The Challenge of Ecclesiastical Multicultural Integration in Homogeneous Japan

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in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

By
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In 2019, 26% of the attendees at Akita Bible Baptist Church (ABBC) were non-Japanese. However, only 4% of the official members of the church were non-Japanese. The purpose of this action research project was to find a strategy to reduce the gap between the relatively high percentage of non-Japanese attendees (26%) and the low percentage of non-Japanese official members (4%). In other words, the purpose was to identify a strategy to increase multicultural integration regarding organizational influence at ABBC. This strategy was discovered by first interviewing eleven non-Japanese attendees. The research facilitator was surprised to discover that 73% of the non-Japanese interviewees thought they had organizational influence even though only one out of the eleven was an actual church member with objective organizational influence. How much influence did they think they had? On average, with ten being the most influence they could have and one being the lowest, they thought they had an influence level of six. This viewpoint led to a shift in how the research facilitator viewed multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. Contrary to the original assumption, the objective percentage gap is much less important than the subjective level of influence the non-dominants feel they have in the church. The interviewees also revealed that empathetic listening and caring for the non-Japanese would be beneficial in increasing multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. As a result, the church enacted an English service intervention strategy that led to a measurable increase in the subjective level of multicultural integration at ABBC.

Abstract Length: 249

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### Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td>ABBC</td>
<td>Akita Bible Baptist Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIU</td>
<td>Akita International University</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBA</td>
<td>Conservative Baptist Association</td>
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<td>CBFMS</td>
<td>Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society</td>
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<td>DMIN</td>
<td>Doctor of Ministry</td>
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<td>IRB</td>
<td>Institutional Review Board</td>
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<td>JBA</td>
<td>Japan Bible Academy</td>
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<td>JEA</td>
<td>Japan Evangelical Association</td>
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<td>LUSOD</td>
<td>Liberty University School of Divinity</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Throughout history, the challenge of multicultural integration has impacted most nations and people groups. A perfect example is the friction between Jews and Gentiles 2000 years ago in Israel during the time of Christ. Clearly, nothing is new or unique about the problem itself. Akita Bible Baptist Church (ABBC) in Akita, Japan also struggles with the challenges of multicultural integration. Nothing about the existence of the challenge is unique in and of itself. However, what makes the situation at ABBC unique is the ministry context. Because ABBC is located in an overwhelmingly homogenous and non-Christian nation with a relatively short history of Christianity, the challenges of multicultural integration express themselves in ways that are different from many other countries throughout history. This first chapter will consider the ministry context that makes the situation so unique. Then this chapter will present the problem, purpose statement, and thesis statement of this project.

Ministry Context

In real estate, people say location is everything. In biblical interpretation, people often say context is everything. In this thesis project, while context may not be everything, it not only significantly affects the perceived problem at hand but will also impact the nature of the research. For this reason, this section will address the local community context as well as the local church context of ABBC.

Local Community Context

In a way, the church doors limit the ministry context. However, the church does exist within the context of this present world. As such, the local community context can significantly

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1 “they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.” John 17:14-16, English Standard Version (ESV) Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references in this thesis project will be from the English Standard Version of the Bible.
impact what goes on inside the church's doors. For this reason, this section will observe the local community context of ABBC before considering the more limited local church context.

**Cultural Context**

Akita Prefecture is well known for its Namahage. Namahage are "demons" that come down from a mountain on Oga Peninsula into the local villages every New Year's Eve. In rural towns on Oga Peninsula, people dressed as Namahage enter the houses of local residents. They cry out loudly, "Are there any crying children here?" In an attempt to make the children behave and not be lazy over the coming year, the Namahage scare the children once they find them. The Namahage also promise good fortune over the households that they visit. The head of the house then pays the "demons" with rice cakes and money in gratitude for the "demon's" blessings. One theory on the origins of the Namahage tradition is that long-ago Japanese residents considered shipwrecked non-Japanese sailors to be demons. The Namahage customs may have started from that point. Whether or not the Namahage were originally just non-Japanese shipwrecked sailors may never be known.

Nevertheless, the historical reality that Japanese people sometimes considered non-Japanese people to be fearful or evil impacts Japan to this day. While the present attitudes are far more nuanced, the general attitudes towards non-Japanese people can also come through in the church. When this attitude appears in the church, it can directly affect the problem at hand.

Akita's rice festival called Kanto Festival is also very famous. Visitors come from all over Japan each year to see the festival in the first week of August. Performers balance tall bamboo sticks with lanterns attached to them on their hands, shoulders, and backs. The bamboo

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sticks can weigh up to 50 kilograms (110lbs). The bamboo sticks with lanterns represent large rice plants loaded with rice. Historically, residents held the festival to ask the local gods to give them a bountiful rice harvest in the coming fall. People have mostly forgotten about the festival's religious aspects, but the cultural events continue to this day. It is an opportunity for the residents of Akita to demonstrate their rich history and culture to the rest of Japan and the world. Japanese people sometimes consider Japanese Christians to have betrayed that rich history and culture by taking on the Christian faith. This sense of betrayal can be even more the case when there are many non-Japanese people in the local church as well. This feeling results because, from the outside, the church even physically looks non-Japanese when many foreigners attend the church. At first glance, the cultural context of ABBC may not seem to be related to the problem that this thesis addresses. Nevertheless, as the reader will observe in the problem statement, the cultural context directly impacts the problem at hand.

**Location Context**

Akita Bible Baptist Church is in Akita City. Akita City is the capital of Akita Prefecture, located on the northern part of the main island of Japan called Honshu. On the west side of the city, approximately 15 minutes by car from the church, is the Sea of Japan. Aomori Prefecture (North), Iwate Prefecture (East), and Yamagata Prefecture (South) are adjacent to Akita prefecture. People call the general northern region of Honshu, Tohoku. Tohoku contains six prefectures in all. In general, people consider Akita a rural and traditional region of Japan with a rich history and culture.

**Climate Context**

Akita Prefecture is known for having four very distinct seasons. The winter season comes with heavy snow across most of the prefecture. What makes the climate of Akita unique is its
relative darkness. Akita City has 1,526 hours of sunlight per year which is the lowest number out of all the capital cities in Japan. Even if one calculates the number of sunny days, Akita City has the lowest number at one hundred and seventy sunny days per year. Many people consider the cold and darkness to be partially responsible for why Akita often has the highest suicide rate in Japan. On the positive side, the lack of sunlight leads to relatively white skin that is considered favorable in Japan. As a result, many Japanese people think women from Akita are the most beautiful in the nation.

**Population Context**

Akita Prefecture’s population has been decreasing rapidly at a rate of 10,939-14,757 people per year for the last ten years. On October 1, 2020, there were 952,005 people in Akita Prefecture. This number has decreased by 13,922 since October 2019. Akita City contains approximately a third of the population of Akita Prefecture, with 304,031 people at present. Across Japan, a relatively high percentage of the population is elderly. Akita is a prime example of this with 37% of prefectural residents being 65 years or older. In 2019, 4,508 people were born in Akita Prefecture, while 15,520 passed away. The numbers point to an aging population with too few births to keep up with the quickly declining population. In the meantime, the population of non-Japanese residents has been increasing nationwide. Although COVID-19 has drastically reduced the number of non-Japanese residents in Japan in 2020, in 2019, the nation of Japan registered the highest number of foreigners ever with 2,870,000 non-Japanese residents.

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3 Local meteorologists define a sunny day as being a day with less than 80% cloud cover.


(2.3% of the entire population). Compared to 2018, this number is a 7.48% increase of non-Japanese residents across Japan even while the Japanese population continues to decrease. Within Akita City, the increase of non-Japanese residents has been much more gradual than much of the rest of Japan. Akita City had 1,237 non-Japanese residents in 2009 compared to 1,314 non-Japanese residents in 2019. The most significant number of non-Japanese residents in Akita City come from China, with 255 Chinese nationals.  

**Religious Context**

Most Japanese people are either Shintoists, Buddhists, or both. At the end of 2018, 48.1% were Shinto, 46.5% were Buddhist, 1.1% were Christian, and 4.3% categorized themselves as other. The percentage of Christians includes any groups that call themselves Christian. As a result, the number of Christians includes groups like the Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses, among others.

Akita is largely a microcosm of the rest of Japan religiously. In 2019, there were 745,314 Shintoists (78% of population), 560,398 Buddhists (59%) and 4,467 Christians (0.5%) registered in Akita Prefecture. As the numbers reveal, many Japanese do not hesitate to hold several religions at once, so there is potential for some people to have registered with Christianity as well as with Buddhism. Also, since they define a Christian as anyone who calls themselves Christian, they will include any cult member who calls themselves Christians in the total number of registered Christians. For these reasons, the 0.5% percentage is most likely a

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high estimate of the actual number of Christians within Akita Prefecture. Christians are a minority within Akita by any definition.

Local Church Context

The culture, location, population, religion, and even the climate can significantly affect the makeup of a church. However, the church is ultimately not of this world.\(^8\) As such, it is not surprising to find that the ministry context within the church is often unique from the broader local community context. This uniqueness is the case with ABBC too. While the previous section considered the local community context, this section will consider the local church context.

Local Church Historical Context

Soon after World War 2, many passionate Christian missionaries entered Japan in the hope of bringing the gospel to the Japanese people.\(^9\) Some Baptist missionaries made their way to Southern Akita prefecture because one of the cities called Jumonji started with a kanji character that looked like a cross.\(^10\) The missionaries took that as a sign. As a result of their sacrificial ministry, they created several Japanese churches in Southern Akita Prefecture. However, in 1976, there were still no Baptist churches in Akita City. As a result, seven Baptist Christians decided to start a Baptist church in Akita City. Three conservative Baptist pastors from Southern Akita offered to help them start the church. They officially met together for the first time on March 2, 1976. In September 1977, the Conservative Baptist Association of Japan officially recognized ABBC. Akita Bible Baptist Church was formally born.

\(^8\) John 15:19, 18:36.


\(^10\) 十文字
The road forward for ABBC was not without struggle. For one, Japan does not have enough Japanese pastors for each church to have one pastor each. Also, many Japanese people consider Akita to be a rural part of Japan that is outside the national radar. In other words, it is not a very popular place to live. The general lack of pastors combined with the relatively lousy location made it especially hard for the church to find a pastor. It would take almost ten years to find their first pastor. Finally, in 1986, Pastor Ikeda became the first full-time pastor of ABBC. Pastor Ikeda led the church to the point that the Japanese government finally recognized ABBC as an official religious organization in 1993. Also, in 1994, they were able to purchase a church building for the first time. Unfortunately, Pastor Ikeda moved on to a different church in July 1994. Once again, ABBC was without a pastor. This time it would take seventeen years to find their next pastor. In 2011, the author of this thesis, William Petite, became the pastor of ABBC.\(^{11}\)

**Local Church Political Context**

Akita Bible Baptist Church is a baptistic congregational church with Conservative Baptist Association (CBA) roots. Missionaries from the CBA's missions organization, the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society (CBFMS), now called World Venture, were primarily responsible for leading the founders of ABBC to Christ. As a result, ABBC still feels the strong influence of CBA in the style of the regular Sunday services and the style of the church government. The church has one pastor, four deacons, and four board members. Akita Bible Baptist Church has twenty-seven active members, with five additional regional members who live outside of Akita Prefecture but still have not joined a different local church. The church still considers regional members to be members, but they are not qualified to be board members or vote at the annual board meeting. Two of the active members (7%), including the one pastor, are

non-Japanese.\textsuperscript{12} Akita Bible Baptist Church is associated with the Conservative Baptist Association of Japan under the larger umbrella of the Japan Evangelical Association (JEA).

**Local Church Life Context**

Akita Bible Baptist Church’s annual budget is approximately 90,000 US Dollars.\textsuperscript{13} The average attendance for the fiscal year 2019 was 56 people per Sunday, including children. All preaching and teaching uses Japanese. The sermons each Sunday are expository. Once the church covers a whole New Testament book, the church chooses an Old Testament book in an attempt to balance the teachings of the Old and New Testaments adequately. The church irregularly holds thematical studies in addition to the Sunday services. The church holds prayer meetings on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. In cooperation with the Japan Bible Academy (JBA), an off-shoot of Master’s Seminary, ABBC has held seminary classes at the church once every three to four months for the past three years. These classes target church lay-leaders as well as those who are seeking to enter the pastorate. The classes are taught in Japanese but are also interpreted into English. Until March 2020, the church held English worship services up to once a month on Sunday nights. The average attendance was around 20 people. Recently, the English services have become less practical because of a lack of people who can serve in English services and COVID-19. The church has provided regular English and sign-language interpretation for several years. However, while sign language continues, English interpretation has stopped since September 2020 due to an insufficient number of English interpreters.

\textsuperscript{12} One Korean and one American.

\textsuperscript{13} Data obtained from ABBC’s 2020 annual board meeting paperwork.
Local Church Multicultural Context

Almost exclusively, the church consisted of Japanese people from the beginning. However, in 1990, Minnesota State University opened a college campus just twenty minutes by car from ABBC. Minnesota State University would begin to impact the racial and cultural aspects of the church. Soon after Minnesota State University opened, some non-Japanese people started to come to ABBC on Sundays. Unfortunately, in 2003, Minnesota State University closed due to financial reasons. Just one year later, the school reopened as Akita International University (AIU). Akita International University focuses on the liberal arts, teaches all classes in English, and requires all students to study abroad for one year. It has come to be one of the most popular schools in Japan. As a result, many of Japan's brightest students come to AIU from all over Japan. Many more come from all over the world. International students and staff at AIU and another local university called Akita University are the primary providers of ABBC's international and multicultural audience. This, combined with an English-speaking American pastor, led ABBC to become increasingly international from 2011. The number of non-Japanese regular attendees has recently decreased because of the COVID-19 and a lack of English interpretation. However, on a typical Sunday like October 25, 2020, there were 52 attendees (42 adults, 10 children) in all. Nineteen (37%) of the attendees (including children) were citizens of a country other than Japan. They represented America (five), Thailand (three), Taiwan (one), Korea (four), Liberia (one), Kenya (two), Zambia (one), Argentina (two). One attendee was racially Malaysian but had changed his citizenship to Japan, so he was not included in the number of non-Japanese attendees. Some hold dual citizenship as well. Fifty-three percent of the non-Japanese attendees were in Akita City due to AIU or Akita University. The rest live in Akita due to family or other work-related reasons. In conclusion, including children, 37% of the
church's attendees on a typical Sunday in 2019 were non-Japanese. This percentage is a relatively high number when one considers that only 0.4% of the population of Akita City is non-Japanese.

**Problem Presented**

The problem this project will address is that ABBC fails to multiculturally integrate regarding organizational influence. Therefore, the research this project will explore is the problem of insufficient multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. On the surface, the church may look multiculturally integrated. There are people from many nationalities and people groups worshipping together on an average Sunday morning. However, when one looks more deeply, evidence of the problem is readily available. For example, regarding membership, even though over 20% of the adult church attendees are non-Japanese on an average Sunday, only 4% (1 out of 27) of the members are non-Japanese. While non-Japanese serve the church in many ways, the primary burden regarding service falls on the shoulders of the Japanese members. All the board members, deacons, and accountants are Japanese. All the pianists are Japanese. All the emcees are Japanese.

