

A Case Study in Montreal: Strategies Implemented by Immigrant Parents to Support Their Child's Educational and Academic Success: Managing Distance between School in the Country of Origin and School in the Host Society

Authors : Josée Charette

Abstract : The academic and educational success of immigrant students is a current issue in education, especially in western societies such in the province of Quebec, in Canada. For people who immigrate with school-age children, the success of the family's migratory project is often measured by the benefits drawn by children from the educational institutions of their host society. In order to support the academic achievement of their children, immigrant parents try to develop practices that derive from their representations of school and related challenges inspired by the socio-cultural context of their country of origin. These findings lead us to the following question: How does strategies implemented by immigrant parents to manage the representational distance between school of their country of origin and school of the host society support or not the academic and educational success of their child? In the context of a qualitative exploratory approach, we have made interviews in the French-, English- and Spanish-languages with 32 newly immigrated parents and 10 of their children. Parents were invited to complete a network of free associations about «School in Quebec» as a premise for the interview. The objective of this communication is to present strategies implemented by immigrant parents to manage the distance between their representations of schools in their country of origin and in the host society, and to explore the influence of this management on their child's academic and educational trajectories. Data analysis led us to develop various types of strategies, such as continuity, adaptation, resources mobilization, compensation and "return to basics" strategies. These strategies seem to be part of a continuum from oppositional-conflict scenario, in which parental strategies act as a risk factor, to conciliator-integrator scenario, in which parental strategies act as a protective factor for immigrant students' academic and educational success. In conclusion, we believe that our research helps in providing a more efficient support to immigrant parents and contributes to develop a wider portrait of immigrant students' academic achievement. In addition, we think that by improving the experience of immigrant families in Quebec schools, a greater number of migratory projects will be effective.

Keywords : immigrant students, family's migratory project, school of origin and school of host society, immigrants parental strategies

Conference Title : ICEPSS 2015 : International Conference on Education, Psychology and Social Sciences

Conference Location : Venice, Italy

Conference Dates : April 13-14, 2015