



Young Mexican Children in U.S. Schools: The Interaction between Socioeconomic Status, Language, and Generational Status

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Aims of the Study



- **Describe** Mexican students, in the U.S., in the Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 in terms of generational status, language, and socioeconomic status
- **Describe** patterns of math development of young children from kindergarten through fifth grade
- **Analyze** differences in math development across Mexican subgroups
- **Identify** the effects of generational status, socioeconomic characteristics, and English ability, on math outcomes

Data: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten (ECLS-K)



- **Nationally representative sample: about 22,000 kindergartners nested in 1,000 schools**
- **Data collected at kindergarten (fall 1998 & spring 1999), first grade (fall 1999 & spring 2000), third, fifth, and eight grades (spring 2001 2003 2005)**
- **Assessments and contextual information: Academic and social outcomes, along with individual, family, teacher, class, and school characteristics**

Child Sample by Race/Ethnicity, Hispanic Origin, and Generation

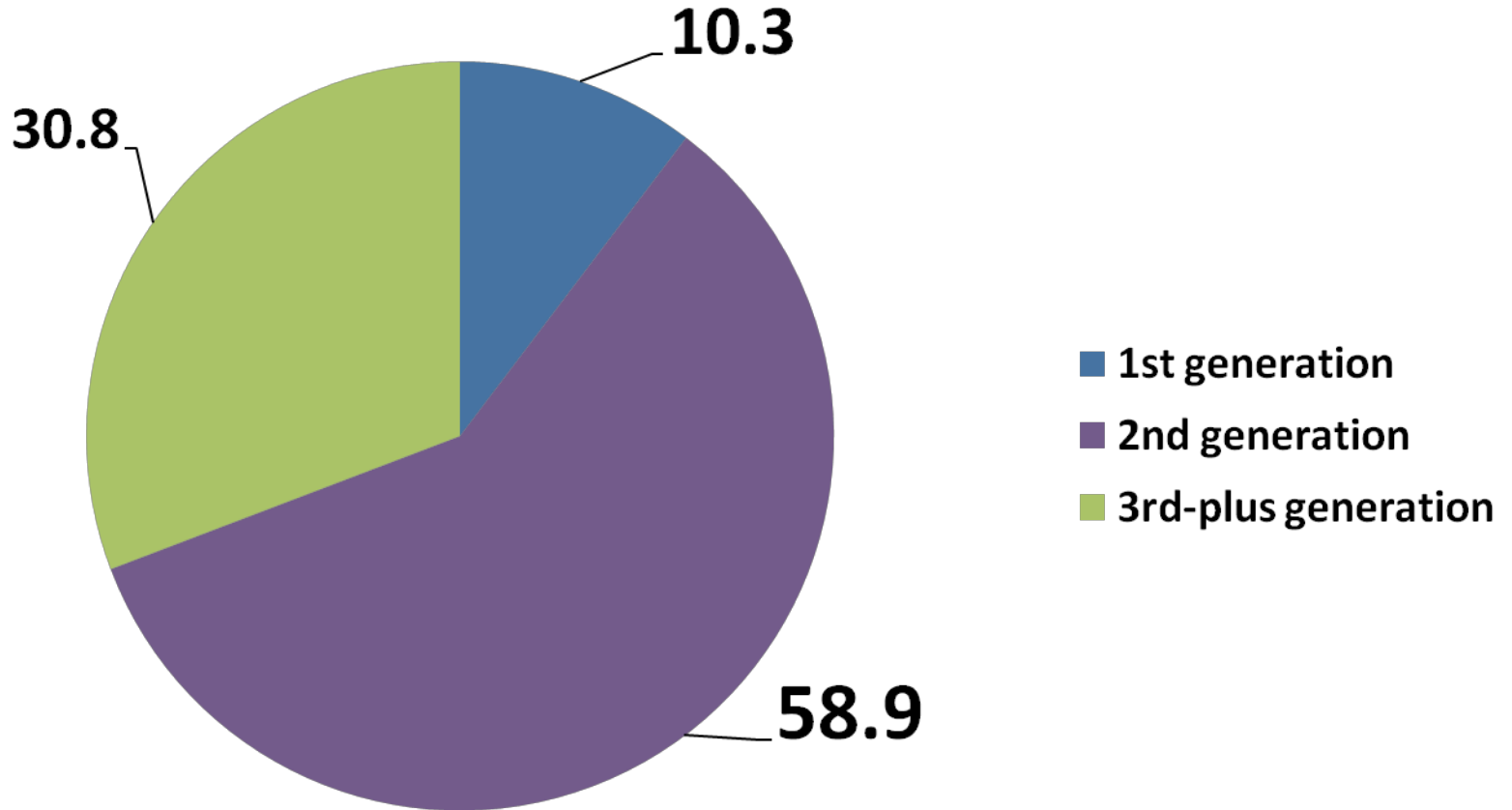


Race/Eth (21,409)		Hispanic (4,006)		Mexican (1,715)	
Hispanic	4,006	Mexican	1,715	Gen 1	174
White	11,659	Cuban	97	Gen 2	991
Black	3,205	Pto Rican	243	Gen 3	518
Asian	1,351	South A.	147	Gen Unk	32
Other	1,136	Central A.	270		
Unk	52	Other	182		
		Unk	1,352		

