

**Class and Ambition
In the Status Attainment Process:
A Spanish Replication**

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ABSTRACT

There are two principal theoretical schools that seek to explain status outcomes in early adulthood: those that focus on intergenerational transmission of class privilege and those that emphasize individual characteristics, particularly ambition. The first may be called the structuralist school and the second the psycho-social school, exemplified by the Wisconsin Model of Status Attainment. A second structuralist perspective, Segmented Assimilation, also highlights the transmission of socio-economic status across immigrant generations, but emphasizes as well the positive role of co-ethnic resources in promoting upward mobility and preventing downward assimilation. We examine these alternative predictions on the basis of a large longitudinal sample of youths in Spain that includes large components of both children of native parentage and children of immigrants. Spain possesses characteristics that make it uniquely suitable to test these alternative predictions. Results show that both family socio-economic status and ambition, measured by adolescent educational aspirations and expectations, play important roles in educational and occupational attainment, but that the influence of family status persists even after controlling for ambition. The influence of co-ethnic nationalities disappear after these controls, with the exception of Asian-origin children, a result that partially supports segmented assimilation. Predictive models of status attainment yield identical results for children of immigrants and children of natives, indicating that in Spain, they have become part of the same universe. Theoretically and practical implications of the analysis are discussed.

Class and Ambition in the Status Attainment Process: A Spanish Replication

Students of inequality in educational and occupational achievement among members of the same age cohort have identified a number of factors that make consistent contributions to the explanation of these inequalities. Parental education, wealth, and power—variously dubbed socioeconomic status, social class, or economic/social capital—have been identified as prime determinants, explaining not only differences in youth's achievement but also the perpetuation of economic inequality across generations (Bourdieu 1985; Blau and Duncan 1967; Massey 2007).

Marxists and other structuralist theorists give this factor a central role so that, once parental privilege accounted for, there is little else to be explained (Wright, 1997; Bourdieu 1984[1979]). In a more optimistic vein, other scholars sympathetic to the creed of equal opportunity, have explored alternative factors in the status attainment process. This school does not deny the role of parental education and wealth, but affirms that other forces are at play, primarily differences in the social psychological make-up of individuals (Coauthor et al. 1969; Sewell and Hauser, 1972; Kao and Tienda, 1998).

Paramount among these differences are those in mental ability and ambition. Offspring of parents of very different socio-economic positions may come into this world with very different intellectual potentials that can play decisively in their future career paths. The distribution of mental ability appears to follow a normal bell-shaped pattern where geniuses occupy one extreme of the curve, but where myriad differences exist among other individuals. Such differences may be modified during subsequent socialization, but cannot be entirely erased (Conley 2016)

Equally or more important is adolescent ambition. Even after controlling for differences in parental status, ambition appears to retain a strong and significant effect on subsequent achievement. From a structuralist viewpoint, such results are puzzling since individual ambition without the resources of an upper or middle-class origin should devolve into an empty wish. However, the empirical results supporting the significance of individual ability and ambition, net of class factors, provide a factual basis for believing that “when there is a will, there is a way” (Coauthor and Author 2, 1973; Hirschman 2016).

The Wisconsin model of status attainment, developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, captured these empirical facts by combining parental socio-economic status with mental ability and aspirations as key predictors of subsequent educational and occupational attainment. A central aspect of the model was the role assigned to the influence of others—parents, teachers, and peers – on the development of adolescent aspirations. The model asserted that a large part of the influence of parental social class on offspring’s education and occupation is “filtered” through parents’ ambition and its transmission to their youths. Thus, not so much wealth and other objective resources, but this psychosocial transmission process (see Figure 1) emerged as key determinant of status outcomes (Coauthor et al., 1969; Sewell and Hauser 1972; Coauthor and Author 2, 1973).

The optimistic message about the pliability of status hierarchies to the power of individual ability and ambition implicit in the Wisconsin model has found much support in subsequent research, not only in the United States, but also in the United Kingdom and other Anglophone countries (Kao and Tienda, 1998; Marjoribanks 2003; Author 2 and Coauthor, 2011). Less support for the model has been found in European continental countries, in particular those that track students into alternative career paths at an early age (Crul and Vermeulen 2003; Crul et. al. 2012).

Parental ambition and significant other influences have weaker effects on educational and occupational achievement when youths are channelled early into one or another school track.

---Figure 1 about here---

Spain offers a notable exception to the continental European pattern because it does not track students in childhood and it offers multiple paths to an advanced education (Coauthor and Author 2, 2014; Gualda and Peña 2012). Hence, the country offers an opportunity to test the rationale of the status attainment model in a distinctly non-Anglophone cultural environment. If predictions on status attainment based on a sample of Wisconsin youths back in the early 1960s hold among students attending school in Spain half a century later, the overall validity of the original model would receive support.

Children of Immigrants

Parallel literatures have developed on the adaptation of children of immigrants in countries of reception in North America and Western Europe. Immigration accounts for a significant and rising proportion of these countries' populations and the second generation represents an equally fast growing percentage of their youth populations. In the United States, for example, the foreign-born population currently approaches 15 per cent and their offspring are approaching one-in-four of all Americans aged 18 and younger (Rumbaut 2005; Lee and Zhou 2015).

Until the early 2000s, relatively little was known about the adaptation process of the second generation spawned by large-scale immigration from Latin America and Asia to the U.S. during the prior quarter century. Since then, a series of large-scale studies have provided detailed information about the adaptation of specific second generation groups—from Mexican-Americans to Indian, Filipino, and Chinese-Americans (Author 2 and Coauthor, 2001; Telles and Ortiz, 2008;

Kasinitz et. al., 2008; Lee and Zhou, 2016). While different theories are proffered to account for the experiences undergone by various minorities, the most general explanation is based on the concept of segmented assimilation. According to it, there is not one path followed by all children of immigrants, but rather several discrete identifiable ones leading to opposite outcomes. (Author 2 and Coauthor, 1993; Coauthor and Author 2, 2001).

One of these paths leads directly into the American middle-class mainstream as children of professionals and other high-status immigrants benefit from family resources to access better schools and more advantageous occupational options. A second path also leads upwards among children of working-class parents who benefit from the internal solidarity of cohesive co-ethnic communities to access otherwise unavailable resources. Co-ethnic social capital compensates in these instances for the modest human capital and socio-economic status of parents, providing ways for children to also climb the educational hierarchy and access advantaged positions in the mainstream (Rumbaut 2005; Fernandez-Kelly and Konczal 2005).

However, where low parental human capital and socio-economic status is not counteracted by strong co-ethnic ties, second-generation youths are disempowered vis-à-vis their host society. They may receive support and assistance on the part of teachers, counsellors, and peers but they may also fall victim to poor schools, and widespread discrimination (Gonzales 2015; Fernandez-Kelly and Konczal, 2005). In the United States, youths in this situation are also commonly exposed to a street culture of drugs, gangs, and petty crime that amounts to an alternative adaptation path. The outcome of this situation is often “downward assimilation” marked by such events as dropping out of school, having children prematurely, facing repeated encounters with the police, and incarceration (Zhou 1997; Rumbaut, 2005; Tellez and Ortiz 2008).

Children of immigrants who experience downward assimilation seldom succeed in achieving enough education to access middle-class occupations. Commonly, they accumulate a chequered employment trajectory and experience persistent poverty. Figure 2 presents these differing adaptation paths outlined in segmented assimilation theory.

---Figure 2 about here---

In Contrast with status attainment theory, which focuses on social psychological determinants of educational and occupational achievement, segmented assimilation offers a structural view emphasizing differentials in parental human capital and socio-economic status, plus the social character of co-ethnic communities. In that sense, its account of second-generation adaptation resembles earlier structural theories of intergenerational class privilege. Status attainment theory also assigns causal significance to socio-economic status as a factor leading to higher parental ambition, transmitted in turn to their children. However, once this psycho-social transmission takes place. Family status ceases to have a significant effect on children's achievement.

