

Parental Socioeconomic Status and Offspring Neighborhood Attainment: Pathways through Middle Adulthood:

Abstract: While sociology's status attainment tradition has spurred substantial research on the intergenerational transmission of socioeconomic status, comparatively little research examines the effects of parental socioeconomic status on adult offspring's neighborhood economic conditions. Using longitudinal data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, in conjunction with decennial census and American Community Survey data and growth curve analysis, we find strong relationships between parental SES and adult offspring's initial and subsequent neighborhood economic conditions experienced into middle adulthood, especially for adults of high SES parents. The effects of parental education and income on both adult offspring's initial and subsequent neighborhood attainment are significantly weaker among Blacks than Whites. The effects of parental socioeconomic status on offspring's initial neighborhood attainment operate largely through childhood neighborhood contexts and, to a lesser extent, offspring's own socioeconomic attainment and demographic behavior. However, neither childhood neighborhood economic context nor offspring's own attainments explains the effect of parental SES on offspring's trajectory of neighborhood SES throughout the adult life course. These findings point to the utility of integrating status attainment models and the life-course perspective to better understand processes of neighborhood stratification.