Immigrant Parental Documentation History and Second Generation Education Attainment

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Abstract: This analysis aims to bridge the issues of undocumented status and the assimilation of the immigrant second generation in the U.S. by exploring the impact that first generation parental documentation history may have on the number of years of schooling achieved by the second generation. Data for this analysis is drawn from the Mexican American Study Project, a survey of more than 1000 Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles and San Antonio first conducted in 1965 with follow-up interviews of both the original participants and their adult children in 2000. While there was no evidence that having a parent who was one-time undocumented effects the number of years of schooling achieved by a child, the inclusion of documentation history increases the importance of maternal human capital and diminishes the effect of private schooling on second generation outcomes.

Introduction

The post-war pool of immigrants to the United States was a relatively small group of individuals mostly granted access to the country by a governmental bureaucracy that conferred upon them the legal right to live and work in their new country (Zolberg 2008). Over the past forty years, U.S. policy regarding immigration has become more and more restrictive, with quotas placed on countries nowhere near the level to meet their demand for entry into the U.S. (Massey, Durand, & Malone 2002). As a result of this discrepancy between the demand and supply of legal entry to the United States, more and more immigrants are coming to the U.S. without legal authorization and the undocumented form a significant portion (11.9 million) of the current day community of immigrants in the U.S. (Passel and Cohn 2009).

The growing number of immigrants without the right to legally work and live in the United States is bound to have an adverse effect on both immigrants and native-born Americans. It is difficult to conceive of a situation in which millions of individuals living in the shadows would not lead to an underclass of workers occupying the bottom of the social and labor ladder in society. Yet, while the current growing segment of undocumented immigrants experience blocked paths to mobility and opportunity, can the same be said of their U.S. born citizen children? Are the economic disadvantages of undocumented status passed on to the children of onetime undocumented immigrants? Immigration policies meant to restrict the entry of foreign workers via means of exclusion from full participation in the labor market may have their consequences felt not only on the lives of those labeled illegal, but also on generations of their citizen descendents.

In this article I will analyze the role of parental undocumented status on the human capital development of the second generation. Are children who have a parent who has lived in the United States without legal status at a disadvantage when it comes to the number of years of schooling completed? If so, what is it about parental undocumented status that influences the educational outcomes of the second generation? In answering these questions, I will situate the question of documentation in the theoretical literature on the assimilation process of the second generation, focusing in particular on the concept of social distance and Segmented Assimilation Theory, which holds that the context of the lives led by the second generation is highly determinative of assimilation outcomes. The second generation inherits much of this context from their parents. Some aspects of this context, such as the economic position of immigrant parents and the neighborhoods and schools in which families live, have been more widely and easily explored in previous work on the second generation than the area of undocumented status. The aim of this analysis is to determine empirically whether a history of undocumented status among parents matters to children and their upbringing.

Literature Review

The sociological literature on immigrants and immigration focuses on two main topics. First, an entire branch of the literature concerns itself with the determinants of immigration. In this branch of the literature, undocumented status is not closely explored as a main topic of study, but rather as a subtype of immigrant that is subject to all the same determinants used to explain migration in each of the major theories. By applying each of these theories of migration in the context of undocumented migration we can

roughly approximate who the typical undocumented are by exploring the conditions that produce may certain characteristics among the undocumented immigrant population.

The neoclassical economic theoretical point of view suggests that those who enter the country illegally may be coming from circumstances in their home country that are much worse than those they would experience in the U.S. (Borjas 1989, Papademetriou 1991, Massey and Espinosa 1997)**.** The neoclassical micro-economic view holds individuals are rational actors who conduct a cost-benefit analysis when deciding whether or not to migrate. Individuals chose to move where they can maximize their income from their skills after accounting for the economic, social, cultural, and psychological costs of severing ties with home and adjusting to a new land (Todaro 1969). Undocumented entry increases the costs of migration by making the process of migration much more difficult, and also decreases the benefits of migrating by blocking access to the full range of employment an immigrant is skilled to perform **(**Todaro and Maruszko 1987**).** Even with an increase in costs and decrease in benefits, those who come to the U.S. without documentation still decide that they would be better off coming to U.S. Meanwhile, for those who come to the U.S. legally, the costs of migrating are lower with higher benefits, meaning the prospect of migrating can more easily eclipse that of staying put in their home country. Furthermore, policies that make legal migration harder to obtain for those who are low-skilled and poor have been followed by increases in illegal migration, suggesting that those who are undocumented are lower-skilled and poorer than those who migrate legally (Espenshade and Baraka 1997).

