

Children's educational and occupational aspirations: What do they mean for ethnic, gender and disability inequalities?

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Selected Background Readings

I list here a selection of readings relating to educational and occupational aspirations. In the lecture I will set out some of the key concepts elaborated in, and some of the unresolved questions raised by the literature, before presenting research that considers the implications of occupational aspirations for inequalities by gender and ethnicity – and including the role of educational aspirations within that.

A) Educational aspirations

- Andrew, M., & Hauser, R.M. 2011. Adoption? Adaptation? Evaluating the Formation of Educational Expectations. *Social Forces*, 90(2): 497–520.
- Bernardi, F., & Valdés, M. T. 2024. Month of Birth, Early Academic Achievement, and Parental Expectations of University Completion: A New Test on Sticky Expectations. *Sociology of Education*, online first: doi: 10.1177/00380407241300
- Birkelund, J.F.. 2020. Aiming High and Missing the Mark? Educational Choice, Dropout Risk, and Achievement in Upper Secondary Education among Children of Immigrants in Denmark. *European Sociological Review*, 36(3): 395–412,
- Chatzitheochari, S., & Platt, L. 2019. Disability Differentials in Educational Attainment in England: Primary and Secondary Effects. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 70(2):502–25.
- Dochow, S., and Neumeyer, S. 2021. An Investigation of the Causal Effect of Educational Expectations on School Performance. Behavioral Consequences, Time-Stable Confounding, or Reciprocal Causality? *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 71:100579.
- Dollmann, J., Jonsson, J.). Mood, C., & Rudolphi, F. 2023. Is ‘Immigrant Optimism’ in Educational Choice a Problem? Ethnic Gaps in Swedish Upper Secondary School Completion. *European Sociological Review*, 39(3): 384–399.
- Engzell, P. 2019. Aspiration Squeeze: The Struggle of Children to Positively Selected Immigrants. *Sociology of Education*, 92(1): 83–103.
- Fernández-Reino, M. 2016. Immigrant Optimism or Anticipated Discrimination? Explaining the First Educational Transition of Ethnic Minorities in England. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 46:141–156.
- Fishman, S.H. 2019. Do Plans Really Matter?: Re-Assessing the Role of Adolescent Expectations in Educational Attainment. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 62:100407.
- Jackson, M. 2012. Bold Choices: How Ethnic Inequalities in Educational attainment are Suppressed. *Oxford Review of Education*, 38(2), 189–208.
- Tjaden, J.D., & Hunkler, C. 2017. The Optimism Trap: Migrants' Educational Choices in Stratified Education Systems. *Social Science Research*, 67:213–28.

B) Occupational aspirations

- Barrett, E. 2021. Career Aspirations of Teenagers and the Future of Gender Equality in Occupations. *Journal of Education and Work*, 34(2), 110–127.

- Busch-Heizmann, A. 2015. Supply-Side Explanations for Occupational Gender Segregation: Adolescents' Work Values and Gender-(A)Typical Aspirations. *European Sociological Review*, 31(1): 48–64.
- Chesters, J. 2022. Understanding the Persistence of Occupational Sex Segregation in German Labour Markets: How Gender Attitudes Shape Young Women's Occupational Aspirations. *Journal of Applied Youth Studies*, 5, 55–73.
- Ferrara, A., & Salikutluk, Z. 2024. Ambitious, Misaligned, or Uncertain? The Occupational and Educational Aspirations of Immigrant-origin Youth in Germany. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, online first: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2024.2378213>.
- Gambaro, Ludovica, Wilhelm, J., & Schober, P.S. 2023. Gender Typicality of Occupational Aspirations among Immigrant and Native Youth: The Role of Gender Ideology, Educational Aspirations, and Work Values. *Frontiers in Sociology* 8.
- Law, H., & Schober, P. 2022). Gendered Occupational Aspirations among German Youth: Role of Parental Occupations, Gender Division of Labour, and Family Structure. *Journal of Family Research*, 34(2), 643–668.
- Parsons, S., & Platt, L. 2017. Is the Future Female? Educational and Occupational Aspirations of Teenage Boys and Girls in the UK. CLS working paper 2017/17. Centre for Longitudinal Studies, UCL: London, UK.
- Polavieja, J.G., & Platt, L. 2014. Nurse or Mechanic? The Role of Parental Socialization and Children's Personality in the Formation of Sex-Typed Occupational Aspirations. *Social Forces*, 93(1):31–61.
- Sabates, R., Harris, A.L., & Staff, J. 2011. Ambition Gone Awry: The Long-Term Socioeconomic Consequences of Misaligned and Uncertain Ambitions in Adolescence. *Social Science Quarterly* 92(4):959–77.