Social Capital in Action: Alignment of Parental Support in Adolescents' Transition to Postsecondary Education

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Abstract
This article examines the effects of social capital in the transition to postsecondary education, in particular, transitions to selective colleges. Refining the theory of social capital with the concept of alignment between parents' and adolescents' goals and actions, we emphasize the complementarity of extra-group ties as social capital through which parents can effectively bridge resources and information to adolescents, enabling them to make informed choices about college. This study explores conditions that ease the transition to college, especially for students who are disadvantaged (e.g., children of immigrants). Using data from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988-94, a multinomial logistic regression analysis that differentiates among students who choose different pathways after high school graduation (a two-year college, a four-year college or no postsecondary enrollment). A Heckman selection model is used to predict the selectivity of four-year colleges attended by students. Results show that alignment of parents' and students' goals increases students' odds of attending a postsecondary institution in the year after high school graduation. The effect of parents' education on the selectivity of the college attended is also dependent on aligned ambition and aligned action between parents and adolescents. For example, active participation in postsecondary school guidance programs by parents is more beneficial to students whose parents have lower levels of educational attainment.

Introduction

The educational and occupational ambitions of today's high school students are at a historical high (National Center for Education Statistics 2003). These higher aspirations have been paralleled by increasing rates of college enrollment among recent high school graduates. Between 1980 and 1990, enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions increased by 14 percent; between 1990 and 2000 enrollments again increased by 11 percent and are

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expected to continue to rise over the next few years. The National Center of Education Statistics (2003) projects that among those under the age of 25, college enrollment will increase by 14 percent between 2000 and 2010. With this change in the number of students attending college, the educational system's sorting function has shifted largely from high school to postsecondary education. As a result, the prestige of postsecondary institutions has become significant in determining educational and employment opportunities after college graduation (Thomas 2003).

Although studies continue to indicate the persistent effects of students' socioeconomic characteristics on the type and selectivity of college attended (Davies and Guppy 1997; Hearn 1991), recent research has shown that parent-child relational ties, often referred to as social capital, influence the educational outcomes of children independent of socioeconomic characteristics (Coleman 1988; McNeal 1999; Morgan and Sorensen 1999; Smith, Beaulieu and Seraphine 1995; Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch 1995; Sun 1999; Teachman, Paasch and Carver 1997; Zhou and Bankston 1996). However, the effect of social capital on the transition to postsecondary education has rarely been examined. Relying on an elaboration of social capital theory, this article explores conditions that facilitate the transition to college, especially for students who are disadvantaged (e.g., children of immigrants).[1] To do so, we take the idea of aligned ambition (Schneider and Stevenson 1999) and recast it intergenerational terms.[2] In addition, the functional specificity and complementarity of extra-group ties as social capital (Laumann, Galasiewicz and Marsden 1978; Sandefur and Laumann 1998) are emphasized in the conceptualization of social capital that is presented. By focusing on resource-bridging actions by parents that go beyond social processes within the home, this study refines the theory of social capital and tries to identify mechanisms that either facilitate the transmission of parents' human capital or alleviate its deficiency. Through actions that are functionally specific to their adolescent's goal of gaining admission to college, parents can provide a bridge to resources and information outside the family that enable the adolescent to make a more informed choice of college; such actions reflect parents' dynamic role as social resources for their children. In particular, we pay attention to different social support options that parents can activate for their adolescents depending on their socioeconomic status.[3]

Functional Specificity of Social Capital

In contrast to market exchange, parents who provide resources to their children do not expect the same levels of reciprocity from their children (Astone et al. 1999; Ben-Porath 1980). However, parent-child interactions still need to be concrete and specific in order to achieve certain goals of family members such as a child's admission to a selective college. While Coleman (1988: S105) writes that "all social relations and social structures facilitate some forms of social capital," his theory of social capital focuses on a highly interconnected network that helps to form cohesive group norms among actors in the network. His theory emphasizes strong social ties within the family, which form an efficient conduit of norms, standards and expectations that enable children to become successful adults (Schneider and Stevenson 1999). Thus, critical information and values that children would otherwise not have flows from their parents. Children who absorb the contents generated by network closure benefit more from their parents' resources than they would from a disorganized family structure.

Recent interpretations of social capital theory, however, suggest that the formation of strong ties does not always have a positive effect and can constrain the actions of network members (Portes 1998; Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993). Intergenerational closure as a form

of social capital may be beneficial for normative behavior, but it may also simultaneously have a negative impact by inhibiting the exploration of other options. In other words, one form of social capital that works for a certain type of action may not work for other types of actions (Sandefur and Laumann 1998). This points to yet another dimension of social capital which we term *functional specificity*. The presence of a favorable structure, such as a two-parent family, does not necessarily translate into positive social capital for the children. We argue that more attention needs to be paid to the dynamic properties of social capital, especially as they relate to the goal-directed actions of network members.

The concept of *aligned ambition* provides a way to explore the functional specificity of social capital (Schneider and Stevenson 1999). In the specifications of the Wisconsin model of status attainment, educational expectations and occupational aspirations are entered separately and predict the status attained. Schneider and Stevenson (1999) developed a theoretically refined concept of "aligned ambition" by matching educational aspirations with occupational ambitions, important variables in the Wisconsin model of status attainment. This matching between educational and occupational ambitions is critically associated with the realization of these ambitions. This study recasts the concept of alignment in relational (intergenerational) terms, defining it as the matching of parents' and adolescents' educational goals. Relational or interpersonal alignment reflects the functional specificity of social capital as well as the importance of the web of expectations surrounding children suggested in the Wisconsin model and the relational transmission of norms or expectations in Colman's conception of social capital. Functionally specific *actions* by parents are examined. When actions taken by parents are critically associated with the realization of their adolescents' aspirations, we define them as aligned actions.

Aligned Actions by Parents: Complementarity with Functional Specificity

Most educational research studies rely on Coleman's concept of social capital (i.e., network closure and a focus on resources within the family). However, a social network that includes only family members may be insulating and diminish the members' capacity to gain access to resources controlled outside the family (Fernandez-Kelly 1995). Moreover, the capacity of the parent-child relation may differ according to the scope of resources that parents can bring to the relationship. Thus, network closure among parents with limited education and few social ties could result in a network that provides few resources for helping students gain access to information necessary for college applications.