Another perspective that sheds light on the meaning of being undocumented is segmented labor market theory. While the neoclassical economics theory focuses on cost-

benefit decisions made by individuals, segmented labor market theory holds that individuals are not pushed by conditions in their home countries to make decisions to migrate, but rather are pulled to migrate by the demand for low-skilled labor of economies in the developed countries (Piore 1979). The labor markets of the developed world are segmented, with segments that require highly skilled workers, such at the professional sector, and segments that require unskilled labor, such as the construction and service sectors. Due to demographic and social changes, a shortage now exists of native born individuals who traditionally filled the jobs in the low-skilled secondary sector of developed economies (Sassen 1988; Massey, Durand, & Malone 2002). The undocumented worker, locked out from employment in the highly skilled sector of the economy, is the perfect source of labor for the low-skilled segment of the economy, and is pulled toward developed economies by this shortage.

Lack of Documentation as a barrier to Assimilation

The second major branch of the migration literature focuses on the assimilation of immigrants and their children to their host societies. In this literature the main debate is whether assimilation occurs in a straight line for all immigrant groups over time and generations or if the context of an immigrant's immigration experience determines the path their assimilation takes (Portes & Zhou 1993, Rumbaut 1997, Zhou 1997). Again undocumented immigration is not dealt with head on in this literature. Among those who argue the segmented view of assimilation, undocumented status is assumed to have a negative effect on the social and economic outcomes of immigrants and their children (Rumbaut & Portes 2001). Most of the works evaluating theories of assimilation

therefore have not given a close look at undocumented status, either because it is taken as a given that undocumented status would be a barrier to assimilation or because whatever hindrance undocumented status presents, the greater overall force of assimilation overcomes the impact of undocumented status.

Social Distance and Segmented Assimilation

Social distance as a major influence on the process of assimilation forms the core of the seminal thinking on assimilation. In 1921, Robert Park and Ernest Burgess devised the classic definition of assimilation: "a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes, of other persons and groups, and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life" (Rumbaut 1997). Assimilation requires "intimate and intense social contacts" and was not just learning or adjusting to the social norms and expectations of a society, but taking the cultural beliefs and history of a people and seeing it as your own (Park 1950, Rumbaut 1997). Warner and Srole and later Milton Gordon argued that social distance, organized around religion and race was the force that determined the length and extent of the assimilation process of immigrant groups. (Warner and Srole 1945, Gordon 1964). Warner and Srole argued that greater differences between immigrants and natives along race and religion, the greater the subordination immigrants would face in the receiving society, slowing the process of assimilation. Gordon argued that immigrants are assimilating into structurally isolated groups, an outcome he called "structural pluralism" (Gordon 1964).

Taking a social distance view, it can be argued that for the undocumented individual and his family, assimilation is much more difficult, since the stigma and social exclusion flowing from illegal status prevents intimate and intense social contact with the native born. Therefore, by limiting an immigrant's contact with the full range of society, undocumented status prevents full assimilation. An end result of such limits to assimilation may ethnic resilience, cultural pluralism, and a reactive formation of identity (Glazer and Moynihan 1964, Portes and Manning 1986). Undocumented immigrants, with their freedoms limited by their status, may only associate with other coethnics and over time, as a subordinated immigrant groups, come to develop a reactive ethnicity as a reaction to this institutional oppression. Thus, not only is undocumented status a barrier to economic capital through limited labor market participation, but also a barrier to the social and cultural capital that is available outside the undocumented and co-ethnic community.

Going beyond social distance, segmented assimilation theory tells us what we can expect the effect of undocumented status of parents to be on the second generation not as a result of immigrants and their children being segregated from their native-born counterparts, but as a result of the context of the lives that flow from undocumented status. In this view, it is not so much about which social spaces families of undocumented immigrants are kept out of, but the spaces in which undocumented status determines an immigrant family must live. In other words, the children of the onetime or currently undocumented still experience assimilation irrespective of their social distance from the mainstream, but that assimilation is into the segment of American society carved out for the undocumented.

Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou (1993) introduced the idea that assimilation is segmented as immigrants assimilate into a certain segment of society, not to society as a whole. Segmented Assimilation Theory posits that much can be predicted about the assimilation outcomes of a member of the immigrant second generation by looking at parental endowments and the context of their entry into a new society. Parental endowments are broken down into three categories: human capital, mode of incorporation, and family structure. Greater human capital allows parents to obtain better positions in the labor market, which in turn means higher incomes, better occupational status, and an overall better living situation in safer neighborhoods and better schools (Portes and Rumbaut 1996). Mode of incorporation refers to the legal and social support an immigrant receives when moving to a new country. Family structure is important because each parent in the household of a child is a source of support and guidance from which a child can draw during their development.

