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Shelley L. Brown

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M.A. degree in Sociology

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**A CRITIQUE OF JOHN OGBU'S MINORITY TYPOLOGY**

**By**

**Shelley L. Brown**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

**Department of Sociology**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **A CRITIQUE OF JOHN OGBU'S MINORITY TYPOLOGY**

By

Shelley L. Brown

Although credited for providing a more in-depth understanding of the historical circumstances and complex processes affecting minority student performance and immigrant adaption, John Ogbu's minority typology is criticized for underestimating the diversifying effect of class on the lives of people of color in the United States. Using data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study, this paper attempts to expand Ogbu's theory by examining the role that socioeconomic class plays in shaping aspirations, influencing success strategies, and predicting academic outcomes among minority populations. However, findings suggest that, although positive relationships do exist between socioeconomic class and each of these three variables, Ogbu's minority typology remains a better predictor.

**To my mother and father, Albert and Delores Brown, for their unconditional  
love and support.**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1	
OGBU'S PERSPECTIVE.....	2
The Role of Institutionalized Discrimination.....	2
Immigrant Minorities.....	4
Involuntary Minorities.....	5
Adaptive Responses.....	6
CHAPTER 2	
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE.....	9
Cultural Deficiency.....	9
Structural Theories.....	10
Expanding the Idea of Innovation.....	14
Applying the Theories.....	15
CHAPTER 3	
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	17
CHAPTER 4	
METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION.....	21
CHAPTER 5	
OPERATIONALIZATION OF TERMS.....	22
Socioeconomic Class.....	22
Self-Efficacy.....	23

Constructive and Deconstructive Innovation.....	23
Academic Outcomes.....	24
 CHAPTER 6	
ANALYSIS OF DATA.....	26
 CHAPTER 7	
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	31
 APPENDICES.....	35
 BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	42



## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1 - Correlation Matrix: Socioeconomic Class and Self-Efficacy.....	38
Table 2 - Correlation Matrix: Socioeconomic Class and Innovative Response Type.....	39
Table 3 - Correlation Matrix: Socioeconomic Class and Academic Outcome.	40

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1 - Ogbu's Theoretical Model.....	3
Figure 2 - Merton's Theory of Structural Strain.....	11
Figure 3 - Proposed Theoretical Model.....	20

## INTRODUCTION

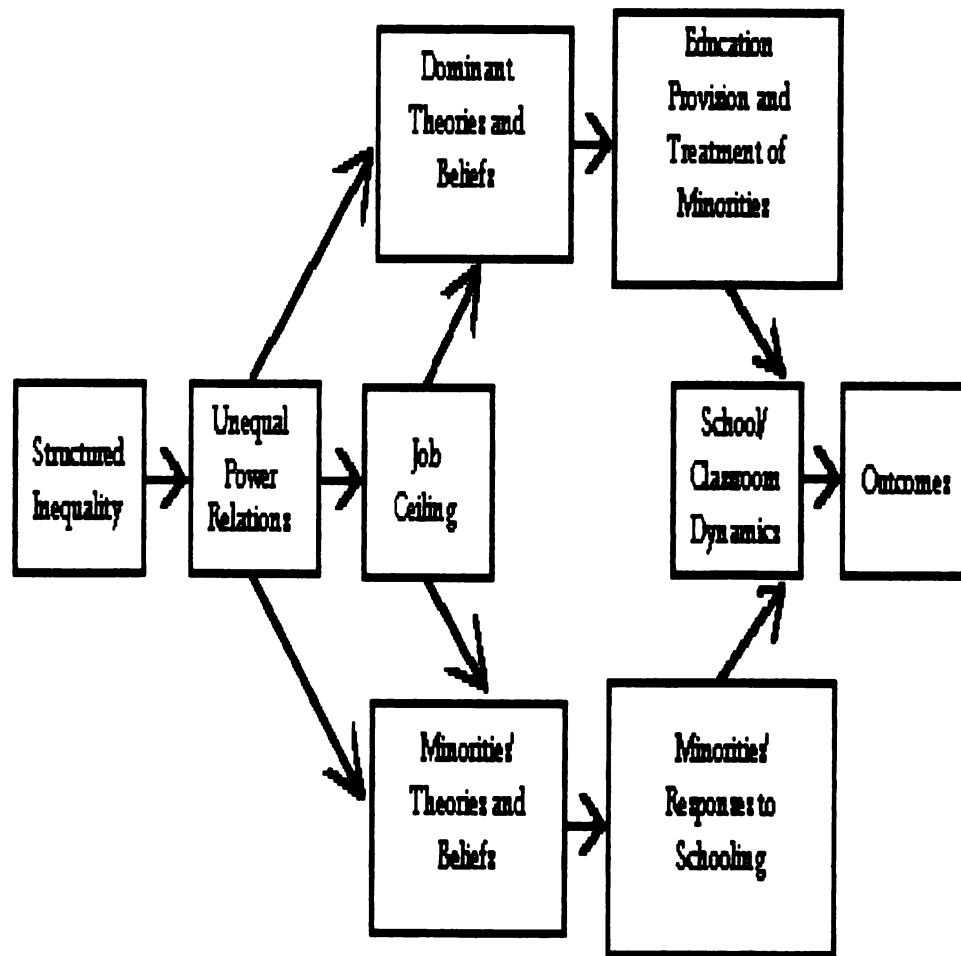
Education is a valuable asset in today's high-tech, global economy. It plays a crucial role in offering opportunities for individual mobility while at the same time legitimating structural inequalities. Consequently, it is important to develop and maintain strategies that allow all students to maximize their educational potential and to identify social and economic circumstances that perpetuate existing disparities by encouraging academic success or failure. If armed with such information, educators and policy makers might be better able to understand and, as a result, better able to address the needs of the many diverse populations that they serve. Emphasizing structural as opposed to cultural explanations for significant differences in the academic performance of immigrant versus involuntary minority groups, this study attempts to provide a more in-depth understanding by comparing the effect of mode of incorporation and economic class on aspirations, success strategies, and educational achievement.