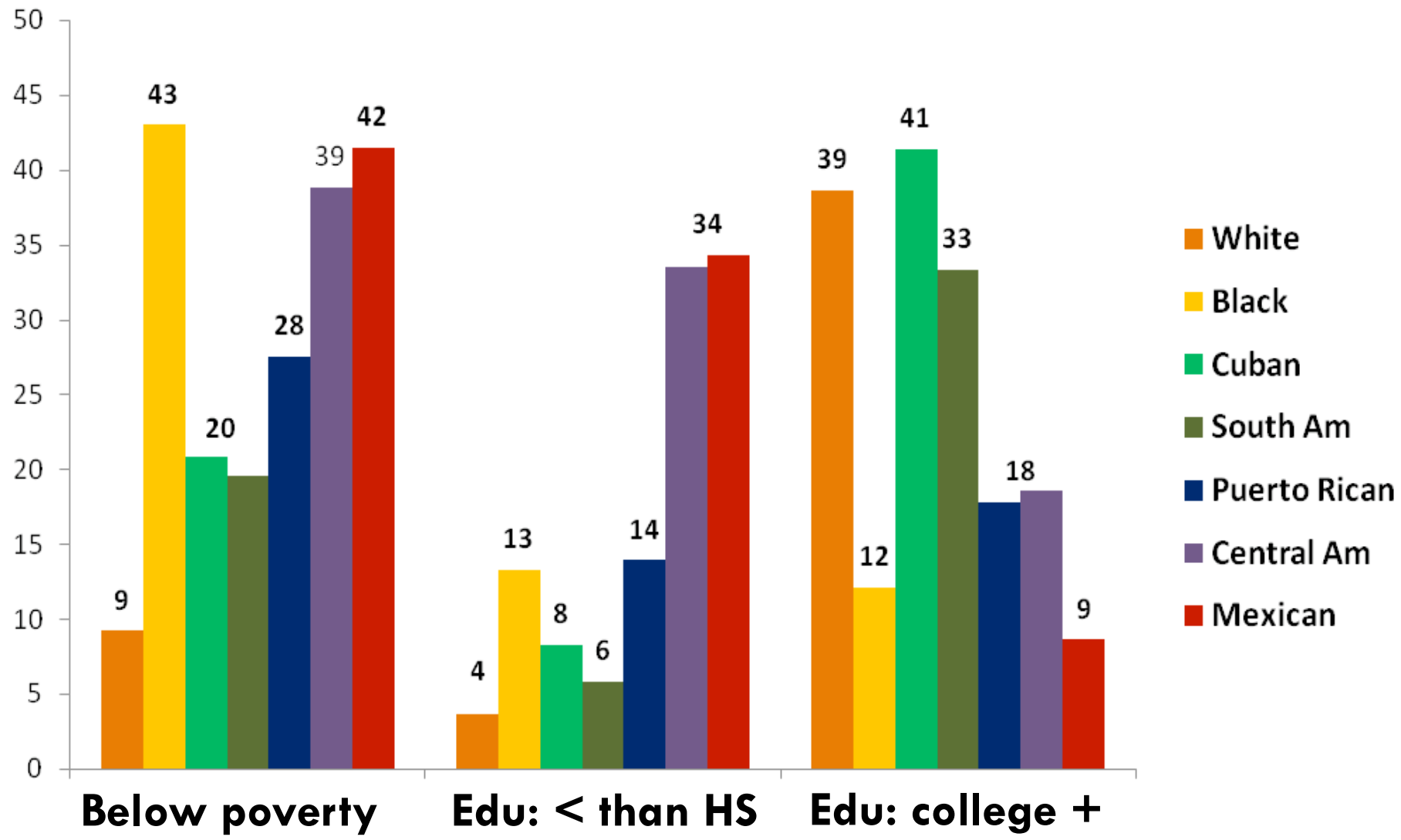


**Mexican students, in the U.S., in
the Kindergarten Class of 1998-
99 (generational status,
language characteristics, &
socioeconomic status)**