At the very least, the Japanese member's methods of service are often more visible than the non-Japanese methods of service. According to the church accountant, non-Japanese attendees give about 5-6% of the total budget regarding calculatable financial giving. When one looks at membership, service, and financial offerings, the imbalance is apparent. While over

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14 For further details on the average percentage of non-Japanese adult attendees in fiscal year 2019 refer to Appendix H. The average was 26% non-Japanese adult attendees.

15 This number does not include the pastor who is American.

16 i.e., two non-Japanese serve in the Children’s ministry. Non-Japanese help with cleaning, cooking, interpreting, etc.

17 Naoko Oomi (Church General Accountant), Line Message to author, October 28, 2020.
20% of the church attendees are non-Japanese on a regular Sunday, only 4% of the official members are Japanese. Non-Japanese service methods are limited, and non-Japanese attendees give 5-6% of the annual calculatable budget. This imbalance can lead some Japanese people to assume that the non-Japanese do not give to the church but only receive. This imbalance can lead to invisible divisions and negative attitudes towards the non-Japanese in the church that are hard to see and address adequately.

To address the primary problem sufficiently, this author must not ignore abundant sub-problems behind the primary problem of insufficient multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. One of those sub-problems is language barriers. Language barriers can not only disrupt interpersonal relationships, but they can also leave the non-Japanese speaker feeling left out of the dominant group. Language barriers also limit the methods of service available to non-Japanese. As a result, the language barriers create a tendency for people to only congregate with people who speak a language they know. In a large church, this may not be a problem and may even be preferable at times. However, in a relatively small church like ABBC, it can cause some of the insufficient multicultural integration within the church. For one, sometimes people do not develop a close relationship with people who do not speak their mother tongue. Then on the other side, people who speak Japanese feel like the people speaking a foreign language at church are just guests. Furthermore, foreign names add to the problem because they are harder to remember. As a result, foreign names can discourage people from deepening their relationship or even remembering a person's name. The older generation of Japanese people tend to give up on remembering non-Japanese` names especially. Thus, language barriers can play a role in the insufficient multicultural integration at ABBC.
A second obvious sub-problem is the relatively short-term nature of non-Japanese church attendees. Most non-Japanese believers do not plan to stay in Akita for the rest of their lives. Foreign university students already know they will be leaving in four to six years, so they are less likely to put their roots deep into the local church. Some non-Japanese who are in Akita for work are not sure their contract will continue into the following year. Multicultural integration can take much more time and energy for the non-Japanese as compared to the Japanese person. For example, the non-Japanese person may have to learn Japanese to integrate adequately. In such a situation, the non-Japanese person naturally weighs the pros and cons of integrating into the Japanese church. A relatively short-term stay in Akita can make the cons related to integration more apparent. In the end, integration may not seem to be worth it to the individual over the long run. For multicultural integration to succeed, the church must address subproblems such as language barriers and the relatively short-term nature of non-Japanese people's stays.

On a broader scale, while people can find the problem of insufficient multicultural integration within local churches worldwide, what makes the problem of ABBC unique is two-fold. First, ABBC exists within the nation of Japan. While there is plentiful evidence on the contrary, many people still assume Japan to be monoethnic and culturally homogeneous. This assumption does not stop there. The assumption continues by declaring that Japan is not only monoethnic and homogeneous, it should remain that way. Although Christians in a local church setting may not openly give voice to such attitudes, the general national tendency may remain the same at a deeper level of the heart, even within the church. Secondly, the population of Christians in Japan is insignificant. While there is some variation between regions, overall,

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less than one percent of Japan's population is Christian. This percentage includes all kinds of Christians.\textsuperscript{19} The situation is even direr within Akita City itself.\textsuperscript{20} Foreigners often come from countries with a much higher percentage of Christians. As a result, while foreigners make up only 0.4% of the total number of residents in Akita City, the local population of foreigners has a relatively high percentage of Christians. The problem is that ABBC, which exists in an overwhelmingly non-Christian and homogeneous culture, fails to multiculturally integrate regarding organizational influence.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this Doctor of Ministry action research thesis is to counsel ABBC on transformative principles of multicultural integration that apply to a local church in an overwhelmingly non-Christian and homogeneous nation. Counseling will primarily target the adult Japanese attendees in the church. While the non-Japanese attendees also need to apply transformative principles of multicultural integration to the situation at ABBC, they can abundantly find such transformative principles throughout a broad spectrum of literature and practice worldwide. Regarding this specific thesis, the emphasis will be on counseling Japanese Christians in ABBC who are significantly influenced by their overwhelmingly non-Christian and homogeneous culture. The empowered non-Japanese believers will be the teachers of the Japanese believers on matters regarding multicultural integration. In doing so, all parties will benefit. The non-Japanese believers will experience a greater sense of integration and belonging within the church.

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\textsuperscript{20} As mentioned before, the highest estimate of Christians in Akita City is 0.5%. That means that less than one out of every two hundred people in Akita City are Christians.
community even if their stay in Akita is relatively short. Just knowing that the Japanese believers are listening to them and want to know what they have to say should encourage them in and of itself. This encouragement alone may even lead to more multicultural integration. At the same time, the Japanese believers in ABBC will benefit by being better equipped to integrate and accommodate any non-Japanese believers in the future. While the non-Japanese are more likely to come and go, the Japanese believers are more likely to remain in ABBC long term. Wisely integrating non-Japanese believers into the church will ensure the church does not repeat common problems related to insufficient multicultural integration that can lead to hurt and confusion every time a non-Japanese person walks through the church doors. Ultimately, this will ensure that the church’s primary purposes of worship, discipleship, and evangelism can remain the focus of the church regardless of the multicultural makeup of the church. It will ensure that ABBC will continue to glorify God.

Basic Assumptions

The first assumption made in this thesis is that Japan is homogeneous. While there is evidence that Japan is not actually homogeneous according to a strict definition of what homogeneous means, in general, both Japanese and non-Japanese people consider Japan to be overwhelmingly homogeneous. At the very least, this thesis will not consider the historical number of other races within Japan as being a significant factor worthy of consideration regarding the problem at hand. This thesis will assume that Japan is an almost wholly homogeneous nation made up of one race.

The second assumption is that the local church should do what it can to multiculturally integrate. A simple solution to any multicultural problem would be to exclude all non-Japanese

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21 Lee, Murphy-Shigematsu, and Befu, *Japan’s Diversity Dilemmas*, 7.
people from the church. This exclusion would solve all problems related to multicultural integration immediately. Donald McGavran takes the lead in saying that this is precisely what churches should do. He says that homogenous churches are better for church growth and ultimately for the kingdom.\textsuperscript{22} However, this thesis will assume that all churches should strive for multicultural integration if given the opportunity. While this could negatively affect the numerical church growth,\textsuperscript{23} this thesis assumes that there are more critical things to consider about the church than numerical growth.

The third assumption is that the church is ultimately responsible to God. Within ABBC, members recognize both the challenges and blessings of having a relatively multicultural church. On the positive side, church members occasionally comment on how the church feels like heaven because Revelation 7:9 says that people from every tribe and nation will be in the kingdom. On the negative side, church members sometimes find they hold racial prejudices that they did not even recognize in themselves before they came to ABBC. Language barriers and communication-based misunderstandings are common. However, in general, the church seems to consider the blessings of being multicultural to outweigh the challenges of being multicultural. Outside the church, society generally looks at multicultural entities positively. Part of this positive attitude is due to the increased necessity of a foreign presence due to the realities of globalization and a quickly decreasing Japanese population.

Nevertheless, ultimately, it is not about what the church or local community feels about the issue. The church cannot independently decide what it considers to be best. The local


\textsuperscript{23} The reader can see one example from ABBC’s history when a Japanese believer left the church because there were “too many English speakers.”
community cannot dictate what is best for ABBC. This thesis assumes that Christ, who is the ultimate Head of the church, is the one who has the authority to determine for what purpose the church exists and anything else about the church. This thesis assumes that Christ reveals His purposes and desires for His church within Scripture. The ultimate goal of this thesis project is to take one step forward toward absolute obedience to Christ as revealed in Scripture for the glory of God.

Definitions

Four definitions will be especially vital for the sake of this thesis project. This section will define "integration" first. The second word that needs to be defined is "homogeneous." “Non-Japanese” is the third word that needs to be defined. This section will define "organizational influence" lastly.

Integration

The word "integration" is of primary significance within the confines of this thesis project. According to Korie Edwards, Brad Christerson, and Michael Emerson, 20% of the church attendees should be ethnoculturally non-dominant for a church to be integrated numerically.24 Suppose one defines integration as merely being the presence of ethnoculturally non-dominant attendees within the church. In that case, ABBC is sufficiently integrated, with an average of 26% of the attendees being ethnoculturally non-dominant over the fiscal year 2019. Malcolm Patten says the availability of foreign food and drink in the church is a requirement for the church to be considered truly multiculturally integrated.25 ABBC is already sufficiently

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integrated using this definition because food and music of ethnoculturally non-dominant attendees show up on many Sundays. This thesis project will determine if a church is integrated or not based on the following definition. A church is integrated if the degree of non-dominant organizational influence is relative to the percentage of non-dominant attendees. With such a definition, in an ideal situation, if there were an average of 26% ethnoculturally non-dominant attendees, then 26% of the ecclesiastical organizational influence would come from those non-dominant attendees.

Homogeneous

What makes the situation at ABBC unique is the homogeneous nature of Japan, and its overwhelmingly non-Christian culture. So, what does it mean that Japan is homogeneous? In its most basic form, homogeneous merely means that things are of the same kind or alike. This thesis project will define homogeneous as having an ethnic fractionalization index of under 0.012. 0.012 is the ethnic fractionalization index number of Japan. Ethnic fractionalization indices are based on the probability of two randomly picked individuals being from different groups. Ethnic fractionalization numbers exist between zero and one. The lower the ethnic fractionalization number, the less likely two randomly picked individuals will be from different ethnocultural groups. Researchers consider Japan to be the third least ethnically fractionalized country behind North and South Korea. Japan has an ethnic fractionalization rate of 0.012. In


general, this means that only 1.2% of any randomly selected pair of people will be from two different groups. Emphasizing this homogenous nature of Japan can easily make minority groups feel invisible within Japan, leading to an unequal distribution of power in the nation.30 This same tendency can easily make its way into the local church as well.

**Non-Japanese**

Within the context of this thesis project, "non-Japanese" will be determined merely by the person's nationality. At times, terms such as "ethnoculturally non-dominant" may be used as well in the place of "non-Japanese." This phrase emphasizes the non-dominant nature of the people who are not Japanese nationals, and it frequently appears in the literature. Defining "non-Japanese" this way leads to clarity. If the definition were related to pure ethnicity or birthplace, confusion would ensue. For example, two attendees at the church are Argentinian nationals. However, their ancestors were ethnically Japanese people who went to Argentina to work many years ago. Their parents, who were born and raised in Argentina, moved back to Japan before the two church attendees were born. The Argentinian attendees were thus born and raised in Japan by ethnically Japanese parents. They are ethnically Japanese. At the same time, their nationality is Argentinian. Are they Japanese or not? They are Japanese, but they are not Japanese. Many people struggle with identity issues in this regard, and in general, Japan is not friendly to people on the edges of what Japan defines as Japanese.31 For the sake of complicated situations like the

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31 The Japanese tennis player Osaka Naomi is a great example of this. Many Japanese people do not consider her to be a “true” Japanese person.
ones mentioned above, "non-Japanese" will merely refer to people who are nationals of a nation other than Japan.

Organizational Influence

The concept of organizational influence is a significant factor in this action research project. As such, this thesis requires a brief definition. At present, ABBC officially defines organizational influence as having the power to vote in board meetings. The only people who have that power are official church members. The members can not only vote; they can also become board members or deacons if other members select them. While anyone has a voice, the members are the ones who officially decide which voices have influence. This means that only 4% of those with any official organizational influence are non-dominant even though, on average, non-dominant attendees make up 26% of the church. At present, an increase in non-dominant organizational influence would involve a more significant percentage of non-dominant members or at least one non-dominant attendee participating in the official process to become a member. While that is the official definition of organizational influence at ABBC, this research project will be open to other definitions that may come up during the data gathering stage of the intervention process.

Limitations

The human factor will be the most significant potential limitation to the research project. The participants in the project will have to overcome power differentials, obey biblical callings for unity and peace, and overcome Japanese cultural boundaries that discourage any change or disruption, all in the name of further multicultural integration for the glory of God.

Within Japanese society and the church, there are apparent power differentials between the Japanese and the non-Japanese. Even if the church attempts to eliminate those power
differentials, the non-Japanese participants may still hesitate to demonstrate organizational influence in a substantial manner. On the other hand, the Japanese participants may still tend to interact from an authority position if the non-Japanese participants influence the church in a way that the Japanese consider to be negative.

The biblical reality of being called by Christ to maintain the peace and unity of the church may also impact the enthusiasm of the non-Japanese participants.\(^{32}\) If organizational influence disrupts that peace and unity in any way, the non-Japanese may decide the cost outweighs the gains. The power differential and biblical calling for unity and peace may have a chilling effect on the efficiency of the non-Japanese who take a more active role in organizational influence.

Finally, culturally, Japan is well known for its aversion to disruptions to the norm. A famous Japanese saying demonstrates this well. Japanese people often say, "The nail that sticks out gets hit." The point is that people should stay in line with the norms of society for the good of society and themselves. Non-Japanese are less prone to be this way in general. At the same time, because the non-Japanese live in Japan for a relatively long period, most will take on the cultural aspects of Japan to some degree out of consideration that they live in a country that is not their own. In the case of ABBC, the church has been doing things a certain way since the beginning. There is a way of doing things that is almost sacred in some people's minds. If non-Japanese organizational influence impacts those "sacred" areas and causes disruptions to the norm, there will most likely be pushback.

These human or societal factors will impact the thesis project and have to be moderated to some degree for the project to be successful. Although the human limitations are essentially

\(^{32}\) Eph. 4:3.
outside this author's control, two strategies will be employed to minimize the human limitations. One strategy will be the thorough preparation of the participant's attitudes. The author must assure the non-Japanese that they can safely demonstrate organizational influence without negative repercussions from the dominant group. On the other hand, the Japanese participants must be assured that the non-dominant influence is temporary. This assurance will ensure they do not automatically go into fight or flight mode over certain issues. Ultimately, at the end of the research, the dominant group will probably still be dominant. The Japanese participants will have a clear and loud voice regarding whether to continue the changes that the non-Japanese influence brought about over the research period. These strategies will help to minimize the human limitations.