## **Chapter 1**

### **OGBU'S PERSPECTIVE**

#### **The Role of Institutionalized Discrimination:**

Ogbu faults structural inequality in both the economic and educational systems for contributing to many problems that minority students face in school (see Figure 1 on the following page). According to Ogbu (1978:5), there is a reciprocal relationship between the opportunities open to a group in American society and the pattern of linguistic, cognitive, motivational, and other school-related skills they develop. By not allowing minorities entry into the labor force and advancement according to their educational qualifications and ability and by denying them adequate rewards for their education in terms of wages, American society discourages minority youth from investing time and effort into the pursuit of education and maximization of their educational accomplishments (Ogbu, 1987:318). Because schools operate according to the norms of American society and according to the norms of the communities in which they exist, Ogbu (1987:319) suggests that they also contribute to the academic problems of minority children, intentionally or unintentionally, by denigrating minorities and their culture.



**Figure 1 Ogbu's Theoretical Model**  
**Source: Ogbu, 1983**

However, Gibson and Ogbu (1991:8) claim that there are two historical forces which shape the different cultural models of minority groups who are relatively successful or unsuccessful in school. One is the group's initial terms of incorporation into the society in which they presently exist; and the other is the pattern of adaptive responses that the group has made subsequent to discriminatory treatment inflicted by members of the dominant group.

### **Immigrant Minorities:**

Immigrant minorities are groups who move to the United States more or less voluntarily in search of increased economic opportunity, better overall well-being, and/or greater political freedom. Within the United States, the Chinese, Cubans, Filipinos, Japanese, and Koreans constitute immigrant minorities (Ogbu, 1978, 1983, and 1987). Because they retain the sense of peoplehood they had prior to emigration, immigrant minorities are characterized by what Ogbu (1978 and 1987) calls "primary cultural systems". Comparing their current conditions of existence in the host society with the standard endured by peers "back home", immigrant minorities develop favorable perceptions of the opportunity structure in the United States, viewing discrimination as a temporary response to their "guest" status, linguistic accents, or lack of an American education. Consequently, immigrant minorities view education as the avenue to economic success and upward

mobility.

### **Involuntary Minorities:**

Involuntary minorities are groups brought into their present society through slavery, conquest, or colonization. Within the United States, African Americans, Native Americans, Hawaiians, and Alaskans, Puerto Ricans, and Mexican Americans constitute involuntary minorities (Ogbu, 1978, 1983, and 1987). Because their original cultural identity is destroyed and/or degraded during the incorporation process, Ogbu (1978, 1983, and 1987) says that involuntary minorities are characterized by “secondary cultural systems” under which they create a new cultural identity in response to the unjust treatment inflicted upon them by members of dominant group. Through historical experience, involuntary groups learn that discrimination is permanent and institutionalized. By comparing their status with that of members of the dominant group, involuntary minorities also realize that the rules for advancement do not work as well for them as they do for members of the dominant group. Involuntary minorities discover that it requires more than education, individual effort, and hard work to overcome the barriers against them in the opportunity structure.

**Adaptive Responses:**

Unlike involuntary minorities, immigrant minorities do not view cultural differences between themselves and the dominant group as markers of identity to be maintained. Instead, Ogbu (1987) and Gibson and Ogbu (1991) find that within immigrant communities cultural differences are seen as barriers to be overcome in order to achieve long range goals of future employment. Because they employ an “additive” method of cultural adaption, immigrant minorities do not interpret the incorporation of dominant cultural features as threatening to their own culture, language, or identity but as a necessary requirement for social adjustment and successful academic performance.

Through gossip and related techniques, immigrant parents and communities promote good work habits and perseverance, communicating to children nonambivalent, instrumental messages about education. Consequently, immigrant children develop and maintain serious academic attitudes, value making good grades, follow school rules and standard practices, and invest a good deal of time and effort in their schoolwork. They often select courses requiring less use of language and avoid fields of study that prepare them for jobs where there is a job ceiling or discrimination against their group.



Involuntary minorities, on the other hand, practice “cultural inversion” as an adaptive response to oppression (Ogbu, 1978, 1983, and 1987; Gibson and Ogbu, 1991). Through the process of cultural inversion, involuntary minorities define certain forms of behavior, events, symbols, and meanings as inappropriate for them, because they are identified with members of the dominant group and regard other, often oppositional, forms of behavior, events, symbols, and meanings as appropriate for them, because they are *not* associated with the dominant group. As a result of this oppositional or “subtractive” method of cultural adaption, involuntary minorities do not interpret the acquisition of academic learning and skills associated with the dominant culture as an additional set of skills to be drawn upon when appropriate but rather as an indication of subservience.