Whether class privilege is transmitted mainly through social psychological ambition, rather than through objective resources, is an empirical question that can be researched for both children of natives and children of immigrants. The Wiscosin model makes no difference between both categories, implicitly assuming that its predictions apply to both. By contrast, segmented assimilation is specifically focused on children of immigrants with an emphasis on structural factors-parental status and co-ethnic communities-as determinants. Figure 3 summarizes the alternative theoretical perspectives discussed so far.

Figure 3

Once again, Spain offers as a suitable context to examine these alternative predictions because it does not track students at an early age. In contrast to other countries in continental Europe, Spain offers the opportunity for parental status to influence children's achievement through social psychological transmission rather than through purely economic factors. It thus becomes possible to put the above empirical question to a test in a cultural context quite different from that where both status attainment and segmented assimilation theories emerged.

Methodology

To investigate this question, a longitudinal design is necessary. Longitudinal data allow the temporal order of causes and effects, including the transmission of aspirations from parents to children to be established unambiguously and, subsequently, the extent to which this process effectively accounts for the reproduction of class privilege (Firebaugh 2008). Such data were gathered in Spain by the Longitudinal Study of the Second Generation (ILSEG in its Spanish acronym).

Spain possesses a third advantage for our purposes, namely that, starting in the 1990s, it rapidly became a country of immigration with the foreign-born population reaching 12.5 per cent of the total by 2012 (Cachón, 2009; Aparicio and Tornos, 2008). This figure is actually comparable to that for the United States (13% in 2015) despite the latter's longer and more sustained immigration (Author and co-author 2014). Migration to Spain is very diverse. While the bulk originates in Latin America, it also includes sizable contingents from Morocco, Sub-Saharan Africa, Rumania, Bulgaria, elsewhere in Eastern Europe, the Philippines, China, Pakistan, and elsewhere in Asia (Zapata Barrero, 2013; Cebolla Boado and Gonzalez Ferrer, 2013). This diversity is important because it allows testing the importance of ethnic communities and their

resources on the achievement process of their youths. The largest immigrant concentrations are in the metropolitan areas of Madrid and Barcelona, where the initial survey for ILSEG took place.

ILSEG was deliberately patterned after the earlier Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS) conducted in the United States in the 1990s. CILS was the empirical basis for the segmented assimilation model (Author 2 and co-author 2001). Hence, a Spanish replication of CILS permits assessing the predictions from that model in a different cultural context. The longitudinal character of the ILSEG data permits analysing individual change over time.

ILSEG began with random samples of secondary schools in Madrid and Barcelona. Within each selected school, all students fitting the definition of “second generation”—born in Spain with at least one foreign-born parent or born abroad and brought to the country at an early age—were included. In total 180 schools were selected and data gathered from 6,905 second generation children at average age 14 (3,375 in Madrid and 3,350 in Barcelona). The survey was completed in 2008. With a constant sampling fraction, it is statistically representative of the universe of foreign-origin youths during early adolescence (average age 14 years) in both metropolitan areas. Details of this survey, including descriptive statistics, are available elsewhere (Aparicio et al. 2014).

Two years after the first survey, in 2010, ILSEG supplemented the data from the students with a study of their parents. In total, a representative sample of 1,843 adult immigrant parents numbering close to one-third of the original student survey were contacted and interviewed. These parental data verified the reliability of student reports on family characteristics and measured directly key determinants of generational status transmission, such as parental occupation and income and levels of aspiration for the children.

Approximately four years after the original student survey, a follow up was launched to monitor changes over time, providing early results of the adaptation process in late adolescence. The students' average age was then 18. Using various tracking techniques, ILSEG managed to retrieve 3,811 follow-ups, equivalent to 73 per cent of the original traceable sample¹. This second survey was completed in 2012. In addition to the original sample, a replacement sample of second generation youths not interviewed in the first survey and a comparison sample of native parentage youths were included. In total, this third phase of the study collected data on 7,320 respondents—3,811 original respondents, 1,534 replacements, and 1,965 native parentage youths. The statistical representativeness of the follow-up sample was assessed, on the basis of various techniques. Causal models of various second generation adaptation outcomes, such as linguistic changes, national self-identities, perceptions of discriminations and attitudes within the host society based on the ILSEG follow-up survey are available (e.g., Author 2 et al. 2016; Coauthor and Author 2 2018).

In 2016, four years after the follow-up survey and eight years since the original one, a second follow-up was launched. By now, respondents had reached early adulthood, between 22 and 26 years of age. Patterns of educational and occupational achievement, including the extent to which class privilege and disadvantage are being transmitted across generations, become apparent by this time. It is possible, therefore, to test alternative predictions concerning that process. The third and last ILSEG survey was not as successful as the first in retrieving the original sample. In total, it interviewed 2,922 cases of which 1,379 were men and 1,593 women. The 1,606 respondents interviewed originally in 2008 and re-interviewed in 2016 represent 42.1 per cent of the first survey. The final 2016 sample included 2,272 children of immigrants and 700 children of native Spaniards, numbers sufficient to analyse the key outcomes of interest. However, attrition

bias in this last survey is significant, requiring statistical adjustments to make results representative of the first ILSEG survey.

We proceed next to summarize results of earlier studies based on ILSEG's first, second, and parental surveys and focused on parents' status and ambition for their children, their transmission to children's own aspirations and effects of these variable on early educational attainment. Earlier results provide the background for the presentation of findings from ILSEG's final survey on educational and occupational attainment among both children of immigrants and children of natives. This analysis culminated with a structural equation model of the status attainment process in Spain.

Summary of Prior Results

The 1,858 adult immigrants in the parental survey differed greatly in educational endowments and achieved occupational status. The sixteen principal nationalities in this sample averaged from just 9.5 per cent with a university education among Romanian immigrants to 50 per cent among Venezuelans. Similarly, non-manual supervisory and professional occupations ranged from 0 per cent among Bolivians to 47.6 per cent among Venezuelans. Despite such vast differences in educational and occupational status, the vast majority of immigrant parents in Spain displayed high levels of ambition for their youths. When asked what aspirations they had for their offspring, three-fourths (76.91%) insisted on a university or post-graduate degree. Almost half of the sample (46.47%), fully expected that their children would attain that level of education.

Regressions of parents' ideal educational aspirations and realistic expectations for their youths indicated that the most significant determinant was parental socio-economic status, followed by knowledge of the host country language. However, explained variation both aspiration

and expectations was limited indicating that a number of other determinants could affect them. In particular, parental national origin retained a significant effect with certain nationalities, such as Romanians, Moroccans, and the Chinese displaying lower ambition levels than the rest of the sample (Author et. al. 2016).

The next question is the extent to which both parental status and ambition transmit to the next generation. This analysis was also done previously using ILSEG First, Second and parental surveys and its results summarized through a structural equation model. This model highlighted two main points. First, effects of parental socio-economic status on children's ambition, as measured by both educational aspirations and expectations, were mediated by parents' own level of ambition. Second, the latter is by far the strongest predictor of youths' own goals toward the future, congruent with predictions from the Wisconsin model.

Since the model was based exclusively on data from immigrants' parents and their children, it is not surprising that a second powerful effect on ambition was knowledge of the host country language. That predictor is, in turn, influenced by parents' own Spanish proficiency, pointing to a second channel of psycho-social transmission of privilege. In other words, parents' own human capital, as indexed by both socio-economic status and language proficiency, transfers to children's own fluency in the language that, in turn, also affects their goals toward the future. With these predictors controlled, a few significant nationality effects remained, pointing to lower ambition levels among certain South American nationalities, particularly Ecuadoreans and Peruvians (co-author et. al. 2013). Such effects are congruent with ethnic disparities in family contexts anticipated by segmented assimilation.

