Korean Women in America: A Comparison of the Perception of
Leadership between Korean American Women and Korean
International Women

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Presented to the Faculty

Liberty University

School of Communication

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In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
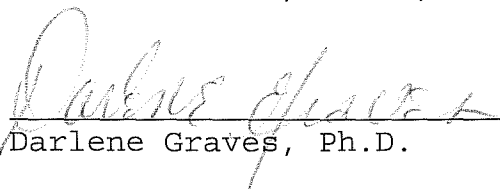
Master of Arts

in

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By

Eun Hye (Grace) Kang

April 15, 2006

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## Acknowledgement

I wish to express my gratitude to God, family, professors, and my friends in the graduate program for embracing, supporting, and laughing with me throughout the time period of completing this thesis.

I would first like to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Terri Cornwell, my mentor . . . Without her I would not have been able to sustain myself throughout finishing my coursework from last semester due to the car accident, my current coursework, teaching COMS 101, and writing the thesis. I will never forget her kindness as she attended to my needs while I was hospitalized in December. Her words of affirmation will stay with me and lead me in the future to go the extra mile and reach my goals.

Jeff Boettger, Korry Gerstner, Chad Kennedy, Renee Peckham, Robin Ringer, and Kimberly Wood, my graduate family members . . . I love you all so much and I am truly going to miss you. Thanks for all the memories.

Special love to Teresa . . . I will never forget her genuine words of encouragement and faith in me since the day we met. I am lucky to have been a recipient of her support for this thesis.

Jennifer Webb, my best friend . . . You know and understand me best. I can count on you to be by my side, always.

My family, my cheerleaders . . . I can feel the effect of your prayers every day. You have been a source of strength and a strong role model for me throughout this process as well as my entire life.

To all of you, individually, and collectively, a heartfelt "Thank you."

# Preface

Although Korean by nationality and American by culture, in my heart I am an African woman. Since the age of four I grew up as a pastor/missionary's kid in Kenya, Africa. Growing up speaking four languages was normal. Meeting Koreans once or twice a year was normal. Eating with my hands, walking barefoot, and speaking with an African accent was normal. Being a Korean, African, and American all at once was normal. It was not until I came to the States that I realized I was not "normal." Not only did I go through culture shock while adjusting to life in the U.S.; these experiences aroused my interest in conducting research on identity issues, especially those of my own ethnicity and gender. More specifically, I wanted to explore how Korean women see leadership, because regardless of the differences I saw between Korean international women (women who are not U.S. citizens and came from Korea or another country), and Korean American women (women from immigrant parents), I felt the term *leadership* was rarely discussed. Personally, I had never felt I could not practice my leadership skills until I came to the States.

Age sixteen was when I became the president of my school and for two years I was also the volleyball captain, the basketball captain, and editor-in-chief for the

school's yearbook when I lived in Kenya, Africa. Age twenty-two was when I began teaching college students. I grew up asking the question "Who am I?" because I felt like an American at school, constantly surrounded by American friends and teachers, a Korean at home because of my family, and African during the weekends and holidays because of traveling to tribal areas. Presently, the question "Who am I?" seems to elicit different types of concerns about culture and ethnic identity.

What are some of the issues concerning leadership that Korean American women face in U.S. society? Do Korean international women face the same issues? Are some of the issues the problem of assimilation, ethnicity, language, or culture? Is today's generation of Korean women in America dealing with the question "Who am I?" These concerns led me to my thesis research. I can now answer the question "Who am I?" I am a proud Korean woman leader within the United States and the Korean community.

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**Chapter VI**

# Abstract

This study supplements the scarcity of research on Korean women in America. It explores the perception of leadership between Korean American women and Korean international women. It was inspired by stories that were told by Korean women indicating that Korean women in America first and foremost deal with the question, "Who am I?" An additional question for this thesis was, "Who am I as a leader?" The majority answer found for Korean American women was: "I consider myself as a Korean American, although deep down I always know I am Korean." Korean international women without a doubt regard themselves as Korean or a Korean from a third culture.

LaFromboise's second culture acquisition model is mentioned to better explain the current situation of Korean women's identities in America. The five major models are: assimilation, acculturation, multiculturism, fusion, and alternation. The Multicultural Model was chosen to specifically explain the identity of Korean women in America.

Data was collected from observations, surveys, semi-structured interviews and demographic questionnaires. One hundred-twenty Korean women in America responded to the study. Findings indicate that Korean American women reveal

more independence and assertiveness than Korean international women. Korean American women exceed in holding leadership positions in the community, church, school and workplace over Korean international women. However, despite such findings, it reveals that adherence to Confucian principles still exists within the lives of both Korean American and Korean international women.

In short, Korean women in America, ages 19 - 40, share a different perception of leadership; however, both are embedded in Confucian ideology and both groups struggle with cultural boundaries. Cultural expectations still dominate Korean society in America and continue to shape the lives of many women in extensive ways. Several implications for future research, limitations, and significance are also discussed.

# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

### Statement of the problem

On April 9, 1990, a cover story in *TIME* magazine, "Beyond the Melting Pot," informed the public of future trends regarding racial and ethnic populations in the U.S. The author, William A. Henry III, affirms, "Someday soon, surely much sooner than most people who filled out their Census forms last week realize, white Americans will become a minority group. Long before that day arrives; the presumption that the 'typical' U.S. citizen is someone who traces his or her descent in a direct line to Europe will be part of the past." He continues, "In the 21st century, racial and ethnic groups in the U.S. will outnumber whites for the first time. The 'browning of America' will alter everything in society, from politics and education to industry, values, and culture … Already 1 American in 4 defines himself or herself as Hispanic or nonwhite." By 2056, Henry theorized that a "typical" U.S. resident would trace his or her descent to everywhere else but Europe.

The term "melting pot" has been, by far, the most popular metaphor that was introduced to describe America's cultural identity. Israel's Zangwill's 1908, play best describes the metaphor. "There she lies, the great Melting-

Pot--Listen! Can't you hear the roaring and the bubbling? Ah, what a stirring and a seething! Celt and Latin, Slav and Teuton, Greek and Syrian, black and yellow... Jew and Gentile... East and West, and North and South, the palm and the pine, the pole and the equator, the crescent and the cross--how the great Alchemist melts and fuses them with his purifying flame! Here shall they all unite to build the Republic of Man and the Kingdom of God."[1]

"Melting pot" was a colorful idea representing the concepts of assimilation. Assimilation implies that cultures are indistinguishable. Individuals must abandon their cultures of origin to conform to the behaviors and customs of the second culture.[2] Critics have stated that the cultures that make up the United States should not "melt" into one national identity. Rather, critics mention that individual cultures should retain their cultural ethnicity and band together when it is for the social and political purposes of the country. Instead of assimilation, a country should be creating a pluralistic culture. Multiculturalism has become the alternative theory opposing assimilation.

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[1] Gonzalez, Jose Elias. "Born in the USA." Eagle-Tribune. February 19, 2001.
[2] Wortham, Anne. World and I. "The Melting Pot, Part 2 – America's Cultural Institutional Core." Vol. 16, November 2001.

In a July 4, 2001, article in *NewsMax* magazine, author David C. Stolinsky redefines the term "melting pot" by defining America as a "stew pot," "diversity salad," "salad dressing," resting on the conclusion that America's best analogy is the "stew pot."[3] He states,

> Instead of a "melting pot," the best analogy for America may be a "stew pot." Here one adds bits of meat, potato, and vegetables with no rigid recipe, but with a sense of proportion. As the stew is heated, the flavors melt. Each element retains many of its original characteristics, but it also takes on the flavors and aromas of the other elements. The result is a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. Moreover, as the "stew pot" simmers on the stove and is partially consumed by the guests, one adds new ingredients — for example, beans and rice, or Asian noodles. The essential nature of the stew remains, but the flavors change in a subtle way to reflect the newly arriving guests and the new ingredients."[4]

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[3] Stolinsky, David C. "America: Melting Pot, Diversity Salad, or What?" NewsMax. <http://www.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2001/7/3/165612.shtml>. July 4, 2001.
[4] Stolinsky 2001.

The twentieth century has generated a new term to describe the multicultural society in United States: "salad bowl," wherein each ingredient in the tossed salad retains its own color, texture, taste, and identity. "Salad bowl" is more recognized by the public than all the other analogies mentioned by Stolinsky.[5] Each group within the culture would have unique identities, distinctive characteristics, and exist side by side like lettuce, carrots, and tomatoes in a salad. The sum total of all the ingredients becomes a mosaic of national identities without the individual parts losing those identities. Salad dressing would induce a tasty blending and unity.

Despite the increase of the rapidly growing number of Asians in the United States, studies on this racial group, compared to other minority ethnic groups, especially Korean Americans or Korean internationals in particular, are scarce. Perhaps it is due to the sample size that is relatively small compared to the size of other Asian groups in most studies. Studies on Asian women may be limited due to gender inequality within the ethnic group. Chow suggested that these situations are somewhat like a "double

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[5] Blair, Jim. "America: Melting Pot or Salad Bowl?" Chicago Tribune: Voice of the People. 1995.

edged sword." [6] In many sexist and chauvinist assessments, women are perceived as "nothingness," and cannot serve as managers or leaders. [7] Therefore, females must somehow have to become genderless, or adopt a masculine persona to accomplish success. These "accomplished" females, then, would be perceived as males and lose their "femaleness," especially when they surpass their male counterparts. In addition, women are expected to become mothers. Those who renounce this role are often less accepted. At the same time, females are expected to develop "appropriate feminine behavior" by being silent and subservient. [8] Some parents are also ambivalent about high-achievement for their daughters. Those parents are afraid that their accomplished daughters may lose their femaleness and therefore, will not be accepted by their male counterparts.

In spite of these facts, sharing womanhood and awareness of femaleness can lead to the development of gender power relations, and group solidarity for advancing the struggle of gender equality. When Asian women begin to actively fight for gender equality, they often encounter sexist oppression from their communities. Still, women can be social agents who are competent in leading their own

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[6] Chow, E. N., Wilkinson, D. & Zinn, M. B. Race, class, & gender: Common bonds, different voices. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996.
[7] Chow 1996.
[8] Chow 1996.

lives and empowering themselves through community activism, social movements, and political change. In large, gender-related or leadership communication research on Asian Americans is also lacking in the world of academics. This research is to append to the past studies and increase the collection of research of Korean women in America, which is discussed in the purpose of the study.

It is projected by the year 2020 that the combination of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders will make up approximately 6 percent of the total U.S. population and the U.S. born Asian Americans will then outnumber foreign born ones.[9] Of the 6 percent, the population of American Asian women must make great strides in moving into leadership roles to not only influence the American community, but also change the backdrop of male-dominated society. It is also pertinent to stand against the devaluation of female leadership and overcome stereotypes as well as cultural and family messages that taught woman to remain in the background. Asian American women must not only do as well as other leaders, they must do better to be exceptional influencers within the "salad bowl." In short, Koreans are becoming a distinctive element of the "salad bowl."

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[9] U.S. Bureau of the Census. Census 2000 summary file 1. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is: (1) to analyze the existing literature on Korean American and Korean international women and in leadership, to accumulate what has been researched about the topic, and to develop prescriptions for the future; (2) to conduct a comparative study of present Korean American and Korean international women in United States; and (3) to analyze the differences of their perceptions of leadership. The history of Confucian ideology will also be examined to show the relationship between the past positions of Korean women's perception of leadership in relation to the current perception of leadership by Korean women. Not only does the study formulate and interpret the research, but it also creates awareness in the public about Korean women in leadership in the United States. The results may not reveal a *significant* difference in leadership between the two groups of women; however, I believed this will not be the case.