Aspirations are desired outcomes, but desired outcomes should be distinguished from desired illusions. They should be linked to knowledge of the real world and its information and resources. As students progress through their schooling careers, parents are likely to become increasingly limited in their own capacities to provide technical, psychological, cognitive and informational assistance. When teenagers are transitioning to postsecondary education, there are many choices that require knowledge and skills on the part of the student as well as the parents. Acquiring accurate information and resources becomes a necessary tool for indexing and exhausting possible options, such as choosing the right college and obtaining financial assistance. Schneider and Stevenson (1999) argue that:

> *Parents need to do more than communicate to their teenagers the importance of a college education. They have to take action: accompany adolescents on college visits, arrange for financial assistance, and assist in judging the program of a college and whether it is the right one for them. (p. 147, emphasis added)*

Building on this argument, this study takes the idea of matching as defined in the concept of aligned ambition and proposes the concept of *aligned action* by parents.[4] Aligned action by parents is goal-specific action through which parents channel information and resources outside the family and appropriate them for the purpose of helping their children achieve their goals. We see aligned parental action as *complementary when it can provide a bridge* to information and resources that parents do not have and which are specific to their children's needs when applying to college. When parents' actions connect their children to resources that further their ambitions, the social relationship between parents and children becomes *social capital in action* and *aligned* for their children.

Why is Bridging or Brokering Important?

In contrast to Coleman's emphasis on network closure, Burt's perspective (1992) on social capital is more about one's location in the social structure and the opportunities one has access to. As Burt (1997: 339) explains: "Human capital itself is useless without the social capital of opportunities in which to apply it." As children try to build bridges to information and resources within the wider social world they will join as adults, parents may play the critical role of *broker* to their children.[5] In comparing the two network structures of social capital – closure and brokerage – and their implications for children's development and success, Burt (2001: 47) states: "The complete story is about effective adult supervision (closure argument) combined with parent ability to wrestle resources out of society to support the child (hole argument)."[6]

In reexamining Coleman's work on intergenerational closure and schools as learning networks, Morgan and Sorenson (1999) found a negative effect of closure among parents around school and a positive effect of friendship closure among students on achievement gains in mathematics. Based on these findings, Morgan and Sorenson proposed an alternative network form of learning called "horizon-expanding" that contrasts with the norm-enforcing networks in Coleman's social capital theory. Although Morgan and Sorenson's study has generated some controversy among scholars (Carbonaro 1999; Hallinan and Kubitschek 1999), and some have questioned the evidence for a "horizon-expanding" network around schools, their study suggests the importance of exposure to diverse opportunities for educational outcomes.

Hofferth, Boisjoly and Duncan (1998) examined the effects of parents' extra-familial resources on children's educational attainment and found a significant association between children's educational attainment and parents' access to the time and financial assistance of high-income friends. They concluded that "strong family ties are not sufficient to ensure that children complete high school and attend college. . . . [N]ot everyone has access to help from friends; access is linked to investment."[7] (p. 263) High-income families have more options to diversify their social capital through contacts outside the family; low-income families do not have the same types or quantity of resources in their social networks.

While acknowledging the importance of family social capital, Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch (1995) emphasize the role of the school as a social resource for low-income families. Academic help, proper guidance for school programs and information about the college admissions process, and institutional agents in the school can provide strong network ties that compensate for family networks when students' parents have limited economic and social resources. A positive social relationship between parents/children and these resource-providers becomes important in expanding the scope of available resources to secure better educational and occupational opportunities later in life.

To obtain access to information and resources in adult society and thereby enhance their future life chances, children rely first on their parents and then on other adults for information. Burt (1998) identifies this form of social capital as a hierarchical network. In the transition to

postsecondary schooling, aligning choices with better options or opportunities is related to parents' resource-seeking actions outside the family. Parents act as contacting resource-agents, who through their intimate social ties within the family, can absorb and transmit resources to their children. They are the conduit through which their children can tap into the broader resources of adult society. However, in some cases, children, especially those in households with constrained resources and/or limited English-speaking parents, can access information from the broader society independent of their parents. For example, a school counselor can advise a student about a college program and how to apply for financial aid (Stanton-Salazar 1997; Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch 1995). Although there is a hierarchical structure within the family unit and within the larger social networks to which parents and their children are connected, members – particularly children – can directly access information outside their formal location in the network structure, as in Burt's framework (1992, 1998).

The actions parents take in contacting resource-appropriate institutional agents about the college admissions process still play an important role in enhancing their children's opportunities for attending a selective college. Parents' contacts are nonredundant of adolescent contacts in the sense that parents hold different positions in relation to resources (e.g., college savings) and are more likely than their children to have knowledge about the limits of existing resources. Consequently, as long as they have a desire to support their children, parents should be in a more advantageous position to process or translate information and resources to facilitate their children's access to higher education, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

Is Bridging to Diversity Enough? The Case of Bilingual Parents

As in Burt's framework, the hierarchical brokerage power of parents to access resources that their children cannot access themselves may vary with parental network diversity. Stanton-Salazar's hypothesis on bicultural network orientation (1997) and Portes and Rumbaut's (1996, 2001) hypothesis on selective acculturation through fluent bilingualism both hinge on the benefits of spanning boundaries of different social groups and absorbing the positive aspects of those groups to achieve upward mobility.[8] In a similar vein, parental bilingualism may be beneficial to children of immigrants or racial/ethnic minorities if parents apply it to building social ties to mainstream society.[9] Parents can also promote the ethnic identity of their children by using their native language. With bilingual ability, parents access not just diverse social groups but potentially better resources and information to help expand their children's life chances as well as their own. In other words, when the cultural capital of parent ethnic identity is contextually intertwined with parent access to better social resources, it may further their children's' educational advancement. Adolescents benefit when their parents build social capital through bilingual communication within and outside of the family.

Bicultural network orientation and selective acculturation implicitly assume that children of immigrants have access to benefits from mainstream society only when it contains social and cultural resources that surpass their own. Wuthnow (2002) distinguishes status-bridging from identity-bridging for purposes of acquiring social resources.[10] Identity-bridging has to do mainly with reifying culturally-defined differences through contacts within and outside one's social network. In contrast, status-bridging has to do with forging social ties between those with limited social resources and those who are more advantaged.

Bourdieu (1986) defines social capital as the relation itself and the sum of resources available through various relations. This implies that available resources are constrained by the members of one's social network because building a social network is itself constrained by an individual's status within a social hierarchy (Cochran 1990). Social groups (e.g., class, gender and racial/ethnic groups) have different access to social capital because of their advantaged or disadvantaged

structural positions and associated social networks (Lin 2000). Both Bourdieu's and Wuthnow's consideration of social hierarchy and the importance of bridging networks suggest that ethnic families should extend their social ties into mainstream society to advance their status rather than merely securing the solidarity of their limited social ties within their respective communities.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Aligned Ambition and Aligned Action

Given the diminishing value of a college degree generated by the growth in postsecondary attendance, attending a selective four-year college may confer an advantage within the labor market for college graduates. This study asks whether the intergenerational alignment of ambition and action have positive effects on admission to selective postsecondary institutions. Two hypotheses are tested:

> *H1: Adolescents who have aligned ambitions, as measured by the agreement between their own educational expectations and their parents' educational expectations for them, have a greater chance of attending a four-year vs. a two-year college, and of attending a selective four-year college, than those who do not have aligned ambitions.*
> *H2: Adolescents whose parents take aligned actions for their educational success have a greater chance of attending a four-year vs. a two-year college, and of attending a selective four-year college, than those whose parents do not take such actions.*

Parental Bilingualism: The Potential for Building Social Ties to Mainstream Society?