Having established the strong effects of parental variables on children's own ambition, how the latter develops in late adolescence could be examined. What are its causes, and how does it relate to early educational achievement? A second structural equation model was developed to summarize the relevant significant effects. Results were based on the First and follow-up ILSEG student surveys and indicate that the prime determinants of ambition in late adolescence are age and friends' educational plans. Students who are older relative to their age cohort had significantly lower levels of aspiration. On the contrary, those who associate with peers planning for a university or post-graduate education had much higher aspirations themselves. Causality between friends' educational plans and those of respondents themselves is ambiguous since individuals with higher ambition tend to associate with peers with similar goals. Despite this possible reverse causality, results are entirely compatible with predictions from the Wisconsin model regarding significant other influences on children's aspirations and expectations.

This second model makes two points clear. First, family socio-economic status continues to have a strong significant effect on early educational attainment, as measured by school grades and levels of schooling achieved in late adolescence. Second, the strongest predictor of early achievement, by far, is children's own ambition measured by both educational and occupational aspirations and expectations. The first result supports the structural theory of inter-generational transmission of class, while the second is compatible with the psycho-social Wisconsin model. In agreement with the model parental status also affects positively the kind of peers with which children associate, showing again the cumulative paths through which the social psychological transmission of privilege operate (Author 2 et. al. 2016). Controlling for the effects of parental status and children's ambition, almost all nationality differences in early educational attainment disappear. Noteworthy, however, is the effect of Chinese origin, which remains positive and

significant on early educational achievement. While associated with a single nationality, this effect is congruent with the significance of different ethnic communities, highlighted by segmented assimilation (co-author and Rumbaut 2001).

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Educational and Occupational Attainment in Early Adulthood

The models just described suffered from three shortcomings. First, indicators of ambition and early achievement were measured at the same time, rendering assessment of a causal relationship between both concepts problematic. Second, measures of educational achievement in the first ILSEG follow-up survey were taken in late adolescence, when most respondents were still

in school. By average age 18, it is still too early to ascertain what the achievement process would look like in adulthood. Finally, the data set on which the model was based is restricted to children of immigrants in late adolescence, raising the question of whether the same or a similar process of educational achievement takes place among natives. These problems were the reason for completing the second follow-up survey of 2016.

Table 1 presents educational attainment by early adulthood, broken down by national origin (Spanish vs. foreign) and by the principal nationalities in the ILSEG second-generation sample. The table makes evident that, by their early twenties, both children of immigrants and children of natives had moved ahead significantly in the Spanish educational system. Only a small minority (13%) was left behind in basic secondary school or in remedial education. Since the majority (62%) of the sample were continuing their studies, we anticipate these levels of educational achievement to increase. Nevertheless, it is evident that children of natives have a clear advantage over children of immigrants in educational attainment. While 28 per cent of the latter had reached the university, the corresponding figure among natives was 43 per cent. As the table shows, these differences are highly significant statistically.

The bottom half of the table displays levels of educational attainment for the largest nationalities included in ILSEG's first sample². Wide disparities among national origin groups are observable, congruent with differences in parental status and models of incorporation into Spanish society. For example, while 47 percent of Argentine youths, 48 percent of Venezuelan and over 35 percent of Romanians and Western Europeans had managed to reach the university by early adulthood, only 19 percent of Ecuadoreans, and 22 percent of Filipinos had managed to reach a similar level of education. Differences among nationalities, indicative of the influence of the

respective co-ethnic communities, are highly significant statistically, It remains to be seen whether such differences endure when controls for other predictors of achievement are introduced.

---Table 1 about here---

Table 2 shows that over half of the sample is already employed, full or part time. There are no differences in this result between foreign parentage youths, nor is there a significant difference between both groups in levels of self employment. Where significant differences exist is in the level of occupational achievement and the data again show a significant advantage for natives. As shown in Table 3, while only 18 per cent of immigrant children had achieved non-manual occupations as administrators, managers, or professionals, the figure among natives reached 27 percent. Differences by national origins are still more marked. Thus, while over 30 percent of children of West European origins and 29 percent of Colombians reported high-end level occupations in early adulthood the comparable figure for Ecuadoreans was only 9 percent and for Filipinos 10 percent. Again, it remains to be seen whether such national differences, , endure when other predictors are included in the predictive equations.

---Tables 2 and 3 about here---

For our purposes, the key issue is how the two main causal strands that we have pursued in this paper-- those stemming from family socio-economic status and those based on individual ambition—play themselves as predictors of status achievement. For this purpose, we used a summated index of family socio-economic status³, constructed four years prior, as well as indicators of personal ambition. These include educational aspirations and expectations in adolescence⁴, number of hours dedicated to school work at the time, and high school grades. Drawing on segmented assimilation theory, we also include a dummy variable indicating whether

the respondent had had one or more children in adolescence or early adulthood--a sign of a problematic adaptation process. Models include controls for age, sex, place of birth, city of residence and native *versus* foreign parentage.

For educational achievement, measured as the highest level of school already completed, we used both linear least squares regression and an ordered multinomial logistic model. We also adjusted results for possible sample mortality bias by introducing a Heckman correction equation. Table 4 presents unadjusted regressions of educational achievement on all predictors. The first panel presents the least squares model and the second the corresponding logistic one. The first point to be noted is that both models are highly successful in accounting for the dependent variable, explaining close to 40 per cent of total variance. Educational achievement is, according to these results, an orderly process governed by developments earlier in life. Of these, none more is important than ambition, whose indicators consistently exhibit positive effects on adult attainment levels. This is the case for all three indicators employed -- aspirations, expectations, and hours per week dedicated to school work from the first follow-up survey.

Yet, controlling for this and other predictors, family socio-economic status continues to produce significant differences in educational achievement. This effect is present in both the least squares and logistic models. Hence, we are led to the conclusion that objective class advantages transmit across generations, even after taking psycho-social processes of the Wisconsin model into account.

---Table 4 about here---

Other results of note in Table 4 include the resilient advantage of females and the large loss in educational attainment attached to adolescent parenthood. The latter effect exceeds seven times

its standard error, pointing to the difficulties experienced by young parents. Average school grades in late adolescence also have predictable positive effects on subsequent attainment. Results point again to the patterned character of the attainment process, where later outcomes build on earlier ones.

Results of the Heckman correction for sample mortality are summarized at the bottom of Table 4 by the corresponding *Rho*, *sigma*, and *lambda* coefficients. All of them indicate a significant bias due to the over-representation of residents of Madrid over Barcelona and females over males in the final sample. Yet, the Heckman correction does not substantively modify results from the unadjusted models⁵. In another version of the model, we included friends' college plans from ILSEG's first survey. The effect of this addition was to reduce the usable sample size by about half without friend' plans having a significant effect on subsequent achievement. As seen previously, this variable did have a strong effect on adolescent ambition, but its effect did not carry into educational attainment. Such casual pattern is congruent with the Wisconsin model (see Figure 1).

The causal analysis of occupational achievement is restricted to the sub-sample of respondents who had joined the labour market, full or part-time. For this analysis, the dependent variable is based on respondents' current jobs recoded into occupational prestige scores based on the PRESCA scale⁶. Family socio-economic status is measured again by our composite FSES index. We included an indicator of occupational aspirations in adolescence, also in occupational prestige scores measured during ILSEG's first follow-up. Regressions results are presented in two-steps—the first including all predictor of educational achievement listed previously- and the second adding this last variable to the model. Table 5 presents the results.