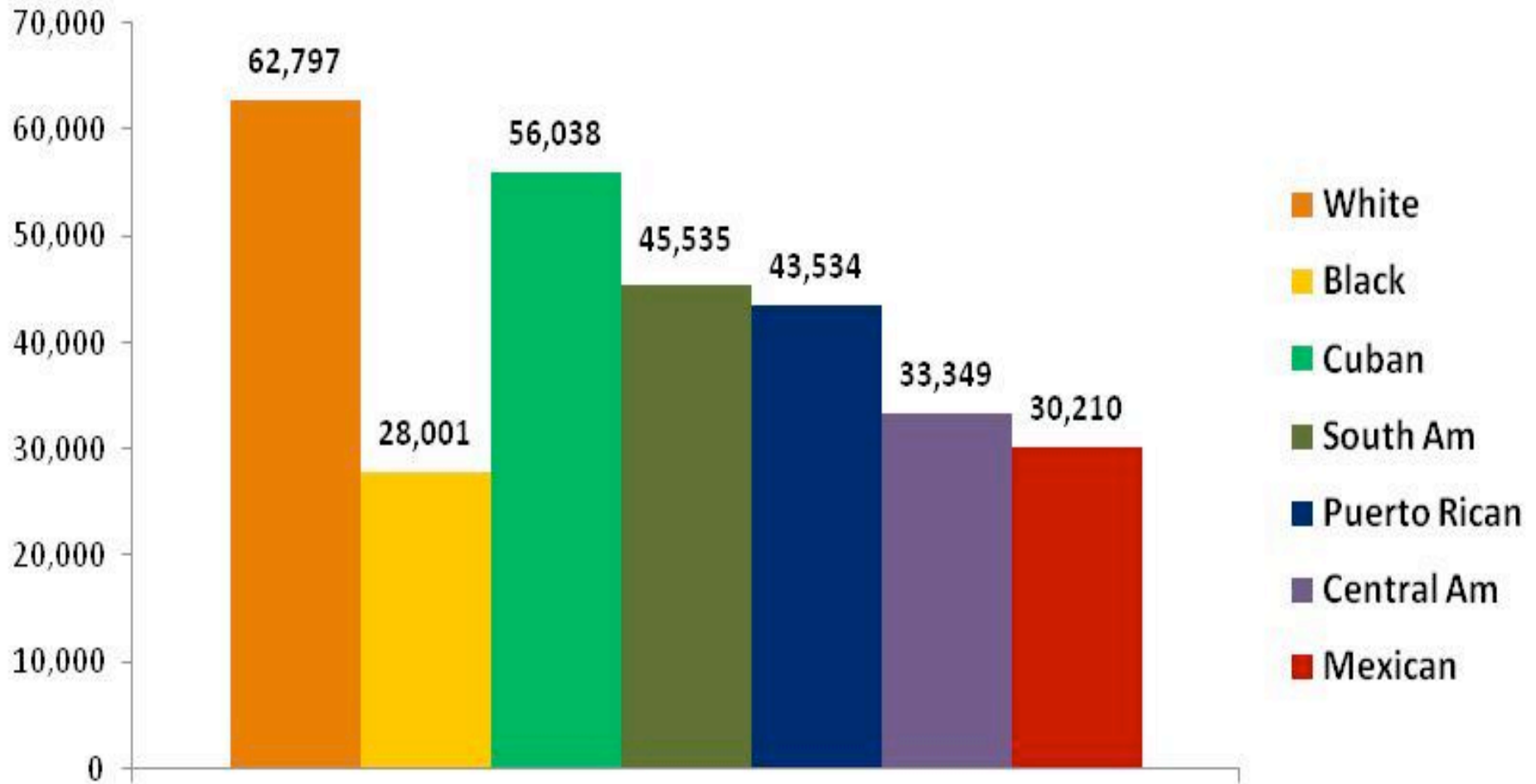
Weighted Percentage of Generational Status (n=1,683)



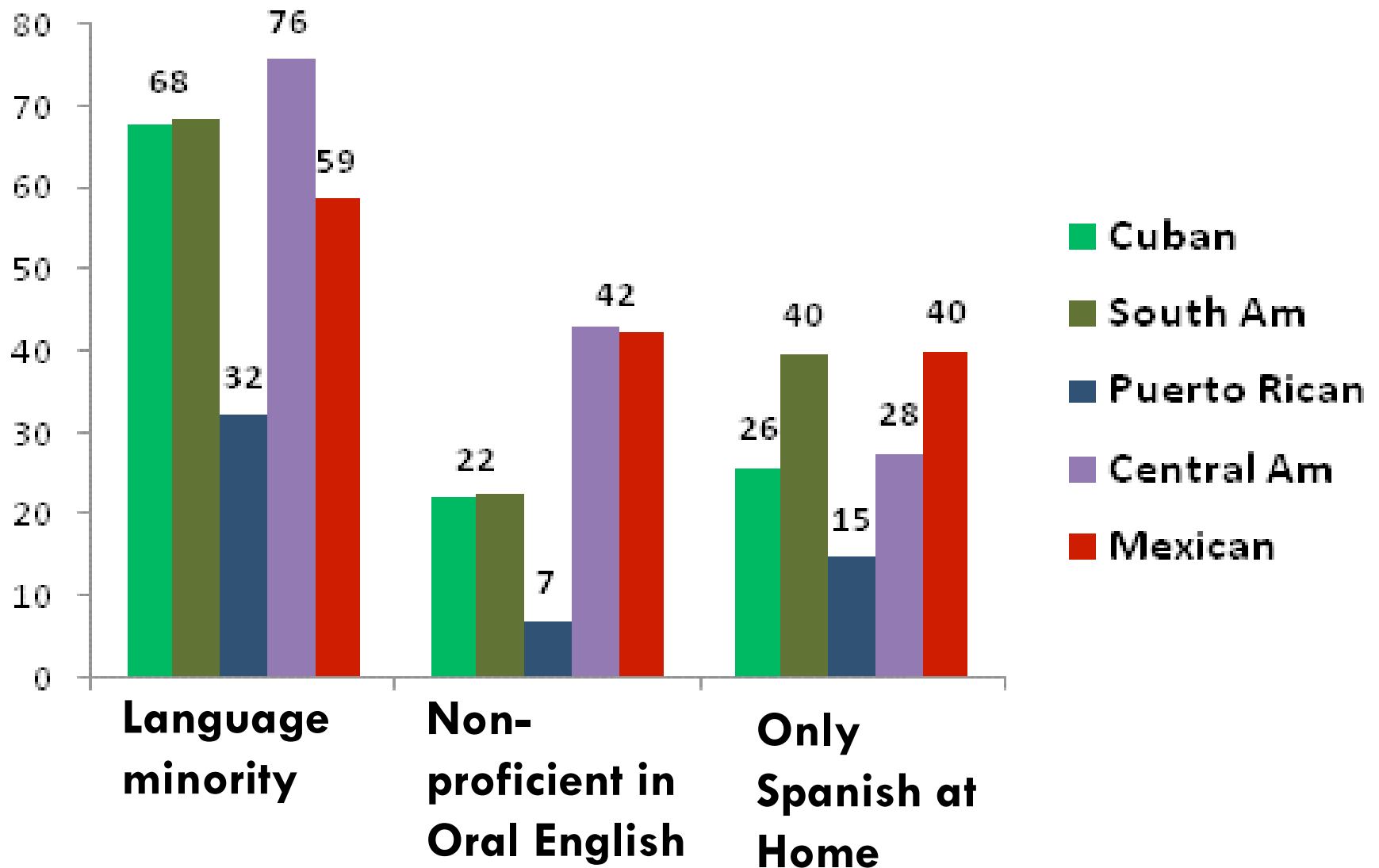
Weighted Percentages of Poverty & Education