Does parental bilingualism lead to selective college attendance for children? How critical is the social context (e.g., status of social contacts) in which parents apply their bilingualism for building social ties to mainstream society? This study examines whether parental bilingualism provides an approximate means for parents to span the gap between ethnic groups and mainstream society and whether parents' ability to extend their social contacts through bilingual communication enhances their children's access to selective colleges. Two additional related hypotheses address these questions:

> *H3: Given that parents' social contacts have a significant effect on the educational success of their children, adolescents whose parents are bilingual have a greater chance of entering a selective four-year college than those whose parents are not bilingual, controlling for other parent resources.*
> *H4: The effect of parents' bilingualism on children's educational outcomes depends on the social contexts (e.g., neighborhoods or workplaces) in which parents apply bilingualism for building social ties to mainstream society.*

Method

Data

The data for this study are taken from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988-1994 (NELS:88-94), a nationally representative sample of 8th graders, first surveyed in 1988, with follow-ups in 1990, 1992 and 1994. Data from NELS:88-94 is combined with Barron's (1992) index of the selectiveness of four-year colleges. This data set is particularly appropriate for investigating the effects of parental bilingualism because it contains extensive survey items on the language proficiency of parents. Due to considerable loss of data through listwise deletion in regression analyses, multiple imputation techniques were used to replace missing values.[11]

Dependent Variables

Two dependent variables are used to examine the study hypotheses: choice of postsecondary institution and selectivity of college attended. An underlying assumption is that successful transition to higher education is not dependent solely on academic performance at the secondary level. It involves various choices at the time of high school completion. Schneider and Stevenson (1999) show that students who choose to begin their postsecondary education at an institution other than a four-year college are less likely to complete a bachelor's degree. (See Chapter 9 in *The Ambitious Generation*.) In turn, Monk-Turner (1990) found that beginning postsecondary schooling at a two-year college is a disadvantage regardless of subsequent schooling. In line with these findings, the choice of postsecondary institution is based on college entrance status (i.e., enrolled in a two-year college, a four-year college or not enrolled in a postsecondary institution) as of October 1992 by high school graduates who were 8th graders in 1988. In the multinomial logistic regression analysis of choice of postsecondary institution, the category of less-than-two-year colleges or proprietary institutions was excluded and resulted in a loss of 2 percent of the cases.

NELS:88-94 data were also supplemented with institution selectivity scores, using Barron's (1992) index of the selectiveness of four-year American colleges. The Barron's index consists of nine rankings. The original nine categories were collapsed into a six-ranking index to make the distribution of data close to normal. In the regression model for college selectivity, some independent variables (e.g., aligned action by parents) were obtained only for those persons who matriculated to four-year institutions in October 1992. To the degree that those variables are systematically related to the dependent variable (the collapsed Barron's ranking), results may be subject to incidental selection bias because those who enroll in a four-year college are not the same as those who are eventual four-year college graduates.[12] To avoid this selection bias, the model is estimated using Heckman's (1979) sample selection model.

Independent Variables

Predictors include aligned ambition, defined here as the agreement between adolescents' educational aspirations in 10th grade and parents' expectations for their adolescents' educational attainment, controlling for each. Aligned actions by parents are also included as predictors. These actions are: (1) parent participation in school programs about postsecondary opportunities and financial aid; and (2) number of college visits with their children.

To test the third hypothesis regarding the relationship between parent bilingualism and the selectivity of colleges attended by adolescents, a parent bilingualism variable was constructed using the NELS:88-94 base-year parent questionnaire items on language proficiency in both English and the parent's native language. Both fluency and comprehension are assumed to be important to parents' efforts to acquire educational resources for their children. All four measures of language proficiency are thus used: speaking, writing, listening and reading (scored 1 to 5 for each item). Those with a total score of 12 or higher are considered to be bilingual and are coded as 1; those with a score of 11 or below are coded as 0. To check for a possible spurious effect of parent bilingualism on college attendance, we include parental immigrant status as a control variable.

To check the significance of alignment as social capital in action, various measures of social capital from previous research are included (Dika and Singh 2002). For the strength of parent-child ties, 12 items on joint parent-child activities from the NELS:88-94 second follow-up parent questionnaire were used. Factor analysis identified sports-related joint activities as one clear and consistent dimension of interaction between parents and children. Such activities serve as one measure of the intensity of general parent-child relations without a specific purpose regarding school performance or college entrance. Discussion of academic issues and direct parental advice on college choice are used as measures of goal-oriented social capital within the family. NELS:88-94 second follow-up parents' questionnaire included 10 items on discussion between students and parents; a factor score was estimated, and a variable constructed, based on four items focusing on academic issues. Direct parental advice on college choice represents the sum of scores from two questions asking if parents talked to adolescents about the quality of postsecondary schools.

Two items are included on family composition: (1) nontraditional family vs. mother-father family, and (2) number of siblings, which reflects the resource dilution hypothesis (Steelman et al. 2002). Three variables are also included that reflect the original conception of intergenerational closure by Coleman: (1) the sum total of closest friends in the same school plus number of those friends' parents known by the focal student's parents; (2) residential mobility, measured by number of moves, which is associated with a reduced likelihood of parents talking with the parents of their children's friends (Pettit and McLanahan 2003); and (3) frequency of talking with the parents of their children's friends about school and postsecondary schooling. A description of these and other control variables are provided in Appendix A.

Analysis and Results

The main focus of analysis is to see whether models predicting different types of transitions after high school (i.e., not attending college, attending a two-year college or attending a four-year college) differ from those predicting the selectivity of the postsecondary institution attended by students who were enrolled in four-year colleges, particularly with respect to the effects of aligned parental action and parental bilingualism. Accordingly, two analytical models were assessed. A multinomial logistic regression model was first estimated for postsecondary enrollment status (two-year college, four-year college, not enrolled). Table 1 presents results regarding the influence of social capital on transitions to either two- or four-year colleges at the time of high school completion.

