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PEER INTEGRATION OF HIGH SCHOOL IMMIGRANT STUDENTS IN CHILE: REPRODUCING SOCIAL HIERARCHIES

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Abstract

Peer Integration of High School Immigrant Students in Chile: Reproducing Social Hierarchies

Emilia Valenzuela Vergara

Immigrants' integration has increasingly become a salient issue and challenge in Chile, especially for immigrant students, who must navigate a rigid and highly segregated educational system. In this process, school peers play a crucial role in the social integration of immigrant students by building social capital, developing connections, and forming networks among students. However, little is known about immigrants' peer integration at schools, and no research has linked the national-, school-, and classroom-level structural conditions that affect the experiences of immigrant peer integration at school in Chile. Using a multilevel analytical framework, this dissertation investigates to what extent high school immigrant students experience integration or exclusion by their Chilean peers, to what extent immigrant youth integrate with their school peers at the school and classroom level, and to what extent national-, school-, and classroom-level educational policies and practices foster, promote, or support their integration with peers. To this end, a mixed-method design was conducted. I relied on large national databases at the school and students' levels and on in-depth analysis of seven high schools in the Metropolitan Region of Chile, obtaining data from policy documents, 75 in-depth interviews with students and school staff, and 46 classroom observations.

Overall, results show that immigrant students experience high levels of peer segregation and exclusion at Chilean schools. National-, school-level and classroom-level policies and practices create structural barriers to the integration of immigrant students. At the national level, I found an increasing trend of school segregation among immigrant students in high school between 2015 and 2020 in all school types. The current national school enrollment policy for immigrant students appears as one important factor that reduces their social inclusion with their Chilean peers. At the school level, educators consistently construct national origin-based stereotypes of immigrant students that reinforce Chilean students' prejudices toward their immigrant peers and affect immigrants' self-identity, confidence, and well-being. In addition, classroom-level structures ensure the physical separation of immigrant students from Chilean students, which affects their peer social relationships. Consequently, immigrant students experience high levels of peer exclusion at school, encapsulation of friendships, and discrimination and racism. The social hierarchy of immigrant students at school is a reflection of societal divisions in Chile.

This study contributes to the literature by investigating peer integration of immigrant students at multiple levels, linking national-, school- and classroom-level policies and structures to conditions that affect immigrant social relationships with their Chilean peers. Using a multilevel framework is valuable as it: (a) offers a more nuanced and in-depth conceptualization of immigrant students' peer integration, (b) highlights how the educational system shapes peer interactions, and (c) expands the debate on immigrant students' peer integration beyond students' academic outcomes.

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To my father Eduardo

Introduction

Immigrant Students and Peer Integration

The number of immigrants in Chile is growing rapidly each year, and the immigrant profile is changing considerably. According to the most recent government estimates, there were 1,492,522 immigrants in 2019, representing 7.5% of the total population (National Statistics Institute of Chile and Department of Immigration INE-DEM, 2020). Ninety percent of the immigrants came from Latin American countries, most commonly Venezuela, Peru, Haiti, Colombia, and Bolivia. While immigrants in Chile represent a heterogeneous group, many are socially segregated and discriminated against (Rojas Pedemonte & Silva, 2016).

Immigrant youth are in a special situation as they are undergoing a double transition because of their age, and because of their physical and psychological mobility (Coutin, 2016). In Chile, scholars find that immigrant students: are concentrated in schools with high rates of poverty (Mardones, 2006); experience high levels of discrimination and racism in schools (Abett, 2011; Hein, 2012; Pavez-Soto, 2012; Riedemann & Stefoni, 2015; Tijoux, 2013); suffer from lower expectations and receive less support from their teachers (Hernández, 2016). However, little research focuses on immigrants' peer integration at school, and no research links the national-, school-, and classroom-level structural conditions that affect the experiences of immigrant peer integration at school.

My dissertation research analyzes to what extent immigrant youth integrate with their peers at high schools in Chile and what role, if any, national-, school-, and classroom-level educational policies and practices play in promoting integration. Based on a multilevel analytical framework, the research questions are the following:

a) To what extent do high school immigrant students experience integration or exclusion by their Chilean peers?
b) To what extent do immigrant youth integrate with their Chilean peers at the classroom and school level?
c) To what extent do national, school, and classroom-level educational policies and practices foster, promote, or support integration of immigrant youth with their Chilean peers?

In line with these research questions, I followed a mixed method research design, combining quantitative and qualitative data. I conducted an in-depth analysis of seven high schools in the Metropolitan Region of Chile, obtaining data from policy documents, 75 in-depth interviews with students and school staff, and 46 classroom observations. I also performed statistical analysis using large national databases at the school- and student- level to explore the extent of immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers at a national level.

Overall, the main argument that guides this dissertation is that immigrant students are spatially and socially segregated and excluded from their Chilean peers at different levels and national-, school-, and classroom-level policies and practices create structural barriers to immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers. The

significance of studying peer integration is associated with such advantages as building social capital, developing connections and forming networks among students. School peers can act as institutional agents who facilitate access to informational resources (Stanton-Salazar, 2004). Moreover, peer relationships at school also affect students' socioemotional well-being (Azmitia, Cooper, & Brown, 2009; Steinberg & Morris, 2001; Osterman, 2000; Gibson, Gándara, & Peterson, 2004).

The dissertation is made up of four chapters; each section examines immigrant students' integration with Chilean peers from distinct perspectives. The first chapter outlines the extent of immigrant students' segregation from their Chilean peers at a national level, by looking at school segregation of immigrant students between schools and the effect that their increased concentration has on students' academic outcomes and perceptions of their school climate. Moving to the school-level, the second chapter delves into school principals, coordinators, and teachers' views of immigrant students, including consideration of the teachers' challenges in performing their jobs and their knowledge of immigrant students' relationships with Chilean students at school. The third chapter analyzes classroom-level structures and practices; how immigrant students are spatially and socially organized in the classrooms and the teachers' role in shaping immigrant-Chilean students' relationships. Seating arrangements, grouping practices, and opportunities for dialogue and collaboration were analyzed to explore the extent of immigrant students' integration with their Chilean classmates. The final chapter analyzes the extent to which immigrant students experience peer exclusion within Chilean high schools. Based on immigrant students' testimonies, I explore their

immigration experience, the reception they received from their Chilean school classmates, the peer relationships they formed, and their experiences of discrimination and racism at school.

This study contributes to the national and international literature by investigating peer integration of immigrant students at multiple levels, linking national-, school- and classroom-level policies and structures to conditions that affect immigrant social relationships with their Chilean peers. Using a multilevel framework is valuable as it: (a) offers a more nuanced and in-depth conceptualization of immigrant students' peer integration, (b) highlights how the educational system shapes peer interactions, and (c) expands the debate on immigrant students' peer integration beyond students' academic outcomes. I hope that placing peer integration in a multiscale framework will contribute to the reflexive understanding of the role that policymakers, educators, and students play in shaping everyday students' interactions. From the policy perspective, I also hope to shed light on current policies that affect the integration experiences of immigrant youth in Chile.

Why Immigrant Students in Chile?

There are two reasons behind the selection of Chile as a case for studying peer integration of high school immigrant students. First, the last three decades have seen a dramatic upturn in Chile's immigration rates, resulting both in significant growth in the number of immigrants and considerable change in their ethnic composition. Thus, immigrant integration has increasingly become a salient issue (and a challenge) in Chile, especially for immigrant students. Second, Chilean schools have one of the highest levels of socioeconomic segregation in Latin America (OECD, 2011). Contrasting with other countries in the region, market and school choice-oriented policies have made segregation—rather than integration—one of the most prominent features of Chile's educational system (Bellei, 2009; Valenzuela, Bellei, & Ríos, 2014). The rapid increase in immigrant students is making visible new forms of school segregation based on racial and ethnic factors (Córdoba & Miranda, 2018).

Chile and Immigration

Over the last decades, Chile switched swiftly from an emigrating to an immigrant-receiving country. Due to its geographic isolation and historic, political, economic, and cultural structure, Chile had not been shaped by immigration in the same way as Argentina, Venezuela, and Brazil (Stefoni, 2001). The particularities of Chile's geography—a narrow cordon between the Andes mountains and the Pacific Ocean at the end of the continent, cut off to the north by the Atacama Desert, and to the south by the remote lands and waters of Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego, and Antarctica (Hutchison

et al., 2013)—all contribute to the social and cultural isolation of Chilean citizens, making them unaccustomed to the presence of a large number of immigrants (Doña-Reveco & Levinson, 2012).

Just as it happened in other Latin American countries, past immigration waves to Chile were closely linked to colonialism. Starting in the 19th century, various initiatives were adopted in the country to attract immigrants from Europe in order to promote growth and "improve the Chilean race" (Stefoni, 2001; Cano, Soffia, & Martínez, 2009; Doña-Reveco & Levinson, 2012). During this time, newcomers from Spain started to settle the country believing in the idea that the Europeans' organizational skills and work ethic would bring greater economic prosperity (Rebolledo, 1994). In 1824, the Chilean government enacted the first law to encourage Europeans to establish factories in urban areas and populate and exploit the land in the sparsely inhabited southern zones (Doña-Reveco & Levinson, 2012). Later, colonies from Britain, Germany, and France among others, began to settle the country. Immigration rates, however, remained low and did not surpass 1%.

The low immigration rates allowed Chileans to bolster a "homogeneous identity" and promote a mestiza identity (Walsh, 2019). As opposed to other countries, Chile is considered as culturally homogenous in terms of language (Spanish is universally spoken), religion (most Chileans identify as Catholics), and race (less than 5% are indigenous and less than 1% are of African and Asian descent) (Torche, 2007). However, according to Gutiérrez (2010), the processes of racialization in Chile are related to the constant search for national homogeneity and the idea that diversity and

multiculturalism are incompatible with the existence of a national identity. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Chilean mestizo appears as a national symbol representing the national identity of the country. In 1904, Nicolás Palacios published "Chilean race," depicting the Chilean mestizo as a permanent, uniform, and superior race (Walsh, 2015). In relation to this point, scholars highlight Chile's effort to differentiate itself from other Latin American countries, promoting a narrative as an "atypical" country in the region based on ideas of racial superiority, modernity, and economic success (Walsh, 2019; Larraín, 2001; Staab & Hill, 2006).

From the 1970s and during the military dictatorship, the migration balance was negative. Many Chileans were obligated to emigrate from the country searching for political asylum, and restrictive policies were imposed on immigrants coming into the country (Cano et al., 2009). However, since the return of democracy in the early 1990s, Chile's political and economic stability began to attract an increasing number of intra-regional immigrants (Cano et al., 2009; Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021). While in 2014, there were 410,988 immigrants, representing 2.3% of the total population, in 2019, this group reached 1,492,522, representing 7.5% of the total population (INE-DEM, 2020). The majority of immigrants came from Latin American and Caribbean countries due to humanitarian, political, and/or economic crises (Jubilut et al., 2021). The ethnic composition of immigrants is also rapidly changing. While in the 90s and 2000s, Peruvians and Argentineans were the dominant immigrant groups, today, the main immigrant communities come from Venezuela (30.5%), Peru (15.8%), Haiti (12.5%), Colombia (10.8%), and Bolivia (8.0%) (INE-DEM, 2020).

The first peak in immigration flow was seen between 1992 and 2012 with the increase of Peruvian and Argentinean immigrants (Doña- Reveco & Levinson, 2012). The Peruvian immigration flow was more economically motivated and contained a strong presence of women, reflecting a global trend toward feminized migration (Staab & Hill, 2006; Stefoni, 2001). Peruvian immigrants in Chile are commonly seen as lower-class because they are engaged in low-status, low-paid labor (Staab & Hill, 2006).

Currently, the two fastest-growing communities are Venezuelan and Haitian immigrants. The Venezuelan flow mainly comprises higher-educated and middle-class immigrants who emigrate to Chile because of their country's political and social crisis (Stefoni & Brito, 2019; Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021). These characteristics have positioned Venezuelan immigrants as a "desirable" or "acceptable" group (Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021). Since the 2010 earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Chile has become an attractive destination for Haitian communities (Ugarte, 2020). According to Ugarte (2020), since 2015, Haitian immigration has transformed Chilean society. This community has "become the most prominent Afro-descendant and non-Spanish-speaking group in the country, revealing a form of migrant recognition and inclusion that intersects with practices of racial discrimination" (Ugarte, 2020, p. 57).

While immigrants in Chile represent a heterogeneous group, scholars have highlighted their high educational levels (Rojas Pedemonte & Silva, 2016) and their lower rate of criminality (Inter-Institutional Committee on Access to Justice for Migrants and Foreigners, 2016; Blanco, Cox, & Vega, 2020) compared to Chile's

standards. However, the scholarly literature has documented how immigrants who arrive in the country are usually segregated and discriminated against (Rojas Pedemonte & Silva, 2016). Immigrants tend to engage in informal and precarious labor, including domestic and service work, construction, and agricultural work, and selling cheap goods on the streets (Pavez-Soto & Chan, 2017). Their access to subsidized housing has historically been limited, and many live in segregated neighborhoods and with high levels of overcrowding. Haitians and Peruvians are the most vulnerable groups with respect to these factors. A study found that the housing conditions of Haitians in Santiago are significantly worse than in their country of origin. Haitians suffer discrimination and abuse in the housing market, especially due to their Afro-descendant origins. Similarly, Haitians have reported paying higher rents and receiving inferior housing conditions than what they perceive for other renters (Rojas Pedemonte & Silva, 2016).

This significant growth in immigration rates has exposed the challenges associated with immigrant integration. The Chilean government has turned its attention to this topic, opening a political debate on migration law (Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021). However, policymakers are still unable to successfully resolve this issue. In this context, academic research necessary to provide empirical evidence, theoretical frameworks, and analyses that help orienting policy decision in this area is urgent.

The Chilean School System

A second reason for selecting Chile as a site for the research is its particular educational system. Compared to other Latin American countries, Chile performs at

the top in student achievement and has low repetition rates (Santiago, Fiszbein, Jaramillo, & Radinger, 2017). At the secondary level, Chile has the best performance on international tests of reading, science, and math for 15-year-old students in Latin America and the Caribbean (OECD, 2019). However, socioeconomic inequality in students' achievement is a major challenge. Chilean schools have one of the most prominent levels of socioeconomic segregation in Latin America (OECD, 2011). Moreover, the country also has the largest average class size in primary and secondary education; and historically, teachers' salaries and professional development are among the worst in the region (Schleicher, 2020). Scholars have described the Chilean educational system as a paradigmatic case of school choice and market-oriented policies, which produces high levels of socioeconomic school segregation (Bellei, 2009; Valenzuela et al., 2014).

The Chilean educational system is organized into four levels of education: preschool (for children up to 5 years old), primary education (grades 1-8), and upper secondary education (high school; grades 9-12). The upper secondary education is organized in two stages. The first stage (grades 9 and 10) offers a common school curriculum for all students, whereas the second stage (grades 11 and 12) allows students to choose between a scientific-humanistic curriculum or a technical-professional/artistic curriculum. The curriculum on science and humanities prepares students to enter university. The technical-professional/artistic curriculum allows students to quickly enter the workforce after secondary education or continue their technical studies at the higher education level (Santiago et al., 2017).

The Chilean classroom system is fix and stable. Throughout their schooling, students are commonly assigned to a single student cohort that is assigned to one classroom corresponding to their grade level. Teachers circulate between classrooms to teach their specific subject matter at different grade levels. In this context, "students would spend 90% of their school time in the same classroom for eight years of primary education and 78% of their time during the first two years of secondary education" (Law number 18,962 in Araos, Cea, Fernández, & Valenzuela, 2014, p. 413). In consequence, students are exposed to stable groups of classmates.

In Chile, there are four types of schools: public, private-subsidized, private schools, and schools with delegated administration. Public (or municipal schools) are administered by municipalities and receive a per-student subsidy from the government. Private-subsidized schools are administered by private organizations and receive the same per-student subsidy as municipal institutions. Private schools (also known as private non-subsidized schools) are independent institutions administered by private organizations without any public subsidy. Schools with delegated administration are institutions owned by the Ministry of Education but administrated by public or private non-profit organizations (mainly in technical-professional education) (Santiago et al., 2017).

In Chile, the educational system has been described as an extreme case of market-oriented education that has fueled and shaped socioeconomic school segregation (Valenzuela et al., 2014; Bellei et al., 2018). This system allows parents to freely select any school for their children. However, families' choices are limited by

school entry barriers (e.g., tuition fees) and school selection practices (e.g., parents' interviews, students' evaluations) (Santos & Elacqua, 2016). According to Bellei (2009), "for more than two decades, Chilean education has operated under an institutional design where fundamental decisions do not rely on national authorities, but on the combination of family preferences (school choice) and (public and private) school competition for attracting such preferences" (p. 2). Valenzuela and colleagues (2014) found that socioeconomic school segregation in Chile was very high and tended to slightly increase during the last decade. The authors argue that some market-oriented mechanisms (i.e., universal parent choice, school privatization, and fee-paying) explained a relevant portion of the Chilean socioeconomic school segregation (Valenzuela et al., 2014).

In 2015, however, the School Inclusion Law introduced major changes in the organization of the Chilean educational system. Briefly, this Law changed the school enrollment process by (a) eliminating co-payments in publicly subsidized schools, (b) forbidding publicly subsidized schools from selecting their students based on academic, socioeconomic, or religious factors, and (c) defining priorities that must be used to assign students to schools (e.g., having siblings or working parent at school) (Correa et al., 2019). Before this Law, public and private-subsidized schools could select their student population. They applied entrance exams, conducted interviews with families, requested religious background and past academic records (Muñoz & Weinstein, 2019). The new School Inclusion Law implemented a centralized enrollment process from Pre-K to grade 12, based on family preferences that prohibit any forms of

discrimination (Correa et al., 2019). Given the gradual implementation of this Law, the impact of school-level segregation is unknown.

The rapid increase in immigration rates challenges the Chilean educational system. According to Córdoba and Miranda (2018) the rise in immigrant students is making visible new forms of school segregation in which country of origin and race appear as determinant factors of school segregation. However, little is known about the experiences of immigrant students at school and the reasons behind school segregation of this group (Córdoba & Miranda, 2018).

In sum, Chile represents an exceptional case for studying peer integration of immigrant students. The country has seen a rapid increase in immigration rates and immigrant students have no alternative but to enroll in a fixed and highly socioeconomically segregated educational system.

Theoretical Approach

A Multilevel Theoretical Framework for the Study of Immigrant Students' Peer Integration

The dissertation uses an interdisciplinary and multilevel theoretical framework in order to understand to what extent immigrant youth integrate with their school peers. I first introduce the concept of peer integration used in the study and its significance in building social capital. Second, I discuss three conceptual approaches -contact theories; national-, school-, and classroom-level policies and structures; and stigmatization theories- that help us understand possible mechanisms underlying immigrant students' exclusion from their school peers' groups.

Peer Integration

The educational system is a key institution for incorporating immigrants and their descendants into the receiving country (Alba & Waters, 2011). In a globalized and transnational world, schooling profoundly shapes immigrant students' life trajectories, their well-being, and opportunities for the future (Suárez-Orozco, 2001). However, schools are hierarchical institutions in which unequal power relationships are often produced and reproduced (Gibson & Rojas, 2006). In this context, schools become a space of struggle for many immigrants, who find they must navigate the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion.

When immigrant youth arrive in a country and enter school, they must decode the dominant system, and conform to the rules governing behavior, peer relationships, and teacher-student relationships. Stanton-Salazar (1997) states that “success within schools (or other mainstream institutions), therefore, has never been simply a matter of learning and competently performing technical skills; rather, and more fundamentally, it has been a matter of learning how to decode the system” (p. 13). Decoding requires either an explicit or implicit understanding of the dominant discourse, yet, racial minority students arrive at school with different cultural resources and face the additional challenge of learning how to decode and interpret social interactions within a mainstream cultural context (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). This constant mode of adaptation at school, decoding and coding the system within unequal power relations, has implications for immigrant students’ peer integration.

Peer relationships at school are vital to the integration process of immigrant students (Stanton-Salazar, 2004). However, friendships and peer relationships at schools can be viewed as a reflection of society: “social class—income and education—as well as race, ethnicity, language, and neighborhood tend to replicate themselves in students’ affinity patterns and crowds” (Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, & Yamauchi, 2000, p. 105). According to these researchers, schools reinforce the “Great Cycle of Social Sorting,” when neighborhoods and schools are sorted by socioeconomic class, race, or culture. Thus, people in the same class, race, or culture are likely to live close to each other and send their children to the same schools (Tharp et al., 2000). Consequently, groups and individuals who are socially integrated into

society tend to be included in dominant social relations at school, and groups who are excluded in society tend to be excluded at school.

The theoretical understanding of immigrant students' peer integration has mainly focused on interethnic friendships (Reynolds & Crea, 2017). However, other scholars expand on immigrant students' social integration at school, including other factors such as social participation and a sense of belonging at school (Van Houtte & Stevens, 2009). According to Reynolds & Crea (2017), the understanding of peer integration should push beyond cross-group friendship and include the extent to which immigrant and native youth are integrated into school social structures and social networks.

This dissertation understands immigrant students' peer integration as the extent of proximity, connections, relationships, and friendships that immigrant students make with Chilean peers at high schools, understanding these spaces as hierarchical institutions that reproduce social inclusion and exclusion dynamics (Stanton-Salazar, 2004). This broader conceptualization of peer integration allows to focus on policies and practices at the national-, school-, and classroom-level, as well as on the role that policymakers, principals, coordinators, teachers, and peers play in shaping these interactions.

The study of immigrant students' peer integration also implies talking about school segregation and peer exclusion. School segregation is the process of separating or grouping students according to their academic, socio-economic, or cultural background (Dupriez, 2010); and it can happen at different levels, such as between

schools and classrooms or within schools and classrooms (Bottia, 2019). On the other hand, peer exclusion involves the rejection of particular students or groups because of their ethnicity, gender, nationality, race, or religion (Killen, Mulvey, & Hitti, 2013). Therefore, peer exclusion results from concrete actions performed by peers intended to reject students' social overtures or prevent them from accessing or participating in social activities (Ladd & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2016).

Social Capital

The significance of studying peer integration is associated with building social capital, developing connections and the formation of networks among students. The concept of social capital has been conceptualized mainly by the works of James Coleman, Pierre Bourdieu, and Robert Putnam. Despite the fact that these scholars highlight different aspects of the definition of social capital, there is a general consensus that social capital has economic and social value for the individual and the group (Whittaker & Holland-Smith, 2016). Coleman (1988), influenced by structural-functionalist theory, defines social capital as a particular kind of resource available to an actor which inheres in the social structure of relations between actors and among actors (S98). This resource facilitates the achievement of personal goals. Coleman's framework is the most frequently cited in the educational literature and is used to link social capital to academic achievement (Dika & Singh, 2002). Taking a different approach, Putnam (2000) proposes to distinguish between bonding and bridging capital. Bonding social capital refers to relationships with people who are similar in some form, while bridging social capital refers to relationships among people who are

unlike in some important way such as age, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, and educational differences (Putnam, 2000; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004). As Putnam (2000) argues: "Bonding social capital is good for undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity" (…) bridging social capital is crucial for *getting ahead*" (p. 23). Stanton-Salazar (1997) argues that the potential for the development of supportive ties is necessarily set in the context of interlocking class, race, and gender hierarchies (p. 9). The author understands social capital as "social relationships from which an individual is potentially able to derive various types of institutional resources and support" (Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995, p. 116). In the school context, peers can act as institutional agents that facilitate access to informational resources and opportunities (Stanton-Salazar, 2004).

Peer integration at school is also associated with students' socioemotional well-being. Peers provide emotional support (Azmitia, Cooper, & Brown, 2009), emotional comfort (Steinberg & Morris, 2001), and a sense of belonging (Osterman, 2000; Gibson et al., 2004). Osterman (2000) finds a positive relationship between students' sense of belonging to their school community and their academic outcomes, motivation, and achievement. Gibson and colleagues (2004) state that peers strongly influence who "belongs" where within the school's hierarchy, which in turn influences the ways in which students participate in school. According to Jørgensen (2017), the concept of social capital has been widely used in educational research to explain the academic achievement of immigrant students. Extending the understanding of peer social capital, the author found that students' socioemotional well-being can be an outcome of social

capital in its own right. More studies, however, should focus on the multiple effects of peer social capital on immigrant students considering their own dynamics and contextual experiences of bonding and bridging ties (Jørgensen, 2017).

Contact Theories

Different factors affect the extent of immigrant students' integration with their peers. Intergroup contact theory, physical proximity, and propinquity between groups are necessary conditions for immigrant students' potential integration at school.

Allport's (1954) intergroup contact hypothesis suggests that intergroup contact could have positive outcomes such as reducing prejudice, stigmatization, and hostility under certain conditions. Among the requirements for optimal intergroup contact, the author included equal status between the groups, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and the support of authority, law, or custom (Allport, 1954). For Pettigrew (1998), these conditions are "facilitators" rather than strict essential determinants for optimal intergroup contact. The author holds the contact situation as a critical and necessary condition that provides the participants with the opportunity to become friends (Pettigrew, 1998). In the case of intergroup contact across ethnicity and race, this line of work suggests that higher exposure to racial and ethnic out-group members can decrease prejudice and stereotyping (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

From a macrostructural approach, Blau (1974) argues that "society's social integration is determined by the prevalence of relationships among different groups and segments in society" (in Van Houtte & Stevens, 2009, p. 220). Consequently, physical

proximity enhances people's opportunities to meet and their likelihood of forming relationships (Blau, 1974).

In the context of school and immigration, these theories highlight the contact situation between immigrants and non-immigrant students as a necessary condition for meeting and having the opportunity to develop relationships and friendships. Moreover, the greater contact with one another may reduce ethnic and racial prejudices and stigmatization related to immigrant groups. In contrast, the physical segregation of immigrant students at the school level might decrease immigrants' opportunities for meeting non-immigrant students, affecting the shared experiences of both groups (Bottia, 2019). According to Van Houtte and Stevens (2009), while in segregated schools, immigrant students may associate among "equals" and have no need to look for other contacts outside school, in mixed schools, they may have the opportunity to develop intergroup contacts because of the proximity of out-group students.

While immigrant students' physical proximity to their peers at the school level is crucial, this group can still be physically separated from their peers at the classroom level. Tharp and colleagues' (2000) work contributes to this area by introducing "propinquity" in the classrooms. The authors define "propinquity" as the "simple fact of being close together" (p. 56), which is crucial in establishing the pool of eligibles from which friendships can be drawn. Thus, investigating how close immigrant students are to their Chilean peers at the school-, and classroom-level is essential for exploring their opportunities to meet, interact, develop friendships, and potentially integrate with their peers.

National-, School-, and Classroom-level Policies and Structures

Physical proximity and propinquity at the school and classroom level is a necessary condition but it is insufficient, as it does not guarantee the formation of relationships among students (Tharp et al., 2000). National-, school-, and classroom-level policies and structures influence the extent of immigrant peer integration. At the national level, societies define their own educational policies, building a wide range of school systems. These policies, which can be defined at the national-, regional-, or district-level, determine how schools organize teachers, students, educational curriculum, curricular placement criteria, as well as entrance and exit examinations.

The educational policies, however, can be implemented at national or regional (state, provincial, district or municipal) levels. Decentralized educational systems delegate most of the key functions and responsibilities to lower levels of administration. For example, in France, policies and funding are mostly determined by the national state, while in the United States, state and local school districts play a large role in educational policy and practice (Alba & Silberman, 2009). As a result, there is substantial inequality among schools attaches to the social composition of their student populations (Alba & Silberman, 2009). Thus, it is crucial to differentiate between educational policies and their implementation, because policies and regulations are developed at the national, state, district and/or regional levels, are implemented in turn at those levels, and finally at the school and classroom level.

Differences among educational systems can produce differences in access to information, education, social benefits, and non-immigrant peers. For example, in some

comprehensive educational systems, such as in Chile, students follow the same curriculum up to age 16, while, in others, students experience curricular stratification in separate tracks (Dronkers, van der Velden, & Dunne, 2011) or *Curricular Streams* (Estrada, 2014). Regarding immigrant students, and/or students with immigrant roots, many western countries have focused strongly on assessing language skills and providing second-language instruction (Gomolla, 2006), while implementing a track-based school system that often separates students by their language proficiency or achievement (Estrada, 2014; Estrada & Wang, 2018; Estrada, Wang, & Farkas, 2020). Estrada's work has shown that policies intended to provide legally-mandated language and core curricular access for students labeled English Learners (ELs) in the United States —students who have not passed the state test of English proficiency—can result in *Curricular Stream* placement that leads to academic, linguistic, and social isolation. Gonzales (2010) affirms that school tracking determines students' access to information and resources by structuring their learning environment and thus the social relationships they can form with peers and school staff.

At the school level, educational policy implementation and practices also differ greatly, affecting students' access to education, information, and peer relationships. At a school-level then, it is necessary to explore how enrollment policies for immigrant students are implemented as well as teaching practices and attitudes toward students, among other variables. For example, when schools segregate students according to academic performances or interests, they limit the students' opportunities to form relationships with peers who have different backgrounds (Gonzales 2010). This can be

particularly important for immigrant students, who have less information about how school distribute opportunities and resources (Gonzales, 2010).

At the classroom level, teachers' practices and attitudes can also affect students' academic performances, social support, access to information, and peer relationships. Regarding peer relations, teachers play a crucial role in creating, promoting or hindering relationships among students. Seating arrangements, grouping practices, and opportunities for dialogue and collaboration in Joint Productive Activity (JPA), can promote or hinder students' peer relationships (Tharp et al., 2000). In some cases, teachers define the social arrangements of their classroom. In others cases the teachers allow students to choose where to sit and with whom to work.

Scholars have found that seating arrangements in the classroom affect students' learning performance and grades (Levine, O'Neal, Garwood, & McDonald, 1980; Holliman & Anderson, 1986; Perkins & Wieman, 2005; Pichierri & Guido, 2016); students' motivation, attention, and engagement (Perkins & Wieman, 2005); teacher-student and student-student relationships (Fernandes, Huang, & Rinaldo, 2011). The majority of the studies, however, have focused on the impact of seating arrangements on academic achievement (Zhang, 2019), and there is limited information about the effects of cultural factors on seating locations (Fernandes et al., 2011).

How seats are arranged in the classroom also can have implications for student-to-student interactions. Depending on the teaching style of the professors, the students can be placed in rows, small groups, in a u-shape, a semicircle, or in a circle. Fernandes and colleagues (2011) argue that organizing students in rows and columns focuses

mainly on individualistic activities, while other forms of seating organization such as semicircular arrangements offer students greater interaction among peers while working together. In this way, seating arrangements may create or inhibit opportunities for peer contact. For example, in North America, small group clusters have been viewed favorably, while in Asia and South America, teachers organize students mainly in rows and columns.

In learning activities, grouping is another variable that affects peer interactions. Students may be organized into cooperative groups with assigned peers; they may be allowed to choose their partners, or to work independently with few opportunities for students to work together (Tharp et al., 2000; Urdan & Schoenfelder, 2006). Propinquity is a necessary, but insufficient condition for creating and developing relationships among students; JPA among members is necessary for forming relationships (Tharp et al., 2000). JPA involves working collaboratively toward a common goal and promotes: instructional conversation, dialogue, negotiation, and collaboration among students. Teachers can promote peer relationships by creating activities involving JPA in which teachers and students work together on a common goal and have the opportunity to converse about their work (Tharp et al., 2000). Thus, investigating how teachers determine seating arrangements, how they group students for learning activities, and how they promote opportunities for JPA are crucial for analyzing the extent to which immigrant students can be integrated with their peers.

Stigmatization Theory

The attitudes, prejudices, and beliefs that school staff, teachers, and peers have toward immigrant and immigrant root students can affect students' peer socialization and academic outcomes. Immigrant youth experience high levels of stigmatization and they are subject to the threat of stereotyping, which research indicates leads to lower performance among even high performing students (Steele & Aaronson, 1995). Goffman (1963) defined stigma as an attribute that discredits an individual or a group, diminishes them, and renders them tainted and discounted, abject, and inferior. Stigma occurs when the construction of social categories is linked to stereotypes that label some people as similar and acceptable and others as different and "others." Goffman (1963) distinguishes three types of stigma: (a) physical stigma, (b) stigma related to individual character, and (c) "the tribal stigma" based on race, nation, or religious differences.

From a sociological perspective, Link and Phelan (2001) argue that power is a necessary condition for stigmatization to occur, "stigma exists when elements of labeling, stereotyping, separating, status loss, and discrimination co-occur in a power situation that allows these processes to unfold" (p. 382). According to Omi and Winant (2014), race, gender, class, age, nationality, and culture are all categories to invoke "othering" and explain differences. Concerned with racial hierarchy and racial classification, the authors argue that "race is a social construction and not a fixed, static category rooted in some notion of innate biological difference" (p. 27). The same notion of social construction can be applied to other categories of othering, like class, or

nationality, which are historically situated and subject to change. For Brubaker (2013), the prevailing other-identifications of immigrants change over time and place. For example, in much of Western Europe, Islam has become the main barrier to inclusion for immigrants and their children; by contrast, in the United States, race boundaries play a much more prominent role (Foner, 2015).

The stigmatization of immigrant students affects the expectations that principals, coordinators, and teachers have of this group. Teacher expectancy refers to teachers' beliefs about who students are and what they should be capable of. These beliefs, whether positive or negative, can be deterministic and fixed, or contingent and open to advocacy (Dabach, Suárez-Orozco, Hernandez, & Brooks, 2018). Teacher expectancy has substantial effects on students' school experiences. According to Weinstein (2002), "the power of expectancy effects lies not in momentary beliefs, brief teacher-student interactions, and single outcomes but rather in the cumulative consequences of entrenched beliefs about ability over the course of a school career" (p. 7). Expectancy literature has mainly focused on the link between teachers' expectations and students' academic outcomes; however, there is less research on how teachers' beliefs affect students' social interactions.

In sum, scholars from different disciplines have contributed enormously to building knowledge regarding immigrant students' integration with their peers. However, theoretical approaches—such as social capital, school segregation, and teacher expectancy—have consistently focused on the effects of peer relationships on students' academic achievements, omitting other factors that should be considered. In

addition, the theories discussed above rarely understand schools as institutions embedded in a multilevel structure involving national-, school-, and classroom-level policies and practices. This dissertation aims to contribute to these gaps by expanding the debate about immigrant students' integration beyond students' academic outcomes, and highlighting how national-, school-, and classroom-level structures promote or inhibit immigrant students' integration with their peers.

The educational system is a key institution in the process of integrating immigrants (Alba & Waters, 2011) and should be understood as a multilevel structure involving national, regional, school and classroom-level policies and practices affecting immigrant students' experiences at school and, in particular, the extent of their peer integration.

Literature Review

The following section provides an overview of academic research associated with immigrant students' integration with their peers. I include international and national research about three topics: school-level segregation, schools' practices, policies, and discourses directed toward immigrants, and instances of discrimination and racism.

School-level Segregation

International literature in the area of school-level segregation and immigration is limited (Schneeweis, 2015; Bossavie, 2017; Walsh et al., 2016; Wells, 2009). Scholars have found that immigrant students and children of immigrants are often segregated from non-immigrant peers at the school level (e.g., Crosnoe, 2005; Frankenberg, Ee, Ayscue, & Orfield, 2019; Orfield & Lee, 2005, 2007; Wells, 2009). Immigrant youth are highly segregated in schools by race, poverty, and linguistic isolation (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2008).

In the United States, many newly arrived immigrant students are marginalized in toxic schools that provide inferior education and have limited resources (Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Latino students are one of the most affected minority groups (Crosnoe, 2005; Frankenberg et al., 2019; Orfield & Lee, 2005, 2007). Fuller and colleagues (2019) observed trends in the isolation of Latino children within certain elementary schools in the United States. They found that from 1998 to 2010, Latino students experienced declining exposure to white peers among schools in districts with at least

10% Latino enrollment. According to Frankenberg and colleagues (2019), California is the most segregated state for Latino students—58% go to intensely segregated schools, and the typical Latino students attend a school with only 15% white classmates (p. 5). Wells (2009) considers the United States "a society where children of immigrants are segregated in school" (p. 130). Based on the Educational Longitudinal Study, Wells found high levels of school segregation of children of immigrants from non-immigrants and whites in high school. Analyzing elementary and middle school segregation of immigrant students in New York City, Ellen and colleagues (2002) found important variations by students' country of origin. While immigrant students from the former Soviet attended high-quality schools with mostly white and middle-income students, Dominican immigrant students attended segregated schools in which most of their classmates were black or Hispanic and came from low-income families (Ellen et al., 2002).

Most studies on school composition and immigration focus on the effects of the share of immigrant peers on students' academic achievement (Johnson, Crosnoe, & Elder, 2001; Karsten, 2010; Van Houtte & Stevens, 2009). Studies report mixed results. Some scholars found adverse effects of the share of immigrant peers on local students' school performance (Jensen & Rasmussen, 2011; Ballatore, Fort, & Ichino, 2018; Brunello & Rocco, 2013; Gould, Lavy, & Paserman, 2009). Other studies report no significant effects of immigrant students' concentration in the classroom on the academic outcomes of native students (Geay, McNally, & Telhaj, 2013; Ohinata & van Ours, 2013, 2016; Schneeweis, 2015). The magnitude of spillover effects may vary by

immigrant students' age at the time of immigration (Bossavie, 2017) and the percentage of immigrant students in schools (Pedraja-Chaparro, Santín, & Simancas, 2016).

International studies focusing on the effects of immigrants' school composition on non-academic outcomes (e.g., school climate, peer integration) are even more limited (Van Houtte & Stevens, 2009). However, a group of scholars found that a higher concentration of immigrant students was associated with higher levels of school violence. Analyzing eleven northern countries, Walsh and colleagues (2016) found that a higher percentage of immigrant youth in school was related to greater levels of physical fighting and bullying perpetration for both immigrant and native students and a lower level of victimization (being victim of aggression) of immigrant students. Other studies show a positive association between an ethnically mixed school composition and immigrant peer integration (Van Houtte & Stevens, 2009). Johnson and colleagues (2001) show that interracial contact in schools promotes interracial friendships. Vitoroulis and Georgiades (2017) found that first generation immigrant students in Canada had reduced odds of victimization and perpetration in schools with high levels of immigrant concentration. In Belgium, Agirdag and colleagues (2011) reported that immigrant students experienced less peer victimization in schools with a higher proportion of immigrant students, but no effects were found for local students' peer victimization.