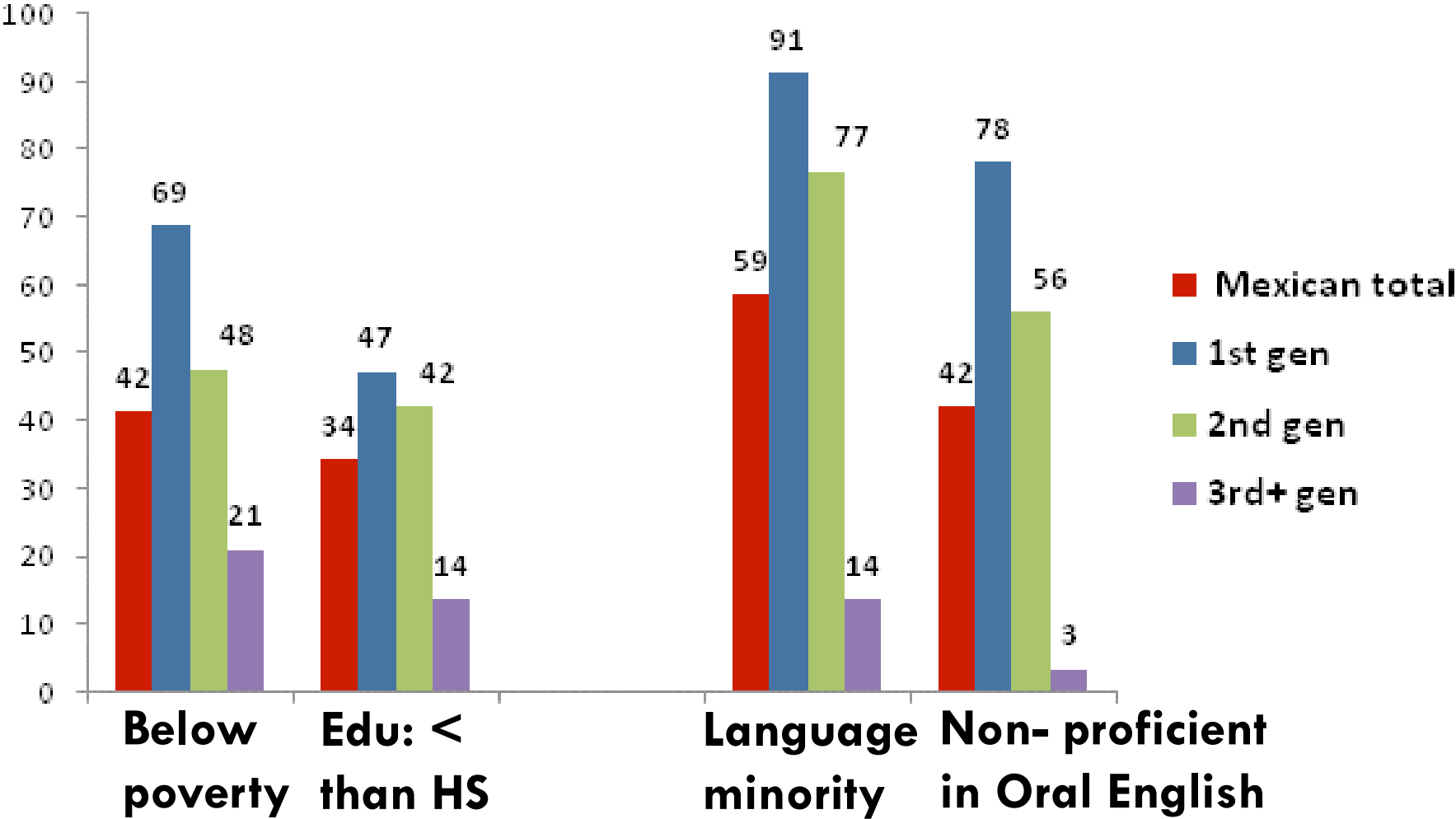
Weighted Mean Family Income (\$)



