CHAPTER 15

Ethnicity and Immigration

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The proportion of ethnic-minority adolescents in the general population of the United States and many other countries has continued to rise in recent years. Some estimates suggest that the number of individuals from ethnic-minority backgrounds will equal the number of individuals from European backgrounds in the United States by the year 2050 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2004). A key source of the growing ethnic-minority population has been immigration. Over the past 40 years, the number of immigrants entering the United States has risen dramatically such that a record of 35.7 million foreign-born individuals lived in the country in 2005 (Batalova & Terrazas, 2007). As a result, approximately one-fifth of American children are currently from an immigrant family (Hernandez, 2004). Today, the vast majority of immigrants to the United States come from nations in Asia and Latin America, with the top five countries of origin being Mexico, the Philippines, China and Hong Kong, India, and Vietnam (Batalova & Terrazas, 2007).

Researchers initially were slow to respond to the growing population of adolescents from ethnic-minority and immigrant families, but the past decade has witnessed a notable increase in such studies. The goal of this chapter is to summarize research in a select number of key domains in the lives of adolescents from ethnic-minority and immigrant families. We selected four topics based on their significance for adolescent development as well as the availability of sufficient previous work that allows for the drawing of at least tentative conclusions: (1) family relationships and parenting, including parental control and autonomy, family obligation and assistance, and ethnic and racial socialization; (2) friendships, including their characteristics, qualities, and the contexts that influence these relationships; (3) educational achievement and attainment, including motivation, values, and actual performance and attainment; and (4) identity, focusing on the predictors and outcomes of racial-ethnic identity. Attention is paid to ethnic and racial variations and similarities as well as the role of immigrant generation in these aspects of development. Although we do not have separate sections devoted to psychological and behavioral adjustment, each section addresses the extent to which the relevant developmental factors play a role in these outcomes.

Finally, each section explores the role of two broad contexts that are known to vary across ethnic and generational lines and that often influence the specific aspects of development being addressed. Variations in cultural norms, values, and beliefs likely play a role in the motivations, behaviors, and activities of adolescents. Yet these norms, values, and beliefs do not exist in a vacuum, and any consideration of the development of ethnic-minority children and adolescents must also take into account two key contexts of their lives (García Coll, Ackerman, & Cicchetti, et al., 1996). The first of these is the collection of socioeconomic resources possessed by the family. As discussed in the following sections, ethnic and generational groups

in the United States often differ in terms parental education, occupation, family income, and family wealth. These resources, in turn, may both influence values and beliefs and directly affect aspects of adolescents' development. The second context is the set of structural and social factors that can constrain the opportunities available to adolescents and their families, ranging from school and neighborhood quality to larger societal stereotypes about the ability and potential of teenagers from different ethnic and immigrant backgrounds. The amount of attention paid to these socioeconomic, structural, and social factors in each section depends on the availability of existing evidence for their influence.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND PARENTING

As perhaps the primary socializing agent of adolescents that mediates the effects of many structural and social factors in the larger society, the family is a likely source of ethnic variability in development during the teenage years. Relationships and socialization techniques within the family have been described as being highly dependent on both cultural traditions and the immediate adaptation challenges facing family members (Kagitcibasi, 1990; Levine, 1974). Interestingly, however, the few studies that have focused on dyadic relationships between individual family members (e.g., mother–adolescent, father–adolescent) have found relatively few variations across ethnic groups, either in relationship quality or in the links between variations in relationship quality and adolescent adjustment. For example, Fuligni (1998) observed similar levels and developmental patterns of parent–adolescent conflict and cohesion across families from Latin American and Asian backgrounds. Also, Smetana (2002) has noted similarity in the reasoning and justification behind parent–adolescent conflicts within African American and European American families. Some studies have suggested that ethnic variations may be evident at specific periods of adolescence (e.g., late adolescence: Greenberger & Chen, 1996), or that there may be important differences in how conflict may be resolved (Lee, Su, & Yoshida, 2005). But these findings remain to be further studied, and they do not change the overall picture of dyadic interactions between parents and adolescence during the teenage years as being fairly similar across ethnic and immigrant generational groups.

Rather than dyadic relationships, other aspects of family relationships appear to show more significant variability according to ethnic background. Specifically, research has suggested important variability in three aspects of family relationships during adolescence: parent control and discipline, family obligation and assistance, and ethnic or racial socialization. As described below, each of these aspects of family relationships have sources in the cultural backgrounds and socioeconomic resources of families, as well as the immediate social context and structural challenges faced by the families by virtue of their ethnic-minority and immigrant status.

Parental Control and Discipline

Families from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds must deal with the fact that during the teenage years, their children become increasingly mature and capable of independent decision making and action. In addition, all families endeavor to socialize their adolescents to eventually take on adult-life roles and responsibilities and to be capable of taking care of themselves and others who depend upon them. Yet it is clear that complete independence is neither desirable nor healthy for adolescent development, so families face the challenge of striking the right balance between autonomy and relatedness during the teenage years. The ideal balance will be specific to individual adolescents' competence and maturity and to the families' cultural values and life circumstances. Numerous ethnic and immigrant generational differences have been noted in regards to the allowance of individual autonomy and the exertion of parental control.

An important aspect of adolescent autonomy is the age at which parents allow children to engage in various personal and social behaviors. A number of studies have shown that adolescents with Asian backgrounds generally expect to receive autonomy at later ages as compared to their U.S. peers from other ethnic backgrounds. For example, adolescents from Chinese backgrounds are expected to be able to do things like go on overnight trips with friends, date, go to parties, and choose to do things with friends rather than family at significantly later ages than their peers from European backgrounds (Feldman & Quatman, 1988; Fuligni, 1998). These findings are consistent with international comparisons that have shown that adolescents in Asian societies (e.g., China, Hong Kong) expect to receive autonomy in these areas at significantly later ages than adolescents in Western societies such as Australia and the United States (Feldman & Rosenthal, 1990; Zhang & Fuligni, 2006). Yet generational differences in these expectations exist such that immigrant adolescents in the United States have later expectations for autonomy as compared to U.S.-born adolescents of the same ethnic background, suggesting that at least in the area of behavioral autonomy, Asian families may acculturate to the norms of U.S. society across generations. Indeed, controlling for generational differences reduced ethnic differences to nonsignificance in the Fuligni (1998) study, suggesting that the original ethnic difference was due to the later expectations for autonomy among the immigrants.

Differences in autonomy expectations exist largely in the domain of socializing with peers, suggesting that ethnic and generational variations in autonomy and parental control may be specific to certain domains. This argument has been made by Smetana (2002), who has argued that among adolescents from all ethnic and cultural groups, there exists a "personal" domain over which they believe parents should have limited authority. Indeed, numerous studies have shown few ethnic differences in adolescents' endorsement of parental authority over issues such as control over one's body, privacy, and the choice of one's friends and activities. Smetana argues that the prevalence of the belief in personal jurisdiction over certain aspects of one's like is a critical aspect of the development of agency and personhood, which are generally agreed to be fairly widespread developmental imperatives. Fuligni and Flook (2005) suggested that this is consistent with viewing ethnic differences in family relations from a social identity perspective. That is, even within ethnic and cultural groups that emphasize interdependence and reciprocity, it is important for family members to be allowed a degree of individual agency and respect that serves to enhance their identification with and obligation to the larger family.

A great deal of research has focused on variation in parenting styles across different ethnic and generational groups within the United States. A general finding has been that adolescents from Asian, Latin American, or African American families report higher levels of authoritarian parenting, which is a global characterization of a parenting style that focuses on control, obedience, and conformity among children. Adolescents from European American families, in contrast, report a comparatively higher frequency of authoritative parenting, a style that emphasizes the development of autonomy and self-direction (e.g., Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch, 1991). Many reasons for the ethnic variation in parenting styles have been offered. Chao (1994; Chao & Tseng, 2002) suggested cultural explanations for the higher level of parental control in many Asian American families, focusing on a traditional belief that parents should engage in what is called "child training" that focuses upon inculcating hard work and discipline in children. Other sources of ethnic variations may lie in the lower socioeconomic resources of many ethnic-minority parents, and parents who have lower levels of education and lower status occupations are more likely to report authoritarian-type

parenting (Dornbusch et al., 1985; Steinberg et al., 1991), a finding consistent with earlier work by Kohn and Schooler (1978) that suggested parents who work in lower status occupations are more likely to value conformity in their children. Finally, the higher level of control and emphasis upon obedience among some ethnic-minority families may be due to the fact that they are more likely to live in threatening neighborhoods. Strict parental control may be an adaptive strategy in these families in order to protect teenagers from the dangers of the neighborhoods in which they live (Furstenberg, Cook, Eccles, Elder, & Sameroff, 1999).

Despite the general agreement about ethnic differences in the distribution of different parenting styles, there has been more controversy about whether the impact of different styles of parenting on adolescent adjustment varies across ethnic and cultural background. The basic question has been whether the cultural or social context in which the parenting occurs modifies the effect of the parenting on adolescent adjustment. Two reviews (Sorkhabi, 2005; Steinberg, 2001) have suggested that the power assertion and excessive control that is typical of authoritarian parenting have generally negative implications for adolescent adjustment across a variety of domains, including psychological well being, externalizing behavior, and psychosocial maturity.

The one exception to the rule, acknowledged by Steinberg (2001) and Sorkhabi (2005), is in the area of academic achievement. A number of studies have noted that whereas authoritarian parenting is associated with lower grade point averages (GPAs) among several groups, it is unassociated with GPA among Asian Americans (Dornbusch, et al., 1985; Steinberg, 1991). Sorkhabi (2005) has argued that these findings may be an artifact of the use of adolescents' self-reported grade point average (GPA) in these studies, and that other studies using official measures of achievement in Asian societies have found that authoritarian parenting is associated with poorer achievement in these countries. Yet another explanation is that the lack of association between authoritarian parenting and GPA may be limited to Asian families in the United States, who are largely immigrant families, in contrast to Asian adolescents in Asia and non-Asian adolescents in the United States. Indeed, Chao (2001) reported that the association between authoritarian parenting and GPA actually became stronger in later generations of Chinese families in the United States. It is possible that for immigrant Chinese families, who emphasize the importance of educational success perhaps more than any other ethnic or generational group in the United States, their focus on academic achievement outweighs any negative impact of authoritarian parenting. This focus can be seen in the high aspirations of the parents, their belief in the dire consequences of *not* doing well in school, and the high level of academic support among Asian peer groups in the United States (Fuligni, 1997; Fuligni & Yoshikawa, 2004; Kao & Tienda, 1995; Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992). It is also possible that the "model minority myth" of the high academic competence of Asian American students fosters high expectations among teachers and this in turn enhances academic achievement among Asian American students (Qin, Way, & Muhkerjee, 2008; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Together, these factors may serve to buffer the students from the negative implications of authoritarian parenting for their achievement at school.

Finally, there has been a recent surge of interest in variability in the frequency and implications of different disciplinary practices for adolescent development. In particular, studies have examined the role of physical discipline, such as spanking or hand slapping, that does not cross the line into abuse or maltreatment. Studies of earlier ages observed how although African American families, particularly low-income families, may more frequently employ such disciplinary techniques when compared to European Americans, such techniques did not seem to have the same

negative implications for children's adjustment as they did in European American families (Deater-Deckard, Dodge, Bates, and Pettit, 1996; Gunnoe & Mariner, 1997). Lansford, Deater-Deckard, Dodge, Bates, and Pettit (2004) extended this work to the adolescent years, observing that African American parents of early adolescents reported infrequent, but nevertheless greater use of physical discipline as compared to European American parents. Yet whereas physical discipline was associated with greater externalizing behavior among European American adolescents, it was linked to lower levels of externalizing among African American adolescents. Lansford and colleagues suggest that the social and cultural context of physical discipline is different in African American families, where it can be seen as a more legitimate expression of parental authority and is done out of concern for the behavior of the child as opposed to being done out of anger. It should also be noted that Lansford and colleagues distinguished between physical discipline such as spanking from more extreme practices that are abusive, which have negative implications for adjustment among adolescents from both African American and European American groups (Lansford, Dodge, Pettit, Bates, Crozier, & Kaplow, 2002). Additional work is needed to replicate these intriguing results, as well as explore the possible explanations for them. In addition, understanding the variation of the use of physical discipline by socioeconomic status and how the impact of physical discipline may be moderated by socioeconomic status is lacking. Research is also needed to explore the frequency of physical discipline and implications for adjustment for adolescents from immigrant families within the United States and for adolescents outside of the United States. Preliminary findings suggest that physical discipline is common among many poor Chinese American families as well Chinese families with parents who were raised in China before the economic and social transformations of the 1980s (Way & Yoshikawa, in progress). Yet little is known if and how these parenting techniques are associated with adolescent adjustment.