In Chile, there is scant information about school-level segregation and immigration, whether and how it has changed through the years, and its effects on students' school experiences. Qualitative research, however, found that immigrant

students are concentrated in certain schools (Alvites & Jiménez, 2011; Córdoba, Altamirano, & Rojas, 2020; Donoso, Mardones & Contreras, 2009; Mardones, 2006, 2010; Mondaca, Gairín, & Muñoz, 2018; Pavez-Soto, 2012; Poblete & Galaz, 2007). The high levels of inequality, spatial segregation, and discrimination have led to the formation of "immigrant schools," which are centers characterized by "good will" and a welcoming attitude toward immigrant children, many of whom were previously rejected from other educational centers (Pavez-Soto, 2012). Schools with 30% or more foreign students are seen as "immigrant schools" (Stefoni et al., 2010). These centers have the most prominent rates of poverty, reflecting high levels of inequality across Chilean society (Mardones, 2006). The formation of "immigrant schools" or "school ghettos" could thus hinder the broader integration of immigrant students in the country (Donoso et al., 2009; Mardones, 2006, 2010). In addition, scholars have called attention to schools that have intentionally adopted inclusive policies to recruit immigrant students as a strategy in order to increase their enrollments and thus have access to more funding (Mardones, 2006, 2010; Tijoux, 2013). Thus, immigrant students can become "useful children" for schools because they attract funding and support schools' continuity (Tijoux, 2013). This issue becomes more complicated because immigrant parents often prefer the multicultural context of these schools in order to facilitate their children's processes of adaptation, while protecting them from racism and xenophobic attitudes (Joiko & Vásquez, 2016; Mardones, 2010).

According to Córdoba and colleagues (2020), the unprecedented enrollment of immigrant students is leading to a new form of school segregation in which country of

origin and race appear as the determinant factors of segregation. Drawing on ethnographic data gathered in two public schools in Santiago, the authors found that the unequal distribution of immigrant students responds mainly to the self-segregation of immigrant families who want to protect their children from discriminatory situations related to their immigrant condition (Córdoba et al., 2020).

Eyzaguirre, Aguirre, and Blanco (2019), for the first time, investigated the effects of immigrant concentration in Chilean schools on students' academic achievement and the school climate. Based on students' data from 2014-2017, the authors found a positive relationship between the share of immigrant students and Chilean peers' achievements and school climate. In fact, being exposed to a higher proportion of immigrant peers at grade level within school was related to decreased experiences of discrimination and violence among Chilean students (Eyzaguirre et al., 2019).

Schools' Practices, Policies, and Discourses

There are different tactics that schools develop to foster the educational processes and social integration of immigrant students. Some schools focus on immigrants' academic performances, outcomes, and testing achievements; other schools promote multiculturalism and creating stronger social ties with teachers and peers. Gibson and Carrasco (2009) conducted a comparative ethnography in high schools in California and Catalonia, focusing on the contradictions in school structures, policies, and practices intended to support the children of immigrants. While the basis of the policy of Catalan schools is multiculturalism and sociability, California high

schools place much greater emphasis on academic achievement and college preparation. Ríos-Rojas (2014) views educational policies promoting diversity as both a resource and a problem. There are schools which support a "diversity discourse," but at the same time they frame diversity as a problem, given that educators affirm that schools require more resources to work with immigrant students and they argue that diversity is "exhausting." More recently, Ríos-Rojas (2018) shows how the discourse of the "illegal immigrant" is produced and reproduced in a citizenship education classroom, even when the teacher promotes discourse that favors diversity, openness, and tolerance toward immigrant students. Valenzuela (2010) proposes the concept of "subtractive schooling" to explain that schools are not providing bilingualism in an additive fashion to Mexican American students but rather they subtract their culture, language, and community-based identities.

At the classroom level, Arriaza and Rocha (2016) find that teachers hold the potential to build social capital in the classroom. In particular, the authors argue that teachers in elementary school can promote trust and reciprocity among students by promoting sharing personal stories and using the same type of school supplies. As they state: "Getting to know each other leads students to the enactment of an environment for sharing. In this context then sharing, as we have shown thus far, becomes the primordial grounds for social networking" (Arriaza & Rocha, 2016, p. 66).

In Chile, a group of studies that emerged over the last ten years analyzes specific policies that "immigrant schools" are implementing to integrate immigrant children and youth (Alvites & Jiménez, 2011; Salas, Kong, & Gazmuri, 2017; Barrios-Valenzuela

& Palou, 2014; Donoso et al., 2009; Mardones, 2010; Joiko & Vásquez, 2016; Poblete & Galaz, 2007; Poblete, 2018). In these schools, some policies introduced to integrate the growing number of immigrant students include: changes in the educational curriculum; the celebration of a multicultural day, and incorporation of the Peruvian national anthem. The most emblematic case is the República de Alemania School or "the Peruvian school" (Alvites & Jiménez, 2011; Donoso et al., 2009; Mardones, 2006, 2010; Poblete & Galaz, 2007) which introduced the course "History, Geography, and Social Sciences of South America" in the curriculum. This course's fundamental content is "the rescue of the rich and permanent, although silenced and invisible, memory of continental integration of the South American peoples" (Alvites & Jiménez, 2011, p. 126). However, scholars argue that "inclusive practices" adopted by schools to integrate immigrant students are only a superficial response, a "soft multiculturalism," and there is not a real project promoting intercultural education (Joiko & Vásquez, 2016). These efforts are the result of individual initiatives of schools, and at the governmental level, there are no educational policies that encourage intercultural curricular proposals to address the ethnic-cultural diversity of migration (Hernández, 2016). Accordingly, some scholars argue that it is crucial to develop an intercultural education program at a national level (Barrios-Valenzuela & Palou, 2014; Bravo, 2011; Mardones, 2010).

Discrimination and Racism

Discrimination and racism are often cited as a particular problem that immigrants face at school (Suárez-Orozco, 2000; Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Gomolla,

2006). In the United States, Suárez-Orozco (2000) shows the way immigrant students experience and become aware of negative stereotypes about them. Undocumented immigrant youth in the United States experience high levels of stigmatization and shame about their status (Valdés, 1996) even blaming themselves for the barriers they encounter (Gonzales 2010, 2011). These feelings may impede peer integration.

In addition, scholars argue that teachers have lower expectations regarding the performance of immigrant students (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Valenzuela, 2010). Estrada asserts that legal labels focus on deficits; institutional policies highlight those deficits and exert power, which leads to stigmatization. In this context, she and her colleagues find that school staff construct their own labels for English Learner students (ELs) (Estrada, Park, & Farkas, 2018). Specifically, school staff differentiate among two types of ELs: the "true" ELs that reflect positive stereotypes of recent immigrants including being hard-working, motivated, and successful people; and second, those who are not "real" ELs that included students who have remained in EL status six years or more, and students with low academic skills, poor motivation, and undesirable behavior. In sum, students are labeled as having a deficit if they remain in that group. These students remain isolated academically, linguistically, and socially from peers—institutional power/structures are involved, which allows stigmatization to develop (Estrada et al., 2018). In contrast, other minority groups are stereotyped as high achievers. In his study of Californian high schools, Conchas (2006) found that teachers had higher expectations for Asian students

than for Latino or African American youths. As a result, Asian students often ended up enrolled in higher-level courses.

Regarding this point, socialization and friendships are difficult for immigrant students (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). Some communities tend to experience social encapsulation in friendship networks, which signifies a tendency to forge friendships with other youth from the same cultural, ethnic, or racial background (Álvarez, Schneider, & Carrasco, 2016). Álvarez and colleagues (2016) find that in Spain, most of the friendships of immigrants were with other immigrants, especially those of the same cultural origin. However, the author says that the implications of encapsulation on friendships for school adjustment are not yet clear.

In Chile, a group of studies analyzes the perception of discrimination and racism experienced by immigrant students at schools (Tijoux, 2013; Pavez-Soto, 2012; Pavez-Soto, Ortiz-López, Domaica-Barrales, 2019; Abett, 2011; Hein, 2012; Riedemann & Stefoni, 2015). Most of these studies use qualitative data and refer to specific communities like Peruvians, Bolivians, and Haitians. For example, Pavez-Soto (2012) describes the discrimination perceived by Peruvian children at schools in Santiago de Chile. She finds that their skin color, their personality, and their nationality were the three major categories of stigmatization perceived by this group. Riedemann & Stefoni (2015) show how high school Haitians experience explicit and implicit forms of racism through "jokes," insults, gestures, and physical aggression. Nationality is the symbolic element that produces the most impact within schools in Chile, with Peruvians (Hernández, 2016; Pavez-Soto, 2012) and Haitian students (Pavez-Soto et al., 2019b)

being the groups experiencing the most discrimination. Immigrant students' country of origin is a social stigma used by educators (Pavez-Soto, 2012, 2017; Tijoux, 2013). A study published by the Chilean Ministry of Education and UNICEF (2018) found that immigrant students felt discriminated against and stigmatized by their teachers. Some students reported that teachers treated them by nationality instead of using their names in the classroom, a situation that they perceived as pejorative and discriminatory. This study also found that, in most cases, the teachers were not aware of their behaviors (UNICEF & MINEDUC, 2018).

Immigrant students do not always perceive racist attitudes directed towards them as such (Abett, 2011; Hein, 2012). Abett (2011) investigates how schools in Recoleta are perceived in multicultural classrooms and what the schooling process is like for youth migrants. The author shows the lack of knowledge that many Chilean students, and also foreigners, have with respect to situations of discrimination, racism, or xenophobia at schools. Similarly, Hein (2012) explores how immigrant youth in Chile experience, perceive, and manage their transition from school to work, finding that their experiences of discrimination were practically limited to the Chilean school context, and that they disappeared after leaving the institution.

The impact of race and discrimination is commonly denied by school authorities and professors as they explicitly affirm: "we don't have discrimination here," and "foreign students don't present any problems" (Abett, 2011). Teachers and directors also minimize, mitigate, use euphemisms, and label as "exaggerations" any racist practices (Riedemann & Stefoni, 2015). Adults end up considering racism as a

common, natural, and normal practice that forms a part of everyday life (Tijoux, 2013). Scholars in Chile also found that teachers have lower expectations regarding the academic performance of immigrant students. Hernández (2016) finds that both teachers and Chilean parents perceive that the national curriculum is more advanced than that of other Latin American countries and that Peruvian children arrive with a low level of education. Moreover, teachers —despite stating that they have a positive attitude toward immigrant students— often affirm that they arrive "with a hostile attitude that hinders their adaptation process" (Hernández, 2016, p. 158). Similarly, Salas and colleagues (2017b) find that despite the fact that teachers present favorable attitudes toward immigration concerning equality and rights policies, their beliefs change when asked about situations of direct coexistence. Analyzing public schools in Santiago, they found that 34% of the teachers believe that immigrant students negatively affect the performance of the class, and 21% of them think that immigrant students detract from the prestige of the school. The authors also argue that schools with a lower proportion of immigrant students show higher levels of implicit prejudices than educational centers with a high concentration of immigrants.

In sum, there is scant evidence on peer integration of immigrant youth in schools that examines and integrates national-, school-, and classroom-levels. International literature in the arena of school-level segregation and immigration is limited (Schneeweis, 2015; Bossavie, 2017; Walsh et al., 2016; Wells, 2009). Most studies on school composition and immigration focus on the effects of the percentage of immigrant peers on students' academic achievement (Johnson et al., 2001; Karsten,

2010; Van Houtte & Stevens, 2009). Social capital, friendships, and peer relationships have been analyzed mostly in terms of their influence on immigrants' academic outcomes. Few studies have focused on the role that schools and teachers can play in promoting or hindering peer integration.

In Chile, the literature on immigration and education is even more limited. Mardones (2010) and Poblete (2006) agree that despite the fact that immigration rates have been increasing in the last decades, research on immigrant children and youth in Chile is still in an exploratory phase. In the education domain, the academic literature has focused mainly on discrimination and racist practices toward immigrant students. The Chilean literature has not addressed the socialization of immigrant students, their relationships with peers and teachers, or for example, whether they experience social encapsulation in friendship networks. School-level segregation of immigrant students is an unexplored topic in Chile, thus, whether and how it is changing through the years, and its effects on students' school experiences are still unknown. This dissertation aims to contribute to filling these gaps and to participate in an incipient debate by exploring what is happening in the Southern cone.

Research Design and Methodology

Research Design

This study aims to analyze to what extent high school immigrant students experience integration or exclusion by their Chilean peers, to what extent immigrant youth integrate with their school peers at the classroom and school levels, and to what extent national, school, and classroom-level educational policies and practices foster, promote, or support their integration with peers. To this end, I used a mixed-method research design, combining quantitative and qualitative data. This approach allowed me to understand immigrant students' peer integration at multiple levels, their different meanings, and the structural factors shaping these relationships.

Mixed methods which combine quantitative and qualitative data help to gain both an "outsider" and an "insider" view of the phenomenon (Edwards, 2010) allowing researchers to think creatively and to theorize beyond the micro-macro divide (Mason, 2006). Mixed methods are useful for migration issues, as it facilitates an in-depth understanding of the problem: "the quantitative aspects facilitate generalizations and highlight the issues of greatest concern to large numbers of migrants, while the qualitative research, whose design is flexible, opportunistic, and heuristic in nature, facilitates in-depth understanding and aids in identifying specific means to achieve the project goals" (Babu, Borhade, & Kusuma, 2014, p. 487). Ryan and D'Angelo (2018) examine the advantages of using mixed methods to explore the structure and meaning of immigrant networks. The authors argue that adopting mixed methods may help to

both understand the meanings behind certain social interactions structures and to capture wider contextual factors in shaping these relationships.

I used a quantitative approach to explore the extent of immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers at a national level. As discussed before, physical proximity between immigrant and Chilean students is necessary for potential integration. Thus, the quantitative data analyses address whether immigrant students experience school-level segregation—the first barrier to meeting and developing relationships with their Chilean peers—and whether increasing immigrant concentration is related to student outcomes. Drawing on large national databases at the school and student level, I analyzed the segregation of immigrant students between schools and the association of increased concentration of immigrant youth with Chilean and immigrant students' academic outcomes and perceptions of their school climate.

A qualitative approach to the study of immigrant students' peer integration allowed me to gain insight into their experiences and explore school and classroom-level contextual factors shaping these relationships. I conducted an in-depth analysis of seven high schools in the Metropolitan Region of Chile, obtaining qualitative data from policy documents, in-depth interviews with school staff and students, and classroom observations. I completed a total of 46 classroom observations and 75 in-depth interviews with principals, teachers, and immigrant and Chilean students.

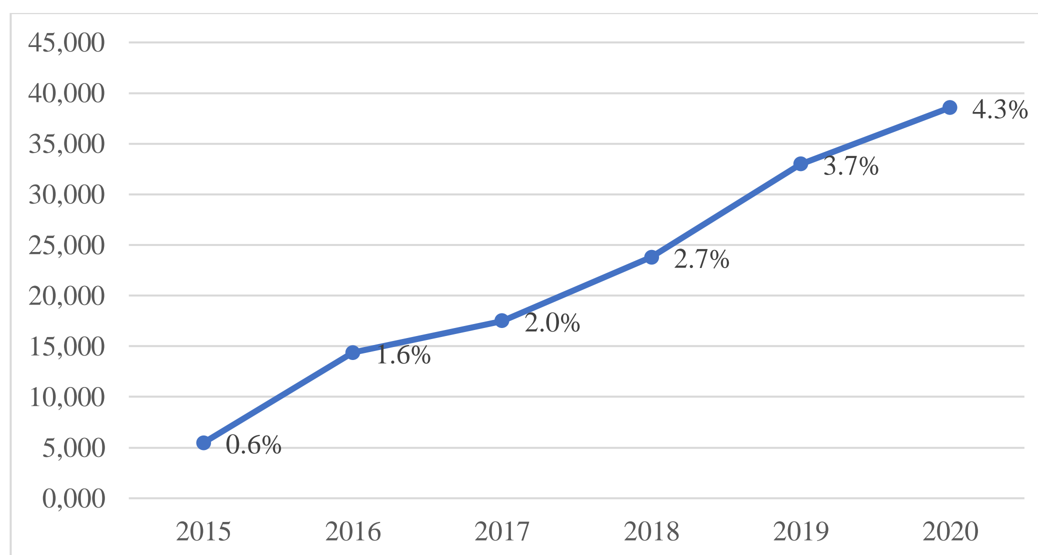
Triangulation of information from in-depth interviews, classroom observations, policy documents, and quantitative data allowed me to document to what extent immigrant high school youth integrated with their Chilean peers at school.

Immigrant Students in Chile

According to the Ministry of Education, across grades 1-12 in 2020, 3,598,422 students enrolled in the education system: 49.2% in private-subsidized schools; 44.8% in public schools; 5.4% in private schools; and 0.6% in delegated administration schools (Chilean Ministry of Education, database 2020). In the same year, 902,123 students enrolled at the secondary level (25.1%). Of this group, 38,555 were immigrant youth, representing 4.3% of the total student population. Graph 1 shows that the number of immigrant students in high school has substantially increased during the last five years.

Graph 1

Total enrollment of immigrant students in high schools, 2015-2020



Year		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Immigrant students	N	5,475	14,357	17,507	23,792	32,99	38,555
in high school	%	0.6	1.6	2.0	2.7	3.7	4.3

Source: Author's graph based on analyses of MINEDUC National Enrollment Databases 2015-2020.
Note: Data include students enrolled in secondary education, including sciences-humanities and technical-professional/artistic education. Data excludes secondary education for adults.

Table 1

Number of high schools, enrollment, and immigrant country of origin by school type, 2020

		Public	Private-subsidized	Private	Delegated administration	Total
Schools	N	855	1629	455	70	3009
	%	28.41	54.14	15.12	2.33	100.00
Sciences-humanities	N	717	1518	455	51	2,741
	%	26.16	55.38	16.60	1.86	100.00
Technical	N	138	111	0	19	268
	%	51.49	41.42	0.00	7.09	100.00
Students	N	317,048	457,433	83,677	43,965	902,123
	%	35.14	50.71	9.28	4.87	100.00
Chileans	N	297,065	443,66	81,756	41,087	863,568
	%	34.40	51.38	9.47	4.76	100.00
Immigrants	N	19,983	13,773	1,921	2,878	38,555
	%	51.83	35.72	4.98	7.46	100.00
Immigrant country of origin distribution						
Venezuela	N	4,598	3,371	155	581	8,705
	%	52.82	38.72	1.78	6.67	100.00
Colombia	N	1,93	1,047	50	251	3,278
	%	58.88	31.94	1.53	7.66	100.00
Peru	N	1,292	1,129	11	351	2,783
	%	46.42	40.57	0.40	12.61	100.00
Bolivia	N	1,865	638	5	100	2,608
	%	71.51	24.46	0.19	3.83	100.00
Haiti	N	697	380	2	109	1,188
	%	58.67	31.99	0.17	9.18	100.00

Source: Author's graph based on analyses of MINEDUC National Enrollment Databases 2020.
Note: There is information about immigrants' country of origin for only about 55% of immigrant students in high school. The Ministry of Education included this variable in 2014, and there is still missing information. Due to this limitation, no further statistical analysis was conducted with "immigrants' country of origin."

Immigrant students from more than 27 different nationalities attend Chilean high schools. However, the ethnic composition of this group has changed somewhat over time. While in 2015, most immigrant students came from Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, and Argentina, in 2020, the leading country of origin of immigrant students was Venezuela, followed by Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Haiti. In addition, immigrants are concentrated in certain high schools. More than half attend public schools (in contrast to 34.4% of Chilean students), and only 5% take part in the private education system compared to 9.5% of Chilean students.

Sample and Informants

To select the pool of schools for sampling, I drew on the MINEDUC National Database that contains administrative data on all of the schools in the country. First, I selected all high schools in the Metropolitan Region offering scientific-humanities education. The Metropolitan Region was chosen because 58% of immigrant students attend schools in this region and it is also the region that presents the highest variability of nationalities of immigrant students, compared to the other regions (MINEDUC National Enrollment Database, 2016). Also, I selected schools that offer scientific-humanities education as most immigrant students attend this type of school. In addition, the selection of schools for inclusion in the sample considered two variables: (a) School type (public, private-subsidized, and private schools); and (b) Percentage of immigrant students at the schools.

First, the school type is a proxy variable to analyze socioeconomic stratification, which can have consequences for peer integration of immigrant students. Upper-class

students usually attend private schools, while middle-class and lower-class students more commonly attend private-subsidized and public schools, respectively (Valenzuela et al., 2014).

The second variable of interest in selecting the pool of schools for sampling was the immigrant students' concentration or distribution among schools. I created three levels of immigrant students' concentration in schools: high (20% or more), medium (19 to 6%), and low (2% to 5%). To avoid extreme and unusual cases, I excluded schools with less than 2% immigrant students or less than eight immigrant students.

From the total of high schools in the Metropolitan Region that have immigrant students, I selected all schools with a high, medium, and low proportion of immigrant students and public and private-subsidized schools. A total of 90 schools in the Metropolitan Region met these conditions. After being invited, seven schools agreed to participate in the study. The following table presents descriptive data on the schools that participated in the study.

Table 2

Descriptive data on the schools that participated in the study

N°	Municipal	Dependence	Grades	Ideology	Size	Immigrant students %	Most common nationality
1	San Miguel	Private-subsidized	K-12	Lay	1245	16%	Venezuela
2	Ñuñoa	Private-subsidized	K-12	Catholic	795	8%	Venezuela, Colombia, China, Brasil
3	Santiago	Private-subsidized	K-12	Catholic	501	52%	Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, China
4	Recoleta	Public	K-12	Lay	689	40%	Peru, Colombia, Haiti, Bolivia, the Dominican Republic
5	Quilicura	Public	9-12	Lay	176	55%	Haiti
6	Recoleta	Public	9-12	Lay	347	30%	Peru, Dominican Republic, Colombia, and Haiti
7	Santiago	Public	K-12	Lay	480	28%	Peru, Colombia, Venezuela

School 1 is located in a middle-class residential neighborhood in San Miguel and has an enrollment of approximately 1,500 students in grades K-12. Immigrant students represent 16% of the student population, and almost all of them come from Venezuela (95%). This institution aims to be an important promoter of social mobility in Chile, making it possible for students to enter higher education. In that way, the

school is committed to promoting academic excellence, skills, and outlooks necessary to allow students to continue their education at a higher level.

Situated in the east of Santiago, School 2 is a Catholic institution with a student population of approximately 800 students in grades K-12. Compared to the other schools, it has a smaller percentage of immigrant students (8%), mainly from Venezuela, Colombia, China, and Brazil. The school was founded in the late 1950s as a private institution focused on educating and helping poor families. Based on Catholic values, the school is committed to the development of students' cognitive, social, and emotional skills, and promoting the values of respect, responsibility, solidarity, and honesty.

School 3 is situated in a traditional neighborhood in the city center. Founded in 1900 by a religious Catholic congregation, this center began as a school for young ladies from Santiago and later received vulnerable children from different regions of the country. In the 1990s, the institution joined a well-known school network managed by a Catholic NGO, promoting the values of honesty, responsibility, respect, inclusion, solidarity, and educational excellence. Today, the school enrolls around 500 students, of which more than 50% are immigrants from more than ten countries including Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, China, and Russia. The school is considered as an institution that benefits from diversity and cultural exchange.

School 5 has a significant percentage of immigrant students (55%), mainly from Haiti. Located in a poor neighborhood in Quilicura close to the highways, the institution serves a population with high social vulnerability. The school promotes an

“Intercultural Educational Project” that builds on “the knowledge, respect, and appreciation of Chile’s native cultures” which implies “the recognition and appreciation of the cultural pluralism of global society” (Institutional Education Project, School 5, 2019). In the late 90s, this project was inspired by the increased enrollment of students from indigenous communities. However, currently, the school has a significant Haitian student population. It is important to highlight that at this school, student’s immigrant status was more recognizable to their peers and teachers than in other schools, most likely on account of racial differences (majority afro-descendants) and the immigrants’ language (the majority spoke creole).

Two public schools are located in the municipality of Recoleta, where a high proportion of immigrant students are concentrated. School 4 was founded in the 1940s and aimed to educate children in a climate of respect and diversity and to encourage students’ learning and creativity. This school serves 800 students and has the highest student-teacher ratio (39 students per teacher). Increasing numbers of immigrant students now attend, making up 40% of the total student body. This institution is known for accepting immigrant students. The main challenge that the school faces is the high social vulnerability of their students, many of whom live surrounded by poverty, violence, and drug trafficking. In an interview with the principal, he recognized that the increase of immigrant students has posed multiple challenges to the school, including the increase in social tensions between the immigrants and the Chilean students.

School 6 is also situated in Recoleta, but in a different neighborhood called Patronato. Patronato is a multicultural commercial neighborhood with small shopping stores and restaurants run by Koreans, Japanese, Peruvians, Chinese, and Indians, among others. The school is emblematic as it has trained many generations of acclaimed students who have contributed to the cultural, political, scientific, and artistic sphere. The school is also well known for its political activism. Multiple generations of students have participated in social movements ever since the dictatorship period during the 1980s up to student movements in the 2000s, including the Penguin revolution of 2006 and the current student mobilizations. During the 90s, the school started to develop a bad reputation because students were associated with social disturbances, violence, and drug consumption. As a consequence, the school lost students and public funding. However, nowadays, school 6 is sprucing up its reputation and experiencing an increase in student enrollment. Around one-third of the students are immigrants from Latin American countries, mainly from Peru. As the coordinator stated, immigrants have sharply increased the school enrollment, allowing in part, the continuation of the school.

Finally, school 7 is a public institution located in the central south part of Santiago in a "high-risk neighborhood" since it is close to the penal precincts and the Justice Center. This is a small school of around 500 students. Most of the students come from low-middle income families, and 40% only live with their mother. Immigrant students represent 30% of the enrollment. The school's institutional educational project

promotes the principles of inclusion, diversity, and multiculturalism in the development of students (Institutional Education Project, School 7, 2019).

Data Sources and Instruments

Quantitative Data

National Databases

For the quantitative analysis, I drew on three sets of databases provided by the Chilean Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and the Education Quality Agency. First, I used the MINEDUC National Enrollment Databases (2015-2020) to analyze the distribution of immigrants within the Chilean educational system and an indication of the extent to which national and school-level educational policies and practices promote integration with peers. This database contains information on immigrant and Chilean students' demographics, including where immigrant youth are enrolling and their distribution among school types and municipalities. At the student level, the main variable of interest was immigrant status. Schools are asked if students were born in Chile or outside the country, and all students born outside the country were considered "immigrant students."

Second, I draw on two databases provided by the Education Quality Agency: (a) Educational Quality Measurement System (SIMCE) Databases, and (b) Student Questionnaire of Quality and Context of Education Database. These databases allowed me to analyze the effects of the share of immigrant youth on students' academic outcomes and perceptions of school climate.

SIMCE databases (2016 to 2018) contain information about students' math and language SIMCE test scores. SIMCE is the Spanish acronym for System of Measurement of Educational Quality (Sistema Nacional de Medición de la Calidad de la Educación). This instrument evaluates the basic content of school curricula of students in grades 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 11.

The Student Questionnaire of Quality and Context of Education Databases (associated with SIMCE test) provides information about students' self-reported school experiences such as participation, motivation, assistance, social relations, health habits, and school climate (2016-2018).

Qualitative Data

Qualitative data was obtained from three sources: in-depth interviews with immigrant and Chilean students and school staff, classroom observations, and educational policy documents.

Interviews

In-depth interviews with immigrant students were conducted to find out about their experiences at Chilean schools in order to obtain indicators of the extent of immigrant peer integration. In particular, students were asked about their experiences regarding immigration, friendship integration in their country of origin, the reception they received from their peers at their Chilean school, their classmates' expectations, the extent of their participation in classes and extracurricular activities, peer institutional resources and support, experiences of discrimination and racism at school and their responses to these experiences. In addition, in depth-interviews with Chilean

students were conducted to explore their school experiences, peer relationships, friendships, classroom dynamics, experiences of discrimination and racism at school, and their thoughts on immigration.

In-depth interviews with school staff focused on: (a) educational policy implementation about classroom composition; cohort and curricular placement, and immigrant student enrollment in high school; (b) school practices, if any, regarding curriculum and teaching adaptations for immigrant' students, and recommendations for school practices that could help to promote immigrant integration with their peers; (c) the school staff's discourse regarding immigration at school; and (d) peer integration of immigration students.

In each school, I interviewed the principal, coordinator, or their representative, and a group of observed teachers in *Language and Literature, Orientation, and Gym classes. Orientation* classes are guided by the chief teacher (professor jefe). The chief teacher is the class leader who accompanies the students in their educational process for a year and, sometimes, for longer. The chief teacher plays a crucial role in the formative process of the students. They have to sustain a direct relationship with students and their families, to articulate students' relations with other professors and educational staff, to coordinate the course's activities, and to motivate students (Educar Chile, 2014). Each class grade level has a chief teacher who, in most cases, facilitates Orientation classes (MINEDUC, 2016).

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations provided a description of student interactions, the classroom context in which they occurred, and the role that the teacher played in promoting or hindering peer relationships. The observation protocol was drawn from two instruments: Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) (Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008) and the Classroom Qualities for English Language Learners (CQELL) (Goldenberg, Coleman, & Amabisca, 2010). The CQELL allowed me to observe: classroom organization; grouping practices, and opportunities for interactions. From the CLASS protocol I got information on classroom organization; grouping practices, instructional dialogue, and classroom climate. I also added two variables to measure seating arrangements and the formation of group activities. While I collected quantitative data of all these variables, I only analyzed qualitative data from the CLASS and CQELL's running observation notes for this study. The running observation notes contributed to a better understanding of the observation ratings and provided concrete examples of the extent of peer integration of high school immigrant students.

The observations took place in three classrooms: *Language and Literature* (Lengua y Literatura); *Orientation* (Orientación o Consejo de Curso) and *Gym* (Educación Física y Salud). These courses represent different instructional foci at high schools. First, in *Language and Literature,* students work on Spanish reading, writing, and oral communication. At high school, this curriculum has a cultural and communicative focus (MINEDUC, 2015). Second, *Orientation* aims to develop personal, intellectual, moral, and social dimensions of students by discussing topics

related to interpersonal relationships, personal growth, well-being and self-care, participation and belonging, and management and development of learning (MINEDUC, 2015). This class was chosen because the students have a higher level of participation and decision-making compared to other courses. Third, in *Gym classes,* high school students are expected to do motor activities, to learn about healthy habits, and to develop cooperative behaviors through sports. As the national curriculum states: "The subject Physical Education and Health is an excellent means of socialization: it increases the independence and responsibility of the person, the involvement, the organization, and the management of the activities; which is an exceptional way of experiencing cooperation and solidarity" (MINEDUC, 2015, p. 256). In that way, *Gym classes* were crucial for further exploration of peer interactions and teachers' grouping practices.

Educational Policy Documents

Educational policy documents provided information about educational guidelines and policies at the national, regional, and school level that could have consequences for peer integration at high school. For each document at each level, I asked the following questions: (a) What is the enrollment protocol for immigrant students at a national, municipal, and school level? (e.g., information provided; documents required; recommendations or directives about what kind of schools to enroll in), (b) What are the policies for cohort and curricular placement of high school immigrant students? (c) What, if any, immigrant student challenges are identified and what, if any, strategies and guidelines are offered to address them?

Fieldwork procedures

The fieldwork occurred from August to November 2018 in Santiago de Chile. I conducted an in-depth analysis of seven high schools in the Metropolitan Region of Chile, obtaining data from classroom observations, and interviewing educational staff and students. I completed 46 classroom observations and 75 in-depth interviews with principals, teachers, and immigrant and Chilean students (see Table 3).

I first sent an initial request for participation to principals, informing them of the purpose of the study and the relevance of their participation. In two public schools, principals first requested that I obtain an official letter from the educational department of their municipalities in order to participate in the study. After obtaining their permission, I coordinated an initial meeting with the school principal and/or coordinator. During this meeting, I explained in detail the objective of the research and how data would be collected in the schools. I also requested detailed information about school and classroom composition and the immigrant students' profiles. Then the principal assigned me a grade 9 classroom and gave me teachers' contact information. In addition, principals and coordinators shared with me their motivation to participate in the study, and according to their educational project and interests, what information would be useful to examine in more detail. One school that was especially interested in the study asked me to include two 9 grades in the sample.

Table 3

Total of classroom observations and interviews

Data Sources	School Grade	1 9A	1 9C	2 9B	3 9	4 9A	5 9A	6 9A	7 9	Total
		Private-subsidized				**Public**				
Classroom Observations	Language	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	17
	Orientation	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	16
	Gym	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	13
	Total	**5**	**6**	**6**	**6**	**7**	**6**	**5**	**5**	**46**
Interviews	Principals or coordinators	1	_	1	1	1	2	1	1	8
	Teachers	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	3	14
	Immigrant students	5	5	3	2	5	5	2	1	28
	Chilean students	4	3	3	2	2	4	2	5	25
	Total	**11**	**9**	**9**	**7**	**10**	**12**	**7**	**10**	**75**

(Column group heading: **Schools**)

During a second visit in the schools, I conducted a small survey of the teachers I expect to observe, asking for student demographic indicators (e.g., number of total students, number of immigrant students, grade level, courses), and teaching schedules. After coordinating with teachers' schedules, I conducted classroom observations in

grade 9 during Language and Literature, Orientation, and Gym classes. I conducted five to six observations per classroom (across the three courses), yielding a total of 46 observations. Classroom observations lasted between 30 to 90 minutes (average 68 minutes) for a total of 52 hours of classroom observations. During the first day of observation, the teacher introduced me to the classroom and informed students that I would be observing the class and following them during their activities. I usually sat in the back of the room to have a broader view of the classroom dynamics. During the observation, I took detailed notes of everything I heard and saw in the classroom. After each observation, I coded variables of interest using the CLASS and CQELL.

Overall, I had an excellent reception from the teachers and students who I observed. An interesting fact was that the teachers did not select which lessons I would observe. After finding out the teachers' schedules, they let me attend their classes at any time, excluding days in which students had learning activities outside the school or when they were taking exams. At the beginning, the students were curious about my presence in the classroom. However, over time, the students got used to me, often forgetting I was there. On some occasions, students spoke to me, sharing their opinions or asking me questions about the lesson.

After collecting most of the classroom observations, I invited the principals, coordinators, observed teachers, and students to participate in an interview. All interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions, and I asked participants' permission to audiotape the interview for transcription purposes. All interviews were face-to-face and conducted by me in Spanish or French. Participants were required to

provide a signed consent at the beginning of the interview, and students were additionally required to present a signed consent from parents or guardians. The interviews ranged from twenty minutes to an hour and a half.

A total of 75 individuals were interviewed, of which 53 were high school students and 22 educational staff. All immigrant youth interviewed were first-generation and arrived in Chile between 2011 and 2018. They came from Latin American countries such as Venezuela, Haiti, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic. Immigrant students ranged in age from 13 to 16 years old at the moment of the interview (mean age 15) and were all in grade 9 (see Appendix A).

All interviews were conducted at the schools. I interviewed the principals and coordinators in their offices, and the teachers in their classrooms, the library, or the teacher's workplace. Students' interviews took place in different locations, including classrooms, the library, the dining hall, and the schoolyard. Depending on the principals' and teachers' preferences, some of the students' interviews were conducted during instructional time while others happened during break time.

Finally, most of the interviews were conducted after classroom observations. In that way, during the interviews, I had the opportunity to ask students and educational staff about specific situations that I had observed first-hand in the classroom, including seating and grouping segregation, moments of tension between students and/or with the teacher, and instances of racism and discrimination.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

For the quantitative portion of this research, I performed two statistical analyses: (a) School segregation indexes to analyze immigrant student distribution in Chile and trends between 2015-2020; and (b) Fixed-effects regression models to examine the effect of increased concentration of immigrant students on students' academic outcomes and perceptions of their school climate. All statistical analyses were performed in Stata/UC 16.

School Segregation Indexes. To measure the distribution of immigrant students among Chilean schools, a series of segregation indexes were calculated, including the exposure, isolation, and dissimilarity index (see details in the Appendix B). I observed trends over the 2015 to 2020 period, as immigration increased significantly during this period. School-level databases were constructed from the MINEDUC National Enrollment Database for each period. The 2020 database contains enrollment data for a universe of 902,123 high school students in 3,009 schools. The corresponding numbers in 2015 are 905,244 students in 2,936 high schools.

The exposure index measures the degree to which a group of students is exposed to another group (Massey & Denton, 1988; James & Taeuber, 1985; Reardon & Owens, 2014). Massey and Denton (1988) explain the exposure index as "the extent to which minority and majority members physically confront one another by virtue of sharing a common residential area" (p. 287). In this case, the exposure index provides information about the extent to which an immigrant student is exposed to Chilean peers

at school. The exposure index ranges from 0 to 1, where higher scores indicate more integration.

The isolation index provides information about the extent to which students are isolated among their own group (Massey & Denton, 1988; Reardon & Owens, 2014). The index is interpreted as the probability that a randomly drawn immigrant student goes to the same school with another immigrant student. The isolation index ranges from 0 to 1, where higher scores indicate higher segregation, and lower scores indicate low segregation.

Finally, the dissimilarity index captures the degree to which a population is unevenly distributed among certain units (Duncan & Duncan, 1955; Massey & Denton, 1988). In this case, the dissimilarity index represents the proportion of Chilean students who would have to change schools in order to make school composition equal across all schools. This index ranges from 0 to 1, where higher scores reveal strong segregation, and lower scores imply lower segregation. Massey and Denton (1993) suggest that values under 0.3 are low, values between 0.3 and 0.6 are moderate, and values above 0.6 are high.

Segregation indexes are relatively new and contribute to knowledge about immigrant school composition. To date, there are no studies that have calculated segregation indexes to explore immigrant student distribution in Chilean schools.

Fixed-effects regression model. To analyze the effect of immigrant student concentration on students' academic outcomes and school climate, I followed Eyzaguirre, Blanco, and Aguirre's (2019) analytical strategy using the most updated

national statistics. A student-level database was comprised of the MINEDUC National Enrollment Databases, the Educational Quality Measurement System (SIMCE) Database, and the Student Questionnaire of Quality and Context of Education Database for 2016-2018. The final database contains information about 623,969 students in grade 10 between these years, representing 90% of the total population for these years. I used the empirical strategy of fixed effects regression modeling (e.g., Hoxby, 2000; Ohinata & Van Ours, 2013; Schneeweis, 2015; Eyzaguirre et al., 2019; Wang, Cheng, & Smyth, 2018). This strategy measures within-school variability in the proportion of immigrant students among cohorts (see details in the Appendix B). As students are not randomly allocated to schools, the model controls potential bias due to selection effects of schools and students (Hoxby, 2000; Gould et al., 2009), such as sorting of students across classrooms and schools (e.g., parents' school selection, school tracking) (Wang et al., 2018; Eyzaguirre et al., 2019). According to Schneeweis (2015), cohort fixed effects "contain unobservable student characteristics that are shared by all students of a given group and school cohort. The school fixed effects capture unobservable characteristics of school and neighborhood that are constant over time and group specific, such as the school building, school and neighborhood facilities and other unobservable that are likely to be correlated with both the ethnic composition and academic achievement" (p. 67-68). In that way, the model includes cohort and school fixed effects to isolate plausibly exogenous factors in the variation of the proportion of immigrant students.