Weighted Percentages of Language Characteristics



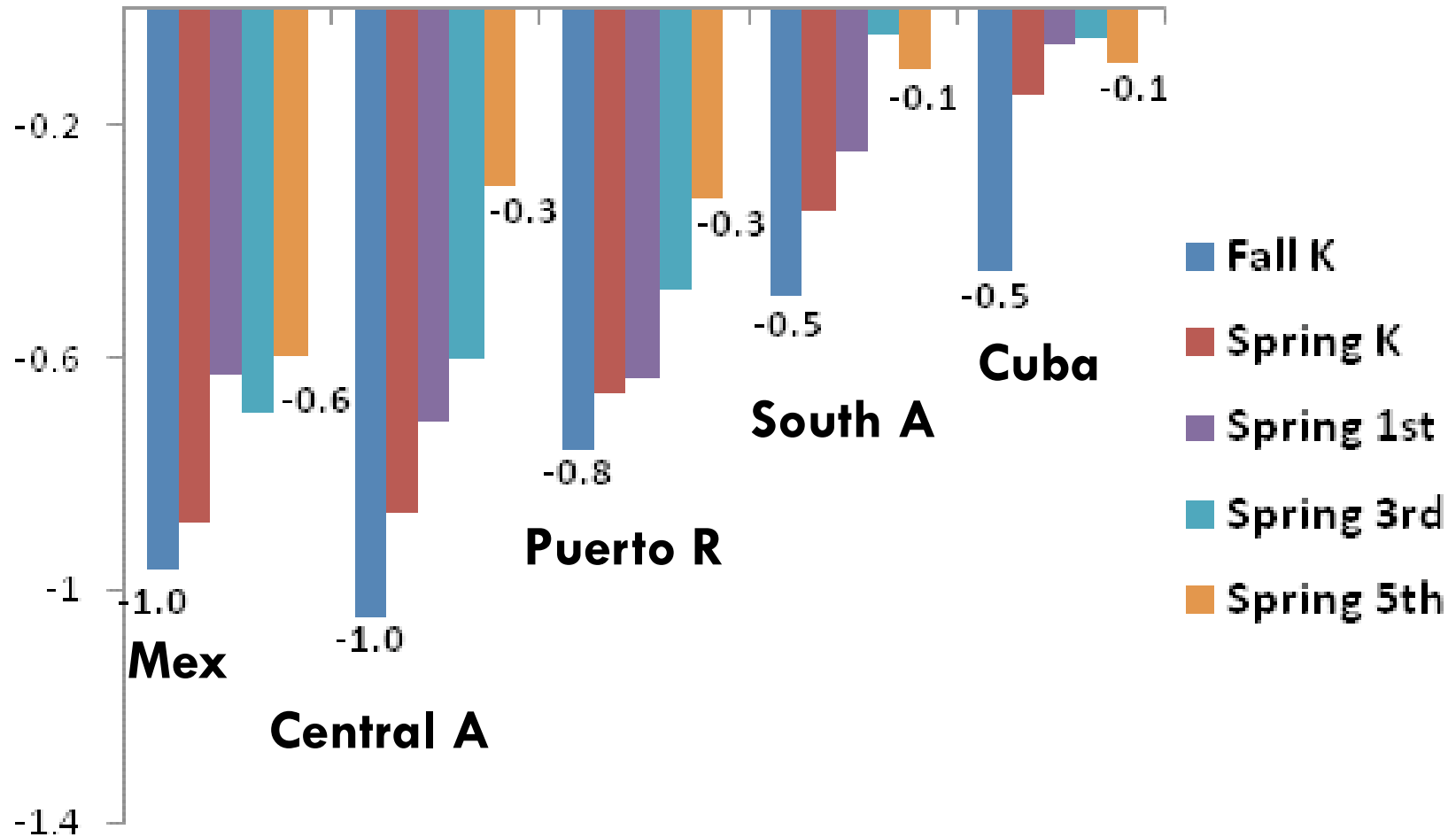
Weighted Percentages of Poverty, Education, & Language Characteristics, by Generational Status