As previously mentioned, this study shed light about Korean internationals and Korean Americans, but also on the differences in the perception of leadership between Korean American women (a.k.a. "Twinkie" or "Banana") and Korean international women (a.k.a. "FOB" pronounced "*fahb*") in

America. "FOB" and "Twinkie" or "Banana" are generally derogatory terms made up by the Korean community in America.[10] Both terms are not foreign within the Korean community. "FOB" is a vocabulary word created by the Korean-American students. When a woman is referred to as a "Banana," the speaker is claiming that she is yellow on the outside and white on the inside, i.e., claiming that she is ashamed of being Korean. In a positive light, it means that the person is behaving, acting, and having characteristics similar to a white Caucasian, but looking Korean on the outside. This usually applies to second generation or later generation Korean Americans because they have become Americanized.

It is pertinent to understand the generation status of Koreans in America. First, there is the 1$^{st}$ generation, which generally refers to the immigrant generation. For example, in the context of the U.S., 1$^{st}$ generation refers to those who immigrated to the U.S. after being born in another country. Specifically, the term "first-generation," *Ilse* in Korean, is defined as "**1.** Of or relating to a person who has left one country and settled in another. **2.** Of or relating to a person or persons whose parents are

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[10] "The Lexicon of Asian." ASIA'ZINE. <http://www.asiazine.com/cgi-bin/forum/lan0501show.cgi>. Vol. 5, No. 1.

immigrants." [11]   Within this immigrant generation, 1.5 generation usually refers to the children who immigrated with their parents who are 1st generation immigrants. 1st generation is further explained as follows.[12]

> 1st generation: those who immigrated as adults
>
> 1.1 generation: those who immigrated at college age (18-21 years old)
>
> 1.2 generation: those who immigrated between the age of 14 – 17
>
> 1.5 generation: those who immigrated between the age 6 and 10
>
> 1.9 generation: those who immigrated between the age of 1 and 5
>
> 2nd generation: refers to the U.S. born children of the immigrant parents
>
> 3rd generation: refers to the children of U.S. born or 2nd generation parents

Being "second-generation," *E-sae*, means, "**1.** Of or relating to a person or persons whose parents are immigrants. **2.** Of or relating to a person or persons whose parents are citizens by birth and whose grandparents are

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[11] American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language.
<http://www.yourdictionary.com/ahd/s/s0203600.html>. Fourth Edition. 2000.
[12] Kibria, Nazli. Being Asian American. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

immigrants."[13]   It was not until the 1980's that the third

term, "1.5 generation," was created.[14] Soon after, the term

1.9 generation was created.

As the word "Twinkie" or "Banana" was defined, a term

has been created by Korean Americans to define Korean

international students in America, "FOB."[15]   "FOB" stands

for "Fresh Off the Boat" or "Fresh Off the *Bee-haen-gee.*"

*Bee-haen-gee* means airplane in Korean. A "FOB" can be

defined as a Korean international student who came to study

in the U.S. during her teenage years. "FOBs" can also be

Korean Americans who cannot speak English and are not

accepted by the American society, but the sample of those

individuals are slim.  This paper will refer to "FOB" as

the international population.  A "FOB" usually has a Korean

accent and can be spotted easily when the person speaks.

The belief is that a "FOB" acts "FOBby" (an adjective form

of the noun "FOB"), meaning acting like a Korean in Korea,

or by dressing into current fashion trends in Korea.

Perchance, I believe this thesis may indicate that

times have changed and new generations of Korean women,

either composed of a Korean American women or Korean

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[13] American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language.
<http://www.yourdictionary.com/ahd/s/s0203600.html>. Fourth Edition. 2000.
[14] Kim, K.C., & Hurh, W. M. "The burden of double roles: Korean wives in the
USA." Ethnicity and Racial Studies, 11(2), p. 151-167, 1988.
[15] "The Lexicon of Asian." ASIA'ZINE. <http://www.asiazine.com/cgi-
bin/forum/lan0501show.cgi>. Vol. 5, NO. 1.

international women, are making a difference, particularly in the United States. The Korean traditional role has been domestic in nature and virtues of traditional Korean women are of sacrifice, submissiveness, acquiescence, obedience, and patience. This thesis reveals the fact that Korean culture is unwilling to accept the wave of new generations of women in leadership and is slow to accept the fact that Korean women have risen beyond their cultural identity and have redefined what it means to be a Korean woman.

## CHAPTER II

## Literature Review

What follows in this chapter is a review of the literature pertinent to the research reported in this thesis. In the amount of research conducted for this thesis, more than eighty journal articles and thirty books were used as resources. Of the eighty journal articles and thirty books, more than twenty-two journal articles and twenty books are cited in this study.

Conducting research consisted of borrowing books from the Pierre Guillermin Library at Liberty University, finding journal articles found through LexisNexis Academic. Also, it was searching through the EBSCOhost, google's and yahoo's search engine, INFOTRAC, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Highbeam Research, and the VIRGO library system from University of Virginia. Needed articles, journals, and books that were currently unavailable were done through interlibrary loans. Researching at the Alderman Library at University of Virginia was most productive.

My journey began as I wished to know the depth of studies that have been done on Korean-Americans and Korean internationals. I was curious to know how much access I had to the information. I had access to all publications and

journal articles I needed. The conclusion I reached after searching for sources was that there is a gap in research between gender related issues and leadership studies of Korean-Americans in general and specifically Korean-American women.

In addition, besides the population of Korean international students in the United States, research on Korean international students, particularly women, has not been extensive. I also came across the topic of Korean-American children. Most of the studies that I found regarding children of immigrant parents or immigrant children were from the fields of psychology or education. It was rare to find any social work research dealing with the unique issues that adolescent of either first, second, or third generation Korean-Americans face while in the process of adjusting to living in the United States until I researched about Korean adopted women. This thesis is to supplement the literature on Korean women in America. It is important to note that this study only begins to address the perception of leadership between Korean American women and Korean international women in America.

Korean women in America

Studies on leadership among Korean Americans or Korean internationals are lacking. Research has been centered primarily on health, psychological, or identity related issues.[16] Vast amounts of health-related research, such as cancer, have also been conducted.[17] Among the small number of studies on Korean American adolescents, most have focused on either substance abuse or depression. Studies on Korean internationals have been on implications for ministry and counseling. It has also been about the psychosocial adjustment status of Korean international students on their expectancies of counseling.[18]

To continue, it is evident that research on Korean Americans is very limited. The most research on interpersonal communication has been conducted on Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans. On the contrast, the most research that has occurred on acculturation has been on Vietnamese Americans and Korean Americans. Acculturative stress on Koreans has been researched as well.

Kim Uichol defines acculturative stress as "the conflict which often arises in efforts to resolve or

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[16] Leong, Russell C. Amerasia Journal. Vol. 29 Issue 3, p 5, 2004.
[17] Lee, MC. "Knowledge, barriers, and motivators related to cervical cancer screening among Korean American women." Cancer Nursing 23(3):168-75, 2000.
[18] Byon, Kyong Hee. "Korean international Students' expectations about counseling." Journal of College Counseling 2(2), p. 99, 1999.

minimize cultural differences … when there is contact and interaction between two or more autonomous cultural groups."[19] Berry posits that certain characteristics of the host culture may also contribute to acculturative stress.[20] One's age and gender may influence acculturative stress. This study will lead to the discussion of multiculturism instead of assimilation or acculturation to describe the blending of cultures in the U.S.

But first, it is necessary to understand the historical and contextual dimensions that have influenced the existence of Korean Americans and Korean international women in America to understand their current perception and attitude of leadership.

## Korean American women in America ("Banana's")

Koreans began immigrating to the United States in 1882. Since then, the 2000 population stands at 1,076,872 Korean Americans.[21] "Only 24,000 Koreans entered this country during the 60 years before the Immigration Act of 1965, known as the Hart-Celler Act, whereas, 30,803 Korean

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[19] Kim, U. "Acculturation of Korean immigrants: What are the hidden costs?" Korean Observer. P. 431-454, 1989.

[20] Berry 1990.

[21] Akitaya, Kyoko, Hunter, Carla D., & Jung, Sunna, Kim. "The Cultural Negotiations of Korean Immigrant Youth." Journal of Counseling and Development. American Counseling Association, Vol. 83, 2005.

immigrants entered in 1976 alone".[22] The Immigration Act of 1965 allowed individuals from third world countries to enter America, including Asians. The Act was a corrective measure instituted to atone for a past history of discrimination in immigration. Since then, immigration of Koreans to the United States has become a growing phenomenon. They are the fastest-growing ethnic group in America. Korean Americans are composed of a diverse group varying in socioeconomic states, educational levels, religious backgrounds, and acculturation levels.

Currently, Korean Americans make up the fourth largest Asian-American group in the U.S. They face issues that are different from those of three other large ethnic groups, i.e., Chinese Americans, Filipino Americans, and Japanese Americans, mainly because of differing immigration history (see Table 1). Of the above ethnic groups, Korean Americans are the most recent group to settle in the U.S. According to the U.S. Census Bureau of 2004, 864,125 immigrants were in the United States from Korea (see Table 2). [23] Geographically, 44 percent live in the West, 23 percent in the Northeast, 19 percent in the South, and 14 percent in the Midwest (see Table 3). The state with the largest

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[22] Akitaya 2005.
[23] Yau, Jennifer. "The Foreign Born from Korea in the United States." Migration Information Source. Migration Policy Institute: Washington, DC, 2004.

population is California, with 33 percent of the total; New York is second with 12 percent.[24]

Current Korean Americans, children of the immigrants, are pulled between two cultures, the nation of their cultural heritage, Korea, and that of their birth, America. As mentioned before, these children are called "second generation" Korean Americans. The women in particular live to be what Anne Wilson Schaef has called an "ideal woman," who represents her socio-cultural norms and rules.[25] Regardless of having been highly educated in American institutions, having six digit paying jobs, and having adapted to American ways of independence, it appears that it is difficult to disregard their parents' wishes of maintaining traditional values.

The story below gives a picture of issues Korean American women go through in their lives. This story by Janet Kim can be identified by many Korean American women:

> My mother leaned in, swallowed loudly in what
> seemed like an attempt at a dramatic pause, put
> on her serious voice and said to her youngest
> daughter, "Janet-sa, this year, more than a job,
> I hope you find a nice boyfriend." Maybe some of

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[24] Choe, Peter, & Han, Sang Il. "Korean American Coalition - Census Information Center." International Journal of Korean Studies. Volume VI, No 1, 2002.
[25] Schaef, Anne Wilson. Women's Reality. Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985.

you can relate. I'm a senior in college, six months from being ejected into the cold, callous world where I'll be kicked from door to door with a sign around my neck that reads: "Entry-level." Needless to say, I'm scared. And my dear mother wishes for me not employment, but companionship? I'm sure many of you have been threatened with the "once you leave college, you won't be able to find a boyfriend" tactic used by desperate members of the Korean Mother's Mafia of America. Sometimes they like to lay it on real thick, pointing to some old, lonely lady you both know and pity. Telling some elaborate story about how she's single because she never dated in college. "Look at Ms. Kang, your violin teacher. Do you want to turn out like her?"

This Valentine's Day, when she calls to inquire if I'm seeing anyone special, I will answer, "Yes. I'm seeing three, actually. I have an afternoon date with Accenture on Tuesday; drinks with a hottie named Price Waterhouse Coopers on Thursday; and on Friday night, Allstate's taking me somewhere really special, but his recruiter says it's a surprise. I heard he has a big

signing bonus." But sometimes, when I think about what my mom says, it makes me a little sad. She has more faith in my finding a decent career than my being able to trick a guy into liking me — as if she thinks I'm "uncool" or something.[26]

As apparent in Janet's writing, it is more important for a Korean woman to find a man and get married than to get a good job. The traditional image of a Korean woman is one who finds self-fulfillment in her exclusive devotion to marriage and parenthood. However, despite Korean culture's ramifications, Korean American women have developed an identity entirely of their own by acquiring leadership skills contradictory to the Korean culture's norm.

One of the constant obstacles these women face is racial and ethnic discrimination from other Americans, but also from Koreans as well.[27] They have always attempted to assimilate into American culture in order to be more widely accepted by their peers and society as a whole, which has caused Korean American women's expectations to be completely different from those of Korean international women.