Beyond the endowments passed from parent to child, the social context into which immigrants migrate plays a crucial role in the assimilation outcomes of the second generation. Portes and Rumbaut identify three dimensions to the context of the segment of American society the second generation assimilate into: race, labor market access, and social context of the neighborhood. Racial discrimination can severely diminish the life chances of a second generation child if they are identified by the host society as being a member of a disadvantaged minority group. A highly segmented labor market with a blocked path from low-status, low-wage jobs and high-status professional jobs means success in the labor market over the lifetime is heavily dependent on initial access to the labor market. Finally, the social context of the neighborhood in which an immigrant child

grows up in terms of crime and quality of schools determines the norms promoted to children through mere observation and imitation.

From a segmented assimilation perspective, the children of current and onetime undocumented parents are at a heavy disadvantage. By virtue of their parent's legal status history, the children of those with undocumented pasts are endowed with less social capital and a very antagonistic reception into the U.S. Furthermore, given the fact that most undocumented immigrants are Latino, undocumented status is racialized and means that those who are the children of undocumented parents are not likely to escape the racial stigma of being their parents' child (De Genova 2005)**.** As for access to the labor market, their parents, legally locked out of the formal labor sector, place them at a major disadvantage when attempting to enter the labor market in the skilled, well-paid segment of the labor market. Finally, encumbered by the restraints of undocumented status, parents are limited in the quality of the neighborhoods they can afford and have access to for their children. Therefore, having undocumented parents should have a highly detrimental effect on the prospects for second generation to assimilate into the mainstream and achieve educational and labor market success.

Bridging Parental Documentation and Second Generation Assimilation

Very little work has been done on understanding the effect of undocumented status on the lives of immigrants and their family over time. Much of this lack of research is due to a dearth of longitudinal dataset that spans both lifetimes and generations of immigrants and their families (Waters & Jimenez 2005). Furthermore, of the data that exists on immigrants, questions regarding legal status in the host country have been

avoided by researchers, out of fears that such questions would adversely affect data collection (Portes & DeWind 2004). Without many longitudinal datasets that ask about immigration status, we have not been able to demonstrate that undocumented status has actual negative effects on the lives of immigrants and their children. The focus of work done on the undocumented has focused on the economic effects on native workers and the resources of the state. Some work has also dealt with the wages and earnings differentials between legal and illegal workers. Yet, at the intersection of the economics of documentation and the assimilation of the second generation, there has been little work done.

Study Goals

This analysis aims to bridge the question of undocumented status and the assimilation of the immigrant second generation in the U.S. In other to do so, this analysis will focus on the second generation's development of human capital through formal schooling. Success in the labor market depends greatly on the human capital one has to offer employers, and success in the labor market leads to accumulation of economic capital and social mobility. Therefore I feel it appropriate to begin exploring the tie between parental documentation history and the assimilation of the second generation by looking for relationships between parental documentation and the number of years of schooling obtained by a second generation child. Given the literature, I expect that a history of undocumented status of parents would be associated with fewer years of education achieved by a child. Parents with pasts as undocumented immigrants should be

lower-skilled and poorer and less equipped to guide their children along a path of upward, straight-line assimilation.

Methods

Data for this analysis is drawn from the Mexican American Study Project, a survey of more than 1000 Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles and San Antonio first conducted in 1965 by Leo Grebler at UCLA for his book, *The Mexican American People.* Respondents in this survey included individuals who were first, second, and third generation immigrants to the United States. The survey asked respondents a wide array of questions covering education, income, employment, political beliefs and participation, religious beliefs and behaviors, legal status in the U.S. and other areas.

In 2000, Edward Telles and Vilma Ortiz conducted a follow up to this first survey by tracking down the original respondents using contact information provided by respondents in 1965. Along with interviewing the original respondents to the 1965 survey, Telles and Ortiz also interviewed their children. Telles and Ortiz thus turned a one-time cross-sectional survey into a longitudinal multigenerational survey. With this data, one can explore the changes over 35 years in the lives of first, second, and third generation Mexican-Americans and changes between first-second, second-third, and third-fourth parent-child generations. This analysis will focus on a subgroup of 129 children interviewed in 2000 of first generation Mexican immigrants who were interviewed in 1965.