Family Obligation and Assistance

Many ethnic-minority families in American society have cultural traditions that emphasize the role of children to support and assist the family. Within families with Latin American roots, there is a traditional emphasis upon family solidarity and togetherness that is sometimes referred to as "familism" (Sabogal, Marín-Otero-Sabogal, & Marín, et al., 1987). Families with Asian backgrounds, such as those from China and Korea, may have Confucian traditions of filial piety and respect that focus on the importance of children providing instrumental and financial support their parents and siblings throughout their lives (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Ho, 1996). Immigrant parents from Latin American and Asia, having been raised in their native societies, are thought to place particular emphasis upon these traditions when raising their children (Fuligni & Yoshikawa, 2004). Similar values of family togetherness and mutual support have also been cited as existing within the cultural backgrounds of African American and Native American families (Harrison, Wilson, Pine, Chan, & Buriel, 1990; Joe & Malach, 1998).

Ethnic-minority and immigrant families also face numerous social and economic challenges that may enhance and maintain the tradition of adolescents supporting and assisting the family. The challenging economic circumstances of many families with Latin American, African American, and Native American backgrounds create the very real need to help the family. Parents who work in low status jobs with irregular work hours may need their adolescents to assist with the maintenance of the household by engaging in tasks such as sibling care, cleaning, and meal preparation. The irregular income of some poorer families may mean that adolescents, once they become of employable age, may work in order to contribute financially to the family. Immigrant parents often know very little about the workings of American society, have limited English

skills, and often need to rely upon their adolescents to negotiate interactions with government agencies, services, and utility companies. Finally, simply knowing that one is a member of an ethnic or racial group that is derogated and under threat by elements of the larger society leads family members to believe they must band together and support one another in order to faces the challenges of being an ethnic minority in American society.

Numerous studies have reported that indeed, adolescents from many ethnic-minority groups have a stronger sense of obligation to support, assist, and respect the authority of the family when compared to their European American peers. Ethnographies of several immigrant groups have noted the emphasis adolescents place on providing help to their parents and siblings both currently and in the future when they become adults (Caplan, Choy, & Whitmore, 1991; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995; Zhou & Bankston, 1998). For many of these adolescents, part of their sense of obligation stems from a desire to repay their parents for the many sacrifices they made in order immigrate and provide better lives for their children. This sense of obligation is strong regardless of the adolescents' country of origin, with one study noting that those from Asian and Latin American backgrounds together reported substantially stronger values regarding family assistance and support than their peers from European American backgrounds (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999).

Although many observers suggested that the cultural tradition of family obligation and assistance would wane across immigrant generations, there is very little evidence to suggest that this is the case. Instead, a sense of obligation to support and assist the family appears to remain strong across several generations such that even U.S.-born adolescents from U.S.-born parents with Latin American and Asian backgrounds reported a stronger value of family assistance than their peers from European backgrounds (Fuligni et al., 1999; Sabogal et al., 1987). Fuligni and Flook (2005) have suggested that the retention of traditions of family obligation and assistance across generations may be due to the fact that family membership serves as a social identity for adolescents from ethnic-minority backgrounds. That is, even though U.S.-born parents and adolescents grow up in a more individualistically oriented American society, they are still members of ethnic and racial minority groups who face numerous challenges and experience social threat. Hundreds of studies that have focused on other social identities, whether real or experimentally manipulated, have shown that experiencing threat results in a greater identification with the group and a greater willingness to support the group (Hogg, 2003). Fuligni and Flook suggest that the same may be true for adolescents from U.S.-born families with ethnic-minority backgrounds who understand that their families still face challenges succeeding in American society simply by virtue of their ethnic group membership.

Nevertheless, there is some evidence for relatively lower sense of family obligation among some adolescents in the United States from East Asian backgrounds who are able to pursue postsecondary schooling at 4-year colleges and are able to take advantage of the social and economic opportunities this affords them. Fuligni and Pedersen (2002) observed that even though the sense of obligation of these youth increased from high school into young adulthood, as it did for all youth regardless of ethnic background, the sense of obligation of those from East Asian backgrounds did not increase the same rate as their peers from Latin American backgrounds, resulting in a value of family obligation that was quite similar to that of their peers from European backgrounds. As a college graduate from a Chinese immigrant family reported to Fuligni, Rivera, and Leininger (2007):

> You know, like a lot of Asian people start to feel torn . . . I mean I do feel compelled to help them out, but yet, I also feel compelled to do what I wanna do . . . because it's like you're supposed

to do that, you're supposed to go out and make a name for yourself and be the person you're supposed to be, but then at the same time, it's kind of like you, there's this obligation there. (p. 256)

The implication for other aspects of adolescent adjustment of an emphasis on family obligation and assistance is an important consideration. On the one hand, family obligation and assistance may be seen as inherently negative for several aspects of development during a developmental period that emphasizes the development of autonomy in an individualistically oriented American society. On the other hand, a sense of obligation may provide adolescents from immigrant and ethnic-minority backgrounds a sense of purpose and meaning that provides them with a meaningful role to fulfill in an American society that is often criticized as offering teenagers few opportunities to be productive. Numerous studies have suggested that a sense of family obligation has a number of positive correlates among adolescents from both ethnic-minority and -majority backgrounds, but high levels of actual assistance to the family may be problematic for some youth in more difficult life circumstances.

Most work has focused on adolescents' values regarding family obligation. A sense of duty to support and assist the family has consistently been related to a higher level of academic motivation in both qualitative and quantitative studies. In a study of adolescents from immigrant Vietnamese families, in which teenagers were asked to rank the relative importance they placed upon several values, the top five values were "respect for family members," "education and achievement," "freedom," "family loyalty," and "hard work" (Caplan et al., 1991). A factor analysis of these values, in turn, yielded a "family-based" achievement factor that included "education and achievement," "loyalty," and "cohesion and respect." Similar patterns of a link between obligation and educational motivation have been observed in studies of immigrants from Latin America and South Asia (Gibson & Bhachu, 1991; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995). Finally, Fuligni (2001) has noted a significant correlation between adolescents' sense of obligation to the family and their belief in the utility of education, such that a stronger sense of obligation significantly accounts for the higher level of academic motivation among adolescents from Asian and Latin American backgrounds as compared to their equally achieving peers from European backgrounds.

A sense of obligation to help the family also has been linked to better psychological and behavioral health. Fuligni and Pedersen (2002) noted that those with a greater sense of obligation report better positive psychological well being, and other studies have linked a sense of family duty to higher self-esteem (Bush, Supple, & Lash, 2004). Similarly, a number of studies have linked higher levels of familialism among Latino adolescents to lower levels of problem behavior and substance use. For example, Gil, Wagner, and Vega (2000) found that familism was associated with less alcohol use and a lower deviance, and Ramirez et al. (2004) reported that higher familism led to less use of marijuana and inhalants among families. Sommers, Fagan, and Baskin (1993) observed that familism was associated with less violence, theft, and drug use. More recently, Germán, Gonzales, and Dumka (in press) showed that familism mitigated the negative effects of deviant peers on adolescents' externalizing behaviors.

Much less work has been done on the actual provision of assistance to the family, but this research has suggested that, whereas modest levels of assistance may have no negative impact on youth, high levels of actual assistance in the context of difficult family circumstances may be more problematic. For example, young adults from poorer families who provided financial support to their families have a more difficult time completing their postsecondary degrees (Fuligni & Witkow, 2004). Adolescents from economically distressed

families who shoulder the burden of too much household maintenance may have difficulties (Burton & Skinner, 2005). Other research has suggested negative outcomes when family assistance is provided because of parental mental or physical distress (Jurkovic, 1997). Therefore, it appears that the implications of assistance behaviors should depend upon the family context. The implications may be negative when assistance takes place in families characterized by severe economic strain, parental distress, and problematic family relationships. Future research should concentrate more closely on the implications of actual family assistance for adjustment, and how it may depend on the family context in which that assistance occurs.

Ethnic and Racial Socialization

Ethnic-minority and immigrant families face unique challenges in the socialization of their adolescents that are not shared by European American families. As members of racial and ethnic groups that often experience derogation and discrimination, parents must prepare their adolescents for the kind of negative treatment that the adolescents may receive from peers, adults, and societal institutions. In addition, some of the values and traditions of ethnic-minority and immigrant families differ from the norms of the larger society. Therefore, rather than being able to rely on larger institutions such as schools and the media to teach their adolescents about their cultural background, parents in ethnic-minority families need to make special efforts to teach their adolescents about their ethnic heritage.

These particular socialization challenges of ethnic-minority parents were largely ignored until only recently, and there has been a rise in research into what has been called racial or ethnic socialization. Several theories and models of racial/ethnic socialization have been offered, but they all share an emphasis on the key dimensions of preparation for discrimination and teaching about one's ethnic and cultural background. One popular conceptualization has been offered by Hughes and Chen (1997), who outlined three dimensions of racial and ethnic socialization. The first dimension, called *cultural socialization*, includes teaching that focuses on the cultural traditions of the group to instill feelings of ethnic and racial pride. The second dimension, *preparation for bias*, includes efforts to teach children about ethnic and racial stratification in the larger society, and how to deal with negative treatment. Finally, *promotion of mistrust* messages are more negative in tone and teach children to be suspicious of other groups. Other models have included additional dimensions such as egalitarianism, religiosity, caring for extended family, and achievement (for a review, see Hughes et al., 2006).

Ethnic and racial socialization should be particularly relevant during the teenage years. Teaching about discrimination and the fact that one's child may be a target of negative treatment simply because of his or her ethnic background is a difficult and sensitive topic for parents to broach. Many ethnic-minority parents are reluctant to discuss such topics until their children are cognitively and socially mature enough to understand their complexity. Even though children can understand discrimination during elementary school (Brown & Bigler, 2005), parents understandably want their children to maintain a positive and optimistic view of their place in the world. But experiences with actual mistreatment and discrimination increase during the teenage years as adolescents increasingly interact with the larger society outside of the protection and purview of their parents (Greene, Way, & Pahl, 2006; Way, Santos, Niwa, & Kim-Gervey, in press). In addition, adolescents become aware of the disparities and stereotypes that are attached to ethnic and racial background as they witness the unequal distribution of students across achievement levels and academic tracks (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Finally, the unequal response to adolescents' risky behavior by the criminal justice system makes some adolescents (e.g., African American males) aware that society

expects them to get in trouble by virtue of their race or ethnicity.

As noted by Hughes et al. (2006) in their comprehensive review, research on ethnic and racial socialization has been conducted primarily with African American families. In addition, studies have rarely included multiple groups to allow for the comparison of rates of ethnic and socialization across different ethnic groups. Nevertheless, two studies have suggested that ethnic and racial socialization is more common in African American families than families with Latin American backgrounds (Hughes, 2003; Phinney & Chavira, 1995). In particular, messages about preparation for bias appear to be more common in African American families than other ethnic-minority families (Hughes et al., 2006).

It is assumed that ethnic and racial socialization is more common among ethnic-minority families than European American families. That assumption has rarely been tested, but Huynh and Fuligni (in press) found that U.S. adolescents with Chinese and Mexican backgrounds reported more frequent cultural socialization and preparation for bias messages from their parents than did their U.S. peers from European backgrounds. Among the different types of ethnic and racial socialization, cultural socialization appears to be the most common, being reported by the majority of families in many different studies (Hughes et al., 2006). Preparation for bias occurs somewhat less frequently, and promotion of mistrust tends to be reported by only a small percentage of ethnic-minority parents and adolescents.

Because of the predominant emphasis upon African American families, there has been little work on the nature of ethnic or racial socialization among immigrant families living in the United States. It is reasonable to expect that the dimension of cultural socialization may be higher among immigrant families, given that the parents were raised in the native society and often maintain ties to their countries of origin. Indeed, several studies have suggested that immigrant parents are more likely to try to teach their adolescents about their families' cultural norms, values, and traditions (Knight, Bernal, Garza, Cota, & Ocampo, 1993; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). It is unclear, however, how immigration might influence other dimensions of ethnic and racial socialization. On the one hand, given the status as both newcomers and ethnic minorities in American society, immigrant parents may be expected to engage in relatively higher levels of preparation for bias as compared to their counterparts born in the United States. On the other hand, some studies have suggested that immigrant parents' relative lack of historical experience with American discrimination and their optimism about succeeding in their new countries may lead them to deemphasize discrimination against their racial or ethnic group. Along these lines, Hughes (2003) found that immigrant Latin American parents were less likely to deliver preparation for bias messages than African American parents. Future work that compares adolescents and families from different generations with the same ethnic background should be done in order to examine the impact of immigration more closely.