Among the adaptive strategies employed by involuntary minority parents and communities are passive confrontation with the schools; verbal encouragement but nonteaching involvement with children’s education; a weak control of children’s use of time; a weak socialization of children to develop good academic work habits and perseverance at academic tasks; and a weak sanction of academic instrumental behavior and academic responsibility. As a consequence, involuntary minority youth do not develop or maintain good academic work habits and attitudes. Instead, they tend to have a norm of

minimum effort, spend limited time on academic tasks, and avoid taking difficult or “White” courses. According to Ogbu (1987), involuntary minority youth tend to be satisfied with average grades and submit easily to peer pressures that take them away from their schoolwork. They resist following school rules and standard practices and distrust school authorities with whom they are frequently in conflict.

Plagued by truancy, delinquency, and high drop-out rates, involuntary minority youth often change the rules for economic advancement (Ogbu, 1978). Having rejected the educational expectations of both the schools and the society, many young people in this group direct their time and energy into nonacademic, less socially acceptable areas as a means of getting ahead. The street economy is one popular alternative.

## **Chapter 2**

### **THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Ogbu's minority typology is based upon two general theoretical models, the first focuses upon cultural deficiency, and the second centers on structural opportunity.

#### **Cultural Deficiency:**

Like many deficiency theorists (see Blauner, 1972; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Moynihan, 1965; Solomon, 1988; Sowell, 1981), Ogbu's explanations for racial subordination often focus on pathological cultural characteristics thought to be inherited from the past and reproduced from one generation to the next. Because cultural differences between immigrant and involuntary minorities are treated as cultural deficiencies and assumed to be the reason that involuntary minorities are disproportionately found in subordinate positions, Ogbu and others sharing this perspective seem to criticize less successful groups for not modeling the behavior of immigrant minorities. Arguing that the attitudes and values held by members of

involuntary minority groups often prevent them from successfully competing in society, cultural deficiency theorists claim that involuntary minority communities adopt cultural identities that are characterized by complex webs of deviant behavioral patterns. Consequently, involuntary minorities are judged to be more permissive in raising their children, less verbal, more fatalistic, less apt to defer gratification, and less likely to be interested in formal education than members of immigrant minority groups. Unlike many deficiency theorists, Ogbu points out that many of these practices are adaptations to oppressive structural conditions.

### **Structural Theories:**

Arguing that racism is an institutionalized component of all major sectors of society, structural theorists (see Carrier, 1986; Cloward, 1968; Oakes, 1985; Persell and Cookson, 1990; Woodson, 1992) claim that the criminal justice, economic, health care, and/or formal educational systems interact to regulate members of minority groups to subordinate positions within the social and economic power structure where the opportunities left open to them are drastically limited. Focusing on the response patterns adopted by minority group members in reaction to limited opportunity, the theory on which Ogbu's minority typology is most closely based is Merton's (1968) theory of structural strain which is summarized in Figure 2.

Type of Response	Goals	Means
Retreatism	—	—
Ritualism	—	+
Rebellion	+/-	+/-
Conformity	+	+
Innovation	+	—

**Figure 1** Merton's Theory of Structural Strain

Merton's theory of structural strain is based upon three factors: (1) culturally valued goals defined as legitimate for all members of society, (2) norms that specify the legitimate means of achieving these goals, and (3) the actual number of legitimate opportunities available to people to achieve the culturally valued goals. According to Merton, structural strain occurs when the valued goals have no clear boundaries; when people are unsure whether the legitimate means that society provides will lead to the valued goals; or when legitimate opportunities for meeting the goals are closed to a significant portion of the population. Because Ogbu (1978, 1983, and 1987) states that they are often denied access to quality education, which is the socially accepted means of achieving the goal of upward mobility, and because their level of occupational advancement and financial reward is unjustly limited, even in cases where a quality education has been obtained, minority groups suffer structural strain.

Although it is the individual's job to choose a path that leads to success, Merton claims that people respond to structural strain in five identifiable ways, each involving some combination of acceptance and rejection of the valued goals and means. First, retreatism involves the rejection of both cultural goals and the means of achieving those goals. Unable to achieve success through

either legitimate or illegitimate means, retreatists resign from society. The retreatist not only rejects education as a means to advancement, but he or she abandons all nonacademic avenues as well.

The second response, ritualism, involves the rejection of cultural goals but rigid adherence to the legitimate means of achieving those goals. Although the ritualist plays by society's rules, he or she does not expect hard work to pay off in the form of financial success. Passively accepting his or her ascribed social status, the ritualist does not seriously pursue the goal of upward mobility.

Rebellion, the third response, involves the full or partial rejection of both goals and means and the introduction of a new set of goals and means. According to Merton, rebellion provides for the potential formation of deviant subgroups, such as delinquent youth gangs.

The fourth response, conformity, entails the acceptance of the cultural goals and the pursuit of those goals through legitimate means. Assuming that if they follow the rules they will be justly rewarded, conformists do not acknowledge the potential effect of economic inequality.

Finally, innovation involves the acceptance of the cultural goals but rejection of the legitimate means to obtaining those goals. An innovator desires upward mobility but does not necessarily view education as the means

to achieving success.

### **Expanding the Idea of Innovation:**

Although Merton's (1968) description of innovation involves complete rejection of the culturally valued means of achieving success, Ogbu (1987), Gibson (1988 and 1995), and Gibson and Ogbu (1991) point out that innovation does not necessarily entail total rejection of the legitimate means. There are both constructive and deconstructive forms of innovation.

