

Minority youth education goals studied

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A University of Alberta study suggests minority youths have higher educational goals due to their families' values.

Sociologist Harvey Krahn, along with Alison Taylor from the university's department of educational policy studies, used Statistics Canada data from the Youth in Transition Survey to examine differences in goals for postsecondary education among 15-year-old students.

Previous studies showed immigrant youth try to be successful in the education system, and their parents are aware of the need to do well in school. But other research has shown language and cultural barriers can stand in the way of immigrant youth.

"It is possible that such barriers might dampen educational aspirations," said Krahn. "So we were surprised by just how resilient these young visible minority immigrant youth really were, despite such barriers, and by how much higher their aspirations were compared to those of Canadian-born non-visible minority youth."

Krahn and Taylor found 79 percent of visible-minority immigrant youth -- people not of the majority race in a given area -- hope to earn at least one university degree in their future, compared with 57 percent of Canadian-born non-visible minority students.

The research is published in the Journal of International Migration and Integration.

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