The MASP dataset provides a significant opportunity to improve on inter-generational immigrant assimilation research that has up to this point has had to rely on

repeated cross-sectional surveys or on longitudinal surveys that cover only a narrow timeframe. When analyzing the progress across generations of immigrants, analyses using data produced via cross-sectional surveys has had to assume that those individuals are second generation immigrants at later timepoints are the descendents of those who were first generation immigrants at an earlier time. A major limitation of this assumption is that we cannot be sure that those who are the second generation are the descendants of those who came to this country a generation earlier since the group of individuals who immigrated to the US a generation earlier did not all have children, or did not stay in the U.S. long enough to have child in the US. In other words, differences between cohorts in repeated cross-sectional analyses lack internal validity as they compare groups that lack the intergenerational relationship that is sought in assimilation research.

The MASP data allows us to measure real progress across generations since parents and children are followed from 1965 to 2000 in two waves. This allows us to find relationships between a child's outcomes in 2000 and parental and child characteristics in 1965. Rather than attempt to extrapolate the resources provided in and the context of the childhood of the second generation from population level indicators of the first generation, MASP allows us to determine these resources and contexts exactly. Thus I explore the relationship between 2000 educational outcomes for the second generation and parental characteristics such income, homeownership, and legal status and childhood characteristics such as school attendance from 1965.

Measures

The Dependent Variable: Number of Years of Education

As the U.S. labor market becomes further bifurcated into a low-skilled service sector and a high-skilled professional sector, the importance of human capital development has increased**.** Whereas in generations past individuals could work their way up the labor market ladder through time and toil, acquiring human capital on the job, today's lowest level jobs do not lead to ever higher paying jobs (Piore 1979, Portes & Rumbaut 1996, Handel 2003). Entry level jobs in the manufacturing sector which did not require a high school degree could provide individuals with a lifetime of secure employment through with accumulated experience would be rewarded with higher pay and more responsibilities. Today's entry level jobs not requiring a high school education are overwhelmingly service based jobs that do not make for lifelong careers nor upward employment mobility (Bluestone and Harrison 1982; Sassen 1988; Massey and Hirst 1998; Fischer and Hout 2006). Therefore, education has become more important in determining the lifelong labor market success of individuals as education influences where in the labor one can begin their employment.

Since human capital leads to better positioning in the labor market, this analysis will focus on the effect of parental and childhood characteristics on the human capital development of second generation Mexican-American immigrants. The dependent variable for this analysis is the number of years of education obtained by 2000 by the children of Mexican immigrants surveyed in the 1965 wave of the MASP dataset. Our goal is to determine what factors in a second-generation child's life determine the amount of education they ultimately obtain, with particular interest on the effect of parental undocumented status.

Independent Variables

The primary independent variable in this regression analysis is parental documentation status. Parents interviewed in the 1965 wave of the MASP study were not asked for their documentation status. Instead the measure of documentation comes from participant responses to the 2000 survey which asks if the respondent has ever been an undocumented immigrant. Responses to this question were coded using a dummy variable indicating undocumented status at any time in a parent's lifetime. Thus, this study is an analysis of the effect of having a parent who has ever been undocumented immigrant, not an analysis of being raised by a parent who was undocumented during childhood.

Economic Capital

Given the positive relationship between children's educational performance and parental socioeconomic status, this analysis includes controls for the economic resources of respondents' parents during their childhood (Gamoran 1987; Hirschman 2001). Socioeconomic status is operationalized by three measures in this analysis. The first of these is the amount of education achieved by the respondents' parents during the respondents' childhood and is measure separately for the mother and father of the respondent. The second is the combined household income of the respondents' households as measured during respondents' childhoods. Finally, parental homeownership during the respondents' childhood is used to distinguish between those parents who had accumulated enough capital to purchase home from those who rented their homes.

Social Capital

Respondents' access to social capital while growing up is measured through multiple variables. First, family participation in weekly religious services is coded with a dummy variable indicating whether or not the family attends services on a weekly basis. Church participation is a good source of social capital as it provides access to social networks of individuals who can provide parents and their children with resources and support that can be used to navigate school and growing up (Hirschman 2004). Second, whether or not a child attended private school in 1965 is coded using a dummy variable. Private school provides access to a social network that may be distinct from that which public school offers, since entry to private school is restricted through academic and financial barriers such as entry exams and tuition**.** This analysis will test whether these differing social networks and resources lead to different outcomes in educational obtainment.