Transition Model

The coefficients reported in Table 1 indicate the effects of social capital within and around the family on the log-odds of three discrete outcomes. The first column shows the effects of predictors on enrolling at a two-year college vs. not being in school. The second column shows the effects of predictors on enrolling in a four-year college vs. not being in school. The third column shows the effects of predictors on enrolling in a four-year college vs. a two-year college. The coefficients for the third column reflect the difference between the first and second columns and are therefore not reported.

What Differentiates Enrolling in Any College from Not Being in School?

Among the control variables for the first two columns, the significant negative effect of being black in the first column and the significant positive effect in the second column deserves mention. A recent study tested "net black advantage" in attending college after high school graduation, taking into account the role of historically black colleges and universities (Bennett and Xie 2003). Overall, this study found a net black advantage at lower levels of family socioeconomic status. However, the study did not make a distinction between two-year or four-year college attendance. As shown in Table 1, being black is found to be a positive predictor of enrolling in a four-year college vs. not being in school, but a negative predictor of enrolling in a two-year college vs. not being in school, net of all other variables in the model. As shown in column 3, being black is a positive predictor of enrolling in a four-year vs. a two-year college. The positive and significant effects for females and Asians confirm the previous research on transitions to postsecondary education.

With respect to socioeconomic variables, having parents with higher levels of educational attainment significantly increases the odds of enrolling in either type of college, while logged family income affects only the odds of enrolling in a four-year college. With the exception of Catholic school attendance, there is no evidence that attending a private high school confers an advantage with respect to postsecondary enrollment. Attending a Catholic high school vs. a public school has a strong effect on enrollment in four-year colleges vs. not being in school.

The effect of social capital variables vary significantly with respect to enrollment in either two- or four-year colleges vs. not being in school, but not with respect to enrollment in two-year vs. four-year colleges. Compared with students who were not in school, students who enrolled in either a two- or a four-year college in 1992 had fewer siblings, more frequent discussions on academic issues with parents, and denser intergenerational closure around school, net of other variables in the model. Consistent with previous studies, the negative effect of number of siblings on college enrollment supports the resource dilution proposition (Steelman et al. 2002). Intergenerational closure, measured by number of acquaintances, reflects the presence and number of social ties around the focal student. The more social ties within and across generations, the greater the chance of enrolling in college. This finding is consistent with previous research showing that the effects of intergenerational closure are positive with respect to high school completion, school grades and test scores.[13] Both sporting activities with parents and discussion of academic issues connote the tie strength of intergenerational closure within a family. Students whose parents reported frequently discussing academic issues with their teenagers are more likely to attend either a two-year or a four-year college. This result follows the theoretical elaboration on social capital discussed in the introduction: When social capital is functionally specific to the goal (outcome variable), it works more effectively.

Interestingly, variables such as Catholic school attendance, joint sporting activities, a traditional mother-father family, discussion with other parents, and having foreign monolingual

Table 1: Multinomial Logistic Regression Model for Matriculation to Postsecondary Institutions: October 1992

	Two-Year vs. Not in school		Four-Year vs. Not in school		Four-Year vs. Two-Year
Control Variables					
Female	.24	***	.35	***	
Asian[a]	.58	**	.60	**	
Hispanic[a]	.13		-.08		
Black[a]	-.42	***	.26	*	***
Highest parent education	.23	***	.42	***	***
Logged family income	.08		.11	**	
Standardized test score composite (10th grade)	.02	***	.09	***	***
Urban high school[b]	-.14		.06		*
Rural high school[b]	-.06		.12		*
Catholic high school[c]	.31		.54	**	
Private high school[c]	-.28		-.23		
Various Measures of Social Capital following Coleman					
Nontraditional family[d]	-.08		-.18	*	
Number of siblings	-.08	***	-.07	**	
Play sports with parents	.02		.04	**	
Discussion on academic issues	.13	***	.17	***	
Generational closure around school	.07	***	.09	***	
Number of moves	-.23	***	-.37	***	**
Discussion with other parents	.05		.08	**	
Aspirations and Expectations					
Student educational aspirations	.39	***	.71	***	***
Parents educational expectations	.10	*	.24	***	**
Aligned Social Capital					
Intergenerational alignment of aspirations and expectations					
Agreement of educational expectations between parents & youth	-.02		.17	**	**
Intergenerational action alignment					
Parent participation in school PSE guidance program	.24	***	.58	***	***
Parent Potential for Building Diverse Social Relations					
Bilingual parents[e]	-.10		.13		
Foreign monolingual parents[e]	.25		.58	*	
Immigrant parents	.33	*	.12		
Constant	-6.12	***	-12.61	***	***
-2 Log likelihood			17816.27		
X^2(df)			7520.04(50)		
Number of cases			12524		

Source: National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988-94, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. Data are weighted to be generalizable to the population of U.S. high school students.
Notes: [a] Reference group is White. [b] Reference group is Suburban high school. [c] Reference group is Public high school. [d] Reference group is Intact family. [e] Reference group is English monolingual parents.
$^{*}p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .00$ (two-tailed tests)

parents increase the odds of enrolling in a four-year college vs. not being in school, but not of in enrolling in a two-year college vs. not being in school. With respect to the effect for foreign monolingual parents, it may be that parents who are fluent only in a foreign language develop stronger identity-bonding with their children and have a greater commitment to advancing their children's education. If this is the case, then this variable, as well as the others listed above, displays characteristics of intergenerational closure. We return to this point later in the discussion of the four-year college selectivity model.

What Differentiates Enrollment in Two-year and Four-year Institutions?

Turning to variables that show significant effects on four-year vs. two-year college enrollment, there are no significant effects for females or Asians. With respect to socioeconomic background, only parents' education significantly increases the odds of enrolling in a four-year vs. a two-year college; the effect of logged family income is not significant. However, two of the school location variables are significant. Students from both urban and rural high schools are more likely to enroll in a four-year vs. a two-year college than those from suburban high schools.

Students who experience greater residential mobility have lower odds of enrolling in a four-year vs. a two-year college; they also have lower odds of enrolling in any type of college. Enrolling in a four-year college requires greater effort on the part of the student and family in obtaining needed information or resources such as financial aid. This process usually requires help and resources that extend beyond the family. However, moving from place to place leaves the family as the only source for social resources for a certain period of time. Moving may also contribute to psychological difficulties in adjusting to a new environment. This should be considered a cost rather than a benefit to educational progress.[14] Controlling for both adolescents' ambitions and parents' expectations, aligned ambition (the match between adolescents' educational aspirations and parents' expectations regarding their children's educational attainment) significantly increases the odds of enrolling in a four-year vs. a two-year college; it also increases the odds of enrolling in a four-year college vs. not being in school (Part A of Hypothesis 1). Agreement on an educational plan between parents and youth may be accomplished through a sense of shared identity within the family. The less divergence between adolescents' aspirations and parents' expectations, the more likely the family is to make strategic choices about postsecondary education that are in line with available resources.