Recognizing the additional barriers that they must overcome in order to achieve culturally valued goals, deconstructive innovators continue to pursue economic success and upward mobility but choose unproductive, even destructive, methods of countering these obstacles. Unintentionally exacerbating existing problems and inequalities, deconstructive innovators often reject positive aspects of the dominant culture that may have been beneficial to members of their group. Because it discourages serious scholarly effort and respect for school authority, the subtractive or oppositional mode of cultural adaption employed by involuntary minorities is considered a deconstructive form of innovation. However, the additive method of innovation practiced by immigrant minorities does encourage academic excellence and is, therefore, considered a constructive form of innovation.

After evaluating all possible alternatives, constructive innovators, unlike



deconstructive innovators, choose more productive, socially acceptable methods of countering the effects of institutionalized discrimination in their pursuit of culturally valued goals. Selectively incorporating positive aspects of the dominant culture that may be beneficial to members of their group, constructive innovators encourage “accommodation without assimilation”. Consequently, education remains instrumental in their pursuit of economic success and upward mobility.

### **Applying the Theories:**

Despite their high drop out rates which imply that involuntary minorities, like retreatists, reject education as a means of achieving upward mobility, and the lack of motivation they hold in common with ritualists, Ogbu (1978 and 1983) suggests that, unlike either retreatists or ritualists, most involuntary minorities do accept the cultural goal of social and economic advancement, although many attempt to achieve it through socially unacceptable, nonacademic avenues. Consequently, very few from either minority group may be accurately classified as retreatists or ritualists.

As for more rebellious forms of reaction, Merton (1968) claims that such extreme patterns of response are confined only to small portions of the population. Although Ogbu (1978 and 1983) suggests that involuntary groups exhibit the greatest potential for rebellion, especially disorganized forms such

as riots, this response is least frequently used.

Finally, adhering strictly to the rules and underestimating the pervasiveness of racial discrimination, Ogbu's description of immigrant minorities suggests that they tend to be conformists. However, Boddy (1970), Fong (1994), Miyamoto (1984), and Takagi (1992) document both subtle and blatant forms of racial discrimination that have historically plagued immigrant communities and continue, presently, to limit their life chances. According to Omi and Winant (1991) and Min (1996), common experiences of racial oppression, such as these, tend to intensify group identity and cohesion. Consequently, for many immigrant minorities who choose to remain in the U.S. over an extended period of time conformity may be only a temporary response decreasing in appeal as members of immigrant minority groups become more "racialized".

Because most accept the cultural goals of upward mobility and economic success but disagree as to the most appropriate means of achieving these common goals, the great majority of involuntary and immigrant minority youth tend to be innovators, with the former group being more apt to employ deconstructive forms of innovation and the latter group gravitating toward more constructive forms of innovation. For this reason, neither retreatism, ritualism, rebellion, nor conformity will be further discussed in this study.

## **Chapter 3**

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

One of the reasons cited by Ogbu (1978:8) for his conscious omission of class within the African-American community is his belief that, "Regardless of their class position, Blacks tend to perceive of their opportunities for social mobility as much more limited than is the case for the general population." Because Ogbu fails to consider class variables among any of the other involuntary minority groups, this belief appears to be generalizable. In addition, Ogbu also assumes that, regardless of their class position, immigrant minorities hold equally favorable perceptions of the U.S. opportunity structure and are equally optimistic about their ability to achieve upward mobility through legitimate means.

However, as Gibson and Ogbu (1991:371) admit,

The cultural models and educational strategies of minority communities are in a constant process of renegotiation. Mobility strategies change as the societal context changes and as the minority group's situation within a given society itself changes. Both role expectations and folk theories of success are modified over time.

Although U.S. society continues to be plagued by structural inequality and unequal power relations, the occupations above the job ceiling of which Ogbu (1978) speaks include “clerical, sales, and kindred workers, professionals, technicians, managers, officials, proprietors, and skilled craftsmen and foremen”; and involuntary group members have, recently, made considerable advances in many of these areas, thereby penetrating this job ceiling. Has the rise of the middle class in Black and other involuntary minority communities served to diversify theories, beliefs, and experiences (Frazier, 1962; Fanon, 1967; Benjamin, 1991)?

Because of the many motivational factors that fuel migration, Pedraza (1996), Rumbaut (1996), and Portes and Rumbaut (1990), also, note significant differences in socioeconomic class among laborers, professionals, entrepreneurs, refugees, and asylees within immigrant communities. Because migration is often characterized by an inverse relationship between date of departure and social class of the immigrants, particularly among refugees, class disparities within immigrant communities may widen in the future. Will these increases in class disparity influence the role expectations and mobility strategies employed by immigrant minorities? If so, in what ways? Ogbu fails to address questions such as these.

According to findings introduced by Deosaran (1978); Evans (1990 and

1993); Gecas and Schwalbe (1983); Gecas, Schwalbe, and Staples (1984) and Hughes and Demo (1989), a positive relationship exists between socioeconomic class and self-efficacy (or one's self-perceived ability to achieve intended goals through legitimate means). If this finding holds true, then minority students from more privileged class backgrounds should express higher degrees of self-efficacy. Because students with higher degrees of self-efficacy are, by definition, more certain of their ability to achieve intended goals through legitimate, socially acceptable means, minorities from more privileged class backgrounds should, also, be more willing to accept education as the means to obtaining economic success. Consequently, minorities from privileged class backgrounds should be more inclined to adopt constructive forms of innovation which produce higher academic outcomes, irrespective of their group's mode of incorporation. On the other hand, minority youth from less privileged class backgrounds should experience lower degrees of self-efficacy. Believing that they will not be able to succeed through legitimate means, minorities from less privileged class backgrounds will be more likely to adopt deconstructive forms of innovation which tend to result in lower academic outcomes, regardless of their group's method of entry.