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[26] Kim, Janet. "Employ me, then maybe you can date me."
<http://www.koreamjournal.com/Magazine/index.php/kj/2006/february/campus_mail>.
KoreAm Journal, Feb. 2006.
[27] Kim-Rupnow, Weol Soon. "An Introduction to Korean Culture for Rehabilitation
Service Providers." <http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/korea.html>. 2001.

## Table 1

## Population of Major Asian Americans in United States
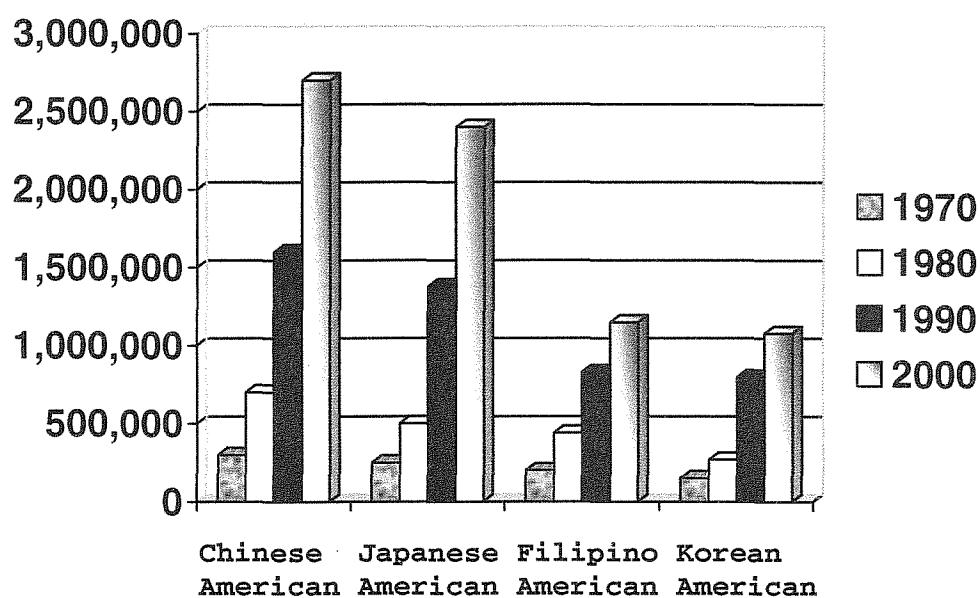


(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2000)[28]

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[28] Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center. "Korean American Population." C. J. Huang Foundation. <www.aafny.org/cic/>. 2004.

## Table 2

### Korean Immigration Chart (1948 – 2004)

| Decade | Immigrants |
|--------|------------|
| 1948-1950 | 107 |
| 1951-1960 | 6,231 |
| 1961-1970 | 34,526 |
| 1971-1980 | 267,637 |
| 1981-1990 | 337,746 |
| 1991-2000 | 164,166 |
| 2001-2004 | 57,711 |
| Total | 864,125 |
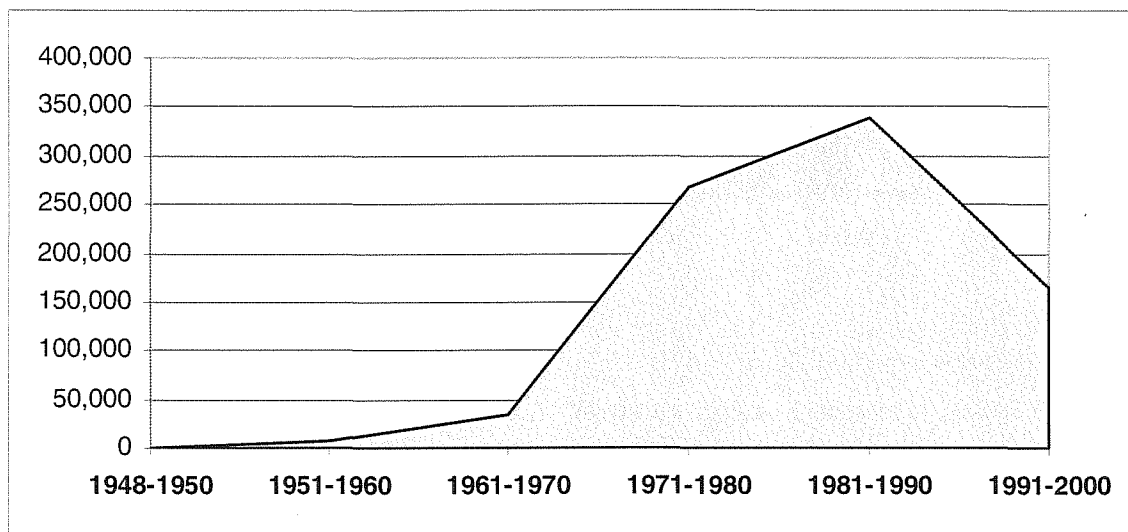


Source: "2004 Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service."[29]

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[29] Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center. "Korean American Population." C. J. Huang Foundation. <www.aafny.org/cic/>. 2004.

## Table 3

## Korean Population by Region in the United States
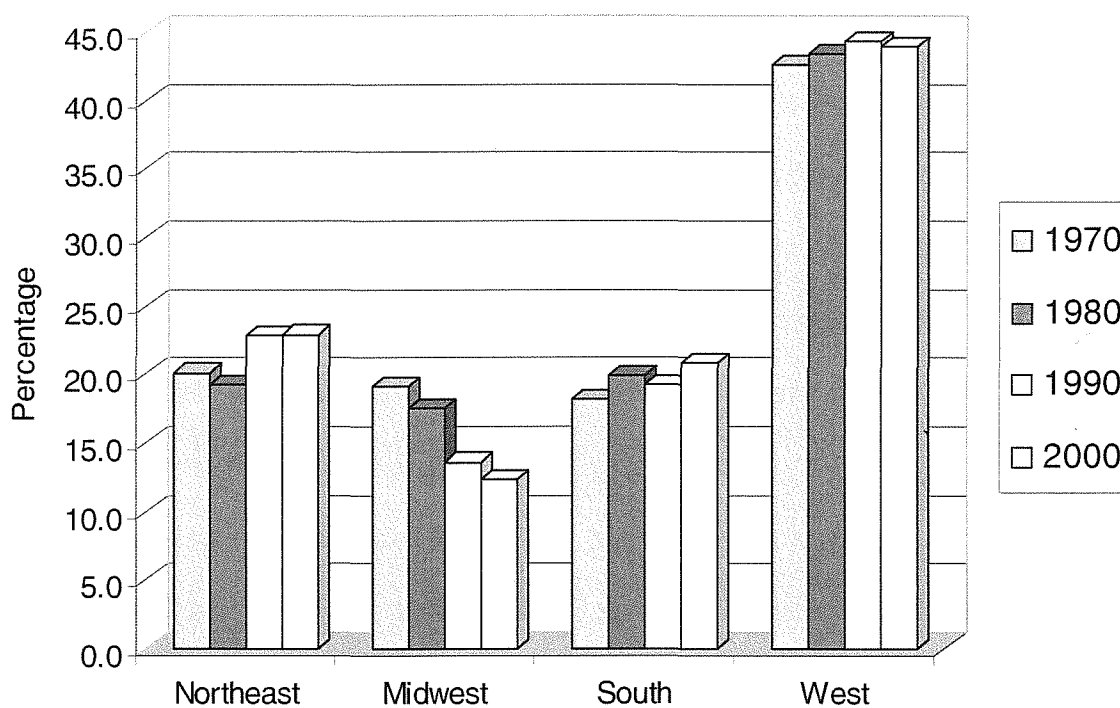


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Census 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000.[30]

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[30] U.S. Bureau of the Census. Census 2000 summary file 1. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000.

Korean international women in America ("FOBs")

In one sentence, the role of women in Korean culture can be defined as the following: "If a hen crows, the household will collapse."[31] This is a form of expression to say that if a woman speaks on social matters or speaks her mind in society her family would no longer be respected and be negatively judged by others. The family would be discouraged from becoming a part of society. The expression was designed to separate women from mainstream society.

The background of Korean society and culture explains, to a great extent, the outlook of Korean women. Korean people have survived wars throughout their history and are still facing a communist country, North Korea. In Korea, collectivism and collaboration are taught from one's childhood as one of the most important survival skills and moral virtues. Independence and autonomy are not attributes one has to attain upon reaching adulthood. Rather, a person becoming independent of his or her parents, teachers or others, tends to be considered threatening to the stability of the community he or she belongs to. Becoming independent by having others become dependent on him or her is one of the appropriate signs of sound adulthood in Korean culture.

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[31] Song, Young In, and Ailee Moon. Korean American Women Living in Two Cultures. Los Angeles and Taegu: Academia Koreana. Keimyung University Press, p. 317, 1997.

Korean international women have come to America to seek opportunities for better education and to get a competitive edge on other Korean women in order to find better career opportunities in Korea. In the late 1990's, South Korea struggled to revive its economic crisis as it tried to get out of a $20 billion debt.[32] South Korea turned for aid to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for aid. IMF is an organization of 184 nations established in 1944 by the United Nations. Its primary focus is to secure financial stability and sustain economic growth. Jobs became scarce as Korea's economy weakened in the late 1990's. Despite the strong recovery in 1999-2000, South Korea's economy has been overwhelmingly negatively affected by the global economic slowdown.[33] During a time when it has been difficult for men to have a career, women have had no options. Most of all, women were viewed as non-family breadwinners and a secondary workforce. This is an example of the neo-Confucian gender notion.[34]

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[32] Chinoy, Mike. "In South Korea, employees brace for IMF reforms." CNN. January 8, 1998.
[33] "Demand Assessment." <http://www.hawaii.gov/dbedt/ert/cp/s_kor.html> July, 2002.
[34] Moon, Kyoung-Hee. "Gender impact of employment adjustment in post-1997 Korea: cases of Hyundai Motor Company and the commercial banking industry." <http://www.griffith.edu.au/text/centre/asiainstitute/conferences_workshops/kyoung-hee01.html>.

The Korean Women's Research Institute conducted research on Korean Women.[35] The research provides valuable information on the foundation of a Korean women's position in Korean society. This research institute was established by the Korean government under legislative mandate in 1983. It provides vocational training and assists women's organizations in their activities. Results produced by the Institute concerned of Korean women's positions in society. Women take the role of producing labor in order to sustain the capitalistic society. Their labor is for the family, maintaining the house and providing clothes and food for the family. This also is an aspect of Confucian family tradition. However, the modern formation of women's positions in Korean society is not supported by Confucianism. Regardless of the height of education one might have achieved, marriage, children, and family are three pertinent values of Korean women. To this day, Korean society discourages thinking otherwise. In addition, upon marriage, women find it almost impossible to reenter the workforce due to a social infrastructure which lacks the mechanism to bring women back into the workforce.

The Korean Women's Research Institute provides valuable information on the foundation of Korean women's

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[35] Nyuk, Dong. "About Women's Studies." Korean Women's Research Center. 1991.

positions in Korean society. Although driven away by their own society, a majority of Korean international women, mostly students, return to Korea. "[Korean employers] value more [work] experience in the States."[36] Also, a U.S. visa to stay in America may expire, causing one to go back to Korea. The choice of Korean international women to pursue their education is extremely restricted compared to Korean Americans.

## Models of Second Culture Acquisition

Ethnicity describes people by their supposed common ancestry, language, and cultural ancestry. The term *Asian American* contains more than two dozen subgroups.[37] Models of Second Culture Acquisition have been described by LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton to better understand the process of change that occurs when two or more cultures interact. These models are: acculturation, assimilation, multiculturism, fusion, and alternation.

