

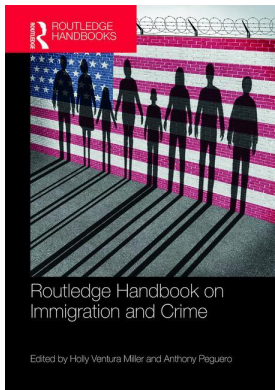
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9

IMMIGRANT GENERATION DIFFERENCES IN CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Disentangling Myth and Perception from Empirical Reality

Jorge M. Chavez

Introduction

Contemporary research on immigration and crime consistently finds that immigration is negatively associated with crime and violence, and that first-generation immigrants, despite facing considerable social, cultural, and economic disadvantages, are less likely to participate in crime and violence than second and later generations (Bersani, 2014; Butcher & Piehl, 1998; Desmond & Kubrin, 2009; Martínez & Lee, 2000b; Morenoff & Astor, 2006; Rumbaut & Ewing, 2007). The finding that immigrants face more positive social and behavioral outcomes compared to second and later generations despite higher levels of social disadvantage, is well recognized within the broader immigration literature and is known as the “immigrant paradox” (Desmond & Kubrin, 2009; Markides & Coreil, 1986; Sampson, 2008; Suarez-Orozco, Rhodes & Milburn, 2009). This research is bolstered by a recent growing literature that has consistently found that neighborhoods with more and greater concentrations of immigrants have lower rates of crime and violence than expected (Alaniz, Cartmill, & Parker, 1998; Chavez & Griffiths, 2009; Desmond & Kubrin, 2009; Feldmeyer & Steffensmeier, 2009; Graif & Sampson, 2009; Lee & Martínez, 2002; Martínez, Stowell, & Lee, 2010; Nielsen, Lee, & Martínez, 2005; Nielsen & Martínez, 2009; Stowell & Martínez, 2009; Velez, 2009). Yet, there remains a disjoint between the existing empirical research on immigration and crime and violence, and public perceptions of, and sentiment regarding, the immigration-crime link.

Public sentiment has consistently held that immigration is criminogenic and that immigrants are potential offenders (Alba, Rumbaut, & Marotz, 2005; Butcher & Piehl, 1998; Martínez & Lee, 2000b). Meanwhile, partially in response to the largest growth in immigrants in US since the early 1900s (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2011), recent political and public discourse has increasingly linked immigration and crime as a rationale for more restrictive immigration policy (Chavez & Provine, 2009; Hagan & Palloni, 1999; Rumbaut & Ewing, 2007). Increases in immigration have historically faced a backlash of public sentiment and increased anti-immigrant rhetoric, and the recent increases in immigration have been paralleled by concerns over associated risks of

terrorism, increases in crime and violence, and increases in unemployment (Chace, 2000; Sniderman, Hangendoorn, & Prior, 2004).

Despite prevailing public sentiment linking immigration to crime (Alba, Rumbaut, & Marotz, 2005; Butcher & Piehl, 1998; Martínez & Lee, 2000b; Sampson, 2008), contemporary findings that show that immigrants are less likely to be involved in offending than second- and third-generation immigrants are not new. The earliest empirical research on immigration and crime, going back nearly a century, found that immigrants had lower rates of criminal involvement than native-born populations (National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, 1931; Taft, 1933; Van Vechten, 1941). Although the early Chicago School research on social disorganization emphasized the role of immigration in destabilizing poor, ethnically heterogeneous, and transient communities, this research also found that immigrant youth were not more likely to offend than native-born youth in comparable community contexts (Shaw & McKay, 1942).

As a consequence of the disjoint between the existing empirical research and public perception and rhetoric on the immigration-crime link, criminological scholars have called for increased and expanded empirical attention and dissemination of findings that document the negative relationship between immigration and crime (Martínez & Lee, 2000b; Sampson, Morenoff, & Raudenbush, 2005). Although contemporary research has continued to document the negative relationship between immigration and crime, and that immigrant populations are less likely to offend than native-born populations, this literature remains underdeveloped and unrecognized within the political and social culture.