**Delimitations**

The most obvious delimitation will be the applicable population. This thesis project will only include people who are or who have been actively involved with ABBC. Within that group, the project will only include adults.\(^\text{33}\) The faith of the participants will not be a determining factor. Potentially allowing non-believers to get involved will ensure a broad range of input.\(^\text{34}\)

The second delimitation will be the length of the project. The non-dominant participant's intentional organizational influence for the sake of this project will be limited to a maximum of three months. This delimitation will be a strategic part of minimizing the before-mentioned human limitations. At the end of the three months, the church can determine whether to continue the non-dominant participant's organizational influence and the impact that it brought about on the church.

\(^\text{33}\) An adult is someone over 18 years old.

\(^\text{34}\) In the end, no non-believers were involved.
The third delimitation will be the amount of organizational influence that the non-Japanese have over the larger community. There must be a limit on the amount of influence they can have to avoid the potential for permanent damage to the church community. This limit in organizational influence is guaranteed by permitting changes that only directly impact the three months delimitation. For example, they cannot formally fire the pastor or sell the church building during this project. Doing so would directly influence the church long after the time frame delimitation and would not be permitted. They must act within the determined budget as well. These delimitations on organizational influence will assure the dominant members that they need not fear what happens throughout the project. At the same time, the dominant participants must be open to the influence that the non-dominant participants may bring about for the non-dominant members to feel sufficiently empowered to exercise sufficient organizational influence for the project to be successful.

**Thesis Statement**

If the congregation of ABBC receives counseling on transformative principles of multicultural integration, then the anticipated result is that the church will become more multiculturally integrated regarding organizational influence. While multicultural integration at ABBC is the desired effect of this thesis, it is not the ultimate goal of the counseling on transformative principles of multicultural integration. Ultimately, this project will seek further multicultural integration at ABBC to better represent Christ and His plans for the church so that ABBC can better reveal the glory of God to the world. Ultimately, if the congregation of ABBC receives counseling on transformative principles of multicultural integration, then the anticipated result is that ABBC will glorify God to a greater degree. However, this thesis will only attempt to result in a greater degree of multicultural integration.
Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

Chapter two will establish a conceptual framework. It will start by including a literature review that expands on the information discussed in the thesis project proposal by examining the findings of researchers who have done similar research and observations on the challenges of multicultural integration. Then chapter two will create the project's theological and theoretical framework by setting a biblical foundation for why this paper believes it is beneficial to seek further multicultural integration in the church when possible.

Literature Review

This first section of the conceptual framework will review the contemporary literature regarding multicultural integration and define multicultural integration according to the literature. The literature will then present common hindrances to multicultural integration that may impact the situation at ABBC as well. Fortunately, the literature also presents methods of overcoming those hindrances. This section will review methods that worked at churches other than ABBC and consider how those methods might also apply to ABBC. Finally, this section will evaluate the benefits of multicultural integration that the literature presents.

Defining Multicultural Integration

Multicultural integration is not just an issue for the church. Governments worldwide seek to effectively integrate multiple non-dominant ethnocultural groups into society for the nation's good. In cases as such, a primary goal of the government involved is to provide some level of public recognition, support, and accommodation to non-dominant ethnocultural groups for the general good of the nation in question. Governments put various policies in place to make that
happen. The nation will spend significant money, time, and energy to multiculturally integrate because they view multicultural integration as beneficial.

In the sense that nations view multicultural integration positively, churches often agree. However, the methods and motivations for doing so often differ. A church wants to go beyond just recognizing, supporting, and accommodating non-dominant ethnocultural groups for the good of the church. A church wants to ultimately be a publicly visible representation of God's plan to make all ethnocultural groups into one family of God where all are equal in Christ for the glory of God (Eph. 2:14-21). With such a goal in mind, what does multicultural integration look like within the church specifically?

There are several ways to approach such a question. Some, like Edwards, Christerson, and Emerson, say that the percentage of non-dominant attendees determines whether a church is multiculturally integrated or not. They say that a church is multiculturally integrated if 20% or more of the congregation is ethnoculturally non-dominant. They think this way because when 20% of the congregation is non-dominant, the non-dominant group ceases to be a token within the church. The non-dominant group may still not be dominant, but at 20%, they will probably have some authentic organizational influence. Also, at 20%, the probability of cross-cultural contact within the church is 99%.

Marilyn Naidoo would agree that multicultural integration means that the non-dominant group will have some organizational influence. At the same time, Naidoo emphasizes that the actual level of organizational influence obtained is more important than the percentage of non-dominant members who hold that influence. Even if less than 20% of the congregation is

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36 Edwards, Christerson and Emerson, “Race, Religious Organizations, and Integration,” 213.
ethnoculturally non-dominant, if the non-dominant group practically impacts the overall power differential of the congregation, then that congregation is multiculturally integrated.\(^{37}\)

While Edwards, Christerson, and Emerson’s 20\% mentioned above may not need to be the golden standard for defining a multicultural church, numbers must play a role in the equation. Grace Ji-Sun Kim and Jann Aldredge Clanton say that 5\% of the church being ethnoculturally non-dominant does not make a multiculturally integrated church, even if some in that 5\% have a degree of organizational influence.\(^{38}\) For example, in the case of ABBC, the pastor is a non-dominant member. According to Kim and Clanton, if all the other members were dominant Japanese members, the church would still not be multiculturally integrated even though the non-dominant member has great organizational influence.

The percentage of non-dominant congregants and the organizational influence of non-dominant congregants do not guarantee multicultural integration. Further factors must enter the equation to help determine whether a church is multicultural or not. Patten provides some further light on the matter. He explains that cultural expressions of the non-dominant groups will be revealed in things such as food and music in the church if the church is multiculturally integrated.\(^{39}\) This guideline is available even if the non-dominant members make up less than 5\% of the total number and have no organizational influence. The cultural expressions in food and music exist because the church chooses to live with and rejoice in differences. Their interactions with each other naturally transform the dominant as well as the non-dominant.\(^{40}\) A church is

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\(^{38}\) Grace Ji-Sun Kim, and Jann Aldredge Clanton, eds. *Intercultural Ministry* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2017), Loc. 1731, Kindle.

\(^{39}\) Patten, *Leading a Multi-Cultural Church*, Loc. 221.

\(^{40}\) Kim and Clanton, *Intercultural Ministry*, Loc. 158.
ideal for such transformative interaction because church attendees have frequent contact, resulting in better communication and cooperation.

Rather than focusing on structure, Ken Davis focuses on the attitude of the attendees at a multiculturally integrated church. He states that the church must be intentional about recruiting, recognizing, embracing, and reconciling diverse groups. The structural policies and resulting content of the community are merely a result of such an attitude. The multicultural church should be defined by such an inclusive attitude more than by the actual results of such an attitude. This is because the proper attitude does not always bring about the desired results.

While defining what multicultural integration looks like is not a concrete matter, three general guidelines repeat themselves in the literature. First, there has to be somewhat of a representation within the congregation of a non-dominant ethnocultural group. Ideally, some members of that group are in leadership positions of some sort. Second, in a multiculturally integrated church, the non-dominant group has some kind of organizational influence. This organizational influence does not always have to come about due to non-dominant members being official leadership team members. Instead, the church will represent the non-dominant group in food or music due to a more unofficial kind of organizational influence. This cultural representation in the church is the third guideline to determine whether the church is multiculturally integrated or not. As Davis mentioned, all of this starts with an intentional heart attitude in the church.

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Hindrances to Multicultural Integration

There are many reasons why multicultural integration may not occur. If there were a local church community where no non-dominant ethnocultural groups lived within the physical vicinity of the church, multicultural integration would not be possible. In fact, in such a situation, a multicultural church may not even be desirable because, for the most part, the makeup of a local church should match the makeup of the local community.\(^4\) However, in today's world, few communities are entirely homogenous. This brings up the question at hand: even though there are non-dominant groups within the physical vicinity of the church, why are churches often prone to not be multiculturally integrated? In other words, what hindrances does the church need to overcome to create a multiculturally integrated community of faith?

Kim and Clanton say that tokenism can be a factor that discourages multicultural integration. Tokenism occurs when leadership committees include non-dominants, but in reality, the non-dominant members of those committees have little or no actual influence.\(^4\) This kind of tokenism often accompanies congregations where the percentage of non-dominant members is under 20%.\(^4\) When tokenism occurs, the dominant members may feel that they are doing a good thing, while the non-dominant members may feel discredited. This cognitive gap in understanding the situation will discourage real multicultural integration.

David Anderson mentions that stereotyping is a common complaint of non-dominant groups in a church.\(^4\) Stereotyping occurs when a person says that every member of a particular


ethnic group is a certain way. For example, Japanese people often stereotype Korean people by saying they are loud and argumentative. This stereotyping is hard to change because the one holding the stereotype classifies any contrary evidence regarding the stereotype as an exception to the rule. Either way, the person on the receiving end of the stereotype is usually a non-dominant member who can be hurt by the stereotype and leave the church as a result. As a result of the stereotypes, the dominant group will often congregate with those who are like them even more. In both instances, stereotypes can result in people withdrawing to the familiar. This tendency is extremely detrimental to a multicultural church. Stereotypes will not be beneficial to creating a multicultural church. As such, Kymlicka recommends that the non-dominant groups fight the stereotypes instead of succumbing to them. Anderson and Margarita Cabellon say that being open about stereotypes within the church is beneficial. If stereotypes are in the open, the church can directly confront and deal with them. This openness is beneficial regarding musical stereotyping as well. For example, some people may think all African Americans like gospel music. Suppose the church does not give a voice to this stereotype. In that case, the church may try to please African Americans by regularly playing gospel music when the African Americans in the church may not even like gospel music. This lack of communication and misunderstanding because of stereotypes will be harmful to the multicultural church.

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47 Patten, *Leading a Multi-Cultural Church*, Loc. 1011.


Bertil Ekström declares that prejudice will probably always be a struggle within multicultural churches.\textsuperscript{51} This prejudice can come from a variety of factors, but historical and economic factors are often involved. In the case of Japan, Japanese people sometimes view Koreans with prejudice.\textsuperscript{52} This prejudice partially comes from the fact that Japan conquered the Koreans in World War II. Another factor is that the Koreans who remained in Japan after World War II struggled financially in a nation that was already not enthusiastic about their presence. This all led to deeply held feelings of prejudice towards the Koreans.\textsuperscript{53} Unfortunately, such prejudice will make its way into the church and must be reprogrammed to be multiculturally integrated.\textsuperscript{54} This reprogramming can occur primarily through communication between ethnic groups because prejudice is often the result of bad experiences in the past or just plain ignorance.\textsuperscript{55} The church can be a great place for interaction and communication that eliminates prejudice and the resulting discrimination that follows. This fact may especially be the case in Japan, where many Japanese people often fiercely deny the existence of such prejudices.\textsuperscript{56}

Donald McGavran refers to an example in Taiwan as he stresses how linguistic barriers hinder multicultural integration as well.\textsuperscript{57} Ekström especially recognizes how language affects


\textsuperscript{54} Anderson, \textit{Multicultural Ministry}, 32.

\textsuperscript{55} Patten, \textit{Leading a Multi-Cultural Church}, Loc. 996.


\textsuperscript{57} Donald A. McGavran, \textit{Understanding Church Growth} (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1970), 166.
the power differential within the church. Leaders in the church must always be conscious of how language affects everything in the church and do what is necessary to eliminate as many linguistic barriers as possible. In most cases, this will mean making English the primary language in the church.\textsuperscript{58} Making English the primary language may be problematic in Japan since most of the dominant group will not be able to speak English even though many studied English for years as children.\textsuperscript{59} Regardless, the effort must be made to eliminate linguistic barriers because linguistic barriers severely limit the potential for multicultural integration.\textsuperscript{60} The mere fact that the Spirit speaks to people in their languages should motivate us to do what we can to do the same in our local church community.\textsuperscript{61}

Finally, another hindrance to multicultural integration will be negative responses to integration made by the dominant group. The dominant group usually has the most to lose when the church is moving towards multicultural integration. This is especially true when the dominant group within the church is the non-dominant group within the local community.\textsuperscript{62} In such a case, if the dominant group in the church loses said dominance, they may lose their only position of dominance in society. This may cause them to be more prone to resisting successful attempts at multicultural integration. Also, at some point in the integration process, the previously dominant group may eventually become the new non-dominant group. Thus, a role reversal has occurred.

\textsuperscript{58} Ekström, \textit{The Church in Mission}, 177, 215.


\textsuperscript{60} Naidoo, “The Potential of Multicultural Congregations in Supporting Social Reconciliation.” 3. Naidoo also mentions that even if linguistic barriers cannot be overcome initially, singing the same hymn in multiple languages can lead to a sense of unity despite linguistic barriers. (pg. 5)


\textsuperscript{62} Ekström, \textit{The Church in Mission}, 173.
This role reversal can potentially lead to a whole new and different need for integration to start all over again. When this kind of role reversal becomes a real possibility, there can be uncertainty within the church community. Will the previously dominant group be satisfied feeling like they are now non-dominant? Will they fight to return to dominance? Will they leave? Such uncertainty and risk involved in integration are often enough to discourage people from trying to make the church multiculturally integrated.

Overcoming Hindrances to Multicultural Integration

Now that this author has considered multicultural integration and identified hindrances to such integration, what are some ways these hindrances can be overcome to create a more multiculturally integrated church? Once again, this issue is not just one found in the church. Society struggles with the same thing. As a result, sometimes, the church may learn from the successes and failures of the policies within society. For example, Japan primarily uses education and secondarily uses multi-media to impact society to bring about unity. This method has been successful at accomplishing its goal of bringing unity to the nation. The church may find this method to be beneficial as well. Ultimately, the teachings of Christ will bring about the greatest degree of unity within the church. As such, biblical education within the church will overcome a wide variety of hindrances. Even in the case of the linguistic barrier, teaching English to members is a way to encourage integration and a way to love. At the same time, the church must be careful about imitating government policies because the government is ultimately seeking different results than the church is. This difference in goals is undoubtedly the case with Japan.

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For one, Lee speaks of how present geopolitical circumstances force Japan to let outsiders in begrudgingly. Japan needs to supplement its decreasing population somehow.

Japan does not consider a sizeable foreign population to be ideal. Nevertheless, the dire circumstances force Japan to open its borders to outsiders. As a result, they must learn how to integrate foreigners. Mark Mullins speaks of how Japan has used assimilation throughout its history. In fact, the church even cooperated with the government to assimilate Koreans into society during World War II. An attempt to assimilate people into society can sometimes be a form of oppression that actually pushes people out of society. People losing their place in society due to failed assimilation attempts may be a chance for the church to serve if the church can help the forgotten people of Japan with the following methods of multicultural integration.

As mentioned before, education will be vital. However, biblical education must ensure that the methods of practical application are apparent. Kim and Clanton say that the church leadership must teach the members to feel comfortable being uncomfortable. They must come to have a high tolerance for feeling uneasy for a multicultural church to succeed. If the leadership does not ingrain such qualities in the church, some will resort back to what is comfortable and easy, as all people are naturally prone to do.


