



SEMINAR SERIES

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STEM Outcomes of Second-Generation Israeli Immigrant Students with High-Skilled Parental Backgrounds *A discussion with educators*

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Host | Dr. Marina Milner-Bolotin

► **September 20** | Scarfe 1209 | 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

Light refreshments will be served at 12:00 p.m. | Lecture will commence at 12:30 p.m.

Israel is a multicultural society that has experienced waves of Jewish immigration since its foundation in 1948. Most of the Jewish population in Israel are either immigrants or their offspring. STEM-related careers often open doors to economic upward mobility and financial independence. This research examines between-group differences in Israeli high school STEM enrollment between five groups of *Israeli-born Jews*. Four of these groups comprise second-generation immigrant students from North America (NA), South America (SA), France, and the Former Soviet Union (FSU), with high-skilled background parents. The fifth group comprises non-immediate-immigrant background students. The study's conceptual framework combines expanded Segmented Assimilation Theory and Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and cultural capital. NA second-generation immigrants were characterized by the highest family educational and economic levels, while the FSU second-generation immigrants had the highest percentage of high-skilled parents, albeit with the lowest economic background. This research used Ministry of Education databases for all grade-12 students in the Jewish sector, who earned a high school matriculation certification during 2014-2017 (N=173,636). We found that the non-immigrant background students did not have an advantage in STEM enrollment in high school as compared to the second-generation immigrants. Moreover, the FSU students had the highest percentage of STEM enrollment. The average STEM grades among the NA, SA, and French students were similar compared to the non-immigrant background students,

while the FSU second-generation immigrants received the lowest average STEM grades. Our findings suggest that both Segmented Assimilation Theory and Bourdieusian concepts of habitus and cultural capital should be considered to account for the educational STEM outcomes of immigrant children. The practical implications of this study may inform educational policy and intervention programs aimed at increasing high school STEM enrollment.

Dr. Svetlana Chachashvili-Bolotin is a senior lecturer at the Ruppin Academic Center in Netanya, Israel. She holds a PhD in Sociology and Anthropology from Tel Aviv University. In early 2011, she founded the Research Department in the Education Division of the Municipality of Ashdod (the fifth largest Israeli City). She served as its head in 2011-2015. In 2015, she represented Israel in the U.S.-led International Visitor Leadership Program that explored women's contributions to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) through research and development, education and teaching, leadership and public policy formation. Since 2015 she has been a member of the professional committee of Israel Ministry of Education. In 2017, she served as an Active Head of the Information and Research Division of the Israel National Road Safety Authority. Her main areas of research include migration and education, economic and social integration of immigrants. Dr. Chachashvili-Bolotin published more than 30 articles in international peer-reviewed journals, as well as professional and applied studies and reports. Her long-term goal is to strengthen connections between the academy and practice. She considers herself as an applied sociologist researcher-practitioner whose research is affected by practice and practice is informed by research.