The Modern Context of Immigration

The context of immigration has changed considerably from that of the early 1900s, which saw an influx of predominantly European immigrants into urban areas (see Kleniewski & Thomas, 2010). Passage of the Immigration Act of 1965 opened up the quota system that had reduced immigration into the United States and shifted the composition of incoming immigrant populations away from those of European origin to those of Latin American and Asian origins (Martin & Midgley, 2003; Rumbaut & Ewing, 2007). As such, in the contemporary context of immigration, new immigrants are now more likely to be racial and ethnic minorities than in the past. Moreover, the new wave of immigrants has higher birth rates than the overall population (Passel, Cohn, & Lopez, 2011), such that as of 2007, 16 million children in the US were estimated to live in immigrant families (first- and second-generation immigrants), representing nearly a quarter of all US children (Mather, 2009). Immigrant children are the fastest growing school-aged population (Morse, 2005).

This unique cohort of immigrants represents a significant and growing population of first-generation youth who have arrived in the US prior to the age of 18 and are educated and enter adulthood largely in the US, which Rumbaut (2004) has referred to as the 1.5 generation. Thus, they may be closer to second- than first-generation immigrants in their orientation (Portes & Rivas, 2011), yet still face unique challenges as they enter US society, including limited English proficiency, living in poverty, limited access to health care, and exposure to violence in schools and communities (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001; Tienda & Haskins, 2011).

In addition to demographic shifts in the immigrant population, new immigrants are likely to have lower educational attainment and limited labor market skills compared to those of prior immigrant generations (Clark, 1998). Meanwhile, immigrants now face a rapidly changing economic and technological context as the US shifts toward a more modern, post-industrial, service-oriented economy, which requires specialized skills and training that many immigrants are not likely to have (Rumbaut & Ewing, 2007). Higher levels of economic disadvantage in immigrant communities are also likely to hinder economic mobility and assimilation for new immigrants as a result of limited employment opportunities and lower earnings (Alba et al., 2013; Alba & Nee, 1997; Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005).

The contemporary wave of immigration is characterized by foreign-born settlement patterns distinct from those of previous generations, becoming more spatially diffuse than in the past, with growth in immigrant populations seen across all 50 states. In particular, states with few immigrants prior to 1990 have experienced the biggest increases in immigrant populations (Hernandez, 2004), with nearly one-third of immigrants now settling in areas outside of traditional immigrant settlement states (Singer, 2004). As of the 2010 census, the largest growth in immigrants has occurred in the Midwest and South, which have not historically had large immigrant populations (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2011). As immigrants increasingly settle outside of traditional urban ports of entry, suburban and rural immigrant populations are growing faster than those of central cities (Singer, 2004). Taken together, the dispersion of settlement by immigrant families has resulted in a racial and ethnic demographic shift across the United States, as racial and ethnic segregation has declined, with destination neighborhoods becoming more racially and ethnically mixed (Logan & Zhang, 2010). As a result, the communities seeing the largest increases in immigrant populations may be the same communities lacking the institutional infrastructure to serve a growing and increasingly racially and ethnically diverse immigrant population (Hernandez, 2004).

Thus, the contemporary context of immigration would appear to be a formidable one for new immigrants, suggesting they would be particularly vulnerable to negative outcomes to crime and violence relative to prior immigrant generations. Yet, as has been seen among earlier waves of immigration since the 1900s, the current body of empirical research continues to find that immigrants are less likely to offend than native-born populations and that it is the children of immigrants and later immigrant generations that engage in offending comparable to that of native-born populations (Bersani, 2014; Butcher & Piehl, 1998; Desmond & Kubrin, 2009; Lee, Martínez, & Rosenfeld, 2001; Martínez & Lee, 2000b; Morenoff & Astor, 2006; Ousey & Kubrin, 2009; Rumbaut & Ewing, 2007).

Immigrant Generation, Crime, and Violence

Although the empirical literature on immigration and crime has a long history dating back to the first half of the 20th century (Martínez & Lee, 2000b), research on immigration and crime waned until a recent resurgence beginning in the late 1990s. A small, growing, and robust series of studies have begun to document the negative relationship between immigration and counter public perception and narratives that links high crime rates with immigration.