These predictions are based upon three major assumptions which are illustrated in Figure 3:

**Assumption One**

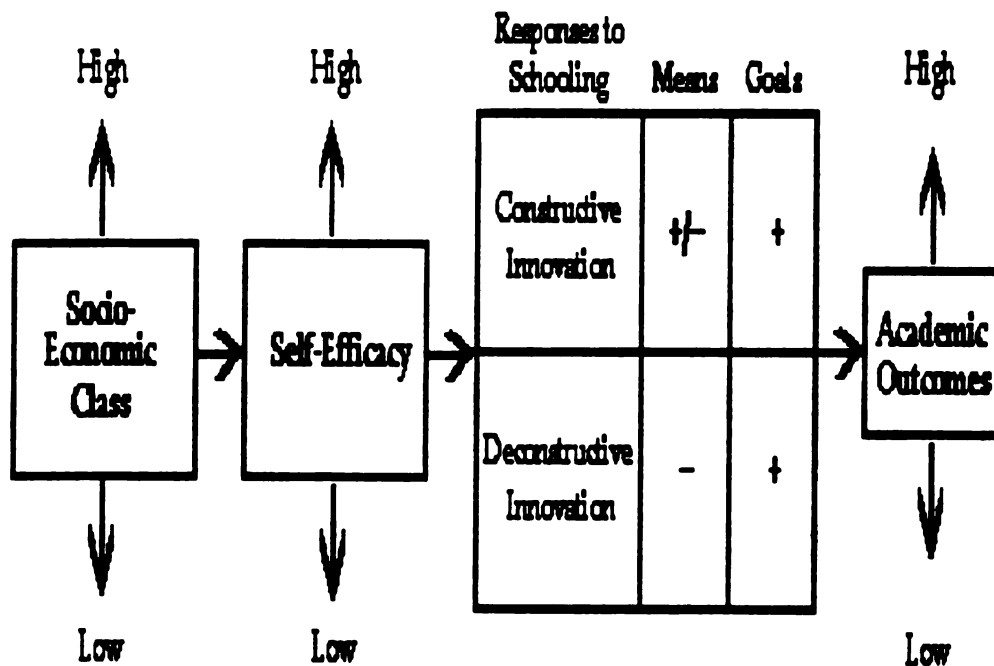
There are positive relationships between socioeconomic class and (a) self-efficacy; (b) innovative response type, with constructive innovation being the more highly rated type of response; and (c) academic outcome.

**Assumption Two**

When socioeconomic class is held constant, significant proportions of variance in academic outcome are explained independently by (a) self-efficacy and (b) innovative response type.

**Assumption Three**

When socioeconomic class is held constant, the amount of variance in academic outcome explained by a minority group's mode of incorporation decreases.



**Figure 3 Proposed Theoretical Model**

## **Chapter 4**

### **METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

Data for this study was taken from the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS). Beginning in 1988 with a cohort of 25,000 eighth graders attending 1,000 public and private schools across the nation, the NELS was designed to provide data about critical transitions experienced by students as they leave eighth grade school settings, progress through high school (or dropout), enter and leave postsecondary institutions, and enter the work force. The 1988 eighth grade cohort has been followed at two-year intervals, and the data for this study was collected during the second follow-up which took place in 1992, when most sample members were entering the second semester of their senior year. Because this study focuses on minority students, all cases listed as “non-Hispanic White” have been eliminated from consideration leaving a total sample size of 7,164 cases including 4,626 involuntary minorities, 1,214 immigrant minorities, and 1,324 minorities of unknown origin.

## Chapter 5

### OPERATIONALIZATION OF TERMS

#### **Socioeconomic Class:**

In order to evaluate the influence of socioeconomic class background on the response patterns of students from both minority groups two indicators, `f2pared` and `f2ses1q`, are used. `F2pared` measures the educational level of the respondent's parent(s), and `f2ses1q` indicates the respondent's socioeconomic quartile. `F2ses1q` is a string variable constructed by dividing another variable, `f2ses1`, into four quartiles based on the weighted marginal distribution.

`F2ses1`, a continuous variable with a mean of 16.89 and standard deviation of 37.87, was created using base year parent questionnaire data. When available the following parent data were used: father's education level, mother's education level, father's occupation, mother's occupation, and family income. Finally, occupational data were recoded using the Duncan's Socioeconomic Index.



**Self-Efficacy:**

The data set contains three items, f2s67a, f2s67b, and f2s43, which indicate the respondent's self-perceived chances of succeeding through legitimate, socially acceptable means. F2s67a indicates the respondent's chances of graduating from high school, f2s67b indicates his or her chances of graduating from college, and f2s43 reflects how far in school the respondent thinks that he or she will get. Positive relationships between socioeconomic class variables (f2pared and f2seslq) and each of the three indicators of self-efficacy (f2s43, f2s67b, and f2s67a) confirm assumption 1(a).