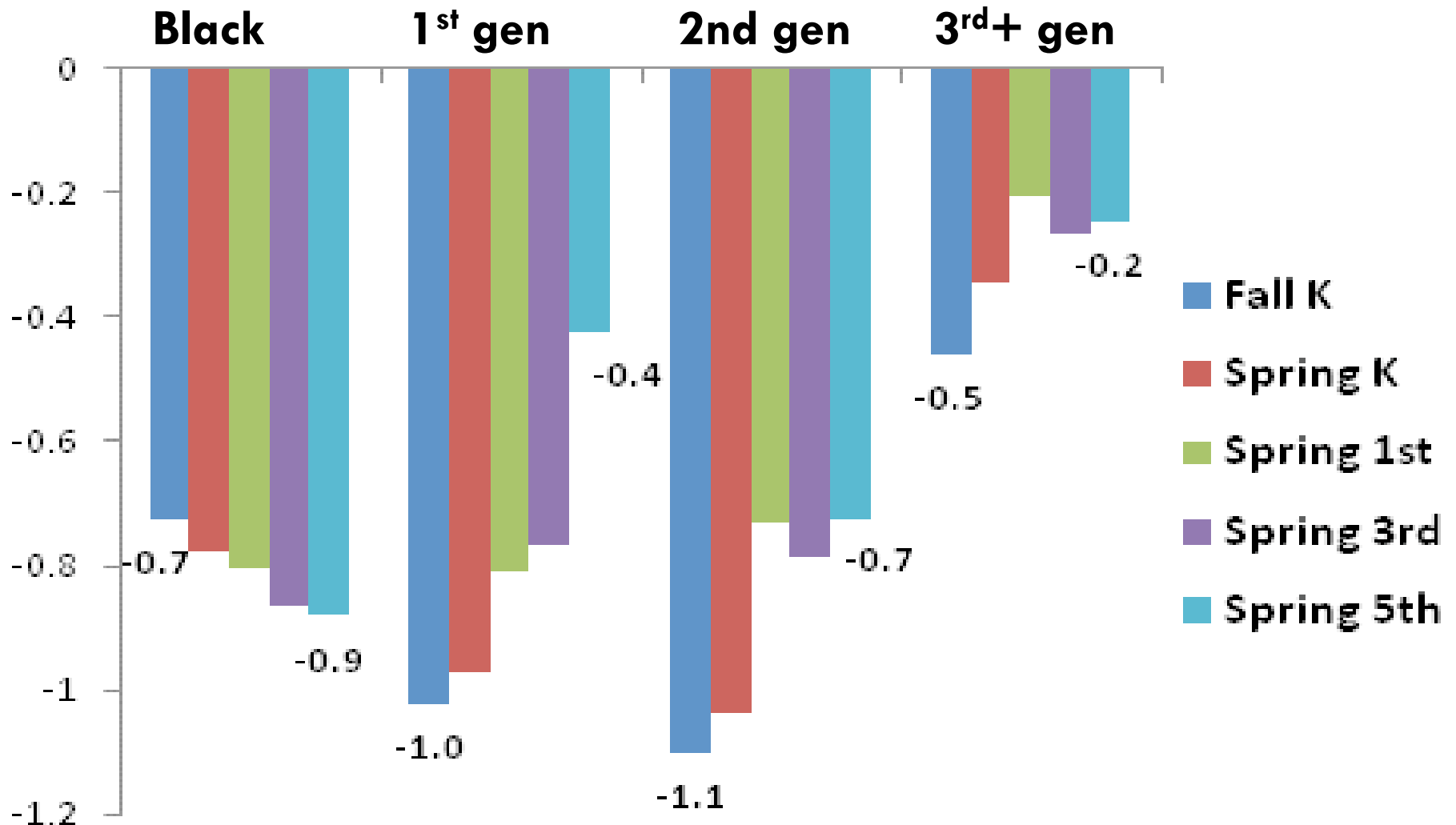


**Mexican students' math
achievement patterns from
kindergarten through fifth grade**

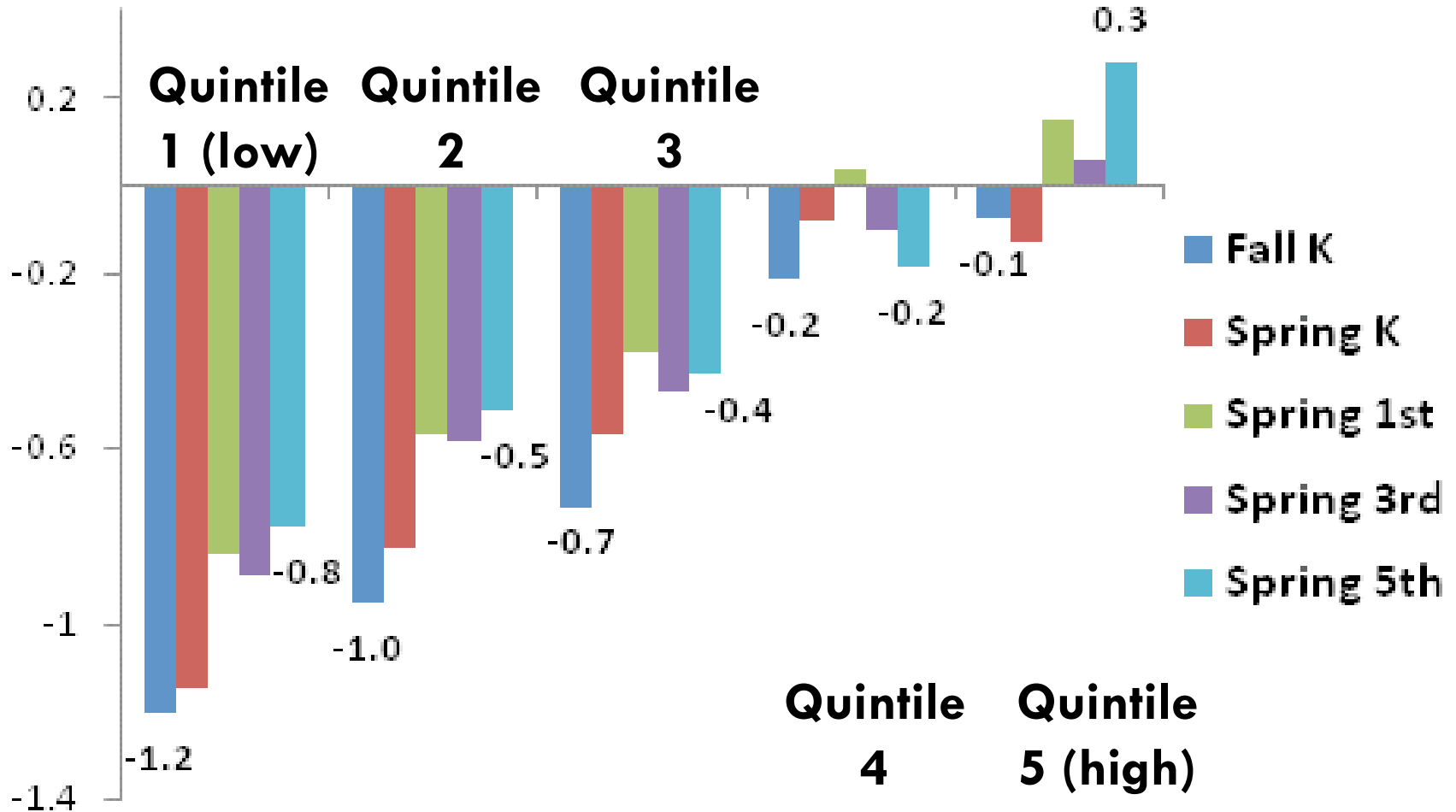
Estimated Math Gaps, by Country of Origin (standard deviations below Whites)