*Acculturation.* Acculturation is much like the assimilation model although it differs in one significant way. Assimilation assumes that the individual and the group will eventually become full members of the majority

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[36] Garsow, Melissa C. "Korean students stay firmly rooted to their country – even thousands of miles from home." NYU Livewire News Service. Oct. 2004.
[37] Coontz, S. Introduction. In S. Coontz, M. Parson, & G. Raley (Eds.), <u>American families: A multicultural reader</u>. New York: Routledge, 1999.

group and lose identification with their culture of origin. However, acculturation implies that the individual and the group may become a participant in the majority culture by adopting the beliefs and behaviors, but will always be identified as a member of the minority culture. According to LaFromboise, et al., "acculturation can be a stressful experience, reinforcing the second-class citizenship and alienation of the individual acclimating to a new culture … the primary feature of the acculturation model rests on the notion that the individual will never be allowed to lose identification with the culture of origin."[38]

*Assimilation*. According to the assimilation model, one abandons his or her own cultural identity and assimilates into the host culture. Members of the minority group are forced to learn the ways of the majority group. LaFromboise et al., point to three dangers with cultures that assimilate. The three are: 1) individuals could be rejected by the members of the host culture; 2) one could be rejected by the culture of origin; and 3) one is expected to experience a grave amount of stress as the person learns the behaviors of the majority culture.[39] As pointed out by LaFromboise, majority group members may

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[38] LaFromboise, T., Coleman, H., and J. Gerton. "Psychological impact of biculturalism: Evidence and theory." Psychological Bulletin. 114(3), p. 399, 1993.
[39] LaFromboise 1993.

avoid people who are "different" simply because they find that communication is difficult. Rather than the assimilation model, the multicultural model seems to best describe the American culture.

*Multicultural.* Min Pyong Gap notes that Korean Americans are more ethnically attached than any other Asian ethnic group. [40] One reason is because of the cultural homogeneity of Korea. Another reason can be attributed to Korean immigrant churches. Min mentions that non-Christian Koreans attend Korean churches in the States in order to maintain social interactions and make connections for businesses. Korean Americans and Korean international people tend to surround themselves with Koreans, which is a characteristic of multicultural society. Some other characteristics of multicultural societies consist of learning each other's language and encouraging all groups to maintain and develop their group identities. John W. Berry claimed that individuals can sustain a positive identity of his/her culture of origin while being engaged with the host culture in a multicultural society. [41] Some doubts about this model are given. "It is questionable

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[40] Min, P. G. "Korean Americans." Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995.

[41] Berry, J.W. Psychology of acculturation: Understanding individuals moving between cultures. In R.W. Brislin, Applied Cross-Cultural Psychology (pp.232-253). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1990.

whether such a multicultural society can be maintained …
[for] more than three generations of cross-cultural contact.
… In lieu of active discrimination or self-selected
separation, it may be difficult to maintain a truly
multicultural society over time."[42]

*Fusion.* This model describes cultures coming together
to form a new culture. The term "melting pot" rests on both
the assimilation and fusion model. The fusion model
foresees all immigrants transformed into Americans where
there is a complete combination into an emergent whole.
The model suggests that cultures who share political,
economic, and geographic space will blend until they are
not distinguished from one another, creating a new culture.
This model is different from the assimilation or the
acculturation model in that there is no required assumption
of cultural superiority. The multicultural model best
explains the model for ethnic identity among Koreans in
America.

*Alternation.* The alternation model assumes that one
could learn behaviors and understand both the culture of
origin and the host culture while maintaining the culture
of origin. According to this model, the individual can have
a sense of belonging to two cultures without having to

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[42] LaFromboise 1993.

choose between the two and compromise his/her identity. "It is possible and acceptable to participate in two different cultures or to use two different languages, perhaps for different purposes by alternating one's behavior according to the situation."[43]  This model postulates that people who are flexible to relate to both the second culture and his/her culture of origin are less likely to be anxious or stressed than those who are assimilating or accumulating.

Summary of the models

There are five models of second culture acquisition (SCA) to date: assimilation, acculturation, multiculturalism, fusion, and alternation. These models have been developed in order to better understand the adjustment of various groups in second culture contact. This study focuses on the model of acculturation, which may explain the origin of the name "Bananas" or "Twinkies" given to Korean Americans. The acculturation model supposes that when an individual aims to acquire a new culture, he/she will not become fully assimilated or accepted into

[43] Ogbu, J. U. & Matute-Bianchi, M. A. "Understanding sociocultural factors: Knowledge, identity and social adjustment." Beyond Language: Social and Cultural Factors in Schooling. Sacramento, CA: California State University, p. 89, 1986.

the majority culture.[44] One could choose to be involved in the dominant culture and disengage from his or her traditional culture.

In contrast, the cultural pluralistic theory argues that immigrants maintain strong ethnic ties even in light of the exposure and influence of the dominant culture, while continuing to participate in and being part of the great community. This theory may explain the "FOB's" way of life in the United States.

The majority of the "FOB's" come to the states as students without knowing how to speak English. "FOB" students are considered to be international students and are not required to take the SAT or the ACT to enter American universities. Instead, they must take the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and have a high school diploma. Depending on the score, Korean students are able to enroll at American universities. "FOB's" speak only Korean to each other, associate with only Koreans who speak Korean, stay in tune with Korean news in Korea, and download Korean shows and drama's to watch in their dorm rooms. They participate in the greater community by

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[44] Gong, F. Takeuchi, D. T., Agbayani-Siewert, P., & Tacata, L. "Acculturation, psychological distress, and alcohol use: Investigating the effects of ethnic identity and religiosity." In K.M. Chun, P. B. Organista, & G. Mavin (Eds). Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement, and applied research. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. p. 189 – 206, 2002.

participating in school functions or by joining clubs at school, but only clubs that are meant for Koreans. "FOB's" embrace the Korean society to a degree that some graduate from college without knowing how to speak English. They do not acculturate into the American society. "FOB's" way of life in the U.S. complement the cultural pluralistic theory.

The multicultural model seems to best emphasize the relevancy of diverse cultures, races, and ethnicities as being part of one system in America. Other models of SCA seem to over emphasize the acquisition of a new culture, whereas the multicultural model retains involvement in the culture of origin while psychologically adjusting to the host culture. It is noted by Park and Stonequist, "that living in two cultures is psychologically undesirable because managing the complexity of dual reference points generates ambiguity, identity confusion, and normlessness."[45]

"FOBs" maintain strong ties with the culture of origin and lack acculturating to American society. "Banana's" reveal a desire to connect, but do not have the direct connection with the culture of origin. Regardless, they remain involved with the Korean community and sustain relationships with other Korean Americans and people of

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[45] LaFromboise 1993.

different cultures. Language is a manifestation of the acculturation process. Min, who examined the host and ethnic interpersonal communication patterns of Korean immigrants, found that the level of Korean language competence is an important indicator of potential communication gaps within families.[46] In this regard, Kim Uichol also argues that "shared language is basic to shared identity … identity rests on shared ways of using language that reflect common patterns of thinking and behaving, or shared culture."[47] These studies point to the importance of "Banana's" speaking the Korean language to maintain the Korean ethnic identity and culture in America, and "FOB'S" speak English to acculturate and adjust into American culture.

Korean Americans have become a part of the multicultural society of America by psychologically and culturally adjusting to the host culture. It is assumed that Korean Americans struggle through the issue of biculturism, when one adapts to and tries to integrate different aspects of the two cultures to maintain the integrity of their cultural self. Caught in between two

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[46] Min 1995.
[47] Kim, U. "Acculturation of Korean immigrants: What are the hidden costs?" Korean Observer, 10. P. 431-454, 1989.

cultures, both Korean Americans and Korean internationals deal with cultural issues, only, it is to different extents.

# CHAPTER III

## Leadership

### Confucianism

In order to better understand the relationship of Korean women's perceptions of leadership, it is important to understand the history of the status of women's leadership in Korea. The root of Korea's culture originates with Confucian philosophy, which continues to resonate in Korean society.

Confucius (551-479 B.C.), the Chinese sage who originated Confucianism both as a religion and a socio-political philosophy, established an ethical and moral system to govern all social relations in family, community, and society. His philosophy has greatly influenced China, Korea, and Japan. He believed that standardized social relation is an ideal approach to the harmony and order of human society. He identified many hierarchical social relationships such as father and son, husband and wife, older brother and sister, and younger ruler and subject. All relationships depend upon the father-son relationship, in which a son needs to show filial piety to his father. As extensions of the relationship, the daughter-in-law has more responsibilities assigned to the role of married woman in showing filial piety than does the filial son, and the

relationship between husband and wife is secondary to the father-son relationship. Fundamental values of such hierarchical relations were accepted and practiced, but were subject to criticism. The social status of women was as a minority, socially and sexually, and was subject to men.

The idea of male-preference became the root of *namnyo yoobul*, the societal insistence on the rigid distinction between men and women.[48] *Namnyo yoobul* is the main point in the book Li-Chi, a Confucian classic writing. It presents the basic rules between men and women in Confucian family and society. Today, Koreans often repeat the Confucian saying, "the separation of male and female after the age of seven" which is written in the book of Li-Chi.[49] To this day, women eat at different tables from the men during social occasions. Women are also not called by their own original last name after marriage, even though their own last name is used in legal documents. Rather, their identities and possessions are named in reference to their husbands' last names or the husbands' identity, such as "Mr. Kim's wife," "Mr. Park's house," "director's wife,"

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[48] CHai, Ch'u. The Sacred Books of Confucius and other Confucian Classics. New York: University Books, 1965.
[49] CHai 1965.

"governor's wife," or "Pastor Kang's wife." This custom is also supported by the words of Li-Chi.

The adoption of Confucianism occurred when the rulers of the Chosun Dynasty (1392-1910) adopted it as a basis for their values. Women had arranged marriages during their teenage years, and it was not unusual for them to meet their husbands, teenage boys, for the first time on the day of the wedding. It was the custom for the bride and groom never to meet but to remain strangers until the wedding ceremony. By the time children were nine or ten their parents were fully involved in searching for their future mates. Once a good mate was found, both families would arrange an engagement or even a formal wedding; the bride and groom would be as early as age ten or twelve. Prospective mates had to be from different clans, since Koreans practiced strict exogamy, and be accepted by family elders on both sides. Negotiations between the two families would occur with the exchange of gifts and letters of agreement to the marriage. The elements of the ceremony were the exchange of gifts, the series of bows, and the trading of wine cups in a courtyard. After the ceremony the bride would live with her husband's family.

An appropriate married Chosun woman was a woman who did not speak unless spoken to. She was particularly

subject to her mother-in-law's direction.  In addition, she could not leave the house without her husband's permission. When traveling, she would remain inside a covered wagon in order to prevent other men from gaping at her. Steeped in Confucian ideology, Koreans still retain various customs of the traditional wedding ceremony.

Contemporary weddings are more elaborate and expensive in terms of gift exchanges and social displays than weddings in traditional times. Most weddings now take place in ceremonial halls, in western-style, with the bride dressed in a white gown and the groom in a tuxedo or a suit. Music is played by a pianist or a string quartet. Following the formal ceremony there is a second, traditional-style ceremony called *p'yebaek.* This is held at a different building in a room that is furnished in traditional style. The bride and groom are clothed in *hanbok,* the traditional cloth in Korea, fitted with various accessories. The central element of the *p'yebaek* is the bowing ritual, where the newlyweds perform the submissive bow before their parents, kneeling and bowing far enough to make their foreheads touch the floor. Other relatives may also request bows from the bride and groom and present an amount of

money on a tray, as the "bowing price."[50]  It is evident

that Koreans wish to retain the cultural practices.

Compared to contemporary women, leadership of women

did not extend beyond the home during the Chosun period.

It was the duty of the woman to take over nearly all

responsibility for the household, to release her husband

from worries and allow him to pursue "outside" affairs.

This had the effect of increasing the importance of women

in the household. A senior woman held the position of

female head of house, and this could entail considerable

authority over human and material resources. Providing

clothing by spinning, weaving, and preparing food were

obvious tasks for poor and rich women alike and were

labeled "women's work."  However, in a large household, the

female head of house would have significant managerial

responsibilities, including managing servants, arranging

weddings and funerals, providing allowances from the common

funds, or keeping track of all income and expenditures.

Mothers were often the ones who arranged marriages for both

sons and daughters. Leadership for women in Confucian

ideology usually meant leadership from within the household.