Variables

SIMCE scores: SIMCE (Spanish Acronym for System of Measurement of Educational Quality) evaluates students' learning outcomes from the school curriculum in math, language, and sciences (Education Quality Agency, 2019). Students in grades 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 11 are required to take this test.

School climate: According to the Education Quality Agency (2014), the school coexistence climate indicator refers to students' perceptions and attitudes regarding the presence of a respectful, organized, and safe school environment. From the Student Questionnaire of Quality and Context of Education database, four indicators of school climate were created:

- *Discrimination:* thirteen items related to experiencing discrimination due to physical attributes, personality, gender, sexual orientation, style of dress, religion, politics, grades, disability, socioeconomic situation, ethnicity, immigrant status, and parenthood or pregnancy.
- *School violence:* three items regarding perceived fights (e.g., yelling, pushing, pulling hair, blows), insults, and threats or harassment between students.
- *Victim of aggression (or victimization):* four items referring to students' experiences of intimidation or mistreatment at school, including physical, verbal, social, and online aggression.
- *School safety (insecurity):* five items related to feeling secure (in school entrances and exits, classrooms, hallways, patios, and bathrooms).

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data gathered from educational policies, in-depth interviews, and notes on classroom observation were analyzed using a grounded theory approach. This interpretative inductive approach seeks to build theory that emerges in a flexible and simultaneous process of data collection and analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The interviews of immigrant students, Chilean students, and educational staff were tape recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using NVIVO version 12. I coded major themes that emerged from the interview data and followed a continual process of coding and recoding of the data for emergent categories of meaning (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Ethical Issues

This study involves both sensitive data and a vulnerable population. I introduced myself as a graduate student at the University of California Santa Cruz. Informed consents were gathered from principals, coordinators, teachers, and students participating in the study. Each consent included a description of the purpose of the research, procedures, risks and benefits, confidentiality, permission to record their information, and contact information. I reiterated that participation was voluntary, and refusal would have no penalty. In addition, all participants' information and classroom observations were protected: schools, classrooms, and participants were identified only by an ID, and all information was saved and stored in my password-protected computer. Throughout this study, pseudonyms are used for all interviews. I received the

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval in July 2018 (approval number IRB00000266).

My research proposal was designed to contribute to both the immigration literature and to the design and implementation of public policies regarding immigrant students in Chile. In that sense, engaging in a cooperative dialogue with educational staff, teachers, and students was a key element in the whole process. Despite the fact that participants did not receive any direct benefit from this study, they had the opportunity to reflect and discuss immigration in Chile. I was willing to discuss any issue of particular interest to schools related to my research, but also on other issues such as immigration in Chile, immigration in the United States, and comparative educational policies. In addition, I was open to exchanging public material or literature that could be useful for participants when they requested it.

Chapter One:

School Composition and Immigrant Student Segregation in Chile

Introduction

The rapid increase in the immigration rate in Chile has affected the composition of many schools across the country. Whereas in 2010 there were 31,726 immigrant students enrolled in Chilean schools, representing less than 1% of the total enrollment, by 2020 this number reached 178,058 (5%). School and student characteristics may affect students' interactions and the development of friendships with peers. According to Van Houtte and Stevens (2009), the school ethnic composition could be determinant for the social integration of immigrant students, and ethnically mixed schools could positively influence interethnic friendships. Thus, the extent to which immigrant students experience physical proximity with non-immigrant peers has consequences for their social integration.

This chapter aims to analyze immigrant students' integration with Chilean peers at a national level. In particular, I explore the following questions: What is the distribution of immigrant students across Chilean high schools? To what extent are immigrant students segregated in schools from their Chilean peers? What is the effect of being exposed to a higher proportion of immigrant students at grade level on school climate and academic achievement? How do immigrant students enroll in Chilean

schools, and how is that experience related to their integration with Chilean peers? I argue that immigrant students are segregated from their Chilean peers at the national level and that the current policy regarding the enrollment process for immigrant students contributes to their segregation. Based on the quantitative analysis of large national data and qualitative information, results show:

a) An increasing school segregation trend for immigrant students in high school between 2015 and 2020 in all school types.
b) The presence of immigrant students does not appear to have adverse effects on Chilean and immigrant students' academic achievement and perceptions of their school climate. In grade-level cohorts who experience increasing percentages of immigrant students within schools, Chilean students report, on average, lower levels of discrimination, insecurity, and school violence. I found no statistically significant relationship between increasing percentages of immigrants and Chilean student academic outcomes.
c) Multiple factors in the current school enrollment process of immigrant students appear to diminish immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers. This policy could lead to inadequate grade-level placement of immigrant students, incubate school staff's hostile views towards immigrant youth, and promote the formation of "immigrant schools," inhibiting their integration with Chilean peers.

This chapter is organized into two main sections. First, I analyze school-level segregation of immigrant students. Considering that the physical proximity between

immigrant and Chilean students is a necessary condition for their potential integration, the quantitative hypothesis addresses the concern of school segregation of immigrant youth as the primary obstacle to meeting and developing relationships with their Chilean peers. I use quantitative data at the school and student level provided by the Chilean Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and the Education Quality Agency, and perform two statistical analyses: (a) School segregation indexes to analyze immigrant student distribution in Chile and trends between 2015-2020, and (b) Fixed-effects regression models to examine the effect of the increased concentration of immigrant youth on Chilean and immigrant students' academic outcomes and perceptions of their school climate.

National level segregation of immigrant students raises questions about national school policies and their potential to foster school-level segregation. In this line, the second section explores the current enrollment policy regarding immigrant students and this policy's potential effects on school-level peer integration. This analysis relies on educational policy documents and in-depth interviews with principals, coordinators, and teachers in the seven schools that participated in this study.

As mentioned before, international literature in the area of school-level segregation and immigration is limited (Schneeweis, 2015; Bossavie, 2017; Walsh et al., 2016; Wells, 2009). In Chile –a country well-known for its significant levels of school segregation by socioeconomic level (Bellei et al., 2018; Valenzuela et al., 2014; OECD, 2011)–there is little information about school-level segregation and immigration, how it is changing over the years, and the effects on students' school

experiences. This chapter aims to contribute to filling this gap and to participate in an incipient and divided debate by exploring what is happening in the Southern cone.

School-level Segregation of Immigrant Students

As mentioned earlier, the number of immigrant students in Chilean high schools has increased substantially in the last few years. According to the Ministry of Education, in 2020, of 902,123 high school students, 38,555 were immigrant youth (4.3%). Close to one-third of schools do not have any immigrant students (27.4%), while 73.6% have at least one immigrant student. However, among the schools that enroll immigrant students, this group's concentration varies significantly. Table 4 shows the concentrations of immigrant students in high school by school type. Overall, more than half of the schools enroll between 1% to 4% of immigrant students. The percentage of high schools with 4% immigrant students–representing the national average– is only 6%. A small proportion of schools has 20% or more immigrant students (4.5%).

Table 4

Concentration of immigrant students in Chilean high schools by school type

School Type		No immigrants	1% to 4%	5% to 9%	10% to 19%	20% or more	Total
Public	N	203	346	128	92	86	855
	%	23.74	40.47	14.97	10.76	10.06	100.00
Private-subsidized	N	481	881	151	77	39	1,629
	%	29.53	54.08	9.27	4.73	2.39	100.00
Private	N	128	256	55	13	3	455
	%	28.13	56.26	12.09	2.86	0.66	100.00
Delegated Administration	N	11	31	7	13	8	70
	%	15.71	44.29	10.00	18.57	11.43	100.00
Total	N	823	1,514	341	195	136	3,009
	%	27.35	50.32	11.33	6.48	4.52	100.00

Source: Author's calculations based on analyses of MINEDUC National Enrollment Databases 2020.

Data obtained from the Educational Quality Measurement System (SIMCE) database, for grade 10 in 2018, shows that, on average, Chilean students score higher in language and math than immigrant students do. For example, Chilean students achieved an average SIMCE language score of 250 points, compared to 238 for immigrant students. This gap is even higher in math, with an average score of 265 for Chilean students compared to 246 for immigrants.

Regarding school climate indicators, in 2018, 43% of all 10th grade students reported being discriminated against in the past year. Among this group, the most common forms of discrimination were due to their personality (55%), physical appearance (45%), learning style (27%), and dressing or hair styles (25%). Immigrant students reported more discrimination experiences compared to their Chilean peers (49% versus 43%, respectively). Of this group, 58% felt discriminated against because of their immigrant status.

High School Segregation Indexes

Table 5 shows three segregation indexes: the exposure, isolation, and dissimilarity index. In 2020, the index measuring immigrant exposure to Chilean students was .82, indicating that the average immigrant student attended a high school with 82% Chilean students. Immigrant students tend to be more segregated in public high schools, where the exposure index was .77. The dissimilarity index in 2020 was .55, indicating that more than half of the Chilean students would need to change schools in order to make school composition equal. This value suggests moderate segregation levels (values between 0.3-0.6) but is close to high segregation ranges (Massey & Denton, 1993). Looking across school type, the dissimilarity index fluctuates from .44 in private schools to a high of .57 in public schools, indicating higher levels of school segregation of immigrant students in public institutions.

Table 5

High school segregation indexes 2020

	Percent enrollment immigrants	Percent enrollment Chileans	Immigrants Exposure to Chileans	Immigrants Isolation from Chileans	Dissimilarity index	Students (N)	Schools (N)
Total	.04	.96	.82	.18	.55	902,123	3,009
School type							
Public	.06	.94	.77	.23	.57	317,048	855
Private-subsidized	.03	.97	.87	.13	.51	457,433	1,629
Private	.02	.98	.93	.07	.44	83,677	455
Delegated Adm.	.07	.93	.83	.17	.51	43,965	70

Source: Author's calculations based on analyses of MINEDUC National Enrollment Databases 2020.

Observing trends over the 2015 to 2020 period (Table 6), immigrant students experienced declining exposure to Chilean students across all school types. For example, in 2015, the average immigrant student attended a private-subsidized high school with 97% of Chilean students, whereas in 2020, this proportion was 87%. However, results also show a declining immigrant-Chilean student dissimilation index across all school types. For example, while in 2015, 67% of the Chilean students in public schools would need to change schools to achieve completely even distribution across all schools, this number reached 57% in 2020.

Table 6

High school segregation indexes, 2015 to 2020

Students	Percent enrollment immigrants	Percent enrollment Chileans	Immigrants Exposure to Chileans	Immigrants Isolation from Chileans	Dissimilarity index	Students (N)	Schools (N)
Total							
2015	.001	.99	.95	.05	.63	905,244	2,936
2020	.04	.96	.82	.18	.55	902,123	3,009
School type							
Public							
2015	.01	.99	.93	.07	.67	324,936	808
2020	.06	.94	.77	.23	.57	317,048	855
Private-subsidized							
2015	.01	.99	.97	.03	.59	460,066	1,675
2020	.03	.97	.87	.13	.51	457,433	1,629
Private							
2015	.01	.99	.98	.02	.59	74,649	383
2020	.02	.98	.93	.07	.44	83,677	455
Delegated Administration							
2015	.01	.99	.97	.03	.56	45,593	70
2020	.07	.93	.83	.17	.51	43,965	70
Schools with 5% or more immigrant enrollment							
2015	.08	.92	.90	.10	.20	23,954	77
2020	.14	.86	.77	.23	.34	209,041	672

Source: Author's calculations based on analyses of MINEDUC National Enrollment Databases 2015 and 2020.

For more precise estimation, I recalculated segregation indexes for high schools with 5% or more immigrant student enrollment (higher than the national average). While in 2015, there were 77 high schools across the country that had 5% or more immigrant student enrollments, this number reached 672 in 2020. Results for this subsample of schools also showed declining immigrant-Chilean student exposure between 2015 and 2020, reflecting increased school segregation trends. While in 2015, the average immigrant student attended a school accompanied by 90% of Chilean peers, this proportion was 77% in 2020. In addition, despite the lower dissimilarity index, between 2015 and 2020, this index increased from .20 to .34 in 2020, indicating that a higher proportion of Chilean students would need to change schools in order to achieve an even composition. This finding is interesting as it shows that schools with 5% or more immigrant students do not follow the trend of the declining immigrant-Chilean students dissimilarity index that was shown previously.

These results are consistent with what scholars have found in other countries. For example, in the United States, Fuller and colleagues (2019) found that from 1998 to 2010, Latino students experienced declining exposure to white peers in districts with at least 10% Latino enrollment. Moreover, the authors also found a declining Latino-white dissimilarity index nationwide; but when considering the ten poorest districts with 10% or more Latino students, they saw an increase in the dissimilarity index (from .52 in 1998 to .63 in 2010) (Fuller et al., 2019).

Considering that the social integration of one group is determined by the prevalence of its relationships with different groups in society (Blau, 1974), increasing

trends in school segregation of immigrant students in Chilean high schools would reduce their opportunities for integration with Chilean peers. Moreover, as the data shows, close to one-third of high schools in Chile do not have immigrant students. Students from these centers are isolated from their immigrant peers, deprived of the "contact situation" –a necessary condition that provides the participants with the opportunity to become friends (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 76).

The Association Between School-Level Immigrant Concentration and Nonacademic Outcomes

Table 7 shows the linear effects of the concentration of immigrant students within schools on Chilean and immigrant students' self-reported incidences of discrimination, insecurity, school violence, and victimization. Each column displays a separate regression and shows the coefficients on the changes in the concentration of grade 10 immigrant students for years 2016 to 2018. Following Eyzaguirre and colleagues' strategy (2019), the dependent variable is standardized, based on the mean and standard deviation of each variable in 2016.

Table 7

Effect of immigrant students' concentration in perceived discrimination, insecurity, school violence, and victimization (Grade 10)

	Chilean				Immigrant			
	Insecurity	Discrimination	School violence	Victimization	Insecurity	Discrimination	School violence	Victimization
Share of immigrant students	-1.123***	-0.374***	-1.314***	-0.341***	-0.340	-0.255	-0.995***	-0.276
	(0.100)	(0.101)	(0.184)	(0.115)	(0.273)	(0.286)	(0.354)	(0.375)
Constant	-0.225	-0.331	-0.134	0.0167	-0.209	-0.222	-0.071	0.105
	(0.776)	(0.796)	(1.023)	(0.990)	(0.793)	(0.923)	(1.042)	(1.101)
Observations	**518,724**	**506,240**	**522,458**	**517,012**	**9,778**	**9,467**	**9,856**	**9,724**

Source: Author's calculations based on analyses of MINEDUC National Enrollment Databases and Educational Quality Measurement System (SIMCE) databases 2016-2018 for grade 10.
Note: Dependent variable is standardized based on the mean and standard deviation of each variable in 2016 (Eyzaguirre et al., 2019). Standard errors in parentheses, (*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$).

Results show that immigrant students' presence has a significant positive effect on school climate, especially for Chilean students. According to the estimation, an increase in 10 percentage points of immigrant students in their cohort will yield a decrease of 0.04 standard deviation of the reports of discrimination by Chilean students. For the same 10 percentage point increase in the share of immigrant peers, Chilean students' reports of school violence and victimization fall by 0.1 and 0.03 standard deviation, respectively.

In addition, being exposed to a higher proportion of immigrant students does not affect immigrants' experiences of discrimination, insecurity, and victimization. However, increasing the share of immigrant students by 10 percentage points would decrease immigrants' reports of school violence by 0.1 standard deviations. In other

words, the share of the own group positively affects immigrants' perception of school violence. This result is different from what Eyzaguirre and colleagues' (2019) previously found studying the same databases of 10th grade students for earlier years (2014 to 2017). According to the authors, immigrant students' experiences of school violence, discrimination, and victimization were not significantly affected by a higher concentration of immigrants' peers in their cohort.

Chilean and immigrant students may report different perceptions regarding their own experience of peer violence, discrimination, security, and victimization and how these experiences change due to the increase in the immigrant school composition. Although statistical data cannot identify the reasons behind the disparity between immigrant and Chilean students' reports, some hypotheses could be made. For immigrant students, one potential explanation is that the concentration of immigrant students is growing at a high speed, and such an increase could serve as a protective factor for immigrant groups, who may perceive less school violence levels due to the arrival of more students with similar backgrounds. However, it is crucial to keep in mind that statistics on immigrants' discrimination, insecurity, and victimization at school were not affected by the increasing concentration of immigrant students. So, even if the perception of school violence seems to decrease, being a victim of bullying, discrimination, and harassment does not seem to vary due to increasing immigrant students' enrollment. In the case of Chilean students, the reasons behind the positive effects on school climate due to the increase of immigrant peers are harder to identify. One hypothesis is that Chilean students who were victims of discrimination and school

violence see reductions in these experiences due to the arrival of new immigrant peers who could potentially be targeted instead.

Table 8 displays the linear effects of the concentration of immigrant students on the average test scores of Chilean and immigrant students. Results show that the share of immigrant students has no significant effect on Chilean students' academic outcomes. However, an increase of the share of immigrants by 10 percentage points increases immigrants' average math test score by 6.8 points. No significant effects were found on immigrant students' language scores. These results are consistent with what Eyzaguirre and colleagues found (2019).

Table 8

Effect of immigrant students' concentration in SIMCE's score (Grade 10)

	Chilean		**Immigrants**	
	Language	Math	Language	Math
Share of immigrant students	18.96	2.200	31.00	68.54**
	(12.21)	(11.72)	(23.91)	(29.96)
Constant	250.578	267.097	239.149	250.068
	(50.994)	(64.655)	(49.273)	65.246
Observations	**540,678**	**548,772**	**10,253**	**10,456**

Source: Author's calculations based on analyses of MINEDUC National Enrollment Databases and Educational Quality Measurement System (SIMCE) databases 2016-2018 for grade 10.
Note: Standard errors in parentheses, (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1).

As I mentioned in the Literature Review, one of the main concerns for scholars and policymakers regarding the increase in immigrant students has been to explore its association with local students' academic outcomes (Johnson et al., 2001; Karsten,

2010; Van Houtte & Stevens, 2009). The statistical results may challenge international literature research that found adverse effects of the share of immigrant peers on local students' school performance (e.g., Jensen & Rasmussen, 2011; Ballatore et al., 2018; Brunello & Rocco, 2013; Gould et al., 2009). Results also contradict scholars' findings that a higher concentration of immigrant students was associated with higher levels of school violence (e.g., Walsh et al., 2016). In that way, results help debunk myths about immigrant students' potential adverse effects on Chilean students' academic outcomes and school climate.

School Enrollment Policies and Immigrant School Segregation

The trend of increasing school-level segregation of immigrant students at a national level raises questions about how national school policies are implemented at the school level. According to Karsten (2010), immigrant students' school segregation is sometimes associated with parental school choice, school selection of their students, and residential segregation. Comparing school segregation of immigrant students in twenty-seven OECD countries, Karsten found higher levels of segregation in countries with a higher prevalence of school choice. In the case of countries such as the United States, residential segregation is the major driver of the extent to which Latino students attend schools with white or middle-class peers (Fuller et al., 2019).

The Chilean educational system has been described as an extreme case of market-oriented education, which has increased socioeconomic school segregation (Bellei et al., 2018; Valenzuela et al., 2014). According to the literature on this issue, Chile's high levels of school segregation are the product of both schools' capacity to

choose their students and the voucher school system (Valenzuela et al., 2014). For many years public and private-subsidized schools were able to select their student population by applying entrance exams, conducting interviews with families, and requesting religious background and past academic records (Muñoz & Weinstein, 2019). The new "School Inclusion Law" seeks to regulate school admissions and end arbitrary students' selection.

Could immigrant student school-level segregation also be associated with market-oriented mechanisms in education? How could immigrant students be affected by the new School Inclusion Law and its enrollment process? One way to approach this issue is by analyzing the school enrollment process of immigrant students.

School Enrollment Policy

Due to the increase in immigrant students' enrollment, the Chilean government designed a school enrollment protocol to validate their prior education and place them in the appropriate grade level. This process varies depending on the immigrant's country of origin, taking the form of "studies recognition" or "studies validation." According to MINEDUC (2019), immigrant students can apply to a "studies recognition" if they come from any country that has signed the "Educational Agreement" with Chile and brings legal documentation certifying completion of the last grade. This is a process that immigrants' parents must complete directly in the Chilean Ministry of Education. On the other hand, immigrant students from a country without an educational agreement with Chile or who do not have legalized school

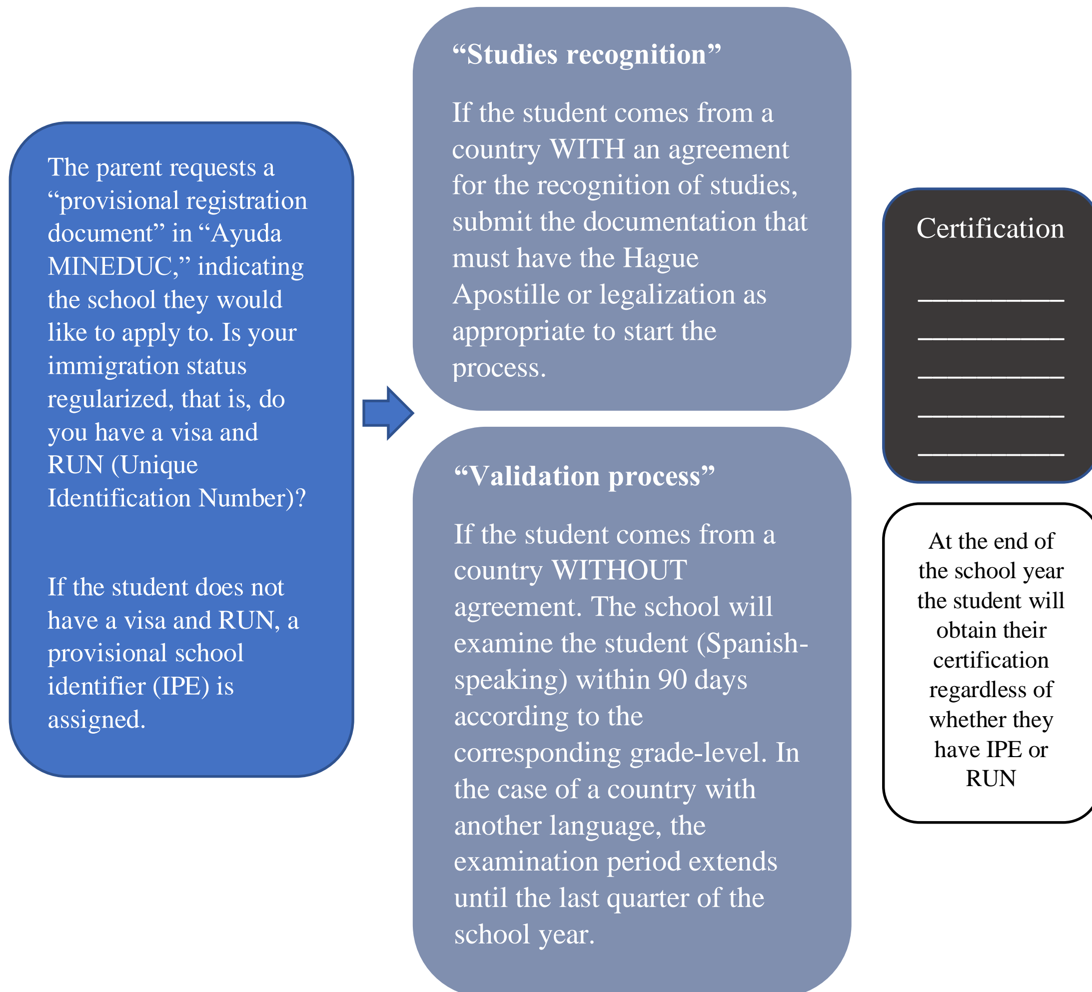
records must follow a “validation process” at the school to which they want to apply. According to MINEDUC:

> “If the student does not have the school documentation to certify the last approved grade [since it does not come from any of the countries with a study recognition agreement], the school must evaluate her to define the grade-level which she will attend. For this, the criterion with the most weight is the student’s age. In this context, it is suggested that students be evaluated in their mother tongue or that the evaluation be delayed until the last quarter of the current year in order to evaluate them once they have had the opportunity to learn the language. All this to validate the previous grade-level to the one in which the student is enrolled [in the new Chilean school] (MINEDUC, 2019).

The following diagram shows the enrollment process of immigrant students.

Figure 1

Enrollment process of immigrant students in Chile



Source: MINEDUC, 2019.

In sum, the Chilean government grants schools the responsibility of enrolling, evaluating, and placing immigrant students. There are no national or regional standard exams. School staff must create and administer personalized tests for each immigrant student evaluating minimum grade-level content knowledge. Moreover, the policy document specifies that if the student's language of origin is other than Spanish, school

staff must "wait until the last quarter of the current year to evaluate them once they have had the opportunity to learn the language." What these instructions mean is unclear. How are non-Spanish-speaking immigrant students placed at school? What criteria do teachers and administrators use for placing non-Spanish-speaking immigrants in grade-level cohorts? Do school staff adjust these placements for the following year based on the student performance at the end-of-year? What happens if the student "does not have the opportunity to learn the language" after or by the last quarter of the school year? Governmental policy documents do not provide school staff-specific procedural and decision-making guidelines. The absence of such guidance could have severe consequences for immigrant students' grade-level placement, and it could affect their possibilities for peer integration.

School Enrollment Policy at the School Level

During the interviews with principals, coordinators, and teachers, I asked about policies regarding immigrant students' enrollment and found that the "validation process" was full of difficulties and misunderstandings. School staff lacked clarity about this process; they implemented different exams to validate immigrant students' studies, depending on the students' respective countries of origin and native language and had minimal support from the government.

According to the interviewees, the validation exam verifies "essential" grade-level school content knowledge or abilities that immigrant students should possess; however, the specific content knowledge and abilities as well as how to evaluate them were left to the discretion of each school. For example, staff from different schools

implemented different types of exams to validate immigrant students' prior studies. While some schools focused on testing for minimum school content knowledge of math and reading comprehension, other schools measured immigrant students' skills or abilities.

Cecilia Echeverría, a coordinator at public School 6, explained how challenging the "validation process" is. On average, she does 70 school validations per year for immigrants from different countries and grade levels. Once immigrant students apply to the school, they receive a table of contents to be evaluated on the exam. She schedules a meeting with their parents to explain the process, gives students time to study, and allows them to ask questions before taking the exam. Although the test evaluated a wide range of school topics, Echeverría highlighted that they mostly focus on measuring students' reading comprehension. At School 4, Mr. Valdivieso evaluates immigrant students' skills through different tests, depending on their country of origin and grade level. He explains:

> *Immigrant kids arrive, and we have to validate their studies. There are two ways. One is called the apostille [apostillamiento], all this diplomatic, consular thing, with seals and stamps, and that is very expensive. And the other way is the internal validation, in which we facilitate the process for them [immigrants' families], so they don't have to spend money or anything, and we do all the process internally. What does it consist of? [Immigrant students] do the exam here, internally. The coordinators [UTP] validate these exams, and we say: "Yes, this student is qualified to be in 9th, 10th, 11th [grade]." Some students*

have to validate all their elementary schools. Imagine what that means—to create all the instruments to ensure that this student—because sometimes they [coordinators] say to us: "She is [ready] for 10th grade." But she is actually [ready] for 8th grade or even 6th grade. So we must make sure that pedagogically, the [immigrant] student is at the level she should be. And, obviously, those instruments cannot be the same for everyone. How could I evaluate Chilean history with Arturo Prat? [An immigrant student] will have no idea. So, about what are we concerned pedagogically? In not measuring knowledge but measuring skills. Then, if I am going to ask about Chile, we make sure that the student will know about latitude, longitude, those kinds of things, universal concepts. In that way, we have had to adapt the instruments to evaluate the academic units according to foreign students' context, and the teachers have to do it. They have had to build different tests to measure that type of skills instead of measuring general knowledge of the Chilean culture and education (Mr. Valdivieso, Principal, Public School 4).

As Mr. Valdivieso explained, the validation exam has to be different and personalized for each immigrant student according to their grade level and country of origin. The test must also focus on universal or abstract concepts rather than context-dependent facts, a decision made after realizing how different the school curriculums were among countries.

In relation to this point, principals and coordinators often shared stigmatized ideas about the previous education of immigrant students, arguing that their school

curriculum in their countries was outdated and weak compared to the Chilean curriculum. Principals and coordinators said: "Some children who come from abroad had a very low level of education;" "Out there you realize that not everyone has reading comprehension;" "We lack information [when assessing immigrant students] because we do not know the curriculum that they have there [country of origin], which must be different in every field." In that way, teachers have a deficit of information regarding the curriculum in students' home countries. This is consistent with Hernández's work (2016), suggesting that teachers often perceive that the national curriculum is more advanced than that of other Latin American countries.

Another difficulty associated with immigrant students' enrollment process was the lack of orientation and support from the central government. School staff reported not having support, training, resources, or information from the government to guide the process. Cecilia Echeverría shared her frustration with validating immigrant students' prior studies:

> *The main problem is the lack of support from the central level. I am clear about one thing: that not everyone knows how to validate studies, because nobody teaches us. How did I learn? Because I am very nosy. I started doing research; I went to the Ministry of Education: "Ministry, teach me because I don´t know." Nobody else does that. I know it because I am the one teaching the rest… The Law 22.072 does not explain how it is done; it does not explain the protocol; it does not explain the times; it does not explain anything (Ms. Echeverría, Coordinator, Public School 6).*

For Cecilia Echeverría, the enrollment process is "exhausting," "[Teachers] are always alone," and "do not receive extra paid time." Similarly, other school authorities shared their frustration with the lack of direction from the government. As a teacher stated, "There is no instruction, no manual, nothing from the government." Because educators have no training or support regarding the enrollment process, their evaluations are likely to be idiosyncratic, and their validity is based entirely on the capacities individual teachers bring to the task of evaluating. This context could easily lead to invalid, non-comparable evaluations that could underestimate immigrant students' knowledge, capacities, and potential. Under this scenario, a question remains: Does the current enrollment process concretely hinder or promote immigrant student integration with their Chilean peers? More research is needed to answer this question; however, below, I present some hypotheses.

School Enrollment Policy and Immigrants' Peer Integration

The processes involved in validation of prior studies and school placement have implications for immigrant student segregation from Chilean peers in three different ways. This policy could lead to inadequate grade-level placement of immigrant students, incubate educators' negative views towards immigrant students, and encourage the formation of "immigrant schools," potentially affecting their integration with Chilean classmates.

First, difficulties with immigrant student school enrollment processes could lead to inappropriate grade-level placement. Wrong grade-level placements not only affect immigrant students' access to appropriate school content but also reduce their

opportunities for interacting with same-age classmates. Previous studies report that immigrant students are often placed in grades below their age cohort. For example, Tijoux and Zapata-Sepúlveda (2019) found that children of immigrants in the north of Chile were older than their classmates as a result of this practice. The authors also reported that children of immigrants felt ashamed of being older and taller than their Chilean peers. In that way, wrong grade-level placement could affect immigrant peer integration.

Second, the immigrant student school enrollment process can trigger school staff burnout that could potentially affect immigrants' social integration with Chilean peers. According to school authorities, this process is confusing and tedious, and it consumes a lot of their work time. They lack formal training, preparation, and government support. Additionally, they hold stigmatized ideas about the previous education of immigrant students. These negative views could have multiple and different causes. However, immigrant students' enrollment process could be a "bad starting point" for educators' and immigrant students' interactions. Therefore, it is critical to understand how educational policies and their implementation at the school level may be implicated in creating and reinforcing stigmatized and prejudiced views of immigrant students. Chapter 2 aims to explore further the views school staff hold of immigrant students and their effect on peer integration.

Finally, the formation of "immigrant schools" and market-oriented policies could have severe consequences for immigrant students' integration at the school level. Scholars have called attention to the formation of "immigrant schools." These schools

have intentionally adopted their policies to recruit immigrant students as a strategy to increase their enrollment as a vehicle for accessing more funding (Mardones, 2006, 2010; Tijoux, 2013). Thus, immigrant students can become "useful children" for schools because they bring funding and support schools' continuity (Tijoux, 2013). In relation to this point, a plausible hypothesis is that schools that see immigrant students as an opportunity to increase their funding are willing to implement the immigrant enrollment process. Moreover, these schools could develop a "background" or "expertise" in enrolling immigrant students, and this "expertise" could be used to attract more immigrant pupils. As Cecilia Echeverría said, she must look for information and learn how to enroll immigrant students. She must rely on her sources without governmental support. In contrast, other schools may show more resistance to admitting immigrant pupils due to the hard, complicated, and confusing enrollment process they must follow. This study does not provide sufficient evidence to fully support these claims. However, market-oriented educational policy and the increased concentration of immigrant students in particular schools need further attention, as it could seriously hinder immigrants' integration with Chilean peers.

Conclusions

This chapter outlines the extent of immigrant students' segregation from their Chilean peers at a national level by looking at immigrants' school composition, the effect of their concentration on students' academic outcomes and school climate indicators, and the school enrollment policies regarding immigrant students. Results contribute to the literature on immigration and school composition. Previous Chilean

qualitative studies warned about immigrant school-level segregation but lacked quantitative evidence to support that assertion. Moreover, this is the first study using segregation indexes to explore school composition trends of immigrant students. Going further, results also contribute to the debate on the association of school-level immigrant student concentration with nonacademic factors such as school climate. According to Fletcher and colleagues (2019), an exclusive focus on academic outcomes may miss other domains in which immigrant peer effects are beneficial.

Based on quantitative and qualitative data, I found: (a) an increasing school segregation trend of immigrant students in high school between 2015 and 2020 in all school types; (b) The presence of immigrant students does not have adverse effects on Chilean and immigrant students' academic achievement and perceptions of their school climate; and (c) Multiple factors in the current school enrollment process of immigrant students appear to be associated with immigrant students' potential integration with their Chilean peers. This policy could encourage the formation of "immigrant schools," incubate educators' negative views towards immigrant students, and lead to inadequate grade-level placement of this group, creating barriers to their social integration with Chilean peers.

First, I found that immigrant students are spatially segregated at the national level, and this segregation is increasing over time. Immigrant students are also less exposed to Chilean peers in public schools. As scholars found in other countries, these schools often have less educational resources and access to social networks (Suárez-Orozco, 2001). The high levels of school segregation need urgent attention. Scholars

from different disciplines and using different terminologies have highlighted the importance of physical proximity between groups as a necessary condition for their potential integration. The intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954, Pettigrew, 1998, Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) and the macrostructural approach (Blau, 1974) suggest that the contact situation or physical proximity increases the opportunity for people to meet, and therefore, form relationships and friendships. Moreover, higher exposure to racial and ethnic out-group members can decrease prejudice and stereotyping among groups (Pettigrew, 1998, Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). In that way, the increasing school segregation trend of immigrant students in Chile will reduce their opportunities to meet, form relationships, and become friends with Chilean classmates.

The growth of the numbers of immigrant students at Chilean schools could concern governmental authorities, policymakers, and educators, arguing that such increases could alter Chilean students' school climate and academic outcomes. However, I found that immigrant students' concentration does not negatively affect Chilean and immigrant students' educational outcomes and school climate. Fixed-effects regression models show that Chilean students that see increasing percentages of immigrant students in their grade-level cohorts report, on average, lower levels of discrimination, insecurity, school violence, and victimization. In that way, results help debunk myths about immigrant students that have implications for their peer integration, especially the myths about their potential adverse effects on Chilean students' academic outcomes and school climate.

Third, this analysis is hypothesis-generating by considering the school enrollment protocol of immigrant students as a policy that could affect immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers. Results show that this policy lacks critical information and guidance, which according to school staff, leads to misunderstanding and limitations. At the central level, the validation process for immigrant students is required. Still, it does not stipulate clear guidelines, standard assessments for different grade levels and content areas, and implementation support at the school level. Consequently, school staff implement different validation exams without preparation, support, and standard assessments, which leads to wide variation in the quality and validity of evaluation. This policy could lead to inappropriate immigrant student grade-level placement, create or reinforce educators' negative attitudes towards immigrant students, and encourage the formation of "immigrant schools." These factors could potentially reduce immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers.

Immigrant students' enrollment process could be a "bad starting point" for interactions between educators and immigrant students. However, more information is needed to understand the nature and meaning of these relationships. The next chapter will move to the school level and examine educators' views of immigrant students, the challenges they face, and their knowledge of immigrant youth relationships with their Chilean peers.

Chapter Two:

National Origin-Based Stereotypes of Immigrant Students in Chilean Schools

Introduction

> *The most susceptible students, I don't mean smarter or more capable, no, but the most assertive ones; those that are always willing to ask and willing to learn, are Venezuelans. Then, it began to drop. For example, the Colombian student is very "salsa," very "moving" [active, enthusiastic,] and is also good about asking but is not that assertive and willing to investigate. Peruvian kids are one stage behind, because Peruvians are more inward [introverted]. They are quieter, capable; especially linguistically, they are very capable, but they are always more introverted. They do not participate unless I ask them to (Mr. Chamorro, Language and Literature Teacher, Public School 7).*

Mr. Chamorro is a 58-year-old Language and Literature teacher at public School 7. This was his first year of teaching; however, he previously had worked as a school inspector for eighteen years in a nearby municipality. As he recounted, his dream was to become a high school teacher, "Every year, I asked the principal to let me teach 10th graders." Unfortunately, he never got this chance, so he decided to quit and applied for a teaching position at School 7. Mr. Chamorro was not afraid of being

a new teacher, since being a school inspector gave him the necessary in-depth knowledge of how the educational system works and how to deal with students. He looked like a school inspector. He had a firm voice and seemed to have everything under control. During classes, he was strict and inflexible with the students, but at the same time, he was warm, caring, and funny. He defined his teaching style as traditional and classic, "I graduated last century, in the '80s, so, I like expository classes." He recognized that he had difficulties incorporating new technology tools in his classes, but he was working on it.

