

Parental Cross-Nativity and Intermarriage among Second-Generation Mexican Americans in Metropolitan Los Angeles

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Abstract

Sociologists have long regarded intermarriage as an important indicator of integration between immigrant and native groups. This study examines how parental cross-nativity marriages between Mexican-origin foreign-born parents and Mexican-origin parents born in the U.S. affect intermarriage among second-generation Mexican Americans in metropolitan Los Angeles. Logistic regression analysis provides the likelihood of intermarriage with the Non-Hispanic white majority group (the group with which the Mexican-origin population intermarries the most) based on data from the Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMMLA) survey. This research shows that second-generation Mexican Americans who have a foreign-born mother and a U.S. native-born father are more likely to intermarry with non-Hispanic whites compared to second-generation Mexican Americans whose parents are both foreign-born. The daughters of foreign-born mothers and native-born fathers demonstrate the highest likelihood of intermarriage. Foreign-born mothers who are arguably less traditional and more tied to the new country, demonstrated by marriage to a native-born coethnic, may socialize their daughters to pursue non-traditional gender roles by encouraging them to achieve more education, thus leading to a higher likelihood of intermarriage integration. Although parental cross-nativity leads to intermarriage integration for some second-generation Mexican Americans, there is also evidence that they experience racialized integration, demonstrated by a high endogamy rate.

Keywords: Intermarriage, Immigration, Integration, Cross-Nativity, Mexican, Mexican-American

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Introduction

Unlike previous waves of immigrants that came to the United States from Europe, post-1965 immigrants have arrived from Latin America and Asia. This difference has raised questions about their integration prospects as non-Europeans (Gans 1992). In particular, much attention is focused on Mexican-origin immigrants and their descendants. Since 1980, this immigrant group has been the largest in the United States (Terrazas 2010). Many Mexican-origin immigrants are in the United States as unauthorized laborers with low skill sets and a low educational

attainment level (Bean, Brown, and Bachmeier 2015; Massey, Durand, and Malone 2002; Portes and Rumbaut 2014; Terrazas 2010). In 2017, the number of unauthorized Mexican immigrants living in the United States was 4.9 million, or almost half of the total unauthorized population (Passel and Cohn 2019). In 2018, immigrants from Mexico, authorized and unauthorized, made up the largest share of immigrants in the United States, totaling 11.2 million or 25% of all immigrants (Budiman 2020). All individuals with Mexican ancestry numbered almost 37 million or about 11.3% of the total U.S. population (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2018). Between 2000 and 2010, births

surpassed immigration as the main reason for the Mexican-origin population's growth in the United States (Passel, Cohn, and Gonzalez-Barrera 2012). Projections indicate that the United States will become a majority ethnic-minority country by 2044 (Colby and Ortman 2015). Because of these demographic trends, there has been a lot of fear and debate among the public and policymakers on the extent to which the Mexican-origin population is integrating into U.S. society.

Not only is there concern about how this population is integrating economically, but also socioculturally. About 46% of whites believe that a U.S. population in 2050, where the majority is non-white, will weaken American culture (Parker, Morin, and Horowitz 2019). Samuel Huntington (2004) claimed that “[t]he persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, and two languages” (p. 30). Chavez (2008) found that two-thirds of magazine covers between 1965 and 2000 demonstrated images of immigration as threatening and alarming, thus producing a “Latino Threat Narrative.” This narrative in politics and media racializes Mexican and other Latinx immigrants as “illegals” and raises fears about their sociocultural integration by communicating that “Latinos are unwilling or incapable of integrating, of becoming part of the national community. Rather, they are part of an invading force from south of the border that is bent on reconquering land that was formerly theirs (the U.S. Southwest) and destroying the American way of life” (p. 3). When the forty-fifth president of the United States launched his presidential political campaign on June 16, 2015, he made sociocultural distinctions between Mexican-origin immigrants and his political base, primarily made up of white Americans, by referencing racialized ideas and stereotypes, such as that Mexican immigrants are “illegal,” morally inferior, and criminals. Throughout U.S. history, there has been public anxiety about how immigration changes American culture and about immigrant’s supposed unwillingness to integrate into U.S. society.

One way to gauge the extent to which the Mexican-origin population is integrating socioculturally in the United States is by assessing

intermarriage patterns. This research examines intermarriage, an act that reflects the weakening of social boundaries, contact, and similarity between racial/ethnic groups. It focuses on this key aspect of integration to shed light on how the Mexican-origin population integrates into U.S. society. More specifically, this study looks at how parental cross-nativity affects intermarriage integration among second-generation Mexican Americans.

Many immigration scholars argue that nativity, which implies a larger amount of time spent in a host society, exposure and familiarity with institutions and mainstream language, norms, values, behaviors, and characteristics, can facilitate integration across generations, including intermarriage integration (Alba and Nee 2003; Brown and Bean 2006; Gans 1979; Gordon 1964). The influence of nativity is gauged in this study by analyzing how parental cross-nativity, marriages between one foreign-born mother of Mexican-origin and one U.S. native-born father of Mexican-origin, and marriages between one foreign-born father of Mexican-origin and one U.S. native-born mother of Mexican-origin, affects the likelihood of intermarriage with the non-Hispanic white majority group among their adult children. Are Mexican-origin second-generation¹ adult children resulting from cross-nativity marriages between a foreign-born mother and native-born father more likely to participate in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites, compared to Mexican-origin adult children who have two foreign-born parents? How do these results differ from adult children whose fathers are foreign-born and mothers are native-born? Among these adult children, are there any sex/gender² differences in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites? How does education help explain intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites among second-generation Mexican-American women/daughters whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born?