Using Census data from the 5% Public Use Microdata Sample in 1980 and 1990, Butcher and Piehl (1998) found institutionalization rates to be significantly lower for foreign-born than native-born populations. Importantly, when controlling for other economic, institutional, and social factors, institutionalization rates for immigrants were even lower relative to native-born populations. Moreover, looking at recent research on earlier immigrants, institutionalization rates for earlier immigrants did not differ from those of native populations, while institutionalization rates of more recent immigrants were significantly lower than those of their native-born counterparts, a finding suggestive of a positive relationship between assimilation and institutionalization. Butcher and Piehl (2007) expand on these analyses to examine whether their findings could be accounted for by deportation of immigrants, but found no evidence supporting this hypothesis. Similarly, in recent work utilizing the National Epidemiologic Survey of Alcohol and Related Conditions, they found violence and anti-social behavior among first-generation immigrants to be considerably lower than that of later generations, but differences from non-immigrants disappeared by the third generation. In two recent studies, Martínez and Lee (2000b) arrived at similar conclusions examining Miami city homicide data for Haitian, Jamaican, and Mariel Cuban groups. Miami provided a unique context given the city's high diversity and the recent influx of immigrant populations in the 1980s. Martínez and Lee (2000b) found immigrant victim and perpetrator rates to be significantly below that of native populations and

that the rate of immigrant homicides significantly declined as the immigrant population became settled in the city of Miami.

More recent research on delinquent, criminal, and violent outcomes has reached similar conclusions as these earlier studies on immigrant generation differences in offending. For example, Rumbaut (2005) examined crime and incarceration among a sample of first- and second-generation immigrant youth followed over a ten-year period until 2003, the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS). The CILS was conducted in three cities, San Diego, Miami, and Ft. Lauderdale, and sampled youth from 77 different nationalities. Rumbaut (2005) found incarceration to be higher for native-born than foreign-born youth and that among foreign-born youth risk of incarceration increased over time in the US. Although, incarceration rates varied considerably across nationality, the overall pattern, that immigrant youth were at lower risk for incarceration, held. Similarly, using 2000 US Census data, Rumbaut and Ewing (2007) found incarceration rates for foreign-born populations to be lower than those of native-born populations, and length of residence in the US to be positively associated with incarceration among the foreign-born, regardless of nation of origin.

Morenoff and Astor (2006), using data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods, found that first-generation immigrants did not differ from native youth in participation in crime and violence; however, they did find evidence that length of residence in the US and linguistic assimilation increased participation in crime and violence. Similarly, using a national representative sample from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health, Bui (2009) and Bui and Thongniramol (2005), found first-generation immigrant youth to report significantly less participation in property and violent offending and substance use than second- and third-plus-generation youth. Also using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health, Desmond and Kubrin (2009) found neighborhood immigrant concentration to be a significant protective factor from participation in violence during adolescence for immigrant youth, even when controlling for numerous individual and neighborhood factors. Miller (2015) used the Add Health data to examine criminal justice system contact for native and foreign-born Latino youth by examining arrest, charges, and convictions for 16 different types of offenses. While findings were mixed across the offense types, Miller (2015) found native-born Latinos were significantly more likely to report contact with the police and being arrested, while foreign-born Latinos were significantly more likely to report being charged and convicted.

Additional research using school-aged samples supports the general findings of studies utilizing Add Health data. For example, Peguero and Jiang (2014) drew on data from the Educational Longitudinal Study to examine school violence and found foreign-born youth to be significantly less likely to engage in violent behavior and to be victimized relative to later generations. Meanwhile, Almeida, Johnson, McNamara, and Gupta (2013) use Boston Youth Survey data, consisting of youth of predominantly Dominican and Puerto Rican background in grades 9 to 12, to examine the occurrence of violence among immigrant youth. Almeida et al. (2013) found first-generation and recent immigrants reported less violence and substance use than native-born youth and non-recent immigrants who had been in the US five years or longer.

An emerging literature has begun to examine longitudinal data as a means of understanding variation in offending risk among immigrant and native-born groups. Thus, a more limited number of recent studies have considered the extent to which generational differences in offending exist over the life course. Using the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods, Sampson et al. (2005) examined immigrant generational differences in violence across early and late adolescence and identified significant differences between immigrant- and native-born youth, such that immigrant status accounted for differences in violence between White and Latino youth. Similarly, Powell, Perreira, and Harris (2009) found first- and second-generation immigrant youth experienced declines in delinquency beginning earlier in adolescence than did later generations, using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health. Drawing on data from the National

Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997, Bersani (2014) found that first-generation immigrants had lower offending rates through young adulthood than second- and third-generation youth. Meanwhile, even among second-generation immigrant youth, offending trajectories mirrored rather than surpassed those of native-born youth during the transition to young adulthood.