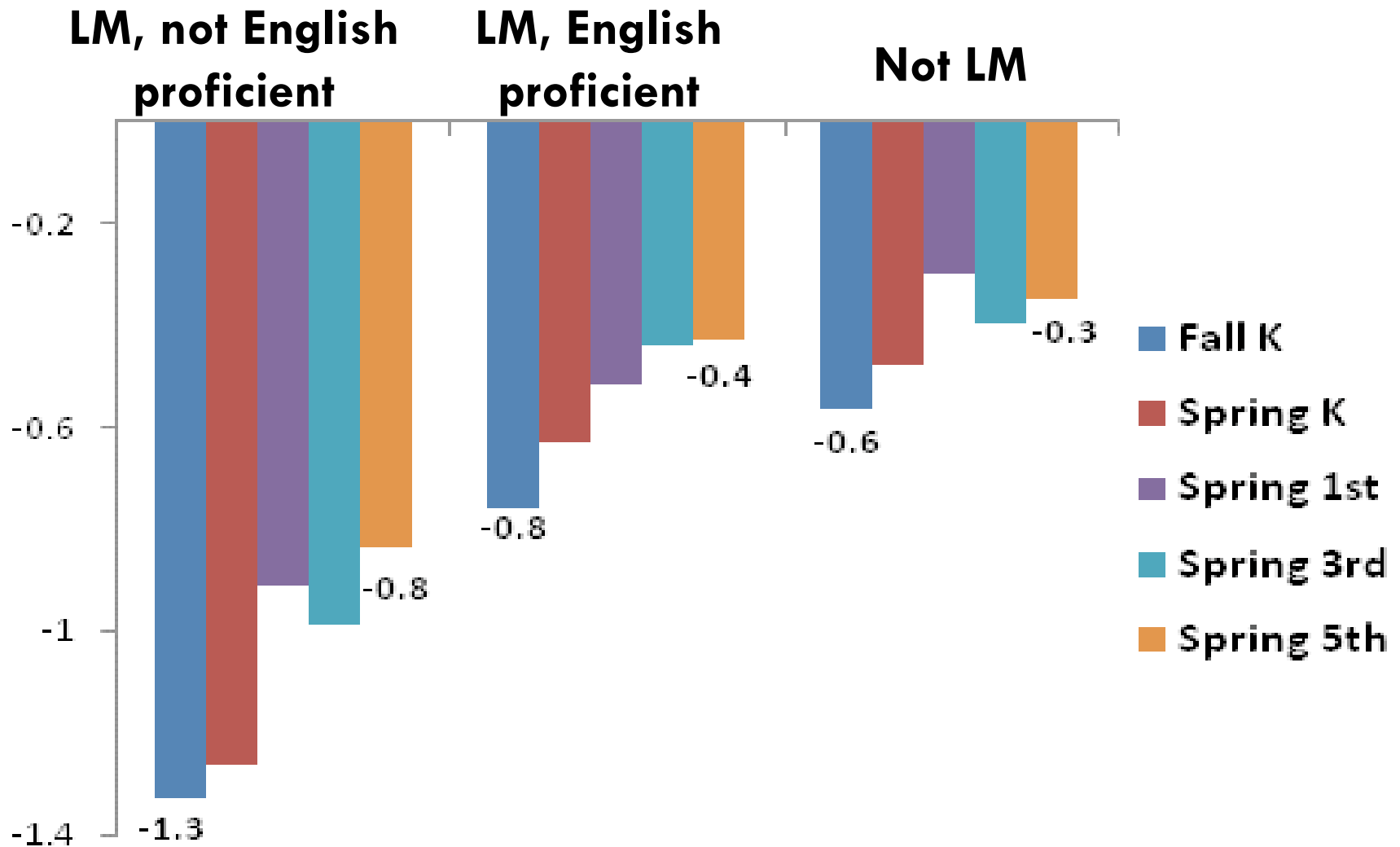
Estimated Math Gaps, by Generational Status (standard deviations below Whites)