**Constructive and Deconstructive Innovation:**

Constructive and deconstructive forms of innovation are measured by five item indicators including f2s9b, f2s9d, f2s25f2, f2s34a, and hsprgm. Item f2s9b indicates how often the respondent cuts classes; item f2s9d indicates how often he or she gets into trouble for breaking school rules; item f2s25f2 indicates the amount of time that the respondent spends on homework; item f2s34a indicates the amount of time that he or she spends playing video games; and item hsprgm indicates whether the respondent is enrolled in a college preparatory program. Because constructive and deconstructive innovation are two sides to the same coin, high scores for items indicating one type of innovation translate into low scores for the same items indicating the

other. In this case, constructive innovation is indicated by high scores for items f2s25f2 and hsprgm and low scores for items f2s9b, f2s9d, and f2s34a. This response pattern is reversed in deconstructive innovators. Positive relationships between socioeconomic class variables (f2pared and f2ses1q) and constructive forms of innovation (f2s25f2 and hsprgm), in addition to negative relationships between socioeconomic class variables (f2pared and f2ses1q) and deconstructive types of innovation (f2s9b, f2s9d, and f2s34a) confirm assumption 1(b).

#### **Academic Outcomes:**

The three items indicating academic outcome are grade point average (gpa), notdrop, and f22xcomp. Gpa is a continuous variable with a mean of 2.50 and a standard deviation of .89. Although it is based upon a 4.00 scale, gpa consists of scores ranging in value from 0.00 to 5.00, with scores above 4.00 indicating extra credit granted to respondents enrolled in honors or exceptionally difficult courses. Notdrop indicates whether or not the respondent continues to be enrolled in school. Finally, f22xcomp is a continuous variable with a mean of 47.30 and standard deviation of 10.22. These values represent standardized test composites combining cognitive test scores achieved in mathematics and reading comprehension. The math test on which this variable is partially based contained items such as word problems,

graphs, equations, quantitative comparisons, and geometric figures. Some questions could be answered by simple application of skills or knowledge, others required the student to demonstrate a more advanced level of comprehension and problem solving. The test of reading comprehension contained four to five short reading passages, with three to five questions about the content of each. Questions encompassed understanding the meaning of words in context, identifying figures of speech, interpreting the author's perspective, and evaluating the passage as a whole. Positive relationships between variables indicating socioeconomic class ( $f2pared$  and  $f2ses1q$ ) and items ( $gpa$ ,  $f22xcomp$ , and  $notdrop$ ) indicating academic outcome confirm assumption 1(c). See Appendix A for further clarification.

## Chapter 6

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data in this study is analyzed using frequencies, correlation matrices, comparison of means, and multiple regression. Measures of association include Kendau'll's Tau-b, eta, and chi square, and all relationships are significant below a probability level of .05.

#### **Assumption One**

There are positive relationships between socioeconomic class and (a) self-efficacy; (b) innovative response type, with constructive innovation being the more highly rated type of response; and (c) academic outcome.

Although data in Table 1 (see Appendix B) suggest that all six relationships are weak---the strongest,  $T_b = .298$ , between f2ses1q and f2s67b and the weakest,  $T_b = .045$ , between f2ses1q and f2s43---assumption 1(a) is confirmed by positive correlations between socioeconomic class variables and each of the three indicators of self-efficacy. All correlations including indicators of self-efficacy are significant below  $p = .001$ .

As predicted by assumption 1(b) and indicated by data in Table 2 (see

Appendix C), significant positive correlations between socioeconomic class variables and those indicating constructive forms of innovation do exist, although most are very weak. Because constructive and deconstructive innovation are two sides to the same coin, in order to confirm this assumption completely, negative correlations should exist between socioeconomic class variables and those indicating deconstructive forms of innovation. However, Table 2 indicates that although all specified correlations are negative, as predicted,  $f2s34a$  is the only indicator of deconstructive innovation that is significantly related to both socioeconomic class variables at probability levels less than .001. While  $f2s9d$  is significantly associated only with  $f2pared$  at a probability level less than .05.

Finally, data presented in Table 3 (see Appendix D) indicate that correlations between socioeconomic class variables and indicators of academic outcome appear to be stronger than correlations between socioeconomic class variables and those in either of the other two categories. Assumption 1(c) is confirmed by the six positive correlations in Table 3 which range in value from  $r_b = .215$ , between  $f2ses1q$  and  $notdrop$ , to  $r_b = .440$ , between  $f2ses1q$  and  $f22xcomp$ . In this instance all relationships are significant below  $p = .001$ .

### **Assumption Two**

When socioeconomic class is held constant, significant proportions of variance in academic outcome are explained independently by (a) self-efficacy and (b) innovative response

type.

Because the first regression equation (see Appendix E) indicates that f2s43, f2s67a, and f2s67b (all indicators of self-efficacy) and f2s9b, f2s9d, f2s25f2, f2s34a, and hspgmn (all indicators of innovative response type) each explain very low, although significant, proportions of variance in gpa while controlling for socioeconomic class, both sections of assumption two are confirmed regarding this particular indicator of academic outcome. However, regression equations explaining the other two indicators of academic outcome offer less support.

In the regression equation where  $y = f22xcomp$ , one indicator of self-efficacy (f2s43) and two indicators of innovative response type (f2s9b and f2s9d) drop out of the equation. Only f2s67a, f2s67b, f2s25f2, and f2s34a continue to explain significant proportions of variance in f22xcomp when socioeconomic class is held constant. Nevertheless, when combined these few variables provide greater predictive power than do those listed in the first equation, even though a greater number of variables are included in the former. Based upon the value of R square, the second equation explains 5.86 percent more variance in f22xcomp than the first equation explains in gpa. In addition, T-values corresponding to variables in the regression equation where  $y = f22xcomp$  are all significant below  $p = .001$ , while none of the variables in

the equation where  $y = \text{gpa}$  have T-values that remain significant at such a low level of probability.