Recent research utilizing samples of serious offenders has also found immigrant youth to be less likely to be high rate offenders than native-born youth over the life course. Among a sample of incarcerated males, Jennings, Zgoba, Piquero, and Reingle (2013) found that Hispanic immigrants were more likely to be low-rate offenders than native-born Hispanic, based on arrest trajectories from ages 18 to 50. Bersani, Loughran, and Piquero (2014), using data from the Pathways to Desistance Study, a sample of adjudicated youth followed over a seven-year period from middle adolescence to early adulthood, found first-generation immigrants were more likely than native youth to be low-rate offenders.

Finally, in addition to the literature examining immigrant generational differences in offending and violence, and the literature on concentration of immigrants and rates of crime and violence, a separate qualitative literature has examined immigrant participation in gangs (Bankston, 1998; Martínez & Lee, 2000a). However, researchers have noted that gangs and gang problems are likely to be present in the types of communities where immigrants are likely to be concentrated, that is, structurally disadvantaged communities. However, this relationship holds regardless of immigrant concentration or the racial and ethnic make-up of residents (Martínez & Lee, 2000a). To date, only two studies have examined immigrant generational status and gang membership. Miller, Barnes, and Hartley (2011) examined the relationship between acculturation (measured via immigrant generation, time in the US, age at arrival, and ethnic identification) and gang membership among a sample of low income, urban, Mexican American adolescents in the Southwest, and found that more acculturated adolescents were less likely to report gang membership. In contrast, Herbst (2013), using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health, found that first-generation immigrant adolescents were less likely to report gang membership, particularly when residing in a neighborhood with a high concentration of immigrants. These conflicting findings highlight the need for future research examining risk for gang membership across immigrant generations.

The general conclusions of recent research on immigration and crime and violence in the contemporary context of immigration mirrors that of an earlier generation. Much as first-generation immigrants were protected from participation in crime and violence, despite significant social and economic disadvantages during the waves of European immigrants at the dawn of the 20th century, the increasingly diverse wave of immigrants to the US, now from Asia and Latin America, are generally less involved in crime and violence than comparable second- and later-generation native-born groups.

Explanations

While the recent literature documenting the protective effect of immigrant status on crime and violence has grown, our understanding of the mechanisms by which immigrants are protected remains limited. Instead, as Martínez and Lee (2000b) note, a wide range of theoretical orientations instead suggest that first-generation immigrants should be at risk for crime and violence, rather than protected. Explanations usually fall within domains of structural or cultural factors, or draw on classic social disorganization theory. For example, the disadvantaged communities in which immigrants are likely to reside provide limited opportunity for mainstream social and economic assimilation, while nation of origin cultural orientations of immigrants may clash with those of mainstream society and local law enforcement. In this manner, social disorganization theory emphasizes the destabilizing role of immigration in poor, transient, racially and ethnically heterogeneous communities (Martínez & Lee, 2000b).

Similarly, Vigil's (2002) multiple marginality framework draws on the subculture of violence, routine activities, street socialization, and ethnic identity to account for why immigrant youth may be at risk for joining gangs and why risk may increase across successive generations. Vigil (2002) draws on qualitative literature to provide a holistic framework for risk for gang membership, whereby the context of immigration (poor, isolated, ethnic communities) provides few pathways for economic opportunity and instead exposes immigrants to street socialization and street subculture, ultimately shaping identity as immigrants become marginalized from mainstream society. In this vein, the multiple marginality framework aligns with classic straight-line theories of assimilation, which suggest that acculturation into the norms and values of the host society reduces marginalization, provides access to opportunity, and reduces risk for crime and violence (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Zhou, 1997). However, recent research suggests that classical theories of assimilation are not able to account for the counterintuitive finding that first-generation immigrants participate in less crime and violence than native populations despite significant social and economic disadvantages (Greenman & Xie, 2008).