Like collective efficacy (Sampson, Morenoff and Earls 1999), parents' aligned actions go beyond the static stock of social capital. As shown in Table 1, the participation of parents in postsecondary education and financial aid programs significantly improves the odds of students enrolling in a four-year vs. a two-year college, net of all other predictors (Part A of Hypothesis 2). This finding is in line with previous research indicating that a good social relationship between parents/children and these resource agents is important in expanding the resources needed to securing better educational and occupational opportunities (Rosenbaum et al. 1999; Stanton-Salazar 1997; Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch 1995). Contrary to Hypothesis 3, having bilingual parents does not have any significant effects on either college enrollment or enrollment in a four-year vs. a two-year college.

Four-Year College Selectivity Model

In the next analysis, the main goal is to see whether the social capital variables included in the previous model are predictive of enrollment in competitive four-year colleges. Table 2 presents four college selectivity models, which were estimated using Heckman's (1979)

Table 2: Heckman Selection Model of Barron's College Competitiveness: October 1992

Independent Variables	Whole Sample				White Only		Minority Only	
Control Variables	**Model 1**		**Model 2**					
Female	-.05		-.05		-.04		-.07	
Asian[a]	.34	**	.23	*				
Hispanic[a]	.02		-.02					
Black[a]	-.07		-.08					
Highest parent education	.14	***	.14	***	.12	***	.19	**
Logged family income	.10	***	.10	***	.13	***	.05	
Standardized test score composite 10th grade	.06	***	.06	***	.06	***	.07	***
Urban high school[b]	.06		.06		.07		.08	
Rural high school[b]	-.11	*	-.10	*	-.13	**	.11	
Catholic high school[c]	.12		.11		.12		.002	
Private high school[c]	.29	***	.28	***	.26	**	.29	
Various Measures of Social Capital following Coleman								
Nontraditional family[d]	-.01		.003		.001		.03	
Number of siblings	-.02		-.02		-.02		-.04	
Play sports with parents	-.01		-.01		-.01		-.02	
Discussion on academic issue	.03		.03		.03		.00	
Parental advice on college choice	.05		.05		.04		.08	
Generational closure around school	.03	***	.03	***	.03	***	.03	
Number of moves	.02		.03		.03		.01	
Discussion with other parents	-.003		-.002		-.003		.01	

Aspirations and Expectations								
Student educational aspirations	.27	***	.26	***	.22	***	.40	***
Parents educational expectations	.17	***	.17	***	.22	***	.06	
Aligned Social Capital								
Intergenerational alignment of aspirations and expectations								
Agreement of educational expectations between parents & youth	.09	**	.09	**	.09	*	.10	
Intergenerational action alignment								
Parent participation in school PSE guidance program	.14	***	.13	***	.12	***	.20	**
Number of colleges visited for choice	.14	***	.14	***	.16	***	.03	
Parent Potential for Building Diverse Social Relations								
Bilingual parents[e]	.26	**	.13		.33	*	.06	
Foreign monolingual parents[e]	.24		.07		.09		-.03	
Immigrant parents			.28	***	.19		.48	***
Constant	-4.96	***	-4.97	***	-5.31	***	-4.953	***
-2 Log-likelihood	22512.71		22492.00		17022.05		5339.53	
X^2(df)	1599.94(26)		1622.83(27)		1253.50(24)		448.49(24)	
Number of cases	4649		4649		3407		1242	

Source: National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988-94, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. Data are weighted to be generalizable to the population of U.S. high school students.

Notes: [a] Reference group is White. [b] Reference group is Suburban high school. [c] Reference group is Public high school. [d] Reference group is Intact family. [e] Reference group is English monolingual parents.

*$p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ ***$p < .00$ (two-tailed tests)

correction for selection bias. The first two columns of Table 2 show the effects of predictors for the whole sample with and without the immigrant status of parents; the last two columns respectively show the effects of predictors for two subsamples: white only and minority only.

In contrast to Table 1, where non-Catholic private school attendance did not have a significant effect on four-year college enrollment vs. not being in school, Table 2 shows a positive effect of private school attendance on enrollment in selective four-year colleges, with the exception of the minority-only model. Compared to students who attend public high schools, those who attend non-Catholic private schools are more likely to enroll in a selective four-year college; Catholic high school attendance, however, has no significant effect. Although private school attendance is not significant for the minority-only model, the size of its coefficient is consistent the other models. Compared with rural high schools, suburban high schools also show an advantage with respect to the selectivity of the college attended. Consistent with previous research, parents' educational attainment and logged family income, as well as students' academic ability, have significant effects on the selectiveness of the institution attended. These results strongly confirm the effects of an advantaged family background on college selectivity.

Model 1 examines the effects of predictors on college selectivity without controlling for the immigrant status of parents. In this model, the effect of having bilingual parents on college selectivity is significant and robust. After controlling for the immigrant status of parents in model 2, the effect for bilingual parents becomes insignificant. Given the status benefits of social networks as discussed above, the quality of information available through parents' linguistic capacity should improve over time and with the rise in status of people in their residential neighborhood and at work. As shown in the third column of Table 2, which displays the results for the white-only sample, the effect of having bilingual parents again becomes significant; it is not significant, however, in the model for the minority-only sample (fourth column). Living in an English-speaking white majority residential area provides greater chances to utilize the status-bridging potential of bilingual parents. Even though this analysis does not show that bilingual parents in the white-only sample live in an English-speaking white majority residential area, numerous studies on racial-ethnic residential segregation suggest that the effect of bilingualism is dependent upon social context. Bilingual parents in the white-only sample are more likely than those in the minority-only sample to live in a white English-speaking neighborhood and, accordingly, to use their linguistic abilities to obtain information and resources needed to advance their children's education.

With respect to social capital variables, the only consistent effects across the transition and selectivity models are aligned ambitions and aligned actions by parents. Other social capital variables are insignificant in the selectivity model with the exception of intergenerational closure. Although the effect is weak, aligned ambition is a positive and significant predictor of college selectivity (Hypothesis 1). Aligned actions by parents also have significant effects on college selectivity (Hypothesis 2). In particular, in the minority-only model, parents' participation in postsecondary education guidance programs is the only social capital variable that has a significant effect on college selectivity. This result may be consistent with Stanton-Salazar's argument on the importance of institutional connections for students with disadvantaged family backgrounds. To test this relationship, interaction terms for parents' highest level of education by aligned actions were added to both the transition and selectivity models, and the models were re-estimated.