The implications of ethnic and racial socialization for other aspects of adolescent development are not well understood. Studies have often obtained mixed results because of inconsistency in the operationalization of ethnic and cultural socialization, and because researchers have not clearly distinguished between specific dimensions of socialization that may have different outcomes (Hughes et al., 2006). Yet when studies have clearly measured cultural socialization, this dimension has been fairly consistently related to positive developmental outcomes such as higher ethnic identity, self-esteem, and lower rates of externalizing behavior. The links between cultural socialization and academic outcomes are inconsistent, as are the associations between preparation for bias and a host of developmental outcomes, largely because of the difficulty of distinguishing between a proactive, positive preparation for bias and a more negative promotion of

mistrust. This would seem to be a key direction for future research, in that preparation for bias theoretically should enable adolescents from ethnic-minority and immigrant backgrounds to more effectively deal with episodes of discrimination.

FRIENDSHIPS

Theory and research have repeatedly underscored the importance of friendships in satisfying adolescents' desire for intimacy; enhancing their interpersonal skills, sensitivity, and understanding; and contributing to their cognitive and social development and psychological adjustment (Crockett, Losoff, & Petersen, 1984; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Hartup, 1996; Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). During adolescence, the significance of friendships becomes even more paramount as adolescents begin to spend increased time with their friends (Crockett et al., 1984). However, despite the fact that friendships are critical for adolescents across multiple cultures (Hinde, 1987; Patterson, Dishion, & Yoerger, 2000; Sherer, 1991), researchers rarely focus on friendship processes among ethnic-minority adolescents. Although there has been some research on peer group processes, such as peer victimization, among ethnic-minority adolescents (Graham, Bellmore, & Juvonen, 2007; Graham, Bellmore, & Mize, 2006), there exists only a handful of research on the friendships, in particular, of ethnic-minority adolescents.

The research that does exist on the friendships of ethnic-minority youth (Cauce, 1986; Cote, 1996; DuBois & Hirsch, 1990; Hamm, 2000; Mounts, 2004; Way & Chen, 2000; Way & Greene, 2006; Way & Pahl, 2001) tends to be comparative in nature, aiming to detect ethnic/racial differences in *the characteristics* (e.g., number of cross-ethnic/racial friendships) and *quality* (e.g., level of support or intimacy) of friendships among ethnically diverse youth. In addition, a small but growing body of research draws from ecological theories of human development to explore the ways in which families and school shape the friendships of adolescents, including those of ethnic-minority adolescents (Mounts, 2004; Updegraff, Madden-Derdich, Estrada, Sales, & Leonard 2002; Way & Greene, 2006).

The Characteristics of Friendships

Research on the characteristics of friendships among ethnic-minority adolescents has typically focused on the extent to which ethnic-minority and -majority youth have cross-ethnic/racial friendships. These studies suggest that, for the most part, adolescents, including those who attend ethnically diverse schools, are less accepting of peers from other ethnic/racial groups than they are of peers from their own ethnic/racial group (Bellmore, Nishina, Witkow, Graham, & Juvonen, 2007; Brown, 1990; Hamm, 1998; Tatum, 1997). Inconsistency, however, is evident regarding the prevalence of cross-ethnic/racial friendships. Some studies show African American and/or European American youth as unlikely to have any cross-ethnic friendships (Bellmore et al., 2007; Shrum, Cheek, & Hunter, 1987; Way & Chen, 2000), whereas others depict adolescents who attend ethnically diverse schools as commonly experiencing ethnically diverse friendship networks (Hamm, 1998).

In addition, the likelihood of cross-ethnic/racial friendships appears to differ depending on the race/ethnicity of the adolescent (Clark & Ayers, 1991; DuBois & Hirsch, 1990; Hamm, 1998). Hamm (1998) showed, for example, that 75% of the Asian American and Latino adolescents in her study reported having at least one cross-ethnic friend, whereas only 50% of the African American and European American adolescents did so. Other scholars, however, have shown African American adolescents to be almost twice as likely to report having other-race friends than White adolescents (Clark & Ayers, 1991; DuBois & Hirsch, 1990). Way and colleagues found that the vast majority (73%) of Black, Latino, and Asian American students report having same-race/ethnic friendship networks (Way & Chen, 2000). However, in contrast to Hamm's (1998)

findings, in Way's study Asian American students were most likely *not* to have cross racial/ethnic friendships (85% of Asian American students in comparison to 73% and 64% of Latino and African American students, respectively).

The discrepancy in findings regarding prevalence of cross-ethnic friendships as well as the ethnic/racial group least or most likely to report having such friendships draws attention to the importance of examining the context in which these friendships are embedded. Cross-ethnic friendships may be more likely in school contexts in which there are academic and extracurricular activities that implicitly or explicitly encourage such relationships. Furthermore, the ethnic/racial diversity of the school, as well as the dominance of particular ethnic/racial groups within the school, is likely to influence the prevalence of cross-ethnic/racial friendships. The discrepancy in findings may also be due to the type of friendship being examined. Closest friendships may be less likely to cross the racial/ethnic divide than less intimate ones (Way & Chen, 2000).

The prevalence of cross-ethnic/racial friendships within particular ethnic/racial groups is also likely influenced by social status, language preference, and gender. Research finds that Asian American students who may be a numerical majority in the school but have very low social status often report high levels of peer discrimination by their non-Asian peers and thus few cross-ethnic friendships (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Furthermore, language barriers are likely to further enhance ethnic segregation, with Asian American immigrant students often reporting that they prefer to speak Chinese with their peers (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004; Qin & Way, in press). Although most studies have not explored gender differences, Way and colleagues find that girls are slightly more likely to report having same-race/ethnicity friendships than boys, with approximately 78% of the girls and 67% of the boys reporting same-race/ethnic friendship networks (Way & Chen, 2000). Qualitative interview data reveal boys as being more flexible or open regarding friendship selection than girls, which may be the product of boys being more likely than girls to be involved in informal or formal sporting activities that forced them to have more contact with adolescents from different ethnic/racial groups (Way, 2004).

Research on the characteristics of ethnic-minority adolescent friendships has also shown context-specific differences in the source of friendships. DuBois and Hirsch (1990), for example, found Black adolescents to be more likely than their White peers to report having a large network of neighborhood friends, whereas White adolescents reported having more school-based friendships. Supporting this finding, Clark and Ayers (1991) showed that African American adolescents had more contact with their best friends outside of school, whereas European American adolescents' best friendships were more likely to take place within the school context. Way and colleagues find that while most of the ethnic-minority adolescents in their studies report having school-based friendships, less than half, particularly in the first 2 years of high school, indicate having *best* friends who attend the same school (Way & Greene, 2006; Way & Pahl, 2001). In the 9th grade, only 25% of the Black students, 40% of the Latino students, and 38% of the Asian American students reported having best friends who attended the same school (Way & Chen, 2000). These findings are consistent with previous research showing ethnic-minority adolescents as less likely than European American adolescents to have school-based close friendships (particularly in the early years of high school) and underscore not only the importance of examining the diversity of characteristics of friendships among youth, but also of distinguishing between types of friendships (e.g., school vs. neighborhood, closest vs. general friendships).

The Quality of Friendships—Quantitative Research

Research on the quality of adolescent friendships has typically been grounded in Weiss's

(1974) contention that children and adolescent seek social provisions in their close friendships (Furman. 1996). Such provisions include intimacy (e.g., sharing secrets together), affection (e.g., showing warmth toward one another), companionship (e.g., having fun together), and satisfaction (e.g., deriving pleasure from the relationship) (Shulman. 1993). A large body of research over the past decade has focused on understanding the prevalence and correlates of these dimensions of friendship quality (see Buhrmester. 1990; Bukowski. Newcomb. & Hartup. 1996; Collins & Laursen. 1992; Furman & Buhrmester. 1985), and the extent to which they vary by gender and, more recently, by ethnicity.

Studies have found that the quality of friendships do vary by gender and ethnicity. Jones & Costin, (1994), for example, explored friendship quality among Mexican American, African American, and European American sixth and ninth graders and found that African American males were more likely to reveal their personal thoughts and feelings with their male friends than were Mexican American or European American boys. Furthermore, significant gender differences in levels of self disclosure in their same-sex friendships were apparent only among European American adolescents; European American girls were more likely to reveal their personal thoughts and feelings to their friends than European American boys. Similarly, in their study of Black and White, socioeconomically diverse, middle school children, DuBois and Hirsch (1990) showed White girls as having significantly more supportive friendships than White boys. No gender differences were detected among Black youth. Black boys were also shown to be more likely to have intimate conversations with their best friends than were White boys; no differences were found between Black and White girls.

Way and colleagues find ethnic differences in perceptions of friendship support with Black and Latino adolescents reporting higher levels of friendship support than their Asian American peers (Way & Chen. 2000; Way & Greene. 2006; Way & Pahl. 2001). Their qualitative research also suggests that Asian American immigrant adolescents often report being unhappy with their friendships and yearning for friendships that are more supportive (Qin et al.. 2008; Qin & Way, in press; Way & Pahl. 1999). They find, however, few gender differences in friendship support, with only the Latino youth in the first years of high school indicating such differences (Way & Chen. 2000). Research is needed to explore why gender differences in friendship support are consistently found among White youth but not among among ethnic-minority or immigrant youth.

Longitudinal research on friendship quality across adolescents from different ethnic groups is extremely limited, with most longitudinal studies conducted with young children (e.g., Ladd, 1990), over brief periods of time, or with middle class, European American adolescents (e.g., Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Rice & Mulkeen. 1995). Research conducted primarily with European American, middle-class adolescents has shown that from early to late adolescence, (1) friendships are perceived as increasingly more intimate and/or supportive and (2) gender differences in friendship quality become less apparent as boys and girls begin to rely more on friends to help solve their problems (Azmitia, Kamprath, & Linnet, 1998; Berndt, 1989; Furman & Burhmester, 1992; Rice & Mulkeen, 1995; Sharabany, Gershoni, & Hofman, 1981; Youniss & Smollar, 1985). Longitudinal studies of friendships among ethnic-minority adolescents have also indicated that the perceived level of support in both close friendships and friendships in general increases over time from age 13 to age 18 (Way & Greene, 2006). These findings support theory and research indicating that as young people become increasingly self-aware, cognitively skilled, and confident in their identities (McCarthy & Hoge, 1982), they become better able to have mutually supportive and satisfying friendships. In Way's studies of the development of friendships

of ethnic-minority adolescents, the rate of improvements over time in friendship quality was similar across African American, Latino, and Asian American adolescents. Boys, however, showed steeper improvements over time than girls in the quality of closest same-sex friendships even though the mean level of friendship quality at age 16 did not differ by gender (Way & Greene, 2006). This latter finding is consistent with previous longitudinal research with European American adolescents that suggests that intimacy in best friendship increases at a sharper rate for boys than for girls from 8th grade to 12th grade (Rice & Mulkeen, 1995).

The Experience of Friendships—Qualitative Research

Although research has examined the extent to which adolescents feel supported in their friendships, very little research has focused on how adolescents make meaning of or experience their friendships. In-depth interviews over 4–5 years with over 200 ethnic-minority youth living in an urban context revealed themes of *closeness, desire,* and *distrust* in their friendships (Way, 2006; Way, in progress; Way, Greene, & Pahl, 2004; Way & Pahl, 2001). Each of these themes suggested subthemes that underscored the complexity of each theme. For example, closeness was experienced in friendships not only as a result of intimate disclosures within the friendship but also as a result of borrowing and loaning money. Furthermore, the three themes were interwoven such that, for example, the theme of distrust formed a type of "context" for the experience of closeness for adolescents.

Closeness

Closeness was defined by the youth in Way's studies as believing that one could trust his or her best friends with secrets and money (Way, 2004; Way, Becker, & Greene, 2004; Way et al., 2005; Way & Pahl, 1999). For example, when Amanda, a Puerto Rican young woman, was asked what she liked about her best friend, she replied, "she keeps everything a secret, whatever I tell her." Maria, a Puerto Rican young woman, responded similarly saying that: "I can talk to her about anything, like if I call her, I'm hysterically crying or something just happened or whatever, . . . and maybe she'll be doing something, she'll stop doing that to come and talk to me and to help me." Brian, an African American male, stated about his best friends: "I tell them anything about me and I know they won't tell anybody else unless I tell them to." (Way et al., 2004). Similarly, adolescents, particularly the boys, consistently indicated that borrowing and loaning money was a key component of closeness between themselves and their peers.

In addition, adolescents, particularly the boys, voiced feelings that they could trust that closest friends to protect them from harm and that they would "be there" when needed. When Raphael, a Puerto Rican young man, was asked by an interviewer, "What kinds of things could you trust with your [closest] friends?" he replied: "Let's just say I had a big fight, I got beat up, I had like five guys against me, they'll come and they'll help me out." Similarly, Akil, an African American male, responded to the same question: "You get into a fight with somebody else; [my best friend] will tell me to calm down, chill . . . like when someone jumps me, he will help me." Although trust was consistently the foundation of closeness in friendships, the ways in which the adolescents trusted their friends, or *how they felt close to them*, varied across gender (Way et al., 2004).