Theoretical & Empirical Framework

Intermarriage has been used to measure integration and social distance between racial/ethnic groups in American society, and to measure inclusion or exclusion. Intermarriage with a majority group is a function of both contact and similarity, since individuals choose spouses who are similar across multiple dimensions, including age, education, and

¹ The second generation is defined as those individuals whose parents are both foreign-born, or who have one foreign-born parent (also known as the 2.5 generation).

² In the IIMMLA survey sex and gender are used interchangeably. In line with the language adopted by the survey, this study also uses sex and gender interchangeably.

race/ethnicity. The current context of reception in the United States also affects Latin American immigrants' marriage patterns and their descendants. According to Vasquez-Tokos (2017), "Statewide and local political sentiment, race relations, and law enforcement all play into the cognitive frameworks and lived experience of both Latinos and non-Latinos and provide an indispensable backdrop for understanding contemporary marriage patterns and family dynamics in specific locales" (p. 18). Intermarriage is an indicator of the social distance between racial/ethnic groups, as well as the social acceptance of individuals and their racial/ethnic group. Therefore, it provides insight into the rigidity of racial/ethnic boundaries and the extent to which racially and ethnically different immigrant groups are integrated and received by the majority group (Alba and Nee 2003; Bean and Stevens 2003; Bean et al. 2015; Davis 1941; Duncan and Trejo 2007, 2009, 2011; Feliciano 2001; Gordon 1964; Grebler, Moore, and Guzman 1970; Kalmijn 1998; Kennedy 1944; Lee and Bean 2010; Lieberman and Waters 1988; Mittelbach and Moore 1968; Murguia 1982; Murguia and Cazares 1982; Qian 1997; Qian and Lichter 2001, 2007; Qian, Lichter, and Tumin 2018; Rosenfeld 2002; Schoen and Cohen 1980; Schoen et al. 1978; Vasquez-Tokos 2017).

Intermarriage with the majority group can facilitate integration for immigrants and their descendants by creating an opportunity for sociocultural understanding and social mobility. Intermarriage increases social and cultural capital by enlarging and diversifying social networks. Immigrants accelerate the integration process by intermarrying with the majority group which has more cultural capital and more established social networks due to its long presence in the United States compared to first-generation immigrants and their children (Lee and Bean 2010; Patterson 1997). In addition, Lee and Bean (2010) found that second-generation Latinx and Asian respondents viewed marriage with non-Hispanic whites as part of the process of becoming American, which they argue "is in itself a form of upward mobility because it connotes a movement from immigrant to native and from foreign to familiar" (p. 97). Arguably, intermarriage is not an endpoint of integration or a unidirectional process because non-Hispanic white partners also change and integrate with their Latinx marriage partner's culture, raising their consciousness about racialization (Telles and Ortiz 2008; Vasquez-Tokos 2017).

Although native-born Mexican-origin coethnics do not form part of the majority group, they arguably have more cultural capital and larger and more diverse social networks compared to a foreign-born person of Mexican-origin. They are also more structurally integrated because of their greater participation in

mainstream American society. Qian and Lichter (2001) mentioned that "Native-born minorities today comprise a mix of many different generations (i.e., second, third, or higher generations), which reflects length of exposure to the majority culture and the degree of acculturation and structural assimilation" (p. 292). In terms of structural integration, the Mexican-origin native-born population has higher educational outcomes, higher English language skills, and consequently higher incomes compared to the Mexican-origin foreign-born population (Bean and Brown 2015; Bean and Stevens 2003; Bean and Tienda 1987; Wojtkiewicz and Donato 1995). In addition, the Mexican-origin native-born population demonstrates more spatial integration (Bean and Brown 2015; Brown 2007). Arguably, A foreign-born Mexican-origin individual would gain more cultural capital, access to larger and more diverse social networks, and more structural integration after marrying a native-born person of Mexican-origin. Marriage with a native-born coethnic may provide immigrants a path to upward social mobility (Qian, Lichter, and Tumin 2018). Consequently, marriage between a foreign-born person of Mexican-origin and a native-born person of Mexican-origin may positively affect intermarriage participation with non-Hispanic whites among their second-generation adult children. Due to their native-born parent, these adult children are further removed from the immigrant generation. They are consequently more exposed to and more likely to participate in mainstream U.S. society, since they have access to more cultural capital and social network resources, and are more structurally integrated.

Theoretical Perspectives: From Assimilation to Integration

Sociologists have extensively researched how intermarriage and other factors allow for immigrant populations to integrate into U.S. society by using a variety of theoretical perspectives that range from assimilation to integration. Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess described assimilation as "a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them a common cultural life" (Park and Burgess 1921:735). Gordon (1964) and Alba and Nee (2003) maintained that assimilation is a process that occurs over time. The earlier version of classic assimilation theory and the more contemporary version stress that the immigrant minority group and the majority group become more similar in norms, values, and behaviors as the time of residence in the host country progresses. They also

stress that later-generation descendants of immigrants will share more similarities with the majority group (Bean and Brown 2006). In contrast to Gordon, Alba and Nee (2003) defined new assimilation as a process of convergence where immigrant and native groups affect one another, thereby reshaping the American mainstream; it is not a one-way process where only the immigrant group changes. Building on this redefinition, Bean and Stevens (2003) describe the assimilation process as “one type of incorporation process” and define incorporation as “the broader processes by which new groups establish relationships with host societies” (p. 95).