A woman of Confucian principles communicated to the outside

world through books and letters.  It was not thought proper

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[50] Clark, Donald N. Culture and Customs of Korea. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000.

for a woman to make her concerns or her feelings known to outsiders.

Haboush wrote, on the literature of Korean women in leadership, citing sources dating back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. "Literature on women leaders is based on official government sources as well as on tomb inscriptions, biographies, and exhortatory literature compiled or written by high officials." [51] This type of literature has largely determined the subjects discussed. These subjects were discussed from men's views and were crucial for highlighting a woman's "virtue" as manifested in her handling of human relationships and her leadership at home. [52]

## Korean Women in the 21st Century

Although gender and ethnic studies exist, exploration of the interactive effects of gender and ethnic differences for Korean women is scarce. Little is known about the lives and relationships of Asian American women or the factors that promote or impede their growth and development. White, middle-class women have been over-represented among

[51] Haboush, J. Kim, & Joan R. Piggott. Women and Confucian Cultures in Pre-modern China, Korea and Japan. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
[52] Haboush 2003.

researchers, theoreticians, and in samples of populations.[53]

Consequently, myths continue to perpetuate a mystique about

Asian women, and Korean women in particular, and

stereotypes that objectify them remain. There is much to

be addressed about Korean women. Soh Chung-Hee writes on

women in Korea, supporting the claim of Confucian

ideology's continuous influence in modern women.

Women in Korea:

> Despite constitutional declarations of equality,
> the cultural norms and values that guide gender
> relations in everyday life continue to be based
> on the Chinese cosmology of yin/yang
> complementarities (i.e., the harmonious
> combination of yin and yang – the feminine
> passive and the masculine active principles,
> respectively) fortified by the traditional
> Confucian ideology of male superiority.[54]

Women in Korea in the 21st century seek to be noticed

and there has been a renewed emphasis on femininity.

However, they are still bound by a Korean culture that

specifically defines male and female roles. Besides roles,

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[53] Brown, L. "The meaning of multicultural perspective for theory building in feminist psychotherapy." Women and Therapy. P. 1- 23, 1990.

[54] Soh, C. "Sexual equality, male superiority, and Korean women in politics: Changing gender relations in a patriarchal democracy." Sex Roles. P. 28, 73 - 90, 1993.

due to competition for recognition, the 21<sup>st</sup> century Korean culture has defined the beauty of Korean women.  At the risk of possible medical mishaps and tremendous pain, women transform themselves to fit the cultural concept of beauty, mostly defined by Korean men.  Beauty means having a high nose, big eyes, and a slim body.  Being beautiful is essential for a 21<sup>st</sup> century Korean woman to get a job. Being a leader or participating in leadership roles are secondary issues. Author Park, Moo-jong of *The Korea Times* summarizes the importance of plastic surgery in two sentences, "Frankly speaking, the people with a better appearance can find jobs more easily and are treated better. The cosmetic surgery fever is just an aspect of our competition-ridden society, in which people make efforts to have better conditions than others."[55]

Song noted that there is an emphasis on Korean women trying to look "beautiful." [56]  Song went on to say that Korea has become a society wherein more money and resources are spent on "improving" the looks of women than on other accomplishments.  It would be rare to find Korean women leaders involved politically, socially, educationally, or religiously in Korea. It is evident that 21<sup>st</sup> century Korean

[55] Park, Moo-jong. "Surgical Beauty Syndrome." <u>Korea Times</u>. May 15, 2001.
[56] Song, Young In, & Ailee Moon. <u>Korean American Women Living in Two Cultures</u>. Los Angeles and Taegu: Academia Koreana: Keimyung University Press, p. 317, 1997.

women are conforming to an idealistic presentation of one's self by plastic surgery, to exude power, wealth, and strength. They also undergo plastic surgery in order to enhance their social capital and be noticed.

Regardless of social class, contemporary young Korean women are less encouraged to aspire to higher ambitions than young men of comparable backgrounds and abilities. For many girls, marriage is the only way to adulthood. Whether or not the average girl is planning to pursue higher education or a career, getting married is to be of the utmost priority for her. This remains as a cultural norm from Confucian ideology. As some of these issues remain for Korean women in Korea, Korean women in America face other concerns. "Korean women in America face cultural barriers and acculturation stressors. In addition to these stressors are financial pressures which are associated with levels of life satisfaction and marital relationship."[57]

In comparison to Korean international women in America, Korean American women are encouraged to "do the right thing" and maintain a traditional ethnic identity when married so their husbands can devote themselves to building the miracle "model minority" image and success in America.[58]

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[57] Moon, Ailee, & Young In Song. Korean American Women living in two cultures. Los Angeles: Academia Koreana, 1997.
[58] Moon 1997.

However, in America, Korean American women are also called upon to assume an economic function to meet the financial needs of the household. Korean American women go through a process of role expansion, adding new roles without relinquishing old ones, rather than a process of role redefinition.

Korean immigrant women, on the other hand, are at risk for psychological problems (Kim & Hurh, 1988; Kim, 1989, Berry, 1987; Min 1995). Berry and Kim made the following two generalizations:

> First, it is not the acculturative changes themselves that are important, but how one sees them and what one makes of them. Second, mental health is affected by the level of discrepancy between acculturating persons' expectations and actualities: the greater this discrepancy, the poorer mental health.[59]

Other research indicates that Korean immigrant women exhibit higher levels of depression and mental health issues than other Asian Americans.[60] One factor is that as they work overtime they are unable to take care of their

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[59] Berry 1987.
[60] Keith, P.M., & Hong, S. H. "Depressive symptoms of younger and older Korean married women." Journal of Comparative Studies, 25(2), 223-231, 1994.

children; juvenile delinquency has been on the rise.[61] The women are burdened with fulfilling both traditional expectations as well as coping with the psychological consequences in their roles within the community and family. Even though a substantial proportion of Korean immigrant women work full-time, they feel ambivalent about the role of provider. Perry-Jenkins, Seery, and Crouter reported that when wives are ambivalent about their provider roles, the level of depression and psychological overload is higher and marital satisfaction is significantly lower.[62] In addition, Korean immigrant women's reactions to high levels of stress are reactive rather than proactive. They adjust their distress with the burden of passivity by doing their best to perform as both housekeepers and breadwinners. Their levels of stress and mental problems would decrease if men were to share household chores with their wives.

Along with middle-class backgrounds, Korean immigrants have brought to the United States the traditional Confucian extended family and related traditional gender role orientation. Could it be that in this generation of Korean American women Confucian ideology is so embedded that they

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[61] Perry-Jenkins, M., Seery, B., & Crouter, A. "Linkages between women's provider-role attitudes, psychological well-being, and family relationships." Psychology of Women Quarterly, 16, 311-329, 1992.

[62] Perry-Jenkins 1992.

are not able to fully develop their leadership abilities? Perhaps the socio-cultural factors that Korean immigrants of second generation Koreans brought to the United States from their native country, and the structural conditions that immigrants encounter in the United States, still continue to influence the children of Korean Americans.

Elization Shon, author of "Struggle for Identity and Self-esteem as a Korean American Woman," is a Korean American woman who came to the States when she was two years old. [63]   Comments on her experience of having to conform to Korean ways, supports the hypothesis of this study which will be later discussed:

> I learned who I was by listening to my older brother, who threatened to send me back to Korea so that I could learn how to be a "proper Korean girl," by observing the shocked looks on my mother's face as I "talked back" or expressed anger, by hearing my father preach that one should always put others first and oneself last, and by doing what I was told I should do – cook, clean, and baby-sit. My brothers' tasks were to become doctors and my task was to marry one. I was groomed for the position of a doctor's wife.

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[63] Moon, 1997.

My mother conceded to allowing me to attend
college only because my father convinced her that
I would be able to meet more eligible Korean men
to marry if I went to college. However, my mother
would remind me from time to time, that men
didn't like smart women and that pursuing an
education would jeopardize my chances of getting
married."[64]

While struggling to conform to Korean ways, Korean American women feel marginalized.[65] Marginality is the onset of self-identity exploration with a certain amount of commitment to it. Stanley Sue suggested that Asian Americans suffer from "learned helplessness," meaning that they have no clear way out of their search for ethnic and cultural identity.[66] Those who resolve this dilemma move to the stage of self-identity exploration, which is called "immersion-emersion" by Cross.[67] In this stage, individuals search for who they are and how to ground themselves in the culture. Cross goes on to mention that the last stage Asian Americans go through in identity development is self-

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[64] Moon 1997.
[65] Sue, S. & Morishima, J. The mental health of Asian Americans. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers, 1982.
[66] Sue, S. "Psychological theory and implications for Asian Americans." Personnel and Guidance Journal, 55(7), 381-89, 1971.
[67] Cross, W. E., Jr. Shades of Black: Diversity in African-American identity. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991.

acceptance, which is accepting them for who they are and having positive conceptions of their ethnicity.[68]

Leadership, based on the old paradigm, was the hierarchical structure that existed where everyone knew his or her place and information traveled down. The new paradigm says that self-assurance is the key, the backbone to succeed in the business world. [69] While women have traditionally been socialized to please others, new paradigm leaders believe that "good girls rarely post great returns." The strongest managers today not only anticipate change, but they create entirely new organizations that respond effectively to shift and engage others in the search for innovation. Having been molded from such a society, Korean American women have the opportunity to excel in becoming compelling leaders in the workforce by using the new paradigm.

Yoon Kyeong Nah conducted a study on the theory of self-directed learning. This involves Korean women revealing that there is a difference between self-directed learners between Korean American women and Korean international women. [70] The Korean self-directed learners

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[68] Cross 1991.
[69] Book, Esther W. Why the best man for the job is a woman. New York: Harper Business, 2001.
[70] Nah, Yoon Kyeong. "Can a self-directed learner be independent, autonomous and interdependent?" Adult Learning. Vol. 11 Issue 1, p18, 1999.

articulate their awareness of others' well-being. Some might want to say these women's awareness of others' well-being is attributable to their so-called "womanness" that cherishes relationships with others. In Nah's study, the experience of the women leaders suggests that the performance of self-directed learning in Korean educational settings means that educators help learners pursue their learning goals with the interests of other learners; educators help learners become learning resources to each other. Among the many feasible reasons for the unsuitability of the self-directed learning theory for Korean women's learning processes are contextual differences. The contextual differences are between the learners, upon whom the theory was based, and the Korean women leaders whose culture prioritizes collectivity over individuality, and interdependence over independence and autonomy. The spirit implied in self-directed learning theory, as it is practiced in North America, does not seem to fully fit the learning processes of women in leadership positions in Korea.

Korea has advanced, however, in leadership development. The American Chamber of Commerce Korea (AMCHAM), for example, is an organization aimed to educate Korean females and provide them with leadership opportunities. Committees

exist within this organization to provide a setting in which forums and open discussions can occur. Writer Overby has stated, "AMCHAM has realized that Korean women are very well educated, but underutilized. They are now helping the development of Korean women in Korea and in America. More companies such as AMCHAM are recognizing Korean women's potentials and are setting up structures to help them reach their full potential."[71] AMCHAM is particularly optimistic about Korean international women who come to the States to receive their education and then later return to Korea and contribute to Korea's economy.[72] Organizations such as AMCHAM provide and support Korean women in becoming leaders in the 21st century.

Theory

*Hofstede's theory*

Leadership may be interpreted and categorized according to culture depending on the interpretation of the culture. Anderson explains:

> Culture is one of the most enduring, powerful and invisible shapers of one's behavior including one's interpersonal communication behavior. It is

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[71] Overby, Tami. The Korea Times. "Women – South Korea's most underutilized resource." The Korea Times. <http://times.hankooki.com>. 2003.
[72] Overby 2003.

one of the four primary sources of human
behaviors along with traits, situations, and
statutes.[73]

Further, Geert Hofstede refers to culture as the
"collective mental programming that distinguishes groups of
people" and compares the role of culture in collectivities
to the role played by personality in the individual, that
is, the aggregate of characteristics that constitute the
individual's response to the environment.[74] His study aligns
with what seems to have occurred in the culture of Korean
Americans and Korean internationals. Due to the
psychological adjustments to the American culture, Korean
American women feel closer to their American identity than
their Korean identity. Attending educational institutions
in the States has also contributed to the independent
nature of Korean American women.