Finally, adolescents conveyed feelings of closeness to their best friends due to the fact that their family knew their friends and their friends' families (and vice versa) (Way et al., 2004). Michael, an African American young man, said about his best friend: "Since we were real small I have known his whole family, he knows everybody in my house, we just walk over to his crib, open his fridge without asking or something, that's how long we've know each other." Similarly, Armando, a Dominican young man, responded when asked

what makes him close to his best friend: "Um, basically 'cause he knows my family. If you know somebody's parents, then you know how far the trust can be stretched." Bringing their friends into the fold of their families and becoming part of their friends' family allowed the adolescents to trust and feel close to their friends.

Desire

Way and her colleagues also find that the boys in their qualitative studies consistently expressed a strong yearning for intimate, same-sex friendships. For example, Albert, a Puerto Rican young man, told the interviewer: "I would like a friend that if I got anything to say to him or like any problems or anything I'll tell him and he'll tell me his problems." (Way et al., 2004). In contrast to what the research literature suggests about boys' friendships (Belle, 1989; Buhrmester & Furman, 1987), Albert's wish for a close friend was not based on a desire for friends with whom to "do things," but instead, to discuss personal problems. After describing the betrayals of friends who will "talk behind your back," Victor, a Puerto Rican male, similarly stated: "Basically I hate it, I hate it, cause you know I wouldn't mind talking to somebody my age that I can relate to 'em on a different basis." Boys, like Albert and Victor, expressed yearning for friends who "would really be there" and with whom they could share their "true feelings."

Significantly, these stories of desire for friendships that involve high levels of self-disclosure were not stories revealed exclusively by acutely sensitive boys who were socially isolated in the school context. They were stories heard from popular boys who were members of athletic teams as well as those involved in theater arts. These stories were heard from straight "A" students and students who were struggling academically. The language of yearning for intimacy with other males was used by laid back, macho, "hip hop" boys wearing low-riding pants, baseball caps drawn low over their brows, and sneakers untied. Boys, who have been portrayed in popular culture as more interested in shooting each other than in sharing their thoughts and feelings spoke to us about wanting male friendships with whom they could "share their secrets," "tell everything," and "get inside" (Way et al., 2004).

Distrust

Finally, a key theme in the teens' discussions of friendships was distrust (Way et al., 2004). For example, adolescents spoke of a world in which peers will "try to take over you and take you for everything you've got and step on you." For example, in response to a question about his male peers in general, Anthony responded: "I don't trust [them]. I trust me, myself, and I. That's the way I am. I trust nobody." Although he reported having a best friend during all four years of the study, a friend in whom he voiced being able to confide and to whom he felt close to, his overall perception of his peers in general involved much mistrust. Richard, too, spoke about distrusting his male peers, saying: "Can't trust anybody nowadays. They are trying to scam you, or scheme, or talk about you." Richard admitted that although he had never directly experienced these types of betrayals from his male peers, he "know[s] what most of [them] are like." These youth, however, often also spoke of having close friendships despite their perceptions of distrust. Thus, distrust of peers appeared to be a type of context in which close friendships develop (Way, 2004; Way et al., 2004). In other words, the distrust of their peers in general is the larger context in which they develop close and trusting same-sex friendships.

The Context of Friendships

Drawing from ecological theories of human development, a small but growing body of research examines the links among family, school, and neighborhood contexts and the development of friendship among ethnic-minority youth. Findings suggest that many of the associations between contextual factors and variations in friendships are similar across

ethnic groups. However, studies with ethnic-minority youth, particularly those from urban contexts, shed light on the ways in which families, schools, and neighborhoods shape the development of friendships.

The Family Context

Research on the links between the quality of relationships with family members and with peers has been based primarily on attachment and/or social support theories (Updegraff, McHale, Crouter, & Kupanoff, 2001) and has typically found the quality of family relationships to be positively associated with the quality of friendships (Greenberg, Siegel, & Leitch, 1983; Kerns, 1994; Kerns & Stevens, 1996; Procidano & Smith, 1997; Youngblade, Park, & Belsky, 1993). According to attachment theorists, children internalize their parents' responsiveness toward them in the form of internal working models of the self (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). These internal working models, in turn, influence nonfamilial relationships, as children provided with security, warmth, and trust are more likely than others to experience similar qualities in their relationships with their peers (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987; Greenberg et al., 1983; Kerns & Stevens, 1996; Sroufe & Waters, 1977). Moreover, attachment theorists also emphasize the enduring and stable nature of attachment styles, showing significant associations between current parent attachment and peer relationships (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987; Cauce, Mason, Gonzales, Hiraga, & Liu, 1996). In a similar vein, social support theorists also maintain that a positive association exists between adolescents' perceived support from families and the extent to which they feel supported by friends (Procidano, 1992; Procidano & Smith, 1997). In the social support literature, perceived family support is generally understood as the extent to which adolescents feel they can depend on family members for advice, guidance, and emotional support. When a child's need for support is met at home, that child will likely experience others outside of the home as supportive as well (Bartholomew, Cobb, & Poole, 1997; Sarason, Pierce, & Sarason, 1990).

The few studies of ethnic-minority friendships have found significant links between parent–child closeness and adolescent friendships among ethnic-minority youth (see Cote, 1996; Updegraff et al., 2001). This research has suggested that the association between parent and peer relationships varies as a function of race/ethnicity, and gender. For example, using a sample of early adolescents from Latino and European American families, Updegraff and her colleagues (2002), examined adolescents' experiences with their mothers, fathers, and best friends and found both mother and father acceptance to be significantly linked to friendship intimacy among European American adolescents. For the Latino adolescents, however, only mother acceptance was related to friendship intimacy.

Similar to Updegraff and colleagues (2002), Way and colleagues find that father support is unrelated to friendship support among Latino, Black, and Asian American adolescents. However, support from mothers is significantly associated with change over time in adolescent reports of friendship support (Way & Pahl, 2001). These findings extend the relevance of mother support for friendships to other ethnic-minority groups (e.g., African American and Asian American). Strikingly, however, adolescents who reported the least amount of support from their mothers in 9th grade (at time 1) show the sharpest increases over time in reported levels of support from friends, suggesting a compensatory pattern of relationship (Way & Greene 2006; Way & Pahl, 2001). However, increases in perceived family support are associated with improvements in friendship quality over time (Way & Greene, 2006). Although these findings seem contradictory, they are consistent with much of what we know about the development of relationships. Improvements in one type of relationship (i.e., family members) may be associated with improvements in another type of relationship (i.e., friends). However,

the sharpest improvements may be seen in those relationships (i.e., friends) that are compensating for the lack of support in other relationships (see also Cicchetti, Lynch, Shonk, & Manly, 1992).

In addition to studies examining the association between the quality of family support and peer relationships, a growing body of research based on social learning theory has examined the links between parental attitudes about peers and friendships and adolescent friendships. According to social learning theorists, children acquire the requisite skills for friendships through modeling and observational learning (Mischel, 1966). Such research has primarily focused on issues of parental monitoring, examining how parental monitoring at home influence the quality and characteristics of peer relationships (Brown, Mounts, Lamborn, & Steinberg, 1993; Fuligni & Eccles, 1993; Snyder & Hoffman, 1990). Findings from these studies have suggested that there is a clear association between the extent of parental monitoring and a range of adolescent outcomes, including involvement with deviant peers (Ary, Duncan, Duncan, & Hops, 1999; Snyder, Dishion, & Patterson, 1986) and positive peer contact (Brown et al., 1993; Mounts, 2001). The degree of parental monitoring has also been related to friendship development, with the two extremes of monitoring—excessively high and excessively low—interfering with children's abilities to establish friendships (Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984). Research with ethnic-minority youth has also found parental monitoring to be significantly related to the perceived quality of closest and general friendships (Rosenbaum, 2000). Adolescents who reported that their parents knew their whereabouts, what they are doing after school, how they spend their money, and where they are during the day and evening hours reported having more supportive closest and general friendships (Rosenbaum, 2000).

Parental guidance, or the degree to which parents directly assist adolescents with friendships, has also been linked with the quality of adolescents' friendships. Vernberg, Beery, Ewell, and Absender (1993), for example, documented various strategies used by parents to help their seventh and eighth grade children develop friendships after moving to a new school district, such as meeting with other parents, facilitating proximity to peers, talking with their adolescent children about peer relationships, and encouraging their children to participate in activities with other adolescents. More recently, in a study of Latino and European American adolescents and their parents, Updegraff and colleagues (2001) reported that parents—mothers in particular—often got to know and spent time with their children's friends as a way to influence these friendships. Mounts (2001, 2002, 2004) has also described various strategies parents use to influence their adolescents' friendships, such as guiding (i.e., talking about the consequence of being friends with particular people), neutrality (i.e., not interfering with their children's peer relationships), prohibiting (i.e., forbidding adolescents' associations with particular peers), and supporting (i.e., providing an environment at home where adolescents can have their friends over).

Studies have also indicated that parental rules and attitudes regarding their adolescents' friends are critical correlates of the quality of adolescent friendships for both ethnic-minority and -majority adolescents (Mounts, 2004; Way et al., 2007). In one study of ethnic-minority adolescents, adolescents' perceptions of parental rules and attitudes predicted the quality of closest friendships over and above the effect of mother and family support (Way, Greene, & Muhkerjee, 2007). Those adolescents who perceived themselves as having parents with a more encouraging attitudes (e.g., "my parents think it is important to have friends") and rules (e.g., "my parents allow me to spend time with my friends during the weekends or after school") regarding friendships reported having more supportive close friendships. Furthermore, research with both ethnic-minority and -majority middle school students indicates that parents' practices related to their

children's friendships (e.g., being involved in their children's friendships), as reported by the parents, was significantly associated with change over time in adolescent perceptions of the quality of their friendships (Muhkerjee, Way, & Hughes, under review). No ethnic differences were found in this analysis. Parents' perceptions of their practices related to friendships had, in fact, a stronger association with the adolescents' perceptions of the quality of their friendships than did the adolescents' perceptions of their parents' practices. Thus, in addition to adolescent perceptions of family support, parental monitoring, and guidance, parents' attitudes, rules, and practices related to their children's friendships shape ethnic-minority and -majority adolescents' perceptions of the quality of their friendships.

Qualitative data also underscores the significance of parental rules and attitudes about friendships for ethnic-minority adolescents. In Way and colleagues' research, Black, Latino, and Asian American adolescents reported their parents as wanting them to have friendships. However, they also perceived their parents as being extremely wary of nonfamilial friendships (Gingold, 2003; Way, 1998; Way & Pahl, 1999) and of the tendency for nonfamilial friends to be deceptive and to pressure them to engage in deviant behaviors. Previous research has suggested that many families from low-income and/or ethnic-minority backgrounds maintain the belief—due to a history of discrimination and oppression—that those who are not part of one's immediate or extended family should not be trusted (Salguero & McCusker, 1996; Stack, 1974; Way, 1998). Thus, the particular parental messages and attitudes regarding friendships may be unique to a low-income, urban sample.

The School Context

It is typically assumed that family relationships—both the quality of these relationships and the level of parental guidance and monitoring—are the most important factors shaping adolescents' experiences of friendships. However, such beliefs ignore the significant role of the school context (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004; Way et al., 2004; Way & Pahl, 2001). Perceptions of the school climate, or the quality of interactions and feelings of trust, respect, and support that exist within the school community, have been found to influence (both concurrently and prospectively) students' self-esteem, psychological adjustment, level of anxiety, problem behavior, academic self-concept (Grobel & Scharzer, 1982; Kuperminc, Leadbeater, Emmons, & Blatt, 1997; Roeser & Eccles, 1998), and school behavior (Hoge, Smit, & Hanson, 1990; Sommer, 1985). Theorists also argue that students who perceive the school environment as respectful, supportive, equitable, safe, and dependable find it easier and are more willing to make and maintain supportive friendships with their peers than those who perceive the school as hostile (Epstein & Karweit, 1983; Minuchin & Shapiro, 1983; Hamm, 2000). Indeed, Epstein and Karweit (1983) note: "Negative features in a school environment—ridicule, discrimination, low expectations, stereotypes, repressions, punishment, isolation—may increase the disassociative quality of the setting and affect the thought processes and social behavior of the students" (p. 60). Although the objective reality of the school (e.g., number of students in school, ethnic diversity) is likely related to the characteristics and quality of friendships, adolescents' perceptions of the relational (e.g., teacher/student and student/student relationships) and the organizational (e.g., sense of safety in the school) climate may also have a powerful influence (Andersen, 1982; Roeser & Eccles, 1998).