The regression equation offering the least support for assumption two, however, is the one in which  $y = \text{notdrop}$ . In this final equation, all indicators of innovative response type and all but one indicator of self-efficacy fail to explain significant proportions of variance in notdrop when socioeconomic class is held constant. Only one variable, f2s67a, remains in the equation. Explaining only 1.04 percent of the variance in notdrop, the predictive power of this equation is very weak.

### **Assumption Three**

The amount of variance in academic outcome explained by a minority group's mode of incorporation decreases when socioeconomic class is held constant.

Because all variables indicating socioeconomic class and mode of incorporation are excluded from the third regression equation, neither class factors nor method of entry appear to be significant predictors of a minority student's decision to withdraw from or remain in school. Consequently, comparisons between the two were impossible in this case.

Based upon data presented in the first two regression equations which suggest that academic outcome is positively influenced by immigrant status while involuntary status has the opposite effect, a minority group's mode of incorporation explains more variance in both gpa and f22xcomp than all but

one other variable in both equations, even when controlling for socioeconomic class. Although socioeconomic class variables, especially  $f2_{\text{pared}}$ , are significant predictors of  $\text{gpa}$  and  $f22_{\text{xcomp}}$  when mode of incorporation is held constant, socioeconomic class factors fail to explain much of the variance in these forms of academic outcome among minority group members who have entered the U.S. voluntarily and those upon whom entry into the U.S. has been forced. Therefore, assumption three remains unconfirmed.



## Chapter 7

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

These findings suggest that, although several variables in the proposed theoretical model significantly explain small proportions of variance in academic outcome, especially gpa and composite test scores, there is something about being an immigrant as opposed to an involuntary minority that even outweighs the influence of increasing economic opportunity in explaining differences in academic success. There are many possible explanations for this trend.

Often possessing both social and cultural capital at the time of arrival, immigrant minorities have benefited from a greater number of resources. Unlike involuntary populations which represent a random selection, immigrant minorities are self-selected for the success struggle before ever reaching these shores. This distinction alone, may account for differences in level of motivation. In addition, immigration laws' preferences for families, after years of denying families, helped establish network and support communities which

promoted the persistence of primary cultural systems along with any psychological comforts that these systems may provide. Preference to those with skills made finding jobs easier, and a shift in immigration from rural to urban immigrants who were more educated and to a greater degree professional, changed the trajectory of this population as a whole. Despite little economic capital, their trade or entrepreneurial skills, the social capital of existing networks available from earlier immigrants, and the small size of many immigrant populations enabled them to take advantage of market niches and assume “middleman minority” positions.

Involuntary minorities can be seen as “immigrants” only arriving to the United States upon being freed from slavery or having gained independence from colonial rule and exploitation, at which point they faced economic and structural conditions unlike those encountered by more recent immigrant minority groups. Because factors such as basis for group conflict, resources upon arrival, structure of the economy at arrival, and size of the group interact, relegating minority groups to unequal positions within the “racial caste system,” involuntary minorities were often placed at a greater disadvantage from the very start. Because American society was historically organized around racist principles, racial harmony depends upon an elaborate system of controls to insure compliance. Immigrant groups are less threatening,

therefore, the need to control involuntary minorities has been greater for the dominant group.

Deprived of individual freedoms and denied education during the colonial period, involuntary minorities had neither economic nor cultural capital. With only agricultural backgrounds, involuntary minority groups lacked the skills required to take part in an industrial economy. As a result, they were locked into “quasi serfdom” (Sowell, 1981:183). Because of the large size of many involuntary minority populations and historical group conflicts with the dominant white class, market niches and “middleman minority” positions were unavailable to involuntary groups.

Only with World War I, with immigration halted, were involuntary groups able to gain some industrial jobs mostly in menial, unskilled positions; and only after World War II, through riots and the Civil Rights Movement did major gains allow for the true growth of the middle class in involuntary minority communities. Because the historical legacy of slavery, conquest, and colonization has left an enduring imprint not only on the dominant group’s view of involuntary minorities but on the psyche of the involuntary group as well, “chains and images of psychological oppression” discourage many from acting in their own best interests despite recent increases in economic and educational opportunity (Akbar, 1984; Fanon, 1967; Woodson, 1992).

Lacking a foundation of capital on which to build upon, the only choice left for involuntary groups has been to conform, which is inhibited by structural as well as racial barriers, or to form an “oppositional identity.” Education’s role in only offering assimilation to involuntary minorities in exchange for conformity often forces them to give up their identities and disassociate themselves from their communities (Fanon, 1967; Fordham, 1990 and 1996; Fordham and Ogbu, 1986; Frazier, 1962; Woodson, 1992). This is an unfair price that many are apparently unwilling to pay.

In order to insure that the involuntary minority community, previously excluded from education, is made more relevant to education, while education is at the same time made more relevant to the involuntary minority community, a transformation needs to take place so that what is learned gets transmitted back to the community (Hare and Hare, 1991). Education must be given back to the people, and the increase in community control brought about through the establishment of independent, charter schools represents one possible solution.