The contemporary framework for understanding assimilation proposes a segmented research model of assimilation, with some immigrant groups experiencing a downward trajectory characterized by living in poverty and isolation from mainstream opportunity, and other immigrant groups residing in relatively advantageous contexts protected from urban problems (Haller, Portes, & Lynch, 2011; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997). Thus some immigrant groups may become integrated into mainstream society over time and across generations as suggested by classical theories of assimilation. Alternatively, some immigrant groups may become assimilated into an urban underclass, marginalized over time and across generations, facing downward assimilation and risk for engaging in crime and violence (Haller et al., 2011). Therefore, within current assimilation frameworks, there are multiple paths by which assimilation may occur, with attendant consequences for crime and violence depending on the context in which immigrant groups are assimilated.

Portes and colleagues (Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005; see also Haller et al., 2011; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) suggest immigrant pathways of assimilation depend on three broad socio-structural factors that vary across immigrant groups: immigrant human capital, immigrant family structure, and the context of incorporation. Immigrants bring human capital critical to economic and social integration into US society, including education, skills, and motivation. Immigrant family structures frame the social capital of immigrant groups, which includes absence or presence of parents, siblings, and extended family members upon which first-generation immigrants may draw social support, informal social control, and models of motivation, which may protect from living in disadvantaged communities. Moreover, kinship and social networks may play an important role in helping later generations expand on economic and social gains (Haller et al., 2011; Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Finally, the context of incorporation refers to the broader social and economic climate immigrant groups may face, as well as the community context into which immigrants settle, including local economic barriers or resources, the presence or absence of an established co-ethnic immigrant community, state policy targeting immigrants, and public sentiment regarding immigration. The context of arrival may serve to buffer or hinder immigrant abilities to translate human capital into economic and social integration.

Receiving the most attention within the contemporary literature on the immigration and crime link is the immigrant revitalization perspective (Martínez, 2006). The immigrant revitalization perspective aligns well with the broader literature on segmented assimilation. Stowell and Martínez (2007) suggest that the relationship between immigration and crime depends on the community context into which immigrants settle. Although newly arrived immigrants are likely to settle in disadvantaged neighborhoods, making immigrants vulnerable to crime and violence, the presence of co-ethnics is critical in ameliorating some of the negative effects typically associated with residing in such contexts from such negative effects (Martínez, 2006; Velez, 2009; Vigil, 2002).

Martínez (2006) suggests that concentrations of co-ethnic immigrants may draw on new forms of social organization, country of origin social structures, and informal social controls to protect immigrant youth from engaging in crime and violence and reducing risk for gang formation. For example, Portes, Fernández-Kelly, and Haller (2005) suggest immigrant youth and the children of immigrants residing in disadvantaged communities with a high proportion of immigrants, are protected from negative consequences as they are likely to support aspirations for academic achievement and economic success.

The immigrant revitalization perspective emphasizes the potential for an influx of new immigrants and immigrant concentrations to strengthen social control through strong familial and neighborhood ties, and to increase social support and social capital for immigrant groups, resulting in increased economic opportunities, greater enforcement of conventional norms, and increased reinforcement of parental control over youth even in the context of poverty and disadvantage (Lee & Martínez, 2002; Velez, 2009). Recent research has found immigrant concentration to protect foreign-born youth from participation in violence (Desmond & Kubrin, 2009). However, Kubrin and Ishizawa (2012) suggest that the protective effect of immigrant concentration on rates of crime and violence depends on larger structural and social forces, finding that neighborhood immigrant concentration in Chicago was associated with lower rates of crime and violence, while neighborhood immigrant concentration was associated with higher rates of crime and violence in Los Angeles. Thus, the implications of contemporary assimilation theory for crime and violence are complex and require additional empirical attention.

Conclusions

The modern context of immigration is one that suggest multiple barriers for the record number of immigrants entering the US. Increasing anti-immigrant sentiment and rhetoric, public perception that immigration increases crime and violence, and a rapidly changing modern post-industrial economic landscape are all challenges that new immigrants must navigate. Moreover, the current wave of immigrants is likely to be racial and ethnic minorities and to have lower educational attainment and limited labor market skills than immigrants in earlier immigration waves. Yet, at the same time, a significant number of new immigrants are also under the age of 18 and are being educated and entering adulthood in the US. This characterization describes a unique cohort of immigrants and unique context of arrival for understanding immigrant generation differences in crime and violence.