Patten agrees, but he places more emphasis on the grace needed when mistakes and misunderstandings happen. People make mistakes. It is unavoidable. This is especially true in a multicultural community. Thus, the church needs to educate the members in the practices of grace for a multicultural church to work.

Brandon Martinez puts an educational emphasis on awareness. The leadership must teach the church to be aware of what the non-dominant group is feeling and experiencing. This education is just the beginning. Especially the dominant group needs to be purposeful in listening and getting to know the plight of the non-dominant. Such a humble attitude will not only go a long way in creating a thriving multicultural church, but it will also give people opportunities to love each other when they become more aware of each other’s stories and thoughts.

For multicultural integration to succeed, the church needs to have tolerance for uneasiness, grace, and awareness. On the other hand, Naidoo emphasizes that the church also needs not to have certain things as well. For example, while it may seem contradictory, Naidoo recommends that church members not have color blindness regarding skin color. The reason for this is that such color blindness can result in a lack of dialogue. This lack of dialogue may end up unintentionally assimilating the non-dominant group. People must openly acknowledge differences to have a beneficial dialogue about the differences in the first place.

Ultimately, the church must teach Christ. Anderson and Cabellon recommend that the Lordship of Christ be a prevalent theme in the church's education. If the church understands that Christ is Lord, the church will be much more open to differences and uncomfortableness. If

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70 Patten, *Leading a Multi-Cultural Church*, Loc. 1605.

71 Martinez, “The Integration of Racial and Ethnic Minorities into White Congregations,” 488.

Christ is their Lord, they will be more loving and sensitive to the wants and needs of those in their church community.  

While education is important, practice and policies are also an essential part of making a multicultural church. For example, Edwards, Christerson, and Emerson argue that a necessary practice will be to diversify leadership within the church. At the same time, as mentioned before, care must be taken to ensure that the diverse leadership has authentic influence and power within the congregation to avoid tokenism. If the church can avoid tokenism, then diverse leadership will be very beneficial to maintaining a multicultural church.

Another practice that will be vital in a multicultural church is intentional relationship building. Naidoo speaks of how relationship building will create deep connections, respect and allow people to learn from each other. This process will all lead towards an actively inclusive community. David Moe says that to create such deep relationships, the church needs vulnerability. This vulnerability will force the dominant group to let go of their power differential leading to an equal playing field for all at the church. Finally, Christerson, Edwards, and Emerson talk about the problem of loneliness among non-dominant members. Relationship building can reduce this loneliness.

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74 Edwards, Christerson and Emerson, “Race, Religious Organizations, and Integration,” 218.
77 Moe, "Intercultural Theology in the Multicultural Context of World Christianity," 21.
78 Christerson Edwards and Emerson, *In Against All Odds*, 33.
Benefits of Multicultural Integration

The literature does not agree on the benefits of multicultural integration. Plenty of authors either argue against or recommend caution regarding integration. McGavran is at the top of the list of such authors. While Davis argues that McGavran is merely misunderstood, most think McGavran says that multiculturally integrated churches are not desirable. McGavran says that multicultural churches actually hinder the gospel's advancement because people understand the gospel better when they hear it from other people like them. While the author of this thesis has considered ways to overcome hindrances, McGavran emphasizes that such hindrances only exist because churches attempt to integrate in the first place. He says that homogenous churches are better for church growth and ultimately for the kingdom.

Most do not object to multicultural integration as much as McGavran, but they acknowledge the problems involved with integration. For example, Kymlicka says that assimilation rather than integration would ensure the non-dominant would remain in the church long term. She says this because integrated people are more likely to return to their homeland at some point because they maintain their primary identity there. Assimilation would eliminate that identity. Christerson, Edwards, and Emerson say that integrated churches are inherently unstable. Naidoo acknowledges that integration in the church can result in bringing the problems of society into the church. Once the specific context of Japan enters the picture, the

80 McGavran, Understanding Church Growth, 167.
81 Kymlicka, Multicultural Odysseys: Navigating the New International Politics of Diversity, 75.
82 Christerson, Edwards and Emerson, Against All Odds, 153.
negative nature of multicultural churches becomes even more apparent. Humanly speaking, the church needs to stop being considered a non-Japanese outsider organization to better impact Japan for the gospel. However, in general, the Japanese church often tends to attract foreigners. This tendency can make Christianity look even more foreign and undesirable to the Japanese people. How does the church in Japan seek multicultural integration while striving to show that Christianity is not just an outsider religion?

If the literature review were to stop here, it would seem as if there was no reason to seek multicultural integration. Nevertheless, for the most part, the literature and, more importantly, the universal church often argues that multicultural integration in the church is a good thing. Why is that? First, there are biblical and theological reasons why integration is desirable. The theological framework section will consider some of those primary reasons. The following section will consider the benefits of multicultural integration according to the literature.

Kim and Clanton say that a multicultural church is more prone to grow together (while perhaps not growing in number) and transform. If growing together and transforming are desirable for the church, then integration is very beneficial. Patten agrees by adding that intercultural habits create a mindset that can deny self. The members of the multicultural church can naturally and joyfully give, share, and even be inconvenienced for the sake of others and the gospel. Multicultural churches naturally encourage such vital spiritual growth. This encouragement of spiritual growth is a good thing for a church overall. There is also great joy

84 Chamberlain, "The Church in Japan," 19.
85 Kim and Clanton, Intercultural Ministry, Loc. 131.
86 Patten, Leading a Multi-Cultural Church, Loc. 1494, 2142.
and adventure in participating in a diverse church. There is rarely a dull moment in a multicultural church.

The benefits flow outside the doors of the church as well. For example, Martinez talks about how churches can alleviate racial and social tensions in society in general. Even on a smaller scale, the safe, multicultural interactions in the church can teach the non-dominant person how to effectively live in a country that is different from his or her own. If the non-dominant person has difficulty within the local society, Christerson, Edwards, and Emerson say that the church can give that person a safe and healing place to call home. Even though, ultimately, multicultural integration primarily involves theological and spiritual benefits, the literature reveals that other benefits also make the great risk and cost of multicultural integration worthwhile.

Theological Framework

Chapter one presented a critical assumption regarding this thesis project. That assumption was that the church should strive to be multicultural when presented with the opportunity to do so. The reason for this assumption is based on another assumption that Christ is the head of the church. As the head, He alone has the ultimate right and authority to determine how His church should function. Chapter one also assumed that Christ reveals His will for His church primarily through the Scriptures. Because of such fundamental assumptions, this thesis must build a theological framework based on Scripture to support the claim that Christ desires the church to

\[87\] Anderson and Cabellon, Multicultural Ministry Handbook, 59.

\[88\] Martinez, “The Integration of Racial and Ethnic Minorities into White Congregations,” 469.

\[89\] Patten, Leading a Multi-Cultural Church, Loc. 1141.

\[90\] Christerson, Edwards and Emerson, Against All Odds, 36.
be multicultural when given the opportunity. This section will develop such a theological framework by considering how both the Old and New Testaments shed light on the matter.

Old Testament

Because the church only officially came into existence after the resurrection of Jesus, the New Testament provides most of the instructions for the church regarding multicultural integration. However, a quick survey of God's attitude toward cultural "others" or "non-dominants" in the Old Testament can provide an excellent backdrop to understanding the more direct commands of God regarding multicultural integration in the New Testament. What does the Old Testament say about God's attitude toward the multiculturally non-dominant people groups within God's chosen community?

First, the Old Testament differentiates between the native Israelite and the sojourner. For example, Leviticus 17:15 says that every person who eats “what dies of itself or what is torn by beasts, whether he is a native or a sojourner, shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening; then he shall be clean.” There is a difference between the native Israelite and the person who lives in Israel but has ethnocultural roots in a different community. For the sake of this thesis project, the native and sojourner will be directly comparable to the dominant and non-dominant members, or more specifically, the Japanese and non-Japanese people at ABBC. Even though the Old Testament acknowledges a difference between the native and the sojourner, God calls the sojourner to obedience just like the native. The sojourner did not receive special treatment in that regard. God expected the sojourner to obey him. Numbers 15:16 says it this way, "one law and one rule shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you." At the same time, there were limitations to how that sojourner
could serve and worship God. For example, Numbers 1:51 says, "when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up. And if any outsider comes near, he shall be put to death."

From the time of the Jewish tabernacle to when a Jewish temple existed in Jerusalem, even a non-Levite Jew's access to the temple was limited.\(^{91}\) If the non-Levite Jews had restricted access to the temple, the Gentile's access was even more restricted. Death could result if the outsider crossed that line. As noted, God differentiated between the non-dominant ethnocultural groups in Israel and the dominant native Israelites. God called the sojourners to obedience but also restricted their access to God.

In the meantime, instructions on how the native Israelites were to treat the Gentiles living among them are plentiful in the Old Testament. In general, the Israelites were to welcome and show special care for the sojourners who lived in their land under God's authority and in obedience to God. For example, regarding vineyard cultivation, the Israelites were to leave a portion of their harvest so that the sojourner in the land could eat it.\(^{92}\) More broadly, Leviticus 19:33 says, "when a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself." God would even curse a native Israelite who perverted justice towards a sojourner.\(^{93}\)

The Old Testament repeatedly explains why God told the dominant Israelites to be kind to the non-dominant people in their midst. The first reason is that God loves and cares for the sojourners.\(^{94}\) As God's representatives on earth, the Israelites were supposed to be a visible

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\(^{92}\) Leviticus 19:10 “And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.”

\(^{93}\) Deuteronomy 27:19 “Cursed be anyone who perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.”
representation of God's love for sojourners. The second reason provided is that the Israelites were also sojourners in Egypt at one time in their history. They should remember the hardships that they or their ancestors faced as sojourners in Egypt. As such, they should empathize and care for sojourners who are presently in their midst. Exodus 23:9 says it this way, "You shall not oppress a sojourner. You know the heart of a sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt." This care for outsiders was a unique aspect of Israel when compared with other nations at that time.

The previous section has performed a brief survey regarding God's attitude toward people who were not from the same ethnocultural background as the Israelites but lived within the Israeli community. While there are limitations to the non-native person's involvement in the Jewish religious system, God also called them to obedience. God then calls on the Israelites to treat the sojourners well and not do them wrong because God loves and cares for sojourners and because the Israelites were once sojourners themselves in Egypt.

Before moving onto the more direct teachings in the New Testament, the difference between God's chosen people in the Old Testament and God's chosen people in the New Testament will be considered. In the Old Testament, if a Gentile wanted to enter the Mosaic Covenant as a member of God's chosen community, God required that he or she officially

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95 Deuteronomy 10:18-19 “He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.”


98 Gerald O’Collins, Salvation for All God’s Other Peoples (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 75. https://web-a-ebcohost-com.exproxy.liberty.edu/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/ bmxIYm1fXZIyMDk1N19fQU41?sid=1aad992e-08c1-46fe-a4a9-eeb1384f943f@sessionmgr4008&vid= 0&format=EB&lpid=lp_64&rid=0.
become a Jew. If the person was a man, that means he would have to be circumcised as well.\textsuperscript{99} In that sense, there were no people other than Jews in God's chosen community in the Old Testament. Rather than integrating, Israel assimilated all believing Gentiles. Salvation only came to the Gentiles through the direct involvement of the Israelites.\textsuperscript{100} Sojourners were not officially in the chosen community of God. They were just living in or passing through the region where most Israelites lived.

Contrarily, in the New Testament church, believers do not have to become a Jew or any other nationality to enter the church community. This is a significant difference between the Old and New Testaments that took the Jewish side of the newborn church many decades to finally accept.\textsuperscript{101} Now, regardless of nationality, all people are born outside the community of God. They enter the community of God when they start believing that the gospel is their only hope for salvation.

There is no need to change nationalities or citizenship. This difference between the Old and New Testaments is how the problem of this thesis project originates. Even if all the believers are one in Christ, there are remaining language, ethnocultural, and sociopolitical differences that invade the church. For instance, in the case of ABBC, most Japanese people only speak the Japanese language. To accommodate this reality, Japanese is the primary language in the church. On the other hand, most non-Japanese people who join the church speak little or no Japanese. As a result, even though the believers` spiritual reality is oneness in Christ, language and other barriers exist, naturally creating power differentials even though there is no spiritual

\textsuperscript{99} Exodus 12:48 “If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land.”

\textsuperscript{100} O’Collins, \textit{Salvation for All God’s Other Peoples}, 72.

difference before God. This was not as much of a problem in the Old Testament because believers had to legally become Jews and even learn the Hebrew language to truly enter the community, eliminating many of the problems the church faces today. As such, to create a theological framework for this thesis project which exists within the context of the New Testament era, a brief examination needs to be made to confirm whether Christ indeed reveals in Scripture that He desires for His church to integrate regardless of the practical difficulties that it creates. Due to space limitations and the fact that this theological framework is not the primary focus of this thesis project, this thesis project will focus on the book of Acts for the theological framework.

New Testament

For this thesis project, the book of Acts is sufficient for creating a brief theological framework. The book of Acts records the birth and the first few decades of the church’s growth. The reader can see how Christ desired people of different nationalities and even social statuses to come together as one within the church. This did not mean that there were not challenges related to coming together. The challenges were plentiful from the beginning. However, regardless of the challenges, Christ called the church to overcome such challenges to better represent the kingdom of God on earth.

The first hints of this reality appear from even before the church was officially born on Pentecost. Jesus tells his disciples that they are to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth. Ultimately, it is obedience to this command that resulted in local believers starting ABBC. Obedience to this command resulted in the challenge of ecclesiastical multicultural integration in Japan in the 21st century. Jesus desired that believers would go to the ends of the earth while
testifying about Jesus, the church's foundation.\textsuperscript{102} This command alone is not sufficient to create a theological framework for this specific thesis project. The reason for this is that there are many potential ways to obey Christ.

For example, ABBC could target only people who speak Japanese. This limited audience would make church life much more straightforward in many ways. If the resources were sufficient, another method would be to create two churches. One church would be for English speakers, and one church would be for Japanese speakers. In the end, such methods would only solve the language problems. Other more profound ethnocultural differences will come up in multicultural churches. For example, many Koreans have more of a tendency to get emotional in prayer or worship. Many Japanese people, on the other hand, tend to be much more reserved than Koreans. How are people like the Koreans and Japanese to worship together without becoming a distraction to each other? In other words, the great commission does not naturally imply that the church should seek to multiculturally integrate. This thesis needs further biblical support.

