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Migration, Mobilities, and Changing Political Landscapes

My Child's Root: Here, There, or Nowhere? A Study of Diaspora and Cultural Identity Transmission in Hong Kong Families

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This study examines how parental interpretations of diaspora identity shape their children's acculturation experiences and identity development. As global diaspora populations continue to grow, studying the transmission and formation of diaspora identities becomes increasingly important for understanding integration experiences across generations. However, existing research on this topic often relies on retrospective, child-centric perspectives that assume consistent, uniform parental intentions to transmit cultural heritage. Our study addresses this gap by prioritizing the viewpoints of diaspora parents. Using twelve semi-structured interviews with Hong Kong parents, we identify two hybrid forms of diaspora identity: separated, prioritizing homeland connections and return mobility, and integrated, balancing belonging in both homeland and hostland contexts. Our findings demonstrate that these parental identities directly influence children's acculturation and identity development, shaping their navigation of multiple cultural affiliations and even fostering a sense of global citizenship. We challenge the notion of diaspora identity as a singular construct defined solely by opposition to the host society, revealing its nuanced, coexisting, and reciprocal nature. Our findings contribute to broader sociological discussions on identity formation, acculturation processes, and the dynamics of belonging in an increasingly interconnected world.