---Table 5 about here---

The table yields several findings of note. First family status continues to exercise a significant influence on occupation, net of other variables. This result runs contrary to the Wisconsin model where the effect of family status should be mediated by significant other influence and respondent's own ambition level. On the contrary and, in support of structural transmission as well as segmented assimilation, family status maintains a resilient influence on the occupational level that youths in Spain have attained.

Indeed, once this influence is taken into account, earlier educational and occupational aspirations cease to have a reliable influence. The only remaining effects on occupation are those of realistic educational expectations and indicators of actual performance earlier in life, namely, how many hours were dedicated to schoolwork in adolescence and what their average grades were at the time. In the same direction, the negative influence of adolescent parenthood remains significant. These results imply that youths who dedicated their time and effort to academic pursuits earlier in life moved ahead in the labour market, while those prematurely assuming parental roles were set back in terms of both education and occupation.

Other effects in Table 5 include those of gender and birthplace. Contrary to results for educational achievement, females are at significant disadvantage in the Spanish labour market. It is possible that some of this effect is due to more of them remaining in school. However, the strong male advantage in occupational status is consistent with findings reported in the past research literature (Granovetter 1974; Blau and Duncan 1967; author 2 and co-author 2001; Fernandez-Kelly and Konczal 2005). The birthplace effect indicates a significant advantage for the native-born, a result that replicates that in the frequency distributions shown previously.

When educational achievement enters the model, it becomes the strongest effect of occupational status. This result is predictable and compatible with the Wisconsin model, showing once again the path- dependent character of the attainment process. Support for this model is tempered, however, by the influence of other predictors including, most significantly, those of family status, gender, and birthplace. Results of the sample selections equation are presented at the bottom of the table. They show a significant attrition bias, indicated by the substantial rho, lambda, and sigma coefficients associated with the Heckman correction. However, as in the case of education, the sizable effects discussed previously remain.

The final iteration of the two achievement models involve adding national origin dummies for all sizable nationality groups in ILSEG's first survey, as presented in Table 1. Given the theoretical importance of these results, they are presented in Table 6 although they could be summarized in a single sentence: none of these effects achieves statistical significance. Put differently, major disparities among nationalities in educational and occupational attainment, displayed in the prior frequency distribution, are accounted for by family status and adolescent ambition plus gender and birthplace. This absence of inter-ethnic differences in the attainment process runs contrary to segmented assimilation insofar as that theory placed emphasis of the social effects of co-ethnic national communities, in addition to parental human capital. Alternatively, it is possible that the influence of national origin is entirely mediated by the status that immigrant parents managed to achieve in Spain and their own resulting levels of aspirations⁷. Nevertheless, it is clear that class and ambition are the determining factors eclipsing any lingering differences in the composition and characters of immigrant co-ethnic communities.

---Table 6 about here---

In summary, the status attainment process in Spain is fairly clearly delineated by these results, with family class position influencing ambition levels and bearing directly on educational achievement*, while the latter decisively influences occupational status. However, parental SES continues to have significant effect on occupation, contrary to predictions of the Wisconsin model and in support of structural theories. Indeed when class and ambition are taken into account no significant nationality effects remain, a result that runs against segmented assimilation's emphasis on co-ethnic community effects.

Parental Origins and the Achievement Process

An important pending question is whether the achievement process is the same for children of immigrants as for children of natives. As seen in Table 4 native parentage has a significant positive effect on education, but it is not clear whether the attainment process is different for natives and immigrants. Native parentage does not have a main effect on occupational achievement but birthplace does indicating a net advantage for children born in Spain, whether of native or foreign parentage. For this analysis, we interacted both birthplace of respondent and of their parents with both class and ambition, as indicated by parental SES and educational expectation. Results of this analysis shows that neither set of interaction has a statistically significant effect on either education or occupation. Thus, result holds over all variation of the predictive equations, using least squares and logistic regression, and including correction for sample mortality or not. We omit presentation of these results for space reason, as they will simply show non-significant interaction that leave substantive results discussed previously unchanged.

Put differently, the status attainment process in Spain is the same for children of natives and children of immigrants. They form part of a common youth universe whose effects of social

class and ambition play similar roles and where the only advantages accrues to those born in Spain *versus* those abroad. Figure 4 summarizes results of our analysis with a structural equation model (SEM) based on data from the successive ILSEG surveys. It is patterned after the Wisconsin model, and displays both similarities and differences with the latter. As in the original model, parental socio-economic status directly affects both parental ambition and friends' educational aspirations. Both, in turn, lead to children's own ambition levels. These are also affected by gender (positive for females) and birthplace (position for the Spanish-born). Neither gender nor birthplace appeared in the original Wisconsin model.

Finally, ambition has a direct effect on educational attainment and the latter, in turn, is the strongest predictor of occupational status. In the case of occupation, the effect of gender is reversed in favour of males, while birthplace continues to favour the native-born. As seen preciously, birthplace has an additive effect without significant interactions with other predictors. The most theoretically important are those from family socio-economic status that continued to bear significantly on both educational and occupational achievement. These paths vindicate predictions from structural theories of class transmission, even when the strongest direct influence on achievement still is associated with children's own ambition levels.

The model in Figure 4 provides a fairly good fit to the ILSEG data over four successive surveys as indicated by the goodness-of-fit statistics—Streiger's Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) (Maruyama 1991).

Figure 4 about here

Downward Assimilation

We return finally to the question of segmented assimilation in the second generation by considering a set of indicators pointing to problematic outcomes in early adulthood. These include having had one or more children; having left the parental home⁸; having failed to complete basic secondary education; being unemployed, having spent time in jail for a crime or misdemeanour; and having a family member spend time in jail. Downward assimilation is predicted by segmented assimilation to be a likely outcome of low parental status and a negative mode of incorporation. It can be understood, theoretically, as the opposite of educational and occupational achievement discussed above.

In all of these indicators, native parentage youths enjoy an advantage over the foreign-born. For example, 7.8 per cent of children of immigrants have had a child in adolescence themselves, as compared with less than 1 per cent among children of natives. Thirteen per cent of members of the second generation had abandoned the parental home and 5.7 per cent had not completed basic secondary education, as compared with 7.9 per cent and just 1.1 per cent among native youths. Since segmented assimilation refers specifically to the second generation, we restrict the analysis, henceforth, to children of immigrants.

Sixty-six per cent of our second-generation sample registered no incidents indicative of downward assimilation and an additional 27 per cent experienced just one. The most common experiences were being unemployed or failing to complete basic secondary school. The validity of the Downward Assimilation Index (DAI), a unit-weighted count variable of the six indicators above, is supported by its correlation with the educational and occupational outcome variables. These correlations are negative and all are statistically significant⁹.

Figure 5 summarizes results of a negative binomial regression in which DAI (a count variable) is regressed on the set of predictors employed previously plus dummy variables for all major nationalities represented in the sample (Table 3). Older respondents and females are more likely to score high on this index. The age-effect is due to the higher probability of older youths leaving the parental home or having children themselves. The gender effect is due to the greater likelihood of females having children in adolescence and, subsequently, leaving the parental home.

Figure 5 about here

The most important results pertain to family status and early ambition. Family status inhibits significantly the probability of downward assimilation; so do adolescent ambition and early educational achievement, indicated by school grades. Once these variables are taken into account, most national origins effects disappear, indicating that the probability of divergent outcomes in early adulthood are governed primarily by age, gender, social class, and ambition. An exception to this trend is the significant effect for children of Asian (Chinese and Filipino) origins. This effect is negative indicating significantly lower probability of downward assimilation for these groups. The coefficient provides some support for segmented assimilation insofar as it highlights the importance of co-ethnic communities, at least for some groups.

Overall, our results provide a mixed picture of the status achievement process in Spain. Positive outcomes, indicated by higher educational and occupational attainment, are governed by social class and ambition psycho-social ambition, with no difference among immigrant nationalities. Negative results for second generation youths, indexed by downward assimilation indicators, are similarly influenced by the same factors plays age and sex while, exceptionally, Asian-origin youths are much less prone to follow a downward path.