While talking about immigration issues, Mr. Chamorro elaborated on how essential immigrants were for the country, how they contributed to the economy, and how Chileans should welcome and integrate different communities. However, he also believed that immigration should be "organized," "controlled," and "regulated" by the Chilean government. Teaching immigrant students was especially challenging for Mr. Chamorro. As he explained, immigrant students came to Chile with different behaviors, values, and attitudes, depending on their country of origin, and he recognized that he had different expectations for them. As expressed in the quote above, he saw Venezuelans as "assertive," Peruvians as "introverted," and Colombians as "moving" students: more active, impulsive, and intense adolescents compared to their classmates. Mr. Chamorro's statement represents just one example among many other teachers and administrators who construct hierarchical and stigmatized views of immigrant students based on the student's country of origin.

This chapter explores the attitudes, prejudices, and beliefs that principals, coordinators, and teachers have regarding immigrant students and how these images affect immigrants' integration with their Chilean peers. Drawing on stigmatization theories (Goffman, 1963; Link & Phelan, 2001) and the teacher expectancy framework (Weinstein, 2002), I argue that national-origin-based stereotypes shape the way that educators see and understand immigrant students' relationships with their Chilean peers. Moreover, these national-based stereotypes directly affect immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers by reinforcing Chilean students' prejudices toward their immigrant peers and by affecting immigrants' self-identity, confidence, and well-being.

The analysis is based on data from school staff interviews. It also includes interviews with immigrant and Chilean students and classroom observations that point to the effects of educators' beliefs on peer integration. The triangulation of interviews with classroom observations allows linking what teachers said about immigrant students with the teachers' actions including how these labels were communicated to students and the effects on peer dynamics.

This chapter is organized into three sections. First, I describe how school staff constructed a hierarchical view of immigrant students based on their nationalities and how these images varied for immigrant students from Venezuela, Haiti, Peru, Colombia, and China. Secondly, I extend this argument to show how school staff use nation-based stereotypes to describe immigrant students' relationships with their Chilean classmates. Third, I explore how educators' beliefs about immigrant students

and “National-origin-based school practices” such as multicultural celebrations negatively affect immigrants’ peer integration. I conclude with a discussion about the prevalence of nation-based stereotypes at Chilean schools. School staff implementation of school policies that highlight nationality and their use of nation-based stereotypes in classes contribute both to reinforcing bonding ties among immigrant students and to limiting immigrant students’ opportunities with Chilean peers.

“The good,” “the bad,” and “the invisible” students: High levels of national-origin-based stereotypes of immigrant students

One of the main goals of the interviews with teachers, coordinators, and principals was to discuss their views of and experiences with immigrant students, including the challenges they faced as teachers and their knowledge of immigrant students’ relationships with non-immigrant students at school. During these conversations, I noted that immigrant student’s country of origin was always mentioned as a determinant social marker. Educators from different ages, at different school types, and working with different immigrant youths, often referred, for different reasons, to immigrant students’ nationalities. Like Mr. Chamorro, many educators placed stigmatizing labels and projected attributes onto immigrant youth that defined them by their country of origin. For school staff, Venezuelan students reflected positive stereotypes of being hardworking, motivated, and successful recent immigrants; Haitian youth represented deficits, low academic performance, and poor motivation and behavior; Peruvian students were seen as “invisible students,” quieter and more introverted than their peers; and Colombian youth were simultaneously labeled as

impulsive, intense, sociable, and talented at sports. National origin-based stereotypes have a cultural and biological essentialist tone that reflects beliefs about clear and fixed class, racial, and ethnic divisions among different groups.

Venezuelan Students

From the perspective of school staff, Venezuelan youth were the "good students" and were described as high achievers, highly motivated, hard workers, assertive, participative, and willing to learn. The staff recognized that, in general, Venezuelans have higher academic skills than their peers and often occupy the first places in the classroom. According to educators, Venezuelan children mostly came from middle-class professional families and had higher cultural capital than did their Chilean peers. At School 7, Mr. Labra enjoyed teaching Venezuelan youth:

> *Here we have a debate group in which there must be ten children, and seven are Venezuelans. They have a better vocabulary, better language... they are not ashamed; they are not afraid. They [Venezuelan students] are much more proactive than Chileans and, and even than Peruvians themselves. Regarding class participation, Venezuelans are also more extroverted and cheerful. For example, the classes with groups of Venezuelans are more dynamic; they ask; they are supercritical (Mr. Labra, Gym Teacher, Public School 7).*

In Mr. Labra's view, Venezuelan students share a series of positive attributes: they are "fearless," "happier," "proactive," "extroverted," and more "participative" compared to their peers. Venezuelans made his classes more dynamic and entertaining, positively influencing their classmates' learning. Similarly, Mr. Vásquez believed that

Venezuelan students made “a real contribution” to the school. He quickly corrected himself, “I am not saying that the others aren’t [a contribution to the school], but compared to kids from other countries, Venezuelans’ presence and participation in the classroom is great.” According to Mr. Vásquez, these characteristics of Venezuelan students resulted from a superior school curriculum in their country, which he defined as “more universalist and complete.”

Based on responses of other interviewees, the reasons behind Venezuelan students’ “educational exceptionalism” were associated with their “higher cultural capital.” For Ms. Echeverría, coordinator at public School 6, “Venezuelan students’ cultural background is different,” most come from the upper socioeconomic class, and their parents have a high level of education. Ms. Miranda, a young English teacher, believed that Venezuelan students were “the exception” at school; “they are excellent students… they have a much higher cultural level compared to other students.” She also highlighted that Venezuelans have an unusual immigration experience as most of them “were pushed” to move due to the political situation of their country, contrasting with other communities that came to Chile looking for better economic opportunities. Along these lines, school staff often associated Venezuelan immigrants with antisocialist political ideas.

Haitian Students

While Venezuelan youth were perceived as “good students,” teachers and administrators stigmatized Haitians as “bad students.” School staff associated Haitian students with low academic performance, poverty, and disruptive behaviors. These

discourses are highly racialized, and nationality (Haitian) is used as a code to refer to a group coming from a poor and "undeveloped country," from lower classes, non-Spanish speakers, and afro-descendant.

Many teachers felt that Haitian students were low performers. For them, Haitian youth had learning difficulties, mostly because of language limitations. The teachers expressed their frustration with teaching Haitian students, arguing that they often refused to learn Spanish: "If they [Haitian students] don't understand Spanish, their performance will be low, and it's low;" "I don't understand Creole, and apparently, Haitians also refuse to learn Spanish;" "Most or a large percentage [of Haitian students] do not understand, only Chileans listen to me." "I often told them, 'ok, but speak in Spanish, don't speak in Creole, I don't understand you… speak, speak, speak in Spanish,' but some children definitely don't want to." As a result, often, the teachers give less attention to Haitian students in classes.

In addition, school staff from three schools described Haitians as violent and aggressive students, especially with their peers. Mr. Valdivieso is a young principal at School 4—a public institution that serves students with high social vulnerability, many of whom live surrounded by poverty, violence, and drug trafficking. He recounted how impacted the school community was by the "violent behavior of Haitian kids." During the last year, he had several cases of verbal and physical violence committed by Haitian students towards their peers. Intrigued by this new phenomenon, Mr. Valdivieso started to collect information to find out the causes of such violent behaviors. He concluded

that the problem was "Haitians' culture of violence" rooted in Haiti's history of slavery and colonization:

> *We have seen a lot of violence, physical violence [from Haitian students], especially this year due to the arrival of many more Haitians than last year, like an explosion. Well, you know there are migratory waves, and this year, we had a wave of many more Haitians. We were impressed that all the young children were extremely violent in their games, aggressive. John, our cultural mediator, told us that this [violence] has to do with a formation issue, huh, of Haiti's culture. What happens is that [Haitians] obviously come from more working classes, with less education, less access to culture, and a lot of machismo. They are very macho, where that machismo, even is tolerated when expressed as levels of physical violence. In Haiti, the father is the boss, and he can beat his wife, he rules the house, and these are examples that the children see. They still tolerate teachers' violence against children in the classroom, and the parents ask the teachers to correct their children and correct them by hitting them. So, it is a bit like… like living in Chile in the '70s,'80s... I am still neither so old nor so young. I am 45 years old, and I experienced those years when the teachers kept pulling your ears, where they could pinch us, eh, carry on, almost put donkey ears on us, all those things that nowadays will appear on television as a violation of rights, do you notice? Because there is a change in mentality. All of this is tolerated in Haiti. He [John] told us, and we could not believe it. He said that this is part, I am summarizing the whole idea, but this has a lot to*

do with the slave culture with which they [Haitians] grew up. It is symbolic violence internalized by generations, where they accepted that the 'patrón' beat you, that it is normalized by hitting you, therefore, if the 'patrón' did it, because they were slaves with this slave culture, in his family he also did it. So, it is centuries of this domination and culture, eh, patriarchal slavery that costs a lot. And Haiti, with all its problems that you know they have, of economic, social, cultural growth, all the deficiencies, that continues to happen… (Mr. Valdivieso, Principal, Public School 4).

Mr. Valdivieso reproduced several nation-based stereotypes of Haitian students. First, he saw Haiti as an undeveloped and "backward" country, and Haitians coming from lower, poor, and uneducated classes. Second, he stated that Haitian immigrants arrive with a macho and patriarchal culture that normalizes violence as a natural form of social interaction. Consequently, Haitian men are violent with women, and Haitian teachers are violent with their students. The validation of teachers' violence, as the principal notes, was "normal" in Chile forty years ago, but now it is sanctioned by the law[1]. Third, Mr. Valdivieso thought that the main reason behind Haitian students' violent behaviors came from their history of colonialism and slavery. His assumption that Haitians are "slaves of that slave culture" assumes that they are trapped and cannot escape from committing violent behaviors. According to him, Haitians carry an inherent culture that permeated their social life. It is interesting to note that Mr.

[1] Corporal punishment is banned by law in seven Latin American countries, including Chile, Mexico, and Haiti (Trucco & Inostroza, 2017).

Valdivieso's image of Haiti—a poor, underdeveloped, uneducated, and violent country—is constructed in direct contrast to the image of Chile—a rich, developed, educated, liberal, and peaceful country. Making clear boundaries between both countries, the principal's narrative leaves us with the discourse of "Chilean' superiority" relative to the rest of Latin American countries (Walsh, 2019; Larraín, 2001; Staab & Hill, 2006).

These ideas were echoed by teachers and coordinators in two other schools. Mrs. Echeverría believes that Haitian students are intolerant at school. She seemed highly aware of the biases that Haitian youth brought to school, yet she did not reflect on how her ideas were also imbued with stereotypes. For her, Haitian students are close-minded: "They come with a lot of fear, shyness, but also with a lot of prejudice about Chile… They [Haitians] have a powerful cultural issue with homosexuality and gender. For them, I will tell you gently, someone gay or trans is not well seen; to them, it's almost equivalent to a crime. Because their culture is like that." The coordinator explained how the school staff was working hard to "open Haitian students' minds" and try to keep away the stigmas and prejudices they had on gender and sexual orientation differences. At no time Mrs. Echeverría recognized that her ideas were also imbued with stereotypes. This "blindness" reflects Link and Phelan's conceptualization of stigma as deeply linked with power. As the authors say: "Power allows the identification of differentness, the construction of stereotypes, the separation of labeled persons into categories, and the full execution of disapproval, rejection, exclusion, and discrimination" (Link & Phelan, 2001, p. 367). In a power position, teachers and

coordinators constructed stereotypes about Haitian students, in which class, race, history, and cultural differences converge. It is the staff's power position that allows them to disapprove, reject, and exclude this group.

Although educators widely shared mostly negative images of Haitian students, two teachers felt that Haitians were happy students, and one coordinator highlighted their responsibility and commitment to the school.

The negative image educators hold regarding Haitian students is consistent with what international scholars have found. Historically Haitian immigrants have encountered negative stereotypes and prejudice and are often seen as part of an inferior and low socioeconomic class (Clerge, 2014; Zephir, 2004). Haitian immigrants are placed at the bottom of the ladder (Zephir, 1996), and at schools, Haitian students encounter racial and ethnic discrimination from teachers and peers (Clerge, 2014). Following global trends, in Chile, Haitian immigrants have become one of the most excluded communities. They are targets of discrimination threats because of their race, language, and social class simultaneously (Rojas Pedemonte, Amode, & Vásquez, 2017). Most of them engage in informal and precarious labor—with poorly paid salaries and high levels of risk and abuse—and overcrowded access and poor housing conditions (Rojas Pedemonte et al., 2017). In the educational context, it is clear how Haitians' social position in Chilean society is reproduced at the school level. For the school staff, Haitian students are "at the bottom of the ladder."

Peruvian Students

In between Haitian and Venezuelan students, teachers and administrators characterized Peruvians as the "invisible students." When speaking of Peruvian youth, educators stated: "There is not much to say," "They don't cause any problems," "I don't have any issues with them." Peruvians were simultaneously seen as responsible, participative, and "linguistically capable" students, but also "sometimes slower" and "lazy." The invisibility of this group was also evident when asking educators about classroom composition. While students from Haiti, Venezuela, Colombia, China, and the Dominican Republic were clearly identified, the teachers often missed Peruvian students or had doubts about their country of origin:

> *Teacher: In the class you observed, there are Venezuelans and... [thinking], no, all are Venezuelans.*
>
> *EVV: Really?*
>
> *Teacher: Yes, ah, there is a Peruvian [student]. Yes, I forgot (Mr. Matus, Language and Literature Teacher, Private-subsidized School 1).*

A more in-depth analysis of teachers' discourses reveals that "Peruvian students' invisibility" is associated with two intertwined ideas. First, the school staff see Peruvian students as culturally similar to Chilean youth. Second, as the oldest community of immigrants in Chile, in teachers' views, Peruvians were once visible in the past but slowly started to adapt to the Chilean culture, and therefore, lost visibility.

The first time Mr. Labra taught gym classes to immigrant students was in 2005 when a group of Peruvian families arrived at school:

> *I remember that I began to interact with foreign children when I started working in "El Borgoño" in 2005, 2006, around there. But at that time, you did not see as many [immigrant students] as now. At that time, the first foreigners with whom I interacted were the Peruvians, Peruvian children. I tell you, in those years, there must have been a couple of Peruvian children by cohort, no more than that, and then, after 2010 to date, there was a demographic explosion [of immigrants]. But, from my experience with foreign children in those years, I did not have any problem. In general, I have the impression that the Peruvian is similar to us, in the sense that it's difficult for him to enter [a group]. They [Peruvians] are observers; they tend to be a little reserved. They have a lot of things in common with Chileans. The Peruvian is shy, and later when he adapts, he interacts with all his peers. By contrast, as I said, Caribbean people, Colombians, and Venezuelans have a stronger personality. In general, I didn't have any problem with foreign children. The first ones were the Peruvians, and there was not a problem… However, several times I had to control some disruptive kids that bothered the weakest children, especially in this case, the Peruvians, they bothered them at that time... (Mr. Labra, Gym Teacher, Public School 7).*

As Mr. Labra emphasized, "Peruvian students are similar to us." They are quiet, shy, introverted, and observers, "They are not a problem." Being similar to Chileans is conceived as a positive attribute. In the end, he recognized that Peruvians were sometimes "weak kids" and suffered bullying by their peers. In the same way, four

other interviewees agreed that Peruvian students experienced discrimination and violence in the past, but over the years, their situation improved. In the teachers' opinions, most of them are well integrated at school. As the oldest group of immigrants in Chile, Peruvians "gain their space" at schools. Mrs. Echeverría elaborated on this point:

> *Ah [sighs], Peruvians here, it's like, it's that we are not very, I don´t know if there is much difference with the Peruvian population. Eh, and it's like here, kids, Chileans with Peruvians and vice versa, there is no greater problem in that sense. Yes, like that Peruvian integration problem was experienced in the '90s, there were important discrimination issues with the theme that "You eat pigeons," and blah blah. But since Chile knew the Peruvian idiosyncrasies, we are well, integrated (Ms. Echeverría, Coordinator, Public School 6).*

Thus, being from the oldest community of immigrants in Chile, sharing cultural features with Chileans, and letting the adopted country "know Peruvian idiosyncrasies" are factors that give Peruvian students some respect at school. These ideas are relevant as they show how the image of a particular community changes over time.

Colombian Students

Colombian students were simultaneously labeled as impulsive, intense, sociable, and talented at sports by educational staff. Teachers and coordinators consistently referred to this group as impulsive, outgoing, and sociable students. According to the interviewees: "Colombians have a stronger personality," "They are super extroverts by nature," "The Colombian is defiant and speaks loudly," "It is well-

known that they [Colombians] are happy, they speak loudly." In addition, Colombian students were commonly perceived as good dancers and enthusiastic participants in extracurricular activities: "We have a dancer, his name is Rodrigo [from Colombia], spectacular how he dances, and of course, everyone else follows him."

The strong personality of Colombian students was occasionally associated with disruptive behaviors. At two schools, educators saw Colombians as aggressive and confrontational students who often had trouble with their teachers and peers. One interviewee associated "Colombian immigrants' aggressiveness" with a culture of "drugs and trafficking" and gangsters.

African-descendant students from Colombia were also labeled as talented students at sports with high physical and athletic performance. Mrs. Rivadeneira was proud of *los niños de color* ("kids of color") from Colombia, who since their arrival immediately excelled in sports:

> *In sports, they are 'secos' [amazing]… We have the Olympics at the institutional level, and we win a lot with our foreigners, more than with the Chileans [laughs]… And yes, I don't know, genetics too [laughs]. They run a lot. They are better than the others. The kids of color are impressive... with them, we win [laughs] (Mrs. Rivadeneira, Principal, Private-subsidized School 3).*

Mrs. Rivadeneira reproduces racial stereotypes about Colombian students that focus on their value for their physical prowess. Her words sound like she is paying them a

"compliment," placing positive attributes on Colombian youth rather than stigmatizing them.

Ernesto Acosta, a 33-year-old gym instructor at the same school, also thought that Colombian students were better at sports than their peers: "There are physical qualities that some students clearly have, depending on their race, their genetic condition." Hayes and Sugden (1999) found that the genetic argument to explain African American students' physical advantage over white students prevails within the physical education profession, despite the lack of scientific evidence for it. The authors concluded that "while it is important to recognize achievement in sport, the overemphasis on black sporting prowess in schools is detrimental to the overall social and intellectual development of black students" (Hayes & Sugden, 1999, p. 93).

Chinese Students

Even though there were only a few Chinese students in three of the schools analyzed, this group also carries stereotypes. In two schools, teachers saw Chinese students as hardworking, responsible, and "advanced" youth. Being a Chinese student was associated with being from the upper class. Ms. Lombardi was proud of Ayako's performance. "In math; she is doing excellent. Her GPA is 5.9, above the class average. However, if she spoke Spanish, she would do much better than now." She highlighted how responsible Ayako is, how beautiful her writing is, and how complete her class notes are. Ms. Lombardi referred several times to Ayako's country of origin, "It is cultural; Chinese people are hardworking."

Mrs. Rivadeneira shared a similar view. In her view, Chinese children were "more advanced" than their peers; they were faster learners and more responsible than other immigrant students. Like Venezuelan students, teachers perceived that Chinese immigrants come from the upper socioeconomic classes. According to Ms. Rivadeneira, "In general, the Chinese are people who do not have economic problems. They arrive in Chile with already established commerce stores, in a very good situation." For example, she accounted for how Chinese parents could pay for private Spanish lessons to help their children improve at school. It is interesting than this group of second language learners did not suffer from the negative stereotypes associated with language barriers as Haitian students did.

As data show, school staff construct a hierarchical view of immigrant students based on their country of origin. They distinguish immigrants' otherness by using their nationality as the primary and most noticeable category. However, there are clear racial, ethnic, and class divisions associated with immigrants' countries of origin.

In relation to this point, teachers' discourses have a cultural and biological essentialist_tone. From a psychological approach, cultural essentialism refers to a way of thinking and understanding social groups as having some natural, essential, and fixed characteristics that determine their identity and explain their behaviors (e.g., Bastian & Haslam, 2008; Haslam, Rothschild, & Ernst, 2002; Rangel & Keller, 2011). According to Phillips, "when people talk of 'cultural practices,' or seek to explain the strange behavior of their neighbors by reference to something termed their culture, they conjure up a simplified and homogenized thing" (Phillips, 2010, p. 54). In that way, school staff

do not only construct stereotypes about immigrant students, but they see them as carrying an essential, distinct, and unchangeable national culture with them. Moreover, in the case of Colombian students, teachers also hold biologist essentialism views, in which particular "genes" have clear connotations (Zeromskyte & Wagner, 2017), in this case, genes with "high physical and athletic performance." This point is relevant, as educators see and explain immigrants' behaviors as a reflection of a fixed and unchangeable culture without considering that culture and racialization change. As Omi and Winant (2014) explain, "race is a social construction and not a fixed, static category rooted in some notion of innate biological differences" (p. 27). In the authors' views, race is socially constructed, historically fluid, and continually in formation. "No social category rises to the level of being understood as a fixed, objective, social fact" (Omi & Winant, 2014, p. 103). Therefore, "race" or "nationality" as social categories should be understood as social constructions that are historically situated and susceptible to change.

Peer Relationships: The Extension of the National Origin-Based Stereotype

Principals, coordinators, and teachers depicted stigmatized and racialized images of immigrant students depending on their country of origin. These images also permeated educators' explanations and expectations of how immigrant students related to Chilean peers at school. For school staff, immigrant students are "self-segregated" and associated mostly with other immigrant students. The immigrants' countries of origin were referred to as the main reason for explaining different levels of peer segregation. While Venezuelans were "nostalgic," Colombians and Haitians were

"disruptive" and "aggressive" students who avoid relating with Chilean classmates and "prefer" to connect with other immigrant youths. In this view, educators do not see immigrants' peer segregation as a problem to solve but as an exclusionary behavior that comes about from their own choice.

When asked about peer dynamics and friendship of immigrant students at private-subsidized School 1, most of the school staff agreed that immigrants, mostly from Venezuela, were well-treated by their peers; they felt comfortable at school and developed strong ties with Chilean youth. The school coordinator, Alan Campino, said: "The truth is that we have not had to deal with conflicts between them [Venezuelan and Chilean students], the relationship with their peers is quite good, the reception they have here is also good, and the truth is that they relate quite well with their peers, with teachers, with everyone." The 9th-grade-A head teacher at the same school agreed. She thought that in her classroom, immigrants were not socially segregated. "They get along well… they treat each other well; they are good friends. There is plenty of equal respect."

However, going deeper into peer relationships, educators recognized that the connections between immigrants and Chileans were good, but Venezuelan students often "segregated themselves" or "auto-excluded" from their Chilean peers. According to Ms. Accardi, Venezuelan students, especially girls, preferred having Venezuelan friends. "I feel that Venezuelans are more nostalgic about their country…" She implied that immigrant students' cultural affinity drove the pattern rather than Chilean peers' attitudes or behaviors. Alan Campino admitted, "Venezuelans are generally together.

There are groups of Venezuelans who get together, in the yard, 15, 20 children from different cohorts, who share their nationality. The same in the cafeteria, they get together for lunch…" Nevertheless, he reiterated that this did not mean that they had a bad relationship with their Chilean classmates. Mr. Campino thought that it was a "temporary thing," part of being a Venezuelan immigrant. In that way, missing or being nostalgic for their countries is seen as a natural and temporary behavior by Venezuelan students.

The school staff at public School 7 made a similar argument. Educators felt that Venezuelan students "self-segregated" themselves from Chilean students because they preferred to be around other Venezuelan youth. Mr. Labra felt he knew in-depth students' interactions and friendships: "In general, what I have seen is that foreigners here are very "aclanados" [clannish]. They are like geese, they all go to the same side, they date and become engaged among themselves… Well, I think it's because most Venezuelans have been arriving for a maximum of two years, so they are beginning to know." For Mr. Labra and other teachers as well, Venezuelan youth prefer to connect and interact with other Venezuelan students. They do not see Venezuelan peer segregation as a problem to address at school.

The discourse that Venezuelan students are well-treated, do not have problems with peers, and are only "temporarily segregated" from their Chilean classmates should be understood in the context that Venezuelans are seen as "good students." As explained before, educators see Venezuelans as high achievers, responsible, and participative students compared to their peers. This positive view of Venezuelan

students could be associated with the model minority stereotype. In the United States, the "model minority" discourse has been used to explain the high academic performance of Asian students at school. According to Li (2005), Asian students are stereotyped as high achievers, intelligent, perseverant, obedient, respectful, and highly successful compared to their classmates. This discourse is seen as an exception to the rule because it challenges the general assumption that immigrant students would always perform below the mainstream. Although the model minority stereotype could be seen as a "positive stereotype" of Asian students, a group of scholars argues that such discourse is problematic (Li, 2005; Qin, Way, & Rana, 2008). According to Li (2005), assuming that Asian students are "better" or have "fewer problems" compared to other minority groups could result in less attention to and support for their academic and social needs. Similarly, teachers' emphasis on Venezuelan students' "self-segregation" and their inability to see segregation by Chilean peers may be related to the idea that they are "good students" and do not have problems or needs.

Venezuelan students were not the only ones that "self-segregated" from their peers. According to school staff, Haitian and Colombian youth also excluded themselves from their Chilean classmates. At public Schools 4 and 5, most of the teachers, coordinators, and principals thought that immigrant students' relationships with Chilean peers were complicated and recognized seeing high levels of peer segregation. Explaining this issue, educators referred to immigrants' country of origin as a determinant factor shaping peer relations. For example, at School 5, three educators

explained how complicated the relationship between Haitian and Chilean students was. Mr. Montenegro explained:

> *Teacher: I think that [peer relationships] have been negative because since I arrived here, there have been at least six, seven fights between Haitians and Chileans. The Haitian, in general, is easily angered and violent.*
>
> *EVV: Is there any fight that you have seen? Could you give me an example?*
>
> *Teacher: Yes, I saw a fight in this same classroom a few weeks ago—a Chilean with a Haitian back there. I don´t know who insulted whom, but they hit each other, punch themselves [each other], punch! (Mr. Montenegro, Language and Literature teacher, Public School 5).*

Mr. Montenegro explained that he had never seen these levels of violence before. According to him, the main reason behind students' tensions was once again "Haitians' culture of violence," especially of Haitian boys, "they get angry, aggressive, and violent very easily with their classmates… and they don't like to share with Chileans." Curiously, he added that after several fights, last month, the school decided to expel three Chilean students because of "bad coexistence." Why did the school make this decision? Why did they not expel the Haitian students too, if supposedly they were the ones who brought violence to the school? Mr. Montenegro did not have answers to these questions. However, to him, it was clear that Haitian students were disruptive and violent and segregated themselves from their Chilean peers.

Similarly, at public School 4, Mr. Valdivieso firmly believed that Haitian and Colombian students were responsible for increasing the violence at school. In his view,

the "Haitians' culture of systematic violence and machismo" and "Colombians' legacy of gangs and drug trafficking" were behind the tensions between the students. The principal reflected on how well peers treated Haitian students, and that Haitian students did not suffer from any form of discrimination or racism at school. In his opinion, Haitian youth were the ones who segregated themselves and discriminated against Chilean peers: "we found ourselves with a serious problem, which is violence... but not towards Haitians. It is the other way around. In fact, Haitians are treated super well; nobody bothers them; it is [violence] from Haitians mainly towards their peers." He also explained how Colombian students recently brought a culture of gangs. "For two weeks, we had fights between Colombian and Chilean students at recesses. Fights that you don't want to see. There were twenty Colombians on the one side, twenty Chileans on the other… they were students from 7th to 11th grade." The principal firmly believed that the root of the problem was the "Colombian culture," their country of origin, and the way they interacted with their peers.

The experience of Mr. Valdivieso and other educators as well reflects the prominence of nation-based stereotypes of immigrant students in explaining peer dynamics. School staff recognized that immigrant students self-segregated and related mostly with other immigrant students. Still, rather than seeing them as victims of exclusionary behaviors, these educators felt that immigrants themselves did not want to integrate and often blamed them for their social exclusion. However, of 22 school staff interviews, three educators offered a different discourse about interactions between immigrants and Chilean students.

Mr. Fariña works at Mr. Valdivieso's school. He taught Language and Literature classes to high school students. He had 26 years of experience working in public schools and was passionate about improving the Chilean educational system. He defined himself as a "Latin Americanist." "I feel like a Latin American; I don´t feel like a Chilean, but rather I feel Peruvian, Bolivian, Ecuadorian, Dominican, Colombian, Haitian, whatever country it is, that corresponds to Latin America. As Simón Bolívar and later Ernesto Che Guevara once said: Latin America is one." He had a favorable opinion about immigrant students, "They have strengthened the Chilean public education." In his point of view, immigrants were participative, responsible, and respectful students. Despite this fact, he also had national-origin-based stereotypes of different groups. He also described Chilean youth as "lazy" and "disrespectful" students. When describing immigrant-Chilean interactions, I was impressed that he started by depicting Chilean students' attitudes toward their immigrant peers. "The Chilean [students] segregate." "It is difficult for them to form a relationship with immigrants." "They avoid this relationship." "Those who don´t respect, who attack immigrants are Chileans." For example, he talked about Jaime, a 15-years-old student from Trujillo, Peru, who experienced several episodes of bullying and harassment committed by Chilean classmates. Even in one incident, they burned Jaime's backpack.

Another example of a different discourse was offered by Mrs. Canals, the librarian at public School 5. I was not supposed to interview school staff other than principals, coordinators, and teachers. However, after meeting Mrs. Canals at the library, she told me "she had a lot to say about School 5." She had been working for

twenty-four years at this school— twenty years as a visual art teacher, and four as the school librarian. She started showing me the library, her space, a tiny and precarious room with Mrs. Canals' desk, and three small round tables for the students. Proudly she showed me how she had organized the books according to different themes: "Chilean history," "geography," "gender and feminism," "mythology," "science fiction," etc. The shelves looked empty. There were no more than six books per topic. I asked her if students used to go to the library to read and borrow books. She responded, "Not that much." Our conversation lasted for an hour. She told me the history of School 5, how the school changed due to the enrollment of indigenous students in the late 90s, and now with the increase in Haitian students, and its "Intercultural Educational Project." As Mr. Montenegro stated, Mrs. Canals recognized that school violence had significantly increased over the last years. However, from her perspective, Haitian youth had nothing to do with this increase: "It is a social problem." "I would say that now it's more complicated. It is not because of the foreign students' arrival. It is because of the times we live in, the society we live in, the levels of violence with which we are, all that… It is a social problem." She added, "If there were only Chilean students at this school, perhaps there would be more problems with violence." The words of Mrs. Canals reflect a more elaborate and reflective interpretation of the increasing trend of school violence. According to her, students' conflicts are embedded in a broader structure, in a society that has changed and has become more complex over the years. In addition, similar to the comments of Mr. Fariña, she felt that Haitian-Chilean students' tensions often came from "problematic and violent Chilean youth."

She described the climate in different classrooms and ended up concluding that the classrooms in which there were more conflicts among Haitian and Chilean youth were the ones that had "problematic Chilean students." She added that School 5 enrolled a vast population of students from low-income families, and some of them have criminal records or problems with the law.

The testimonies of Mr. Fariña and Mrs. Canals offered a different explanation behind immigrants' segregation from Chilean peers, complicating previous discourse whose central focus was on immigrant students' behaviors and attributes. For Mr. Fariña and Mrs. Canals, immigrant students were often victims of discrimination and violence from "problematic" Chilean youth. But why did they have such a different perception about the segregation of immigrants from Chilean students, compared with the views of, for example, Mr. Valdivieso and Mr. Montenegro, who worked at the same schools? Various reasons could affect these disparities. Mr. Fariña and Mrs. Canals have extensive experience working at schools. In the case of Mrs. Canals, she worked at the library, a space that allowed her to reflect broadly on students' relationships. However, these discourses are isolated and rare. The majority of the teachers shared nation-based stereotypes of immigrant students in explaining peer dynamics and blame them for their own social segregation.

It is impressive that most of the school staff did not refer to immigrants' experiences of stereotypes and discrimination, causing peer exclusion. As shown in Chapter 1, on average, immigrant students reported more discrimination experiences than did their Chilean peers (49% versus 43%, respectively). Of this group, 58% felt

discriminated against because of their immigrant status (Data from the Educational Quality Measurement System SIMCE, 10th graders 2018). In addition, fixed-effects regression models showed that increasing the share of immigrant students in their cohort was associated with lower levels of school violence. This point was not reflected in most of the principals, coordinators, and teachers' discourses. Conversely, the presence of immigrant students, mainly from Colombia and Haiti were linked to increasing peer tension, conflicts, and fights. They blamed immigrants for their social exclusion, and they expected them also to solve the problem. Although more information is needed to understand educators' negative perception of immigrant groups, a plausible hypothesis is that teachers excessively focus on how immigrant students "change" the social and learning environment at school rather than focusing on the nature and development of interactions between Chilean students and immigrants.

National Origin-Based Stereotypes of Immigrant Students and Peer Integration

What role do principals, coordinators, and teachers play in perpetuating nation-based-stereotypes of immigrant students? How do they communicate these beliefs to students? How do these stigmatized representations affect the relationship between immigrant students and their Chilean peers? Students' interviews and classroom observations reveal that racist and classist nation-based stereotypes toward immigrant students were often expressed by school staff in front of classmates. These occurrences affect both Chilean and immigrant students' peer relationships by intimidating

immigrant youth and reinforcing Chileans' prejudices toward their immigrant classmates.

Teachers Sharing Stereotypes in the Classroom

In general, immigrant students were aware that their country of origin was a significant social marker at school. Many immigrant students reported feeling embarrassed, stressed, and humiliated when teachers shared negative messages about their home countries in front of the class. These situations became extremely sensitive when teachers made racist judgments about particular immigrant communities. For example, Rosa, a 15-year-old Peruvian girl at private-subsidized School 1, noted that it was common to hear stigmatized images of immigrant communities depending on their country of origin—a situation that was often normalized and accepted at her school. According to Rosa, one day, a teacher affirmed that "all Peruvians were lazy" in front of her peers. "It was last year; that a teacher told my peer Loreto that all Peruvians were lazy. My classmate started to cry, and I was furious because I am Peruvian too." Rosa could not understand why the teacher made such a claim. She had excellent grades, participated in class, and was not lazy at all. Although the teacher later apologized to Peruvian students, Rosa believed his claim that "Peruvians are lazy" remained and resonated in the minds of all immigrant and Chilean students.

At School 1, two Venezuelan girls felt upset when teachers shared their political ideas about the political situation in Venezuela. Carolina, a 14-year-old Venezuelan student, explained what happened in a history class:

We were talking about the independence of Latin American countries, and something related to Los Libertadores, and he [Mr. Lelio] referred to the subject of Bolívar, who is Venezuelan. And there the topic began, and he started to talk about how good Chavismo was. I felt overwhelmed, and I responded to him, I raised my voice. The teacher said to me, 'No, what you said is wrong.' I ended up crying, I ended up crying, horrible, and I left the classroom (Carolina, Venezuelan student, 14 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).

Carolina interpreted Mr. Lelio's claims as a direct attack toward Venezuelan immigrants who escaped from the political situation of their country. As she expressed, she was angry, furious, and mad. She was scared that her peers would think all Venezuelan students had the same political ideas or would associate her with right-wing ideologies.

At public School 5, Chilean students sensed that their teachers were tired and frustrated with Haitian classmates, mainly because of their "language limitations" and "disruptive behaviors." Melissa, a Chilean girl, thought that adults often shared racist images of Haitian students at school. A teacher even referred to Haitian students as "animals." Melissa said: "For example, when Haitians are sitting badly, [the teacher] told them that here, they are in Chile, and in Chile, they have to sit well. Not like where they come from, where they could sit as they wanted, like animals." Although Melissa recognized that the teacher made a racist claim about Haitian immigrants, in some way, she said she understood him. Some teachers just cannot deal with Haitian students' misbehavior. For her, the problem is these students' country of origin: Haiti. She agreed

that Haitian peers were loud, disrespectful, and restless, affecting the classroom climate and peer relationships. Thus, teachers' racist labels reinforce and validate Melissa's view of her Haitian classmates.

During classroom observations, I observed frequent public incidents in which teachers stigmatized immigrant students based on their country of origin. These situations created odd moments in which immigrants seemed uncomfortable and embarrassed. For example, during a gym class at School 3, Mr. Acosta implicitly reproduced the stereotype that Colombian students were superior at sports. He tried to convince Joel, a tall and strong afro-descendent Colombian youth, to participate in a school tournament:

> *Teacher: We have an activity this Friday about the theme of athletics… Here there are students; there are several students who are going to the Olympics and are going to compete. We have to choose a triathlon team. We think that you [pointing Joel] have the qualifications. What place did you reach in the last competition?*
>
> *Colombian student: Fourth.*
>
> *Teacher: Joel, I believe that your abilities, due to your biotype, are appropriate for competing and representing the school (Mr.Acosta, Gym teacher, Private-subsidized School School 3, 10.09.2018).*

Joel was not convinced that he should participate in the tournament. He looked down, embarrassed, and did not say anything else. He seemed uncomfortable with the teachers' assumption that his "biotype" was superior for competing. This situation

could be seen as an isolated and irrelevant teacher-student interaction. However, as explained before, this teacher firmly believed that Colombian students were better at sports than their peers. As he explained in the interview, Colombian students had "physical qualities" a "genetic condition" associated with their (Afro-descendant) heritage. In that way, Joel's "biotype" has clear nation and racial meanings that stereotype Colombian students.

At public School 7, I observed another uncomfortable moment in Mr. Vázquez's Orientation class. The topic of this class was the "Institutional Educational Project." Students had to discuss school history, its structure, mission, and identity. Although this Orientation class aims to promote students' participation, the teacher led the discussion and often made general assumptions. After half an hour, Mr. Vázquez asked: "Do you believe that our school has acquired an identity that differentiates us from other schools?" A Chilean girl responded: "Yes, because more and more foreigners are coming here." Then, the teacher opened a conversation about how the increase in immigrant enrollment had impacted the school. Students did not seem too excited with this topic, so to motivate the discussion, Mr. Vázquez said:

Teacher: We will debunk some immigration myths. For example, one parent from this classroom said that the school is going from bad to worse, and that is because of the arrival of foreign students.

Chilean student: The best averages are from foreign students.

Teacher: You have hit the nail on the head!

Chilean student: I am Chilean, and I am [academically] terribly bad.

Teacher: At the award ceremony, of the seven best averages, six were from foreigners, from Venezuelan students. When foreigners arrive, they contribute.
Immigrant student: A Chilean did not know anything about the history of her own country.
Teacher: The history champion in 10th grade is from Venezuela. There is a school near here that will exceed the enrollment of students, and more than 50% are foreign students. This is not an attack on us as Chileans; it is cultural interaction. Do you know the Russian student, right? Petrosky? He didn't know how to speak Spanish, and he learned it in five months. They are students who give a substantial contribution to the classroom, so we must take advantage of it (Mr. Vásquez, Head teacher 9th grade, Orientation Class, Public School 7, 11.21.2018).