Nevertheless, the emerging empirical literature on immigration and crime and violence in the contemporary context supports the empirical findings of the last century of research on immigration and crime: that first-generation immigrants are less likely to engage in crime and violence than later generations. This small but growing literature consistently documents that first-generation immigrants have lower rates of participation in delinquency, crime, violence, and criminal justice contact, contrary to public perception. First, it is critical that this literature continues to grow to counter the increasingly hostile public sentiment toward immigrants, so as to better inform public policy regarding immigration and crime.

Second, there are a number of gaps in our understanding of the immigration and crime link, which must be addressed. The majority of research on immigrant generation differences in crime and violence has focused on males or failed to consider variation by sex with few exceptions. Recent research by DiPietro and Cwick (2014) using data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods suggest that generational patterns of risk for offending may diverge for immigrant males and females at the second generation. Similarly, although immigrant generation differences in offending are found regardless of nationality, there is tremendous variation in risk for offending and criminal justice system contact across nation of origin background (Rumbaut, 2005). The current wave of immigrants is characterized by tremendous racial and ethnic diversity, with

associated variations in human capital and in context of arrival. Empirical research should consider the varied experiences of immigrants and their implications for crime and violence.

Similarly, there are a considerable number of first-generation children and adolescents who have arrived in the US prior to the age of 18 in the current wave of immigrants. This group has been labeled the 1.5 generation, and represent foreign-born youth who are educated and enter adulthood largely in the US (Rumbaut, 2004). Research suggests these youth may be more similar to second- than first-generation immigrants of the past (Portes & Rivas, 2011). New research is needed that considers the unique experiences of young immigrants who are completing school and entering the work force after having been raised in the US. Research has begun to document the distinct challenges that immigrant children face compared to children of US-born parents (Shields & Behrman, 2004), yet this group has received limited empirical attention within the criminological literature.

Immigrant families are also increasingly settling in areas that have not previously had immigrant populations and often lack the educational and community infrastructure to serve them (Hernandez, 2004). Much of the existing research has drawn on samples from traditional immigrant destinations and urban ports of entry. New research is needed that considers the experiences of children in immigrant families in emerging immigrant destinations. For example, immigrant children living in rural areas, away from large metropolitan areas, are among those facing the greatest number of risk factors for child well-being (Mather, 2009).

A growing literature has begun to consider immigrant generation differences in crime and violence over the life course as longitudinal research has become available. Much of the existing research has rightfully focused on documenting differences in offending between first, second, and later immigrant generations; however, criminological research is only now beginning to consider how the life course may vary across immigrant generations. As a consequence, little is known about how life course transitions like residential mobility, educational attainment, employment, and marriage may vary across immigrant generations and their implications for risk from crime and violence. For example, Bersani et al. (2014) suggest that the effect of neighborhood disadvantage on violent offending may vary across immigrant generations, with second-generation immigrant youth residing in disadvantaged neighborhoods at high risk for offending in the transition to young adulthood.

Finally, our understanding of the mechanisms by which immigrant generation differences in crime and violence occur remain limited. Assimilation scholars have identified three broad structural factors critical to assimilation for immigrants: immigrant human capital, immigrant family structure, and the context of incorporation (Haller et al., 2011; Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Similarly, a number of promising theoretical frameworks (immigrant revitalization, multiple marginality) have been proposed within the criminological literature, but to date these have received limited empirical attention. To some degree, this is due to the limitations of existing criminological data that have focused on racial and ethnic variation in offending, with only sporadic empirical attention to immigrant generational variation in offending. New data and empirical research are needed, which allow researchers to tap into immigrant generation status, processes of assimilation, context of arrival, and risk for crime and violence. Moreover, it is evident that the existing criminological literature on immigrant generation differences in crime and violence may benefit from incorporating the broader literature on immigration and assimilation.

In conclusion, the existing literature on immigrant generation differences in crime and violence is small and growing with many avenues for future direction. In particular, researchers need to begin to empirically test the hypothesized mechanism by which immigrant youth are protected from participation in crime and violence. To date, there remains a need for additional research to document the protective effect of immigrant status on risk for offending, given the stable public perception linking immigration and crime, and to better inform public rhetoric and policy. Data consistently show that immigrant populations are less likely to engage in delinquency, crime, and violence and

to have criminal justice system contact; a finding that has been identified regardless of nation of origin or time period since first examined in the early 1900s.

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