

Title: Psychological Well-being of Adolescent Immigrant Students

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Abstract

Cultural relocation not only impacts the parents, but also the children of immigrants, and often in very different ways. Little is known about the children of immigrant and refugee families, even though they have a visible presence in schools and communities and eventually will form a significant portion of society in the United States. Even less is known about the subjective aspects of the children's experiences, including their modes of ethnic or national self-identification, perceptions of discrimination, future aspirations for adult futures, self-esteem, and psychological well-being. Research is lacking on how these factors may be related to more objective indices of the immigrant children's experiences, such as language shifts from the mother tongue to English in educational contexts.

This article explores the connections between psychological well-being and the linguistic and cultural practices of schools, and identifies strategies that would provide institutional and educational support for immigrant and refugee adolescents as they navigate a bilingual and bicultural world. Based on work in the field, we suggest the importance of considering factors such as the reason for departure from the native country, linguistic and cultural barriers, ethnic support services, the process of acculturation, and intergenerational conflict.