The church was born on the day of Pentecost. On this day, Jewish pilgrims from “every nation under heaven”\textsuperscript{103} gathered in Jerusalem for the Jewish Feast of Weeks. This group included ethnic Jews who were part of the diaspora, but it also included people from different ethnic backgrounds who became Jews to enter God’s chosen community. As a result, there were many Jews who had non-Hebrew mother-tongues but who also spoke Aramaic. When the church was born on Pentecost, the most extraordinary supernatural evidence that testified to the church's birth was the elimination of language barriers that had first originated at the tower of Babel in Genesis 11.\textsuperscript{104} The reason for those language barriers not lasting more than a day is another

\textsuperscript{102} 1 Corinthians 3:11 “For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

\textsuperscript{103} Acts 2:5 “Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.”
theme altogether. However, the fact that on the day the church was born, Christ chose to reveal the church’s birth by eliminating language barriers is significant. He eliminated one of the most obvious and hard to overcome barriers to multicultural integration on that day. By eliminating the barrier, even temporarily, Christ revealed that language barriers should not hinder integration within the church in an ideal scenario. Even though language barriers returned after that day, a church not divided by languages remains the ideal. If this is the case, when feasible, the church should do what it can to eliminate language barriers rather than divide based on languages.

Jesus had told the church in Acts 1:8 to intentionally reach the ends of the world with the message of Christ. However, even after Pentecost, the Jerusalem church intentionally remained in Jerusalem for the most part. Persecution finally made the church intentionally reach out to the regions beyond Jerusalem like Judea and Samaria. The church was reluctant to reach outside its originally Jewish walls. While there were exceptions, even ten years after the church’s birth, the norm for the church was witnessing only to Jews. The primarily Jewish church was still thinking about the church according to Old Testament standards. Many early Christians believed that although Christ was the ultimate provider of salvation by grace through faith, the

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106 Acts 8:1 “and there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria”

107 Philip to the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8, Peter to Cornelius in Acts 10

108 Acts 11:19 “Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews.”
natural result of such faith was becoming a Jew. At just such a time, Scripture presents the church in Antioch as an exemplary local church living according to God’s will. The positive portrayal of the church in Antioch provides excellent guidance regarding the matter at hand.

While most Jewish Christians were exclusively witnessing to Jews, some Christian Jews witnessed to non-Hebrew speaking non-Jews in Antioch. As a result, Acts 11:21 says, “And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.” The hand of the Lord was with them. The presence of the hand of the Lord signified that Christ approved of and empowered the Christian’s faithful work of witnessing about Christ to people who were different from most other Christians at the time. A church was born in Antioch as a result. The resulting work of the Lord was so significant that the church in Jerusalem felt the need to send representatives to investigate what was happening in Antioch. What did the Antioch church that had Christ’s stamp of approval on it look like? Acts chapter 13 reveals the makeup of the leadership within the church – Saul, Manaen, Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius.

Saul was also a Jew who was born in Tarsus but grew up in Jerusalem. He was trained in the strictest forms of Judaism. Until he became a Christian, Saul would have been a highly respected spiritual leader with high status within Judaism. Saul is known as Paul throughout most of the Bible.

Although little is known about Manaen, his name reveals that he too was a Jew. For some reason, he grew up with Herod the tetrarch who had John the Baptist killed while Herod was king of Galilee. Under normal circumstances, this would imply that Manaen would have had a

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110 Acts 11:22 “The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.”

111 Matthew 14.
high sociopolitical standing. When compared with Saul, a religious elite, and Manaen, a social elite, it appears that Barnabas was more of a common form of Jew. He grew up on the island of Cyprus in the Mediterranean Sea.

Lucius is a Latin name. He originally came from Cyrene, which is in Northern Africa. If he is the same Lucius that Paul mentions in Romans 16:21, then he is also an ethnic Jew. However, the Lucius in Romans 16:21 could be a different Lucius, so the matter is not conclusive. While Saul, Manaen, Barnabas, and perhaps Lucius were ethnically Jewish, Simeon was not ethnically Jewish. Simeon was referred to as “Niger,” which is the Latin word for “black.” This name implies that he was black and came from Africa but moved to Antioch for some reason. This Christian black ethnic Gentile played a vital role in sending out the first officially church-sponsored missionaries to target the ends of the earth as Christ had originally commanded. Scripture portrays Antioch as an exemplary church within early church history. In such a church, non-Hebrew-speaking non-Jews attended the church and even had organizational influence in the church. The lack of ethnic distinctions within the leadership of the church was revolutionary at the time. The lack of ethnic distinctions concerned the Jewish church so much that teachers from Jerusalem went to correct the Antioch church of their “error” in Acts 15.

While the presented evidence is in no way comprehensive, for the sake of this paper, it will be a sufficient theological framework that encourages ABBC to desire to have a greater


degree of multicultural integration. This desire is especially true regarding further multicultural representation in church organizational influence. If the ideal church in early church history had non-Jewish organizational influence, then ABBC should at the very least be willing to increase non-Japanese organizational influence if possible. Further development of a theological framework would be beneficial. Peter`s interactions with Cornelius and the Jerusalem Council`s conclusion on Jews and Gentiles worshiping together are good places to start in Acts. Outside of Acts, passages like Colossians 3:1-14, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21, 1 Corinthians 12:12-26, and Ephesians 4:1-4 are passages vital to creating a more comprehensive theological framework on the matter.115

**Theoretical Framework**

In the Old Testament section of the theological framework, God had compassion for those outside the chosen community of Israel. As a result, God called the Israelites to treat sojourners with compassion. At the same time, God did not directly call the Israelites to reach the ends of the world with the messages of God. Instead, the Israelites would represent God from where they lived in the nation of Israel. Throughout most of the Old Testament, if a person wanted to follow God and become a member of God`s chosen community, the person would have to become a Jew. In the New Testament, the church temporarily takes on the function of being God`s chosen people who represent God to the world. Unlike the Israelites, the church should not wait around for the world to come to the church. This time, anyone who wants to join the church does not have to change their nationality or citizenship. This change in method results in the church having more of an integration problem than the Israelites did. While the Israelites

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simply assimilated new believers,\textsuperscript{116} the church attempts to integrate them. This section will consider how the previous theological framework would play out practically and theoretically if ABBC fully applied the theological framework.

God`s attitude of care and love toward outsiders was clear from the Old Testament. This love and care were not dependent on the faith of the sojourner. The caring God of the Old Testament is the same God of the New Testament. If ABBC incorporates that aspect of the theological framework, it must show care and concern for the non-Japanese in the local community. As was the case for Israel, this care must be provided regardless of the recipient`s faith. Practically, that will often involve English to Japanese interpretation and translation help. Things such as doctor`s visits, government office visits, and even understanding their neighborhood's local community rules often require linguistic help. Another practical way ABBC can help the non-Japanese residents in the local community is to help with moving. Often the non-Japanese resident does not have many local contacts and may not even have a car or Japanese driver`s license. ABBC can help with providing the hands and cars needed to move from one location to another. Akita Bible Baptist Church can reveal the love and care of God towards outsiders by helping them practically regardless of whether they are Christians or not.

In Acts 1:8, Jesus told his disciples to witness about him to the ends of the earth. From the first disciple`s perspective, ABBC is doing just that every time it evangelizes. With less than 1\% of the population being represented by Christians, Japan is one of the largest unreached people groups on the earth. However, from ABBC`s perspective, the non-Japanese people in Akita are from the ends of the earth. As a result, whenever ABBC gets a chance to witness to someone who is non-Japanese, ABBC gets an opportunity to obey Christ by witnessing to people

\textsuperscript{116} Patten, \textit{Leading a Multi-Cultural Church}, Loc. 517.
from the ends of the earth. While people like Paul had to spend much time and energy just to get to the “ends of the earth,” Akita not only is the ends of the earth from the perspective of Jerusalem, the ends of the earth come to ABBC from ABBC`s perspective. Of course, this does not excuse the church from being proactive regarding international missions, but it does make the theoretical framework relatively simple for ABBC. In a way, everything ABBC does evangelistically is an act of witnessing to the ends of the earth. No unique strategy is required to do so.

In Acts 2, on the day the church was born, God temporarily eliminated all language barriers. These language barriers originated in Genesis 11 because of sin and continue to this day. Although there are practical limitations to the church`s ability to eliminate all language barriers, the church should attempt to make the barriers as small as possible. Practically, this means that in an ideal situation, whenever possible, the church provides interpretation. At ABBC, interpreters simultaneously interpret sermons whenever an interpreter is available. When there are no interpreters, the pastor translates the sermon's main points into English beforehand for the non-Japanese participants to read. The pastor interprets most e-mail correspondence, bulletins, and official papers into English. This interpretation work increases the pastor`s workload significantly, but it ensures the non-Japanese can stay connected if they choose to do so. Ideally, someone other than the pastor should do the translation work. Also, the church can help the non-Japanese learn Japanese and help the Japanese learn English.

Finally, Acts presented the church in Antioch as an excellent example of how a church should look. For the sake of this paper, it was significant that people from different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds had organizational influence within the Antioch church. Akita Bible Baptist Church cannot just ignore non-Japanese people like the Jews were ignoring the Gentiles
for the most part in the early church. Akita Bible Baptist Church should attempt to allow the non-Japanese to have organizational influence if possible. Theoretically, this influence should be relative to the number of non-Japanese participants in the church. At this point, with few exceptions, only Japanese attendees have any objective organizational influence within the church. There is room for improvement if the church at Antioch is the kind of church that Christ is calling ABBC to be.
Chapter 3: Methodology

This DMIN action research thesis has identified the problem. The problem is the failure of ABBC to multiculturally integrate regarding organizational influence. The purpose of this thesis has also been identified. The purpose is to counsel ABBC on transformative principles of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence that apply to a local church in an overwhelmingly non-Christian and homogeneous nation. Identifying a problem and having a purpose does not automatically solve the problem. A research facilitator must develop a methodology that assists and guides the research participants throughout the research process to find a potential solution to the problem of failing to multiculturally integrate regarding organizational influence. This section will lay out how this problem will be specifically addressed. The church will develop a specific intervention strategy in months one through three. Then the church will practically implement the intervention strategy sometime in months three through five. Month six will be a cool down and evaluation period. The author will record the preparation and implementation of that intervention design in detail in this thesis project.

Intervention Design\textsuperscript{117}

The reader can think of the following section as a recipe; it lays out the general plan for seeking to solve a problem like ABBC’s. Of course, each situation will need some adjustment to the design to fit that specific situation. However, if the reader wants to imitate this action research project at their church, this is the recipe for doing so. After laying out the recipe, the author will record what happened when it was implemented at ABBC.

\textsuperscript{117} See Appendix G for a general Intervention Design Timeline.
Preparation

A project like this should not begin without IRB approval. In this case, the project will gain IRB approval according to the guidelines Liberty University provides. CITI training is also required before IRB approval can be granted. IRB approval ensures that the researcher ethically performs the research. In addition, this author has been the pastor of ABBC for over ten years. In such a case, there is the potential for the author to be biased or abuse his authority. That is all the more reason to seek IRB approval. The IRB approval process will identify any potential unethical issues that the research facilitator cannot see personally.

Once IRB grants their approval, the author will obtain final approval to begin research from ABBC’s deacons, board members, and church members. The approval of the deacons and board members will be obtained at the monthly church leadership meeting that the church leadership holds on the first Wednesday night of every month. The church member’s official approval will be obtained at the monthly church business meeting that the church holds on the third Sunday afternoon of every month.

Interviews

Once the author officially obtains IRB approval and all necessary approvals from the church in writing, the two-step process to find a solution will be implemented. The first step of the process will be finding the most appropriate way to counsel ABBC on transformative principles of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence in the specific context of ABBC. The author will perform interviews with nine non-Japanese church attendees and the one and only non-Japanese church member to discover the most appropriate way to address

118 Consent Form in Appendix B.

119 Appendix A.
the problem from the perspective of the non-Japanese research participants. In the ideal situation, the author will interview a total of ten ABBC non-Japanese attendees. Suppose a total of ten ABBC non-Japanese attendees are not available for some reason. In that case, the author will broaden the target group to include other non-Japanese church attendees who go to a different Japanese dominant church in Japan.

The author will first approach the target interview candidates to request their cooperation. If they are willing to cooperate, the author will schedule a time and location for the interview. If the interviewee does not have a preference, the interview will occur at the church, the pastor’s house, the local mall, or a local cafe. If the interviewee is a woman, the author will secure a public location to do the interview and will secure the understanding and approval of the woman’s husband if she has one. Ideally, the husband will be nearby during the interview. Out of respect for the person’s time, the interview will be no longer than one hour. Suppose the interview requires more time in specific cases. In that case, the research facilitator will either get the approval of the interviewee to go longer or schedule a different time for a follow-up interview. For the most part, though, the author will end the interviews within an hour at most. At the beginning of the interview, the author will obtain the interviewee’s signature on an informed consent and confidentiality statement form. The author will also obtain written permission to record the conversation on an audio recorder. Any data obtained from the

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120 Appendix A. While face-to-face interviews will be most desirable, there is the potential for COVID-19 restrictions to practically restrict the ability to hold interview’s face-to-face. In such a case, interviews will be held by phone, Zoom, or by e-mail.

121 Appendix E.

122 Appendix D.
interviews should be kept on a password-secured computer or cellphone to protect the privacy of the research participants. In the ideal situation, the interviewee will feel free to take the interview in the direction he or she feels is best. However, the interviewer will guide the process and ensure the conversation stays relevant to the topic at hand, primarily by using the questions in Appendix A. This process of gathering data by contacting and interviewing ten people will take no more than two months.

In the third month, the author will carefully analyze the data collected in the interviews to find meaning behind the phenomenon of limited multicultural integration regarding organizational influence at ABBC. During this time, two special considerations will be made regarding analyzing the data.

First, what is the best way to evaluate an increase or decrease in non-dominant organizational influence throughout the second half of the intervention process, according to the data? The most apparent subjective method of measurement is calculating the percentage of official non-dominant church members. As mentioned before, the percentage now is 4%. An increase in that percentage, or at least some non-dominant attendees preparing to become members, would objectively signify an increase in multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. However, the research facilitator is open to other methods of measurement that may come up in the data gathering section of the project.

Second, according to the data, what is the best practical way to encourage an increase in multicultural integration regarding organizational influence? The results of the interviews will answer that question as well. An intervention strategy will be created as a result. Knowing how

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123 This percentage has been decreasing since 2013 due to a slowly increasing number of Japanese members. No non-Japanese people have become members since 2013.
to measure organizational influence and encourage an increase in that organizational influence by the non-Japanese will provide clear direction for the second half of the intervention process.

If necessary, the author will perform follow-up questions and further data gathering in the third month. However, ideally, the data obtained through the initial interviews will suffice to provide a practical measurement system that can be used to measure multicultural organizational influence. The data will also provide a practical church intervention strategy that will encourage an increase in multicultural integration. If that ideal becomes a reality, the author will contact the research participants to create a detailed intervention strategy for the church. At the end of month four, the church will hold an annual church board meeting. The author will give a detailed report of the project to the church at that time. Any feedback and guidance from the church will be encouraged. The author will add that input to the overall data.