## **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX A**

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONS FROM THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL LONGITUDINAL STUDY

- f2pared      Parent's highest level of education
- 1    didn't finish high school
  - 2    high school graduate or GED
  - 3    high school, some college
  - 4    college graduate
  - 5    M.A. or equal
  - 6    Ph.D., M.D., other
- f2ses1q      Socioeconomic quartile
- 1    quartile 1 low
  - 2    quartile 2
  - 3    quartile 3
  - 4    quartile 4 high
- f2s9b      How many times did R cut or skipped classes
- 0    never
  - 1    1-2 times
  - 2    3-6 times
  - 3    7-9 times
  - 4    10-15 times
  - 5    over 15 times
- f2s9d      How many times got into trouble
- 0    never
  - 1    1-2 times
  - 2    3-6 times
  - 3    7-9 times
  - 4    10-15 times
  - 5    over 15 times

- f2s25f2    Total time spent on homework out of school [per week]
- 0   none
  - 1   less than 1 hour
  - 2   1-3 hours
  - 3   4-6 hours
  - 4   7-9 hours
  - 5   10-12 hours
  - 6   13-15 hours
  - 7   16-20 hours
  - 8   over 20 hours
- f2s34a    Hours on weekdays R plays video games
- 0   none
  - 1   less than 1 hour
  - 2   1-3 hours
  - 3   4-6 hours
  - 4   7-9 hours
  - 5   10-12 hours
  - 6   13-15 hours
  - 7   16-20 hours
  - 8   over 20 hours
- f2s43    How far in school R thinks he or she will get
- 1   less than high school
  - 2   high school only
  - 3   less than 2 years of school
  - 4   more than 2 years of school
  - 5   trade school degree
  - 6   less than 2 years of college
  - 7   more than 2 years of college
  - 8   finish college
  - 9   M.A. or equal
  - 10   Ph.D., M.D., other
- f2s67a    Chances that R will graduate from high school
- 1   very low
  - 2   low
  - 3   fifty-fifty
  - 4   high
  - 5   very high



- f2s67b** Chances that R will go to college
- 1 very low
  - 2 low
  - 3 fifty-fifty
  - 4 high
  - 5 very high
- hsprgm\*** The high school program in which R is currently enrolled
- 0 no college prep
  - 1 college prep
- notdrop\*** R's dropout status
- 0 dropped out
  - 1 did not drop out

\* indicates recoded variable

## **APPENDIX B**

## APPENDIX B

**Table 1**  
**Correlation Matrix: Socioeconomic Class and Self-Efficacy**

	<b>f2pared</b>	<b>f2scs1q</b>
<b>f2s43</b>	.0670 .000	.0449 .000
<b>f2s67a</b>	.1666 .000	.1616 .000
<b>f2s67b</b>	.2798 .000	.2979 .000

## **APPENDIX C**

## APPENDIX C

**Table 2**  
**Correlation Matrix: Socioeconomic Class and Innovative Response Type**

	<b>f2pared</b>	<b>f2ses1q</b>
<b>f2s25f2</b>	.1657 .000	.1580 .000
<b>hsprgm</b>	.3177 .000	.3098 .000
<b>f2s9b</b>	-.0175 .237	-.0050 .725
<b>f2s9d</b>	-.0349 .018	-.0166 .239
<b>f2s34a</b>	-.0597 .000	-.0610 .000

## **APPENDIX D**

## APPENDIX D

**Table 3**  
**Correlation Matrix: Socioeconomic Class and Academic Outcome**

	<b>f2pared</b>	<b>f2ses1q</b>
<b>gpa</b>	<b>.3463 .000</b>	<b>.3242 .000</b>
<b>f22xcomp</b>	<b>.4315 .000</b>	<b>.4400 .000</b>
<b>notdrop</b>	<b>.2397 .000</b>	<b>.2153 .000</b>

## **APPENDIX E**



**APPENDIX E**  
**REGRESSION EQUATIONS**

**Equation Number 1    Dependent Variable:   GPA    GRADE POINT AVERAGE**  
R SQUARE                      .36245  
ADJUSTED R SQUARE        .35808

$$\begin{aligned} \text{GPA} = & .918447 + (.223501)\text{IMMIG} - (.149503)\text{INVOL} + \\ & (.036653)\text{F2PARED} + (.038468)\text{F2S25F2} - (.047929)\text{F2S34A} + \\ & (.006840)\text{F2S43} + (.195061)\text{F2S67A} + (.066473)\text{F2S67B} - \\ & (.044500)\text{F2S9B} - (.073973)\text{F2S9D} + (.052853)\text{F2SES1Q} + \\ & (.067981)\text{F2SEX} + (.327630)\text{HSPRGM} \end{aligned}$$

**Equation Number 2    Dependent Variable:   F22XCOMP    STD TEST COMP**  
R SQUARE                      .42101  
ADJUSTED R SQUARE        .41796

$$\begin{aligned} \text{F22XCOMP} = & 29.067628 + (2.359649)\text{IMMIG} - (1.933035)\text{INVOL} + \\ & (.882716)\text{F2PARED} + (.658061)\text{F2S25F2} - (.617664)\text{F2S34A} + \\ & (1.979942)\text{F2S67A} + (.847757)\text{F2S67B} + (1.276780)\text{F2SES1Q} - \\ & (1.023912)\text{F2SEX} + (5.084597)\text{HSPRGM} \end{aligned}$$

**Equation Number 3    Dependent Variable:   NOTDROP    DROP OUT STATUS**  
R SQUARE                      .01091  
ADJUSTED R SQUARE        .01039

$$\text{NOTDROP} = .949854 + (.009856)\text{F2S67A}$$

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