The classroom climate was tense. A group of immigrant students felt uncomfortable, and a few Chilean students rolled their eyes. Mr. Vázquez made claims and ignored students' exchanges. He associated Venezuelan students with high academic performance and a "real contribution" to the school. Chilean students themselves were represented as low performers compared to their Venezuelan peers, and one Venezuelan boy even laughed at Chilean peers' "ignorance" of Chilean history. Despite Mr. Vásquez's good intentions to debunk immigration myths and highlight Venezuelan students' strengths, these "positive stereotypes" should not be overlooked. Qin, Way, and Rana (2008) found that teachers' favoritism toward Chinese American students damaged their peer relationships and was often a source of discrimination and

harassment. In that way, reinforcing and normalizing Venezuelan students' stereotypes and comparing them with non-immigrant students may reinforce previous stigmas and increase the perceived differences among students, thus affecting their relationships.

"National-Origin-Based School Practices"

Sharing national-origin-based stereotypes about immigrant students in front of the class was just one way in which teachers affected peer relationships between Chilean and immigrant students. These stigmas are deeply embedded in the educators' minds and guided their actions in certain situations. However, during the fieldwork, I also noticed that educators constantly referred to school-level practices that aim to "integrate" immigrant students with their Chilean peers by making their country and culture visible. I labeled such practices as "National-origin-based school practices," which include informal and formal practices and activities adopted by schools to promote a cultural diversity discourse and facilitate immigrant-Chilean students' relationships. However, data show these practices often alter immigrants' peer integration with their Chilean peers by reinforcing the idea of "otherness" and "difference," creating tensions with Chilean classmates and promoting bonding ties among immigrant youth. Finally, for educators, immigrants' peer integration is making visible their nationality and culture.

In tune with a "diversity discourse," some schools have adopted informal practices that make visible immigrant students' countries of origin and culture. These practices range from requiring students to introduce themselves by saying their country of origin or forcing them to bring up their immigrant background in classes. Ms.

Rivadeneira recognized that students' nationality mattered at her school. As an example, she said:

> *One thing that happens in the classroom is that when someone arrives, they [students] always ask you what's your name and where you are from because it's very well established that we are not all Chileans. Moreover, when children introduce themselves, generally, the first day of class in all the subjects, it happens to you that they say their names and their nationality. In fact, one of the early reports I received from new teachers expressed their surprise about children stating: "my name is X, and I'm Chilean." And what does it matter? But then, the teachers realize that one student was Chilean, another was Bolivian, Argentinian, Mexican, and so on. So now, this practice is part of our school identity (Mrs. Rivadeneira, Principal, Private-subsidized School 3).*

Mrs. Rivadeneira did not initially know why students presented themselves by saying their names and country of origin, neither did she know where or when this practice started. However, highlighting students' nationality is now considered normal and "part of the school identity."

At School 2, Ms. Lombardi taught literature and language classes. When talking about classroom dynamics, she said that every time she taught Chilean culture, she required all immigrant students to compare and share what happened in their countries of origin. "I don't know if you notice, but every time they [immigrants] speak, they say: 'In Ecuador, this doesn't happen,' or 'In Colombia, this is different.' They are always making comparisons." Although Ms. Lombardi recognized this dynamic is

challenging for immigrant students, especially for those who feel pressure to participate and share their home country experiences, she believed it is a learning opportunity for all her students.

For Mrs. Rivadeneira and Ms. Lombardi, to continually point out immigrants' countries of origin was seen as a regular and normalized practice at school. It allows students to know each other and to make visible immigrants' backgrounds in their home country. But as I showed earlier, immigrants' nationality has fixed meanings grounded in cultural and biological essentialist ideologies. So, informal practices that continually refer to immigrants' countries of origin must be analyzed with caution, being aware of the consequences that this may cause regarding immigrant students' feelings and its potential effects on peer integration.

Schools also have adopted formal practices and activities that highlight national-based-origin views of immigrant students, such as multicultural celebrations and extracurricular activities. According to school staff, multicultural festivals are essential for making visible immigrants' culture and promoting dialogue, tolerance, and respect among the school community. All students must actively participate in these events, showing a country's culture through dance, food, clothes, and performances. However, there is no major reflection about the real impact of multicultural celebrations and how they could affect student integration with their Chilean peers.

Educators from all schools spoke proudly about their multicultural celebrations, a tradition born due to the increase in immigrant students. They explained how the "Chilean Independence Holiday," that takes place each September, was replaced by

multicultural festivities. The traditional "September 18" was transformed into the "Latin American Party," "Folkloric Gala," "Feast of All Nations," and "Multicultural Carnival." The organization and logistics of these events differed among schools. In some schools, each grade level must perform a Latin American traditional dance, cook traditional food, and decorate the school with different flags. In other schools, immigrant students are in charge of a stand that exhibits their culture. However, teachers and principals agreed that multicultural celebrations are successful practices for integrating immigrant students socially.

> *For example, we created the "Peña Folclórica" that is held in September. In previous years, only dances from Chile were presented that had to do with the north, center, and south [of the country]. Now, we even changed the name to "Gala Folclórica Latinoamericana" and include dances from all countries. So, it is much closer also for [immigrant] students. We decorated the school with flags from the students' countries' (Mr. Campino, Coordinator, Private-subsidized School 1).*

> *Due to the high diversity of students here, we usually do activities that are related to them. In October, we have a celebration which is the "party of all nations." Each grade level is assigned by lottery to a South American or Latin American country and has to prepare a stand showing everything that has to do with its culture. Uhh… I don´t know, historical data, gastronomy, visual arts, sports, architecture. So, it is a very useful activity because students must explain to their peers what happens in their countries. They collaborate building their*

stands… It happens a lot that [for example] other Venezuelan students approach the Venezuelan stand, and they say, "oh, I remember the country where I lived." So, we work a lot with that… (Mr. Olivo, Head teacher 9th grade, Public School 6).

Our school works with "cultural diversity." In fact, we do a "multicultural fair." The national holidays are no longer national holidays, but a multicultural festivity in which students do not only perform the national dances but also the national dances of Brazil, Colombia,… depending on the students enrolled… The Indigenous New Year is no longer indigenous; instead, it is the Latin American folk New Year (Ms. Salazar, Coordinator, Public School 5).

Principals and teachers see multicultural celebrations as a way to promote "diversity" and a space to facilitate immigrants' social integration. In other words, the meaning of peer integration is associated with making visible immigrants' culture through formal activities like multicultural celebrations. However, these activities often segregated immigrant students from their Chilean peers. For example, immigrant students reported how these celebrations had been a source of tension with Chilean classmates who refused to participate or mocked their culture.

At School 1, Lía from Venezuela often felt uncomfortable at these events. She recalled having an incident with a Chilean peer:

Once I had a fight with a girl from my classroom. The school was organizing a celebration where we performed typical dances, and someone in the room asked if we could include Venezuelan dances by chance. And then, the girl began to

say [derogatory tone of voice] "Why would she dance that? She was not Venezuelan, she was Chilean." I was upset and yelled at her,... that is, if I respect her culture, I respect her traditions, I respect her dances, her food, her way of speaking, why can't she focus for a moment and respect my culture, my typical dances, my food?... This is the only fight I have had like this... it bothers me that they say those things because, at the end of everything, these are cultures, and if I respect your culture, you also must respect mine (Lía, Venezuelan student, 14 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).

Lía's testimony shows us that the benefits of multicultural celebrations should not be taken for granted. Rather than integrating minority groups, these events could be a source of tension and conflict among Chileans and immigrants and reinforce the "otherness" of particular groups.

Concerning this point, only two teachers recognized that multicultural festivities had caused tension among students, but these episodes were seen as isolated, unusual, or "part of a transition process." For example, in the past, Ms. Lombardi had to deal with Chilean students who refused to participate in non-Chilean traditional dances. "Last year [Chilean] girls did not dance, or they did not care, because they thought they did not have anything to do with this." Ms. Lombardi thinks that it "is about time" because Chilean students' participation in these activities has increased this year. She argued that transforming national festivities into multicultural events has been shocking for some Chilean youth who are resistant to cultural diversity.

Multicultural festivities not only caused tensions between Chilean and immigrant students; they are also spaces for bonding social capital among immigrant students. Carolina, a Venezuelan 14-year-old, valued the multicultural celebrations at her school as immigrants reunite and share cultural traditions, symbols, and values. She explained how her clique composed of Venezuelan students met at these spaces:

> *In May, mid-May, we did a cultural activity, the 'Humanist Fair,' where several groups organized themselves to perform dances from different countries. We met with all Venezuelan students and did three dances; we sang a song; we had our stand with food ... As a result of the cultural celebration that we did about Venezuelans´ dances, I met all the Venezuelans in the school and in all the recesses, "Hello, how are you?", and this and that, we began to speak with our Venezuelan words. We understand each other, and the news there, "Hey, this happened, that," and it's more enjoyable to be here (Carolina, Venezuelan student, 14 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).*

As stated by Carolina, multicultural celebrations facilitate the connection and formation of relationships among immigrant students of the same country of origin. These events could strengthen immigrant-to-immigrant relationships rather than promoting diversity discourse and facilitating peer connections with their Chilean peers.

At public School 4, a "National-origin-based school practices," in the form of "Cuerpos de Baile Colombianos" was implemented to address the tensions between Chilean and Colombian students. Based on stigmatized ideas of Colombian students,

the principal, Mr. Valdivieso, "resolved" the conflicts between Colombian and Chilean students by creating an extracurricular activity exclusively for Colombian students.

After several weeks of physical fights among Colombian and Chilean youth during recesses, Mr. Valdivieso started to feel concerned, confused, and overwhelmed. He was worried that the tensions could escalate and get out of control. So, he decided to look for solutions immediately. "I spoke precisely with a member of the CATI[2] team [Integral Tutorial Support Center] and with the social worker, and I requested for him to organize discussion sessions with Colombian students as a strategy to lower the pressure."

According to the principal, the main objective of the discussion sessions was to listen to the Colombian students' needs and feelings. "They [CATI team] began to meet every week, once or twice for a month with Colombian boys and girls, not only those who fight but all the Colombians, as they were the community that was creating more problems at that time." These sessions showed that Colombian students felt lonely, excluded, and ignored at school: "They told us they felt bad because nobody asked them about their issues; like they ignored them, they didn't know about their folklore, they didn't know about their words. They felt bad that no one cared about them." According to the principal, the solution came from the Colombian students: to create *cuerpos de baile colombianos* [Colombian group dances]. That way, Colombian students could practice their traditional dance, maintain their culture, and show it to the

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[2] Integral Tutorial Support Center (in Spanish Centro de Atención Tutorial Integral CATI) is a program led by the Municipality of Recoleta that aims to provide comprehensive support for the students, including health needs, well-being, coexistence, learning, and a better quality of life at school (Municipality of Recoleta, DAEM, 2015).

school community. The principal ended by saying, "We never had problems with the Colombian community again."

Two points are relevant in Mr. Valdivieso's strategy to decrease "Colombian students' violence" and to improve peer relationships with the Chileans. First, the principal and his team held Colombian students responsible for the intensifying violence at school. He not only linked disruptive behaviors with Colombian students' culture but also, he "solved" this situation by working exclusively with one side, the Colombian students. Despite Mr. Valdivieso's good intentions in listening to the Colombian youths' needs, I wonder why he did not include the Chilean students in the discussion sessions. And a more complicated issue was, what was the message to the school community? Second, the principal said that Colombian youth reported feeling lonely, ignored, and excluded at school, "They felt bad that no one cared about them." Did "cuerpos de baile colombianos" change Colombian students' feelings? Did the relationship between Colombian and Chilean students improve? Were Colombian students now integrated with their classmates? Probably the answer is no. Creating a Colombian dance group was a way in which Colombian students strengthened ties and friendships with similar peers—other Colombian students—rather than uniting all students independent of their nationality. From the social capital framework, "cuerpos de baile Colombianos" may be an opportunity for Colombian students to develop bonding capital rather than bridging capital. In Putnam's words, bonding social capital "reinforces our narrower selves" (Putnam, 2000) and reinforces the Great Cycle of Social Sorting (Tharp et al., 2000).

Conclusions

This chapter explores school principals' coordinators', and teachers' views of and experiences with immigrant students, including the challenges they face as teachers and their knowledge of immigrant students' relationships with Chilean students at school. The analysis shows that school staff construct hierarchical, stigmatized, and racialized views of immigrant students, depending on their country of origin, and that these categories affect immigrants' integration with their Chilean peers.

According to Conchas (2006), race is a major code to stigmatized students in the United States. In Chile, immigrant students' nationality appears as the most visible mark of exclusion. Educators shared national origin-based stereotypes of this group that have a clear cultural and biological essentialist tone. Each country carries fixed, unchangeable, and essential characteristics that determine immigrant youth's identities and school experiences. While staff held positive stereotypes of Venezuelans (e.g., motivated, hardworking, and successful students), they held negative stereotypes of Haitian youth (e.g., poverty, low academic skills, and disruptive behavior). Peruvians, or the "invisible students," were seen as quieter and more introverted than their peers; and Colombian students were simultaneously labeled as outgoing, impulsive, and talented at sports. In that way, referring to immigrant students' countries of origin becomes a fixed code for race, class, ethnicity, and language background that "explains" immigrant students' attitudes and behaviors. For Yildiz and Verkuyten (2012), cultural and biologist essentialism tones permit majority members to abstain from engaging in direct prejudice and to instead focus their arguments on the essence

of culture. Similarly, constantly referring to immigrant students' countries of origin allows educators to reproduce simplistic stereotypes and prejudices without reflecting on the consequences and meanings that these stereotypes could impart to both immigrant and Chilean students.

The symbolic power of immigrants' nationality is consistent with what other scholars have found in Chile. Different studies report that the most noticeable category used to label immigrant students is their country of origin (Hernández, 2016; Pavez-Soto, 2012, 2017; Tijoux, 2013). This chapter contributes to this literature by revealing how national-origin-based stereotypes of immigrant students affect immigrant-Chilean peer relationships in three ways.

First, teachers and administrators do not see immigrants' peer segregation as a problem to solve, but as an exclusionary behavior that comes from immigrant students' own choices. Educators' ideas of immigrant students (based on their countries of origin) strongly influenced their views about peer integration. They reported that immigrant youth "self-excluded" from their Chilean peers. While Venezuelan students were "nostalgic" for their home country and wanted to be around other Venezuelan students, Haitians and Colombians were "aggressive and violent" youth and refused to relate with their Chilean peers. This is a crucial finding because educators put full responsibility for peer segregation on immigrant students' shoulders instead of focusing on the social context of peer dynamics. Moreover, educators' prejudices and racist claims do not appear to incur severe consequences or penalties for them. In other words, educators did not see peer dynamics as a social process in which all the students,

teachers, coordinators, schools, and social structures play a crucial role; therefore, they did not feel responsible for changing immigrant students' "self-exclusion."

Second, the interviews and classroom observations show that teachers expressed nation-based labels of immigrant students in classes, sometimes unconsciously, creating uncomfortable moments and impacting both immigrant and Chilean students' beliefs. As noted by Weinstein (2002), the power of teachers' beliefs and expectancy should not be reduced to isolated comments or brief exchanges between teachers and students, but rather be understood as the cumulative consequences of entrenched beliefs throughout the entire school experiences. When students witnessed educators referring to Venezuelans as "a real contribution," Peruvians as "lazy," Colombians as "genetically superior at sports," and Haitians as "animals," the long-lasting effects on peer dynamics is unimaginable. When facing these views within schools and by authority figures, immigrant students may feel embarrassed, stressed, and insecure. On the other hand, Chilean students see their own prejudices and stereotypes of immigrant peers reinforced and validated by school authorities. Consequently, the peer integration of immigrant students is altered.

Third, "National-origin-based school practices," in the form of informal and formal habits or activities that highlight immigrant students' countries of origin could affect peer integration with their Chilean peers. Educators should pay closer attention to multicultural festivities. In tune with a "diversity discourse," school staff are convinced that these activities promote tolerance, respect, and empathy toward immigrant groups. However, as shown in this chapter, these activities focus on showing

and making visible students' cultures. There is no major reflection about the meanings, significance, and consequences of such events. Multicultural celebrations are events that segregate rather than integrate immigrant students with their Chilean peers, reinforcing the idea of "difference" and "otherness." Immigrants felt uncomfortable or have tensions with Chilean classmates who refuse to participate or mocked their culture. At the same time, multicultural festivities strengthen bonding ties among immigrant students. This finding is consistent with what international scholars found and the idea that a "diversity discourse" at school could reinforce power inequalities (Ríos-Rojas, 2014). For example, Ríos-Rojas (2014) analyzes educational policies promoting a "diversity discourse" in Spain. She argues through her findings that schools' "diversity discourses" have an inherently contradictory logic –claiming to be inclusionary and welcoming of "differences" while simultaneously producing marginalities and placing differences onto particular bodies (p. 4). According to Portera (2008), schools' practices such as multicultural celebrations could lead to "exotic or folkloristic presentations" of immigrant students' cultures (p. 485) and thus reinforce the national-based stereotypes of these groups. In that way, formal and informal school practices promoting a "diversity discourse" should be analyzed in-depth, paying attention to their effects on immigrant-Chilean and teacher-student relationships and avoiding taking their benefits for granted.

Why do the immigrant students' countries of origin play such an important role in Chilean schools? Where do these stereotypes come from? The reasons for these questions could be multiple, and more research is needed to explain the roots of

national-origin-based stereotypes of immigrant students. As shown in the previous chapter, during the enrollment process of immigrant students, educators already had prejudices toward the prior education of some groups. They saw their school curricula as outdated, weak, and inferior compared to the Chilean curriculum. Again, where did this prejudice come from? According to Weinstein (2002), it is necessary to think broadly: "Expectancy processes do not reside solely 'in the minds of teachers' but instead are built into the very fabric of our institutions and our society" (p. 290). "We need to understand that expectancy phenomena involve linked psychological, social, institutional, and societal processes. Changing beliefs without changing policies and practices will fail to eradicate the effects of negative prophecies" (Weinstein, 2002, p. 291). In that way, understanding and working against educators' national based-stereotypes of immigrant students need to go further from teachers' minds and include social, institutional, and societal processes.

This chapter shows how educators' attitudes and practices construct hierarchical views of immigrant students, depending on their country of origin and how these categories influence their peer integration at school. However, teachers also can shape Chilean-immigrant students' interactions through classroom practices such as seating arrangements, grouping practices, and opportunities for dialogue and collaboration in Joint Productive Activity (JPA). The next chapter moves to the classroom level and analyzes the extent to which immigrant students are integrated with their Chilean classmates within their classrooms.

Chapter Three:

Classroom Segregation in Chilean High Schools

Introduction

The classroom is a key space for analyzing students' interactions since students spend most of their time in these areas. At the classroom level, teachers can promote or hinder students' peer relationships through seating arrangements, grouping practices, and opportunities for dialogue and collaboration in Joint Productive Activity (JPA). This chapter examines the extent to which immigrant students are integrated with their Chilean peers within their classrooms. Classroom observations revealed how teachers determined seating arrangements, how they grouped students, and the extent to which they created opportunities for JPA. Results show that: (a) Overall, within classrooms, immigrant students tend to sit in the same place close to their friends, who also are immigrants; (b) teachers allow immigrant students to choose the members of their workgroups, most of whom are immigrants too. I argue that immigrant and Chilean students are spatially and socially segregated at the classroom level and that teachers greatly fail to create opportunities for promoting bridging ties between immigrant and Chilean students. This reproduces the "Great Cycle of Social Sorting," in which social class, ethnicity, race, language, and neighborhood divisions are replicated at the classroom level (Tharp et al., 2000). Therefore, minority groups excluded in society—in this case, immigrant students—tend to be excluded in the classroom.

This chapter must be understood according to the logic of Chilean classroom organization. Most students have one assigned classroom in Chilean schools, and teachers from different subjects must circulate between classrooms to teach. Additionally, most of the time the arrangement of the desks is such that students are seated in straight rows and columns, in pair arrangements or individual desks. These fixed structures shape peer interactions among students.

First, I describe how immigrant students are organized at the classroom level by looking at seating arrangements. Second, I examine grouping practices and the role of teachers in shaping immigrant-Chilean students' relationships. Finally, I present the case of Ms. Lombardi's classroom at School 2, who implemented "cooperative learning." This is an alternative classroom organization that promotes interactions and collaboration among different peers and could present opportunities for immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers at the classroom level.

Seating Arrangements in the Classroom

At the classroom level, immigrant students tend to sit in the same place close to their friends, who are mostly immigrants. This classroom organization reduce immigrants' propinquity with their Chilean classmates, which is necessary for their potential social integration (Tharp et al., 2000). Results also show that immigrants' classroom segregation is normalized and accepted by teachers and students. Educators often prioritize having a "peaceful" classroom without peer tensions over addressing or confronting immigrants' peer segregation.

When I first came to the classrooms that participated in the study and had the opportunity to observe the 9th-graders, I found a common pattern: students had one assigned classroom for all subjects, and desks were arranged in straight rows and columns, in pair arrangements or individual desks. This pattern is normative in most Chilean high schools. Students have their own room where they are seated in straight rows and columns, and teachers circulate between classrooms to teach. After doing several classroom observations and in-depth interviews with students and teachers, I found high levels of peer segregation of immigrant students in the classroom as most of them sit in one area of the class close to their immigrant friends. In three of the classrooms, teachers allowed students to choose their own seats, and in four classrooms, teachers had a seating plan, but students did not respect it and instead moved closer to their friends.

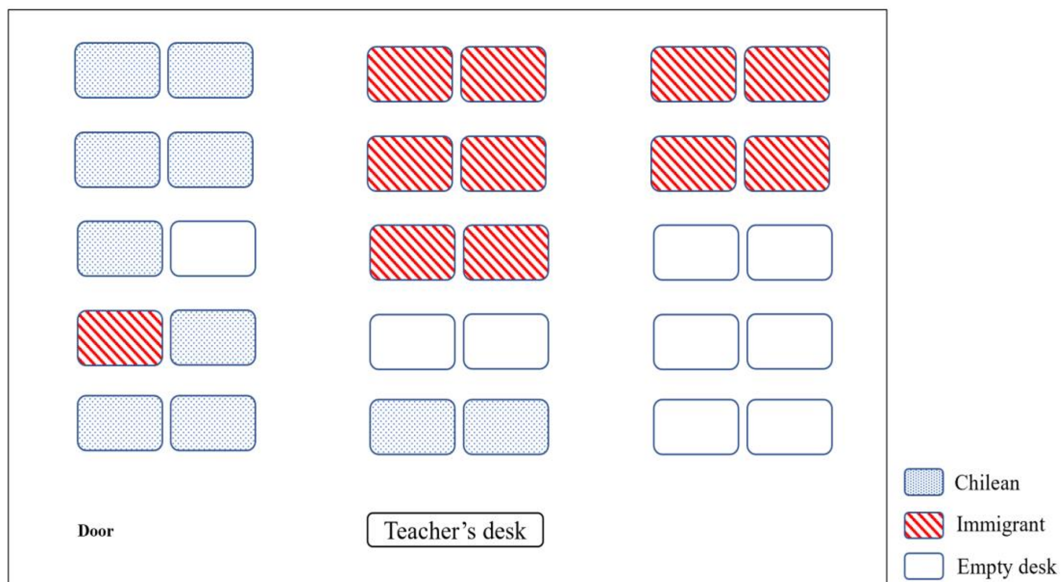
Students Choose their Seats

At some schools, teachers officially allow students to choose their own seats in the classroom. Public School 5 was one of them. As described before, this public school serves a population of high social vulnerability, among whom 55% are immigrant students from Haiti. At this school, the 9th graders had an old, dark classroom, which was huge for the 24 students. On the walls, there were a few posters in Spanish and Creole with rules such as: “Pay Attention,” “Do Not Use Cell Phones,” and “Do Not Eat, Do Not Play.” The first time I went into this classroom, I sat in the back of the room. The students looked at me, some with curiosity, others with suspicion, not wanting me to get very close to their social space. I observed Mr. Montenegro’s

Language and Literature lesson at 8:10 a.m. Only seven students were present. The teacher warned me beforehand that students were always late. The first thing that caught my attention that day was the high level of student segregation between Chileans and immigrants in the classroom. The desks were arranged in straight rows and columns in paired desks. Chilean students occupied the left-most column and two seats in the front middle column, while Haitian students sat in the back of the classroom (Figure 2). Only one immigrant youth was situated next to a Chilean classmate (left side of the room) –whom I later found out was a new student from Venezuela. All other immigrant students located at the back in the second and third row were from Haiti. The empty seats and desks in the classroom increased the distance between Chilean and immigrant students, generating a feeling of greater peer segregation.

Figure 2

Seating arrangements in 9th grade, School 5



Around 8:30, Mr. Montenegro wrote the learning objective on the board: *Unit non-literary texts: read the non-literary texts thoroughly and answer questions proposed in the text.* Meanwhile, students were chatting animatedly with each other. Some conversations were in Spanish, others in Creole. Little by little, they became increasingly noisy until Mr. Montenegro calmly turned around and informed them that the activity will have "a grade recorded in the book."

Students worked independently on this activity for 1 hour and 20 minutes. The teacher circulated, giving feedback and answering students' questions. At the same time, students were allowed to socialize with their friends. The teacher had to deal with several issues: distracted students; cell phones in use; and especially with students who spoke loudly. Apparently, sitting with their friends encouraged this behavior.

During the subsequent observations of Language and Orientation classes I did in this classroom, I saw the same seating pattern in which immigrant students always sat together in the same seats at the back of the room. Both immigrant and Chilean students confirmed that they were allowed to choose their seats. In the students' discourse, peer segregation in the classroom is normalized and accepted by everyone.

In the interviews with immigrant and Chilean students, I asked them how the teacher decided the seating arrangements. Their answers were all the same: the teacher allows students to choose their seats, and they always sit close to their friends. Félix, an afro-descendant from the Dominican Republic, is 15 years old. He settled in Chile a year ago following his father and stepmother, who wanted to improve their quality of life. Félix recognized that students in his classroom could decide where to sit and that

they always wanted to be with their friends. Talking about the peer interactions, he pointed out that students are completely divided by nationality: Chileans speak with Chileans and Haitians with Haitians:

> *EVV: How are the interactions or social relationships in your classroom?*
>
> *Uh ... the communication is between Haitians and Chileans, but it doesn't look like Chileans talking with Haitians, hanging out and talking and that, Haitians and Haitians talk.*
>
> *EVV: So, the classroom is segregated?*
>
> *Yes (…) The separation can be seen so much that (he shows with his hands) on this line there are Haitians, and on the other, there is no... (Félix, Dominican student, 15 years old, Public School 5).*

Félix was right. As I observed, his classroom was extremely segregated: Haitians sat in one row and Chileans in another one and they barely spoke to each other. The segregation is so extensive, that even when describing his classroom, Félix spoke only of the Haitians as if the Chileans did not exist:

> *EVV: What things do you like about your classmates, and what do you dislike?*
>
> *Eh ... about the Haitians, I like sometimes we always talk, like about stories they had in Haiti, what they did, when they played, when they met with their friends, like that. What I don't like too, that they like to talk a lot, as you say something to him and he tells the other, and he tells the other.*
>
> *EVV: What do you think about your classroom segregation?*

> *I would like my classroom to be more integrated because… some Haitians may need something that Chileans have, and they can lend it to them… or if a Haitian has something that a Chilean needs, he can borrow it ... hey, that would be great (Félix, Dominican student, 15 years old, Public School 5).*

Rocío is a 15-year-old girl from Chile who always sat in the rear-left part of the classroom with her Chilean friends. She explained that students are free to sit any place in the classroom and that this obviously produces peer segregation: "You saw the room yourself, there are Haitians here, and there are Chileans there (laughs)." Rocío told me that the head teacher assigned students' seats at the beginning of the school year, mixing all the students. However, multiple tensions appeared between Chileans and Haitians, so the head teacher changed her mind and allowed students to choose their seating locations. For the teacher, this was the solution that best reduced students' fights and misbehavior.

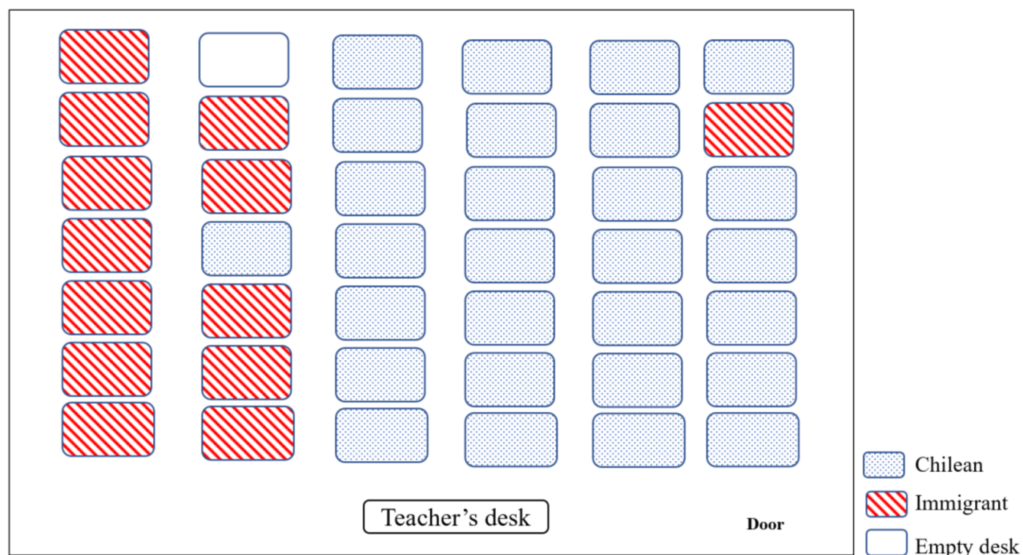
In that way, students confirmed peer segregation in the classroom. It is normalized and accepted by everyone. This situation is interesting, considering that this school promotes an "Intercultural Educational Project" that embraces, recognizes, and appreciates the cultural pluralism of a global society (Institutional Education Project, School 5). However, this cultural pluralism is not reflected in the classroom organization. Chilean and immigrant students were together in the same room, doing the same activities, but there were no connections or talking amongst them.

In Schools 6 and 7, the 9th graders were also allowed to choose their seats in the classroom. For example, 9th grade at School 7 was a full classroom of 41 students,

where 13 were immigrants from Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, and the Dominican Republic. As figure 3 shows, peer segregation by nationality was evident, as most of the immigrant students sat in the two left-most columns:

Figure 3

Seating arrangements in 9th grade, School 7



At public School 7, students explained that teachers allow them to choose their seats: "We decide where to sit," "People sit where they want and where they can… I always sit in the same place," "We can sit any place if we don't behave badly," "I sit with my close friend Soledad." For Oliver, a Chilean 15-year-old, any person who enters the classroom could identify the cliques because students sit with their friends all the time. Intrigued by this situation, I asked teachers about this seating arrangement, confirming what was evident: students could choose their seats and sit close to their friends. More interesting, teachers did not see peer segregation in the classroom as a problem to address.

Mr. Vázquez, the head teacher of this class, explained how he organized students' seating locations:

> *In practice, when children arrive, they choose their seats. It is a natural and spontaneous thing. What happens is that sometimes, different circumstances can appear down the road, and you have to implement a different distribution of space and students' positions. Of course, I always tell the children: 'You can sit with your partner.' I have no problem, I trust them, but the idea is that each one is contributing. Let one student be the contribution and support of the other. Now, if there is any weakness between both students, you have to start to make changes in their seats (Mr. Vázquez, head teacher 9th grade, Public School 7).*

Mr. Olivo, the head teacher of grade 9 at School 6 had a similar opinion:

> *Students can sit in any seat. Yes. When I see a conflict or something, I talk with them, and if I see that there is a student who is not paying attention in class and I need to put him in the front row, I talk with him because it´s important to place him in front. I also have to talk with the student who is in the front to see if he can sit in another place. However, generally, students can sit in any seat (Mr. Olivo, Head teacher 9th grade, Public School 6).*

In sum, both teachers, Mr. Olivo and Mr. Vázquez, conveyed that they only changed students' seats when problems arose. In this regard, changing seats could be seen as a punishment for students and choosing their seats (or sitting with friends) as a reward as long as they behave well. In other words, teachers do not care where the students sit if

they behave well and let them teach their class, even if this results in peer segregation. Thus, the teachers are not seeing segregation as a problem that they need to resolve.

Teacher has a Seating Plan, but No One Respected it

The segregation of immigrant students with their peers was also present in the classrooms that had seating plans to organize students. At Schools 1, 2, and 3, students reported that the head teacher had a seating plan that remained in place for the whole year with some minor changes. However, as soon as the head teacher left the classroom, the students usually changed seats for all other classes, choosing to sit close to their friends. This is an important finding, because it is not enough to implement a seating plan if it is not respected by students in all the classes.

Miss Accardi is the head teacher of grade 9-A, and she teaches Language and Literature, and Orientation classes at private-subsidized School 1. She is young and did not have other work experience before coming to this school. Her classroom had about 40 students—for whom she implemented a strict seating plan. According to the teacher, she had three criteria for organizing students' seats: visual disability, behavior issues, and poor academic outcomes. She explains:

> *Well, the first criterion is to move students who have visual problems. All the students who are in the front of the class, the vast majority have visual problems. The second important criterion is people who are already disorderly; all of them are in the front of the class too. And the last big change was made when the results of the language test came out. I had two students with insufficient scores, so both were moved to the front seats because I had to keep*

an eye on them. I need to know if they are working, if they are improving. There is one student who is improving, who is doing very well. There is another that not so much, but I know that any student who is very interested in their studies and is seated in the back of the classroom is going to work the same way and will not be a disruptive person in the class. But as for the ones who are disruptive, I prefer to have them in the front, to have them a little more controlled, but there also are people who are not disruptive, who are doing very well and are in the front of the class just because they do not see well (Miss Accardi, Head teacher 9th grade, Private-subsidized School 1).

As Miss Accardi stated, she located students with visual problems, behavior issues, and low academic performance near the front of the class. Her main goal was to help students but also to "control" them and be able to teach in an orderly and peaceful classroom. Despite the teacher's intention to organize her classroom, most of the students reported that this seating plan was often ignored once Miss Accardi left the room and their other classes began. As explained before, in Chile, each grade level has a classroom for the whole year, and teachers must circulate among classrooms to teach. Lucas, a Chilean student, explained:

EVV: Where do students sit in the classroom?

Look, what happens is that Miss Accardi is super strict with the stuff about seats; she is super strict, and if you change, she will instantly tell you to stay in your seat. We sit in groups of two, of two by two. There are like, one, two, three, four, like five or six rows or so, and students are sitting in pairs. And she [Miss

Accardi] is super strict with seat changes. She organized us in a way that all obviously could pay attention to the class. So, she separated me from my friends, because obviously, we laughed and maybe didn´t catch the lesson, so I believe that it's for that reason.

EVV: How did Miss Accardi determine who was going to be in the front, who was going to be in back, how was that?

Because, for example, Hernán and Alejandro are in the front because I think they did a test, I think, or something like that, they responded to a test to know how much they knew, an exam, I don't remember very well, and something like that came out, that they needed to know more, obviously. Then, the teacher sat them in the front. And generally, for example, Esteban, another student who always sleeps and things like that, was also moved to the front. And so more or less, we all sit down like, with people who don't talk.

EVV: And where do you usually sit in the classroom?

In the middle part of the first row, when entering the classroom.

EVV: Where were you now when I observed your classroom today?

No, not there. It is just that now we changed [seats], because we were not with the head teacher.

EVV: Is this usual? Do you move when your head teacher leaves the classroom?

Yes, it happens. I don't like to sit where Miss Accardi placed me, because, I don't know. When I change seats, I can talk more with Hernán as he is in front of me, and with Roberto who is behind me.

EVV: So, you move there to be closer to your friends?

Yes, that's it. You get it, right? (Lucas, Chilean student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).

Lucas knew Miss Accardi's seating plan; however, he recognized his peers do not respect it. When Lucas says to me, "You get it, right?" he refers to a practice that is well-known and normalized by students. In fact, after observing this classroom for a few months, I realized that students always sat in the same seats when the head teacher left the classroom. I could even recognize groups of friends who were highly segregated by immigrant-Chilean status after they made their seating changes.

Regarding this point, another thing that caught my attention in this classroom was that some students decorated their "permanent desks" –the desks they moved to after the head teacher left the room. Students used to decorate these desks with stickers, notes, and drawings, reflecting somehow an "appropriation of their spaces." For example, an immigrant girl wrote "Venezuela" on her desk, with the colors of the flag, and stuck the lyrics of a popular Venezuelan song: "Llevo tu luz y tu aroma en mi piel y el cuatro en el corazón" [I carry your light and your scent on my skin and the *cuatro*[3] in my heart]. This demonstrates how much students came to see the desk that they sat in at as 'theirs', in some cases becoming the means for expressing the students' identities.

In the classrooms at Schools 2, 3, and 4, students also ignored teachers' seating

[3] "Cuatro" refers to a four-stringed musical instrument, also known as "cuatro llanero" o "cuatro tradicional."

plans and ended up sitting close to their friends. For example, Rosa, a 15-year-old Peruvian girl in public School 4, said that their peers always choose where to sit, even when Miss Miranda changed them for misbehaving:

> *EVV: Who determines the students' seating location?*
>
> *Ourselves.*
>
> *EVV: Meaning you can sit where you want?*
>
> *Where we want. It was like the first day of school, and we sat like this. It was like we decided and got there, and those places were like for the whole year.*
>
> *EVV: Have you ever changed seats?*
>
> *Yes, the head teacher changed us, because there were a lot of complaints that students talked a lot, too much, lots of whispers in class, as the teacher said. Then the head teacher decided to change the students' seats. But a month later, my classmates, a little stubborn, when it suits them, and it doesn't suit them, they decided to change everything, including me. I had to sit in another place, and my friend in another place, and we all ended up together. Yes, the group where I sit, the majority is in my clique (Rosa, Peruvian student, 15 years old, Public School 4).*

When explaining seat locations, Rosa describes a social dynamic in which students moved as a group, "We all ended up together," "The group where I sit, the majority is in my clique." Rosa feels that "she sits in the group." This is interesting, considering that most of the time, students in her classroom sat in columns and rows and worked on individual tasks.