Conclusion

The debate between structuralists --supporters of a straightforward transmission of class privilege—and individualists—defenders of the role of individual ability and ambition—will not be settled by these results. However, they offer a portrait of how the two factors intertwine in a Western country. As seen in Figure 4, both factors play a role in adult status attainment, with the effect of family status partially channelled through parental ambition, as predicted by the Wisconsin model. However, family SES retains an enduring influence on both educational and occupational achievement even after controlling for its social psychological effects. This finding supports the structuralist position.

Of equal significance is the similarity of the status attainment process among children of natives and children of immigrants. In Spain, at least, both groups appear to form part of a common universe with no significant differences in the effects of class, ambition, or gender. The advantage in achievement to those born in the country is also common to both groups. Contrary to predictions stemming from segmented assimilation, there are no significant differences in status attainment among the multiple nationalities composing the Spanish foreign-origin population. This finding is important because it contradicts not only the theory, but also common stereotypes about the relative superiority of some groups (i.e. Western Europeans) over others (i.e. Moroccans, Sub-Saharan Africans, and Filipinos). Once family status and psycho-social ambition are taken into account, there are few differences left to explain at least in status attainment, among nationalities.

Segmented assimilation is supported by the consistent negative effect of adolescent parenthood on adult status attainment, an indication of downward assimilation. It is also partially supported by the negative effect of Asian nationalities on the likelihood of following that path.

Other variables, however, play determining roles in downward assimilation with social class and ambition in adolescence preventing it, and age and gender (female) raising its frequency.

Concerning theoretical predictions outlined in Figure 3, the balance of our results lean in the structuralist direction since social class directly affects all outcomes; positive and negative; even after controlling for demographic variables and psycho-social factors. Similarly, while some results run against it, segmented assimilation is supported by the significant status differences among immigrant parents (which then go on to affect their children's adaptation), the negative effect on achievement of premature parenthood, and the patterned set of causal effects on downward assimilation of which age, sex, and family status are paramount.

Finally, our results also cast light on the process of integration of the second generation in Spain. Overall, the process appears to have been positive, a conclusion supported by the relative weakness of indicators of downward assimilation and, most significantly, by the participation of children of immigrants in the same youth universe as children of natives. There is no evidence in these results of specific nationalities having been marginalized because of their race, culture, or religion. This finding deserves emphasis as it runs opposite to popular stereotypes (Zapata-Barrero 2013; Cebolla and Gonzalez Ferrer, 2013; Cachon 2009). To the extent that children of immigrants follow the same path to status achievement as children of natives and that there are few signs of downward assimilation, they can be expected to play a significant role in the future of their adopted nation. This appears to be the case for Spain and this experience has implications for other European nations hosting large immigrant populations.

ENDNOTES

¹Some school principals agree to take part in the study only if students' personal identifiers were excluded. Naturally, these students could not be followed over time.

²National origins were assigned according to country of birth of respondents and, if born in Spain, according to country of birth of parents. If parents were born in different countries, that of the father was assigned, unless only the mother lived with the respondent. Nationalities presented in Table 1 include only those with 100 cases or more in ILSEG's first survey.

³This index was formed by the standardized sum of fathers and mother's education; father's and mother's occupational status; and home ownership divided by 5. When one or two indicators were missing, only valid indicators were used, divided by their number. The index mean is 0; standard deviation, 1.

⁴Educational aspirations were measured by the question—"What is the highest level of education that ideally you would like to reach?" Expectations are responses to the question—"What is the highest level of education that realistically you expect to reach?"

⁵The Heckman equation for sample selection includes as predictors age, gender, city of residence, language spoken at home, and family home ownership. Results are omitted for space reasons, and are available from authors upon request.

⁶Scale of occupational prestige scores standardized from Spain by Carabaña and Gomez Bueno (1996).

⁷This possibility is given support by significant and resilient differences in parental education and occupation among major nationalities in the ILSEG parental sample and by the significant effects of this variable on parental ambition, as summarized previously (see Author 2 *et. al.* 2016. Chapter 5).

⁸In Spain, it is customary that children, especially girls, stay at home before reaching adulthood. Hence, it is an indication of a problematic adaptation process when children leave the parental home before that time. (Aparicio and Torneo 2008; Author 2 *et al.* 2016).

⁹Results for status achievement and downward assimilation are presented separately for two reasons. First, because the model for education and occupational achievement (Fig. 4) is based on the full sample, including children of natives as well as children of immigrants, while the model testing segmented assimilation (Fig. 5) is based on the latter only. Second, because the estimating statistical routines are different, with achievement outcomes estimated on the basis of least squares regression while the

Downward Assimilation Index is modelled employing negative binomial regression, a maximum likelihood routine.

Table 1

Educational Achievement by Early Adulthood in Spain						
	Basic Secondary or Less %	Advanced Secondary Incomplete/Mid- level Technical %	Advanced Secondary Complete/Superior Technical %	University Incomplete %	University Degree (B.A./B.S.) or higher	Total %
Foreign Parents	16.07	25.47	29.89	15.98	12.58	100 (2,265)
Native Parents	5.45	16.93	34.72	27.98	14.92	100 (696)
N=	13.57	23.46	31.03	18.80	13.13	100 (2962)
a. X ² =	107.87***					
b. V=	0.19					
National Origin						
Argentina	10.00	17.50	25.00	27.5	20.00	100 (40)
Bolivia	17.46	28.57	31.75	12.70	9.52	100 (63)
Bulgaria	24.24	21.21	24.24	12.12	18.18	100 (33)
Chile	5.00	45.00	30.00	5.00	15.00	100 (20)
China	21.95	9.76	31.71	14.63	21.95	100 (41)
Colombia	13.67	21.58	33.81	15.83	15.11	100 (139)
Dominican Rep.	26.58	26.58	20.25	16.46	10.13	100 (79)
Ecuador	21.41	29.73	29.94	10.40	8.52	100 (481)
Morocco	17.16	29.85	35.37	13.43	14.18	100 (134)
Pakistan	15.38	38.46	30.77	15.38	0.00	100 (13)
Peru	15.84	22.77	30.69	20.79	9.90	100 (101)
Philippines	14.29	33.33	30.95	16.67	4.76	100 (42)
Romania	22.77	19.80	23.76	13.86	19.80	100 (101)
Venezuela	10.34	17.24	24.14	24.14	24.14	100 (29)
Western Europe	9.76	17.07	31.71	24.14	17.07	100 (82)
Other Latin America	20.00	26.67	23.33	20.00	10.00	100 (30)
Total	18.42	25.77	28.71	14.71	12.39	100
a. X ² =	94.10***					
b. V=	0.13 ^b					

1. Missing data omitted. Absolute frequencies in parenthesis
a. Chi square coefficient of statistical significance of differences.
b. Creamer's V coefficient of strength of association
**p<0.1

Source: ILSEG-III Survey

Table 2**Employment by Early Adulthood in Spain¹**

<i>Employment</i>	<i>Foreign-origin</i> %	<i>Native Origin</i> %	<i>Total %</i>
Unemployed	16.01	11.05	14.86
Employed (Full or part-time)	55.32	56.24	55.47
Student Full time	27.26	31.56	28.32
Other	1.41	1.15	1.35
	100.00	100.00	100.00
N=	N=2,267	697	2,694
	$X^2=1.73$ n.s.		
	V=.03		
Type of Employment:			
Own Account	15.35	18.11	16.02
Wage/Salaried	84.65	81.99	83.98
N=	N= 100.00 1,257	100.00 403	100.00 1,660
	$X^2= 1.73$ n.s.		
	V=.03		