Estimated Math Gaps, by Socioeconomic Quintile (sd below Whites)



Estimated Math Gaps, by Language Minority (LM) Status (sd below Whites)



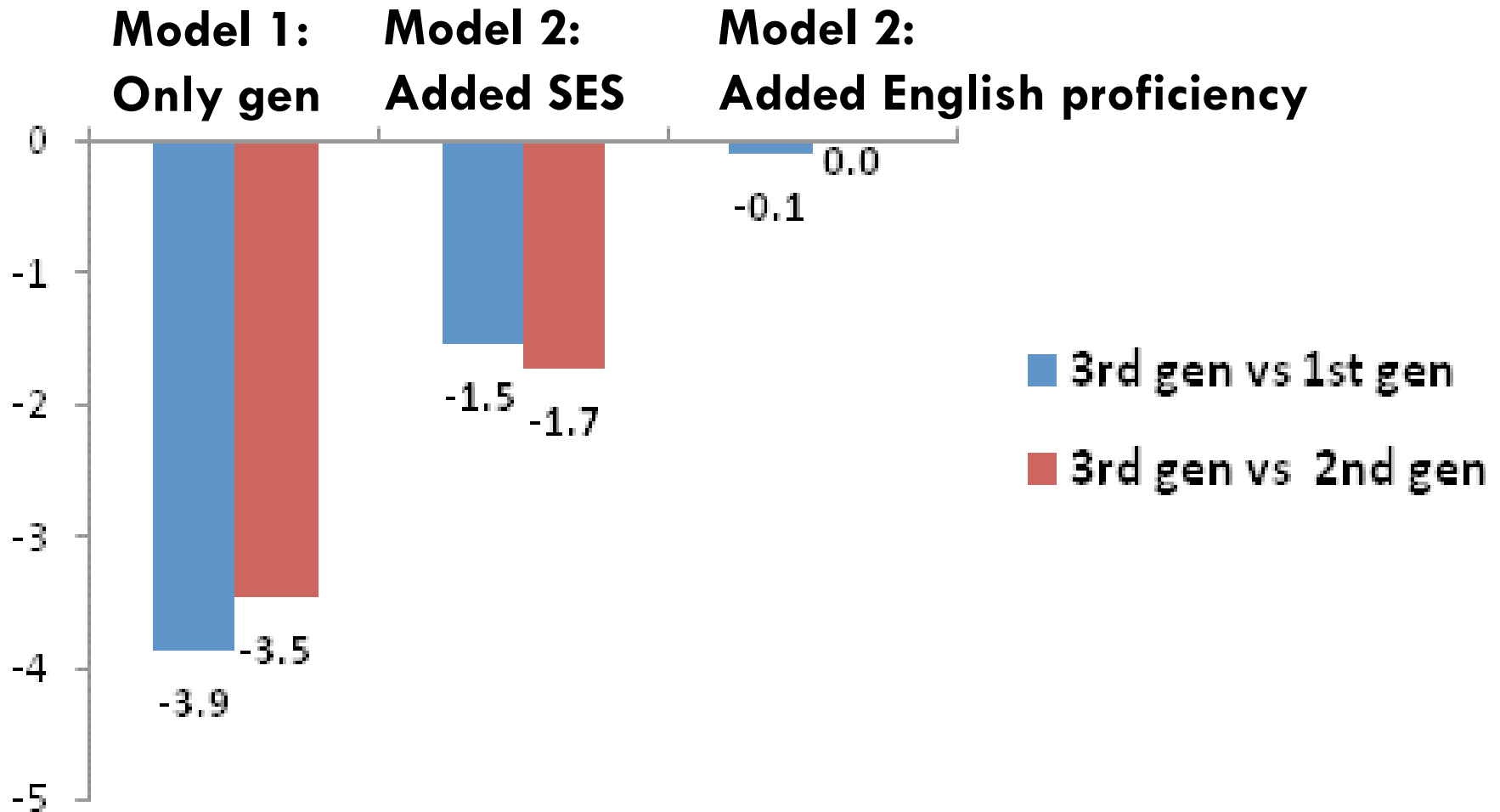


**Effects of generational status,
socioeconomic characteristics,
and English ability, on math
achievement at the start of
kindergarten**

OLS Regression Estimates of Math Achievement From Key Variables

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
1st generation	-3.87	-1.55	-0.11
2nd generation	-3.46	-1.73	-0.72+
3 rd + generation	-	-	-
SES		2.02	1.68
Language minority			-1.67
Oral English prof			0.82
Adjusted R2	0.08	0.18	0.20

Regression Estimates of Math Achievement From Key Variables



Take-Home Message...

- **Compared with other Latino subgroups, Mexican students in the U.S. experience important language & socioeconomic disadvantages**
- **On average, Mexican students enter kindergarten with lower math skills than those of White students and other Latino subgroups**
- **Important variability in outcomes is found among Mexican sub groups**
- **Increasing English proficiency at Kindergarten entry could be an important mechanism to reduce Mexican students' educational disadvantages**



Gracias!

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