

Mothers as Ethno-Cultural Knowledge Keepers and Educators: How Immigrant Mothers Provide Ethno-Cultural Education to Their Children

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Abstract

Mothers are known to be the primary carriers of ethnocultural practices and rituals within immigrant households, in comparison to their male partners. From maintaining the communications in their home country's language(s) to ensuring their children grow up eating cultural dishes, immigrant mothers prioritize educating their children about the various elements which make up their identities related to their home countries. Even with all their dedication and effort, it is not often that women are recognized for the title of "educator" as they take on this specific weight of mothering within their households. In addition to educators, in this work I will argue that immigrant mothers are knowledge keepers within their homes and pass on cherished ethnocultural lessons to their children as a form of resistance towards assimilation within their host countries.

This form of assimilation resistance, in the form of ethnocultural education, allows and encourages their children the freedom to create and negotiate their own identities between their family's home culture and the host country they are growing up in. Through this work, I will explore the various ways in which immigrant mothers provide ethnocultural education to their children, the considerations they may take in this process, and their overall experiences mothering within this context.

Keywords: assimilation resistance; childhood education; identity; immigration; motherhood