1. Missing data omitted

a. Chi square coefficient of statistical significance of differences

b. Cramer's V coefficient of strength of association

n.s.= no significant difference

Source: ILSEG-III

Table 3

Type of Employment by Early Adulthood¹

<i>Employment type:</i>	-Unskilled manual (construction worker, maids, home deliveries, gardeners, etc.) %	-Low-level non-manual (secretaries, waiters, bartenders, department store vendors, etc.) %	- High-level non-manual (managers, executives, skilled technicians, professionals) %	Totals %
<i>Foreign Origin %</i>	17.95	63.82	18.23	100 (1,114)
<i>Native Origin %</i>	15.32	51.38	27.30	100 (359)
Total	17.31	62.25	20.44	100 (1,473)
$X^2=$	13.84***			
$V=$.10			
Nationalities:				
Argentina	9.52	76.19	14.29	100 (21)
Bolivia	31.25	53.13	15.63	100 (32)
Bulgaria	25.00	50.00	25.00	100 (16)
Chile	28.57	57.14	14.29	100 (14)
China	7.41	62.96	29.63	100 (27)
Colombia	11.59	59.42	28.99	100 (69)
Dominican Republic	17.02	70.21	12.77	100 (47)
Ecuador	23.93	67.09	8.97	100 (234)
Morocco	14.96	62.50	23.44	100 (64)
Pakistan	0.00	80.00	20.00	100 (5)
Peru	15.91	63.64	20.45	100 (44)
Philippines	21.05	68.42	10.53	100 (19)
Romania	16.98	60.38	22.64	100 (53)
Venezuela	4.76	57.14	38.10	100 (21)
Western Europe	13.64	54.55	31.82	100 (44)
Other Latin America	10.00	80.00	10.00	100 (10)
Total	18.19	63.61	18.19	100 (720)
$X^2=$	52.16***			
$V=$.19			

1. Unemployed and full-time students excluded. Absolute Frequencies in parenthesis

2. Rounding error may apply

*** p<.001

Source: ILSEG-III

Table 4**Type of Employment by Early Adulthood¹**

<i>Employment Type;</i>	<i>Foreign Origin %</i>	<i>Native Origin %</i>	<i>Totals %</i>
-Unskilled manual (construction worker, maids, home deliveries, gardeners, etc.)	17.95	15.32	17.31
-Low-level non-manual (secretaries, waiters, bartenders, department store vendors, etc.)	63.82	51.38	62.25
- High-level non- manual (managers, executives, skilled technicians, professionals)	18.23	27.30	20.44
<hr/>			
N=	100.00 1,114	100.00 359	100.00 1,473
X ² =	13.84***		
V=	.10		

1. Unemployed and full-time students excluded

*** p< .001

Source: ILSEG-III

Table 5
Determinants of Educational Attainment by Early Adulthood in Spain

<u>Predictors</u> ¹	<u>Coeff.</u> ²	<u>S.E.</u> ³	<u>Coeff.</u> ⁴	<u>S.E.</u> ³
-Age	-.028*	.01	-.056*	.03
-Sex (Male)	-.128**	.04	-.233***	.07
-City of Residence (Barcelona)	-.187***	.04	-.307***	.08
-Country of birth (Spain)	.205***	.05	.400***	.10
-Native Parentage	.137**	.06	.229*	.10
-Family SES	.216***	.03	.402***	.05
-Educational Aspirations	.253***	.02	.455***	.04
-Educational Expectations	.181***	.02	.347***	.03
-Stayed in School	.701*	.292	1.107*	.53
-Hours of School Work	.118***	.02	.209***	.03
-Had Children	-.754***	.10	-1.381***	.19
-Constant	1.197	.42		
N=2619 R ² =.377			N=2,619 Wald Chi Square=1,058.09 Pseudo R ² =.138	

1. All predictors were measured in the previous survey at average age 18, with the exception of teenage parenthood.

2. Standardized ordinary least squares coefficients.

3. Robust standard errors of regression.

4. Ordered multinomial logistic coefficients

*p<.05

** p<.01

***p<.001

Source: ILSEG-II and III surveys

Table 6
Determinants of Occupational Status by Early Adulthood¹

<i>Predictors</i> ²	<i>Coeff.</i> ³	<i>S.E.</i> ⁴	<i>Coeff.</i> ³	<i>S.E.</i> ⁴
-Age	.043	.54	.065	.53
-Sex (Male)	7.215***	1.52	7.771***	1.61
-City of Residence (Barcelona)	-1.448	1.76	-.732	1.75
-Country of Birth (Spain)	7.971***	2.16	7.166***	2.12
-Native Parentage	-1.447	2.48	-1.944	2.45
-Family SES	4.000***	1.54	3.050**	1.15
-Still in School	-5.189	10.54	-7.226	10.52
-Educ. Aspirations	.329	.58	-.386	.58
-Educ. Expectations	1.905***	.45	1.300**	.45
-Hours of School Work	1.475**	.67	1.120#	.67
-Average Grades	2.238***	.64	1.452*	.67
-Has Had Children	-5.108**	2.29	-2.407	2.38
-Educational Achievement	--	--	3.882***	.80
Constant	69.385	16.71	68.515	16.42
N	1,344		1,344	
R ²	.10		.11	

Source: ILSEG II and III surveys.

1. Occupational status measured in occupational prestige scores in the PRESCA scale. See note #5.

2. All predictors measured four year earlier, at average age 18, except having had children and educational achievement, measured at average age 22.