Contingent Effects of Parental Education

Table 3 presents the estimates of interaction terms for aligned ambitions and aligned actions with the highest level of parents' education. Highest level of parents' education represents

Table 3: Interactions of Highest Parent Education with Alignment Variables

Interaction Terms for Table 1	Two-Year vs. Not in school	Four-Year vs. Not in school	Four-Year vs. Two-Year
Family Background			
Highest parent education	.26 ***	.40 ***	.14 *
Aligned Social Capital			
Agreement of expectations	-.13	-.04	.09
PSE programs	.45 ***	.70 ***	.25 *
Interactions with Highest Parent Education			
Agreement of expectations*highest parent education	.06	.10	.04
PSE programs*highest parent education	-.10	-.06	.04
-2 Log likelihood		17805.29	
X^2(df)		7531.01(54)	
Number of cases		12524	

Interaction Terms for Table 2	Whole Sample		White Only	Minority Only
	Model 1	Model 2		
Family Background				
Highest parent education	-.07	-.07	-.12 *	.19
Aligned Social Capital				
Agreement of expectations	-.26 *	-.26 *	-.30 *	-.12
PSE programs	.32 ***	.32 ***	.29 ***	.45 ***
N of colleges visited	-.05	-.05	-.05	-.01
Interactions with Highest Parent Education				
Agreement of expectations*highest parent education	.14 ***	.14 ***	.15 ***	.10
PSE programs*highest parents' education	-.07 **	-.07 **	-.06 **	-.10 *
N of colleges visited*highest parent education	.07 ***	.07 ***	.08 ***	.02
-2 Log likelihood	22453.19	22432.30	16975.45	5332.26
X^2(df)	1613.58(29)	1636.89(30)	1266.93(27)	468.09(27)
Number of cases	4649	4649	3407	1242

Source: National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988-94, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. Data are weighted to be generalizable to the population of U.S. high school students.
*$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ ***$p < .00$ (two-tailed tests)

parental competence regarding alignment as well as the family background of adolescents. The first notable finding is that there are significant effects of all interaction terms in the selectivity models; in the transition model, no interaction terms are significant. Again, this indicates that the process of admission to selective four-year colleges differs from the process of deciding what type of college to attend, if any. Whereas entering a two-year or a four-year college is more a matter of choice, admission into a more selective college requires more intensive efforts to obtain required resources and information.

Second, the main effect of parents' educational attainment becomes insignificant and negative net of other variables in the selectivity models. This finding may suggest that aligned ambitions and aligned actions are the contingency mechanisms that either facilitate the transmission of parental human capital or ease its deficiency. While the effects of aligned ambitions and aligned actions vary with the level of parents' education, the main effects of participation in educational and financial aid programs for postsecondary schooling are still positive and significant for all selectivity models net of other variables.

Looking at these effects in detail, the higher the level of parents' education, the greater the effect of aligned ambition. However, since the main effect of aligned ambition is negative and roughly two times the interaction effect of parents' education (in all but the minority-only model), parents who have at least a bachelor's degree can provide benefits to their children through the matching of parent-adolescent educational expectations. The pattern for college visits on which parents accompany adolescents is similar to that for aligned ambition. The higher the level of parents' education, the greater the effect of number of college visits. When parents have a high school diploma or less, benefits from parents accompanying adolescents on college visits are negligible. These two alignment variables increase the transmission of parent human capital, while parents' participation in education and financial aid programs for postsecondary schooling eases its deficiency.

The higher the level of parents' education, the less is the effect of their participation in postsecondary education programs. Parents who actively participate in formal programs are more likely to establish ties with resource agents. Parents' participation in postsecondary programs is also significant in the minority-only model, which indicates the importance of active program participation by parents of minority students. This finding suggests that students from disadvantaged family backgrounds (e.g., those whose parents have low levels of educational attainment) benefit more from institutional help than more advantaged students. This runs parallel to Stanton-Salazar's (2001) network analytic frame for social capital, which delineates the greater weight of an institutional agent in the social network of students from lower income families compared to those from middle income families. In terms of its theoretical importance, the way that "supportive ties to school personnel potentially embody differential value and power" depends on the social background of the student (Stanton-Salazar 2001: 163). For lower income families, the school's capacity for providing support is indispensable because those families have fewer alternatives.

Discussion

This article recasts the concept of alignment as parent-child relational ties in action to further children's educational advancement and investigates the effects of alignment on students' transitions from high school to postsecondary institutions. The effects of alignment were apparent in both the transition and selectivity models but showed clearer benefits in the selectivity model. The effect of parents' education on college selectivity depends on aligned ambition and aligned action. In particular, active participation in postsecondary school guidance programs by parents is more beneficial to students whose parents have lower

levels of educational attainment. In all analytical models and subsamples, academic ability and students' own educational aspirations had strong and significant effects on the outcome variables, controlling for other variables in the model.

While there were no benefits to students of bilingual parents in the transition model, white students of bilingual parents did benefit in the college selectivity model (i.e., they were more likely to be enrolled selective four-year colleges); for minority students, having bilingual parents had no significant effect on four-year college enrollment. From these findings we can speculate that *white* bilingual parents have more opportunities to successfully use their bilingual abilities to build social ties to the predominantly white mainstream. As Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch (1995: 132) suggest, "bilinguals are in a potentially optimal position. On the one hand they acquired sufficient mainstream cultural capital to share in the resources enjoyed by dominant group members and, on the other hand, they retained sufficient trust in the system to believe that cultural accommodation will ultimately produce desired returns." If Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch are correct, bilingual parents are likely to believe that their engagement in their children's schooling and post-high school planning will pay off in desired educational returns for their children. Low-income parents who are engaged in their children's schooling may be similar to bilingual parents with respect to their belief in the importance of investing in their children's education. Additional research that takes into account race, social class and parent bilingualism is needed to address these questions. Future research should also explore the effect of social diversity with data on parents' actual social ties, as distinct from their ties to others through the friendships of their children. Rather than asking about the simple presence and quantity of social ties, it is desirable to have information on the characteristics of the individuals with whom parents interact, such as education, occupation and ethnicity.

In terms of parents' role in coping with paradoxical social change – increases in educational aspirations and in the number of highly-educated people relative to available educational and occupational opportunities – the concept of *alignment* offers a new means for determining who moves up and why. Aspirations are desired outcomes, but desired outcomes should be distinguished from desired illusions. The ambition for status attainment arises from the web of expectations surrounding children, but it should also be linked to knowledge of the real world and its information and resources. For information and resources to be effective, they must be appropriated by agents in the child's social network, implemented and then invested in the production process (Bourdieu 1986). Parents who take actions on behalf of their adolescents can make a difference in this regard, as the findings of this study show. However, the power of parents to access resources that children cannot access themselves does not necessarily vary with the diversity of parents' networks, particularly if those networks simply bridge cultural identities. Rather, the brokerage power of parents depends on status-bridging in the residential or occupational contexts which they inhabit (Wuthnow 2002).

