

ABSTRACT

As the children of immigrants reach marital age and start raising children of their own it becomes interesting to look at the extent to which they intend to transmit their ethnic culture to their (third generation) offspring. This process becomes especially fascinating for second-generation migrants married to native-born Caucasians, who are considerably integrated to the host society. By making an international comparison between the Netherlands and the United States this study unfolds the ways in which national opportunities and constraints influence this process for second-generation Chinese parents. The in-depth interviews that the researcher conducted with second-generation Chinese and their native-born Caucasian partners indicate that parents in both countries continue to emphasize Chinese culture to some extent, albeit in different fashions. Placing focus on values related to family obligations (family togetherness, hierarchy, respect, and support) shows that while in both the Netherlands and the United States intermarried second-generation Chinese intend to emphasize family obligations in their childrearing practices, they do so in different fashions. In the Netherlands, a socio-democratic welfare state, the second-generation Chinese respondents were less likely to provide their parents with financial support or have them move in with them when they would reach old age; while the Chinese grandparents would babysit their children on a weekly basis. In the United States on the other hand, a liberal welfare state, the restrictions of financial opportunities for elderly led many second-generation to take their dependent parents into their home or support them financially. These differences indicate that opportunities and constraints in the national context form the way in which intermarried second-generation Chinese parents intend to transmit their culture to their children.