3. Standardized ordinary least squares coefficients.

4. Robust standard errors.

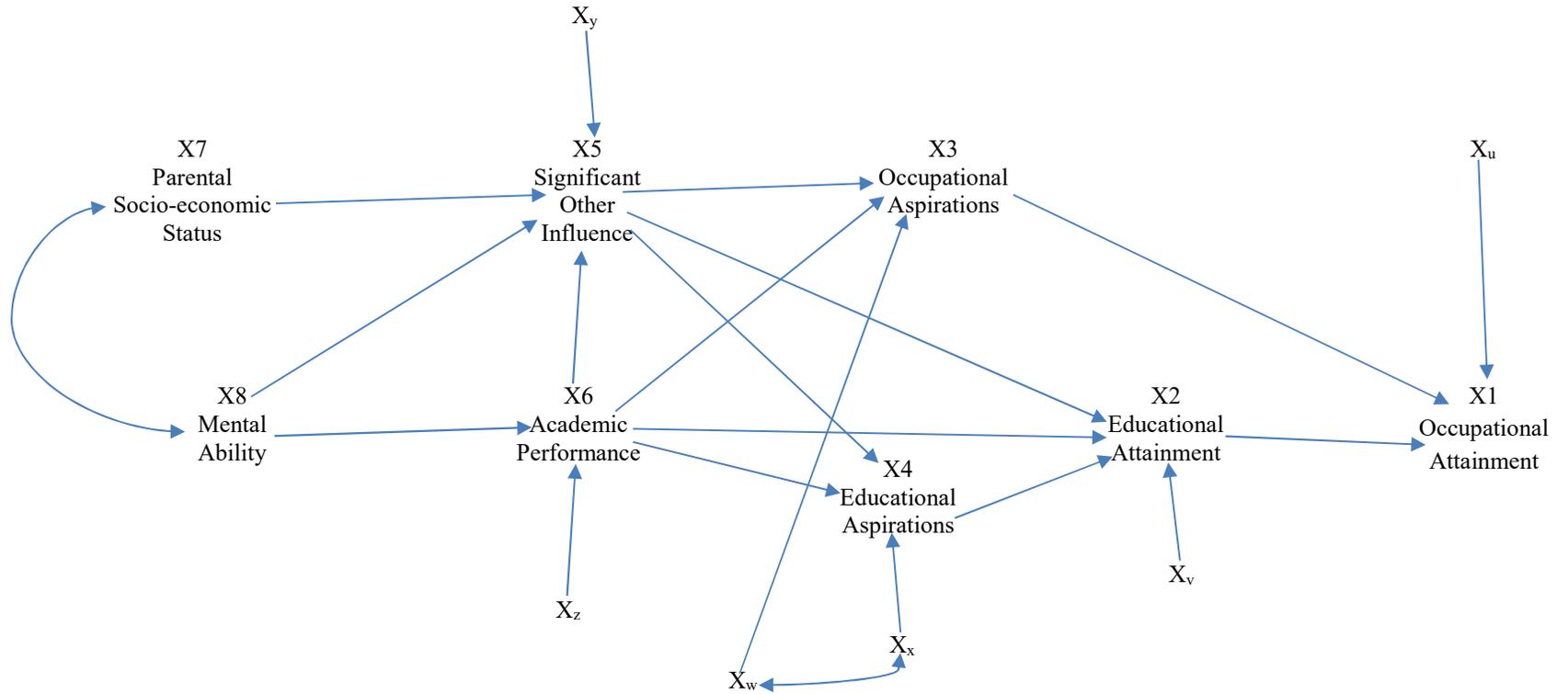
p<.10

*p<.05

**p<.01

***p<.001

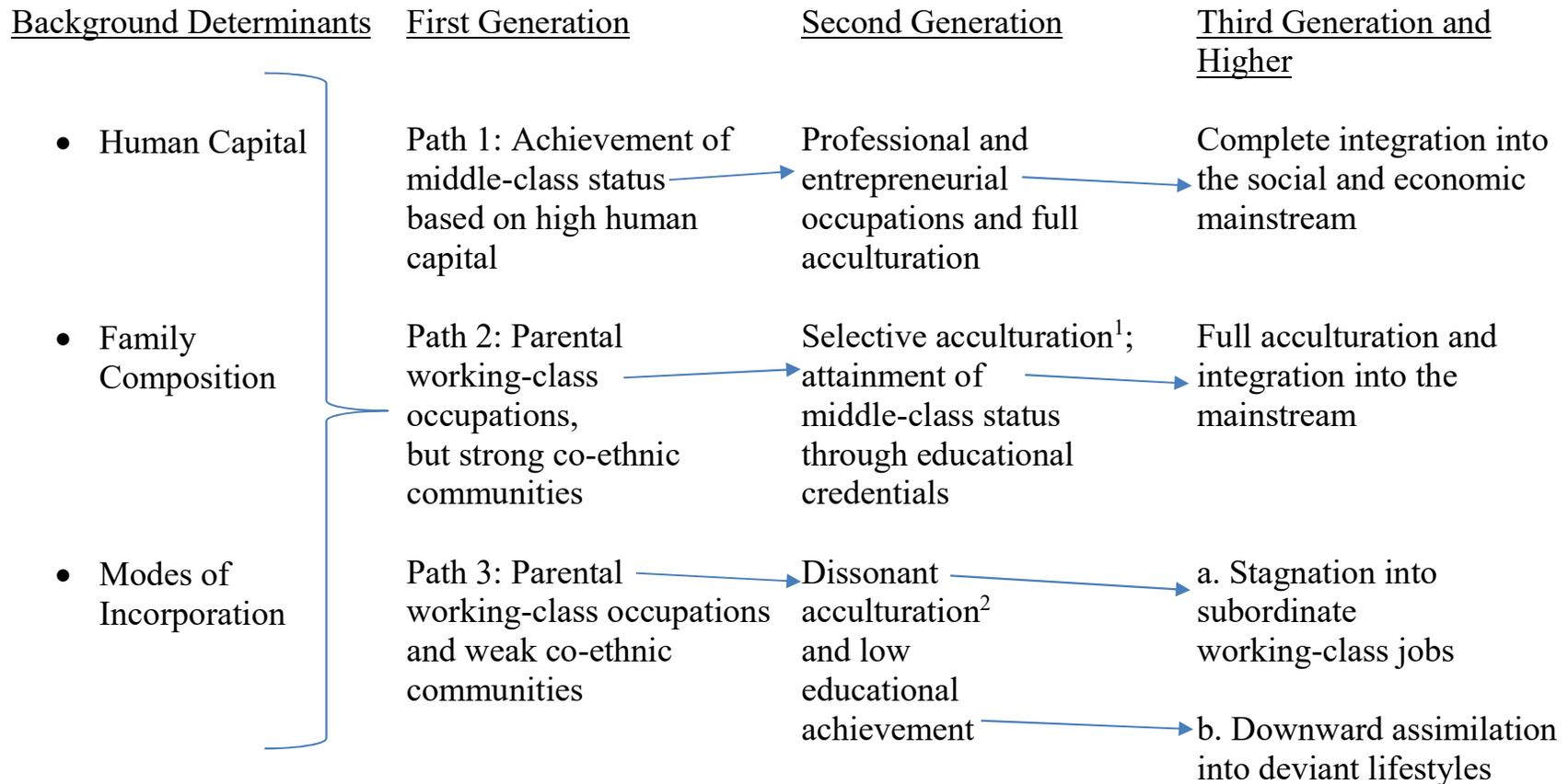
Figure 1
The Wisconsin Status Attainment Process¹



¹Arrows from letter-subscripted variables are residual effects assumed to be uncorrelated with other determinants of each predicted (endogenous) variable.

Source: Haller and Portes, "Status Attainment Processes," Diagram 2.

