidence for Question 1: Are immigrant children at elevated risk for mental health problems, relative to non-immigrant children?

Secondary analyses of general population studies conducted in the 1980s and early 1990s in Canada, using the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY),^{4,5,21} the Ontario Child Health Study (OCHS),²² and the Ontario Health Survey (OHS),²³ suggest that children reared in immigrant families are at decreased risk for emotional and behavioural problems when compared to children reared in non-immigrant families. The pattern that emerges from these findings is one suggestive of resilience, given that immigrant children are disproportionately exposed to poverty, compared to non-

immigrant children. For example, evidence from the NLSCY, which includes a nationally-representative sample of 13,470 children aged 4-11 years, documents lower levels of behavioural problems and emotional problems among children living in recent immigrant families, compared to non-immigrant children.⁵ These results are not due to socioeconomic disadvantage and extend to both parental and teacher assessments. Similarly, evidence arising from the OHS, using a probability sample of 5,401 adolescents aged 12-18 years, suggests that 1st generation immigrant adolescents (i.e., foreign-born) report the lowest rates of tobacco use, followed by 2nd generation (i.e., Canadian born to at least 1 foreign-born parent), with the highest rates of use reported by 3rd generation adolescents (i.e., Canadian born to Canadian-born parents).²³

However, evidence from these cross-sectional studies also reveals declining mental health across successive generations of immigrant children. Individual and family factors that may initially help to protect immigrant children in Canada against the adverse influences of socioeconomic disadvantages like poverty include: the increased likelihood of living in a two-parent home, higher levels of parental education, lower levels of parental mental health problems and risk-taking behaviours, strong emphasis on educational attainment and behavioural regulation in the family, lower levels of hostile parenting, lower likelihood of affiliations with deviant peers, and a strong ethnic identity.^{4,5,23-27} Over time however, these positive family processes and individual characteristics appear to dissipate and converge towards levels similar to non-immigrant families.^{5,23-26,28} Such changes may contribute to the loss of resilience among immigrant children evident in cross-sectional studies. Increased conflict in the home between immigrant parents and children as a result of differing attitudes and behaviors towards adopting cultural values and beliefs of the host country versus maintaining values and beliefs of parental country of origin may also contribute to loss of resilience.²⁹ Longitudinal studies designed to identify mechanisms contributing to declining mental health among immigrant children can inform the development of prevention and early interventional programs designed to promote positive mental adjustment among disadvantaged, high-risk youth.

Evidence arising from studies conducted in the year 2000 or later suggests that the pattern of differences between immigrant and non-immigrant children may vary as a function of mental health outcome (i.e., behavioural versus emotional problems), developmental period (i.e., early childhood versus middle childhood versus adolescence), and cohort effects (i.e., source and host country). For example, recent studies suggest that young immigrant children and adolescents are at elevated risk for emotional problems, relative to non-immigrant children³⁰⁻³² at the same time that immigrant youth demonstrate lower levels of behavioural problems and substance use relative to non-immigrant youth.³¹⁻³³ Future research is warranted to examine whether the mental health advantage reported in previous studies applies to recent cohorts of immigrant children and adolescents in Canada. This will help target interventions for children and adolescents at risk.

Evidence for Question 2: What individual and contextual factors influence mental health problems among immigrant children?

Individual and contextual factors that influence mental health adjustment among immigrant children can be divided into 2 broad categories: (1) putative universal factors applicable to all children, irrespective of immigrant status (i.e., family poverty, parenting processes, peer relationships) and (2) migration-specific factors to the immigrant experience.³⁴ Migration-specific factors linked to mental health problems include: limited proficiency in English in both children and parents,^{34-37,38} lack of participation in host-country and home-country cultural traditions,^{25,37,39} a weaker ethnic identity,^{25,28} and refugee status.⁴⁰ Differences among immigrants in their exposure to universal and migration-specific factors contribute to variability in mental health problems.³⁵

Mental health salience of many universal factors has been well established for children and adolescents in the general population, but it is possible that these factors influence the mental health outcomes of immigrant children differently.^{4,5,23,30,36} For example, the negative effects of family poverty and harsh parenting on mental health outcomes of immigrant and ethnic minority youth appear to be muted,^{4,5,23,36} whereas the negative effects of peer harassment at school on depression are exacerbated among immigrant adolescents.³⁰ Living in neighbourhoods with higher concentrations of 1st generation immigrants is associated with a decreased risk for emotional and behavioural problems among immigrant children, but the reverse is true for non-immigrant children.⁵ Such differential relations highlight the important roles that immigration and culture play in shaping the mental health outcomes of children and adolescents.

Research Gaps

Despite dramatic increases in the number of immigrants in Canada, shifts in the ethnic composition of recent immigrants towards primarily Asia and the Middle East, and widening disparities in exposure to poverty and discrimination, research examining mental health outcomes of immigrant children and adolescents is limited and primarily restricted to general population surveys conducted in the 1980s and early 1990s. As a result, there are substantive and methodological reasons to be concerned about the validity and applicability of these findings to immigrant children living in Canada today.

- 1) Available studies primarily include European immigrant children and fail to represent recent cohorts of immigrants coming from Asia and the Middle East.
- 2) These studies fail to capture the deteriorating economic circumstances of immigrant families over the past 20 years in Canada.
- 3) Sample selection biases arising from language requirements in general population studies (i.e., must speak English or French to participate) and potential differential non-response among at-risk immigrants (such as refugees) raise concerns about systematic exclusions of high-risk groups, and the potential for underestimating levels of mental health problems among immigrant children.
- 4) Survey methods used in general population studies result in the numerical under-representation of 1st generation immigrant children and insufficient sample sizes for statistical analyses.

- 5) General population studies fail to assess important migration-specific factors that contribute to heterogeneity in mental health outcomes among immigrant children (e.g., refugee status, knowledge of English/French).
- 6) Most studies are cross-sectional in design, placing strict limits on making causal inferences about changes in patterns of mental health problems among immigrant children and adolescents.

Conclusions

Earlier evidence suggested that immigrant children in Canada are at lower risk for mental health problems, compared to non-immigrant children; more recent evidence suggests that the pattern of differences may be more complex and vary as a function of type of mental health problem, developmental period and cohort. Recent cohorts of immigrant children and adolescents in Canada may be at elevated risk for emotional problems, although additional research is required. Differential associations between individual and contextual factors and mental health problems among immigrant versus non-immigrant children also highlight the importance of immigration and culture in shaping mental health in youth.

A careful study of the emotional and behavioural needs of immigrant children in Canada is needed for many reasons:

1. Canada's reliance on international migration for population growth;
2. Changes in the source countries and background experiences of immigrant families;
3. Exposure of immigrant families to increased levels of adversity upon settlement;
4. Uncertainty about the relevance and accuracy of data from isolated Canadian studies.

Understanding the needs of immigrant youth is an important first step to creating conditions for them to achieve to their full potential in this country.

Implications for Parents, Services and Policy

Addressing the research questions posed earlier to study substantive and methodological limitations in our current evidence base can serve to:

25. Establish accurate estimates of the emotional-behavioral needs of immigrant children living in stressful environments to set priorities for resource allocation to immigrant children's health and inform the development of programs that are commensurate with their needs.
26. Identify individual and contextual factors associated with emotional and behavioural problems among immigrant children that will underscore the need for implementation of tailored, ecological and multi-systemic approaches to prevention and intervention.

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