Whereas much research has investigated the ways in which perceptions of school climate influence adolescents' psychological adjustment and academic development (Hoge et al., 1990; Kuperminc et al., 1997; Roeser, Eccles, & Strobel, 1998; Way & Robinson, 2003), substantially less attention has been directed at exploring the ways in which adolescents' perceptions of school climate shape

their social development (Crosnoe et al., 2003; Eccles & Roeser, 2003). The existing research with ethnic-minority and -majority adolescents indicates that the effects of adolescents' perceptions of school climate on friendship quality is significant over and above the influence of family relationships and psychological adjustment (Way & Pahl, 2001). Moreover, changes in teacher/student relations and student/student relations in particular is significantly associated with changes over time in adolescent perceptions of friendship quality for African American, Latino, and Asian American adolescents (Way & Greene, 2006). Strikingly, when examined together with perceptions of family relationships, only teacher/student relationships remained a significant predictor of the quality of friendships for adolescents across ethnic groups. When students perceived their teachers as supportive, they also perceived their friendships as being supportive as well, even after controlling for the effects of family relationships (Way & Greene, 2006).

Ethnographic work also has revealed that the racial/ethnic dynamics of the school are strongly associated with the quality and characteristics of ethnic-minority adolescent friendships (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). In the urban, low-income, exclusively ethnic-minority high school studied by Way and colleagues, Black and Latino students are typically in either mainstream or special education classes while Asian American students are generally overrepresented in honors classrooms. According to teachers, these divisions are often made irrespective of the actual abilities of students, with Asian American students with very low literacy skills being placed in honors classes so that they can "be with their peers" (Way et al., 2004). Such actions openly and actively reinforce the model minority myth of Asian American students and the idea that Black and Latino students were not in honors classes because they lacked motivation (Tatum, 1998). As a consequence, Black and Latino students have often been found to harass Asian American students due, at least in part, to their frustration and anger regarding the obvious preference for the Asian American students by the teachers (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004).

Such a negative and hostile relational climate in the school even makes it difficult for students to form friendships *within* their own ethnic/racial group (Way et al., 2004). Research finds that those students who report school as being a particularly hostile (usually based on incidents of racism and discrimination) place often indicate having contentious friendships—irrespective of whether they are same-ethnicity/race friendships (Rosenbloom, 2004). However, students who recount more positive school experiences tend to describe more stable and secure friendships (Rosenbloom, 2004).

The Neighborhood Context

Studies have also indicated that friendship experiences vary depending on the quality and characteristics of the neighborhood (Berg & Medrich, 1980; DuBois & Hirsch, 1990; Epstein, 1989; Homel & Burns, 1989). For example, children living in neighborhoods with easily accessible "play spaces" have more contact with friends outside of school and more friends in general than those who live in neighborhoods without such places (Berg & Medrich, 1980; Homel & Burns, 1989). Similarly, youth residing in dangerous neighborhoods with a high prevalence of violence tend to have fewer neighborhood friends and less contact with their friends outside of school than their peers who live in less violent neighborhoods (Rosenbaum, 2000; Way, 1998).

Neighborhood climate has also been found to influence friendship satisfaction. In their study of urban low-income early adolescents, Homel and Burns (1989) found neighborhood social problems (e.g., crime, delinquency) to predict lower levels of perceived satisfaction with friends and a lower probability of liking one's classmates. Other studies have found family's residence to be strongly linked to the quality of social opportunities (Berg & Medrich, 1980; DuBois & Hirsch, 1990; Hirsch & DuBois, 1990).

Ethnographic work indicates that urban Black and Latino boys often choose not to spend time with their neighborhood friends because doing so often means being stopped and harassed by policemen or by groups of boys "looking for trouble" (Way, 1998). As a consequence, some of these boys choose instead to spend time alone or with family members. For example, one male Puerto Rican sophomore stated in his interview in Way's studies that he did not have friends from the neighborhood because he did not like "hangin' with people getting killed" (Way, 1998, p. 119) and thus he often stayed home during nonschool hours. Similarly, when a Black 11th-grade male was asked why he thought he had not found a close friend he could trust, he replied that the betrayal or "backstabbing" that was typical in his neighborhood led people to further "diss" one another in order to "feel important" (Way, 1998, p. 118). After learning that his closest friend was talking about him "all throughout my neighborhood," this young man decided not to "really bother with it, you know, trying to make best friends" (Way, 1998, p. 116). Survey research has also found that Black, Latino, and Asian American youth's perceptions of neighborhood cohesion, defined as levels of trust, familiarity, and reliability among neighbors and level of safety in the neighborhood, were significantly associated with reported levels of friendship support (Rosenbaum, 2000).

In summary, research with ethnic-minority and -majority adolescents has found that the context of families, schools, and neighborhoods play a significant role in predicting the quality and characteristics of adolescent friendships. Strikingly, few ethnic differences have been found in this body of research suggesting that the impact of the context on friendships is similar across adolescents. However, the ways in which these contexts shape adolescent friendships may not be similar. Whereas families, schools, and neighborhoods may influence the friendships of adolescents regardless of the cultural context, the ways in which these contexts influence friendships may look dramatically different across contexts. The role of teachers, for example, in the social well-being of adolescents may be more important for those being raised in cultures in which teachers are highly valued (e.g., China) than for those being raised in cultures that place less value on the role of teachers. Future research should explore the processes by which the contexts of development shape adolescent friendships.

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND ATTAINMENT

Because it is predictive of numerous indicators of a successful transition to adulthood, academic achievement is one of the most significant developmental tasks facing adolescents in contemporary American society. Individuals who receive high school and college degrees are more likely as adults to be employed, work in higher status occupations, have higher incomes, and even to be married and have better physical health (Halperin, 1998). Unfortunately, substantial differences in academic achievement exist according to adolescents' ethnic background, with the members of some ethnic groups facing particularly acute educational challenges. Variations in different aspects of academic achievement are described below, followed by a discussion of the potential role of motivation and values, the socioeconomic resources of adolescents' families, and social and institutional barriers in creating these often substantial differences according to ethnic and generational background.

Variation in Achievement and Attainment

Ethnic differences in educational achievement and attainment exist at all levels of schooling during adolescence, from middle school through the college years. American students from African American and Latino backgrounds generally receive lower grades and have lower scores than European American and Asian American students on standardized achievement tests during the middle and high

school years. Although the difference in dropout rates between European American and African American students narrowed during the 1970s and 1980s, a gap in high school completion between these two groups has remained stable for the past 15 years (see Figure 15.1). The dropout rate for Latino students has fluctuated over the past 30 years, but it remains essentially unchanged since 1970 and is higher than any other ethnic group in the United States. In contrast, the grades and test scores of Asian American students are higher than any other ethnic group, and they complete high school at rates equal to their European American peers. The higher high school dropout rates among African American and Latino students are one reason why their levels of college enrollment and completion are lower than those of their peers from other ethnic backgrounds. Asian students, in contrast, attend college and received postsecondary degrees at higher rates than their European American peers.

Despite the many challenges that adolescents from immigrant families face in their adaptation to American society, numerous studies have suggested that they often do just as well, if not better, in school than their peers from American-born families. Both national and local studies have suggested that first- and second-generation adolescents receive either similar or even higher grades and test scores than their third-generation peers from similar ethnic backgrounds (Fuligni, 1997; Kao & Tienda, 1995). College attendance and completion rates show similar patterns, with those from the first and second generations enrolling in college and receiving degrees at rates similar to their third-generation coethnic peers (Fuligni & Witkow, 2004; Glick & White, 2004).

There is some suggestion, however, that the immigrant advantage may be stronger and more consistent among Asian students than among those with Latino backgrounds. Fuligni (1997) noted that despite the fact that they did as well in English classes as their third-generation peers, first-generation Latino students received significantly lower grades in mathematics, and Kao and Tienda (1995) reported that the immigrant advantage in grades was most consistent among Asian students in a national sample. Census Bureau statistics suggest that the high school completion rate of foreign-born Latinos is dramatically lower (49% of those 25–44 years of age) than their second- and third-generation counterparts (82% and 82%, respectively; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2007). Yet census statistics often include immigrants who

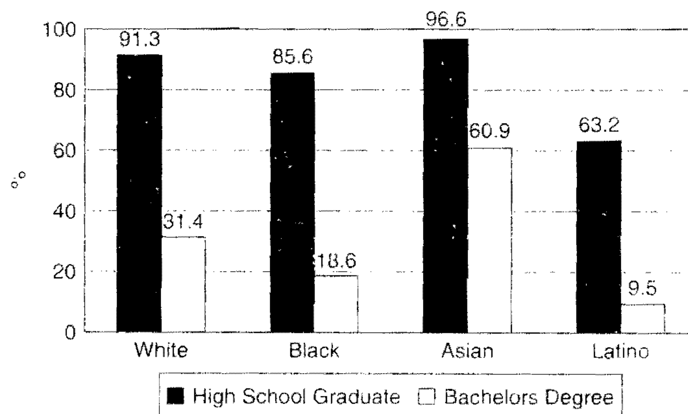

FIGURE 15.1 Percentages of the population, aged 25–29 years, with high school and bachelors degrees, according to ethnic background.

entered the United States as adults and never enrolled in school. A recent national study of adolescents who attended U.S. schools, in contrast, observed little generational variation in dropout rates among Latinos (Perreira, Harris, & Lee, 2006). The inconsistency in research findings regarding the achievement of the foreign born from Latin America may be due to the rapid fluctuation of population flows due to immigration, regional variation in the nature of the Latino population, and significant differences within the larger population of Latin American immigrants according to country of origin (e.g., Mexico vs. Cuba). Future research needs to isolate the role of these factors in order to most accurately determine which aspects of the immigrant Latino population have more difficulty in school than others.

Ethnic differences in educational achievement among the immigrant population itself generally mirror those observed in the larger population, with immigrants from Asia demonstrating higher levels of educational attainment compared to those from Latin America (Larsen, 2004). Yet these overall comparisons can mask often dramatic variations within each panethnic group. For example, students from South America and Cuba typically receive better grades and enroll in college at higher rates than those from Mexico or Central America (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). In addition, students in immigrant families that hail from Southeast Asian countries, such as the Hmong and the Lao, have more difficulty in school than those from China or Korea. Although it is often difficult to break samples down into specific ethnic groups because of their relatively limited sizes in the larger population, it is important to remember that achievement estimates for panethnic groups such as "Asian" or "Latino" youth may not readily apply to all of the specific immigrant groups included in these broad categories.

Motivation and Values

Explanations for ethnic differences in adolescent achievement have often focused on the role of students' value of education and their motivation to succeed. For example, a noted theory offered by Ogbu (1987) suggested that the academic difficulties of African American adolescents were partially attributable to the students' devaluing of education and academic effort. Despite the popularity of this theory, however, subsequent research provided very little evidence to suggest that African American students have lower values of education (Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998). Similar results have been obtained in studies of adolescents from other ethnic-minority backgrounds. For example, Latino and Asian adolescents often report higher educational aspirations and a stronger belief in the utility of education for their future lives (Fuligni, 2001).

Once source of the academic motivation of many ethnic-minority students is their identification with their ethnic and cultural background. Rather than developing an "oppositional identity," in which a strong cultural identity among ethnic-minority students includes an opposition to engaging with educational institutions, most students attempt to create an ethnic identity that includes a value placed on trying hard and doing well in school. Most studies have been conducted with African American adolescents. For example, Chavous et al. (2003) found that adolescents with a stronger ethnic identity possessed greater academic motivation and were more likely to enroll in college. Oyserman, Harrison, and Bybee (2001) reported a positive link between ethnic identification and feelings of academic efficacy, and Wong, Eccles, and Sameroff (2003) observed that African American adolescents with higher levels of ethnic identity actually received better grades in school. Recent work has observed similar links among those from Asian and Latin American backgrounds. For example, Fuligni, Witkow, and Garcia (2005) found that a stronger attachment to one's ethnic background was associated with greater interest in school, a stronger belief in the utility of education, and a greater identification with the actual high school among adolescents with Mexican

and Chinese backgrounds. In fact, the greater level of ethnic identification among those from Mexican and Chinese backgrounds was a significant source of the higher levels of motivation of these students as compared to their equally achieving European American peers.

Family is another significant source of motivation for many ethnic-minority adolescents. As described in the previous section on family relationships, adolescents from a variety of backgrounds have a strong sense of obligation to support, assist, and contribute to their families. Trying hard and doing well in school is seen as a key obligation of these students, both to fulfill the hopes and dreams of their parents and to obtain better jobs in the future so that they can provide financial support to their parents, siblings, and extended family (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995; Zhou & Bankston, 1998). The link between family obligation and academic motivation has been particularly studied among adolescents from immigrant families, and it appears to exist regardless of the families' country of origin. Similar to ethnic identity, a greater sense of family obligation among adolescents from Asian and Latin American backgrounds is a significant source of the extra motivation it takes these students to achieve at the same level as their European American peers (Fuligni, 2001).