Figure 2
Paths of Mobility across Generations

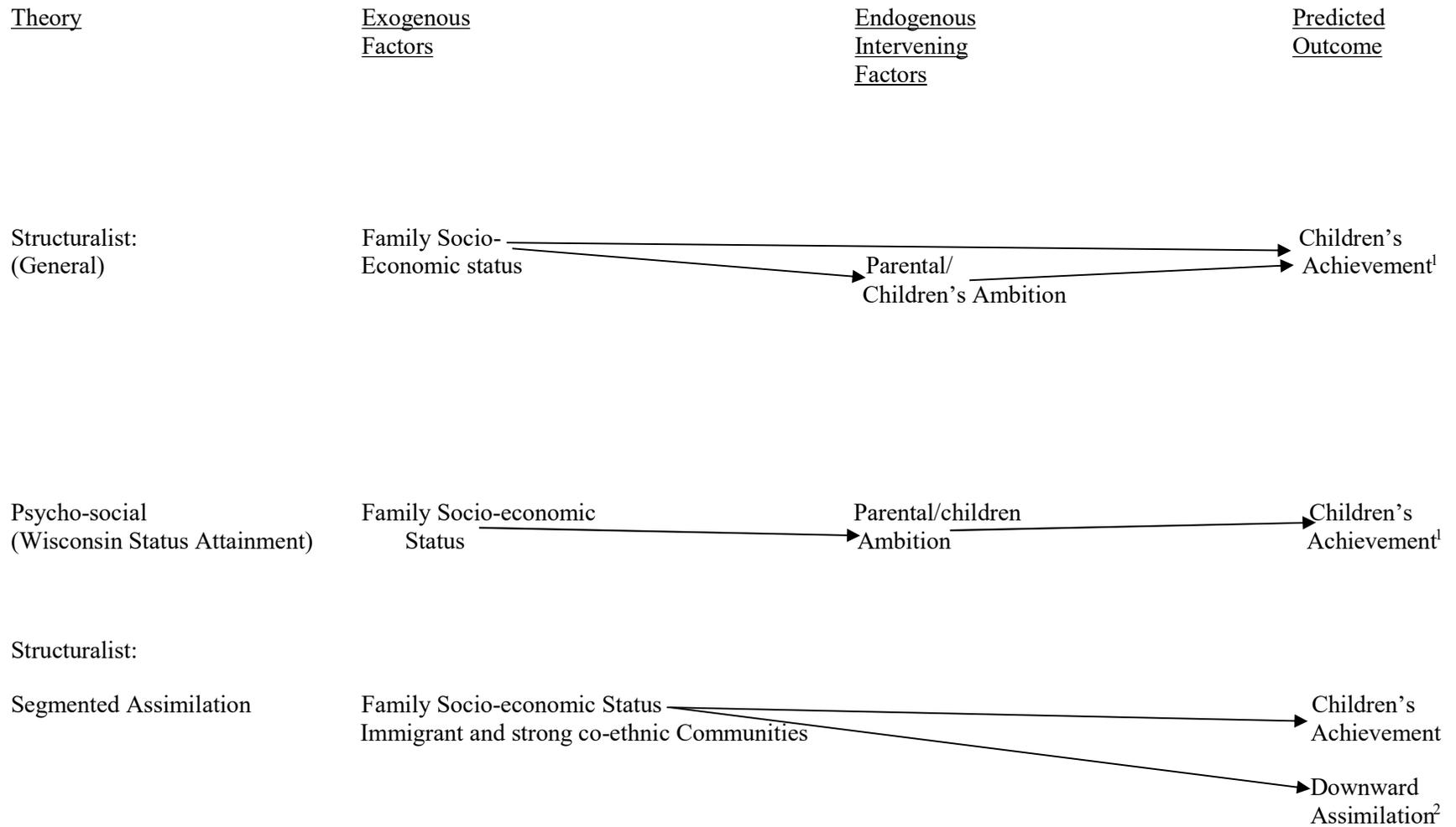


¹Defined as preservation of parental language and elements of parental culture along with acquisition of English and American culture.

²Defined as rejection of parental culture and breakdown of communication across generations.

Source: Portes and Rumbaut, *Legacies*, fig. 3.1.

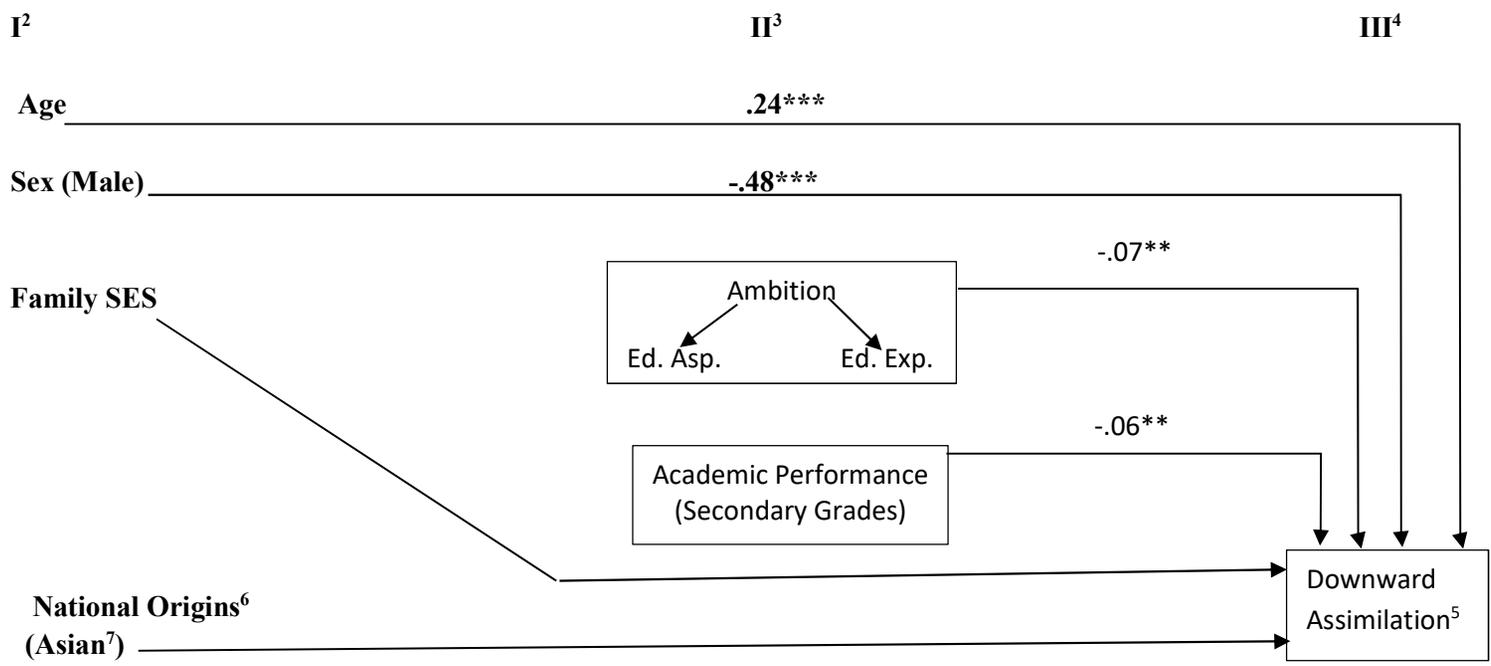
Figure 3
Models of Educational Predictive and Early Occupational Attainment



1. Educational and occupational attainment

2. Teenage pregnancies, incidents of arrest and incarceration, unemployment, etc.

Figure 5
Determinants of Downward Assimilation
in the Second Generation in Spain¹



Likelihood Ratio chi square= 219.50***

N= 1,863

1. Negative binomial regression (NBR) coefficients. Significant effects indicated by asterisks.
2. First ILSEG Survey, (2008)
3. Second ILSEG Survey (2012)
4. Third ILSEG Survey (2016)
5. Downward Assimilation Index built with indicators from final survey. Listwise deletion of missing data.
6. All nationalities numbering at least 100 cases in the original survey.
7. Chinese or Filipino.

ENDNOTES

¹Some school principals agree to take part in the study only if students' personal identifiers were excluded. Naturally, these students could not be followed over time.

²National origins were assigned according to country of birth of respondents and, if born in Spain, according to country of birth of parents. If parents were born in different countries, that of the father was assigned, unless only the mother lived with the respondent. Nationalities presented in Table 1 include only those with 100 cases or more in ILSEG's first survey.

³This index was formed by the standardized sum of fathers and mother's education; father's and mother's occupational status; and home ownership divided by 5. When one or two indicators were missing, only valid indicators were used, divided by their number. The index mean is 0; standard deviation, 1.

⁴Educational aspirations were measured by the question—"What is the highest level of education that ideally you would like to reach?" Expectations are responses to the question—"What is the highest level of education that realistically you expect to reach?"

⁵The Heckman equation for sample selection includes as predictors age, gender, city of residence, language spoken at home, and family home ownership. Results are omitted for space reasons, and are available from authors upon request.

⁶Scale of occupational prestige scores standardized from Spain by Carabaña and Gomez Bueno (1996).

⁷This possibility is given support by significant and resilient differences in parental education and occupation among major nationalities in the ILSEG parental sample and by the significant effects of this variable on parental ambition, as summarized previously (see Author 2 [et. al.](#) 2016. Chapter 5).

⁸In Spain, it is customary that children, especially girls, stay at home before reaching adulthood. Hence, it is an indication of a problematic adaptation process when children leave the parental home before that time. (Aparicio and Torneo 2008; Author 2 [et al.](#) 2016).

⁹Results for status achievement and downward assimilation are presented separately for two reasons. First, because the model for education and occupational achievement (Fig. 4) is based on the full sample, including children of natives as well as children of immigrants, while the model testing segmented

assimilation (Fig. 5) is based on the latter only. Second, because the estimating statistical routines are different, with achievement outcomes estimated on the basis of least squares regression while the Downward Assimilation Index is modelled employing negative binomial regression, a maximum likelihood routine.

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