Intervention Strategy

In month four, the research facilitator will arrange the final details of the intervention strategy. The author will prepare the church for the process to follow. It will be vital to bring the church together as one during this time to accomplish the intervention strategy for the benefit of the whole church. While the non-dominant church attendees will be the primary participants in the first three months of the project, the author will regularly update the Japanese attendees on the details of the process. In months four and following, the Japanese attendees will be directly involved in the project.

Month five will officially begin part two of the intervention to increase multicultural integration regarding organizational influence at ABBC. Using the organizational influence measurement system created using the interview data, the author will measure organizational influence among non-dominant attendees before the church practically enacts the intervention
strategy. In month five, the research facilitator and willing research participants will enact the intervention strategy to increase non-dominant organizational influence within the church. The results of the interviews must determine the time span and details of the intervention strategy, so flexibility is required. However, to limit the overall impact on church life, this project will limit the length of the intervention strategy to no more than one month.

Focus Group

The research facilitator will then hold a focus group involving all available parties from both the dominant and non-dominant groups. The research facilitator will first take this opportunity to summarize the results of his research and the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews in thirty minutes. He will then gather data from both the dominant and non-dominant participants on how they viewed the process and its results and whether they think it is worth continuing the intervention strategy to some degree in the future. See Appendix F for potential focus group questions. Immediately after the church performs the intervention strategy and focus group, a measurement of non-dominant organizational influence will be retaken to see if any change in the level of organizational influence held by the non-Japanese has occurred due to the intervention process. Finally, the author will analyze, organize, and report on the results of this thesis project.

Resources will be necessary throughout the process. Akita Bible Baptist Church will provide the transportation costs involved with going to interview participants. The church will provide a voice recorder to record the interviews and a cell phone to correspond with participants throughout the process. The church will also provide up to 1000 yen per person to buy gifts for interviewees in gratitude for their participation. In general, Japan culturally requires a person to give a gift to someone who is helping him or her. If the actual intervention strategy needs a
financial budget, the church will provide the necessary financial resources within a budget that the church leaders determine.

**Implementation of the Intervention Design**

**Preparation**

IRB granted approval on February 26, 2021. The research ethics office determined that since this project consisted of quality improvement activities, which are not "designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge," this study was not considered human subjects research. See Appendix L for IRB Approval. The author had previously obtained permission from the church leadership to begin gathering data in the church,\(^{124}\) so immediately after IRB granted approval, the author began contacting potential interview participants.

**Interviews**

The author performed the first interview on March 14, 2021, at the house of the first interviewee. The first interviewee was the only non-Japanese member of ABBC. She was the only participant who had an objective degree of organizational influence in the church. The first interviewee also provided a good context for the rest of the interviewees because the rest were all non-members of ABBC. On March 24, the author was able to interview two more willing participants. The author then performed interviews on March 26, 27, 31, April 10, 11. While the author initially planned for the interviews to take one to two months, all the interviews took less than one month.

The author used Facebook Messenger and LINE\(^{125}\) to communicate with four participants who participated in writing. While face-to-face interviews were preferable, time restraints,

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\(^{124}\) Permission was obtained on February 3, 2021.

\(^{125}\) LINE is Japan’s version of Whatsapp.
COVID-19 restrictions, and social distancing requirements necessitated interviews in writing for four participants. As for the seven face-to-face interviews, the author performed two interviews at his own home. Two interviews took place at local restaurants. Three interviews were performed at the participant’s houses. In such cases, the participants made meals for the research facilitator and were very enthusiastic about the project. This enthusiasm on the part of the interviewees was encouraging to the author. In general, all interviewees showed enthusiasm about the project. The author used his cellphone to record the interviews to review later.

Initially, there were supposed to be only ten interviews. The author thought one of the potential participants had refused to be interviewed due to personal work-related time constraints. However, the participant decided she was willing to participate, at which time the author had already arranged for someone else to take her place. This resulted in the number of participants being eleven instead of ten as initially planned.

As originally planned, all participants were non-Japanese by nationality. The eleven participants were Korean (2), American (2), Taiwanese, Batswana, Zambian, Liberian, Thai (2), and Argentinian by nationality. Two of the participants were born and raised in Japan. As a result, they speak Japanese perfectly and are culturally Japanese in many ways. Including the two participants raised in Japan, five participants were relatively confident in their Japanese ability. Six of the participants were female, while the remaining five were male. Three were in their 20’s, five were in their 30’s and three were in their 40’s.

After the last interview took place on April 11, the author organized the results of the interviews using a matrix on Excel to analyze the data. The interviewees’ names were in the top row with one name and the specific interview date in each column. Then each row below the
name contained the answers to their interview questions. The actual interview questions were in the column on the far left. The answers were compared and analyzed in this manner.

After creating the matrix, the author organized the answers according to the interviewee's church history, language proficiency, cultural tendencies, and length of time the interviewees had been in Akita. The author assumed that such characteristics would impact the way the interviewees answered the interview questions. Whether this was the case or not will be addressed in the results section of this paper. The results section of this thesis will also address the answers and potential reasons for those answers. Finally, the answers regarding obstacles to integration and how to overcome those obstacles were all organized in two graphs. In so doing, common themes in the answers became apparent.

The previous section stated that a practical intervention strategy to increase multicultural integration regarding organizational influence would be created based on the results of the interviews. As a result, based on the information that became apparent in the graphs, it was hypothesized that an English Sunday morning service might be beneficial to increasing multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. What does this mean? At ABBC, the Sunday morning service is all in Japanese. On most Sundays, interpreters provide English interpretation for everything except the praise and worship, communal Scripture reading, and the Lord’s Supper. Having an English Sunday morning service means that everything would be linguistically opposite of what it usually is; everything in the service will be in English. An interpreter would interpret everything into Japanese except for the praise and worship, communal Scripture reading, and the Lord’s Supper. Based on the data obtained through the interviews, the author considered this to be a potentially beneficial intervention strategy that could result in further multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. Why is this? Some of the
interviewees felt the dominant attendees did not understand the plight of the non-dominant attendees. If the dominant attendees experienced what the non-dominants experience every week, the dominant attendees may become more empathetic to the non-Japanese people`s situation. Further empathy on the part of the non-dominants could lead to more openness regarding any increased influence by the non-dominants. Empathy should also increase the dominant`s openness to counseling on transformative principles of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence.

While performing the interviews, the author had already begun considering the benefits of holding an English service as an intervention strategy. For this reason, the author discussed the idea of an English service with the deacon board at the monthly deacon’s meeting on April 7, 2021. They were open to the idea. On April 15, after finishing all the interviews and entering the analysis stage, the author wrote to the deacon`s board requesting permission to perform an English service intervention strategy on May 23. None of the deacons raised any objections to the plan. On April 18, the author discussed the idea with the church members at the monthly church business meeting. Several of the interviewees also voiced their approval of the plan. Thankfully, both the church leadership and the members welcomed the idea. The author requested that the church join a focus group after the English service to openly discuss the results of the interviews and the intervention strategy. The primary reason for the focus group from a research standpoint was to triangulate the data as recommended by Sensing. Until the focus group participants were involved, the only evaluators of the interviewees' data were the author.

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126 One must also remember that there are cultural differences and expectations regarding empathy. Don’t assume that your understanding of empathy is the only correct understanding. Loren Townsend, Introduction to Pastoral Counseling (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009), 112.

and the non-dominant interviewees themselves. Within the focus group, the third evaluator of the data will complete the triangulation. In this case, the dominant Japanese participants in the church will provide the third perspective on the data. The author will include the results of this completed triangulation in the results section of this paper.

As was mentioned in the previous section, the church held its annual board meeting on April 25, 2021. Once again, the research facilitator explained how the project was proceeding and what the English service intervention strategy would look like at the annual board meeting. At the board meeting, two church members expressed excitement about the idea of having an English service on May 23. One person asked who would do the interpreting from English into Japanese. After a short discussion, the church decided that the author would interpret English into Japanese for everything except the sermon. The emcee would speak in English while the author would interpret what he said. In the case of the sermon, the author would preach in English while the same deacon who did the emcee would interpret the message into Japanese. The board meeting only involved one non-Japanese person who is the only non-Japanese member of the church. In other words, mainly Japanese research participants at the board meeting decided on significant details of the intervention strategy.

The data from the non-dominant interviewees created the idea of the intervention strategy. If it ended there, the dominants would have had no say in the matter. However, at the annual board meeting, the dominant research participants were directly involved in planning for some of the vital details of the intervention strategy. The author considered this to be an essential factor in the future success of the intervention strategy. It is important to include both the dominants and the non-dominants in the planning stage to ensure both groups are fully invested in the project.
At the annual board meeting, the church officially scheduled the intervention strategy for May 23, 2021. As mentioned above, several important details were also determined. However, more preparation was necessary before the English service could take place. For one, the author needed to refine the measurement system for measuring the organizational influence of the non-Japanese attendees.

The author prepared an objective measurement system and a subjective measurement system. The objective measurement system was three points if someone becomes a member. So the church has increased its level of multicultural integration regarding organization influence by three points if a non-dominant attendee becomes a member throughout the project. Using such a measurement system, before this project, the church had a total of three points because one member was non-dominant. If a non-Japanese person decides to move forward toward becoming a member, that counts as two points. If, as a result of this project, a non-Japanese person is interested in becoming a member or wants to get more involved than he or she presently is involved, that counts for one point. Since no non-dominant attendees showed interest in becoming members or being more involved in general at the beginning of this project, the total objective score for the church was three. An increase in that score during the project would signify a movement in the objective level of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence at ABBC. The author would officially measure this objective score before the English service intervention strategy and then remeasure it after the intervention strategy. This objective measurement system did not change throughout the entire process. It remains the only purely objective way to measure multicultural integration regarding organizational influence at ABBC.

More importantly, the author also used a subjective measurement system to supplement the objective measurement system’s results. This subjective measurement system went through a
revision due to the results of the interviews. The author made this revision after the church held its annual board meeting in April. The original plan was to use the following scoring card for the church's subjective level of multicultural integration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The assumption was that the church members would have a difficult time reliably evaluating the level of multicultural integration if they were just asked whether the church is integrated or not. As a result, the author thought that measuring the felt importance of integration would be a more reliable way to measure the integration level of the church. If the church felt that integration was important, the reader could assume the church would naturally work towards making its organizational structure more integrated. If they did not feel it was important, the church would reveal a lack of desire to make the sacrifices required to become multiculturally integrated. The author assumed that a person could subjectively say that the church was multiculturally integrated if they had a positive attitude towards integration because attitude impacts action. This evaluation method came primarily from Davis’s evaluation of a church’s multicultural integration, also addressed on page twenty-six of this thesis.\(^{128}\)

However, an early analysis of the data provided by the interviews revealed that this was not the best question to ask the church to evaluate multicultural integration. “How much organizational influence do the Non-Japanese people who attend ABBC have?” was determined

\(^{128}\) Davis, “Multicultural Church Planting Models,” 2.
to be a better question to ask the church to measure the subjective level of multicultural integration at ABBC. The non-Japanese interviewees already answered a similar question in a yes/no format in their interviews.\footnote{129} This time, both the Japanese and non-Japanese would answer the same question in a different format. This time the question would be quantified by using a 1 to 10 scale of multicultural integration. Both the Japanese and non-Japanese participants would answer the same questions anonymously. However, the data was divided between the non-Japanese and the Japanese participants. By separating the data, the participants saw how the dominant and non-dominant groups think, respectively.\footnote{130} All participants were asked the following question before and after the focus group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Influence</th>
<th>Very Influential</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Japanese and Non-Japanese:
Please circle the number that best represents your view on the level of organizational influence that non-Japanese people who attend ABBC have at ABBC.

If the participants thought that the non-Japanese people had organizational influence, they probably did to some degree. The original form of the question only addressed the felt importance of integration. The revised question more directly addresses the more objective realities of the present situation at ABBC. For these reasons, the author revised the measurement system shortly before giving it to both the dominant and non-dominant participants. The author printed out a sufficient number of measurement system slips of paper beforehand.

\footnote{129}{73\% of the interviewees said they had organizational influence at ABBC.}

\footnote{130}{The division of data was accomplished by asking the Japanese to put their answers in one box, while the non-Japanese put their answers in a separate box.}
The author then prepared the details of the English Sunday morning service. This preparation would include verses to be read during the service, songs, a sermon, and an English Lord’s Supper. Since this author had never done a full service in English, everything was new and took time. The emcee was involved in the process to make sure the actual service went as smoothly as possible. Even the church bulletin was made into English to ensure the service was as realistically English-based as possible. The author also translated the graphs in the results section of this thesis into Japanese during this time. The author would use the graphs in the focus groups to explain the results of the interviews. Finally, the author created a manuscript for the entire service. This detailed preparation would ensure that all the participants in the service would feel as comfortable as possible on the day of the English service.

The church puts simplified English explanations of what the pastor is saying on the main screen in slide format on a typical Sunday. For the English service, the church put Japanese explanations on the slides. The Japanese explanations ensure that the participants will understand the contents of the service both textually and vocally. It is all an attempt to lower the linguistic barriers to multicultural integration as much as possible.

Intervention Strategy

Now that everything was ready, the author merely had to wait for the scheduled date of May 23 to arrive. Unfortunately, COVID-19 had other plans. On May 9, the city of Akita declared a level 4 emergency for Akita City. This declaration meant that the church could not gather as usual for at least the rest of May. The church changed its plans accordingly by moving the English service to June 6. The change was unfortunate but not detrimental to the project. However, on May 28, the city announced that the level 4 emergency would be extended until the middle of June to accommodate the limited number of available hospital beds. This extension
would mean that the earliest that the church could hold the English service was June 20. Fortunately, the church was finally able to hold the English service and focus group on June 20. Thirty-two adults and eight children attended the English service. Eleven (34%) of the attendees were non-Japanese. The following is a record of what took place during the English service intervention strategy.131

On Sunday morning, June 20, the author sent one last e-mail to the church requesting their cooperation and understanding for the intervention strategy. Once again, the author reminded the church that there would be a focus group immediately after the service. Once the ushers arrived, the author requested their help in getting the questionnaires filled out. The author prepared the ushers to answer the potential questions that people might ask about the questionnaire. English speakers who usually have little opportunity to serve in the Japanese service were given opportunities to serve by leading music, reading the Bible passage before the message, and praying before the offering. All of those who served were interviewees. As initially planned, everything usually interpreted from Japanese to English was translated from English to Japanese. Things like the songs, communion, and prayers were not interpreted. The author had not preached in English in over ten years and had never done communion in English, so there were times that he unintentionally and momentarily switched to Japanese. However, that added a humourous element that put everyone at ease, including the author. The author had requested that the English worship leader play the guitar. However, the worship leader said that might be pushing the envelope a little too far. He thought it would be better to stay as close to the typical Japanese service as possible. At the typical Japanese service, the church only uses a piano. As a result, the church used English for praise and worship, but the church made no other changes to

131 Observe Appendix M for program details.
stay as close as possible to the standard Japanese service. The order and layout of the program were faithful to the typical Japanese service.