According to Hofestede, America is an individualistic,
masculine society. The attitude, "Say what you mean and
mean what you say," best describes the approach of
Americans. In individualistic societies, individual needs
and interests supersede the need of others; members are

[73] Andersen, Peter. "Explaining Intercultural Differences in Nonverbal
Communication." In Samovar, Larry A., and Porter, Richard E. (Eds.),
Intercultural Communication. Wadsworth Publishing Co,. p. 288, 1991.
[74] Hofstede, Geert. Culture's consequences: International differences in work-
related values. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1984.

self-important. "Equality is the prevailing ethic in society and politics. Status is acquired, not inherited..."[75] Also, "...contract, not custom, prescribes the individual's legal obligation to a given transaction, role or course of action."[76]

Geert explains that an individualistic culture,

> Focuses on the degree the society reinforces individual or collective achievement and interpersonal relationships. A High Individualism ranking indicates that individuality and individual rights are paramount within the society. Individuals in these societies may tend to form a larger number of looser relationships. A Low Individualism ranking typifies societies of a more collectivist nature with close ties between individuals.[77]

In contrast, Korea is a collectivistic society. Collectivistic cultures favor group needs and interest over individual needs and interests. A person's identity is more deeply rooted in group affiliations than a person's identity in an individualistic culture. David Matsumoto, a

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[75] Ting-Toomey, S. "Constructive intercultural conflict management." In Ting-Toomey, S. (Ed.) New York: The Guilford Press, p. 195-227, 2001.
[76] Ting-Toomey 2001.
[77] Hofstede, Geert. "Geert Hofstede Cultural Dimensions."
<http://www.geerthofstede.com/geert_hofstede_resources.shtml>. 2003.

Japanese psychologist, explains differences in emotional expression portrayed by individualistic and collectivistic cultures. He says, "… individualistic cultures encourage self-expression. Its members are relatively free to display a range of emotions, positive or negative, toward others."[78] However, because individuals in collectivistic cultures put the needs of others ahead of themselves they are "pressured to suppress negative emotions (e.g., anger, disgust, sadness) toward in-group members because the display of emotions will upset the harmony of the group."[79] Overall, the cultural dimensions of individualism versus collectivism, power distance, independent or interdependent self, and low or high-context communication patterns, help to gain a general understanding of the communication process as well as the leadership characteristics between individualistic and collectivistic cultures (see Table 4).[80]

A nation characterized by either high or low power distance is the extent to which less powerful people accept the unequal distribution of power. Having high distance power means people prefer to be in a situation in which authority is clearly understood and lines of authority are

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[78] Remland, Martin S. Nonverbal Communication in Everyday Life, 2nd ed. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2003.
[79] Remland 2003.
[80] Gudykunst, William B. Bridging Differences, Effective Intergroup Communication. London: Sage Publications, Inc, 1998.

never bypassed. Possible assumptions can be made about leadership based on cultural identities. Individualistic cultures define themselves as singular persons rather than as part of one or more groups or organizations. Collectivistic cultures, on the other hand, characterize themselves by tight social frameworks in which people tend to base their identities on the group or organization to which they belong. [81] This is the fundamental difference between western and eastern cultures.

Korean Americans have lived in a more direct speech culture, while being brought up within a collectivistic society, where the primary concern is for one's wishes, desires, and concerns over one's own "face." The concept of "face" has been researched by Stella Ting-Toomey, who sees face as a symbolic and claimed sense of self-respect in a relational situation. Face is a universal phenomenon of how one manages strategies in maintaining, saving, or honoring one's face. This differs across cultures. [82] According to Geert's theory, high-context/collectivistic cultures are more conforming. His theory would imply that such cultures reveal the style of transformational leadership.

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[81] Hofstede, Geert. Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work. Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1980.
[82] Ting-Toomey, Stella. Communicating Across Cultures. New York: The Guilford Press, pp. 194-230, 1999.

The style of transformational leadership was first defined by Bernard M. Bass. This style of leadership is concerned with engaging the hearts and minds of others. It helps all parties achieve greater motivation, satisfaction and a greater sense of achievement. The skills required include establishing a long-term vision, empowering people to control themselves, coaching and developing others and challenging the culture to change. A transformational leader develops power through understanding and trust.

**Table 4**

**Leadership Characteristics**

*Asian Cultural Values Compared to Traditional Western Leadership Traits APA (Asian Pacific Americans)*

| Cited APA Cultural Values | Ideal Western Leadership Traits |
|---|---|
| Achievement/honor | Achievement/advancement-oriented |
| Collectivism | Independent |
| Deference to authority | Assertive |
| Filial piety/allegiance to parents | Individualistic |
| Harmony | Competitive |
| Hierarchy | Flexible |
| Humility | Confident/arrogant |
| Reserved | Expressive/charismatic |

Source: D.G. Balon[83]

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[83] Balon, D.G. "Leadership Insights and Applications Series #14." National Clearinghouse for Leadership. Programs, p. 9, 2003.

*Face-Negotiation theory*

Korean women in America live in an individualistic culture, while socializing in their own collectivistic culture. Examining the differences of discrepancies in communication between the interacting cultures can be of importance. By doing so, it may add to the explanation of the perception of leadership of Korean women in America. Understanding this theory allow for a better understanding of issues that are faced by Korean women in America.

Another intercultural theory that helps explain inter-cultural communication is the Face-Negotiation theory. Specifically, this theory attempts to offer an enhanced theoretical framework for explaining cultural differences in conflict behavior. Stella Ting-Toomey is the theorist who proposed the face-negotiation theory. She finds that some groups are most interested in saving their own face, while others are most interested in making sure that others are not embarrassed. She looks at how people understand the concept of saving face across different cultures. She separates cultures into two groups, low-context cultures, such as the United States, and high-context cultures, such as eastern countries. Low-context individualistic cultures value spoken words in a conversation, assertiveness, and

honesty, while high context collectivist cultures believe every action and decision affects the group.

Ting-Toomey indicates that there are three questions when dealing with high and low context cultures. First, when there is a conflict, the person in the conflict and the issues are virtually inseparable. Secondly, the question of a conflicts' main concern is the conditions in which conflicts will most likely happen. Lastly, the third question asks what kinds of attitudes the people in the conflict have concerning antagonisms and tensions in the respective cultures.

Ting-Toomey addresses face concern by high and low-context cultures. She describes whose face must be protected, the face need, autonomy, and inclusion.[84] Low-context culture individuals would want autonomy and are more concerned about saving their own face. High-context individual's value inclusion and are concerned with saving the face of the opposing person. They also value approval and respect. Ting-Toomey described that there are four faces of face that stem from the concept of autonomy and inclusion. The four faces of face are: face-restoration, face-saving, face assertion, and face-giving. Low-context cultures predominately use face-restoration and face-saving,

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[84] Ting-Toomey, Stella. <u>Communicating Across Cultures</u>. New York: The Guilford Press, p. 194-230, 1999.

which involve giving freedom and space to yourself and others. High-context cultures use face-assertion and face-giving. These faces defend the need of inclusion for yourself and others. This is important in collectivistic cultures. As a final point, Ting-Toomey explains five styles of conflict management that high and low context cultures use. Generally, high-context cultures use avoiding, obliging, and compromising tactics while low-context cultures mostly use the styles of dominating and integrating.

## CHAPTER IV

## Methodology

The context of the study and the techniques used to collect data relevant to it are discussed in this chapter.

Methodological Choices

Qualitative research procedures were used in this study. Specifically, questionnaires were collected from the respondents which contained dual-choice and multiple-choice questions. Dual-choice items offered respondents two options from which to select. Multiple-choice questions listed more than two discrete answers from which to choose.

According to Miles and Huberman, qualitative research techniques are good fits for investigations of "real life" issues in setting where events are naturally occurring rather than controlled from a laboratory, and where people are expected to demonstrate understanding and perceptions of their own words.[85] In addition, qualitative research is a good strategy for exploring "a new area, [and] developing hypotheses" as well as "testing hypotheses."[86] The research question of primary interest in the study examined the perception of leadership among Korean American and Korean international women.

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[85] Miles, M. B. & Heuberman, A. M. An expanded sourcebook: Qualitative data analysis 2nd ed. Thousand Oak: Longman, 1994.
[86] Miles 1994.

Respondents

Subjects for this study were from Korean American and Korean international women from New York, North Carolina, and Virginia. Other subjects came from California and Chicago. Other areas include Texas, Virginia, and Illinois. These regions were chosen because of the availability of contacts within church groups and/or Korean Student Association members. Respondents were recruited through friends and connections at various churches.

Since the beginning of Korean immigration, Korean churches have played instrumental roles for Koreans. In addition to meeting their spiritual needs, churches have been "central to the success of many Korean immigrants, acting as a one-stop community center and providing newcomers with vital social network."[87] Korean churches provide a wide range of services such as Korean language classes, special cultural celebrations, leisure activities, and helping new immigrants find jobs and housing. It is in churches where traditional values are upheld. This is clearly reflected in a 1989 survey conducted in Korean churches of the Los Angeles area.[88] This survey showed that 99 percent of parents indicated that churches should teach

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[87] Kim, H. History and role of the church in the Korean American community. In H. Kim (Ed.). The Koreans in America 1882 - 1974: A chronology and fact book. NY: Oceana Publications, p. 124 - 140, 1974.
[88] Kim, H. 1974.

traditional Korean culture. Thus, Korean churches in America have become the hub of even greater activity, providing help to thousands of Koreans affected by the unrest of adjusting to American culture.

The overall sample for the two groups of women, Korean American women and Korean international women, contained of 120 respondents. It is comprised of 58 undergraduates (48 percent), 16 graduate students (13 percent) and 46 women who finished school and are working (39 percent). Seventy-four surveys were collected from Korean American women and 46 surveys from Korean international women. Of the 120 women, 112 were Protestant Christians.

Hypotheses

Below is the list of hypotheses for the current study.

H1: Due to cultural influences, Korean American women cannot fully realize their desire to be leaders in the Korean community.

H2: Due to cultural influences, Korean international women cannot fully realize their desire to be leaders in the Korean community.

H3: Difference in the perception of leadership exists between Korean American women and Korean international women.

H4: There is a significant relationship between Confucian ideology and Korean international women.

H5: There is no significant relationship between Confucian ideology and Korean American women

Results to Hypothesis

H1: Supported

H2: Supported

H3: Supported

H4: Supported

H5: Not supported

## CHAPTER V

## Findings and Discussion

Korean American women are seeking an integrated cultural and independent identity. They feel caught between two cultures: traditional Korean and contemporary Western. The women live with a feminist identity conflict as well. They were raised in a Confucian patriarchal culture due to their parents' influence; now, they are forced to seek self-actualization as they encounter the women's movement in contemporary society. The multi-pressured situation generates a desire for resolution.

At the same time, Korean international women in America come to America seeking an education. Mainly from Korea, other Korean international women come from different countries. Majority of the women have to adjust to the language and the culture. After spending years in the United States, they struggle to keep Confucian values due to the influence of western culture.

I believe Korean American's are within a culture of their own. Due to their upbringing from Korean speaking, collectivistic culture oriented parents, and lacking proficiency in Korean, they tend to travel together. I noticed that this is the same for Korean America men as well. It is rare to see Korean Americans in relationships

with people in other cultures. However, they do not appear to be purposely discriminatory; rather, they seemed to remain close amongst themselves because they understand each other best since Korean culture is group-oriented, not individualistic.

Korean international women stick together to support each other through their adjustment stages in America. Korean international women from other countries are quite different. Korean international women from other countries reveal to be more Americanized than Korean.

Within this context, a research project was designed to collect data on the issue and to examine them objectively. The general purpose of the study was to examine the perception of leadership between Korean American and Korean international women in America. This chapter will report the findings of the study.