Although academic motivation does not explain the profound ethnic differences in adolescents' actual achievement at school, it appears to be one source of the surprising success of many students from immigrant families when compared to their peers from similar ethnic and economic backgrounds. Immigrant parents have high aspirations for their adolescents' educational attainment, wanting their teenagers to received college degrees at higher rates than American-born parents (Fuligni, 1997; Kao & Tienda, 1995; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995). Educational opportunity is a primary reason why many foreign-born parents immigrate to the United States in the first place, and their belief in the opportunities available in American society leads them to expect there will be greater returns from their educational investments as compared to American-born parents (Fuligni & Yoshikawa, 2004). The value placed on education by immigrant parents is readily shared by their adolescents, who also have higher educational aspirations and greater academic motivation than their peers from American-born families. The greater motivation of students from immigrant families has been shown to account for their higher level of achievement in secondary school (Fuligni, 1997).

Interestingly, it may be that the belief in the importance of education among immigrant parents is largely instrumental as opposed to being an abstract value placed on exploration and self-improvement. Consistent with this idea, Caplan et al. (1991) reported that a Vietnamese refugee mother stated:

> According to our culture, a well-educated person always gets respect, even when not rich. But this country is different: education goes along with the wealth. I would like my children to be well education, both to be respected in our community and also to get a high position in this society. (p. 116)

The emphasis on the utility of education can be seen in the tendency for many college students from immigrant families to pursue technical and business degrees that have a clear link to stable, well-paying occupations (Tseng, 2006).

It is important to note that substantial variability exists among different immigrant groups in their academic motivation and educational aspirations, however, with adolescents from Asian immigrant families tending to report a stronger belief in the utility of education, higher educational aspirations, and more time each week studying and doing homework as compared to those from other immigrant groups (Fuligni, 1997; Kao & Tienda, 1995). Differences exist even within these panethnic larger groups. For example, adolescents from Chinese immigrant families place more emphasis upon education than their peers from immigrant Filipino backgrounds (Fuligni, 1997).

In contrast to the generational differences in motivation, these ethnic differences among those from immigrant families have a lot to do with the often significant differences in socioeconomic background and resources among various immigrant groups, as discussed below.

Socioeconomic Resources of the Family

In contrast to motivational differences, variations in socioeconomic resources play an important role in ethnic differences in adolescent achievement. Parents of adolescents in the two panethnic groups that have the most difficulty in school, African Americans and Latinos, tend to have lower levels of education as compared to European American and Asian American adults (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2007). African American and Latino adults also are more likely to work in lower status occupations and have lower incomes as compared to other adults (Webster & Bishaw, 2007). These differences in the educational and financial resources of families, which are important predictors of school success, partially account for some of the differences in educational success among adolescents from different ethnic groups. Yet families' socioeconomic resources do not explain all ethnic differences, which often remain after controlling for indices such as parental education and occupation. For example, the achievement gap between African American and European American students exists at virtually every level of the economic distribution (Ferguson, 2007). Many observers note that this may be due to the underestimation of economic variability. For example, even when parents of different ethnic groups have similar levels of education and income, they can have substantial differences in wealth (e.g., home ownership and value, inheritance), financial stability and income regularity, and generational continuity of social class (McLoyd & Ceballo, 1998). These additional, potentially significant aspects of the socioeconomic resources of adolescents' families have rarely been considered in studies of ethnic differences in academic achievement.

Interestingly, variations in the socioeconomic resources of adolescents' families do little to explain the differences in achievement between those from immigrant and American-born families. On average, immigrant parents tend to have lower levels of education, work in lower status occupations, and are more disadvantaged than American-born parents on most other socioeconomic indicators, such as income, poverty, home ownership, and neighborhood quality (Hernandez, 2004). Yet, as discussed above, students from immigrant families tend to do just as well, if not better, in school than their counterparts from American-born families. In fact, the generational differences in academic achievement become even greater after accounting for families' socioeconomic background, suggesting that students from immigrant families do better than would be predicted on the basis on their parents' educational, occupational, and financial standing (Fuligni, 1997; Kao & Tienda, 1995). The greater educational aspirations and academic motivation of immigrant parents and their adolescents is an important reason for this surprising result, as discussed above.

Yet another reason for the inability of traditional socioeconomic indicators to account for generational differences in achievement may be in the complexity of measuring human and financial capital among immigrant families (Fuligni & Yoshikawa, 2003). For example, parental education may be an underestimate of the human capital of immigrant families. Human capital, as assessed by parental education, is thought to be the extent to which parents can provide the skills, abilities, and values that children need to achieve in school settings and later in their own employment (Entwisle & Astone, 1994). The problem is that educational opportunity differs dramatically around the world, and many immigrant parents attended school in countries in which only a minority of the population receives education beyond the primary school years, much less the secondary school years (e.g., Mexico, China, Vietnam). This means that an immigrant parent who has

attended school for the same number of years as an American-born parent actually has gone much further in their educational system. As such, absolute educational level may be an underestimate of the educational values, motivation, and cognitive skills of immigrant parents as compared to American-born parents. Similarly, the occupational status of an immigrant parent may be an underestimate of the skills and abilities of immigrant parents because of the reluctance of American employers to recognize foreign credentials and training (e.g., medical degrees). The socioeconomic resources of immigrant families, therefore, are difficult to assess and require a close attention to issues of parental education, occupation, and family income both before and after immigration (Fuligni & Yoshikawa, 2003).

Even with the caveats expressed above, socioeconomic differences do explain some of the ethnic differences in academic achievement within the immigrant population itself. Immigrants from Asia tend to have higher levels of education and work in better paying jobs than those from Latin America, and these variations account for some of the differences in school grades and standardized test performance (Fuligni, 1997; Kao & Tienda, 1995).

Structural Disparities and Stereotyping

An important reason that ethnic differences families' socioeconomic resources cannot completely account for variations in academic achievement is that students do not compete on a level educational playing field. Substantial differences exist in the quality of schools attended by students from different ethnic backgrounds. Even when they attend similar schools, adolescents may encounter different expectations and opportunities, due to the implicit stereotypes held by the larger society regarding educational abilities and potential of students from different ethnic and immigrant groups. Although some of the variations in the social context of education faced by adolescents from different ethnic backgrounds are linked to differences in family economic resources (e.g., low-income families living in poor neighborhoods with low-quality schools), they are not completely confounded as evidenced by the different expectations encountered by students who attend the same school. That is, even within the same school, students from ethnic-minority backgrounds may by channeled toward and away from challenging coursework by virtue of the stereotypical assumptions made about the academic motivation and potential of their ethnic group. Galletta and Cross (2007) have noted how African American students can be steered away from advanced classes, whereas Way and colleagues found in their ethnographic studies of high schools that the "model minority myth" often led teachers to assign Chinese American students to the "advanced" classes when many of them were not academically prepared for such classes. Teachers justified such tracking claiming that the Chinese students felt more comfortable being among other Chinese students (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004).

The inability of family-level economic factors to fully account for ethnic differences in academic achievement has led to an increased interest in how extrafamilial factors such as structural disparities and societal stereotypes play a role in the lower educational success of students from certain ethnic backgrounds. Students from African American and Latino backgrounds are significantly less likely to attend secondary schools that provide qualified teachers, a positive school climate, and the availability of advanced and college preparation courses. Analyses of school-level differences have shown that experienced teachers are much less likely to be located within schools that have high proportions of ethnic-minority students and those with limited English proficiency (LEP) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). The social environment and climate of schools attended by these students are also less conducive to learning. Ethnic-minority and LEP students are more likely to attend schools that are large (i.e., more than 900

lled students) and severely overcrowded (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003a). Studies have also shown that African American and Latino students are more likely to report the presence of gangs in their schools and to be afraid of being beaten up or attacked in their schools (Kaufman et al., 1998).

The opportunities for taking advanced coursework in secondary school also are more limited for African American and Latino students. Even among those who graduate from high school, students from these two groups are the least likely to take the advanced courses in science and math that are necessary for college admission and attendance, even after controlling for prior levels of achievement (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003b). In contrast, Asian American students are significantly more likely to enroll these types of course in high school than those from any other ethnic group, including Whites. Some of these differences can be attributable to ethnic differences in achievement prior to the high school years that create variations in eligibility for advanced coursework, but there is still differential access to these courses across schools. Upper tracks (e.g., advanced and college track) tend to be smaller, and lower tracks tend to be larger in schools with large numbers of ethnic-minority students (Dornbusch, Glasgow, & Lin, 1996; Oakes, Selvin, Karoly, & Guiton, 1991).

Yet even within the same school, ethnic differences exist in students' enrollment in upper track and advanced placement courses. Misplacement of students across tracks may occur, whether due to official decisions by school personnel or by voluntary course selection patterns on the part of the students. Studies have suggested the African American and Latino students are less likely to enroll in advanced placement courses than students from other ethnic backgrounds with equivalent levels of ability and prior achievement, whereas Asian American students are more likely to be found in such course as compared to similar peers (Dornbusch et al., 1996; Oakes et al., 1991).

The differential patterns of enrollment in advanced coursework among students even in the same schools highlight the role that societal stereotypes regarding academic potential, motivation, and engagement play in the persistent ethnic differences in academic achievement in American society. It has been argued that long-standing stereotypes and myths about the intellectual abilities and academic motivation of certain marginalized ethnic groups, such as African Americans and Latinos, act to essentialize the groups. That is, societal myths and stereotypes about marginalized groups serve to identity the "true" or "essential" character of the group in the social imagination (Mahalingham, 2007). The "essential" character of a groups is impermeable to change or improvement, thereby justifying long-standing differences in educational resources and opportunity.

The influences of such stereotypes can be seen as influencing the differential patterns of enrollment in advanced coursework during the secondary school years. Galletta and Cross (2007), in an ethnographic analysis of the integration efforts of an ethnically mixed school district, show how that even within efforts to promote equality in education, social stereotypes can shape the opportunities available to African American students within the same school and even within the same classroom. One African American student recounted to them an experience in the beginning of the school year in an advanced class:

> [The teacher] called all of the black students' names and told us – in front of the whole class – that we were in the wrong class, that were supposed to be in the other teacher's and [the teacher] said [the other teacher's] name, and the other kids in the class knew that wasn't the enriched class, and I'm, I'm thinking to myself, this is wrong, this is not – how could that be? (p. 33).

These social barriers for full participation of many ethnic-minority students can, at times, take on very real physical significance. In an ethnography of a large, middle-class, predominantly

White high school. O'Connor, Deluca, Fernández, and Girard (2007) examined how the physical spaces in large high schools can become "racialized." The organization of the school into instructional wings meant that classrooms serving different academic tracks were located in different locations of the school. The differential enrollment in tracks based on ethnicity created distinct social spaces within the school in which the African American and White students congregated in the different areas. As a result, African American students who wished to enroll in upper-track classes literally had to travel greater distances and cross distinct social barriers that served to reify existing stereotypes about their academic potential and motivation.

In addition to structural and social barriers, ethnic-minority adolescents must contend with direct experiences of mistreatment due to their ethnic or racial background. Several studies have shown that ethnic-minority students, particularly those from African American backgrounds, report more frequent discrimination from adults, including teachers and school personnel (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2001; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Perceived discrimination, in turn, is often associated with lower levels of educational adjustment across a variety of indicators, including disengagement, GPA, and dropping out before graduation (Katz, 1999; Wayman, 2002; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

The effects of stereotyping on the achievement of many ethnic-minority students, particularly those from African American and Latino backgrounds, do not have to be explicit. In their work on the impact of stereotype threat on minority achievement, Steele and Aronson (1995) have argued that there is always a threat "in the air" to minority-student achievement. In a seminar study, they demonstrated how simply asking college students to report their ethnicity before taking a standardized test resulted in lower levels of performance on the exam. Steele and Aronson argued that making ethnicity salient resulted in pressure for the students to feel that they needed to disprove the stereotype, thereby creating excessive anxiety and perhaps even disengagement that depressed their performance on the exam. This phenomenon has since been replicated among many different groups in different situations, including those as young as middle school (McKown & Weinstein, 2003). Stereotypes, therefore, can impede the achievement of derogated ethnic-minority students even when they are not currently experiencing even implicit prejudicial treatment.

Interestingly, recent studies have suggested that an effective way to counter the effects of such stereotype threat is to emphasize the malleability of intelligence to students. Experimental studies have shown that the effect is minimized when students are told before a test that the test does not assess innate ability. In addition, recent intervention studies have indicated that an intervention that teaches students about the malleability of intelligence through the life span also minimize the effects of stereotype threat (Good, Dweck, & Aronson, 2007). In a sense, these studies have shown the effectiveness of providing students with the tools to fight back efforts of the larger society to "essentialize" their ethnic groups in terms of innate intelligence.

IDENTITY PROCESSES

Among the most widely recognized tasks adolescents face is that of coming to terms with who they want to be and how they fit into existing social groups and settings. This identity-seeking process involves trying on and discarding multiple identities and weighing the values, goals, and behaviors that they could potentially adopt vis-à-vis the various roles and contexts of their lives (e.g., son/daughter, student, citizen, or friend). Researchers have sought to understand identity processes both in terms of resolution of personal identities—self-representations that allow individuals to distinguish themselves from others—and social identities—self-representations that are derived from membership in social groups.