Since there were not enough electronic receivers for all the Japanese attendees to listen to a simultaneous Japanese translation, interpretation was done by taking turns speaking from the podium. This method of interpretation meant that almost everything took double the amount of time that it usually does. As a result, the author had to significantly shorten the message and communion to make up for the added time for interpretation.

The author planned to finish the service at 11:45 am to provide sufficient time for the focus group. However, the service ended at 11:50. After the service ended, the author immediately cleared the boxes containing the pre-service questionnaires so that the post-focus group questionnaires were not mixed with the pre-service questionnaires.

Focus Group

The author started the focus group immediately after the service. Ideally, the church should have performed the focus group after eating lunch together. However, COVID-19 restrictions meant that was not feasible. The focus group was limited to being held until 1 pm to balance the COVID restrictions with the need for meaningful discussions. In the beginning, the author had two people hand out English and Japanese versions of the interview results graphs included in the results section of this thesis. Using an electronic interpreter set, the author’s wife translated all Japanese into English for the English speakers. The English speakers used electronic receivers to hear the interpretation. When anyone spoke in English, the author would interpret what they said into Japanese immediately after they spoke. Twelve non-Japanese and fifteen Japanese people remained for the focus group.

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132 The typical ending time is 12pm.
First, the author took thirty minutes to explain the project and the results of the interviews by using the graphs that will appear in the results section. This time was also an excellent opportunity to thank the attendees for their help and prayers for this project. The author could not have completed the project without their cooperation. Next, to ensure the data was sufficiently triangulated, the author requested that all the Japanese participants speak first. Then, if any time was left, the non-Japanese would be allowed to speak as well. Because of the limited time, the author only asked the Japanese participants one question. What did they think of the English service? A summary of their answers can be found in Appendix N, but those results will be further addressed in the results section of this thesis. One non-Japanese participant joined with ZOOM. After letting the participants know that the author would record them, the research facilitator recorded the discussion with his cell phone for future reference.

At 1:03 pm, the author ended the focus group and thanked the participants for their cooperation again. Then the ushers handed out the same questionnaires that the participants filled out before the service. Most of the participants who remained for the focus group filled out the forms and put them in their appropriate boxes.
Chapter 4: Results

The previous chapter observed the methodology of the project. This section will analyze and report on the interviews, intervention strategy, and focus group results. Initially, this author’s minimal anticipated result of the comprehensive intervention strategy was an increased consciousness regarding the importance, value, and challenges of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence within the church. Regarding the non-dominant research participants, this author’s minimal anticipated result was for at least one non-dominant participant to show a measurable increase in their desire to take a more active role in the church organization. This increased desire must involve a willingness to take the effort necessary to overcome barriers that hinder further involvement. Regarding the dominant research participants, this author’s minimal anticipated result was a measurable increase in the care, concern, and love that the dominant people have towards the non-dominant people inside and outside the church. To objectively evaluate whether the above-mentioned minimal anticipated results have been obtained, the author will use the organizational influence measurement system refined using the data obtained in the first half of the intervention strategy.

Interviews

Before this paper observes the results of the interviews, the reader must remember that the interviewees were all non-Japanese attendees at ABBC. Their eligibility was determined merely by their citizenship and age. Some were born and raised in Japan, but they still require a visa to remain in Japan. Some have been in Japan for less than five years and speak little Japanese. The unifying factor is that they all are or were non-Japanese attendees at ABBC.
With that in mind, what kind of data did the interviewees provide, and what does that data suggest? First, this paper will consider the actual data that was obtained from the interviews. Graphs do well to represent that data in a concise format, so graphs are included below.

The author first asked the participants about their church background since none trusted Christ for the first time at ABBC. They all had church history before they came to ABBC. Seven came from what they considered to be integrated churches, while four came from what they considered to be non-integrated churches. While some of the churches they came from had Japanese people attending and reached out to Japanese people, none of their churches were entirely Japanese churches. This means that for all the interviewees, ABBC was their first experience of an entirely Japanese church. This reality would impact the answers to the following questions and will be considered in depth when this thesis considers what the answers suggest.

How did they evaluate the level of integration in their previous church? The answers had a great degree of variation. For example, one interviewee considered her local church not to be integrated because all the attendees were from one racially homogeneous village. On the other hand, her local church was a small part of a very international church that included many nations and people groups. Her local church was not integrated because the surrounding local community contained only one ethnocultural group. As a result, overall, she considered her church to be integrated because it was a small part of an integrated international church. One interviewee said that numerically, the church she came from was integrated. However, regarding organizational influence, the non-dominant group members were merely tokens in the leadership structure. In other words, non-dominant members were in positions of authority. However, from her position in the church, she recognized that they did not have any actual authority. If her
evaluation of her previous church is correct, it is a prime example of tokenism. A third interviewee considered his church to be integrated because of the attitude of the church. The church primarily reached out to the non-dominant in the local society. This form of outreach naturally led to a very international church. He said it also resulted in effective outreach to the dominant members of society. However, the dominant members of society were not the primary targets of their ministries. At least three interviewees considered their church to be integrated because the leadership actively sought to accommodate the non-dominants in their church. It did not matter that the leadership was not visibly integrated. All that mattered was that the leadership was working to accommodate the non-dominant people in their midst. This intentionality showed that the non-dominant people had indirect organizational influence in the church. The church was multiculturally integrated regarding organizational influence.

As for interviewees who considered their previous church not to be multiculturally integrated, a common theme was the leadership composition. Their church may have had other ethnocultural representatives. It may have been open to non-dominant church participants. It may have even tried to accommodate non-dominants. However, if all the leaders were dominant, the interviewees did not consider the church to be multiculturally integrated. This kind of answer was probably because the specific question was concerning organizational influence. If their previous church did not have any non-dominants in positions of church authority or the non-dominant leaders were mere tokens, the interviewees did not consider their church to be integrated.
The next question was, “What about ABBC? Do you think ABBC is multiculturally integrated in regard to organizational influence, and why would you say that?” The above graph organizes the answers. Overall, eight out of the eleven interviewees (73%) said ABBC was integrated regarding organizational influence. As discussed previously, seven interviewees came from integrated churches, while four came from what they considered to be non-integrated churches. This difference in church background resulted in a slight variation between answers. As can be observed in the previously posted graph, interviewees from non-integrated churches were slightly more likely to consider ABBC to be integrated.

Though further research is needed, this may be a common occurrence. For example, if ABBC is more integrated than their previous church, they may be more likely to consider ABBC to be an integrated church. If they feel their previous church was more integrated than ABBC, they would be more likely to consider ABBC not integrated. Since the level of ecclesiastical integration is largely a subjective matter, this is unavoidable. At least to some degree, all
participants will define integration based on their past experiences. Even though all participants are looking at the same church situation, some will consider the church to be integrated while others will not. How does this affect the matter at hand? Those involved must remember that the level of ecclesiastical multicultural integration is not an objectively definable manner. This fact was apparent in the literature review section of this thesis. There were many ways to view and define ecclesiastical multicultural integration. The theme of multicultural integration has many aspects. With such a reality, this thesis chose to focus solely on the view that non-dominant organizational influence is an essential aspect of ecclesiastical multicultural integration.

Regardless, while there may be churches that everyone agrees are not integrated, there are probably few churches that every person involved will always consider to be multiculturally integrated. This variation occurs because all people will look at the church from a different perspective, influenced by their past individual experiences.

Past church experiences should affect the way a person views the level of integration in a church. Another aspect that could affect how a person views the issue of ecclesiastical multicultural integration is language proficiency. ABBC does almost everything in Japanese. Some non-dominant attendees speak perfect Japanese in such a church, while others hardly speak any Japanese. Does that affect how one views the level of multicultural integration within the church? In the case of ABBC, it does seem to affect how one views this issue. As the reader can observe in the graph above, 80% of the interviewees who could speak Japanese proficiently considered ABBC to be integrated.

In comparison, only 67% of the interviewees who were not proficient in Japanese considered ABBC to be integrated. This discrepancy could come from the fact that those who are proficient are more likely to be involved and understand what is going on in the church. The
Japanese proficient non-dominant interviewees are more likely to be involved in the Japanese church. As a result, they will be more prone to feel that the church is integrated because they are deeply involved and have a degree of organizational influence in the Japanese church. If that is the case, why did 20% of the Japanese proficient interviewees feel that the church is not integrated? The reason given was that even though the specific interviewee could get involved, the language problem made it so that most non-dominant people could not get very involved in the church. As long as the linguistic problem is not overcome to a greater degree, the interviewee thought that the church could not be genuinely multiculturally integrated.

Some people came from a more western-style culture (USA, Africa, South America). Then some people came from nations with an Eastern style culture (Taiwan, Thailand, Korea). The differences are vast, and this thesis cannot sufficiently address them all. Even within one style of culture like the Eastern style, there is a broad range of cultures. For example, Korean people are generally more likely to openly say what they think than Japanese or Thai people, even though they are both considered Eastern cultures.

Nonetheless, in general, Western cultures often tend to be more individualistic than Eastern cultures. Could this impact how people view the level of integration in a church? As observed in the graph above, only 60% of those from regions generally considered to have Eastern cultures said they thought ABBC was integrated. On the other hand, 83% of people from Western cultures said they thought ABBC was integrated. What could be the reason for this discrepancy? In Japan, it is vital to be a useful part of the larger society. Individualism is not highly valued. Instead, individualism is considered harmful to society. Such a worldview is often found in Eastern cultures. As a result, Eastern churches generally tend to be less individualistic than Western churches. They are generally more sensitive to situations where harmony is lacking
in the local church community. This general difference in worldview could have led to the discrepancy between the two groups. Westerners who have a more individualistic way of thinking would be more prone to say that ABBC is integrated because, at the very least, it is more integrated than what they are used to back home. On the other hand, the Eastern participants are more used to harmony or integration within a community. Therefore, they would be more prone to see a lack of integration in the church community.

Finally, the most significant discrepancy was found between those with differing lengths of stay in Akita. 100% of the participants who had lived in Akita for less than five years said that ABBC was integrated. On the other hand, only 63% of the people who lived in Akita for over five years said ABBC was integrated. How is this difference to be interpreted? Two interviewees who lived in Japan for less than five years mentioned interpretation and English songs in the worship service to be why they considered ABBC to be integrated. In general, the short-termers are the ones who will have limited Japanese capabilities. As a result, things like English interpretation will be more valued by them than people who have been in Japan longer. This difference could lead to the higher percentage of people who said ABBC was integrated. Unfortunately, this theory loses its strength when the reader considers the percentage of people who were not Japanese proficient who said ABBC was integrated previously. Only 67% of those who were not proficient Japanese speakers said ABBC was integrated. So the language proficiency alone cannot explain the high percentage of short-termers who considered ABBC to be integrated. Instead, a more feasible explanation is the “honeymoon” concept. People tend to view new things positively at first. A church will often love a new pastor – at first. A newcomer to Japan will often love everything about Japan – at first. The more they begin to settle in and the more they begin to see the whole picture, they will also see what is negative about the situation.
as well. If this theory is true, then non-Japanese newcomers to a Japanese church that is actively seeking to serve the non-Japanese people will probably be more likely to think positively about the church. Therefore, they will be more likely to say that ABBC is integrated.

Thinking that the church is integrated regarding organizational influence and feeling a degree of personal organizational influence are different issues. For this reason, the next question touched on the felt personal organizational influence in the church.

![Graph showing the percentage of people who feel they have organizational influence at ABBC.](image)

Overall, 73% felt they had organizational influence at ABBC. The common theme was that if the church is actively trying to serve them, they must have a degree of influence, even if that is not direct influence in an official manner. Once again, the author created several groups to organize the answers to consider the reasons for their answers.

People from non-integrated churches were more likely to say that they had organizational influence. This viewpoint is understandable when one considers the reason for feeling like they
had influence\footnote{They felt they had influence because the church actively catered to them with English interpretation and English worship.} and their church background. If the previous church did little to nothing to actively serve the non-dominant people in their midst, anything ABBC did to serve the non-dominants would make the non-dominant person feel like they have more influence than they did in their previous church. This church background would lead to a greater number of people who said they had influence. Regarding the non-dominants from integrated churches, they would base their evaluation of ABBC on how ABBC compared to their previous church. If the non-dominants felt they had more influence than they had in their previous church, they would likely say that ABBC is integrated. If the non-dominants felt they had less influence at ABBC than their previous church, they would likely say they did not have personal influence at ABBC.

It is also easy to understand why the Japanese proficient people would be more likely to say they have organizational influence. The Japanese proficient attendees can get involved more efficiently and even have direct influence as a result. Those who are not proficient in Japanese may think they have indirect influence. However, since the church does everything in Japanese, it would be difficult to have direct influence. At the very least, they would need an interpreter to have direct influence.

The culturally western interviewees were more likely to say they had personal organizational influence than the eastern interviewees. A simple explanation for this is the general tendency of those from Western cultures to be more outspoken about their thoughts. If they speak, the church will listen and seek to accommodate that person’s point of view. However, even if the person has a point of view, the church cannot listen to and serve that person effectively if the person does not speak. Their influence will be limited. As a result, because
those from Eastern cultures are less likely to express themselves, they will naturally have less influence overall when all other things are equal.

The interviewees who had lived in Akita for less than five years thought ABBC was integrated and thought they had personal organizational influence at ABBC. Once again, the reason for this is apparent. The church was actively seeking to serve them. This active service must mean that their presence influences the church. Thus, they had organizational influence. In other words, if they were not at ABBC, the church would not be doing certain things that it is doing now. This reality provides evidence that they have influence.

Overall, regarding organizational influence among non-dominant attendees, the interviews' final results were not expected. The non-dominants feel the church is more integrated than the author initially did. It would appear, this author was putting too much of an emphasis on direct influence that can only come through official membership. Initially, this author said that only 4% of the church influence came from non-dominants because only 1 out of 25 members were non-dominant. However, overall, the non-dominant attendees felt the non-dominants had more influence than just 4% of the available influence. They actually felt they had a relatively significant degree of influence.\textsuperscript{134} One must consider that there are many kinds of influences, some more obvious than others. Even if the non-dominants do not have official influence, if the non-dominants have a significant impact on the church life, then the church should take that into account when it evaluates the degree of influence the non-dominants hold. How can the church ensure such an impact is occurring? The answer is relatively simple. Listen to the voices of the non-dominants and seek to actively serve them as a result of that listening.\textsuperscript{135} This attitude will

\textsuperscript{134} The actual degree of influence they think they have will become apparent when the results of the focus group questionnaires are considered later.
create an environment where the non-dominants feel they are welcome and feel they have a significant degree of organizational influence over the church. More importantly, they will feel they belong. There is a place for them in the church. This feeling will remain true even if they are only in the church temporarily. In fact, according to the interview results, the feeling will be even more substantial if they are only in the church temporarily.