Results (see Table 5)
*What are some of the issues concerning leadership that Korean American women face in U.S. society?*

*Korean American women*
    Korea has a patrilineal family system and well-defined set of sex roles prevalent even to this day.

## Table 5

## Respondents' Identification Characteristics

| Characteristic | N (%) |
|---|---|
| **Born in the U.S.** | |
| YES | 52 (43%) |
| NO | 68 (57%) |
| **Age** | |
| 18 - 20 | 26 (22%) |
| 21 - 25 | 32 (27%) |
| 26 - 30 | 54 (45%) |
| 31 - 35 | 8 (7%) |
| **Marital Status** | |
| Single | 102 (85%) |
| Engaged | 4 (3%) |
| Married | 13 (11%) |
| Divorced | 1 (1%) |
| **Identity** | |
| Korean internationals | 46 (38%) |
| Adopted Korean | 2 (2%) |
| 1.5 generation Korean American | 51 (42%) |
| 2.0 generation Korean American | 21 (18%) |
| **Religion** | |
| Protestant | 112 (93%) |
| Catholic | 4 (3%) |
| Muslim | |
| Buddhist | |
| Atheist | |
| Other | 4 (3%) |

Korean American women are still confined to domestic roles and service toward their husbands and families.[89] Therefore, there are not a large number of Korean America women leaders in America. That is not to say that there are no Korean American women leaders. They exist in local communities, entertainment arenas, sports, businesses, and other various fields, but the numbers are low.

By investigating the age of Korean American women, it is evident that the parents of these women are 1st generation Koreans-Americans. According to the demographic aspect of the survey, it is assumed that all of the parents still speak Korean and uphold traditional Korean values at home. These Korean cultural norms and values are observed by Korean American women at home and with the family while spending the majority of their day surrounded by an individualistic society. Evident through the survey, observations, and off-the-record interviews, single Korean American women indicate a struggle between defined Korean women role expectations and experienced American independency from their American educational background. Attending American schools have influenced them to become independent. In American schools, students are entitled to

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[89] Haboush, J. Kim, Ko, Dorothy, and Joan R. Piggott. Women and Confucian Cultures in Premodern China, Korea and Japan. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

their own opinions and ideas, with full equality in opportunity as men.

The message of ethnic consciousness and pride is a particular conception that is pertinent as a Korean. This study revealed that 51 women (69 percent) of the 74 Korean American women were conscious of their ethnicity; however, they also claimed to be more American than Korean. All acknowledged, however, that deep inside they knew they were Korean. The theme of self-discovery has been popular within the Asian American literature. For example, in Amy Tan's best-selling novel, *The Joy Luck Club*, Jing-Mei Woo, an immigrant mother, tells her incredulous second-generation daughter that "once you are born Chinese, you cannot help but feel and think Chinese … Someday you will see … it is your blood, waiting to be let go."[90] Like the Chinese, Koreans are proud of their bloodline. Preserving the traditions of the family and purity of their Korean bloodline remains of great importance to Koreans in Korea and America. The lack of adopting or fostering Korean children by Koreans, for example, is due to the importance of preserving the bloodline.

Language is another key issue that may explain why Korean American women cannot seem to become leaders in the

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[90] Tan, Amy. The Joy Luck Club. New York: Ballantine Books, 1989.

Korean community. John U. Ogbu pointed out that being able to speak a language contributes to a sense of belonging.[91] When individuals can speak their native language they are likely to be included in the group of the speakers and will be appreciated for their capabilities. In addition, communicating in one's own ethnic language creates feelings of intimacy among the community members.

The lack of proficiency in Korean could be a reason behind the fact that Korean American women do not appear as leaders within the Korean community. Survey results revealed that language could be related to identifying their ethnic identity as a Korean for the Korean American women. In the survey, 106 women (88 percent) women responded to the fact that it was important for them to speak Korean. Of the 106 women, 83 women spoke to their parents mostly in English, and some Korean. According to the survey, it is apparent that most Korean American women are more comfortable speaking in English than Korean. Nonetheless, they consider speaking Korean of great importance.

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[91] Ogbu, J. U. & Matute-Bianchi, M. A. "Understanding sociocultural factors: Knowledge, identity and social adjustment." Beyond Language: Social and Cultural Factors in Schooling. Sacramento, CA: California State University, 1986.

Scholars like Pierce Norton agree that language should be understood as a critical marker of ethnicity.[92] However, some scholars disagree with the premise. Edwards and Chisholm conducted research on Scottish Canadians in a small town to test the hypothesis that people can have strong ethnic identities without the preservation of their native languages.[93] The hypothesis was supported as the Scottish descendants who did not speak Scottish were proud of having a Scottish heritage.

Reviving ethnic languages is regarded as a means to help ethnically diverse cultures develop positive ethnic identities. Therefore, Korean schools are set up in metropolitan areas in America to educate Korean Americans. However, similar to the Scottish descendants in Canada, the attitudes of Koreans in America is that one does not have to speak the language to have a positive ethnic identity.

Significant numbers of Korean American women have indicated that it would be difficult for Korean American women to be leaders in an American community. Interview results reveal that parents discourage their daughters from taking leadership roles; this is because of marriage. No

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[92] Norton, B. "Social identity, investment, and language learning." TESOL Quarterly, 29(1), 9-13.

[93] Edwards, J., & Chisholm, J. "Language, multiculturalism and identity: A Canadian study." Journal of Multilingual and multicultural development, 8(5), 591-407, 2001.

Korean man would want to marry an assertive woman, the assumption being made that all leaders are assertive. Getting married is a duty of a Korean woman when it is time. Interviewees claimed that age twenty-four to twenty-six is socially acceptable for marriage and twenty-seven and beyond is a "lost cause." Attitudes of these women have been influenced by the attitudes of Korean men. Korean women beyond twenty-seven are looked upon as too independent and aggressive for Korean men to handle. Traditional riddles and jokes also seem to support the idea that women are best married when they are young.

The study results suggest that the attitude of the majority of Korean American women in the studies concur with Confucian rooted Korean traditional values and norms governing women's gender roles in marriage and family. Their perception of leadership has been influenced by American socioeconomics and cultural as well as egalitarianism and individualism; however, within the generation of Korean Americans studied, the 1.5 and 2.0 generation, still reflects Confucian ideology.

The majority of the respondents, 73 percent of the 74 women, agree that Korean American women's participation in the labor force has improved families' economic status. This reveals that Korean American women work either part-

time or full-time. Nonetheless, domestic work is still
viewed as being performed by the women. However, there
were inconsistencies in the women's own thoughts and
behaviors within the remaining 27 percent. Korean American
women experience two worlds of reality, one of Korean
traditionalism, which includes Confucian gender roles, and
the other of American modernism. This includes great
freedom for women, decision-making power, and greater
opportunities in family and society. It is evident that
Korean American women are torn between two cultures in
being able to be a leader.

*Do Korean international women face the same issues?*

Some of the issues that confront Korean international
women are the problems of not being able to (1) assimilate
into the second culture, (2) break the language barrier, or
(3) stand in opposition to the cultural norms.

With parents who are still in Korea, women are
expected to study hard and graduate with the best grades.
However, these women have to have their majors approved by
the parents. Choosing to be in leadership positions is
neither encouraged nor even available for Korean
international women. When asked if men are generally better
leaders, 52 percent of the women responded with "strongly

agree" and 24 percent responded with "agree." A total of 76 percent of Korean international women agreed that men make better leaders than women. Despite changing and continuous efforts that have been made to promote women's leadership status in Korea, their position is still a visibly subordinate one.

According to the survey, both Korean American and Korean international women revealed that it is not difficult for Korean international women to be leaders within the Korean community. However, while Korean American women disagree that it is difficult for Korean American women to be leaders within the Korean community, Korean international Women argue otherwise. Korean international women believe it is difficult for Korean American women to take leadership positions in the Korean community; perceptions of leadership differ. Also, a majority of Korean American women speak to their parents mostly in Korean. Both Korean-born and American-born Korean American women speak Korean. However, the population of Korean-born Korean American women reveals better Korean proficiency than American-born Korean American women. Parents of Korean Americans are revealed to be 1st generation Korean immigrants who have not been in the United States for a long period of time.

The survey suggests that Confucian proprieties still exist within both Korean American and Korean international women. In short, Korean women in America, ages 19 - 35, share different perceptions of leadership; however, both are embedded in Confucian ideology and they struggle with cultural boundaries. Cultural expectations still dominate Korean society in America and continue to shape the lives of many women in deep and extensive ways.

*Bicultural identity of Korean Women in America*

Based on Berry's concept of integration, bicultural identity has been found to best define the identity of Korean women in America. [94] An individual's bicultural identity is influenced by his/her ethnic group membership and socialization to her/his ethnic group.

Bicultural identity develops in varying degrees throughout the acculturation process, which is influenced by various interactions. However, the greater the dissimilarities, the harder it is to be accepted by the dominant group as part of the mainstream society. Due to the physical and cultural dissimilarities between Korean Americans and the dominant group (white Americans), issues

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[94] Berry, J. W. Ethnic identity in plural societies. In M.E. Bernal & G. P. Knight (Eds.), <u>Ethnic Identity: formation and transmission among Hispanics and other minorities.</u> Albany: SUNY Press, 1993.

of race, ethnicity, culture and their influence, need to be addressed when studying how Korean American women understand their bicultural identity.

Second generation women have been exposed to the dominant society while growing up, so they are not confronted with an unfamiliar culture as may be the case with Korean international women. However, it has been discovered that both Korean American and Korean international women face cultural issues that go beyond language barriers and culture adjustment. Other issues include psychological problems in not being able to integrate one's attitudes, values, behaviors, and emotions in two or more cultures into one's own.

Korean American women may have learned Korean culture indirectly from parents rather than having lived in it. For example, Korean American culture is changing as Korean Americans in the U.S. persist over generations and as social contexts such as racism and prejudice also change with time. Thus, their biculturalism may differ in quality from that of the 1st generation. The 3rd generation will undoubtedly create another culture and perhaps be more "unicultural" than bicultural.

In conclusion, perception of leadership is similar between both Korean American women and Korean international

women in the United States in the 21$^{st}$ century. Despite stronger involvement of Korean American women in leadership positions, both still perceive leadership as a male oriented duty. Leadership is perceived to be primarily a man's attribute.

## CHAPTER VI

## Recommendations for Future Research

The present study raised a number of issues for consideration toward future research. More scientific and representative sampling methods, use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches of inquiry, and design of a longitudinal study are some other suggestions. Brink contends that purely quantitative methods are insufficient when studying ethnic minority populations due to lack of sensitivity to cultural factors in the measures. [95] He suggests that we integrate quantitative and qualitative methodologies to increase sensitivity to cultural factors when studying ethnic minority groups. According to Creswell, combining methods may give one a better understanding of the issues being explored by providing opportunity for richer detail and elaboration. [96]

Future studies would benefit from a larger sample size from all regions of America. Just as people from northern states and southern states are different, so are Koreans who live on the west coast compared to the east, as well as Koreans living in Hawaii. This study recruited women who

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[95] Okazaki, S. & Sue, S. "Methodological issues in assessment research with ethnic minorities." In P.B. Organista, K.M. Chun, & G. Marin (Eds.), Readings in Ethnic Psychology. New York: Routledge, 1998.

[96] Creswell, J.W. Research design: Qualitative and Quantitative approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc, 1994.

were mainly in the east of America. Contacts were made with those who attended church. Recruiting respondents from college campuses and other secular environments could produce different results.

This study surveyed women aged 19 to 40. Korean American women from ages 40 and up are assumed to have encountered different experiences with defining their identity. Korean women in America who experienced adulthood during the 20$^{th}$ century, women who would now be 40 and over, are expected to respond quite differently than women who experience adulthood in the 21$^{st}$ century. Future studies could examine the differences and report the struggles encountered by women in the 20$^{th}$ century compared to the women in the 21$^{st}$ century. In addition, the question of whether and how the Korean American community will successfully integrate their later-generation women can also be added to future studies.

