

“Educational Attainments of Immigrant Offspring: Success or Segmented Assimilation?”

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Abstract: In this article, I study the educational attainments of the adult offspring of immigrants, analyzing data from the 1996 panel of the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID). Fielded annually since 1993 by Statistics Canada, respondents are asked for the first time in 1996 to report the birthplaces of their parents, making it possible to define and study not only the foreign-born population (the first generation), but also the second generation (Canadian born to foreign-born parents) and the third-plus generation (Canadian born to Canadian-born parents). The survey also asked respondents to indicate if they are members of a visible minority group, thus permitting a limited assessment of whether or not color conditions educational achievements of immigrant offspring. I find that "1.5" and second generation adults, age 20-64 have more years of schooling and higher percentages completing high school compared with the third-plus generation. Contrary to the segmented "underclass" assimilation model found in the United States, adult visible minority immigrant offspring in Canada exceed the educational attainments of other not-visible-minority groups. Although the analysis is hampered by small sample numbers, the results point to country differences in historical and contemporary race relations, and call for additional national and cross-national research.