Acculturation as an effective mechanism on immigrant students' academic achievement and well-being. An analysis of data of the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS)

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Against the background of the findings from large scale assessments it may be questioned as to whether the German school system is able to adequately fulfill its functions for the group of immigrant students. In order to explain their repeatedly shown poor academic achievement compared to students without a migration background, empirical educational research has examined numerous background variables, which are characteristic of students with a migration background, e.g. socioeconomic capital of the family, language spoken at home, or importance of the culture of origin. However, studies that have considered the interactions of these individual variables in an integrative context are missing.

The theory of acculturation provides a model which seems appropriate for investigating the interaction of individual background characteristics and possible effects with regard to the school context. Based on findings of research on the acculturation, the planned research project focusses on different dimensions of acculturation, their interplay with academic achievement and/or well-being, as well as their effect on the development of academic achievement and / or well-being. In particular, the following questions are to be investigated.

1) What are the prevailing patterns of acculturation orientation in different types of schools of the German school system?
2) What is the impact of acculturation orientation and / or acculturation behavior (cognitive, social) on (a) academic achievement or (b) well-being?
3) What differences can be found between (a) school levels, (b) school forms, and (c) cohort?

By analyzing the data sets from the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS, Blossfeld, Roßbach & von Maurice, 2011), we seek to examine acculturation as an effective mechanism on immigrant students' academic achievement and well-being. For the investigation of the research questions and hypotheses, the NEPS database provides extensive data.