Cultural Capital

Along with social and economic capital, parents also provide their children with cultural capital with which they can navigate society and institutions. This analysis will capture the cultural capital provided by parents through a measure of parental involvement and contact with respondents' schools during childhood and whether or not a respondent's parents spoke English. The logic here is that parents who are more familiar with how schooling in the United States works and who are able to communicate in English would provide their children knowledge useful in successfully proceeding

through the educational system. One of the earlier measures introduced of economic capital, parental education level, will also be evaluated in this analysis as an indicator of the cultural capital parents are able to provide to their children. Parents who have completed more years of education can be expected to better understand the norms and expectations of the education system and impart to their children the values and goals needed to successfully complete and continue formal education (Fuligni 1997; Kao and Tienda 1998; Jeynes 2005).

Results

There are 129 observations in this analysis, each representing one child of the original 1965 wave of respondents. The complete dataset included 758 children of 1965 respondents, but since this analysis is of the immigrant second generation, the number of respondents included in this analysis is much smaller. While a sample size of 129 is small, the unique nature of this dataset and the dearth of data of this nature should be taken into consideration when evaluating the fruitfulness of this analysis. I concede that this analysis is exploratory, and should be considered as a sort of a statistical case study.

Of the 129 children in this sample, 36 of them had a parent who had at one point been in the U.S. as an undocumented immigrant. Of these undocumented parents, all obtained legal status by the time of the second wave of interviews. Parental income, measured in 1965, averaged about $5,000 when the median income in the U.S. was $6,900 and is about the same for both the households with and without one-time undocumented parents. When it comes to home ownership, 46.5% of parents interviewed in 1965 reported owning the home they lived in; 52.8% for those with undocumented

histories, 45.2% for those without. Weekly church participation in 1965 in this sample is 55% of all respondents, 61.1% for those with parents with undocumented histories, 54.2% for those without. The average number of years of education obtained by fathers is 11.1 years, and 8.3 years for mothers. In households with undocumented histories, these numbers are 14.4 and 6.9 respectively and 10.1 and 7.95 for those with no undocumented histories. The majority of respondents attended public school, with 14% attending private school in the 1965 wave and fewer in households with undocumented histories (13.9 vs. 15.5%). Half of respondents were raised in households where Spanish was not the only language spoken, with 49.6% of respondents raised in Spanish only households. This number was higher in households with undocumented histories (58.3%) than those without undocumented histories (44%). Finally, the average of the outcome variable in this analysis, the number of years of schooling completed by respondents, is 13.7 years with children with one-time undocumented parents completing fewer years (13.19 years vs.13.95 years). A further breakdown of how children with one-time undocumented parents compare with those with parents with no undocumented experience can be found in Table 1.

Six models were run in this analysis (Table 2), together meant to determine the roles of economic, social, and cultural capital, along with undocumented status on the educational attainment of the second generation. All models are linear regressions on the number of years of education completed by children in the second generation. Since the children interviewed in the 2000 wave of the MASP study can be siblings, the regressions in this analysis account for the clustering of cases according to shared parents. As a result, the threshold for significance in this analysis is higher than if the cases were not

related. The first two models regress years of education on the parental measures of socioeconomic status, one model not including parental documented status and the other including documented status. The second two models are the same as the first two, but with social capital measures included. Finally, the last two models incorporate all measures in this analysis, the economic, social, and cultural capital measures. In all these models, the location and gender of the respondents are included as controls.

The first two models provide little evidence that socioeconomics alone can be used to predict the number of years of education achieved by the Mexican-American second generation in this survey. The first model, which does not take parental documentation status into account, shows no significant relationship between any of the measures of parental socioeconomic status and education attainment. Adding parental documentation status as a predictor increases the effect of maternal education and yields a highly significant relationship. In other words, by controlling for whether or not a parent has ever been undocumented in the United States the relationship between mother's education and the number of years of education obtained by a second generation child becomes significant.

Like the first two models, the next two models incorporating measures of social capital provide little evidence that our measures of socioeconomics can be used to predict the number of years of education achieved those in the second generation. Among the measures of social capital, whether or not a respondent attended a private school makes a significant difference when not considering parental documentation. A respondent who attended private school could expect an additional year of schooling than their peers who did not attend a private school. Yet, when parental documentation is added to this model,

the effect of private schooling disappears, and again maternal education returns to yield a significant effect on the number of years of education completed by a second-generation Mexican-American child.

Final two models repeat the patterns of the previous sets of models, with the inclusion of parental documentation shifting the picture of what matters in predicting the number of years of education completed by the second generation. In these two models, we add measures of cultural capital. None of these measures yielded any significant relationships, but private schooling again was found to have a significant effect on outcomes when not including parental documentation history. Also, maternal education does not have a significant effect when parental documentation is not included but yields a significant effect when parental documentation is added.