Both personal and social identities affect individuals' appraisals of their world and their social and psychological experiences across time and settings.

An important component of social identity development during adolescence involves coming to an understanding of one's position vis-à-vis one's racial and ethnic group. Although young children are certainly aware of ethnicity and race, can categorize themselves as group members, and often participate in their groups' practices and traditions, the process of actively exploring one's ethnicity and race and of determining their significance in one's life becomes far more complex during adolescence (McKown & Weinstein, 2003; Ruble et al., 2004). Due to the emergence of abstract reasoning and dialectical thinking, adolescents are able to take a more active role in reflecting on their own and others' views about their group, in deciding how important group membership is to their sense of self and in making choices about participating in group-relevant activities and settings. Each of these tasks is integral to the process of developing a ethnic and racial identity, which is generally conceived as the development of positive (or negative) views of one's group, knowledge about its history and traditions, feelings of group attachment and belongingness, and participation in practices or settings that reflect group membership (Phinney, 1990).

Although the work of racial and ethnic identity development occurs among all adolescents, it is especially salient and complex for ethnic-minority adolescents, native born or immigrant. Ethnic-minority and non-White immigrant adolescents must reconcile their group membership with knowledge that their group is stigmatized and devalued and with experiences of racism, discrimination, and stereotypes. Immigrant youth face additional challenges in negotiating potentially conflicting expectations across the worlds of their more traditional parents and those of mainstream peer and adult agents of socialization (Fuligni, 1998; Lee, 2001; 2002; Suarez Oroszco & Suarez Oroszco, 2001). Thus, studies find that ethnic-minority and immigrant adolescents score significantly higher on measures of ethnic identity than do their White counterparts (Phinney & Alipuria, 1990; Phinney et al., 1994), view race and ethnicity as more central to their self-concept (Fuligni et al., 2005), and are more likely to view their experiences through a racial or ethnic lens (London, Downy, Bolger, & Velella, 2005). Studies also find that components of ethnic identity are more strongly associated with psychological, social, and academic outcomes among ethnic-minority as compared to White adolescents (Yasui, Dorham, & Dishion, 2004). Indeed, scholars have suggested that resolving issues relevant to racial and ethnic identity is necessary for healthy psychological functioning among ethnic-minority and immigrant youth (Phinney, 1989; Umaña-Taylor, 2004).

Due to differences in groups' social status, experiences in the United States, and sending and receiving communities, ethnic and racial identity processes quite likely vary across different ethnic-minority and immigrant groups. However, the empirical literature to date is limited in the information it provides in this regard. Although studies have documented ethnic group differences in identity components and in the experience of ethnicity (e.g., Fuligni, Whitkow, & Garcia, 2005; Pahl & Way, 2006; Way et al., in press), a priori hypotheses that link predicted between-group differences to differences in groups' histories and experiences are generally lacking. Moreover, to date, the general patterns for ethnic and racial identity processes are more similar than different across groups. Thus, in this section, rather than focusing on between-group differences, we focus instead on processes that adolescents share, highlighting differences ethnic–racial group where documented.

Before proceeding, it is useful to clarify our use of the terms racial and ethnic identity, which are used interchangeably in the literature but are theoretically distinct. The term *race* denotes groups derived from similarity

in phenotypic characteristics but only minimally identifies biologically or genetically distinct groups. Although race is largely socially constructed, it nonetheless has powerful meaning in the United States (Allen, Bat-Chava, Aber & Seidman, 2005), rendering the process of negotiating social identities based on *racial* group membership especially relevant to many adolescents. We would expect this to especially be the case for adolescents from groups with distinctive phenotypic characteristics (e.g., Blacks, Asians), in part because they are most often subject to others' ascriptive ethnic/racial designations (Espiritu, 1992, Lee, 1999, Nagel, 1994). The term *ethnicity* implies a set of characteristics that include cultural values, language, traditions, and behaviors shared by a geographically contiguous group that is transmitted intergenerationally. Ethnic identities are often represented as chosen, malleable, and fluid, with ethnic choices changing as the audience changes (Nagel, 1994; Waters, 1993, 2003). Notably, the term *racial identity* is primarily used in studies of U.S.-born Blacks (e.g., Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998; Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002), and Whites (e.g., Helms, 1999; Stoddart, 2002), and the term *ethnic identity* is used more broadly across multiple ethnic groups. However, there is little consensus regarding when one term should be used in lieu of the other (Cross, 2007; Quintana, 2007), and we do not seek to engage or resolve issues of nomenclature here. Instead, we use the hyphenated term *ethnic–racial identity*, reflecting our belief that both are important in providing adolescents with psychological resources and in imposing obstacles to their successful development.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Empirical knowledge about ethnic–racial identity processes during adolescence is embedded in multiple theoretical frameworks, each characterized by slightly different approaches to understanding the phenomena and slightly different research questions. These frameworks recognize that ethnic–racial identities are multifaceted, dynamic, and shift across time and context. Within psychology, the predominant frameworks are social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978), ego identity frameworks (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966, Phinney, 1989), and acculturation frameworks (Berry, 1990).

At its core, social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978) proposes that individuals derive their self-concept from knowledge that they are members of particular social groups and categories that share characteristics that are meaningful in particular social contexts. Given the salience of race and ethnicity in the United States, these are central social categories that individuals evaluate. Membership in stigmatized social categories is thought to be problematic for a positive sense of self, whereas membership in categories that are held in high esteem is thought to enhance self-esteem. Correspondingly, studies have sought to differentiate varying components ethnic identity (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004; Sellers et al., 1998), the mechanisms through which individuals from stigmatized groups maintain a positive sense of themselves and their group (e.g., Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine & Broadnax, 1994; Crocker & Major, 1989); and variations across contexts and situations in the salience of identity (Way et al., in press; Yip, 2005; Yip & Fuligni, 2002). This work has yielded important concepts for distinguishing multiple ethnic identity components that may profoundly shape adolescents' experiences and worldviews. An example is Sellers, Chavous, and Cooke's (1998) distinction between centrality (the importance of ethnicity and race to one's self-definition), salience (the importance of identity at a particular moment), regard (one's own and views of others evaluations of one's group), and ideology (the content of one's beliefs about how one should behave as a group member). For instance, several studies have found that Chinese adolescents have lower private regard compared to their Mexican counterparts (Fuligni et al., 2005) and to their African American, Dominican, or Puerto

Rican counterparts (Rivas Drake, Hughes, and Way, 2008; in press; Way et al., in press). French, Seidman, Allen and Aber (2006) found higher private regard among Latino middle adolescents as compared to their African American counterparts. Altshul, Oyserman, and Bybee (2006) found higher connectedness and awareness of racism among African American as compared to Latino students.

Research embedded in ego-identity frameworks (French et al., 2006; Phinney, 1990; Umaña-Taylor, 2004) focuses primarily on elaborating the processes through which individuals consolidate their ethnic–racial identities. Central to this framework is the idea that individuals attain an achieved ethnic/ratial identity only after having explored and actively accepted its meaning. In Cross's (1971, 1991) "nigresence" model, grounded in the experiences of U.S.-born Blacks, individuals are thought to move from a state of relative ignorance of race (pre-encounter) to one characterized by an achieved sense of their race and its meaning. Movement is precipitated by a discrete encounter event that sets in motion processes of self-reflection and search for greater racial understanding (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). In a similar stage model, Phinney (1989, 1990) differentiates three identity statuses: *unexamined*, in which the meaning of group membership is unexplored; *exploration*, characterized by an active search for information about the meaning of group membership; and *achievement*, the resolution of the identity search, usually resulting in commitment to and affirmation of one's ethnic group. Recent iterations of both theories emphasize that ethnic–racial identities are reformulated throughout the life cycle (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001; Parham, 1989; Phinney, 2006; Umaña-Taylor, Diversi, & Fine, 2002). Empirically based knowledge about shifts in ethnic–racial identity during adolescence is largely embedded within this framework.

Finally, recognizing that immigrant adolescents navigate two cultures, the dominant host culture and the culture of origin, researchers studying ethnic–racial identity within an acculturation framework emphasize the psychological and social consequences of adolescents' efforts to negotiate identification with and preference for the values, beliefs, language, and cultural practices of each culture. Berry's (2003) distinction between integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization; Suárez-Orozco and Suárez Orozco's (2001) distinction between ethnic flight, adversarial identities, and transcultural identities; and Rumbaut's (1994) attention to the specific identity labels immigrant youth choose exemplify this research tradition. Research questions focus on the extent to which adolescents' identity labels and acculturation profiles shift with length of time in the United States and are differentially associated with outcomes such as school success or deviance (Fuligni et al., 2005; Rumbaut, 1994; Sullivan, Schwartz, Prado, Huang, Pantin & Szapocznik, 2007). Most often, identities characterized by integration of the host culture and the culture of origin are promoted as more healthy than other identities.

The Course and Timing of Ethnic–Racial Identity Development During Adolescence

Ethnic-racial identity processes are intimately intertwined with other aspects of identity seeking that are ongoing during adolescence. In general, however, early and middle adolescents are thought to have less clear and committed sense of ethnic identity compared to their older adolescent counterparts, with mid- to late adolescence characterized by search and exploration. Both cross-sectional studies that compare ethnic–racial identity across age groups and longitudinal studies that examine intraindividual change suggest that during adolescence there is a progression from an unexplored and uncommitted ethnic–racial identity to a more secure view of the role of race and ethnicity and affirmation of one's group membership.

Cross-sectional studies that have compared older adolescents to their adult or younger

adolescent counterparts provide the bulk of information about developmental shifts in ethnic–racial identity development, the advantage being that they cover a larger swath of the developmental spectrum than existing longitudinal studies have covered. For instance, in Lysne and Levy's (1997) comparison of 9th- and 12th-grade Native American students, 12th-grade Native American adolescents reported significantly greater identity commitment than did 9th-grade students. Moreover, difference in identity exploration as a function of school ethnic composition was evident only among 12th graders, suggesting that the process of exploration precipitated by being a minority in the school had not yet been set in motion among the 9th graders. Yip, Seaton, and Sellers (2006) compared the identity statuses of African American adolescents, college students, and adults, using cluster profiles derived from Phinney's (1989) proposed stages of identity development. Findings indicated that 42% of adolescents were in the moratorium stage, characterized by active exploration of their ethnicity and race, compared to about 25% of college students or adults. Fewer than 1 in 3 adolescents were characterized as being in the achieved status, characterized by an active commitment to the meaning of ethnicity based on intensive exploration, compared with about one-half of college students or adults.

Longitudinal studies confirm cross-sectional findings that ethnic–racial identities shift during mid- to late adolescence. Studies based on latent growth curve models across multiple ethnic groups find increases in ethnic affirmation during junior high and early high school (Altshul et al., 2006; French et al., 2006; Whitesell, Mitchell, Kaufman, & Spicer, 2006), whereas Pahl and Way (2006) documented stability in ethnic affirmation between 10th grade and 1 year post high school. In French et al., increases in affirmation were most pronounced following the transition to junior high or high school and among Black and Latino, as compared to European American, adolescents. In Altshul et al. (2006) group connectedness and awareness of racism were higher among African American as compared to Latino 8th- and 9th-grade adolescents, but their rates of were similar over time. In contrast to ethnic affirmation, several studies have documented that exploration occurs only among older adolescents. In French et al. (2006), increases in exploration were documented among adolescents transitioning to high school but not among those transitioning to junior high school. Pahl and Way (2006) documented decreases in ethnic exploration between 10th grade and 1 year post high school, although this decrease was more pronounced among Latino than Black youth. Together, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies locate the processes of exploration that Phinney (1989) emphasizes in the later high school years, and indicate that Black and Latino students may differ from each other in the patterns of change over time.

Length of Time in the United States

For immigrant adolescents, the form and shape of ethnic identity also shifts as a function of the length of time their family has been in the United States (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999; Tseng & Fuligni, 2000). Over time, immigrant adolescents interact within an increasing number and broader range of mainstream institutions, including schools, organized activities, and workplaces, where peers and adult socialization agents expose them to U.S. norms and values that they must integrate with those of their own culture (Fuligni, et al., 1999; Lee, 2001, 2002; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001; Rumbaut, 1994). Negotiations that occur within and between these cultures have important implications for immigrant adolescents' views of their ethnic group and perceptions of their group's status (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Phinney, 2001), in addition to having important implications for adolescents' family relationships (Tseng & Fuligni 2000; Fuligni et al., 1999). Studies find differences in the identity labels adolescents choose and in the nature of their ethnic identity as a function of generational status and the length of time

in the United States. Youth with more years in the United States are more likely to prefer combined (e.g., Dominican American) or pan-ethnic (e.g., Latino) labels over labels that refer only to national origin (e.g., Mexican) compared to their counterparts who have been in the United States for fewer years (Rumbaut, 1994), although there is some evidence that identity content better predicts adolescent outcomes (Fuligni et al., 2005; Marsiglia, Kulis, & Hecht, 2001). In a recent study of 5,000 immigrant adolescents, those with high levels of comfort in the host culture and the culture of origin reported better sociocultural and psychological adaptation than adolescents who were primarily oriented either toward the host culture or toward the culture of origin, or those who were unclear about their identity (Berry et al., 2006).