Bean, Brown, and Bachmeier (2015) claim that, in the United States, the idea of integration in part stems from Alba and Nee’s (2003) definition of new assimilation. They built on this idea by stating that integration explains “when sociocultural differences are tolerated and persist over time without undermining social solidarity, the resulting diversity can strengthen the receiving society by exposing natives to new ways of thinking and doing things, thus fostering resilience, creativity, and innovation” (p. 17). They also explain that the idea of integration emerged and is more prevalent in societies that have considered or embraced multicultural policies, such as Canada.

Bean et al. (2015) introduced the membership exclusion perspective which argues that structural integration, such as economic integration (e.g., employment, earnings, education, homeownership) and political integration, is dependent on legal and social citizenship (i.e., societal membership). They contend that official membership exclusion of unauthorized immigrants, whereby they are treated as “alien” sub-citizens and not seen as future citizens, prevents or hinders achievement on structural dimensions of immigrant integration (Dreby 2015; Motomura 2007). Conversely, societal membership can facilitate integration. They also mention that membership exclusion possibly affects sociocultural dimensions of integration less because these facets of integration depend greatly on the length of stay and exposure to the immigrant receiving society. Absent from the aforementioned perspectives is the racialized experience of people of Mexican-origin in U.S. society.

While the classic assimilation perspective argues that later-generation descendants of immigrants eventually converge with the majority group, the racial/ethnic disadvantage perspective states that non-white immigrant groups are prevented from incorporation due to discrimination. Segmented assimilation combines ideas from the racial/ethnic disadvantage model and classic assimilation model, and claims that incorporation outcomes vary from

incorporation into the mainstream, selective acculturation, and downward incorporation into a permanent underclass for different immigrant groups and individuals based on various factors, such as socioeconomic status, context of reception, national origin, and race (Brown and Bean 2006; Portes and Rumbaut 2001, 2014; Portes and Zhou 1993). Telles and Ortiz (2008) argue that, due to the current and historical racialized experience of the Mexican-origin population in the United States and subsequent negative effects on educational attainment, this group’s integration into U.S. society is hindered by racialization. Race/ethnicity and legal status, including presumptions of “illegality,” are important factors that slow or stop the integration trajectory of Mexican-origin and other Latinx immigrants and their descendants, thereby promoting racialized integration and preventing complete inclusion to U.S. society (Brown, Jones, and Becker 2018; Chaudhary 2015; De Genova 2004; Dowling 2014; Ebert and Ovink 2014; Golash-Boza 2006; Golash-Boza and Darity 2008; Massey 2009, 2014; Massey and Sanchez 2010; Telles and Ortiz 2008; Vasquez 2011; Zamora 2018). Arguably, membership exclusion further racializes immigrants and all people of Mexican origin. Zamora (2018) explains that “as the racial trope of the ‘illegal’ Mexican has only intensified anti-immigrant sentiment, the notion of ‘illegality’ is a critical component to understanding immigrant incorporation and race relations” (p. 1899). Telles and Ortiz (2008) contend that due to native’s stereotypical perceptions of Mexicans as “illegal” foreigners “even Mexican Americans with deep roots in the United States are excluded from enjoying a full American identity” (p. 286).

Mexican Americans: Intermarriage, Education, Cross-nativity, Sex/Gender, and Integration

Much research related to Mexican-origin intermarriage demonstrates that intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites increases with each successive generation or is widespread among native Mexican Americans, which arguably supports the classic assimilation perspective (Bean et al. 2015; Duncan and Trejo 2007, 2009, 2011; Grebler, Moore, and Guzman 1970; Mittelbach and Moore 1968; Murguia 1982; Murguia and Cazares 1982; Schoen and Cohen 1980; Schoen et al. 1978; Rosenfeld 2002). Although Telles and Ortiz (2008) found a similar pattern, they cautioned and emphasized that well into the fourth generation, most individuals of Mexican-origin in San Antonio and Los Angeles had Mexican-origin spouses. Their perspective argues that this group was not following a classic assimilation trajectory. They cited low educational attainment as a consequence of

racialization as the cause of this exclusion and lack of sociocultural integration. Intermarriage research has found that achieving higher levels of education increases intermarriage participation because there is less opportunity for minorities to form relationships with people from the same racial/ethnic group since there is a smaller number of racial minorities at many colleges, high status occupations, and their residential neighborhoods, and also more educated individuals attain a more universal view of the world and become less attached to their families and communities of origin (Kalmijn 1993, 1998; Lieberman and Waters 1988; Qian 1997; Qian and Lichter 2001, 2007; Qian, Lichter, and Tumin 2018; Rosenfeld 2005; Telles and Ortiz 2008). Highly educated Mexican Americans are less likely to marry a spouse of Hispanic/Latinx origin (Telles and Ortiz 2008).

Macias (2006) and Telles and Ortiz (2008) argue that Mexican-origin marriage to a coethnic, native-born or foreign-born, hinders intermarriage integration. They argue that marriage to a coethnic may imply that the Mexican-origin population experiences less contact with the majority group and therefore less opportunity to intermarry because of residential segregation or a large coethnic group population size; what Tomás Jiménez (2010) describes as ethnic replenishment due to immigration from Mexico. Macias argues that “from a cultural pluralist perspective, ongoing immigration from Mexico may serve to reinforce Mexican identity and community, encouraging ethnic bonds across generations, slowing down the process of assimilation, and decreasing the likelihood that even native-born Mexican Americans would marry outside their group” (p. 76). Other scholars have found that cross-nativity marriages can lead to intermarriage integration.

Perlmann and Waters (2004) studied the Mexican-origin population born between 1966 and 1980 and found that the Mexican-origin adult children of cross-nativity parents participated in intermarriage at a larger rate compared to respondents whose parents were both foreign-born. They argued that, because of a native-born parent, the Mexican-origin 2.5 generation is “further from immigrant roots, more familiar with American ways, and more likely to outmarry than a child of two Mexican immigrants” (Perlmann and Waters 2004:267). They did not explore how a parent’s gender role, as mother and father, and their nativity status may affect intermarriage integration among second-generation Mexican Americans.