For Miss Miranda, the head teacher in Rosa's classroom, her seating plan is responsive to the students' behavior. Consequently, she often changes students' locations when they talk too much or are not paying attention to the class. For example, one time, she separated two immigrant friends from Haiti who were noisy in class and also were victims of bullying by their peers:

> *At first, they [students] bothered two Haitian girls that sat together and talked all day in Creole. And they talked loudly in Creole, so, uh, the kids bothered them because they were loud... Once, they [students] started telling the girls something about their hair. What did I do? Simple, first I challenged them, and I told them, uh, that the person who makes fun of someone from another country is a person with little education. Just like that, "You are like that; I don't think you are being educated for this." "No, teacher." And after that, I moved the girls. They stopped speaking Creole and now only speak Spanish. This is not intended for them to lose their language. I had to explain that I separated them, not because I wanted them not to speak in Creole, that they can do it, but that the reason was that I wanted them to continue increasing their Spanish levels. And it turned out super good. There has been nothing more, no, in that class, they don't bother them (Miss Miranda, Head teacher 9th grade, Public School 4).*

Despite Miss Miranda's intentions to integrate immigrant girls through changing their seats, classroom observations and students' reports show a different result. As we saw in other schools, students often ignored the teacher's seating plan, changing seats in all

other classes in which this teacher was not present and sitting with their friends. The girls from Haiti were no exception: as soon Miss Miranda left their classroom, I saw the girls move from their seats and sit together at the back of the room.

Workgroups

When discussing how work teams were formed in the classroom, 90% of participants reported that the students chose their groups, and 10% said that the teachers occasionally chose the groups and sometimes left it up to the students. Students recognized they were allowed to choose their workgroups. Working daily with their friends was seen as a natural and normalized practice and part of their friendship dynamics. For teachers, it was easier and more convenient to let students decide their workgroups. While some teachers consider that students are mature enough to select their teams, others argue that students "work better" with their friends, contributing to having a "peaceful classroom," free of conflicts and chaos. Consequently, immigrant students end up working with other immigrants and have scarce opportunities to interact with their Chilean classmates. This workgroup organization repeats the "Great Cycle of Social Sorting" pattern (Tharp et al., 2000), in which social and structural division by race, class, ethnicity, and language are reproduced at the classroom level.

Both Chilean and immigrant students recognized they were allowed to choose their workgroups and usually chose to work with their close friends. They felt comfortable and relaxed working with their friends. They value spending time and working with their friends. Educators confirm this discourse. For them, it is easier and

more convenient to let students decide their workgroups. They consider that students are mature enough to select their teams, and it lets them avoid peer conflicts.

Most of the immigrant and Chilean students (50 out of 53) recognized that teachers let them choose their workgroups and that they usually pick their friends. Students stated: “When the teacher says workgroup, the groups are already made: students are with their friends, and that´s it,” “[I work with] my friends, who generally are those who are foreigners in the classroom,” “I work with my friends, Melisa, Abigail, and Horacio,” “We are always with our group, we never get with someone who is not from our group,” “I always work with Claudia, Francisca, Loreto, and Denise, and we are always the same group.” These groups remained static –they do not vary between courses.

Students argued that when working with friends, they feel more comfortable, relaxed, and confident. Susana, a Venezuelan student, declared that she enjoyed group activities as she can chat and gossip with her friends, most of whom are from Venezuela. Likewise, Carolina told me that she loved to work with her friends because “we Venezuelans are always together... we work well because we feel more comfortable.” Florencia, from Ecuador, stated that she always works with the same group of five friends: “We moved as a group.” In this way, students preferred to work with their friends and used these group projects to hang out, socialize, and share interests.

Some students noted that they preferred to work with their friends even if their friends did not do much work or perform well. For example, Florencia preferred to

work with her best friend, despite the fact that she recognized that her friend was not a good student:

> *Sometimes it is weird, because when I work with Lola, I do all the work myself, but I have a good time. But if I work with another person, we both do it, but I don't have such a good time. So, how can I deal with that? If I work with her [Lola], I'm going to do it well, I do everything, but I have a good time, I talk, I laugh. If I work with other classmates, I would be more serious, but doing the work well and moving forward much faster. However, I prefer to keep these feelings to myself, and be more relaxed working with Lola (Florencia, Ecuadorian student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 2).*

For Florencia, having a good time and relaxing with Lola is very important, even more so than her academic performance. As Jørgensen (2017) found, socioemotional well-being can be an outcome of peer social capital in its own right, which means that it is not always related to educational performance or school-related behavior.

On the other hand, some Chilean and immigrant students report feeling pressured to work with their friends. For example, Enrique, a 14-year-old student from Chile, feels obligated to work with his friends in group activities. He admitted that when he is with his friends, "they don't work," and "It is very difficult to concentrate with friends." Yet, if he doesn't work with them, quite often, his friends get angry. Similarly, Lorenzo felt that sometimes, he would like to work with other classmates; however, he had to partner with Paco, his best friend, although Paco was not a good student:

Sometimes I would like to work with other classmates because he [Paco] does nothing. But I feel that it is more my obligation as a friend or partner to include him, hoping that he will do something… Sometimes, I have to accept this because I guess Paco would do the same for me (Lorenzo, Chilean student, 14 years old, Public School 7).

Students, regardless of nationality, have a "friendship code" that must be respected and followed, which in this case, includes working together in classes. As Lorenzo states, working with his friend in classes is "my obligation as a friend," and he has "to accept this," even if this means having to do all the work by himself.

In addition, there is an in-group social hierarchy and power dynamic when choosing workgroups. Some students said that "they choose their friends" while others said that "they are chosen." Immigrant and Chilean students from different schools reported: "It is me who mostly decides who is in the group, and my friend distributes the work tasks," "We choose like this: 'Come, you,' or 'You come with us," "I always pick Antonia," "I usually choose my girlfriends for the group, no matter how messy we are sometimes," "I decide to work with Kiala, Emeline, Félix, Jacques, two girls, and two boys." In contrast, Emanuel, a 14-year-old from Colombia, explained that when they work in groups, "the friends look at each other and they already know who is with whom," and usually "I stay quiet until they choose me." Matilde, a 15-year-old from Peru, said: "We used to choose our own groups, but they always pick me." Viviana explained: "[I work] with peers who say like, hey, do you have a group? Otherwise, I pick my friend Gloria."

From the point of view of educators, most of those interviewed stated that they let students choose their own workgroups. Some teachers believe that high school students are mature enough to select who they would like to work with themselves. Other teachers think that imposing workgroups on the students generates peer conflicts, so allowing them to work with their friends is convenient for maintaining a tranquil classroom climate.

Mr. Vázquez believed that youth should be allowed to sit and work with their friends: "It is a natural and spontaneous thing" and "Learning has to be based on trust and freedom." When there are tensions or problems inside the group, Mr. Vázquez intervenes and makes changes amongst members. Similarly, Mr. Matus thought that students worked well when they chose their partners, as they felt more comfortable and confident. He believed that students should build their knowledge and have freedom in their decisions, which extends to choosing their workgroup. In Miss Accardi's opinion, workgroup choices are also associated with students' maturity. With the lower grades, she decides the group's members, but with 9th graders, she gives the students freedom and autonomy to choose who they would like to work with, at least in some activities: "It is part of youth's natural process of growing."

Other teachers believed that students "work better" with their friends because they focus more on learning tasks. Ms. Neira thought that youth worked well when they chose their partners: "Students know each other. They know with whom they will really have a positive result." Ms. Neira is convinced that students look for peers who perform well, but at the same time, she recognizes that these peers are usually their friends.

Similarly, three teachers recognized that letting students choose their workgroup is "easier" since they avoid students' complaints and tensions between students: "Students work fine when they are with their friends." However, what is the meaning of "work fine?" "Working fine" for the teachers seems to be related to having a peaceful classroom, free of chaos, disruption, and tensions, instead of confronting or addressing social conflicts.

I observed several situations in which students organized themselves in group activities, resulting in peer segregation of immigrant students. One such example was a language class with Mr. Montenegro from October 2018. At the start of class at 11:30, the twenty students present were sitting in the same places as during my previous visit: Chilean students occupied the first column, and Haitians were located in the back of the classroom in the second and third columns.

Mr. Montenegro: Today we are going to work collaboratively. Choose groups of 4 to 5 people. You cannot work alone because it does not meet the objective.

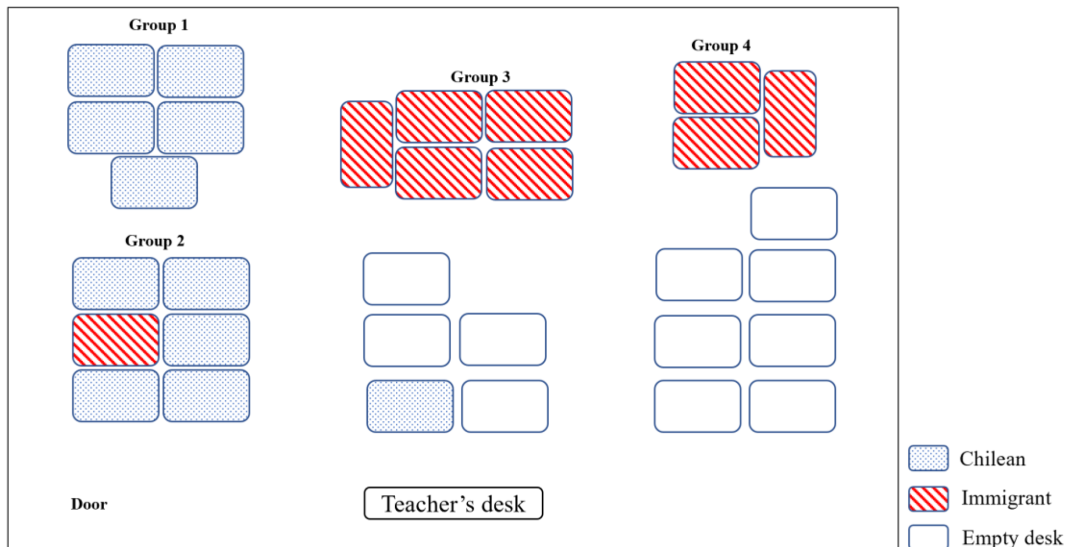
A teaching assistant wrote the main objective on the blackboard: "Create an advertising poster collaboratively according to the classic structure. Remember: slogan, image, color, logo." Ten seconds later, the groups were already created. The students barely moved their desks to form a round table and started working in groups. Peer segregation by nationality was evident. The groups were the following:

- Group 1: 5 Chileans.
- Group 2: 5 Chileans, 1 Peruvian.
- Group 3: 5 Haitians.

- Group 4: 3 Haitians.
- One Chilean student working alone.

Figure 4

Seating arrangements in Language and Literature class, 9th grade, School 5



During the following hour and twenty minutes, students worked in cooperative groups. Mr. Montenegro circulated around the room, giving feedback to the students and answering questions. The teacher allowed students to socialize and play music while working on their advertising. I was impressed by the noise in this classroom. On one side of the room, the Chilean students were talking about YouTube videos, makeup, hairstyles, and making jokes. In the other corner of the class, two immigrant groups were speaking loudly in Creole. Although I did not fully understand what they were talking about, the Haitians seemed to have a good time and enjoy working together. At the end of the class, Mr. Montenegro approached the groups, checking: "What did you do?" and "What did she do?" He looked tired, disappointed, looking at

the students' schoolwork, but at the same time, he reflected powerlessness, as if the students dominated the classroom dynamics.

During an interview following this observation, I asked Mr. Montenegro how he usually formed the workgroups. He confirmed that students could choose their groups and that Chilean students always worked with Chileans, and Haitian students worked with Haitians. He explained that he had tried to mix students from different nationalities in the past but with negative results. For him, the problem was the Haitians:

> *EVV: How do you do group activities? How do you form the groups?*
>
> *I try to give freedom [to students] by affinity because it usually happens that when, especially with foreigners, they form natural groups. So, if I get them out of their group, they get angry. So, I let them work together. I set the number of members, between three and five students, or they can work in pairs (Mr. Montenegro, Language and Literature teacher, Public School 5).*

As I showed in the previous chapter, Mr. Montenegro had a cultural and biological essentialist discourse about Haitian youth and depicted them as "violent," "aggressive," and "disruptive" students. For him, Haitians were responsible for increasing school violence. Similarly, at the classroom level, the teacher blamed the Haitian youth for their self-segregation: "They formed natural groups" and "They get angry" when they are not allowed to work with their friends. In that view, immigrants again appear as fully responsible for their peer segregation.

Interestingly, at public School 4, Mr. Fariña also preferred to let students choose their workgroups. As I pointed out in Chapter 2, this teacher offered a different view of immigrant-Chilean relationships at school, arguing that Chilean youth were responsible for excluding immigrant classmates and often discriminated against and harassed them. Consequently, in the classroom, the teacher allowed students to form workgroups to avoid peer conflicts.

> *I prefer that they [students] form the groups. Already, the formation of groups depends a lot on them, because they know who to join and with whom not to join. I cannot ask a student who has a small, small difference with immigrants to work with them, because he will not do it. Either because of his intolerance or discrimination, because it occurs. We cannot say that this is something that does not happen, considering that Chile is a country with a lot of discrimination (Mr. Fariña, Language and Literature teacher, Public School 4).*

Both Mr. Fariña and Mr. Montenegro's comments demonstrate that students had power over choosing their workgroups. Students could completely refuse to work with particular classmates. "They know who to join and with whom not to join," said Mr. Fariña. This shifts the responsibility of classroom segregation from the teacher to the students: it is immigrants' attitudes, the Chilean students' racism, or Chile's intolerance and discrimination that shapes the groups. Both professors admitted that there was peer segregation in their classrooms, but they avoided addressing this situation. They saw peer segregation as embedded in students' relationships —a powerful and fixed behavior that was difficult to confront.

During gym classes, I hoped to see a higher number of group activities, cooperative behavior, and opportunities for socialization between students. However, gym classes were not the exception to the rule: most of the gym teachers allowed students to choose their partners in group activities and students often chose their friends, leading to the same patterns of peer segregation. During classroom observations, I saw gym instructors forming teams to play handball, basketball, soccer, and volleyball. They frequently gave quick instructions to students, "Work in pairs," "Form groups of three," "Organize two teams." Whereas gym teachers focused all their attention on the different activities, how students organized themselves into groups did not seem relevant to them.

In general, gym teachers were not concerned about group segregation by nationality. However, some of them were concerned about isolated students. One strategy commonly used by teachers to form groups was to select captains. The captains were free to choose who they wanted on their teams, and usually picked their close friends, but this left the students picked last feeling hurt and embarrassed. Another strategy used by teachers was to work themselves with isolated students. For example, Mr. Bernal has worked as a gym instructor for ten years at School 2. When forming teams, he said:

> *The idea is that students select their teams, but sometimes there are obviously always children who are more introverted and are left alone. For example, today, I did an activity and one student stayed alone, so I had to work with her. So, I work with these students, and they are never alone. These students are at*

the age when they have to begin to integrate by themselves. They voluntarily have to join a work team (Mr. Bernal, Gym teacher, Private-subsidized School 2).

Mr. Bernal thought that it was fine to work with students who remain alone. Coincidently, when I observed his class, I saw Mr. Bernal working with a Chinese girl who could not find a group.

At public School 5, Mr. Lozano is an enthusiastic and energetic gym teacher. He is empathic and has a close relationship with students. During his classes, students were constantly asked to form teams. Students always choose their workgroups for themselves. Peer segregation by nationality was exactly the same as during literature classes: Chileans and Haitians working separately in the same activities. Mr. Lorenzo did not seem concerned about immigrants' peer segregation in his class and did not try to enforce a different group formation.

It is relevant to mention that students do not only choose their work team for school tasks but also for extracurricular activities and multicultural celebrations. For example, in many multicultural festivals, students must self-organize and form groups to prepare stands, traditional dances, or performances. In these instances, teachers allow students to select their team members. At School 1, I observed twice how 9-grade-C organized the "Alianzas" –a school celebration in which different teams compete in activities such as dancing, singing, volleyball, and soccer. When I first observed Mr. Laval's Orientation class, he was organizing the "Alianzas." He started by writing the competitions on the blackboard and asked each student which activity they would like

to join. Slowly and without a lot of enthusiasm, students were registering in one activity. After the last youth selected the competition she wanted to participate in, Mr. Laval looked at the group list and, with a smile, left the classroom. Two months later, I interviewed immigrant and Chilean students in this classroom and asked them why they had chosen a particular competition. The most repeated answer was "because my friends were there."

In sum, no matter what strategy teachers followed, whether it was a school task or an extracurricular activity, all forms ended up in the same situation: students chose their teams and worked with their friends who were segregated by nationality. For both teachers and students, it is easier and more convenient to let them work with their friends, reproducing and reinforcing bonding capital (relationships with similar peers) and limiting bridging ties (relationships with different classmates) (Putnam, 2000). The classroom organization replicates the "Great Cycle of Social Sorting" (Tharp et al., 2000) in which social divisions by class, race, ethnicity, and neighborhood divisions reproduce themselves in students' affinity patterns and social relationships in the classroom. If teachers and students prefer this social organization, there is no incentive to work with other classmates; there is no need to adjust to a new language, food, or to people of a different educational level (Allport, 1954).

Cooperative Learning

From all the classes I observed, only one teacher implemented a different classroom organization called "cooperative learning." Cooperative learning consists of forming small groups of students that have to work together to achieve a common

learning goal (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1991). Even though this practice was recently implemented in grade 9 at School 2, I could observe more opportunities for immigrant-Chilean students' interactions than in the other classrooms.

Ms. Lombardi is the head teacher of 9-grade-A at School 2. She is 25 years old and defined her teaching style as innovative and flexible. She was always trying to challenge students and make them think about what is normal and what is not: "I tell the students: the system wants you ordered, militarized, then if you want to continue like this, well follow the rules. But I want to try other things... I always want to implement new things." Ms. Lombardi is proud of 9-grade-A. While this was seen by other teachers as a "problematic group of students" in the past, this class "matured" this year. The students started to "behave well" and become "role models" for younger grades. According to both educators and students, the main reason behind this change was Ms. Lombardi's focus throughout the year on building a strong tie with her students. When speaking of Ms. Lombardi's class, a gym instructor expressed:

> *Now, this class is good. In fact, the head teacher assigned to this class this year helped them a lot. She is very committed to the students. I believe that when a classroom has a supportive and committed head teacher, then she can make a big difference in students, really (Mr. Bernal, Gym teacher, Private-subsidized School 2).*

Regarding classroom organization, Ms. Lombardi explained that most of the year, from March to September, students were organized in traditional rows and columns, and students were allowed to choose their seats and workgroups. However, following her

innovative teaching style, she began implementing new ways of organizing students' seats, such as using semi-circles, circles, and a U-shape. Finally, in November 2018 – in the middle of my classroom observations– she implemented "cooperative learning":

> *The classroom is distributed into seven groups. Within those seven groups, there are two students with an average grade of 6.0 [high academic performance]. And in each of these groups, there is a student who is in the PIE[4] program; they have a special educational need. Last year, in this classroom, we tried to do the same, as two older grades had implemented cooperative work before. At that time, groups were formed in a way in which each group has at least one student with skills in a particular subject such as language, math, English, arts, or gym. In my class, I don´t have an equal number of students with each skill to form homogeneous groups, but I tried, and I organized students as you saw here: by discipline, academic performance, and to help peers that are PIE. Nor do I say: 'Here is a PIE,' no, that can't be said. Well, this classroom tried [cooperative learning] last year, but it didn't work out because… if there is violence, if there is a bad vibe between students, they hate each other; obviously, this will not work... and in order to make cooperative learning work, students have to be well distributed, because they understand that everyone contributes to something. I also designated a leader to each group, who is what I call the 'team leader.' I never talk about 'workgroups,' but 'team leaders.' Leaders are*

[4] The School Integration Program (in Spanish Programa de Integración PIE) is an inclusive strategy that aims to provide additional supports to facilitate integration of students with special educational needs (Ministerio de Educación, 2016). Special educational needs include visual or hearing impairments, autism, cognitive disabilities, and motor disabilities among others.

> *responsible for no student going to another group, and if any student moves to another group, they are both responsible, the team leader and the one who moved. So, it's under that logic, and so far, it has worked for me. I had two groups' complaints and had to make some changes. I usually request a report to know how the team is doing, how the work is going, who works, who doesn't work (Ms. Lombardi, Language and Literature teacher, Private-subsidized School 2).*

Several points are relevant in Ms. Lombardi's narrative in order to understand classroom dynamics during cooperative learning. First, as she explained, she grouped students according to their grades, skills, and being a PIE. Second, the teacher mentioned that cooperative learning was implemented in the classroom last year with negative results because of the social tensions between students. For Ms. Lombardi, it was crucial to solve behavior and social problems before implementing cooperative groups. Therefore, cooperative learning may not work in all contexts. Third, Ms. Lombardi recognized that she had to make two changes in the group composition due to problems between students. So, cooperative groups allow some flexibility in particular cases. Fourth, in contrast to the experience in other classrooms doing workgroups, collaborative learning highlights the role of the leader. The leaders are responsible for their groups. They must fill out a report informing the professor about all the "group issues," including if a peer disobeyed and moved to another group.

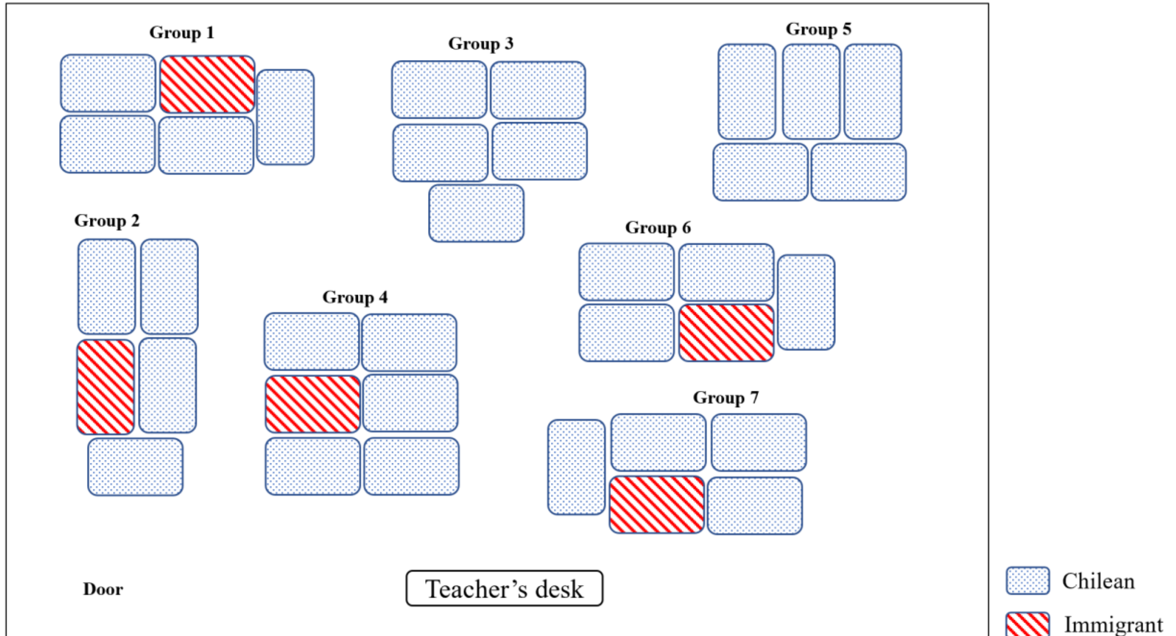
When asking Ms. Lombardi about group composition during cooperative learning, she told me that groups were mixed, and in particular, immigrant students

were integrated with their Chilean peers (see Figure 5). Moreover, of six immigrant students in her class, three of them were group leaders:

> *I have two, actually, three [immigrant students]: Luciana from Colombia is one of the leaders. I have Florencia, who is Ecuadorian, and Rebeca, who is also Colombian. They are team leaders, all three. Yes, it happens that, at least in this classroom, these girls "son las que llevan" [trendsetters] and they especially have a lot of personality. It is also cultural because, I think, Colombians have a lot of presence (Ms. Lombardi, Language and Literature teacher, Private-subsidized School 2).*

Figure 5

Seating arrangements in Language and Literature class, 9th grade, School 2



Ms. Lombardi reproduces the stereotypes of Colombian students as outgoing and sociable youth; in her view, they "have a lot of presence." But coincidently, these students also had the best grades in the classroom, which explains why she chose them as leaders. During classroom observations, I could see the high academic performance and oral skills of Luciana, Florencia, and Rebeca. They usually participated in classes and socialized with their classmates.

When discussing cooperative learning with the students, their experiences varied. Some students valued cooperative learning, while others did not see any difference as they kept changing their seats in other classes. For example, Amparo, a 14-year-old student from Chile, explained that cooperative groups have been positive as she could meet peers that were outside of her clique. Similarly, another Chilean student recognized that he felt more comfortable and confident with cooperative learning, "it is easier to pay attention because you are not with your friends." In this sense, cooperative learning could be understood as an effective measure, as it could increase the opportunities for positive interactions between Chilean and immigrant students.

However, Enrique and Luciana had a contrasting account about cooperative groups. Luciana, a 15-year-old from Colombia, admitted that students do not respect cooperative groups in all classes. Students still changed their seats and workgroups as soon as Ms. Lombardi left the classroom. She explained:

One person is supposed to be assigned to each group, who has to worry about the group, and in this case, that person is me, so I always have to be attentive

to what my group is doing or things like that. However, students can always move, but obviously not when the head teacher is there because it can be something strange that you are assigned a seat, and you go to another, while she is there, but yes, you can move… I usually choose my friends as a workgroup, no matter that sometimes we are messy, or irresponsible, then we already know that if there is an assignment, it must be done, and we cannot be careless. So, like, we choose each other because we know that we get along, we do it, we are responsible, we are artistic, we have different ways of seeing things so that we can add many more things... (Luciana, Colombian student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 2).

As Luciana stated, students usually move when the head teacher is not present in the room. Then, she usually ended up sitting and working with her group of friends, which is composed mostly of immigrants. Similarly, for Enrique, a Chilean youth, no matter how students were organized in the classroom, they always found a way to behave the same way: "[with cooperative learning] I find that there is no change, it's us, no, no, it's not even by how we are sitting. It's like changing the name of a cookie [laughs]." Students ended up changing their workgroups and seating locations. They prefer to be with their friends. It is in the classroom ethos.

Ms. Lombardi's classroom organization challenges the fixed typical classroom structure in which students are seated in straight rows and columns. It also challenges the widespread practice of allowing students to choose their workgroup. In this way, Miss Lombardi's classroom offers more opportunities for immigrant-Chilean students'

interactions than other typical high school classrooms. However, cooperative learning activities in this class did not reach the level of Joint Productive Activity (JPA). According to Tharp and colleagues (2000), JPA involves working collaboratively toward a common goal and must promote dialogue, instructional conversation, negotiation, and collaboration among students—and importantly these features lead to intersubjectivity among the group members. JPA must be genuine, and the role of the teacher must be to support, monitor, and adjust students' work to be successful. Despite Ms. Lombardi's effort to install cooperative learning, cooperative learning only goes halfway toward becoming JPA. More critical, her system seems to fade as soon as she leaves the classroom –the students return to their regular seats, reproducing once again the "Great Cycle of Social Sorting" (Tharp et al., 2000).

Conclusions

In this chapter I analyze the extent to which immigrant students are integrated with Chilean peers within their classrooms by looking at seating arrangements, workgroups, and opportunities for JPA. Interviews and classroom observations confirm that immigrant students are spatially and socially segregated at the classroom level. Immigrant students are mostly organized in straight columns and rows, sit in the same places, and are close to their friends, who are also immigrants. In addition, teachers allow students to choose the members of their workgroups, so most of the immigrants end up working with similar peers, reinforcing bonding ties (Putnam, 2000). Educators fail greatly to create opportunities for promoting bridging ties between immigrant and Chilean students.

Being physically far from Chileans in the classroom and working with other immigrant students are likely to affect the immigrants' social relationships with peers. As mentioned previously, scholars from diverse disciplines have emphasized the importance of physical proximity between groups as a necessary condition for their potential integration (e.g., Allport, 1954; Blau, 1974; Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Immigrant students in Chile are not only physically segregated within schools, as I showed in Chapter 1, but also separated at the classroom level, reproducing the "Great Cycle of Social Sorting" (Tharp et al., 2000). In addition, results show that propinquity is insufficient, as it does not guarantee the formation of relationships among students (Tharp et al., 2000). In my cases, immigrant and Chilean students were together in the same classroom, doing the same school tasks, but there were few or no interactions amongst them.

This analysis found that immigrants' segregation in the classroom is related to teachers' attitudes and behaviors, the strong social ties among students, and the Chilean education system. First, it is evident that teachers limit peer interactions in the classroom through seating arrangements and group activities. In the classrooms where students were allowed to select their seats and groups, and in the classrooms where teachers implemented a seating plan, the result was the same; students ended up moving and sitting and working with their friends. Allowing students to choose their groups and seats reduces opportunities for propinquity and relationships with diverse others (Tharp et al., 2000). In general, there is not much reflection about the possibilities for interaction between Chileans and immigrants—no teachers mentioned in their seating

plans promoting social relationships between diverse students. Educators responded to daily contingencies, allowing students to sit with their friends or work with their friends if they behaved well. If problems arose, they made changes. For teachers, obligating students to work with other peers is synonymous with chaos, social tensions, and disruptions. Which is preferable? To maintain a peaceful but segregated classroom? Or to deal with a mixed classroom composition with social tensions and conflicts? The answer is not easy, considering that teachers have to deal with multiple issues, including students' nonattendance, poverty, violence, and drug consumption. However, teachers should reflect on the social consequences of the self-selected seating location and workgroups, and this reflection should extend beyond students' academic performance and behavior.

Second, this analysis found strong social ties among students in the classroom that affect the integration of immigrant students with their peers through seating and workgroup choice. Many students confirmed that they sit in cliques, they worked with their friends, and they practically moved as a group. Students felt comfortable, relaxed, and confident sitting and working with their friends, regardless of their friends' academic abilities. Social pressures, social hierarchies, and friendship codes pull students to remain with their friends and not approach or work with anyone else. The analysis also shows that high school students have power as they are usually the ones making these decisions and that both students and teachers are aware of this.

Third, the nature of the Chilean educational system affects the integration of immigrant students into the classrooms. As I mentioned before, in Chile, students have

an assigned classroom, and the teachers have to move from class to class. For students, their classroom is their space, the room where they spend most of the day and where they learn and socialize. It is not the teachers' space. In this place, students often feel free to decorate their desks, paint the walls, play music while working on an assignment, or move close to their friends when the head teacher is absent. There is a sense of appropriation of the space, which is not necessarily present in other countries. These dynamics could have severe implications for immigrant students' peer integration with their Chilean classmates. A regimented room, where seats "have names" and identities, and students only work with similar peers makes it difficult for immigrant students to create and develop bridging ties with Chileans. In that way, this educational system increases the peer segregation of immigrant students.

The students in this study have demonstrated that they will not autonomously choose to sit and work with diverse peers from different backgrounds. For integration to happen, it must come from the educators. Cooperative learning is the closest practice that could break the strong segregation of immigrant students in the classroom. As I showed, in Ms. Lombardi's classroom, Chilean and immigrant students had the opportunity to sit and work in mixed groups, even if it was only for a short time of instruction. Additionally, three immigrant girls were the group leaders. As scholars have shown, seating arrangements that focus on the group increase communication between students (Fernandes et al., 2011; Marx, Fuhrer, & Hartig, 1999). However, cooperative learning did not reach the level of JPA and rapidly dissolved after Ms. Lombardi left the classroom. This case study reflects how fixed classroom dynamics

and organization are endemic to Chilean High schools and how structural social divisions are replicated in these spaces. We would need more than isolated classroom practices to promote immigrant students' peer integration.

Until now, I have shown national-, school-, and classroom level structures and practices, which created barriers for immigrant students' integration with their peers. Structural conditions at these three levels offer few opportunities for integration. But are immigrant students segregated at the individual level? How are the experiences of immigrant students? The next chapter brings the voice of immigrant students, our main character, to learn and understand their integration experiences with their Chilean peers.

Chapter Four:

Immigrant Students' Experiences at Chilean Schools

Introduction

This chapter analyzes the extent to which high school immigrant students experience integration or exclusion by their Chilean peers. Drawing on 28 in-depth interviews with immigrant students at seven Chilean schools, I asked them about their emigration journeys, impressions about Chile, school, friendships, peer relationships, and discrimination and racism at school. I argue that immigrant youth's experiences of peer integration should be understood considering a broader context, where immigration, family relationships, and students' school experiences in their home country play a role that is as crucial as the national, school, and classroom-level structures.

This section presents three key findings. First, immigrant students in Chile have lived difficult, stressful, and traumatic experiences related to immigrating, traveling to Chile, and family separations and reunification. This group must adapt to a new environment and develop a transnational lifestyle that will shape their school experiences in Chile. Second, after settling, immigrant students face considerable challenges in Chilean schools associated with the enrollment process and adjusting to a full-day school schedule and new curriculum. Third, results confirm that this group experiences high levels of peer exclusion at school, encapsulation of friendships, and

discrimination and racism. These experiences are embedded in a multilevel structure in which contextual factors at the national-, school-, and classroom-level shape and determine Chilean-immigrant student interactions. Then, schools become a hostile space for immigrant students who must navigate the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion.

First, I present youth experiences about their immigration to Chile, including why their families decided to come, the immigration experience itself, and their expectations and impressions of Chile. Then, I describe immigrants' experiences at Chilean schools, focusing on school enrollment, the process of school adaptation, and classroom dynamics. Finally, I present immigrant students' friendships, peer relations, and their experiences of discrimination and racism.

The Stresses of Emigrating to Chile

Immigrant students from Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, Venezuela, Peru, and the Dominican Republic shared different experiences about emigrating to Chile. Their stories are marked by stressful and traumatic episodes related to the reasons for emigrating, their voyage to Chile, and due to family separations and/or reunification. I started the interviews with an open question, asking youth to talk about their immigration experiences in Chile. Some of them were eager to tell their stories, while others were shyer and more reticent to share their experience. In general, when narrating their stories, immigrants placed themselves as "observers" or as "secondary characters" in a family story that is part of them, but at the same time feels distant.

According to immigrant students, the decision to emigrate was motivated mainly by economic and/or political hardships. Of the 28 interviewed, 11 students identified financial difficulties as the main factor that motivated their families to leave their home countries. Particularly, students identified the loss of a parent's job, lack of access to health and educational services, losing their housing, scam experiences, and difficulties in maintaining living standards as critical factors in the family decision to leave. For example, Félix, Julio, and Rosa, from the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Peru respectively, explained how economic problems motivated their families to leave. Despite having a relatively good life in their countries of origin, Florencia, Rebeca, and Adela, from Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela, agreed that their parents wanted to improve their living standard and finally decided to move to Chile. Luciana, who emigrated with her brother from Santa Marta, Colombia, told all her classmates that she came to Chile to visit her Chilean relatives, but the truth was that her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer and could not maintain her children anymore in Colombia.

Almost all students from Venezuela sensed that the political situation of their country was the main reason to move to Chile. Immigrants detailed how the political and social context of their country started to change ever since Hugo Chávez's presidency, and later, Nicolás Maduro's government. Venezuelan citizens' life started to deteriorate slowly until the situation began to be unsustainable, chaotic, and terrible. Feelings of insecurity, stress, uncertainty, fear, and anxiety due to what was happening in the country started to burden them and their families, and finally motivated the

decision to emigrate. Carolina, a 14-year-old from Maracaibo, Venezuela, gave a detailed description of her experience of immigration to Chile. She arrived in the country in December 2017, following her father, who emigrated two years before because of the political situation in Venezuela. For her, Venezuela "slowly started to collapse." The infrastructure of her school stopped working: the fans were damaged, and they cut off the water and electricity. "The teachers and students started to leave the country. And many of them are here in Chile and others went to the United States, Colombia or Argentina." She is relieved that she could leave Venezuela "before the worst happened," but she is sad for those friends and relatives who are still there. She continued:

> *Peers tell me, of 41 [students] that were in our class, now we are down to 20, and we are practically not going to classes because there are no teachers...' And actually, we no longer know what to do because those people who stayed are there because they no longer have resources. They exhausted all their resources; they do not have a passport and do not know how to leave the country (Carolina, Venezuelan student, 14 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).*

Like Carolina, other Venezuelan youths detailed how the political instability affected their home country's economy and social life and influenced their parents' decision to emigrate. Students felt they had a relatively good quality of life when they were kids, but this life began to slowly deteriorate until it reached a point at which their families could not take it anymore. Interviewees mentioned the lack of educational and work

opportunities and feelings of insecurity, stress, despair, fear, and paranoia as consequences of Venezuela's political context.

Although immigrant students' parents evaluated other destinations for emigrating, such as the United States, Canada, and Spain, immigrant students explained that Chile was the best option. Students highlighted Chile's economic and political stability, more flexible immigration policies, and the presence of relatives that already had emigrated to Chile as the main reasons for choosing Chile. For example, half of the interviewees said they already had relatives or friends living in Chile that pushed them to come and later helped them to establish themselves.

Another source of stress for immigrant students was the trip from their home country to Chile. They shared diverse experiences of traveling from Colombia, Haiti, Venezuela, Peru, the Dominican Republic, or Ecuador. They traveled by bus or plane, accompanied by their parents, guardians, siblings, or completely alone. Some youth took short trips that lasted just a few hours, while others took weeks to arrive in Chile. Despite the different experiences, immigrant students had vivid memories of the long and tedious journey they went through coming to Chile. Students felt that the trip was "the worst thing I had ever lived," "a nightmare," "a horrible experience," "something crazy."

For Claudia, a 14-year-old Venezuelan, coming to Chile was highly stressful. Due to Venezuela's political situation and after her parents divorced, her mother opted to start a new life and emigrate to Chile. This decision was completely unexpected for Claudia. "I never thought of leaving my country. I loved living there; I had my best

friend there. I honestly cried during the whole trip coming to Chile. I was very nostalgic thinking about my country." Claudia described the trip to Chile as the craziest experience she ever had. The initial plan was to take a bus in Venezuela with her mother, crossing through Colombia, Ecuador, Perú, and finally arriving in Chile. It was supposed to be a five-day trip on three different buses, but ended up being a ten-day trip on seven buses. Fears of deportation and detention at the international borders and problems with the buses were some of the most stressful episodes mentioned by Claudia. She explained: "It was (laughing) a little crazy, because, when I was coming here, I was on the border of Colombia with Venezuela, and there were problems with my passport. Then I had to come with my passport about to expire, and I went through all the countries with only my ID…" Claudia detailed how the bus broke down in the middle of the curvy roads on their way to Colombia. Then, after four days in Colombia, they traveled to Ecuador, where they were supposed to stop for two hours but ended up staying twelve. The bus from Ecuador to Peru also got damaged:

We were all so tired on the bus that we all fell asleep, until we woke up, because the smell of smoke was killing us, because one of the brakes was burning... and I felt so drugged, that I simply covered myself up with my blanket... After that, they changed us to another bus, and me and my mom... my mom had red eyes… When we changed to the other bus, all the people were awake, because they didn't want to sleep, just in case… I think that I was awake five hours throughout the trip.