The distinction between simple diversity of social networks and status-bridging lies in the types and quality of resources that can be tapped through exchanges; social capital is realized through the social ties that connect individuals to resources. An interpersonal network can either facilitate or impede a person from envisioning alternative paths according to the resources and opportunities available. When goals are attained through exchange relationships, social capital is "in action." Alignment is thus a mechanism that renders parents, the most of intimate of social ties, as social capital *in action*; the tie is mobilized through parents' efforts to connect their children to resources.

Admission to selective four-year colleges automatically guarantees social relationships with individuals who are most likely to complete their degrees and to move into positions of high status. The time and energy available for building social relations is limited for an individual. Those with greater opportunities to interact and maintain social connections with talented and

successful individuals will thus accrue greater returns on their own education, not just from the standpoint of educational quality and school reputation, but from the social capital gained while attending school as well. These factors, together with the expansion in the supply of higher education, are the driving forces behind the competition for admission to selective four-year colleges. Results suggest that there are ways for parents who are educationally disadvantaged to improve their children's chances of being admitted to a selective four-year college. However, this potential is critically linked to institutional programs guiding those parents and the efforts of high schools to persuade parents to participate in them.

Notes

1. Coleman and Bourdieu offer two theories of social capital that have been used in educational research. Coleman (1988) focuses on "social closure" and emphasizes solidarity, social control, identity and the enforcement of pro-academic norms. In contrast, Bourdieu's (1986) theory of social capital focuses on differential access to institutional resources and overlaps with the work of economic sociologists such as Burt (1992), Granovetter (1973) and Lin (1982) who focus on the bridging or brokering of information and resources. We distinguish the two traditions by referring to the Coleman tradition of social capital as "closure" and the tradition of Bourdieu and economic sociologists as "brokerage" or "bridging." A somewhat similar argument is made by Stanton-Salazar (1997, 2001, 2004). We thank one of our anonymous reviewers for highlighting the importance of Stanton-Salazar's work for our argument.

2. Schneider and Stevenson (1999) argue that when adolescents have aligned ambitions (i.e., when their educational and occupational goals are complementary), they are more likely to make informed choices about educational paths that will help them achieve their occupational goals. In this article, the alignment of educational aspirations with occupational goals is not a focus of interest. Rather, we adopt the idea of "matching" in the concept of aligned ambition and recast it into an interpersonal dimension.

3. This approach is consistent with Stanton-Salazar's argument that "the inclusion of one institutional agent in the social network of a youth from a working-class or low-income family carries far more potential transformative power than such an inclusion would carry in the social network of a typical middle-class youth." (2001:163) This is because lower income families have relatively fewer social resources to draw on for their children's educational advancement. To see how middle- and upper-middle-class parents manage their children's educational careers, see Baker and Stevenson (1986), Stevenson and Baker (1992) and Lareau (1989, 2003). For the college application process, in particular, see McDonough (1997) and McDonough, Korn and Yamasaki (1997).

4. "Concerted cultivation," proposed by Lareau (2003), is similar to the concept of aligned action by parents. Concerted cultivation emphasizes middle class parents' efforts to ensure that their children gain access to privileges and institutional opportunities. This would include the hiring of private college counselors by middle and upper-middle class parents in the context of college applications (McDonough 1997; McDonough, Korn and Yamasaki 1997). On the other hand, aligned action, as proposed here, includes lower income parents. We emphasize the complementary nature of aligned action by parents with functional specificity to the college application process without considering class background. As we show in our analyses, aligned action includes reducing the human

capital deficiencies of lower income parents as well as facilitating the transmission of cultural capital by middle- and upper-middle-income parents.

5. Of course, children of immigrant parents can, and often do, act as brokers for their parents, especially for those with limited English ability. Moreover, working class families also have constraints on their social relationships that almost ensure that the children will have greater access to resources than their parents. Yet parents still play a crucial role in guiding and directing the educational goals of their children, despite cultural and linguistic limitations and class constraints. In the case of immigrant households, the hardships experienced by immigrant/ethnic minority parents often fuel the desire to provide their children with the very educational opportunities to which they have been denied access. And though working class parents may suffer from social structural constraints, so long as there is an alignment of educational goals between parents and children (a "goodwill" effort by the parents, so to speak), it is still possible to improve the educational outcomes of their children. As shown in the analyses presented below, lower income parents pursue appropriate actions for their children even though they are different from those of middle income parents.

6. As a refinement of brokerage as social capital, structural holes represent "the separation between nonredundant contacts." (Burt 1992: 18) The concept of redundancy refers to the limited nature of resources and information when an individual's contacts are connected to each other; because of these interconnections, the same information tends to re-circulate within the network of contacts. Nonredundant contacts (those not connected with each other) indicate more diverse channels of resources and information.

7. In Coleman's theory of social capital, strong family ties generate pro-academic norms; in Bourdieu's theory of social capital, they play a role in the transmission of middle- and upper-middle-class cultural capital. In the study cited, the effects of extra-familial resources work only with high-income families. This suggests that strong family ties in this case transmit the cultural capital of high-income families as well as the behavioral norms generated by network closure in Coleman's theory of social capital, which does not have class implications.

8. Stanton-Salazar (1977) suggests that ethnic minority students with a bicultural network orientation have the advantage of being acclimated to mainstream society in contrast to English-speaking working class students who typically maintain an oppositional stance to middle class culture. Similarly, Portes and Rumbaut (1996, 2001) argue that ethnic groups can adapt to the mainstream culture while retaining positive aspects of their homeland culture.

9. Of course, as one anonymous reviewer of this article astutely pointed out, bilingual parents are not necessarily the same as ethnic minority parents. We agree. However, in our sample, only 6 percent of the bilingual parents were neither immigrants nor racial/ethnic minorities as defined in the data section below. Based on our examination of the sample, we decided to use bilingual parents as a proxy for immigrant or racial/ethnic minorities with better potential to access mainstream resources in the United States. A more accurate indicator for bilingual ethnic minority parents needs to be used in future research.

10. This dimension of social capital, known as status transfer, occurs through social ties. Status, in the traditional meaning of the term, is one's own location in a social hierarchy.

But status embedded in a network of social relations comes from the status of contacts in one's network. Status transfers can occur through network connections with others of higher prestige (Podolny 1993; Podolny and Baron 1997). However, this conceptualization does not imply any resource flow from those with higher status, but only the benefit of higher contact status itself as a signal for the associate.