Sex/gender plays an important role in the integration process of second-generation Mexican Americans. Bean et al. (2015) found that there are sex/gender differences in educational attainment among the Mexican-origin second generation. They

found that “membership exclusion dynamics imply that migration and family exigencies will be more likely, at least across the first two generations, to encourage males more than females to sacrifice postsecondary education for employment” (p. 86). They also mention that among high school graduates, 62.6% of females start college while 57.1% of males start college (Bean et al. 2015:86). Second-generation Mexican-American women achieve more education.

Current Study: Mexican Mothers, Education, and Intermarriage Integration among Second-Generation Mexican-American Daughters

A parent’s gender role has also proven to be an important factor in the integration process of second-generation Mexican Americans. Mexican-origin mothers may be important in the integration process because of their gender role as caregivers, which arguably makes them important socializing agents for their children (Dreby 2010; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994, 2001; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997; Martin 1990). Consequently, they are instrumental in determining their adult children’s educational outcomes. Abrego and Menjivar (2011) found that due to fear of deportation, Latinx mothers “often keep children home from school and generally avoid interacting with anyone who represents a public agency” after local ICE raids (p. 15). Undocumented women and mothers are more susceptible to social isolation because of membership exclusion, workplace isolation, and traditional cultural norms that increase dependence on men (Menjivar 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001; Bean et al. 2015). The adult children of Mexican-origin authorized mothers average two years more education compared to the adult children of Mexican-origin unauthorized mothers, and by sex/gender, the difference was 2.48 years for Mexican-American women and 1.72 years for Mexican-American men (Bean et al. 2011:372; Bean et al. 2015:87). These were the largest educational gains seen in the Bean et al. (2011, 2015) study on fathers’ and mothers’ immigration status and the effect on educational attainment among their adult children. Arguably, children are negatively affected by the social isolation and membership exclusion experienced by undocumented mothers, which underscores how important mothers are as caregivers and socializing agents (Bean et al. 2015). Previous research has demonstrated that regular caregivers, a role taken on mostly by mothers, are major socializing agents for developing children (Adams, Coltrane, and Parke 2007; Coltrane and Adams 2008). Previous research has also shown that Mexican-origin and other Latina mothers are highly influential in the socialization process of their daughters (Gandara

1982; Gil and Vazquez 1996). Gandara (1982) while studying high-achieving Chicanas found that mothers played a very important role in their educational achievements, and that mothers were more likely than fathers to “encourage higher education and nontraditional roles for their daughters” (p. 171). Feliciano (2008) argues that women who migrate to the United States from Mexico are less traditional compared to women who remain in Mexico because they challenge traditional cultural norms by attaining more education prior to migration compared to women who remain in Mexico and Mexican immigrant men, “in a context in which women are not expected, nor often given the opportunities, to pursue education to the same extent as men” (p. 156). Since migration is seen as a masculine activity in Mexico (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994), Feliciano argues that immigrant women from Mexico also challenge traditional gender norms by participating in migration for employment opportunities and “not merely following husbands and male relatives” (p. 150). Mexican immigrant women who marry a native-born coethnic continue the trend of challenging traditional cultural norms by embracing the new country. It is evident that Mexican-origin foreign-born mothers have a tremendous influence on the integration outcomes of their second-generation children. It can be argued that Mexican-origin foreign-born mothers who are less traditional and more inclined towards the new country, demonstrated by marriage to a native-born coethnic, may socialize their daughters to pursue less traditional gender roles by encouraging them to achieve more education, thus leading to intermarriage integration.

Methods

Data

The data used for this study come from the Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMMLA) survey, which is a cross-sectional survey. These data were collected from Mexican-origin respondents and non-Hispanic white respondents in 2004 by using random sampling in the greater metropolitan area of Los Angeles, including the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, San Bernardino, and Riverside. For Mexican-origin respondents, the IIMMLA survey was conducted via telephone interview among 1st, 1.5, 2nd, and 3rd-plus generation adults between the ages of 20 and 40. For non-Hispanic white respondents, the IIMMLA survey was conducted via telephone interview among 3rd-plus generation adults. The entire sample size of the IIMMLA data set is 4,780. From this sample, the analysis was limited to the Mexican-origin second generation who were married,

resulting in a subsample of 219. The survey only takes into account heterosexual marriages, because same-sex marriages were not yet legal in California or at the federal level at the time of data collection.

Measures

Non-Hispanic White Spouse (dependent variable) and Race/Ethnicity of Spouse. The dependent variable is non-Hispanic white spouse, because this is the racial/ethnic group with which the Mexican-origin population intermarries the most, and because this measure provides insight into the rigidity of racial/ethnic boundaries and the extent to which racially and ethnically different immigrant groups and their descendants, such as the Mexican-origin population, are integrated and received by the majority group (Alba and Nee 2003; Bean and Stevens 2003; Bean et al. 2015; Davis 1941; Duncan and Trejo 2007, 2009, 2011; Feliciano 2001; Gordon 1964; Grebler, Moore, and Guzman 1970; Kalmijn 1998; Kennedy 1944; Lee and Bean 2010; Lieberman and Waters 1988; Mittelbach and Moore 1968; Murguia 1982; Murguia and Cazares 1982; Qian 1997; Qian and Lichter 2001, 2007; Qian, Lichter, and Tumin 2018; Rosenfeld 2002; Schoen and Cohen 1980; Schoen et al. 1978; Vasquez-Tokos 2017). Information provided by the respondents of the IIMMLA survey on their marital status, race/ethnicity, and spouse’s race/ethnicity were used to create a nominal race/ethnicity of spouse variable with six categories: (1) Mexican-origin, (2) other Latinx, (3) non-Hispanic white, (4) non-Hispanic Black, (5) Asian and Pacific Islander, and (6) other. A binary non-Hispanic white spouse variable was also created with this information. Respondents who reported having a non-Hispanic white spouse were coded 1 and everyone else was coded 0.