The introduction of parental undocumented status did not just alter the significant relationships found in models that do not account for parental status history, but also greatly increased the fit of the regression models. The R-squared values of models 1, 3, and 5 increased from 0.01 to 0.13, 0.07 to 0.18, and 0.08 to 0.20 respectively. This finding showcases the importance and usefulness of considering parental documentation history when attempting to model the outcomes of the immigrant second generation. While the effect parental documentation is not significant in this analysis, the inclusion of this variable in our analysis has not only provided more clarity and nuance to the story the data tells, but also allows our models to better fit the real data points.

Discussion

While this analysis did not find evidence that onetime parental undocumented status directly affects the number of years of education obtained by a second generation child, I did find that a history of undocumented status is an important aspect of Mexican immigrant families' lives for which to control. In all of the models run, the inclusion of undocumented status not only increased the fit of the models to the data, but also shifted the focus from indicators such as the schools attended by children to the characteristics of their parents. Undocumented status brings with it a later chain of realities for children that would typically be picked up by participation in private schooling. These findings suggest that without considering parental immigration status, differences between the outcomes of the second generation would be potentially mistakenly attributed to the kind of school they attend and not to the more ultimate cause, the social, cultural, and economic position of their parents and family.

I argue that parental history greatly influences the life chances of the second generation, and that in order to fully understand the success of the second generation's assimilation into American society, the issue of undocumented status cannot be ignored. In light of Portes and Zhou's segmented assimilation theory, we must strive to understand the full context of the lives of the second generation. While segmented assimilation theory seeks to explain differences between the multitudes of immigrant groups in America, the very principle of segmented societal realities into which immigrants enter still applies within individual ethnic groups of immigrants. In this case, the Mexican-American group of immigrants to the U.S., immigrants differ widely in the extent of their social, economic, cultural, and human capital assets. There is a rich diversity within

ethnic groups of immigrants, just as there is between ethnic groups of immigrants, and this diversity is not completely captured by simply looking at who is wealthier and more educated; it requires that we also explore the relationship that immigrants have had with their receiving society and government.

The results of this analysis suggest that considering onetime undocumented status of parents increases the importance and value of parental human capital while diminishing the importance and value of a second generation child's access to the advantages of a private school education. Undocumented status appears to be collinear with socioeconomic status in such a way that not including onetime status means that indicators of socioeconomic status capture the effects that parental status may have on children's outcomes. As a result it is not so much a surprise that including an indicator of undocumented status would diminish the effect of private schooling. Those parents who came to this country without documentation can reasonably be expected to be less likely to send their children to private school due to the barrier of cost, the stigma of being undocumented, and the lack of social networks useful in gaining admission to private school. As a result attendance of private school not only selects on those children from wealthier families, but also those children from families that do not include parents with histories of undocumented status.

This analysis offers evidence that the inclusion of undocumented status not only accounts for differences in economic capital between immigrant families, but also plays a role in the returns to human capital parents are able to reap for their children. Parental level of education yielded no effect on the outcomes of children measured in this analysis before the introduction of parental documentation status into the model. Once included,

the level of education obtained by respondents' mother was found to have a positive effect on the number of years of education completed by a child. In other words, by controlling for parental documentation status, maternal education begins to matter. This suggests that in families where a parent has a history of undocumented status, the advantages of maternal education are limited. Mothers in families with undocumented members are less able to convert their human capital into positive outcomes for their children and only after controlling for this disparity in returns can human capital of mothers be used to predict child outcomes.

At the most basic level, individuals' interaction with the labor market can be boiled down to an exchange of labor and skills for economic compensation (Becker 1964). Individuals sell their labor to employers and the value of this labor is dependent on demand for the skills and human capital possessed by laborers. The more human capital an individual possesses the higher demand and value of said individual's labor in the labor market. When first entering a labor market, formal education is a form of human capital that determines an individual's employability and beginning position in the labor market (Haveman & Smeeding. 2006; Heckman and Krueger 2003). Once employed, an individual can gain skills and knowledge while on the job and translate this acquisition of skills and experience into higher level and higher paid positions in the labor market. The ideal for a worker therefore is to maximize their human capital before their entrance into the labor market in order to achieve the best, highest paid job they can which also allows for ever increasing levels of human capital simply by learning on the job**.** If successful in the labor market, an individual should see great economic returns to their human capital that grow even more over time; economic returns that they can then

use to provide their children with the material resources helpful in succeeding in school and life in general (Fuligni 1997; Kao and Tienda 1998; Jeynes 2005).