As discussed before, sampling of respondents was done primarily through contacts from Protestant churches. There is one Korean church for every 400 Koreans in the United States, and approximately 70 to 80 percent of Korean immigrants attend Korean churches regularly. [97] Clearly, religion is a significant factor in the construction of

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[97] Sun, Peter J. "Celebrating the Centennial of Korean American Methodists."http://www.tgministry.org/articles/articles.htm>. February 15, 2004.

Korean ethnicity.  A study comparing women's perception of leadership between different religious groups may explain their definitions of leadership.

Because second culture acquisition is believed to be a process rather than an achieved status, it would be important to conduct a longitudinal study of ethnic identity development to have a better understanding of the various factors that contribute to one's ethnic identity and leadership development.  Other influences that impact a woman's perception of leadership can be examined by exploring Korean and American media, the characteristics of the leader of the family, and stress factors.  Also, conducting more research of the parents, grandparents, and siblings, perception of leadership compared to the daughter would be beneficial.  Further research to look at these other sources is warranted.

This study only begins to address issues of leadership between Korean American and Korean international women in America.  Further research questions could expand the literature on Korean women in America in much more depth. Specifically, the research question could be:

1) Are Korean American and Korean international women handicapped from becoming women leaders in the Korean community?  What about in the American community?

2) Are there any particular leadership characteristics portrayed by Korean American women? Korean international women?

3) Do both groups of women have problems assimilating into American culture?

4) Are Korean women in America contributing to the growth of Korean society, American society, or both?

5) Does one's ethnicity depend on the culture of origin, culture of the parents, or the culture to which one best relates?

6) Is today's generation of Korean women in America dealing with the question "Who am I?"

7) Will the Confucian ideology continue to be embedded among the Korean American and Korean international women in America?

Considering the small amount of studies on Korean women in America in the current literature, I believe this study has made a contribution. The findings from this study could be used by other researchers to better understand Korean women's influence in society. Also, researchers could find strategies to open up doors for more Korean women involvement in leadership within Korean or American communities.

# APPENDICES

Appendix A - Introduction Letter

Appendix B - Survey Questions

Appendix C - Informed Consent Form in Korean

Appendix D - Informed Consent Form in English

**Appendix A: Introduction Letter**

Hello ladies,

My name is Grace Kang and I am a Masters student in Communication Studies at Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA.

Currently, I am in the process of writing my thesis.

The title of my thesis is: **"Korean Women in America: A Comparison of the Perception of Leadership between Korean American Women and Korean international Women."**

I am hoping this thesis will shed light to the area of female leadership within the Korean community and the world of academics. Studies on Korean women in general are scarce and I would like to be a part of expanding the research.

Attached to this e-mail is a survey that will ask you questions about your identity and leadership experiences you encountered in the states. This survey will require 5-8 minutes of your time. ALL answers will be held confidential. The survey must be completed, saved, and sent to me.

I would greatly appreciate it! If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (434) 426-4275.

Thanks so much for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Grace Kang
kang.grace@gmail.com

## Appendix B: Survey Questions

"Korean Women in America: A Comparison of the Perception of Leadership between Korean American Women and Korean international Women."

IDENTITY - Please copy this (✗) and paste it next to the choice that best describes you. There will be some questions for typed answers as well. Please mark **ONLY** one.

1. Age: _____

2. Are you …
_____1. Undergraduate student
_____2. Graduate student
_____3. Finished school and working outside the home
_____4. Not in school and working outside the home
_____5. Finished school and not working outside the home

3. Marital status:
_____1. Single
_____2. Engaged
_____3. Married (**See the last page of this survey**)
_____4. Divorced
_____5. Widowed

4. Religion:
_____1. Protestant
_____2. Catholic
_____3. Muslim
_____4. Buddhist
_____5. Atheist
_____6. Other

5. In what country were you born?
_____1. Korea
_____2. America
_____3. Other _____

6. How many years have you lived in the United States?
_____Years _____Months

7. Is your mother currently living in the United States?
_____1. No
_____2. Yes. How long has she lived in the U.S.?
_____Years _____Months

8. Is your Father currently living in the United States?
_____1. No
_____2. Yes, How long has he lived in the U.S.? _____Years
_____Months

9. What is the primary language that you speak to your mother?
_____1. Korean only
_____2. Mostly Korean, some English
_____3. Korean and English about equally
_____4. Mostly English, some Korean
_____5. Only English
_____6. Other

10. What is the primary language that you speak to your parents?
_____1. Korean only
_____2. Mostly Korean, some English
_____3. Korean and English about equally
_____4. Mostly English, some Korean
_____5. Only English
_____6. Other

11. What is the marital status of your parents?
_____1. Married and living together
_____2. Not married and living together
_____3. Not married and not living together
_____4. Widowed
_____5. Divorced
_____6. Separated

12. Which ONE of the following most closely describes how you view yourself?
_____1. I consider myself basically a Korean. Even though I live and work in America, I still view myself basically as a Korean.
_____2. I consider myself basically as an American. Even though I have a Korean background and characteristics, I still view myself basically as an American.
_____3. I consider myself as a Korean American, although deep down I always know I am a Korean.
_____4. I consider myself as a Korean American, although deep down, I view myself as an American first.
_____5. I consider myself as a Korean American. I have both Korean and American characteristics, and I view myself as a blend of both.
_____6. Other. Explain. _____

13. I am …
_____1. Korean
_____2. Adopted Korean
_____3. 1.5 generation Korean American
_____4. 2nd generation Korean American
_____5. I do not have an identity

14. How comfortable are you with your ethnic identity as a Korean American?
_____1. Extremely Uncomfortable
_____2. Very Uncomfortable
_____3. Somewhat Uncomfortable
_____4. Somewhat comfortable
_____5. Very Comfortable
_____6. Extremely Comfortable
_____7. I do not consider myself as a Korean American

**LEADERSHIP**
15. How many leadership roles (ex. Community, church, school, workplace) have you held in the past?
_____1. 1 - 3
_____2. 4 - 6
_____3. 7 - 10
_____4. 11 - 13

16. How many leadership positions (ex. Community, church, school, workplace) do you currently hold?
_____1. 1 - 3
_____2. 4 - 6
_____3. 7 - 10
_____4. 11 - 13

17. Do you view yourself as …
*1)* – focused on the immediate situation and getting the job done
*2)* – inspiring followers to share the leader's values and connect with the leader's vision; create change
*3)* – a leader who exhibits confidence, dominance, a sense of purpose, and the ability to articulate goals
*4)* – intellectually stimulating others regardless of the other people's intellectual capabilities; have a high degree of empathy for others and their belongings.
*5)* – a leader who encourages leaders to serve others while staying focused on achieving results in line with the organization's values and integrity
_____1.
_____2.

_____3.
_____4.
_____5.

18. Do you consider yourself to be …
_____1. (active and independent, critical thinking)
_____2. (active and dependent, uncritical thinking)
_____3. (passive and dependent, uncritical thinking)
_____4. (passive and independent, uncritical thinking)
_____5. (medium on both dimensions)

19. Who has been more influential to you as a leader in your family?
_____1. Mother
_____2. Father
_____3. Grandmother
_____4. Grandfather
_____5. Older brother/sister
_____6. Younger brother/sister
_____7. Other

20. How many Korean American women leaders do you know?
_____1. 1 Name: _____
_____2. 2 Names: _____
_____3. 3 Names: _____
_____4. 4 Names: _____
_____5. More than four names:
_____

**Write the number (1, or 2) to the following:**
**_1_ agree _2_disagree**

_____1. I believe it is difficult for Korean international women to be leaders within the <u>Korean</u> community.
_____2. I believe it is difficult for Korean American women to be leaders within the <u>Korean</u> community.
_____3. I believe it is difficult for Korean international women to be a leader in the <u>American</u> community.
_____4. I believe it is difficult for Korean American women to be leaders within the <u>American</u> community.
_____5. Generally, men leaders are better leaders than women leaders.
_____6. The wife should follow her husband.
_____7. Men should not speak on domestic matters, and women should not speak on outside affairs.
_____8. I am very proud of my Korean heritage.
_____9. I often watch TV or movies in Korean.

_____10. I bond easily with Korean people.

_____11. I tend to see more negative than positive sides of Korean culture.

_____12. I appreciate high interdependence and closeness among family members.

_____13. Having a Korean heritage is an unfortunate fact for me.

_____14. It is important for me to know how to speak in Korean.

_____15. Psychologically, I feel close to Koreans.

_____16. I do not believe I have any leadership ability.

_____17. I intend to be just as actively involved in leadership roles after I got married.

_____18. I do not care to be in any leadership positions.

_____19. I would like to be more involved in leadership positions in my workplace, school, community, or church.

_____20. I believe the Korean culture does not encourage women to be leaders.

_____21. Psychologically, I feel close to Korean Americans.

_____22. Knowing how to cook Korean food is important to me.

_____23. I cook Korean food at least once a day.

_____24. I would cook food that my husband likes more than what I like to eat.

_____25. I am held back from holding leadership positions due to cultural perceptions of gender roles.

_____26. I like to make Korean friends.

_____27. Being Korean American does not mean I have to embrace my Korean heritage.

_____28. I believe speaking Korean is important.

_____29. The man should be the leader of the house.

_____30. Generally speaking, men are better leaders in the business world.

_____31. I feel that I have nothing in common with Koreans.

_____32. I would like to see more Korean American women leaders projected in the media.

_____33. I think Korean American women deserve more recognition for their leadership roles.

_____34. Despite having leadership roles, the community does not recognize me because I am a woman.

_____35. I identify with problems better with Koreans than Americans.

_____36. I believe my family background has influenced me to view leadership a certain way.

_____37. I believe my educational background has influenced me to view leadership a certain way.

_____38. It is important for me to speak Korean.

_____39. I would like to be an example as a woman leader in the community.

_____40. I care more about being a role mode than I do about being a leader.

## Appendix C: Consent Form - <u>Korean</u>

친애하는 재미교포에게,

저는 리버티 대학, 석사학 수료생입니다. 제 석사학위 논문으로, 재미교포 여성분들이 어떠한 방식으로 어떻게 미국사회에 적응하고 있는지에 관해 조사하려고 합니다. 이 목적을 가능케 하기 위해서는, 여러분의 진심어린 협력이 필요합니다.

이 연구는민족 정체성 리더십 문제 행동 간의 관계를 조사하는 것입니다. 저는 여성분들이 연구에 참여해주길 바라고 있습니다. 연구에 참여하고 싶으시면, 조사 설문지에 응답을 해주시기 바랍니다. 모든 응답은 익명으로 처리될 것이며, 비밀이 보장될 것입니다. 또한 연구의 참여는 자발적인 것이기 때문에, 연구 기간 중에 참여를 중단할 수도 있습니다. 설문지와는 별개로 수집되는 동의서 양식을 제외하고는, 설문지 상에 익명을 보장합니다.

설문지는 대략 10-15 분이면 완성할 수 있을것입니다. 제 전화번호는 (434) 426-4275, 그리고 메일 주소는 gkang@liberty.edu 입니다. 이 연구에 관련된 질문이 있으시다면, 제게 연락주십시오. 이 연구를 위하여 시간을 할애해주시고, 협조해주셔서 감사드립니다.

강은혜 올림

리버티 대학

Communication 석사학

**Appendix D: Consent form - <u>English</u>**

Dear Korean American women/Korean international women:

As part of my masters (MA) degree at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia, and as a Korean myself, I am interested in studying how Korean American women differ from Korean international women when it comes to leadership in the workforce. I hope that the outcomes of the study will lead us as Korean women to better understand ourselves and ultimately motivate us to strive harder in building up our community with our apparent or perhaps non-apparent leadership abilities.

Please know that your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your participation during the study. Also, your name will not be used in any of the findings.

It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Your honest answers will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions after the survey, please feel free to call me at (434) 426-4275 or email me at <u>gkang@liberty.edu</u>. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Eun Hye (Grace) Kang

MA Candidate

Liberty University

School of Communication

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