Intermarried. Intermarried individuals are defined as those respondents who were married to someone who belongs to a different racial/ethnic group (coded 1). Any respondents who had spouses with any Mexican-origin or other Latinx-origin background were not considered to be intermarried (coded 0). Respondents with other Latinx-origin spouses were not deemed to be intermarried in this study because arguably the non-Mexican Latinx-origin population shares some common sociocultural experiences with the Mexican-origin population.

Mexican-origin Second-Generation. Information provided by the respondents of the IIMMLA survey about their race/ethnicity, place of birth, and parent’s place of birth allowed for the creation of a binary Mexican-origin second-generation group variable. The Mexican-origin second generation includes individuals who identified as being Latino of

Mexican-origin, were born in the United States, and have one or two parents who were born in Mexico (coded 1; everyone else was coded 0).

Mother Foreign-born and Father Native-born; Father Foreign-born and Mother Native-born; Both Parents Foreign-born (reference group). Information provided by Mexican-origin second-generation respondents of the IIMMLA survey about their mother's and father's place of birth, and whether their parents at the time of interview were married, divorced, or legally separated, allowed for the creation of three binary variables reflecting the nativity status and marriage participation of their parents. For the Mother Foreign-born and Father Native-born binary variable, survey participants who responded that their parents were currently or previously married and that their mothers were born in Mexico and their fathers were born in the United States were coded 1 and everyone else was coded 0. For the Father Foreign-born and Mother Native-born binary variable, participants who responded that their parents were currently or previously married and that their fathers were born in Mexico and their mothers were born in the United States were coded 1 and everyone else was coded 0. For the Both Parents Foreign-born binary variable, participants who responded that their parents were currently or previously married and that both parents were born in Mexico were coded 1 and everyone else was coded 0.

Age and Female. These demographic variables were created to understand how age and sex/gender affect intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites, but also to see how the introduction of these demographic variables may change how parental cross-nativity affects the likelihood of intermarriage between second-generation Mexican Americans and the non-Hispanic white population. Age is an interval-ratio continuous variable that is generated from the age respondents reported in the IIMMLA survey. Respondents were between the ages of 20 and 40. Female is a binary variable generated from the survey's question related to a respondent's gender. Although respondents were asked about their gender, the survey responses are sex categories (male or female). The survey refers to sex and gender interchangeably, so in this study, sex and gender are used interchangeably as well. Respondents who replied that their gender is female/women were coded 1 and those who replied that their gender is male/men were coded 0.

English. This binary variable was created to understand how only speaking English while growing up, a measure of nativity and structural integration, affects intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites, but also to see how the introduction of this variable may change how parental cross-nativity affects the

likelihood of intermarriage between second-generation Mexican Americans and the non-Hispanic white population. IIMMLA survey participants were asked, "When you were growing up, did you ever speak a language other than English at home?" Those who responded "no" to this question were coded 1, and those who responded "yes" were coded 0.

B.A. Degree. This binary education variable was created to understand how receiving a bachelor's degree as the highest degree, a measure of socioeconomic status and structural integration, affects intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites, but also to see how the introduction of this variable may change how parental cross-nativity affects the likelihood of intermarriage between second-generation Mexican Americans and the non-Hispanic white population. IIMMLA survey respondents were asked, "What is the highest grade of school or year of college that you have completed and gotten credit for?" Survey participants who answered "college graduate" were coded 1 and those who did not receive a bachelor's degree as their highest degree were coded 0.

Mother High School Graduate; Mother Some College; Father High School Graduate; Father Some College. These binary parental education variables were created to understand how a parent completing the equivalent of high school or some college as their highest level of education, a measure of socioeconomic status and structural integration, affects intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites among their adult children, but also to see how the introduction of these variables may change how parental cross-nativity affects the likelihood of intermarriage between second-generation Mexican Americans and the non-Hispanic white population. Of particular interest is analyzing the mother's education, because mothers are important socializing agents and play an important role in their children's life outcomes. IIMMLA survey respondents were asked, "What is the highest grade of school or year of college that your mother has completed and gotten credit for?" For the Mother High School Graduate binary variable, survey participants who answered "high school" were coded 1 and everyone else was coded 0. For the Mother Some College binary variable, respondents who answered "some college" were coded 1 and everyone else was coded 0. IIMMLA survey participants were also asked, "What is the highest grade of school or year of college that your father has completed and gotten credit for?" For the Father High School Graduate binary variable, survey participants who answered "high school" were coded 1 and everyone else was coded 0. For the Father Some College binary variable, respondents who answered

“some college” were coded 1 and everyone else was coded 0.