In Peru, Claudia had relatives and spent the day with them. Finally, they took the last bus that brought them to Chile. She continued:

(…) Well, then, already in Peru we arrived at the border of Peru with Chile, and from there it was like everything happened fast. They asked me for a passport, what is it for, how long will you stay, and my mother said that we were coming as visitors... I mean, on vacation... when it wasn't like that, because I didn't know what was going to happen if I said we weren't. So, we passed, and I don't know ... (muttering and laughing), my mom has this paper, not me. I have my papers, my mother too, and that is... After we arrived, we went to my uncle's house, who lives a few blocks around here, and we stayed there, and I got to sleep again. I was sleepy (laughs) (Claudia, Venezuelan student, 14 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).

I asked Claudia how the trip made her feel; she said that she had mixed emotions: it was interesting, since she could visit countries such as Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, but it was also crazy and terrifying. For her mother, it was a nightmare. Like Claudia, other adolescents conveyed that the trip was difficult, with feelings of stress, anxiety, anguish, and despair. Florencia, Rosa, and Félix traveled to Chile by plane from Ecuador, Peru, and Haiti, respectively. They were completely alone, and none of them was more than 12 years old. Rosa, a 15-year-old from Peru, had a traumatic memory traveling to Chile. She was supposed to fly with her mother from Lima to Santiago. However, her mother found tickets on separate flights. Before the trip, her mother gave her a few instructions that she had to follow: take the airplane, pick up her suitcase, and wait for her at the Chilean airport entrance. Unfortunately, her mother's flight was delayed, and Rosa was not able to reunite with her. At first, she was a little nervous. "I

was alone in a strange country and did not know anyone." But after several hours of waiting, she started "freaking out." "I was at the airport dying of nerves and shaking." Finally, she could contact her mother's friend, who picked her up from the airport. Rosa acknowledges that this experience at the airport was just the first of many other hardships she was to encounter in Chile. For youth, these experiences can be traumatizing and have long-lasting emotional consequences. Previous research suggests that unaccompanied minors and youth are more vulnerable to suffering violence, extorsion, abuse, detention, and deportation at international borders (e.g., Nazario, 2006, Coutin 2016).

In relation to this point, the third source of stress for immigrant students is family separation and reunification due to migration. These experiences involve (re)adapting to new environments, building relationships with new relatives or caregivers, and re-constructing fractured relationships with parents. According to Schapiro and colleagues (2013), parent-child separations related to immigration could take many forms: mothers that temporarily emigrate without a chance of permanent settlement, parents that emigrate and hope to bring their children after them to the destination country, or youth who are sent to live with relatives or paid caretakers.

Of the 28 interviewees, 22 immigrant students came to Chile after or before their mother or father. This group arrived in Chile over the last five years, so most of them are in a process of reunification or have hopes of reuniting with their relatives. Rosa is from Huarua, on the Pacific coast of Peru, and she arrived in Chile in December 2016. She said that a particular fact motivated her mother to move to Chile. When she

was three years old, Rosa got burned with hot water and had serious injuries. Her mother could not afford treatment and medicines for her and was forced to move to Chile, looking for better economic opportunities. Rosa was five years old at the time of their separation. She stayed in Peru with her grandparents while her mother sent remittances to them for eight years. Like Rosa, many other youths had to remain in their home countries with grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, or other relatives.

For Florencia, a 15-year-old girl from Quito, Ecuador, her experience of immigration to Chile has been difficult and challenging. She arrived alone in the country in December 2015, joining her father, a Chilean lawyer who was already living in the country. As she explained, her father met her mother in Ecuador when he was a law student, got married, and had two daughters. They lived for many years in Quito until her father was scammed and decided to come back to Chile to finish his professional law degree. In contrast to the experience of many youth, Florencia decided for herself to come to Chile after her father proposed she live with him: "It was very spontaneous." She thought it was the right decision at that moment as she had behavioral problems at school and tensions with some of her classmates. "What hurt me most was to leave my mom." However, excited to start a new life in Chile, Florencia moved in with her father, who lived with her grandmother and aunt. In the beginning, everything was "fine," "new," and "exciting." She felt welcome and comfortable in the new home; but after a few months, Florencia's relationship with her grandmother started to get complicated. "I saw another vision of my grandmother. My Chilean grandmother used to come to Ecuador to visit me. I always had the idea that my

grandmother was the best, and I came here, and I realized that it was the opposite." The fights with her grandmother became part of her daily life. She felt frustrated, stressed, and somewhat regretted having immigrated to Chile. Also, she felt that she did not have any parental support: her father was working all day and did not have time for her, and her mother was far away in Ecuador.

Like Florencia, four students from Venezuela reported coming to Chile after their father's arrival. In these cases, the father moved first, found a job, rented a house, and after settling in, he called his family to join him. This process could take between two to four years, so many of the youths were children when their father moved.

For immigrant students, family reunification is also complicated and stressful as they must adapt to a new environment and re-construct family ties (Dreby. 2007). After a two-year separation, Florencia finally reunited with her mother, who decided to emigrate to Chile. In the beginning, she was excited and happy to live with her mother again, imagining that they would recover the close relationship they had in Ecuador. However, after a month, she started to feel stress and anxiety. She recognized that in Chile, she had learned to do everything on her own and had gained independence. Now her mother is continuously "bothering her." She said that she feels utterly lonely: "(…) Like I don't have that person to help me. Before, it was my mother, but now that I am with my mother, I find that it is not the same, because she was not with me in moments that were very, very difficult. So, now it's like "mommy," but it's not like it was before…" For Florencia, her family was in a constant process of adaptation and re-adaptation. She expressed being tired of dealing with the discussions

and tensions at home, and often imagined herself moving back to her pacific life in Quito.

Harrowing experiences of family separation and reunification were also shared by students from Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela. In some cases, they even had to live with new people. Margarita is a 15-year-old student at School 1. In 2014, when she was eleven years old, she emigrated from Barranquilla, Colombia, to reunite with her mother, who had emigrated two years before. She first settled in La Serena, in Northern Chile. The house was "full of people:" her mother, sister, grandparents, and a new household member, her stepfather. Without giving many details, Margarita remembered how traumatic her first year in this house was. "Everything was so complicated." "I remember that house. I was afraid of everything: my stepfather, family issues, school issues. I felt very sad and lonely." Margarita was relieved when her mother left her stepfather and moved to Santiago.

In contrast to Florencia and Margarita's experience, Rosa's testimony represents one of few cases of happy family reunification. She finally emigrated from Peru to Chile in December 2016 and joined her mother after eight years of separation. Rosa valued her mother's decision to move to Chile; thanks to her, she could recover from the burns. Also, she recognized that her mother wanted to bring her to Chile when she was eight years old, but her grandparents opposed this as they were used to living with her. Thus, she did not feel abandoned or hold any resentment towards her mother. However, Rosa is still in the process of readjustment to a new home. She is rebuilding her relationship with her mother and getting to know her new little sister.

The family experiences of immigrant students are diverse and complex. They must accommodate their kin relations, live with new family members or friends, and develop transnational connections. According to Zavella (2011), immigrant families may "become borderlands, *casas divididas,* fractured by differences among family members" (p.187-8). Family becomes a space in which different cultures, languages, identities, and locations converge; family members must negotiate bicultural points of view, daily influencing their subjectivities and disrupting family lives (Zavella, 2011). These *casas divididas* specially affect children and youth who usually do not have power over their parents' decisions. International literature confirms that children and youth's responses to parental separation are diverse and may vary according to the child's age at separation (Dreby, 2007; Liu, Li, & Ge, 2009), the length of the separation (Suárez-Orozco, Bang, & Kim, 2011), and the gender of the parent who left (Liu et al., 2009), among other variables. The effects of separation are commonly pain and distress, but also may include feelings of abandonment, anxiety, insecurity, and depression (Schapiro et al., 2013).

Immigrant students' testimonies of immigration are necessary in order to understand youth experiences of peer integration at school. Experiences of uncertainty, moving, traveling, family separation, family reunification, rebuilding fractured relationships, adapting to new family members, and feeling stressed, anxious, and unstable are likely to affect immigrant students' integration and social relationships in Chile.

Chile: "It´s different, but not too much"

After exploring immigrant students' experiences of immigration, I asked them to talk about Chile. Overall, immigrant students believe Chile is a "similar" and "different" place to live compared to their home country. As part of Latin America, Chile shared cultural features with the students' countries of origin, and it is seen as a good and secure place to live. But at the same time, immigrant students felt dislocated and unwelcome; the typical Chilean personality, the weather, and the country's inequalities are seen as factors that complicate students' experiences of integration and adaptation.

Immigrant students agreed that Chile is both "different and similar" to their home countries. According to the interviewees: "there are many things in common, but there are also very different things;" "Yes, it is similar… Nevertheless, not that much, in reality it is different;" "Chile is different but not too much." On the one hand, immigrant students, mainly from Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela, felt it was not a "big shock" coming to Chile. They expected to arrive in a completely different country; however, they found their home countries share a set of cultural values and practices with Chileans, including Spanish as the primary language, the historical context of colonization, religion, and cultural celebrations. Luis, from Venezuela, considered that some "Chilean things" always remind him of Venezuela. "At the beginning, I searched on the Internet about Santiago. It reminded me of my country. There is a Matta Avenue, and there is a Bolivar Avenue. It is similar."

Although immigrant students identify similarities between Chile and their home countries, they simultaneously felt it was different. Immigrant students, mainly from Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Haiti, expected to find a warmer, kinder, and more cheerful country similar to their home countries. However, they found a hostile, unfriendly, and cold land. The Chileans' personality and the weather were "a shock" for immigrant youth. Chileans are described as rude, selfish, cold, depressed, unfriendly, shy, and bored. Margarita shared her impressions about Chile after immigrating:

> *I imagined something more cheerful. Because, for example, there [in Colombia] you can walk to the corner and find many people singing, dancing, doing many things, without shame, and one can talk to an unknown person without it being weird. And I came thinking that I was going to be doing the same thing, and they looked at me strangely, very strangely for, ufff ... for being so ... I don't know, very outgoing, well ... it was strange. And at school, ugh, it was too difficult. It was very, very difficult. (Margarita, Colombian student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).*

Rebeca, a 14-year-old from Colombia had a similar opinion:

> *In Colombia, the people themselves are very friendly, they always greet each other, or things like that; and here the Chileans are not like that. They are like colder, more, I don't know, more… like more depressive. In Colombia we are happier everywhere, we are always happy, even though we are sad inside, we are happy. Instead, here depression is all around us, that the psychologist...,*

and there in Colombia that treatment is not used much. So, that was my first impression [of Chile] that everyone had to have depression, and everyone had to have a psychologist (Rebeca, Colombian student, 14 years old, Private-subsidized School 2).

Like Margarita and Rebeca, six other youths from different schools had a negative impression of Chileans after arriving in the country, especially in contrast to people from their country of origin. Chileans are seen as cold, unfriendly, shy, and rude people compared to the warmer, friendly, outgoing, and sociable people in Colombia, Venezuela, and Haiti. These experiences are important and could have consequences for peer relationships at school.

Another issue that appears in youth narratives when describing Chile is a sense that Chile is "better" than other Latin American countries. Still, it is not seen as "the land of opportunities" or "a country of hope" in contrast to other destinations like the United States, Canada, or Spain. Immigrant students liked the social and political order and the physical landscape of Santiago. They valued the green areas, the roads, public transportation, and clean neighborhoods. Youth, mostly from Central America, liked Chile for being a quiet, peaceful, and secure country. They highlighted the respect for authority, policemen, and traffic laws in contrast to their experiences in their home country, which they described as being "like a mess." Comparing Chile and Venezuela, Adela explained:

There are many different things [in Chile]. For example, here people respect order, traffic is orderly, people also respect the police a lot, and there [in

Venezuela], there, no one stops [laughs] for policemen or the traffic signs. There you are always, like afraid of being robbed or something like that. Instead, here it is like more relaxed. And the food is also very different (Adela, Venezuelan student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).

Other immigrant students also valued Chileans' political and economic stability. However, this discourse becomes ambiguous since immigrant students did not have high expectations of improving their quality of life drastically or having the chance to access a quality education in Chile. Only two students mentioned that Chile is "a land of opportunities" regarding access to education and work. That could be related to different factors. First, a group of immigrant youth and their families came to Chile because of the political situation in their home countries, favoring the safety of their families, but they have seen their socioeconomic status significantly decrease. Second, even though Chile is seen as an economic and politically stable country, the high levels of social-economic inequality are also visible. Some immigrant students expressed their frustration over living in a country that is so unequal and classist. Florencia explained this idea. While in Ecuador, she belonged to the upper class and went to a good school. In Chile, her situation changed drastically, and she now belongs to a middle class and goes to a middle-to-low income school. The problem, as she said, is that Chileans are always pointing out and making fun of lower classes:

The social classes in Chile catch my attention. For example, the teacher always..., that regarding social classes ... Well, we are in a low-middle school class and not in [an upper-class school]..., and in Ecuador, I was in the best

schools, and that has never happened. You could be in the best schools, and there was a poor teacher, and no..., obviously that was bad, but it was not that, that ... The difference was not noticeable as much as here. As here a person with money compared to a person without money, it shows up, even in his way of how, of being.

EVV: And there in Ecuador it is not noticeable?

That is, it shows, but less... and here it is very much like... the social classes, the soap operas show the differences, making fun... I think that people make a lot of mockery toward the lower class and toward the upper class; like the two of them, they hurt themselves, and that bothers me anyway, because... it's like... I've always been in good classes, like in upper classes, and now that I'm in another class... and, people are putting so much emphasis on that... because I knew before that I was in a good class, but it was normal. Instead, here, they always emphasize it. And that bothers me a lot (Florencia, Ecuadorian student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 2).

Florencia felt her family's socioeconomic situation declined after emigrating to Chile, which is quite contradictory, as his father finally obtained a professional law degree from a Chilean institution. Florencia represents just one case among many other youths who have seen their socioeconomic status take a significant downward turn in Chile.

In sum, immigrant students express ambivalence about Chile. The country is seen as a "similar" and "different" place to live compared to their home country. As part of Latin America, Chile shares cultural features with the students' countries of

origin, and it is seen as a good and secure place to live. But at the same time, immigrant students felt dislocated, unwelcome; the Chilean personality, the weather, and the country's inequalities are seen as essential factors that complicate the students' experiences of integration and adaptation.

Overall, youth feel ambivalent about Chile, which is seen as both "similar and different" and "close and far" from their respective home countries. As part of Latin American history and identity, Chile shares common features with other Latin American countries. However, the weather and Chileans' personalities do not seem to fit into this shared identity. The ambivalent discourse about Chile is also in evidence when students are describing the country as a good and safe place to live, but at the same time, highly classist and unequal.

School Experiences: "An Inflexible Educational System"

Immigrant students face considerable challenges and barriers in Chilean schools. According to the interviewees, the problems started from the enrollment process and the difficulties of searching for a school. After being accepted by a school, immigrant students faced daunting obstacles adjusting to a new educational system. The extended day school schedule, different school curriculum, and classroom structure are the main difficulties reported by immigrant students. Despite these challenges, half of the interviewees believe that school in Chile is "easier" and "more relaxed" than school in their home countries.

When asking immigrant students how they decided on their school, a typical response was, "It was the only school with vacancies." Once immigrant students settled

in Chile, their parents started a frantic search for an educational institution for their children. Adela saw her parents become overwhelmed, looking at schools for her. "[My father] was looking at all the schools on this block because this block is full of schools. And in almost none of them was there space, because the school year was about to start. But he found space in this one, and I enrolled here." Similarly, immigrant students from Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, and Peru, attending different schools recognized that several educational centers rejected them before they were able to enroll in their current school. "Other schools did not have space for more students." "This school was the only one with vacancy." Additionally, two immigrant youths, one from Peru and another from Haiti, told me that the Ministry of Education redirected their parents to Schools 4 and 5, respectively.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, in 2015 Chile's educational system implemented the "School Inclusion Law," introducing major changes in the school enrollment process. Parents can freely select any school for their children in this process, and subsidized schools are forbidden from selecting their students based on socioeconomic, religious, or academic criteria (Correa et al., 2019). However, the school enrollment of immigrant students follows a different process. The policy's strict timelines to apply to schools—requiring students to submit their applications in specific moments of the year—are usually in conflict with immigrant families' arrival to the country. This group also must submit to the schools their academic records to certify their grade level. Therefore, the schools could use these records to select or reject students. In other words, the "old" selection practices that the "School Inclusion Law" intends to

eradicate can still be present for immigrant students' enrollment. In either case—when the Ministry of Education redirects them or when schools discretely reject them because of lack of vacancy—immigrant parents' freedom to choose a school for their children is severely curtailed.

After enrolling in school, immigrant students must adjust to a different educational system. Interviewees shared difficulties adapting to a more extended day school schedule and a school curriculum that included new classes and content. First, immigrant students reported problems adapting to a new and different school schedule. In 1997, the Chilean government implemented the Law Establishing a Full-Day Schedule, which increased class hours by 30% without lengthening the school year (Martinic, 2015). While students from Ecuador, Venezuela, Peru, and the Dominican Republic used to spend half of the day at school, usually from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., or 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., in Chile, they had to adapt to a full-day school schedule from 8 to 3:30 or 4 p.m. Consequently, immigrants often reported that adjusting to a longer school routine in Chile has been "exhausting," "boring," and "challenging."

An additional barrier for immigrant students is adapting to a school curriculum that includes new classes and content. History classes are always an issue for immigrant students as each country teaches its own national history and geography, or it has a different version of Latin American history (Hernández, 2016). The interviewees reported difficulties understanding Chilean history and geography. The problem was even worse since students from Venezuela argued that in their countries, they had three separate courses –national history, universal history, and geography –while in Chile,

they only have one class that focuses on these three topics. English classes were challenging for a significant group of students from Peru, Venezuela, Haiti, and Ecuador. Some of them did not have English at their previous school, while others said that the level was too low. Students also reported problems in physics and chemistry, because in some Latin American countries, such as Venezuela, they did not have these courses. Finally, immigrant students mentioned that in their home schools, they had other classes such as art history, calligraphy, sign language, mathematical reasoning, arithmetic, and ecology.

Despite these barriers, ten immigrant students reported that school in Chile was "easier" and "more relaxed" than school in their home country. These students stated that the school curricula was not challenging enough, that everything was overly simplified, and that they were reviewing material they already knew. In their home countries, immigrants had more homework, classwork, and content in classes. In addition, ten students said that the teacher lacked authority and did not impose discipline in Chilean classrooms. For example, youth from Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia said that in their home school they had strict rules: "The discipline was obviously superior than that of this school." "The teaching was strict, it was strong." "The teachers were much more strict, too strict." "For any little thing you do wrong, they called your parents." "They had no patience... it was super strict." "You had to have short nails, no earrings, no necklaces, no tattoos." Luis reflects on how much easier and relaxed Chilean school is for him compared to Venezuelan school, and at the

same time, how long the Chilean school journey is. “We are here all day, and they [teachers] demand less.” This equation does not make sense to him.

Classroom Dynamics

When asking immigrant students about classroom organization and peer relationships at school, the clearest and most frequently cited factor was how segregated classmates’ relationships were. According to the interviewees, each classroom has an “established name,” and the students, teachers, and parents develop a stereotype for it. When describing their classroom, immigrant students said: “9th grade B is known as the loudest and messiest class.” “The teachers consider us to be the most studious, best class in the whole school.” “From what they tell us, we are like the messiest class at school.” “They told us that we were the best class.” These images were profoundly influenced by teachers, directors, and peers’ beliefs. Alba, a 15-year-old Venezuelan student at School 1, explained: “From what we are told, we are like the messiest classroom at school… we are always kidding, so to speak. We joke among ourselves, and so we get along with everyone…”

At School 4, Rosa was afraid to enter 9th grade B, since this classroom had a bad reputation. However, thanks to a teacher, she was placed in another classroom. Describing her classroom, she said:

> *It is like a united classroom, it could be said that in every aspect, it is united and everything, in fact, in my class, it is like the professors consider us to be the most studious, and the class with the best..., of the whole school.*
>
> *EVV: Really?*

Yes, because when I arrived at this school, it seems that I was going to be in the B-classroom, it seems, but… the teacher who was at that time was Isabel, and I asked her: "Miss, what classroom am I going to go to?" And the teacher said: "The paper, the paper." And it had been lost, and it seems that I was going into the B-classroom. And my paper had been lost… The teacher looked at me like that and said: "Ok, sweetie, I'm going to put you in A, I don't know... I'm leaving you in good hands [Te dejaré en buenas manos] (Rosa, Peruvian student, 14 years old, Public School 4).

"Te dejaré en buenas manos" meant that the student will be placed in a "better classroom" compared to 9th grade B, which had a bad reputation. Despite the fact that Rosa barely knew the different classrooms and potential peers, she felt relieved and grateful to enter a "quieter" and "more studious" group. After all, she was going to belong to that classroom until she completed high school.

Going deeper into the vision that immigrant students have about Chilean classrooms, one of the most frequently mentioned items that appeared in their interviews was the high level of peer segregation. Immigrants from different high schools disliked peer segregation and the formation of groups in the classroom where they found distrust, hostile relationships, fights, and conflicts. For example, when Claudia arrived on the first day at School 1 in Chile, she felt intimidated by the other students. She was confused, anxious, and lonely: "I really wanted to cry." She was impressed by how visible the cliques were.

> *What I don't like is that there are a lot of groups. And for example, you approach that group to talk to one of your friends who is there, it's like everyone is silent, because they don't want to get involved, and they don't integrate like I am used to. In Venezuela, we all integrate. If we see, for example, the loneliest person in the room and say, "group work," and I'm missing one, they say: "Hey, come over, stay with me." They are very united there, and here I notice that they are very separate and lack unity (Claudia, Venezuelan student, 14 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).*

When Micaela arrived at her classroom at School 3, she was confused. "I did not know that seats were assigned." Later, she realized her classmates have assigned seats and are grouped by friendships and affinity. Similarly, Adela states: "[The first day at School 1] was very strange. I arrived and saw that everyone was with their group of friends. I didn't even know where to sit or anything, so I sat down in an empty desk while the head teacher spoke. There were two guys behind me. I felt their gaze fixed on me, their laughs…" At School 5, Félix pointed out that students always sit in the same place close to their friends because teachers allow them to choose their seats. Consequently, students are completely divided in his classroom: "Chileans speak with Chileans and Haitians with Haitians."

Like Claudia, Micaela, Adela, and Félix, other immigrant students were astonished by peer segregation in Chilean classrooms. Some Chilean classmates knew each other ever since first grade and shared multiple anecdotes, jokes, and experiences. The findings of previous chapters resonate in immigrant students' discourse. Extending

Stanton-Salazar's work (1997), this group must "decode" and "learn to adapt" to a fixed educational system in which students maintain the same peers over the years, the classes have fixed labels, students spend most of the day in the same classroom and reproduce the same peer dynamics through seating and grouping arrangements.

Friendships

Despite differences in the types of schools and the concentration of immigrants, most immigrants established friendships with other immigrant students, especially those of the same national origin. For immigrant students, cross-racial friendships were tentative, unusual, or absent. According to immigrant students, the reasons justifying their connecting with other immigrants are a combination of "personal choices" and "hostile peer attitudes."

Situated in San Miguel, School 1 is a private-subsidized institution with 16% of the student population consisting of immigrants. In this school, I interviewed immigrants from two different classrooms. In both, I found strong friendship segregation by nationality. Carolina, Margarita, Adela, Elena, and Susana belong to the same group of friends. Most of them are from Venezuela and they arrived in Chile during the last four years. When asked about who her friends were, Margarita said:

> *Most of my friends are Venezuelan foreigners. I have a group of five, we are five, five girls and my best friend, and well, I do not know, now ... but like the closest, she is Venezuelan too, she arrived a year ago, super recently. Well, now it's better than before because we both had a lot of problems. But well... and the other two friends, I met them this year and the fourth, I met her last year,*

but we didn't get along so well, really, because there was another little person who didn't want her to be my friend, because I am a foreigner and all that stuff... (Margarita, Colombian student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).

Margarita's group was seen as "the foreign crew" in her classroom. They had the highest grades and outgoing personalities. They liked to hang out on weekends and shared memories from their home country. Carolina, who is part of this group, met her friends at a multicultural celebration organized by the school. She appreciates these festivities as she can connect and socialize with other students from her same country of origin. Teo, a Venezuelan youth from the same school, explained that his group was composed of Venezuelans from his classroom, but also other grades:

Here, my friends are mostly Venezuelans, but from another classroom, not only from my classroom. There are Venezuelans in eleventh or 10th grade, and with them, I hang out. I meet them almost every weekend. And when we do something, I invite them to my house to play, or we go to the mall, and we do different things, but always, that's what we do among ourselves (Teo, Venezuelan student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).

Teo highlighted that his group does "everything together," and they move as if they were one person. At the same school, in 9th grade B, I met some members of *las cotorras [parrots],* a group of immigrant girls from Venezuela. According to Alba: "They call us *las cotorras* because we talk a lot (laughs). But we did not take it seriously, because it is nothing against foreigners. Do you understand? It's more like playing, between us ..." *Las cotorras* were proud of their group. They did everything

together; they worked together, sat together in the classroom, and hung out on weekends together. Alba continued: “We are all Venezuelans. We are like a group of thirteen, and we all like to have a good time with each other. Most of the parties are at my friend’s house, under the supervision of her parents and we had a good time with each other.”

Despite the fact that School 5 displays different characteristics from School 1—with a higher concentration of immigrant students and being located in a poor neighborhood—I also found high levels of friendship segregation by nationality. At this school, Félix shared that he had no Chilean friends, and he did not socialize with them at all. His group was composed of Michel, Phillippe, and Jacques, all immigrants from Haiti. Explaining a typical school day, Félix said that he would spend all day long with his “buddies:” they sat together in the classroom, they worked together, and played basketball during recess. Felix felt his classmates considered his group to be loud, messy, and annoying.

Public School 4 has a more diverse ethnic and racial student population. However, immigrant students there also formed close ties with other immigrant youth. Aurora, an afro-descendant from the Dominican Republic, described herself as an extroverted, friendly, and talkative student. Her group was formed of immigrants from Peru, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic, and only one Chilean. Rosa belonged to the same group of friends. However, she admitted that her best friends were not from this clique: “Here the closest is the..., they are in 11th grade: Melissa and a friend named Leo. They are like my best friends.” She explained that Melissa and Leo are Peruvians

like her and are in 11th grade: "They are older, because, I mean, I don't know. It just caught my attention having older friends because I think that they give me better advice than those of my age, they are more mature than those of my age."

Immigrant students admitted to enjoying having other immigrant youth as friends. They value sharing a cultural background with them as well as their experiences immigrating to Chile. Immigrant students have in common experiences of traveling, family separation, and reunification. Teo is grateful to be in a school with other Venezuelan classmates:

> *I believe that all foreigners who are in school are a great help because you don´t feel like you are the only one here, that is, as the only foreigner here... And it feels good because, because the same people from your country, we are in a school in another country, in a country that you did not know before and it is comforting (Teo, Venezuelan student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).*

For Teo, it is "comforting" to connect with other Venezuelan students at school. "It feels good." "You don´t feel like the only one here…" Similarly, Carolina believes that her Venezuelan peers "understand each other." She enjoys speaking with their "Venezuelan words" and sharing news about the home country. About this point, interviewees recognized immigrant friends became an essential source of support when they first arrived at school. Their friends had brought them informational and emotional support as well as companionship; they also helped them with schoolwork, language, and understanding course content. In some cases, the immigrants' friends helped them

to enter a social clique. Immigrants also described how they helped new immigrant students. None mentioned a Chilean peer as a resource who helped them at school.

For immigrant students, groups of friends at school are rigid and closed. However, there are a few exceptions in which they develop individual ties with Chilean peers outside their groups of friends. Five immigrants mentioned that they had one or two isolated instances of Chilean friends, but that these people did not form part of their group. Adela shared:

> *My group, all are foreigners, to tell you the truth (laughs) and almost all ... are: Margarita, Carolina, Susana, and I are almost always with foreigners; actually, I do not spend so much time with Chileans. But, but there is a friend of mine, who is like a super friend of mine and I always tell her my confidences, which is Coni who is Chilean. She is very cool truth be told, since she supports me in every way. She tells me her problems, and I tell her mine.*
>
> *EVV: Is she in your group of friends, or is she outside of your group of friends?*
>
> *No, she is outside of the group.*
>
> *(Adela, Venezuelan student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).*

Similarly, two immigrant girls stated that they had a Chilean boyfriend. In both cases, their boyfriends were not part of their group.

Despite this exception, the vast majority of immigrant students have a negative image of Chilean peers. This issue appears when immigrants described their classroom dynamics but also when describing their friendships. Numerous immigrants saw Chilean peers as lazy, annoying, selfish, rude, and arrogant. As stated previously,

Chileans' personality was "a shock" for immigrant youth when they arrived in Chile, and negative adjectives such as rude, selfish, cold, unfriendly, and bored are clearly expressed when describing Chilean peers. Thus, not developing friendships with Chileans is seen as a conscious decision by immigrant students.

In relation to the hostile Chilean personality, a group of participants sensed that although they wanted to be integrated with their peers and belong to a "Chilean group," Chileans excluded them. The immigrants felt that Chileans were less interested in being their friends because they are immigrants. In some cases, they perceived that Chileans are uncomfortable with them in the classroom, maybe because of their high academic achievement or because of their extroverted personalities, and this could affect student interactions.

Experiences of Discrimination and Racism

Immigrant students experience discrimination and racism at school and become aware of negative stereotypes about them. These experiences range from jokes, verbal insults, to physical attacks and cyberbullying. According to the interviewers, the main category of stigmatization is their country of origin, which confirms the power of the nationality-based stereotypes that educators and Chilean peers constructed.

Regarding the question "How do you think immigrant students in general are treated by your classmates?" the majority of the interviewees initially responded that they are well treated in general. They note: "To tell you the truth, pretty good." "They treat us normal; they treat me well." "They treat us well because they treat us like normal Chilean students." However, delving deeper in their discourses, a different

reality comes to light. Immigrant youth are experiencing stereotypes and discriminatory threats from their peers, educational staff, and also from outside the school. Practically all immigrant students recognized having seen or experienced situations of bullying, including verbal insults, harassment, and physical violence at school. Situations of bullying and discrimination are clearly linked to stereotypes based on their country of origin. Interviewees mentioned specific pejorative labels associated with certain communities. For example, Peruvians "eat pigeons" or "are lazy;" Venezuelans are "starving to death" *[muertos de hambre],* and the Haitians and Dominicans are *"los negros."* Forms of discrimination and racism are present in all the schools analyzed.

At School 1, Carolina sensed that immigrant students are often the target of jokes because of their nationality. As an example, she said:

> *In the classroom, there is a girl, who I think is Peruvian or comes from a Peruvian family, I don't know her very well, I don't deal with her very much because, of course, the girl is not so sociable. In the classroom, peers always say to her, "Hey, Peruvians eat pigeons." But they don't say it in a bad way, they say it with conchita, with guachata [as a joke] to make people laugh in the classroom. Then the teacher gets upset, because "Stop, it is her culture, and you don't have to criticize her," and she's right (Carolina, Venezuelan student, 14 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).*

In the same classroom, a Venezuelan student shared:

> *Students used to call me 'un muerto de hambre' [starving man, beggar]. However, they told me that it was only a joke, and I said, ok..., I don´t care,*

well, I eat all the time. Like, I try to get away from all that stuff, "ahh starving man and everything." Maybe other people might be more affected than I am (Teo, Venezuelan student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 1).

For Teo, calling Venezuelan students "muertos de hambre" is common at School 1. He feels his peers have a negative view of his country and often come up with media-influenced images of Venezuelans "looking for food" or "waiting in long food lines for basic groceries."

Immigrant students from Haiti and the Dominican Republic were often called "negros." At School 1, Teo recognized that Haitians are always targets of discrimination: "They call them 'Haitians,' 'blacks' ... I don't know if these are just jokes, but I have seen it." According to Félix, his classmates called him "negro" all the time, but he doesn't really care, "I am negro and that is that." He recognized that his friends, who are afro descendants too, often complain and think that their peers are racist. Similarly, at School 5, Aurora said: "… at this school, there are many racists and all that and I do not like it." Although she said that she herself has not been discriminated against, students used to insult afro-descendants all the time: "They insult them, they called them "blacks." "Go back to another country..."

These forms of violence are commonly seen as "jokes" by students and form part of their daily peer interactions. However, immigrant students often argued that the meaning of these jokes changes depending on the effect they cause on the target, who can take it "in a good" or "in a bad" sense. The immigrants reported: "They bother him in good way, but he takes it badly." "Mostly they are jokes and foreigners take it well."

"They say they do it with good intentions." "It just depends on the person." This is complicated, as the focus is on the victim's reaction and not on the person who made the joke.

Other immigrants recognized having been victims of bullying due to their family situation, language, physical appearance, or personality. The students even recounted cases in which peers destroyed their property, hid their backpacks, removed their cell phones, or struck them because they were immigrants. In our interview, Florencia regularly came back to her experience of being bullied at school. She discussed having to deal with multiple forms of violence from verbal insults like 'orphan,' 'nerd,' 'bitch', to physical abuse and cyberbullying. Florencia has a negative image of School 2 because *"es un pueblo chico infierno grande,"* which means that in a small town all the people know everything about everyone, and you can´t do anything without everyone finding out about it. For two years, she was the target of mean and hurtful comments because of her family separation, physical appearance, and personality. She believed she did not have a good start at school. "Mmm, look, when I arrived, I was a person like, I have always been very direct, very, very direct, then here people are not used to being told things to their face. Then, if something bothered me, I told them. And since I had no friends, I used to approach people... 'Listen, help me'; 'Listen'..." Florencia felt ignored by her Chilean peers. Then, things become more complicated. Students started bullying her due to her family situation, language, and personality.

Uhh, my peers always knew that I didn't live with my mom, because my main teacher who already left school, told them that I didn't have my mom here, that I lived with my dad... So like, I was doing well in certain courses in which my peers weren't doing well, and they used to abuse... And they also abused me as I did not understand [some words] ... I did not understand the concept of "perkin" [nerd], and they said to me "perkin," "Hey, perkin." Sometimes, they pushed me or pulled my hair. They insulted me badly, but I did not understand... Because that is, there were situations, like, I had the concept of a swear word of "hueón" [idiot] and "conchatumadre" [motherfucker], and other swear words, and I laughed because they were used differently in Ecuador. And, once I told my dad. In fact, several times, I said to him that I no longer wanted to come to school. It was horrible. And I told him, my dad..., and my dad wrote a letter to the school inspector, by email, that if they continued to bully me, as he is a lawyer, he was going to report it and everything. And the inspector had..., I think that the worst thing she did was that she called my classmates and told them: "Kristina's father wrote a letter..." Then, my classmates held it against me, the whole year, that I was a "mamona" [mama's boy], that I did not face the problem or confront them to their face, then it's like ... And the inspector decided to do something like a "mediation," and she wanted me to do this mediation. But I am not..., that is to say, I am a little violent and a little bit surly. So since I wasn't interested ... And the inspector always told me: "You are here

on a conditional status." "We are going to expel you from school" (Florencia, Ecuadorian student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 2).

As the student revealed, the school did not offer any help; instead, school authorities made the situation worse by blaming and punishing her. Florencia's experience at school became worse when in 7th grade she was a victim of cyberbullying. People started to post messages about her with sexual connotations. She even described a situation in which a group of Chilean girls created a book based on the movie "Mean Girls" in which they posted rumors and secrets about some girls, including her.

And what happened in 7th grade..., that, I don't know if you've seen the movie "Mean Girls."

EVV: Yes.

So, they did the same thing.

EVV: That´s bad! Students made a book with...?

Yes, with everything, gossip, terrible. And the worst part is that students did it during the tests, after the exams, they used to gather in the corner, they wrote... and well, they created this book, and I realized… and with my group that we were like Rebeca, Beto, who left the school, and who was a friend..., terrible, was my best friend, terrible. And Tania, who also did something to me... she said that I was a bitch, a prostitute and wrote it on a wall of this school. And Beto cyberbullied me. I mean, he harassed me, he used to say "Hey, hey," and several times, he tried to kiss me, several times like he harassed me... He was my best friend, and the school expelled him. And there was another problem in

September, in which students created a WhatsApp group. As I started to get along with older students, one person added me to this group… and a peer sent a child pornographic video. And I was in this group, and I was in the classroom group and a classmate who already left, wrote that "Florence is a bitch." Only, because I had said like, a silly comment, but we were immature, I said to him, "Oh, go kill yourself", and he reported me to the school inspector. And the inspector called Tania and me, and to defend herself, Tania said: "They sent a child pornographic video and Florencia is in the WhatsApp group." I spent about three days in the PDI (Investigation Police Department) (Florencia, Ecuadorian student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 2).

Florencia's experience of discrimination and bullying is heartbreaking. As described at the beginning of this chapter, she emigrated from Quito to Chile. She had to adjust to living with her father, grandmother, and aunt in a new country and rebuild the fractured relationship with her mother years after their split. Feeling frustrated at home and school, she lacked any family or school support needed to confront her situation. Florencia's experience of discrimination and violence at school should be placed in a broader context, considering the immigration processes and her painful family separation and reunification.

Like Florencia, at least five other students reported serious physical attacks from Chilean classmates, including hair pulling, pushing, hitting, and unwanted sexual touching. Additionally, two immigrants at Schools 4 and 5 were involved in physical

fights with Chilean students. At both schools, students recognized that conflicts, violence, and bullying were normalized and occurred often.

Jaime studies at public School 5. He is from Trujillo, Peru. His mother moved to Chile ten years ago, when he was three, leaving him to stay with his grandparents and father in Peru. Ever since Jaime was 7 years old, he had lived in an unstable situation, moving back and forth between Peru and Chile. He finally settled in Santiago in 2016 and now lives with his mother, his sister (who is 17 years old and pregnant), and his 3-year-old brother. As Jaime explained during the interview, living in Chile has been extremely difficult. He had to change schools and houses several times. Then, when he arrived at School 4 in 7th grade, the reception was terrible. He felt completely excluded by his peers in his classroom, did not have any friends, and stated that all the students bullied him, and that they were all from Chile. "The thing I don't like about Chile is, that is, the people. There are some people who are very mean (...) in school." Jaime declared that his situation changed a little bit last year when a professor helped him to change to another classroom. This measure is not common in Chile and happens only when a student or parent asks to switch because of a particular problem, meaning that he will take all his courses with a different social group. At one moment during our interview, Jaime stopped talking. He seemed scared, petrified, as if thinking that someone was listening to him. Seeming uncomfortable and nervous, Jaime asked to end the conversation and left the room silently.