11. According to King et al. (2001) some 94 percent of the reviewed studies lost about one-third of their data, on average, from listwise deletion. The merit of imputation is not simply that it replaces missing data with approximate values, but that it retains data that would be otherwise lost through listwise deletion. In many cases, cumulative missing data from listwise deletion cause serious losses in the number of observations included in analysis. In our analyses, missing values were imputed through an alternative algorithm for multiple imputation proposed by King et al., using the software program Amelia. See King et al. (2001) and the Amelia software (Honaker et al. 2001) for additional information on imputation procedures.

12. For example, among high school graduates who were either not enrolled in college or who were enrolled in a two-year college in the fall of 1992, some might later matriculate to a four-year college and eventually complete their bachelor's degree.

13. See Dika and Singh (2002) for the outcome variables examining the effects of intergenerational closure on education.

14. Moving to a better school or a better neighborhood may be a strategic choice, however. Swanson and Schneider (1999) used the same data used in this study (NELS:88-94) to examine the independent effects of residential and educational mobility. Their study distinguished students who moved to a new home but did not change schools (movers) from students who changed schools but did not move to a new home (changers). Students who both moved and changed schools concurrently (leavers) were also categorized. Swanson and Schneider assessed the timing and duration of the effects of both types of mobility on students' educational achievement and social outcomes. They found that despite some negative short-term effects, moving early in high school can lead to important long-term educational benefits.

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Appendix A. Description of Variables

	Description	Mean	S.D.
I. Dependent Variables			
Postseconday education	Postsecondary matriculation status as of October 1992		
	Not in School	.48	.50
	Less than two-year or proprietary institution	.02	.15
	Two-year postsecondary institution	.16	.36
	Four-year postsecondary institution	.34	.47
Competitive level of four-year college	Nine Barron's rankings are collapsed into six to make the distribution close to normal. Barron's ranking, category 10, special art schools, is excluded from the analyses due to its irrelevance as a ranking category.	3.14	1.19
II. Independent Variables			
Control variables			
Female	Student is female	.50	.50
Race/Ethnicity			
Asian	Student is Asian or Pacific Islander.	.04	.19
Hispanic	Student is Hispanic, non-white.	.10	.30
Black	Student is Black.	.14	.34
	Student is White (the omitted category). (Native Americans are excluded from analyses due to their small numbers in the sample. One unidentified race case was also deleted in data imputation.)	.72	.45
Parent education	Highest level of parent education: 1 = HS or less; 2 = Some postsecondary; 3 = B.A.; 4 = Graduate or professional degree	2.10	.99
Log of family income	Log of family income at grade 12 reported by parent: family income values coded as midpoint of response categories. Range 0 to 200,000.	10.34	1.12
Standardized test score	Standardized test score composite at grade 10. (Reading & Math)	50.22	10.06
Urbanicity of school location			
Urban high school	Location of high school is in urban area.	.28	.45
Rural high school	Location of high school is in rural area.	.31	.46
	Location of high school is in suburban area (the omitted category).	.41	.49
School Type			
Catholic	Catholic high school	.06	.23
Private	Other private high school (religious other than Catholic & non-religious)	.04	.19
	Public high school (the omitted category) (Unidentified private high schools are excluded from the analyses.)	.91	.29

Appendix B: Various Measures of Social Capital following Coleman

	Description	Mean	S.D.
Family composition	1 = Non-traditional family; 0 = Intact family (including adoptive parents.)	.35	.48
Number of siblings	Parent report of number of siblings 8th grader has in the home. Range 0 to 6.	2.45	1.50
Sports activities with parents	Sum of three parent reported items for frequency of joint activities with 12th grader during the past year: attending school activities (sports, plays); attending sporting events outside of school; working on a hobby or playing sports. Factor analysis identified these activities as one component with alpha = .72.	7.54	2.62
Academic discussion with parents	Sum of four parent reported items for frequency of discussion with 12th grader during the past two years about: selecting courses or programs at school; school activities or events of particular interest to your teenager; preparation for SAT, ACT or ASVAB; and college application. For each item, 1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, and 3 = Often. Range 0 to 12.	9.82	2.02
Help with college choice by direct talk to teenagers	Sum total of two parent report items on help with PSE choice about: particular schools and general qualities that a school should have. For each item, 1 = Yes; 0 = No. Range 0 to 2	1.73	1.37
Intergenerational closure around school	Sum total of the number of children's friends known in the same school and the number of those friends' parents known in the same school by parents.	5.24	3.07
Number of moves	Number of moves since 8th grade.	1.56	.86
Discussion with parents of your teenager's friends	Sum total of two parent report items on discussion with the parents of their teenager's friends about: things that are going on at your teenager's school; your teenager's educational plans for after high school. For each item, 1 = Never or seldom; 2 = Once or twice a month; 3 = Once of twice a week; 4 = Almost everyday. Range 0 to 8.	3.40	1.47
Aspirations and Expectations			
Student educational expectations	How far in school does student think he/she will get? (question at grade 10) Coded the same as parent education	2.70	1.00
Parent educational expectations	How far in school do you want your teenager to go? (question at grade 8) Coded the same as parent education.	2.65	.95

Aligned Social Capital			
Intergenerational alignment of aspirations and expectations			
Agreement of educational expectations between teenagers and parents	1 = Agreement in educational expectation; 0 = Difference in educational expectation	.45	.50
Intergenerational action alignment			
Attending PSE programs from teenager's school	Sum total of two parent report items on attending PSE programs about: PSE opportunities and PSE financing. For each item, 1 = Yes; 0 = No. Range 0 to 2.	.60	.82
Number of PSE school visited together for choice	1 = None to 5 = 5 or more	2.41	1.32

Appendix C: Parent Potential for Building Diverse Social Relations

	Description	Mean	S.D.
	Sum total of speaking, writing, listening and reading is used for language proficiency. For each item, scales are scored 1 to 5. Those with a total score of 12 or over are viewed as having sufficient language capacity and coded as 1; otherwise, those with scores of 11 and below are coded as 0. By combining fluency dummy variables in both foreign language and English, the following dummy variables were created: bilingual, foreign monolingual, and English monolingual. Those coded as poor in both languages were dropped from the analytic sample.		
Bilingual parent	Fluent in both English and native language	.09	.29
Foreign monolingual parent	Fluent only in native language	.04	.20
	Native in English (the omitted category)	.87	.34
Immigrant parent	Father or mother is an immigrant.	.13	.34

*Data are weighted to produce results generalizable to the population of U.S. high school students. The weight applies to the sample members who had been in the panel from the base year to the third wave.