Analytic Plan

The analysis meets all the assumptions necessary to perform a logistic regression analysis with the exception of the sample size. A limitation to this study is that the sample sizes are low for the number of independent variables used in this logistic regression analysis. Despite this limitation, logistic regression is performed in order to understand better how parental cross-nativity affects the likelihood of intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites among their second-generation Mexican American adult children. The logistic regression models did not demonstrate multicollinearity, as they all showed low mean variance inflation factors (VIF) ranging from 1.03 to 1.16. Since the dependent variable of intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites is binary, logistic regression is used to analyze the different odds ratio results associated with the cross-nativity status of parents (one parent is U.S. native-born of Mexican-origin and the other is foreign-born of Mexican-origin and are currently married, divorced, or separated from each other). Odds ratios are compared to respondents whose parents are both foreign-born and of Mexican origin (the reference group). This measure provides a glimpse into the social distance that exists between the non-Hispanic white majority group and second-generation Mexican Americans, which in turn provides information on how the second generation is integrating based on their parents' participation in cross-nativity marriages.

Results

This study seeks to shed light on how cross-nativity marriages among Mexican-origin parents affect intermarriage integration among their second-generation adult children. The analysis is limited to the Mexican-origin second generation because this group has at least one parent who is foreign-born. This allows for a better analysis on the effect of parental cross-nativity on intermarriage participation among their adult children. Most interracial marriages among the Mexican-origin population occur with the non-Hispanic white majority group. Table 1 reports that the Mexican-origin second generation participates in intermarriage at a rate of 13.7% and participates in intermarriage with the non-Hispanic white population at a rate of 10.5%. The endogamy rate is 76.7%. The majority have spouses who are of Mexican origin.

Table 2, or the summary statistics table, demonstrates that the sample size of the Mexican-

origin second generation that is married is 219, of which 128 are women (58.4%) and 91 are men (41.6%). The average age of respondents is 30.28 years and at least 16.4% received a Bachelor of Arts degree as their highest degree. Approximately 29.2% of respondents have parents who engaged in cross-nativity marriages (13.7% had a foreign-born mother and native-born father, and 15.5% had a foreign-born father and native-born mother). Almost 27% of respondents had a mother who graduated from high school, and almost 22% of respondents had a father who graduated from high school. The correlations in table 3 demonstrate that the following variables are positively correlated with intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites: Mother Foreign-born and Father Native-born ($p < .01$), English (grew up speaking only English in the household), Age ($p < .01$), B.A. Degree ($p < .01$), Mother High School Graduate ($p < .05$), Mother Some College, Father High School Graduate, and Father Some College. The results also demonstrate that the following variables are negatively correlated with intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites (the correlations are not statistically significant): Father Foreign-born and Mother Native-born, Both Parents Foreign-born, and Female.

Results presented in Table 4 highlight the role that cross-nativity marriages between foreign-born mothers and native-born fathers, and foreign-born fathers and native-born mothers, have on intermarriage participation with non-Hispanic whites among second-generation Mexican Americans. Respondents whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born, or whose fathers are foreign-born and mothers are native-born, are compared to respondents whose parents are both foreign-born (reference group). In model 1, respondents whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born are 3.97 times more likely to participate in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites compared to respondents whose parents are both foreign-born. This result is significant at the .01 level. Respondents whose fathers are foreign-born and mothers are native-born report a non-significant odds ratio of .68. These results indicate that the odds of participating in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites are almost 6 times greater for respondents whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born compared to respondents whose fathers are foreign-born and mothers are native-born.

When the variables Age, Female, English (grew up speaking only English in the household), B. A. degree, Mother High School Graduate, Mother Some College, Father High School Graduate, and Father Some College are added in the second model, the odds of intermarriage participation with non-Hispanic whites among respondents whose mothers are foreign-

born and fathers are native-born is explained by Age, B.A. degree, and Mother High School Graduate, but still remains higher compared to the odds of intermarriage participation among respondents whose fathers are foreign-born and mothers are native-born. Although not statistically significant, respondents whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born are 2.35 times more likely to intermarry with non-Hispanic whites compared to the reference group. Respondents whose fathers are foreign-born and mothers are native-born report a non-significant odds ratio of .52. These results indicate that even after including the variables Age, Female, English (grew up speaking only English in the household), B. A. degree, Mother High School Graduate, Mother Some College, Father High School Graduate, and Father Some College, the odds of intermarriage participation for respondents whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born are about 4.5 times higher compared to the odds of intermarriage participation for respondents whose fathers are foreign-born and mothers are native-born.

Table 5 demonstrates once again that respondents whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born are more likely to participate in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites compared to respondents whose parents are both foreign-born, and their odds are higher compared to respondents whose fathers are foreign-born and mothers are native-born. It also shows that there are differences between adult sons and daughters. Model 3 highlights that second-generation Mexican-American women whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born are 5.8 times more likely to intermarry with non-Hispanic whites compared to daughters whose parents are both foreign-born. This finding related to second-generation Mexican-American daughters is significant at the .05 level and is also double the non-significant odds of 2.75 experienced by Mexican-American sons found in model 1. Focusing again on model 3, daughters whose fathers are foreign-born and mothers are native-born are 1.93 times more likely to participate in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites compared to respondents whose parents are both foreign-born. This result is not statistically significant. The odds of intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites among second-generation Mexican-American daughters are about three times higher for the daughters of foreign-born mothers and native-born fathers compared to the daughters of foreign-born fathers and native-born mothers. Looking at sons whose fathers are foreign-born and mothers are native-born in models 1 and 2, none participated in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites. As a consequence, 14 observations were dropped/omitted from those models.