Confronting Chilean peers: "Si tú los tratas mal, te tratan bien ellos"

Despite the violence, discrimination, and racism in Chilean schools, three immigrant students were able to confront their bullies and "learned" to adapt to a hostile environment, thus gaining a modicum of empowerment. These experiences were the result of immigrants' changes in their own behavior rather than the consequence of a change in their peers' attitudes or due to school support.

Despite the horrific experiences of discrimination and violence experienced by Florencia at School 2, she feels that this year her situation has improved. She now feels confident and secure in her classroom, and she belongs to a multiracial group of friends, including one Chilean. I asked her to explain the reasons behind this shift. She answers:

Despite Florencia still having problems with some classmates,

> *It was, look, mm..., I kind of changed, so to speak, my personality. I switched, and I said like, because I can't be like that anymore. I started to be more surly and didn't let anyone piss me off. When I came here [to Chile] I said, "I will be a good person, I will arrive, I will be a good peer." And actually..., I realized that if you're good, you are overlooked. And in the 7th grade, I started to be very rude, very like I mistreated people, more than... And there, I noticed a change, that people respected me more. Then, it caught my attention, because if you mistreat peers, they treat you well. And so far, now not like that much, but the same. That is, whenever they bother me, I put them in their place, and that´s that (Florencia, Ecuadorian student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 2).*

Florencia believed that the shift in her situation at school changed for the better when she began imitating the Chileans' way of having relationships: being mean and rude. She began to stand up for herself, talking back and confronting bullies. In other words, nothing changed in her environment; instead, she learned how to decode and interpret social interactions within a mainstream cultural context (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). Florencia concluded: "My experiences at this school have been bad, bad at this school, but anyway, I already learned to overcome them."

Like Florencia, other immigrant students have been empowered and confronted their classmates. Luciana, from Santa Marta, Colombia, believed that the Chilean girls were jealous of her when she arrived at school two years ago. She is beautiful, charismatic, extroverted, and confident. Luciana realized immediately that her Chilean classmates were attracted to her. The Chilean girls started to insult her, calling her bitch and slut. At the beginning, she felt vulnerable, but later she decided to ignore them:

> *It was fast for me because I stopped caring. I took [the bullying experience] as something normal. It was, that maybe I have always wanted to see the good side of people, so… I thought, I am tired to think about what people say, what they tell me in a bad way, it's like not ... I'm sorry (Luciana, Colombian student, 15 years old, Private-subsidized School 2).*

For Rosa, the key is always to answer back when peers bother her, never to keep quiet. As she said, this was a piece of advice suggested by a group of Chilean girls that she met outside of school:

They told me... other girls, who were Chileans, but who went to another school. And they said: "If they will bother you, they will bother you." And they said, "You don't have to keep quiet, you have to answer them, because they are going to see your silly face and they are going to bother you more." I said, "No, I'm not that dumb either, but let me be disturbed..." "And they are going to tell you, 'You eat pigeons'," and it's silly... (Rosa, Peruvian, 15 years old, Public School 1).

To sum up, immigrants' narratives show high levels of peer exclusion and segregation at high school and harmful and traumatic experiences of discrimination, racism, and violence. Immigrants are excluded because of their countries of origin, skin color, language, immigration experiences, and personality. Only a small group of students confront and resist Chilean peers' hostile behaviors. They respond by imitating their peers' attitudes, and they gain respect for answering back. However, these changes come from the immigrants themselves rather than from a change in peers' attitudes or due to teachers' help.

Unfortunately, most immigrant students have not changed their situation and feel wholly excluded by their Chilean peers. This is the case of Jaime at School 4 who is still experiencing bullying and discriminatory threats. I asked him if the situation had changed. He responded happily that the situation was a little better than last year because he learned to stay quieter and be less reactive toward his aggressors. Peers see him less than before: "It has changed, yes somehow, but not that much. It was that I turned..., I stopped revealing when they insulted me or when they made jokes."

Conclusions

This chapter aims to analyze the extent to which immigrant students experience peer integration within Chilean high schools. Drawing on in-depth interviews with immigrant students, this section reflects their immigration processes, adaptation into Chilean schools, friendships, peer relations, and experiences of discrimination and racism at school. The results confirm that immigrant students experience high levels of peer exclusion at Chilean schools, while showing how school and classroom level policies, structures, and practices promote exclusion reproducing the social hierarchy of Chilean society.

Immigrant students report high levels of peer exclusion, friendship segregation by nationality, and experiences of racism and discrimination. They are friends primarily with other immigrant students, especially those of the same cultural, ethnic, or racial background or with adolescents with similar immigration experiences. They enjoy sharing experiences of their emigration to Chile and value immigrant friends' informational, emotional, and social support and their help with schoolwork. At the same time, this group felt excluded by their Chilean peers. Some sensed that Chileans are jealous or uncomfortable with them in the classroom because of their nationality, personality, or academic performance. Others believed that Chileans are less interested in being their friends because they are immigrants. As Chilean scholars have demonstrated, immigrant students are targets of discrimination and racist attitudes in Chilean schools (Tijoux, 2013; Pavez-Soto, 2012; Abett, 2011; Hein, 2012; Riedemann & Stefoni, 2015), and their nationality is a social marker used against them by peers

(Hernández, 2016; Pavez-Soto 2012, 2017; Tijoux, 2013). However, youth are also stigmatized and discriminated against due to their personality, family separation, language, and race. The forms of violence are diverse and range from "innocent jokes" to harassment, verbal insults, and physical abuse.

This chapter confirms that contextual and structural factors at the national-, school-, and classroom-level may affect and contribute to immigrant students' peer exclusion at school. Immigrant students mentioned difficulties enrolling in Chilean schools, including being rejected from other schools due to the lack of vacancies or being redirected to other schools by the Ministry of Education. Other youth highlighted having difficulty adapting to a "fixed educational system" with long, full-day school schedules and a segregated classroom organization. Maintaining the same peers over the years, using the same classroom for all the courses, sitting in the same seats, and working with the same classmates are part of a normalized system that immigrant students must endure. Thus, immigrant youth testimonies confirm the power of contextual and structural practices at the school and classroom level that impede their peer integration.

Finally, this chapter reflects on students' experiences of immigration, providing a broader context to understand their experiences of peer integration at school. Immigrant students had vivid memories of the reasons for migrating from their countries of origin, the long and tedious journey they had gone through coming to Chile, and the family disruptions due to immigration. As a consequence of these experiences, they recalled feeling insecurity, stress, fear, anxiety, anguish, and despair.

Previous research has found that pre-migration experiences, traumatic migration journeys, and family disruptions have a significant impact on children and youth's adaptation at school (Schapiro et al., 2013, Black, 2005). Scholars detail the emotional effects and trauma of adolescents and youth crossing militarized and dangerous borders (Jones & Podkul, 2012; Ko & Perreira, 2010). The horrific experiences of unaccompanied Central American minors emigrating to the United States have also been documented in recent decades (e.g., Nazario, 2006, Coutin 2016), including experiences dealing with robberies, extortion, physical abuse, sexual harassment, detention, and deportation, among other hardships. From a policy perspective, Bhabha (2019) argues that adolescent immigrants are a particularly unprotected group whose experiences are often neglected by the public and policymakers. According to the author, "the vulnerability of migrant adolescents is less apparent to policymakers and to practitioners engaged at the frontlines of migration realities than the vulnerability of their pre-puberty counterparts" (p. 372). Moreover, the author found that the contemporary migration framework regarding adolescent mobility is incomplete and inconsistent, and as a consequence, many immigrant adolescents' experiences as victims of human rights abuses are left behind (Bhabha, 2019).

In addition to the stresses of the journey, results showed that family separation, transnational relationships, and parents' reunification are stressors before and after migration. According to international research, family disruptions due to immigration are a source of pain, distress, depression, and feelings of abandonment, anxiety, and insecurity, for many immigrant youths (Schapiro et al., 2013). While this dissertation

does not aim to delve into students' immigration experiences and family relationships, understanding these experiences is crucial for developing a holistic and deeper understanding of the extent of peer integration at schools. For example, previous research has found that family separation may affect youths' adaptation to a new educational system (Schapiro et al., 2013; Black, 2005) and impact their academic outcomes, school engagement, and behaviors (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). Many of them lack parental support with their schoolwork (Artico, 2003). In this sense, social networks for immigrant youth become essential sources of support. However, the significance of peer relationships for adolescents and youth that have experienced family separation and reunification has remained elusive and deserves further attention (Schapiro et al., 2013).

For immigrant youth who deal with family separations, reunifications, and transnational relations, peer ties appear to be crucial. School peers not only affect students' socioemotional well-being (Azmitia, Cooper, & Brown, 2009; Steinberg & Morris, 2001; Osterman, 2000; Gibson et al., 2004) but can act as institutional agents facilitating access to informational resources (Stanton-Salazar, 2004). It is evident that immigrant students in Chile are being excluded by their school peers. Promoting bringing ties among these groups is not an easy task, but it will need for sure national-school-, and classroom-level policies and practices working in the same direction.

Conclusion

This dissertation research examines to what extent high school immigrant students experience integration or exclusion by their Chilean peers, to what extent immigrant youth integrate with their school peers at the school and classroom level, and to what extent national-, school-, and classroom-level educational policies and practices foster, promote, or support their integration with peers. Overall, results show that immigrant students experience high levels of peer segregation and exclusion at Chilean schools. National-, school-, and classroom-level policies and practices create structural barriers to immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers. Consequently, immigrant students' peer relationships and friendships at schools are a reflection of societal divisions—groups and individuals who are socially segregated and excluded in society tend to be segregated and excluded in dominant social relations at schools and in classrooms (Tharp et al., 2000).

Summary of Findings

This study presents a multilevel analytical framework for the study of immigrant students' peer integration. It is organized into four chapters, each of which represents a particular angle of analysis. Starting from the national level, Chapter 1 analyzes segregation of immigrant students between schools and the effects of the increased concentration of immigrants on students' academic outcomes and school climate. Quantitative evidence demonstrates that immigrant students are spatially segregated at the national level, and this segregation is increasing over time. Contrary

to what many educators believe, the presence of immigrant youth does not have adverse effects on Chilean and immigrant students' academic outcomes and perception of their school climate. In line with Eyzaguirre and colleagues' study (2019), I found that in grade-level cohorts that see increasing percentages of immigrant students within schools, Chilean students report, on average, lower levels of school violence, discrimination, and insecurity—and no effects on academic achievements. In addition, this chapter is hypothesis-generating, suggesting that the current national school enrollment policy for immigrant students could reduce their social inclusion with their Chilean peers. The school enrollment policy needs urgent attention as it could lead to inadequate grade-level placement of immigrant students; it appears to incubate educators' negative attitudes towards immigrant students, and promote the formation of "immigrant schools," potentially affecting their opportunities for integration with Chilean classmates.

The second chapter delves into school-level policies and how they condition educators' beliefs and behaviors toward immigrant students. The implementation of educational policy at the school level, including the school enrollment policy for immigrant students, cohort placement, classroom organization, and educational curricula, generate barriers for immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers. This chapter delves into school principals, coordinators, and teachers' views of immigrant students and their knowledge of immigrant-Chilean students' relationships at school. As other scholars have shown, nationality appears as a relevant and noticeable category used by educators to label immigrant students (Hernández, 2016;

Pavez-Soto, 2012, 2017; UNICEF & MINEDUC, 2018; Tijoux, 2013). Teachers and administrators consistently construct national origin-based stereotypes of immigrant students with cultural and biological essentialist tones which are reproduced and shared in classes, extracurricular activities, and multicultural celebrations. The analysis enriches the existing literature by making visible how national origin-based stereotypes of immigrant students shape the way educators see and understand immigrant-Chilean interactions. Educators consistently refer to immigrants' countries of origin to explain different levels of peer exclusion, often blaming this group for "self-excluding" themselves and relating with other immigrants with similar backgrounds. More importantly, these stereotypes reinforce Chilean students' prejudices toward their immigrant peers and affect immigrants' self-identity, confidence, and well-being.

The third chapter analyzes classroom-level structures and policies and how they influence peer integration of immigrant students. The results are enlightening, revealing what happens in the Chilean classrooms. Most immigrant students sit in the same place close to their friends; they can choose their workgroups and have little opportunity to work collaboratively. Teachers highly reduce students' opportunities to develop relationships beyond their existing ties within Chilean and immigrant groups. They do not see peer segregation as a problem to solve. Consequently, immigrant students remain spatially and socially segregated in the classroom reinforcing the "Great Cycle of Social Sorting" (Tharp et al., 2000). This section also reflects on the nature of the Chilean educational system at the classroom level and the implications for immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers. A fixed-classroom

structure in which students are assigned to a single student cohort, the same classroom corresponding to their grade level, and where teachers circulate between classrooms limits students' opportunities to interact and develop ties with different classmates.

The final chapter reports immigrant student-level consequences for peer integration of national, school-, and classroom-level policies and practices. Through the voice of immigrant students, results confirm that this group experiences high levels of peer exclusion at school, encapsulation of friendships, and discrimination and racism. They also report difficulties enrolling in Chilean schools and adapting to a fixed educational system—with long, full-day school schedules and segregated classrooms reducing their opportunities for interacting and developing ties with Chilean peers. Results not only show the complex experiences that immigrant students encounter at Chilean schools but also stress how their experiences are embedded in a multilevel structure in which contextual factors at the national-, school-, and classroom-level shape and determine Chilean-immigrant student interactions. Then, schools become a hostile space for immigrant students who must navigate the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion.

This Study's Contributions

The main contribution of this study is to explore peer integration of immigrant students at multiple levels, linking national-, school-, and classroom-level policies and structures to conditions that affect immigrant social relationships with their Chilean peers. Using a multilevel framework is valuable as it: (a) offers a more nuanced and in-depth conceptualization of immigrant students' peer integration, (b) describes how the

educational system shapes peer interactions, and (c) expands the debate on immigrant students' peer integration beyond the academic outcomes.

A More Nuanced and In-Depth Conceptualization of Immigrant Students' Peer Integration

The multi-level analysis presented in this study offers a more nuanced and in-depth conceptualization of peer integration of immigrant students. As introduced early on, peer integration is understood as the extent of proximity, connections, relationships, and friendships that high school immigrant students make with Chilean peers, understanding these spaces as hierarchical institutions that reinforce the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion. This concept not only contributes to a broader understanding of the extent of peer integration of this group, but it focuses on national, school, and classroom policies and practices and the role that policymakers, principals, coordinators, teachers, and peers play in shaping these interactions. In other words, this thesis aims to go beyond the analysis of immigrant students and discuss the structural and contextual conditions that create barriers to students' inclusion at school.

National-, school-, and classroom-level policies and structures that shape the peer integration of immigrant students should be considered as being connected. They should be understood as a system that is produced and reproduced at multiple levels. National policies permit segregation at the school and classroom level. When national policies give schools little guidelines and support to enroll immigrant students, immigrant students' grade-level placement and enrollment may reduce their possibilities for peer integration. When immigrant students are segregated between

schools, their opportunities to meet, interact, and develop friendships with Chilean classmates are limited. When national-origin-based stereotypes of immigrant students are normalized and accepted by the school community and reproduced in classroom and school activities, immigrant students' peer segregation and exclusion increase. When immigrant students are physically far from their Chilean peers in the classroom and are allowed to work with their friends, they remain socially segregated. Each level feeds the other, setting a hostile, unequal, and segregated educational environment not only for immigrants but all students.

An apparent strength of the multilevel analytical approach used in this study is introducing into the conversation different theoretical approaches. This study drew on different theoretical frameworks connecting the rich work of scholars from various disciplines such as education, sociology, psychology, and anthropology. Moreover, in tune with the multiscale analytical framework, a mixed-method design was necessary to better understand the topic. This study relies on a wide variety of data collection methods, including national databases, policy documents, in-depth interviews with school staff and students, and classroom observations. The act of converging and putting in conversation different theories and methodologies contributes to the interdisciplinary debate regarding immigration and education.

Educational Systems

My findings contribute to the critical analysis of the Chilean educational system. As introduced initially, differences among educational systems produce different learning environments, and therefore, affect peer relationships. The Chilean

educational system is a clear example of a rigid and fixed institution. Students must follow the same curriculum up to age 16 and maintain the same classroom composition over the years. In this system, students spend most of the day in the same classroom, with the same peers, listening to the same jokes, and reproducing the same peer dynamics through seating and grouping arrangements. Their classrooms are not only a space to learn but a room in which to socialize, decorate, and share with friends. It is a "student space." There is a sense of appropriation of the room, which is not necessarily present in other countries.

The effects of Chilean fixed-classrooms structures go beyond the experience of immigrant students' social integration. For example, a study found a relationship between Chilean school classrooms and behavioral habits involving marijuana (Araos et al., 2014). The authors suggest that the stability and persistence of Chilean school classrooms offer a context that encourages or discourages marijuana use among students.

The fixed and stable Chilean school system dramatically differs from others, such as in the United States, where students circulate from class to class and are separated in different tracks. According to Gonzales (2010), school tracking defines students' access to information and resources and structures their learning environment, affecting their social relationships with peers and teachers. Interestingly, the debate about segregating and desegregating schools in the United States is still unresolved. After decades of research, discussions, and policy changes, minority racial and ethnic groups show higher isolation rates than before (Frankenberg et al., 2019). According

to Frankenberg and colleagues (2019), "the segregation of Latino students is now the most severe of any group and typically involves a very high concentration of poverty" (p. 9).

Is the Chilean educational system more socially exclusive or inclusive than the American one? What school/classroom system should be promoted? Following the same curriculum up to age 16 or a track system; a fixed and closed-group classroom structure; or a flexible, inter-group classroom structure? The answer is not easy. In Chile, there is no systematic research about internal school segregation at the classroom level (Araos et al., 2014). While this study highlighted the fixed and normative nature of the Chilean school and classroom system, shifting to a more flexible school and classroom structure will not be the most appropriate solution to avoid students' peer segregation. More information and comparative studies are needed to explore the social and academic implications of different education practices for students.

Expanding the Debate on Peer Integration Beyond Academic Outcomes

Another contribution of this study is to shift the focus of immigrant students' integration beyond students' educational outcomes in order to highlight how national-, school-, and classroom-level structures create barriers to peer integration. Theoretical approaches—such as school segregation, social capital, teacher expectancy, and intergroup friendship—have consistently focused on the effects of peer relationships on students' academic outcomes, leaving aside other factors that should be considered. In the arena of immigration and education, scholars from different disciplines and

countries have disproportionately focused on the effect of the presence of immigrant students on both native and non-native students' academic outcomes.

My research contributes to the debate on the association of the concentration of immigrants in a school with factors beyond students' academic outcomes, such as school climate. My findings show that in grade-level-cohorts that see increasing percentages of immigrant students within schools, Chilean students report, on average, lower levels of discrimination, insecurity, and school violence. I also show that seating arrangements and classroom practices are critical factors affecting Chilean-immigrant students' interactions, possibilities for immigrant students' integration and social-emotional well-being. According to Zhang (2019), most studies on seating arrangements in the classroom have centered on their impact on students' academic achievements. My results extend the discussion, allowing educators and the school community to reflect on how students are organized in the classroom and how teachers' beliefs, attitudes, verbal communication, and practices shape peer interactions.

Putting in the center of the discussion students' academic outcomes and overlooking other factors –such as peer integration– could seriously damage students' school experiences. Academic studies inform and feed educational policies, and many policies have focused on improving students' academic performance. The tracking system for English Learners in the United States is an illustrative example. Based on assessing language skills and providing second-language instruction (Gomolla, 2006), this system separates students by their language proficiency or achievement (Estrada, 2014; Estrada et al., 2020; Estrada & Wang, 2018). Scholars have found that the

consequences for English Learners are detrimental, as they are commonly placed in low-quality tracks leading to academic, linguistic, and social segregation (Callahan, 2005; Estrada, 2014; Estrada, 2018).

According to Fletcher and colleagues (2019), an exclusive focus on educational outcomes may miss other domains in which immigrant peer effects are beneficial. In this way, my findings contribute to the analysis of immigrant students' peer integration associated with non-academic outcomes, providing evidence about school climate and students' socio-emotional wellbeing that should be present in the educational policy debate.

Contributions to the Chilean Literature

This study also contributes to the literature on immigration and education in Chile. To date, most studies have focused on particular immigrant communities and their experiences of discrimination and racism at school (e.g., Abett, 2011; Hein, 2012; Pavez-Soto, 2012; Riedemann & Stefoni, 2015; Tijoux, 2013). To date, no study links national-, school-, and classroom-level policies and practices to immigrant students' experiences of integration with their peers. This study also provides new information about various topics, including school-level segregation of immigrant students, the school enrollment policy, school and classroom-level policies and practices, and Chilean-immigrant students' relationships and friendships.

The mixed-method design used in this study is innovative and enriches the national debate on immigration and education. As stated earlier, most of the literature about immigrant students in Chile relies on qualitative analyses. While these studies

have undoubtedly contributed to the field, new methodological designs were needed to enrich current data. In this line, I offered an alternative methodological approach relying on qualitative and quantitative data that allowed me to understand immigrant students' peer integration at multiple levels, their different meanings, and the structural factors shaping these relationships. In addition, I used a new data collection instrument –the CLASS and CQELL protocols– and performed for the first time segregation indexes to explore school composition trends regarding immigrant students. I also conducted in-depth interviews with educators and students after collecting the classroom observations, which allowed me to examine specific situations that I had observed first-hand in the classrooms, such as seating and grouping segregation, moments of tension between students and/or with the teacher, and instances of discrimination.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations to the study and the interpretation of the results. First, the quantitative approach to exploring the extent of immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers at the national level is limited. School segregation indexes provide an overview of immigrant students' school composition in Chile and how it has changed between 2015 and 2020. However, these indexes do not lead to any clue about the reasons behind school segregation. Additional research is needed to better understand the root of immigrant students' school segregation in Chile, including information about residential segregation, parental school choices, and school selection practices.

Another quantitative limitation is that it was not possible to look at school segregation of immigrant students by their country of origin and age of immigration. International studies have shown that segregation of immigrant students varies by immigrant students' country of origin (Ellen et al., 2002), and the magnitude of spillover effects of the share of immigrant students could change depending on their age of immigration to the host country (Bossavie, 2017). Unfortunately, the MINEDUC National Enrollment Database used in this study did not provide reliable information on students' countries of origin.

Readers of this dissertation may note that the data used to perform the fixed-effects regression models does not precisely map with the qualitative data gathered at the classroom and student level. On the one hand, I used SIMCE databases for grade

10 to determine the effects of the share of immigrant students on students' academic outcomes and perceptions of school climate. On the other hand, in-depth interviews and classroom observations were conducted in grade 9. The Education Quality Agency does not collect information for grade 9, so using grade 10's data was the most accurate decision.

The qualitative data used in this study is also limited. First, the school sample is restricted to seven educational institutions located in five municipalities of the Metropolitan Region of Chile. This sample was one of convenience given the specific inclusion criteria (immigrant student concentration and school type) and relied on the principals' willingness to participate in the study. In that way, the school sample is likely to be biased. The sample of immigrant students who participated in this study is also limited and is not representative of the population of immigrant students in Chile. The analysis is restricted to the narratives of recently arrived immigrant students in grade 9 from six countries. I did not reach immigrant students from other countries such as China, Argentina, Bolivia, or Russia. Future studies could explore the peer integration of immigrant students from different countries and regions.

While I collected information from multiples sources—including databases, policy documents, interviews, and classroom observations—the qualitative approach to the study of immigrant students' peer integration could improve. For example, implementing focus groups with immigrant and Chilean students could have been beneficial to see their relationships and interactions. Conducting in-depth interviews

with immigrant parents or guardians, policymakers, and municipal staff, among others, could also have enhanced the analyses and findings.

Finally, mixed methods research requires providing in-depth contextualization in order to understand and interpret results. The paucity of literature about immigration in Chile was also a limitation in providing a more nuanced context in the analyses.

Recommendations for Policy and Practices

The present study is helpful for policymakers, school staff, and the community. The findings show immigrant school segregation in Chile is increasing and could reach higher levels in the future. Therefore, a set of questions arises. Is the school segregation of immigrant students a topic being discussed by the government, municipalities, and/or schools? What immigrant student educational policies is the Chilean government promoting? Is, for example, the Ministry of Education working on school policies promoting segregation or desegregation? How could this process be facilitated and/or improved? How could the government support schools to enroll and appropriately place immigrants? What could the school community do to encourage peer integration of immigrants (and all) students? How could teachers facilitate peer interactions at the classroom level?

As I demonstrated in this study, national-, school-, and classroom-level policies and practices create structural barriers to immigrant students' integration with their Chilean peers. National policies could lead the way for policies and structures that work against these forces, and at each level, there would have to be investments in implementation, monitoring, and support. This does not mean that all efforts should be exerted on the national level. School authorities, coordinators, teachers, and students are key actors and need to work together to facilitate immigrant students' peer integration. While many policies and practices at different levels could promote peer

integration of immigrant students, I recommend prioritizing three areas: (a) Immigrant students' school enrollment process, (b) SIMCE protocol and discrimination category, and (c) Intercultural education.

Immigrant Student School Enrollment Process

The Chilean Ministry of Education must design a clear, structured, and standardized enrollment process for immigrant students. As shown, this policy at the school level creates many barriers that negatively affect the appropriate enrollment and placement of this group of students. According to school authorities, this process is confusing and tedious; it consumes a lot of their work time; and they lack formal training, preparation, and government support. These difficulties could lead to inappropriate grade-level placement of immigrant students, incubate teachers' negative views towards immigrant youth, and encourage the formation of "immigrant schools."

Therefore, a more structured and organized enrollment process is urgently needed to facilitate the correct grade and course placement of immigrant students. This entity also must construct standardized validation exams according to the students' course levels and needs. This protocol should be clear and accessible to immigrants, municipalities, schools, and the community. To help educators implement the enrollment process at the school level, it must provide additional support, including training and resources.

In addition, more research is needed to determine the effect of the new School Inclusion Law on immigrant students' enrollment processes. As explained, this Law implemented a centralized enrollment process from Pre-K to 12th grade, based on

family preferences that prohibit any form of discrimination (Correa et al., 2019). However, the policy has strict timelines that conflict with immigrant families' arrival to the country.

Databases and SIMCE's "discrimination" category

The "School Coexistence Climate Indicator" used in the Educational Quality Measurement System (SIMCE) needs to be reviewed. Currently, the measure of "discrimination" compresses thirteen items related to experiencing discrimination due to physical attributes, personality, gender, sexual orientation, style of dress, religion, politics, grades, disability, socioeconomic situation, ethnicity, immigrant status, and parenthood or pregnancy. This categorization excludes immigrant students' most critical discrimination category, which is "country of origin" or "nationality." This study and research from other scholars have shown how nationality is a relevant and noticeable category used to label immigrant students (Hernández, 2016; Pavez-Soto, 2012, 2017; UNICEF & MINEDUC, 2018; Tijoux, 2013). Policymakers could argue that the category "country of origin" is collected through "immigrant status."[5] This category, however, is ambiguous and could have multiple meanings for students. For example, in the United States, "immigrant status" is commonly associated with a legal category (e.g., U.S. citizens, permanent or conditional residents, and undocumented immigrant status). In other contexts, "immigrant status" could be understood as "nationality" or "country of birth." Gimeno-Feliu and colleagues (2019) argue that "the

[5] Data obtained from the Educational Quality Measurement System (SIMCE) database for grade 10 in 2018 shows that 49% of immigrant students were discriminated against in the previous year. Of this group, 58% felt discriminated against because of their "immigrant status."

different ways of classifying immigrant status can lead to disparate outcomes in studies conducted on these populations" (p. 413).

In this study, practically all immigrant youth interviewees recognized having seen or experienced bullying situations, including verbal insults, harassment, and physical violence at their schools. Having a more comprehensive categorization of the variable "discrimination" would contribute to having a more accurate picture of their school experiences.

Intercultural Education

Scholars have called attention to the need for an intercultural education policy to promote, value, recognize, and respect students' cultural diversity (Barrios-Valenzuela & Palou, 2014; Bravo, 2011; Joiko & Vásquez, 2016; Mardones, 2010, Grau-Rengifo, Díaz-Bórquez, & Muñoz-Reyes, 2021). This is an urgent topic involving the work and collaboration at the national-, school-, and classroom-level. While the Chilean Ministry of Education published some guidelines and recommendations to promote intercultural education (e.g., MINEDUC, 2015), scholars argued that there is not a real project nor educational policies that embrace, value, and respect students' diversity (Joiko & Vásquez, 2016; Hernández, 2016). While some schools have implemented "inclusive practices" to promote interculturality, such practices are superficial responses, a "soft multiculturalism," the result of individual initiatives (Joiko & Vásquez, 2016).

Schools have shown they could promote interculturality by embracing an "Intercultural Educational Project," adapting their school curricula, or conducting

workshops. However, if national based-stereotypes of immigrant students remain in educators' minds, all these efforts are useless. Considering the limited resources that schools have, I strongly recommend concentrating the efforts on educators. This study confirms how powerful and damaging educators' stereotypes are with regard to immigrant students' experiences. According to Conchas (2006), "teachers are both passive and active agents in perpetuating inequality. They are passive in that they adhere to common perceptions of racial and ethnic groups, and at the same time, they are active in that they structurally and ideologically reinforce racial and ethnic divisions" (p. 17). It is crucial to make visible national-origin-based stereotypes of immigrant students and other stigmas as well. Educators must be aware of their passive and active behaviors reproducing stereotypes. When school staff constructs national origin-based stereotypes of immigrant students grounded in cultural and biological essentialist ideologies, any formal or informal school practices that highlight their cultural background will revert to these stereotypes. School authorities should (re)think their multicultural activities and celebrations, avoiding the supposition of their benefits and be attentive to students' interactions.

Finally, at the school level, more information is needed about external resources or initiatives that could help their work with immigrant students. For example, an interesting initiative is the work of *Derriba Fronteras,* a Chilean NGO founded in 2017 to help immigrant students have a more positive experience in their schools and end any form of discrimination and prejudice. This NGO provides workshops for school staff and acting classes for elementary students to promote dialogue, empathy, respect,

and non-discrimination behaviors. To date, the work of *Derriba Fronteras,* especially their acting classes, has positively impacted immigrant students' lives. A survey implemented at the beginning and the end of the school year showed a significant increase in immigrant students' sense of inclusion in school (Derriba Fronteras, 2020). More initiatives like this one should be promoted, not only to support immigrants' experiences of inclusion but to benefit other students who face similar threats.

COVID-19 and Future Research

I cannot end this dissertation without mentioning the current pandemic context that is affecting the world. Like most countries, since March 2020, Chilean schools have remained closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused schools to move to remote instruction. This shift has intensified a myriad of long-standing social issues and threatens to increase educational inequalities. A recent report estimates that 63% of children living in shanty towns do not have a computer for their schoolwork; a higher number lack internet connections (Escuela de Gobierno UC & Fundación Techo, 2021).

The pandemic is also challenging social relationships and imposing new ways of interacting and socializing with others. In the school context, it is evident that social distance and virtual contact is affecting students' interactions. However, how these relationships are changing and what consequences they may have in the future are unknown. There is limited research about how COVID-19 is affecting peer relationships at school.

The future is unpredictable. However, the pandemic offers an opportunity to rethink our educational systems. It can make way for a new scenario that challenges fixed, rigid, and unchallengeable institutions that reproduce social inequalities and shape the social experiences of students. By placing immigrant students' peer integration on a multiscale analytical framework, this study invites readers, policymakers, and the school community to think about current educational systems and rethink the education system we would like to construct for future generations.

In the arena of immigration and education, more research should be conducted at the national-, school-, and classroom-level. Based on this study, three areas should receive special attention. First, new evidence is needed to profoundly understand how schools are enrolling immigrant students and how this process could affect their adequate course placement, educators' attitudes towards immigrant students, and the formation of "immigrant schools." Moreover, scholars studying the new School Inclusion Law in Chile should pay attention to immigrant students' experiences and how this policy could create new barriers for their school enrollment.

Second, it is essential to expand future studies and explore the reasons that could explain educators' national-origin-based stereotypes of immigrant students. Scholars from different disciplines studying Chilean racialization processes, immigration and media coverage, and cultural studies could shed light on the discussion on immigration and stigmatization.

Finally, comparative studies on immigration and education are absent in Chile. The international evidence could help illuminate Chilean policymakers' and scholars' discussions on immigration and education. Chilean authorities should pay attention to countries with a long history of school segregation, such as the United States, to avoid committing the same errors and damaging immigrant students' school experiences. As mentioned before, Chile does not have a tracking educational system that segregates Non-English Learners. However, the increase of immigrants from non-Spanish speaking countries could lead policymakers to implement a similar strategy.

Massey and colleagues (1987) argue that international migration is a dynamic social process and “migration breeds more migration.” “Once the movement of people begins, it develops a social infrastructure that enables further massive migration” (Massey et al., 1987, p. 5). Immigration in Chile is increasing and will probably increase further in the future. How to socially integrate immigrants—especially immigrant students—should be a priority. The current political and social context that the country faces could offer opportunities to innovate, creating and implementing educational policies that promote students’ social integration.

APPENDIX A

Table 1

Interviewee Demographic Information

School ID	ID	Name	Grade 9 Cohort	Gender	Age	Country of origin
1	1001	Carolina	A	Female	14	Venezuela
1	1002	Teo	A	Male	15	Venezuela
1	1003	Margarita	A	Female	15	Colombia
1	1004	Adela	A	Female	15	Venezuela
1	1005	Susana	A	Female	14	Venezuela
1	1006	Alba	C	Female	15	Venezuela
1	1007	Matilde	C	Female	15	Peru
1	1008	Lía	C	Female	14	Venezuela
1	1009	Luis	C	Male	15	Venezuela
1	1010	Claudia	C	Female	14	Venezuela
2	2001	Rebeca	B	Female	14	Colombia
2	2002	Florencia	B	Female	15	Ecuador
2	2003	Luciana	B	Female	15	Colombia
3	3001	Micaela	A	Female	13	Peru
3	3004	Emanuel	A	Male	14	Colombia
4	4001	Julio	A	Male	16	Ecuador
4	4003	Manuela	A	Female	14	Ecuador
4	4004	Aurora	A	Female	14	Domincan Republic
4	4005	Rosa	A	Female	14	Peru
4	4006	Jaime	A	Male	14	Peru
5	5002	Michel	A	Male	15	Haiti
5	5003	Jaques	A	Male	N/R	Haiti
5	5005	Félix	A	Male	15	Domincan Republic
5	5008	Emeline	A	Female	15	Haiti
5	5009	Brisa	A	Female	16	Haiti
6	6001	Viviana	A	Female	15	Peru
6	6003	Franco	A	Male	13	Venezuela
7	7002	Gabriel	A	Male	15	Domincan Republic

Note: All interviewees' name are pseudonyms.

APPENDIX B

Measures of segregation:

Exposure index: measures the degree to which a group of students is exposed to another group (Massey & Denton, 1988; James & Taeuber, 1985; Reardon & Owens, 2014). In this case, the exposure index indicates the extent to which an immigrant student is exposed to Chilean peers at school. The exposure index for a school is given by:

$$\text{Exposure} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left[\frac{X_i}{X}\right]\left[\frac{Y_i}{S_i}\right]$$

Isolation index: provides information about the extent to which students are isolated among their own group (Massey & Denton, 1988; Reardon & Owens, 2014). The index is interpreted as the probability that a randomly drawn immigrant student goes to the same school with another immigrant student.

$$\text{Isolation} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left(\frac{X_i}{X} * \frac{X_i}{X_i+Y_i}\right)$$

Dissimilarity index: captures the degree to which a population is unevenly distributed among certain units (Duncan & Duncan, 1955; Massey & Denton, 1988). In this case, the dissimilarity index represents the proportion of Chilean students who would have to change schools in order to make school composition equal. Massey and Denton (1993) specify that values under 0.3 are low, values between 0.3 and 0.6 are moderate, and values above 0.6 are high. The dissimilarity index is calculated as:

$$\text{Dissimilarity} = \frac{1}{2}\sum_{i=1}^{n} \left|\frac{X_i}{X} - \frac{Y_i}{Y}\right|$$

Where:

n = total number of high schools

X = total number of immigrant students in high school

X_i = total number of immigrant students in high school i

Y = total number of Chilean students in high school

Y_i = total number of Chilean students in high school i

$S_{i =}$ total number of student enrollment in high school i

Scholars recommend interpreting the exposure and isolation indexes with cautions as both measures are highly influenced by demographic changes (Billingham, 2019). The dissimilarity index, in contrast, is relatively immune to composition effects (Billingham, 2019).

Fixed effect model:

To analyze the effect of immigrant students' concentration within schools on SIMCE' outcomes and school climate, I used the empirical strategy of fixed-effects regression model (e.g., Hoxby, 2000; Ohinata & Van Ours, 2013; Schneeweis, 2015; Eyzaguirre et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2018). This strategy measures within-school variability in the proportion of immigrant students among cohorts.

The model includes grade-level cohort and school fixed effects to isolate plausible exogenous variation in the variation of the proportion of immigrant students. Following Eyzaguirre, Blanco, and Aguirre's work (2019) the econometric model is:

$Y^*_{iscr} = \beta_1 IMshare_{}_{iscr} + \mu_{cr} + \nu_s + \epsilon_{iscr}$

Where:

Y^*_{iscr} represents the score (on school climate or SIMCE) of student i belonging to a school s cohort c (tenth grade) and region r.

$\beta_1 IMshare_{iscr}$ represents the proportion of immigrant students in tenth grade of high school for student i in school s and region r, excluding student i (Schneeweis, 2015).

μ_{cr} and ν_s represent cohort-regional and school fixed effects, respectively. The cohort and regional fixed effects are unobservable characteristics that are shared by all students of a school cohort (Scheeweis, 2015) in a given region (Eyzaguirre et al., 2019). The school fixed effects are unobservable school characteristics that remain constant over time and group specific characteristics (ex. the school building, a common institutional environment) and other unobservable characteristics that are likely to be correlated with the ethnic composition and academic outcomes (Schneeweis, 2015).

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