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# The Integration of Immigrants into American Society

Committee on Population

Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education

# Education

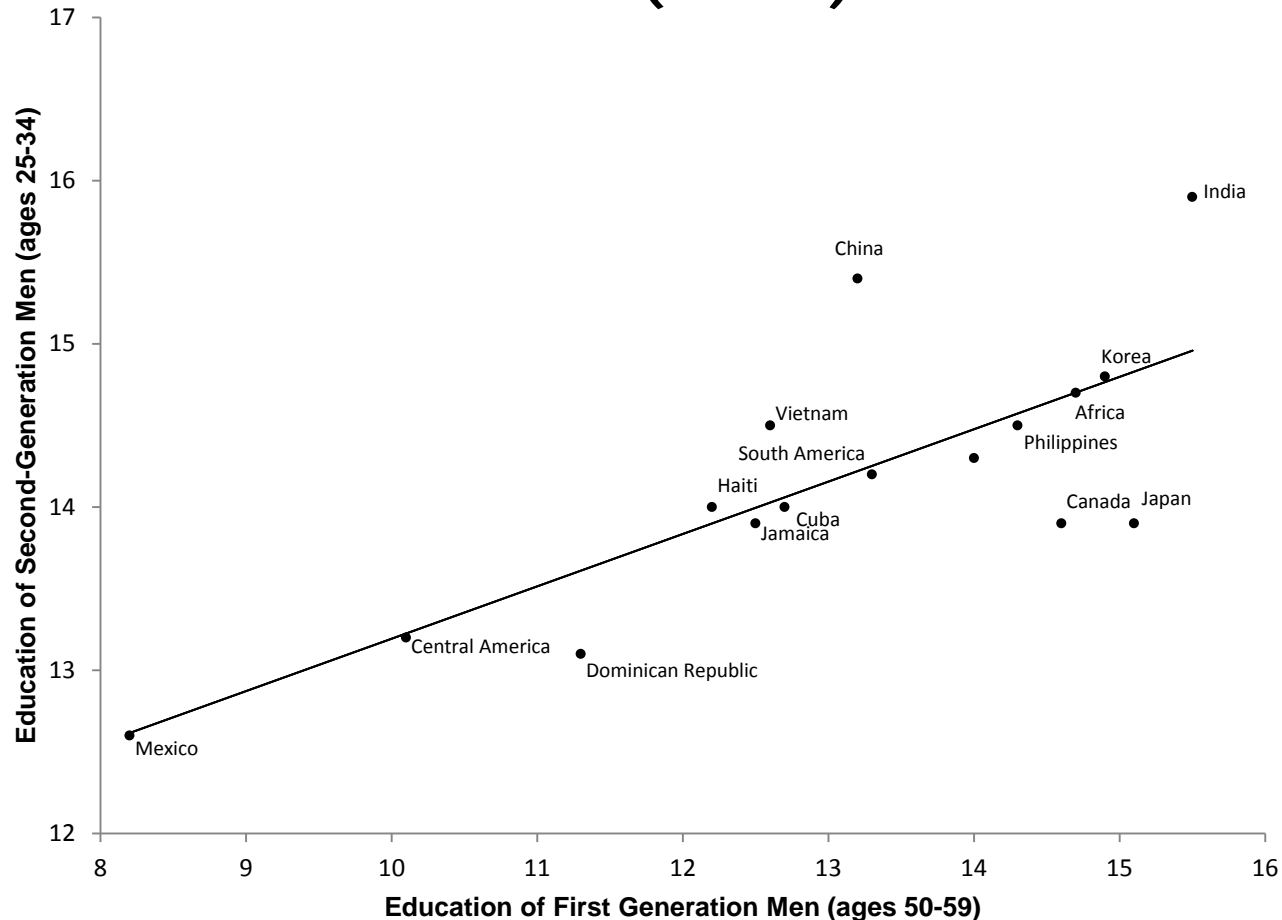
- Immigrant groups start out with very different average levels of education. Some, like Mexicans and Central Americans, have average levels well below those of native groups. Others, like Indians and Koreans, have proportions with college degrees and professional credentials far above those found in the native population. (Post-secondary education has sometimes been acquired in the U.S.)
- In the second generation, the youth from groups with low education levels among immigrants make substantial advances. Those from some groups with high levels of education experience modest declines but on average achieve more education than the U.S. native population (the third and later generations).

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# First- to second-generation educational shift (men)



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# Educational change/stagnation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation

- A few groups—Mexicans and Central Americans—do not reach educational parity with the native population in the second generation.
- There is a lot of attention to their educational attainment in the third generation, and a considerable scholarly debate over its significance has arisen (especially in the Mexican case). The basic finding is that educational progress levels off in the third generation, which falls short of parity.
- Two lines of investigation:
  - Continuing sources of disadvantage, including residential segregation, long-run consequences of undocumented status, difficulty breaking out of working class, and discrimination.
  - Loss to the group of high-achieving individuals through assimilation.

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# Education: More change coming?

- Research on recent education patterns indicates a narrowing of the high-school-graduation gap between Hispanics and whites (Murnane 2013). Moreover, among recent graduates, the rate of entry to post-secondary education by Hispanics has for the first time exceeded that of whites (Lopez and Fry 2013).
- However, our statistical record on educational achievement does not yet reflect the full weight of the children of the huge post-1990 wave of the undocumented. We know that even the U.S.-born children of these immigrants suffer educational disadvantage as a consequence of parental legal status (Bean et al 2015).

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# Immigrants and crime

- ALL the evidence indicates that immigrants commit LESS crime than the native born (aside from immigration-law infractions).
  - Among men aged 18-39, they are incarcerated at a fraction of rate of the native born.
- Moreover, neighborhoods with more immigrants have lower crime rates.
- However, in the commission of crime, the second and third generations converge with native born.

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