Asian American Family Life

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Outline

- Demographics
- Asian values
- Asian family issues
- Quotes from Korean immigrant women
- Q & A
Demographics (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007)

- Asian Americans comprised 4.7% of the total U.S. population.
- The largest ethnic groups included:
Demographics (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007)

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- The largest ethnic groups included: Chinese, Asian Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese.
- The six states with the largest Asian populations were:
Demographics (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007)

- Asian Americans comprised 4.7% of the total U.S. population.
- The largest ethnic groups included Chinese, Asian Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese.
- The six states with the largest Asian populations were: California, New York, Texas, New Jersey, Hawaii, and Illinois.
- About 67% of Asians were foreign-born (vs. 12% in the total population).
- About 77% of Asians spoke a language other than English at home (vs. 19%).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Education (Bachelor’s degree or more)</th>
<th>Occupation (management, professional, and related occupations)</th>
<th>Household Income</th>
<th>Under Poverty Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian Americans</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>$56,200</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>$44,700</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>$48,800</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Americans vs. Whites</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>.96 (after adjusting household size)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Asian Values

- Collectivism vs. Individualism (Hofstede, 1980; Oishi et al., 1999; Triandis, 1996)
  - U.S. (9.55), Britain (8.95), Canada and Netherlands (8.50)
  - China (2), Japan (4.30), and India (4.40)
Asian Values (Kim et al., 1999)

- Conformity to norms
- Family recognition through achievement
- Emotional self-control
- Collectivism
- Humility
- Filial piety
Asian Family Issues

- Acculturation gap between generations
- Gender role conflicts
A qualitative investigation of Korean immigrant women’s lives (Yoon et al., 2010)
Cultural competency and belonging

- … depending on the time of immigration, like 70’s immigrants vs. 80’s immigrants, their life styles are different… Immigrants are fixed to the Korean culture at the time of immigration. They stick to it up to now.
I don’t really belong to the mainstream society although I have one foot in there. I strongly feel that my generation is just a bridge. My father belonged to the other land although he was a first generation immigrant, and my children are complete second generation immigrants. I know both worlds, so I’m a bridge. I believe the heat boiling inside of me will explode in my children’s generation.
Family dynamics: Intergenerational

…the identity confusion and the cultural difference that my children experience… the cultural gap with the parents because of the parents’ traditional ways of thinking… Korean parents’ values stay the same but the children’s cultural beliefs change to an American style. So there is confusion when they compare their Korean parents with the American parents of their friends’… This makes the adolescence become more challenging.
Family dynamics: Gender role

- It seems like every immigrant family has a representative, a person who is the main connection with the mainstream society. I think that, in most Korean immigrant families, the representative is the woman. Men are not able to give up the privileges they had in Korea … they fell into the middle of nothing after immigration… It takes a much longer time for men to realize the reality and take action than women do. Women have maternal instincts and higher adaptability to a new world… To start new businesses in the U.S., women should take initiatives for the most part, although the businesses may be under the husbands’ names. A new society demands someone to jump in, who is usually women rather than men because of women’s inner strengths and adaptability.
Value changes

- In Korea, there are standards for everything, and everyone tries to reach them. Everyone should strive for the best school or jobs … Here, it is not an issue any more as far as I’m happy and satisfied. I don’t have to care about what other people think at all. In Korea, you should please your parents, friends, and everyone… I don’t have to fit myself into other people’s standards any more. That’s a change in my values.
Racial relations

There are discriminations in every place and every culture. I think Americans are generous enough with this much discrimination. If someone mistreats me because I’m an Asian, I feel sorry that the person did not get a chance to have the right kind of education. The more you respect other cultures, the more you can develop yourself. This person can become a leader and outreach. If you don’t know about this, your life will be so narrow and unhappy. So if someone discriminates me, I say “I’m sorry for you.”
Thank you!

Q & A

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