What is important to note about the findings in table 5 is that foreign-born mothers are greatly affecting intermarriage participation with non-Hispanic whites among their second-generation adult children, and in particular among their daughters. After adding the variables Age, Female, English (grew up speaking only English in the household), B. A. degree, Mother High School Graduate, Mother Some College, Father High School Graduate, and Father Some College to models 2 and 4, B.A. degree seems to explain the significance found in the odds of intermarriage participation among second-generation Mexican-American daughters whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born. Second-generation Mexican-American daughters with a B.A. degree as their highest degree are 13.26 times more likely to participate in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites compared to the reference group and this variable is significant at the .01 level. Despite the significance of foreign-born mothers and native-born fathers among Mexican-American daughters being explained by B.A. degree, these daughters are still 2.82 times more likely to intermarry with non-Hispanic whites compared to second-generation Mexican-American daughters whose parents are both foreign-born. The non-significant odds ratio for second-generation Mexican-American sons whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born is 1.53. The non-significant odds ratio of participating in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites among daughters whose mothers are foreign-born and fathers are native-born is almost double that of sons. As mentioned, foreign-born mothers are greatly affecting intermarriage participation with non-Hispanic whites among their second-generation adult daughters and attaining a B.A. degree seems to explain the significance found in the mother foreign-born and father native-born odds ratio for second-generation Mexican-American daughters.

Discussion & Conclusion

Using logistic regression analysis, this study finds that second-generation Mexican Americans who have one foreign-born mother and one U.S. native-born father are more likely to participate in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites compared to second-generation Mexican Americans whose parents are both foreign-born. The daughters of foreign-born mothers and native-born fathers demonstrate the highest likelihood of intermarriage participation with the non-Hispanic white majority group. The findings support the idea that nativity, which implies greater exposure to American mainstream society, can facilitate intermarriage integration for some second-generation Mexican Americans, especially among

Table 1: Marriage Rates for Second- Generation Mexican-American Respondents by Race/Ethnicity of Spouse

Race/Ethnicity of Spouse							
Mexican- Origin	Other Latinx	NH White	NH Black	Asian & P.I.	Other	Percent Inter- married	Total Married (N)
76.7	9.6	10.5	1.8	0.9	0.5	13.7	219

Source: Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMMLA), 2004.

Table 2: Summary Statistics for the Married Mexican-origin Second Generation (N=219)

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	%	Min	Max
Age	30.28	5.18		20	40
Mother Foreign-born and Father Native-born			13.7	0	1
Father Foreign-born and Mother Native-born			15.5	0	1
Both Parents Foreign-born			67.6	0	1
Intermarried			13.7	0	1
Non-Hispanic White Spouse			10.5	0	1
Female			58.4	0	1
English (grew up speaking only English in the household)			7.3	0	1
B.A. Degree			16.4	0	1
Mother High School Graduate			26.9	0	1
Mother Some College			8.7	0	1
Father High School Graduate			21.9	0	1
Father Some College			7.8	0	1

Source: Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMMLA), 2004.

Table 3: Correlation Table for the Married Mexican-origin Second Generation (N=219)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
A. Non-Hispanic White Spouse	1.00											
B. Mother Foreign-born & Father Native-born	0.21**	1.00										
C. Father Foreign-born & Mother Native-born	-0.06	-0.17*	1.00									
D. Both Parents Foreign-born	-0.08	-0.58***	-0.62***	1.00								
E. Female	-0.07	-0.04	0.00	-0.03	1.00							
F. English ^a	0.08	0.30***	0.03	-0.26***	-0.01	1.00						
G. Age	0.18**	0.18**	0.10	-0.23***	-0.13	0.20**	1.00					
H. B.A. Degree	0.21**	0.07	-0.12	0.02	-0.13	-0.08	0.03	1.00				
I. Mother High School Graduate	0.16*	0.03	0.14*	-0.11	-0.11	0.03	0.04	0.09	1.00			
J. Mother Some College	0.05	0.07	0.05	-0.06	0.00	0.04	0.02	-0.01	-0.19**	1.00		
K. Father High School Graduate	0.07	0.14*	0.05	-0.10	-0.20**	0.06	0.10	0.09	0.15*	0.11	1.00	
L. Father Some College	0.12	0.13	-0.03	-0.09	-0.03	0.05	0.02	0.06	0.05	0.09	-0.15*	1.00

Source: Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMMLA), 2004.

^a Respondent grew up speaking only English in the household

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table 4: Odds Ratios for Mothers' and Fathers' Nativity Status and the Likelihood of Intermarriage with Non-Hispanic Whites among the Mexican-origin Second Generation

VARIABLES	Non-Hispanic White Spouse	
	Model 1	Model 2
Mother Foreign-born and Father Native-born	3.97**	2.35
Father Foreign-born and Mother Native-born	0.68	0.52
Age		1.11*
Female		0.97
English (grew up speaking only English in the household)		1.04
B.A. Degree		3.34*
Mother High School Graduate		3.20*
Mother Some College		2.43
Father High School Graduate		1.14
Father Some College		2.09
Constant	0.09***	0.001***
Observations (N)	219	219

Source: Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMMLA), 2004.

Note: The reference group is both parents are foreign-born.

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table 5: Odds Ratios for Mothers’ and Fathers’ Nativity Status and the Likelihood of Intermarriage with Non-Hispanic Whites among the Mexican-origin Second Generation by Sex/Gender

VARIABLES	Non-Hispanic White Spouse			
	Model 1	<i>Men</i> Model 2	<i>Women</i> Model 3	Model 4
Mother Foreign-born	2.75	1.53	5.80*	2.82
Father Native-born				
Father Foreign-born	-	-	1.93	2.39
Mother Native-born				
Age		1.12		1.13
English		0.57		1.37
B.A. Degree		1.46		13.26**
Mother High School Graduate		4.51		2.27
Mother Some College		4.00		0.87
Father High School Graduate		0.60		2.92
Father Some College		2.79		2.55
Constant	0.15***	0.002**	0.06***	0.00***
Observations (N)	77	77	128	128

Source: Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMMLA), 2004.