Undocumented status introduces a complication to this process for immigrant parents and their children. Given the nature of undocumented status, those without legal status are locked out from certain jobs and opportunities in the labor market without regard to their human capital. An immigrant may have the human capital necessary for a desirable job that offers great potential for upward mobility in the labor market, but if they are undocumented, they are automatically disqualified from consideration for those jobs. Instead, those without documentation have to settle for jobs requiring a lower level of skills than they possess, at wages below the value of their skills. An easily exploitable class, undocumented workers can be paid less than those with legal status and be hired and fired at the whim of and economic needs of employers. Together, the low-skilled nature of the jobs available to undocumented workers, the lack of advancement opportunities through those jobs, and the vulnerability of the undocumented in negotiating the labor market lead to fewer economic resources for immigrant parents to provide for their children. Meanwhile, for those who have never been undocumented the conversion of human capital into success in the labor market and economic capital is much easier. In this segmented labor market, competition for employment is grouped by those who have and do not have legal status, where one's human capital is measured against only those in one's documentation status group. As a result, having more human capital is still better than having less, but those with the highest levels of human capital among the undocumented cannot be expected to fare much better than those with less human capital but with legal status to work in the U.S.

In our analysis, the ability to convert human capital into a well-paying job and career does not appear to tell the whole story since father's level of education does not have a significant effect on the outcomes of the second generation as mother's education does. To explain this, we can turn to the non-economic benefits of parental human capital for the children in this analysis. Thus far the benefits of parental human capital for children have been presented as flowing from the convertibility of human capital into material resources. Another means by which children benefit from the human capital of their parents is by the direct transfer of knowledge and skills from parent to child. Parents not only use their human capital to give their children the material resources useful for success in school, but also provide their children with skills and knowledge. Having spent more time in school, parents with more education are better able to guide their children's progression through the school system and curricula. For instance, a parent who has taken high school level algebra or has read the works of Shakespeare that are routinely read in high school are better equipped to help their children with their schoolwork.

Given the cultural group and the social context of the early 60s, the simultaneous significance of maternal education and the non-significance of paternal human capital may be due to norms of child-raising. While fathers were more likely to serve as breadwinners and financially support the family, women were expected to stay at home and see to the nurturing and supervision of children (Hochschild 198; Bianchi et. al 2000; Budig & England 2001). As a result, mothers in this sample would have had more time and opportunity to teach their children skills and knowledge needed for school, or help with their children's schoolwork. Again, when having a one-time undocumented parent in the family limits that family's participation in the labor market, the transfer of human

capital from parent to child becomes much more important in the lives of children. Since children are more likely to receive help and guidance with all things scholastic from their mothers, the human capital of children's mothers will be more important than that of their fathers, controlling for the income of the family and parental documentation status.

Limitations

Recognizing the limitations of the longitudinal data available regarding immigrants and their children his analysis is meant to be merely a first step in understanding the importance of undocumented status in understanding the outcomes of the immigrant second generation. The sample size in this analysis is on the small side and the need to account for clustering due to the nature of the sample made significant relationships difficult to come by, yet, the data still yields such vital results. Also, the data for this analysis includes only Mexican immigrants in the Southwest, and it is reasonable to expect that differences in origin countries and receiving communities would influence the significance of the factors explored in this analysis.

Finally, the sample is of a parental first generation that arrived in the US more than 50 years old, with children raised in this country before the great immigration waves starting in the 70s and 80s. The age of these cohorts make generalizability to immigrants today much more difficult, though, given the increase in numbers and marginalization of undocumented immigrants, and the ever segmenting labor market, a case can be made that the importance of undocumented status is greater today than it was in the times of the participants in the MASP dataset. With more undocumented immigrants in the United States today, the native born population has more exposure to immigrants in the country illegally and more of an opportunity to form beliefs and prejudices concerning them. The

past forty years have allowed for a heightening of the stigmatization and marginalization of undocumented individuals as their increased numbers have made them a more visible force and threat to the native born. For instance, the politics of immigration in the last couple decades has seen an increase in the scapegoating of undocumented immigrants for social and economic problems in society. Therefore, I would expect that a child of undocumented immigrants today would face a more hostile society and a much difficult path to assimilation into the mainstream. As a consequence, if this analysis were to be done with parents and children today, I would expect that undocumented status would have a significant effect.

Given the limitations of this analysis and the data available on the topic on parental documentation and child outcomes, future research is very necessary if we are to truly understand the situation facing the immigrant second generation. Currently there are no longitudinal datasets which span generations that account for the legal status histories of both parents of immigrant children. While the MASP dataset gives us a snapshot of life for a specific group of immigrants and their children, the researchers who conducted the 1965 data collection did not anticipate that documentation status would become so important of an issue in the immigrant community. As a result a great opportunity to better understand the consequences of undocumented status slipped through the cracks.