Parental Influences on Ethnic–Racial Identity

As we have mentioned, many ethnic-minority and immigrant parents transmit information and knowledge to their children about their racial and ethnic group and do so in ways that are both intentional and inadvertent (Hughes, et al., 2006). Parents from multiple ethnic-minority and immigrant groups emphasize the importance of ethnic pride and knowledge about group history, values, traditions, and practices in their childrearing. They also make deliberate efforts to expose children to museums, language classes, books, and trips to the home country in order to connect them do their culture. These deliberate and intentional strategies are reinforced by cultural practices that are deeply embedded in families' daily routines, including celebrations, cooking of ethnic food and listening to ethnic music, and artifacts in the home (Hughes, Rivas, Foust, Hagelskamp, Gersick, & Way, 2008).

Studies clearly suggest that adolescents whose parents place a strong emphasis on socializing them about ethnicity and race report that their ethnicity is more important to them, and they have more positive feelings about their ethnic group (e.g., Hughes et al., 2006; 2007; Phinney & Chavira, 1995). Stevenson's program of research on African American youth has consistently documented significant relationships between parents' reinforcement of cultural pride and measures of African American adolescents' ethnic identity (e.g., Stevenson, 1995, 1998, 2002). Umaña-Taylor and colleagues have documented similar relationships between covert and overt forms of ethnic socialization and Mexican American adolescents' ethnic identity (Gonzalez, Umaña-Taylor, & Bámaca, 2006; Umaña-Taylor & Yazedijan, 2006). Rivas-Drake, Hughes, and Way (in press) examined relationships between specific types of ethnic–racial socialization and specific dimensions of ethnic identity in a sample of African American, Chinese, Dominican, Puerto Rican, and White 6th-grade adolescents. Adolescents who reported greater parental socialization about culture and pride reported that ethnicity and race were more central to their self-concepts and more positive views of their ethnic group. Parents discussions about discrimination were unrelated to centrality or ethnic affirmation, but were associated with adolescents' perceptions of others views about their groups.

Situational and Contextual Influences on Adolescents' Ethnic–Racial Identities

Although studies have primarily focused on individual-level variation in components of adolescents' ethnic–racial identities, scholars increasingly recognize that characteristics of the settings adolescents inhabit have important influences of the course, timing, and content of adolescents' developing ethnic/racial identities. Aspects of settings can both support and challenge adolescents' emerging ethnic identities—rendering them more or less salient and variously challenging and supporting them. For instance, aggregate characteristics of others in the settings as well as ambient setting features (e.g., posters or curriculum in

schools that celebrate the contributions of multiple groups) can shape adolescents' emerging ethnic–racial identities in important ways.

The most commonly examined setting characteristic to date is the ethnic and racial composition of other setting participants. Adolescents in settings in which few other group members are present and adolescents in settings in which their group is a clear majority have both been found to differ from adolescents in more ethnically diverse settings in levels of exploration (Lysne & Levy, 1997) and in their positive feelings about their ethnic group (Umaña-Taylor, 2004). Ethnic composition has also been found to moderate relationships between components of ethnic identity and self-esteem. Allen et al. (2005) reported that Black adolescents' less favorable views about their ethnic–racial group were associated with depression when they lived in mixed neighborhoods or neighborhoods in which they were in the minority, but such views were unrelated to depression among Black adolescents who lived in majority Black neighborhoods. Latino students who lived in mixed or predominantly non-Latino neighborhoods reported more depression if they held their group in high esteem, but group esteem was associated with lower depression among those who lived in majority Latino neighborhoods. White adolescents' school ethnic composition was more relevant to their depression than was neighborhood ethnic composition. Way et al. (in press), however, find that ethnic and racial composition is less relevant for the development of identities than the social and political status of the ethnic groups within the setting. They find that the Chinese American students, who formed the vast majority of students in the urban, low-income school they studied but who also had the lowest social standing among their Puerto Rican, African American, and Dominican peers, reported the least positive feelings about themselves and their ethnic group. Way et al. (in press) underscore the importance of examining the "qualitative" components of a setting (i.e., social status) as well as the more quantitative components (i.e., number of students from each ethnic group in a school) in studies of ethnic identity development.

In addition to comparing ethnic–racial identities across adolescents in different types of settings, studies have begun to pay attention to the ways in which an individual adolescent's ethnic/racial identities vary across different types of settings and situations. These studies recognize that adolescents, like adults, are likely to carry a portfolio of ethnic–racial identities that are more or less likely to emerge at a given moment, depending on the situation they are in and the audience they are facing (Ashmore et al., 2004; Nagle, 1994). For instance, Huang (1998) documented situational variation in ethnic/racial identity among Asian immigrant youth, who felt more ethnic at home, more American at school, and equally ethnic and American with peers. Similarly, Kiang, Harter, and Whitesell (2007) documented that Chinese American college students reported that they were significantly more likely to express their feelings about their ethnic identities in the context of other Chinese American peers as compared to parents or non-Asian peers, and in the context of parents as compared to non-Asian peers. They reported feeling significantly more support for their ethnic identities in contexts that involved other Chinese American peers or parents, as compared to non-Asian peers. Yip and colleagues, in a series of daily diary studies, although ethnic identity is generally more salient among Chinese American high school and college students with higher affirmation and achievement, they report greater identity salience in situations in which they are engaging in ethnic behaviors (e.g., speaking Chinese, eating Chinese food, reading Chinese newspapers) and in situations in which other Chinese people were present (Yip & Fuligni, 2002; Yip, 2005).

A final setting feature that has been examined in relationship to adolescents' emerging ethnic identities concerns the extent to which adolescents perceive that they are exposed to ethnically or racially based discrimination across the various settings in which they

participate. Although perceived discrimination can be construed as a feature of settings or a feature of individuals, in that some adolescents may simply be inclined to perceive more discrimination, studies show that perceiving discrimination plays an important role in shaping adolescents' ethnic identities. For instance, based on ethnographic work with Chinese and Korean high school students, Lee (1999) describes the ways in which students' perceptions that non-Asian peers would always view and treat them differently came to view connections with other Asians, and the development of panethnic identities, as politically and psychologically beneficial. In longitudinal studies with African American high school and college students, Sellers and colleagues have documented that those for whom race is more central, and those who believe that others hold more negative views of African Americans, are more likely to report experiencing discrimination. This may be because they are more likely to interpret ambiguous events as being discriminatory or, in line with theories of race rejection sensitivity (Mendoza-Denton, Downey, Purdie, Davis, & Pietrzak, 2002) because their a priori expectations predispose them to actually being treated unfairly. Using latent growth curve models, Pahl and Way (2006) showed significant relationships between growth in exploration and growth in perceived discrimination over time among students between 10th grade and 1 year post high school. Specifically, increases in discrimination by peers was associated with increases in identity exploration, especially among Black students. In addition, students who perceived more discrimination by peers showed less deceleration in their identity exploration over time compared to their counterparts. Conversely, initial levels of exploration or affirmation did not predict changes in trajectories of perceived discrimination over time.

Functional Consequences of Ethnic Identity

The importance of ethnic/racial identities during adolescence lies in the potential role that they play in shaping adolescents current psychological outcomes and behaviors, and their views of their future roles and opportunities. We have already discussed the documented importance of ethnic–racial identities in influencing adolescents' orientations toward their academics and their actual academic outcomes, given the powerful stereotypes that exist among educators, practicioners, and community members regarding the academic goals, work habits, and abilities of students from different ethnic backgrounds. Thus, our discussion here focuses on the consequences of adolescents' racial–ethnic identities for their overall feelings about themselves and their general psychological well-being.

In line with social identity theory, a secure sense of one's ethnic identity serves to promote self-esteem and psychological well-being during adolescence and throughout adulthood. Scores of studies have documented correlations between concurrent measures of ethnic identity and self-esteem or well-being (e.g., Ethier & Deaux, 1990, 1994; Goodstein & Ponterotto, 1997; Phinney, 1991; Phinney & Chavira, 1992; Umaña-Taylor, Diversi, & Fine, 2002). More specifically, greater ethnic exploration (Umaña-Taylor, 2004), the importance placed on one's identity as an ethnic–racial group member (Ethier & Deaux, 1990, 1994), having positive views of one's ethnic group (Lee & Yoo, 2004), and having reached an achieved ethnic identity status (Lee & Yoo, 2004; Seaton, Scottham & Sellers, 2006) have each been associated with higher self-esteem and greater psychological well-being.

Longitudinal studies, however, indicate that components of ethnic identity may not be as critical over the long run as cross-sectional studies might suggest. For instance, although Umaña-Taylor and colleagues found contemporaneous relationships between ethnic identity exploration, affirmation, and resolution vis-à-vis self-esteem among Latino students, none of these dimensions of ethnic identity predicted self-esteem over time, either directly or through psychological resources provided

for coping with discrimination (Umaña-Taylor, Vargas-Chanes, Garcia, & Gonzales-Backen, 2008). Whitesell et al. (2006) also found weak relationships between trajectories of self-esteem and trajectories of group esteem among Native American high school students. However, Pahl and Way (2006) find that different elements of ethnic identity are significantly associated with change over time in self-esteem for African American, Latino, and Asian American adolescents. Discrepancy between findings in the longitudinal studies of ethnic identity may be due to the length of time examined with those studies that examined shorter periods of time (i.e., and thus less variability to predict change) less likely to find an association while those studies examining extended periods of time more likely to find significant associations between components of ethnic identity and self-esteem.

Additional research in this area has begun to unpack the conditions under which adolescents' orientation toward their ethnic group matters most in predicting their well-being. For example, the content of ethnic identity appears to matter most for adolescents who view ethnicity as central to their self-definition (Sellers, Chavous, & Cooke, 1998; Yip & Cross, 2004). Yip (2005) and Yip and Fuligni (2002) found that Chinese American high school and college students reported greater well-being on days when their Chinese identities were salient to them, but this was especially true for those who held their group in high regard. In addition, although holding ethnicity as central to one's self-concept and feeling connected to one's ethnic group may not be a prerequisite for positive self-views, a strong ethnic identity permits adolescents to resist and better interpret instances of marginalization, exclusion, and discrimination they encounter in their daily lives (Downy, Chatman, London, et al., 2005; Strauss & Cross, 2005). Numerous studies using cross-sectional, longitudinal, and daily diary approaches have found that having an achieved sense of identity and holding positive views of one's ethnic group attenuates the otherwise negative consequences of daily stressors and of specific experiences with discrimination (Kiang, Yip, Gonzales-Backen, Witkow, & Fuligni, 2006; Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin & Lewis, 2006; Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003). For instance, Greene et al. (2006) report that an increase in perceived discrimination by peers over time is associated with declines in self-esteem among adolescents with lower initial scores on measures of ethnic affirmation. Sellers et al. (2006) found that more positive feelings toward African Americans were associated with more favorable psychological functioning in the face of racial discrimination. In addition, there was a significantly weaker association between racial discrimination and psychological functioning among those adolescents who had a greater awareness that other groups held less favorable attitudes toward African Americans than among those who believe others held more positive attitudes. Identity components have been found to buffer relationships between exposure to discrimination and academic outcomes (Wong, et al., 2003) and between discrimination and engagement in violent behaviors (Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone, Chavous, & Zimmerman, 2004).

CONCLUSION

As the amount of material covered in the previous sections demonstrates, the surge in research on adolescents from ethnic-minority and immigrant backgrounds has matured to the point where rich descriptions can be made about the lives and patterns of development of these teenagers. It is clear that variations in cultural background, socioeconomic resources, and social and structural contexts can sometimes produce significant differences in family relationships, friendships, academic achievement, and identity development. These differences include the frequency and implications of parental control, the importance placed upon family obligation and ethnic socialization, educational attainment, and the relevance of

racial–ethnic identity for the development of the self. At the same time, substantial similarities exist across ethnic and immigrant groups in other aspects of development and adjustment, such as the quality of their dyadic relationships with their parents and several characteristics of their friendships. As these findings suggest, the question is no longer whether adolescents from different ethnic and immigrant groups differ from one another. Rather, the questions are in what respects do they differ, in what respects are they similar, and what does the answer to these questions tell us about the larger role played by ethnicity and immigration in the fundamental developmental processes of adolescence. As the population of the United States continues to diversify in the coming decades, there will continue to be opportunities for researchers to address these overarching questions.

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