Note: The reference group is both parents are foreign-born.

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

women/daughters. However, these findings must be put into perspective. Intermarriage integration is partly undermined by racialization. Nativity facilitates intermarriage for some, but not all Mexican Americans. While some second-generation Mexican Americans experience intermarriage integration, the majority are involved in endogamous marriages. This demonstrates that for many second-generation Mexican Americans race/ethnicity continues to be salient in their lives despite nativity, signifying racialized integration and exclusion from the intermarriage market (Telles and Ortiz 2008). As the United States government continues to exclude undocumented Mexican immigrants from full societal membership, Mexican immigrants and native Mexican Americans continue to be perceived and racialized as “illegal” in U.S. society (Telles and Ortiz 2008; Zamora 2018). As a consequence, marriage patterns among Mexican Americans are impacted (Vasquez-Tokos 2017). The racialization of native Mexican Americans negatively affects their educational attainment, which in turn impacts many integration outcomes, including their likelihood to intermarry (Telles and Ortiz 2008).

This being said, for second-generation Mexican-Americans who do intermarry with non-Hispanic whites, the findings demonstrate that parental cross-nativity, which implies greater length of time in and exposure to American mainstream society, can facilitate intermarriage integration (Perlmann and

Waters 2004). The daughters of foreign-born mothers and native-born fathers are the most likely to participate in intermarriage integration compared to second-generation Mexican Americans whose parents are both foreign-born. Mexican-origin foreign-born mothers greatly affect intermarriage integration among their adult children, and especially among their daughters. It is evident that education plays a large role in explaining the significance of the effect foreign-born mothers have on their daughters’ likelihood to participate in intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites since education greatly explains intermarriage (Kalmijn 1993, 1998; Lieberman and Waters 1988; Qian 1997; Qian and Lichter 2001, 2007; Qian, Lichter, and Tumin 2018; Rosenfeld 2005; Telles and Ortiz 2008). These results are consistent with other research that found the importance of Mexican-origin foreign-born mothers in the integration process of their adult children, especially with their educational integration (Bean et al. 2015). Arguably, Mexican-origin foreign-born mothers are important socializing agents that affect the educational attainment, and consequently the intermarriage integration of their adult children, especially their daughters.

Mexican-origin foreign-born women who marry a native-born coethnic are possibly more tied to the new country and less willing to embrace traditional gender roles. Arguably, immigrant women from Mexico are also less traditional because they defied gender norms in Mexico by achieving more education and by

participating in migration; an activity traditionally perceived as masculine (Feliciano 2008). Mexican-origin mothers are very important socializing agents for their children, and in particular their daughters (Adams et al. 2007; Gandara 1982; Gil and Vazquez 1996). Arguably, Mexican-origin foreign-born mothers who married Mexican-origin native-born spouses may socialize their daughters to follow nontraditional gender roles by encouraging educational goals (Gandara 1982). In addition, these second-generation Mexican-American daughters are more likely to be exposed to and participate in mainstream American society because of their father's native-born status, compared to daughters whose parents are both foreign-born. This factor, along with their greater educational attainment (Bean et al. 2015), which further exposes them to the mainstream and increases opportunity for contact with the majority group, may be contributing factors that increase their likelihood to intermarry with the non-Hispanic white majority group.

This study has a few limitations. As mentioned previously, the sample sizes are low for the number of independent variables used in this logistic regression analysis. Other limitations are that the IIMMLA survey data were collected in 2004 and the survey is regional, which brings into question the generalizability of the results. Arguably, Los Angeles and California are at the forefront of demographic changes in the United States due to intermarriage (Lee and Bean 2010). Analyzing data about the Los Angeles metropolitan area is ideal for studying intermarriage dynamics and integration among the Mexican-origin population. This population is quite large in this region and focusing on one region allows for controlling group size. For two decades, between 2000 and 2020, it is estimated that Latinxs accounted for more than half of the population growth in the United States, but their population growth has slowed during this past decade (Noe-Bustamante, Lopez, and Krogstad 2020; Passel, Cohn, and Lopez 2011). By 2011, the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area had the largest population of Latinxs in the United States. About 5.8 million Hispanics/Latinxs, most of whom were of Mexican origin (78%), made up about 48% of Los Angeles county's population (Brown and Lopez 2013). The Mexican-origin population in metropolitan Los Angeles was large in 2004, and it is large today, even though population growth slowed in the past decade and the narrative in politics and media racializing Mexican and other Latinx immigrants as "illegals" continues. The demographic situation in metropolitan Los Angeles increases the chances of Mexican-origin individuals finding a marriage partner from the same racial/ethnic group or Latinx pan-ethnic group. As a result, studying intermarriage and

integration in the Los Angeles metropolitan area among the Mexican-origin population allows us to analyze intermarriage rates associated with group size. Still, we can also determine if intermarriage rates among this population are affected by factors other than group size. Consequently, studying intermarriage among the Mexican-origin population in the Los Angeles metropolitan area allows us to see whether intermarriage occurs due to chance alone.

Despite the limitations, this study makes an original contribution to the academic literature on immigrant integration, family, and marriage by analyzing how a mother's and father's native-born or foreign-born status affects intermarriage with non-Hispanic whites among second-generation Mexican-American adult children. This research finds that Mexican-American women and men are integrating differently. The role of sex/gender in integration research is understudied, but this study finds that it greatly affects the Mexican-origin integration process. Future research should further study gendered integration trajectories and the role Mexican-origin foreign-born mothers play in the integration patterns of their adult children to better inform immigration policy makers on how to structurally and socioculturally include and integrate the racialized Mexican-origin population into a multicultural U.S. society.

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