Future research should develop a way of following both documented and undocumented immigrants and their children's educational outcomes over decades. With an increasing segment of the population that has experience living in the U.S. without legal status, work must be done to understand the long-term and inter-generational effects of legal exclusion of members of society from full participation in society. The nature of

documentation status and the risks incurred by immigrants who reveal their status to researchers makes this sort of work difficult, but we must not allow such difficulties to deter us from shedding light on such an important part of immigrant lives.

Conclusion

More restrictive immigration policies in the face of unstopping flows of workers are not lowering the numbers of immigrants to the U.S., but simply transforming those flows into a class of immigrants whose social and economic lives are legally constrained. With the number of undocumented immigrants in the United States increasing with passing day, the importance of undocumented status on immigrant assimilation will only grow. More and more children are being raised by immigrant parents who cannot fully participate in society and the economy, and unlike the immigrant flows of the past, simply looking at human, social, and economic capital may no longer be enough to predict lifelong and intergenerational outcomes in immigrant assimilation. Instead, the value of these kinds of capital will have to be evaluated according to their usefulness as dictated by the "legal capital" known as a green card.

Appendix

Table 1: Summary Statistics		
	With Undocumented Parent (36 Children)	**Without Undocumented Parent** (84 Children)
Average Number of School Years	13.19	13.95
Father's Average Number of School Years	14.41	10.13
Mother's Average Number of School Years	6.88	7.95
Parental Homeownership rate	52.8%	45.2%
Proportion from San Antonio	13.9%	25%
Sex (% Female)	47.2%	67.9%
Proportion Reporting Exposure to Professionals	36.1%	52.4%
Proportion Attending Private School	13.9%	15.5%
Proportion Attending Weekly Church Services	61.1%	52.4%
Proportion With Parents Married	88.9%	97.6%
Proportion With Parents in Contact With School	58.3%	42.9%
Proportion Whose Parents Expected College for Them	66.7%	57.1%
Proportion With Parents who Spoke Spanish Only	58.3%	44.0%

Table 2: Regression Results for Six Models in this Analysis

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Years of Education					
Fathers Education	0.004	0.009	0.002	0.007	0.002	0.008
	(0.36)	(0.87)	(0.16)	(0.60)	(0.16)	(0.69)
Mothers Education	0.011	0.163	0.014	0.155	0.013	0.157
	(0.43)	(3.53)**	(0.60)	(3.22)**	(0.65)	(3.06)**
Parents Income 1965	0.042	-0.046	0.077	0.000	0.064	0.008
	(0.50)	(0.61)	(0.91)	(0.00)	(0.72)	(0.10)
Home Ownership 1965	0.010	0.301	-0.057	0.195	-0.091	0.309
	(0.02)	(0.68)	(0.13)	(0.45)	(0.20)	(0.69)
Lived in San Antonio	0.150	0.085	0.224	0.027	0.237	0.053
	(0.23)	(0.14)	(0.36)	(0.04)	(0.38)	(0.09)
Gender	0.258	-0.293	0.183	-0.364	0.139	-0.414
	(0.59)	(0.67)	(0.41)	(0.81)	(0.30)	(0.92)
Parent With Undocumented Past		-0.683		-0.877		-0.878
		(1.48)		(1.90)		(1.82)
Exposure to Professionals 1965			-0.303	-0.335	-0.344	-0.344
			(0.79)	(0.92)	(0.92)	(0.94)
Private School Attendance 1965			1.090	0.755	1.044	0.839
			(2.13)*	(1.46)	(2.01)*	(1.53)
Weekly Church Attendance 1965			0.690	0.809	0.775	0.854
			(1.57)	(1.91)	(1.65)	(1.85)
Parents Married in 1965			-0.151	-0.635	-0.174	-0.664
			(0.17)	(0.73)	(0.19)	(0.71)
Parents Regularly in Contact with School in 1965					-0.210	-0.412
					(0.45)	(0.81)
Parent Expected College for Children in 1965					0.124	0.337
					(0.31)	(0.81)
Parents Spoke only Spanish					-0.390	0.020
					(0.91)	(0.04)
Constant	12.765	13.246	12.384	13.417	12.797	13.325
	(12.51)**	(13.17)**	(9.54)**	(10.66)**	(9.30)**	(9.57)**
Observations	129	120	129	120	129	120
R-squared	0.01	0.13	0.07	0.18	0.08	0.20
Robust t statistics in parentheses						

*** significant at 5%;**
**** significant at 1%**

Note: These are unstandardized regression coefficients

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