At the same time, there are indeed hindrances to integration regarding organizational influence. Not everyone felt the church was integrated. Not everyone thought they influenced the church. What hinders integration? What hinders such influence by non-dominants? The answers to these questions can be found in the opinions of the non-dominants themselves. That is why the next question involved asking the interviewees about what they viewed as being hindrances to integration.

There were a total of eleven interviewees. This means that 9 out of 11 interviewees thought that language hindered integration, as can be observed in the graph above. This view

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does not need much explanation. If a person does not know what is being said, he or she cannot respond or interact to exert influence on the situation. Even if that person does try to communicate, the dominant Japanese attendees will not understand what he or she is saying. Either way, the influence that person has will be limited. Language has and always will be a significant hindrance to multicultural integration at churches.

The hindrance of cultural differences takes a little more explaining. Consider this example. In Japan, in general, business meetings do not have very many active discussions. A rigid hierarchal structure is highly valued in Japan, so those not on top of that structure frequently hesitate to make their thoughts known. On the other hand, non-dominant, especially more western minded people, are more likely to give input at church business meetings. This tendency is understandable because it is what they are used to doing at business meetings back home. Unfortunately, the Japanese may feel that the non-dominant person has crossed some unspoken cultural boundaries by being too forthright. If the non-dominant person understands this, he or she may give up on getting more involved because he or she knows that getting involved may cause trouble for the church. This cultural difference regarding business meetings alone hinders integration. While some countries are more culturally similar to Japan than others, in any case, such cultural differences abound.

Another issue that came up in the interviews relating to cultural differences is an acknowledgment of a lack of understanding of Japanese culture. For example, a person from a nation like America may feel like the silence of a person listening to him or her is evidence that person is listening closely. However, many people from some Eastern cultures will go silent when they are offended or do not want to listen anymore. The person from a Western culture may interpret the silence as being a sign of openness. However, the fact is that the Japanese
person is anything but open to what the person is saying. Minor cultural differences like this are apparent in everyday life. When a non-dominant person knows about the differences but realizes he or she will probably never come to understand or adequately interpret the cultural differences fully, he or she may give up on trying to get more involved in the church. This lack of involvement is not because the non-dominant person does not want to be more involved. Instead, he or she will not get involved for the sake of the church. The person does not want to cause trouble for the church. This situation is precisely what happens at ABBC. As one can see, cultural differences run deep and can hinder multicultural integration regarding organizational influence.

While the interviewees considered language and cultural differences to be the greatest hindrances to integration, they also identified some other noteworthy hindrances. Three of the interviewees thought that strong leadership at the church was a hindrance to integration. This view is closely related to the cultural differences. Compared to Western-style churches in general, Eastern-style churches give more authority to the leadership. What the non-dominants feel to be strong leadership is a typical form of leadership in Japan. This feeling is not just a church issue. Businesses and schools are the same way. From a western viewpoint, the Eastern leadership can look dictatorial. Even if the church leadership actively tries to get all attendees involved, the members of a Japanese church will generally follow what the leader says. In such a situation, the non-dominant people may reluctantly fall in line. However, at the same time, they may feel it hinders people`s abilities to get involved. It thus hinders integration as well.

Another hindrance to integration was a lack of fellowship. This viewpoint often found its origins in the language and cultural differences. For example, people are welcome to show up at someone else`s house without warning in some cultures. However, in Japan, people rarely even
invite each other over to eat. They may go out to eat together, but eating at a neighbor’s house is very rare. This reality is hard for some non-dominants to accept. They can feel like it hinders fellowship, and thus, it also hinders close relationships. However, even if there was more fellowship that overcomes cultural differences, the language barrier would still get in the way. As a result, the language and cultural differences will often play a significant role in the reasons for limited fellowship.

One surprising hindrance was the English service that the church held once a month for English speakers. Two interviewees said that the English service hindered integration. This view was surprising because the church started the English service to better serve and integrate English speakers. However, the issue was not the English service itself. The issue was that only English speakers came to the English service. The non-dominant English speakers not only go to the Japanese morning service every week, but they also make significant sacrifices to do so. However, when it came time for the English service, almost no Japanese people made the effort and sacrifice necessary to come. Because of this, the interviewees felt rejected by the dominants. They felt the divide between them was made greater because of the English service. This feeling was astonishing to some Japanese church members who thought the English service made the English speakers feel more welcome than not having an English service.

Overall, the language and cultural differences were the most significant hindrances to integration. The language and culture impacted every other hindrance that the interviewees presented. If the interview ended there, this thesis could not adequately address the problem of limited multicultural integration. The author only came up with a practical intervention strategy to eliminate hindrances to integration and encourage integration by listening to what the interviewees thought could help eliminate those hindrances.
The next question sought practical ways to eliminate hindrances to multicultural integration. This question was the most critical in regard to developing an intervention strategy that would effectively lead to an increase in multicultural integration regarding organizational influence at ABBC. The most common answer was that listening to the non-dominant people in the church would do the most to eliminate barriers to multicultural integration in the church. A similar answer came up regarding a previous question about whether the interviewee had organizational influence or not. 73% of the interviewees felt they had organizational influence at ABBC. Why was that? Several interviewees said that they felt they had influence because they felt the church listened to their voices. The feeling and personal experience at ABBC is probably at least part of why 10 out of 11 interviewees said that listening to the non-Japanese voices was essential to overcoming hindrances to multicultural integration regarding organizational influence.
If listening to the non-dominants in the church is critical to increased integration, why did the research facilitator think an English service would be a beneficial intervention strategy? The reasoning is as follows. First, listening is easier said than done. Sometimes a person can think he or she is listening when actually that person is not listening with the intent to understand. Listening often takes empathy.\(^\text{136}\) By “forcing” the non-Japanese to participate in an English service, they will experience what the non-dominants have experienced every week for years. They will personally experience what it feels like to be non-dominant, at least regarding the language. By experiencing the struggles of the non-dominants, the dominants should develop an increased degree of empathy for the non-dominants.\(^\text{137}\) If that is the case, then what will likely happen? The dominants will be more likely to listen to the non-dominants wholeheartedly. If listening to one another does increase multicultural integration, then the empathy created by the English service should naturally increase non-dominant organizational influence in the church. Also, the English service was considered an effective intervention strategy because people are more likely to talk when they feel the person listening cares for them regardless of their cultural background. In the interviews, two participants felt the English Worship service caused harm to the situation because no Japanese participated in the English evening services. By doing the English service in the morning, the Japanese attendees will have to join. The Japanese came to worship together even though they did not understand a lot of what was going on.

Why did the Japanese people still come to the English service? At least partially, they came to show that they cared for and wanted to understand the non-dominants position and


experience in the church. This visible expression of care should increase the willingness of the non-dominants to speak their mind instead of keeping quiet to avoid conflict brought about by cultural differences. The non-Japanese would also be more prone not to worry about causing disunity because they would feel that the dominant people cared enough to listen.

As the reader may see already, the English service is merely a tool that will encourage meaningful discussion between all stakeholders. Though the language barriers and cultural differences will remain, the empathy of the dominants and the love felt by the non-dominants will make those barriers minimal. Only when those barriers were at their very least could the thesis of this project be sufficiently tested. The thesis of this project is: If the congregation of ABBC receives counseling on transformative principles of multicultural integration, then the anticipated result is that the church will become more multiculturally integrated regarding organizational influence. As the research facilitator, this author is not the ultimate provider of that counseling. For the sake of this project, the non-dominants are the ones who will counsel the dominants on transformative principles of multicultural integration. That counseling can only occur with loved non-dominants willing to speak and empathetic dominants who are willing to listen. The English service effectively brought that necessary scenario to fruition.

Intervention Strategy

After two extensions due to COVID-19, the church finally held the English service on June 20, 2021. New data came from the questionnaires taken before and after the service as well as the focus group. This thesis will discuss the results of the questionnaires and the focus group discussion now.

The same questionnaire was filled out by the participants two times. What were the results of the first questionnaire taken before the service? In all, sixteen Japanese participants
filled out the questionnaire before the service. Five of the Japanese participants left comments on the questionnaire that can be observed in Appendix O. The Japanese participant’s answers varied between one and eight. No one said that the non-Japanese had an organizational influence level of nine or ten. The average level of organizational influence that the Japanese said the non-Japanese had was 4.6 out of a total of 10. Nine non-Japanese participants filled out the same questionnaire. Surprisingly, the non-Japanese felt they had more organizational influence in the church than the Japanese thought they had. The non-Japanese participant’s answers varied between three and nine. No non-Japanese participants thought the non-Japanese in the church had an organizational influence level of one or two. The average level of organizational influence according to the non-Japanese was 6.4. In the interviews, 73% of the participants said they had a degree of organizational influence. The questionnaire put a number on the actual degree of influence the non-Japanese participants felt they had. Remembering that ten was the most influence they could have in the church, they felt they had a 6.4 out of 10. That is a significant amount of influence that easily surpasses what the Japanese participants felt the non-Japanese had.

Immediately after the first questionnaires were collected, the church held the first-ever English morning service described in the methodology section. The church held a focus group immediately after the English service. Following the focus group, the ushers collected the same questionnaires. This paragraph will consider the results of the final questionnaires collected after the focus group. Some of the participants had to leave before the focus group began. As a result, only twelve out of the original sixteen Japanese participants filled out the second questionnaire. The average level of organizational influence the Japanese participants thought the non-Japanese held increased significantly. In the first questionnaire, the average level was 4.6. In the second
questionnaire after the focus group, the average level of organizational influence the Japanese felt the non-Japanese had was 7.2. Judging by the comments on the questionnaires, there were two primary reasons why the Japanese participants felt the non-Japanese participants had more organizational influence than they originally thought before the English service. The first reason was that some people thought about official organizational influence when they answered the first questionnaire. This way of thinking was the same way this author was thinking at the beginning of this project.

However, once the participants realized that organizational influence is more than just having an official vote in the church, they were able to see that the non-Japanese had a greater degree of organizational influence in the church than they had initially thought. The second reason given was that the non-Japanese felt they had organizational influence. This knowledge came from the results of the interviews, where 73% of the interviewees said they had organizational influence. Coming to know that the non-Japanese participants felt they had a degree of organizational influence led the Japanese participants to adjust their views. It is one thing for the dominants to say that the non-Japanese have organizational influence unilaterally. However, having the non-dominants say they thought they had organizational influence impacted the views of the dominants as well. If the non-dominants say they feel they have organizational influence in the church, they are highly likely to have influence. This view of the non-dominants impacted the views of the dominants significantly. That led to an increase in how much organizational influence the Japanese participants felt the non-Japanese participants had.

138 Observe Appendix O for the comments on the questionnaires.

139 Specifically, on average, the non-Japanese thought they had a degree of organizational influence that equaled 6.4 out of 10.
What about the non-Japanese participant’s perceptions? Seven out of the original nine participants turned in the second questionnaire. Surprisingly while the Japanese perception of non-Japanese organizational influence increased, the non-Japanese perception of their organizational influence decreased slightly. Initially, the non-Japanese stated they felt their organizational influence was 6.4 out of 10. However, when the author observed the results of the second questionnaire taken after the focus group, the average level had slightly decreased to 6.1. Thus, it would appear that one comment on a questionnaire summarized their feelings adequately. “No change. Time will tell.”

The English service and focus group significantly impacted the perceptions of the Japanese participants. Nevertheless, the same experience barely impacted the perceptions of the non-Japanese. In this case, that is to be expected. As stated initially, the purpose of this project is to counsel ABBC on transformative principles of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. Guided by the research facilitator, the non-dominants would take the place of the counselor. The dominants would be on the receiving end of counseling. Thus, if a
change was to occur, the primary change would be expected in the dominant participants.

According to the questionnaires, that is what happened. The dominant stakeholders transformed the way they view organizational influence as a direct result of the impact the non-dominants had on them. This impact transformed how they interacted with the non-dominants. Until this point, the Japanese had sometimes felt the non-Japanese were not doing their part by not taking on organizational influence by not becoming members. However, the practical barriers to such forms of increase in organizational influence are significant. That does not automatically mean the non-dominant population cannot have organizational influence. They can have organizational influence along with the Japanese stakeholders when the church serves the non-dominants and listens to the non-dominants. As one participant stated, only time will tell what practical impacts this will have on the direction of the church. Nonetheless, for now, an ideological transformation of the dominant participants was observable.

Another reason no change was observed in the non-Japanese viewpoint is that the non-Japanese did not have any new experiences. They had all worshipped in English before they came to ABBC. Since they started coming to ABBC, they have always known the difficulties of worshipping in a language not their own. Only the Japanese participants were the ones who experienced the difficulties of worshipping in a language that was not their own for the first time. Even in the following focus group, everything the Japanese participants stated about the English service was what the non-Japanese participants said long before participating in the focus group.

Focus Group

Finally, this thesis will briefly consider some of the main themes of the focus group. As mentioned in the methodology section of this thesis, the focus group’s primary purpose was to
add a third view to the issue at hand to triangulate the data.\textsuperscript{140} As a result, all of the Japanese participants were asked to speak first. Then six of the non-Japanese participants were able to speak within the allotted time. The reader can find summaries of what was said by the participants in Appendix N.

Overall, the Japanese participants had negative feelings about the English service. They felt lonely or left out. They had a hard time concentrating. They did not understand what was going on. There were a variety of answers, but most of them were negative. All of the feelings mentioned have been voiced before by the non-Japanese participants. This mutual feeling is why, when allowed to talk, one of the non-Japanese participants said, “Welcome to our world.” The author was relieved because that is precisely what he desired for the English service to accomplish. If the dominants experience the “world” of the non-dominants, will they be more empathetic and willing to listen to the voices of the non-dominants? According to the results of the focus group discussions, the answer seems to be a resounding yes. Several people even mentioned that they felt more empathy towards the English speakers due to the English service. Two people said they wanted to hear what the non-Japanese felt about a particular issue. Such questions reveal a desire to listen. They reveal empathy on the part of the dominants. There was even a newfound level of respect for the non-dominants. This respect was evidenced by one of the Japanese participants saying that she would reconsider coming to this church if the services were in English every week. Nevertheless, coming to a church that worships in a language that is not their mother tongue is what many non-dominants have faithfully done for years. As a result, the non-Japanese merely repeated what the Japanese had already said. The only difference was that the non-Japanese were speaking of the typical Japanese service. The Japanese were speaking

\textsuperscript{140} First view: Non-Japanese, Second view: Research facilitator, Third view: Japanese.
of the one-time-only English service. Either way, by having the Japanese experience an English service, all the participants' voices, both Japanese and non-Japanese, came together as one within the short focus group. If the non-dominants are correct in their assertion that listening to non-dominants eliminates hindrances to integration, then the English service eliminated some of those hindrances by bringing about an environment where the dominants truly listened to the non-dominants.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

This DMIN action research thesis identified a problem. The problem was the failure of ABBC to multiculturally integrate regarding organizational influence. The purpose of this thesis was also identified. The purpose was to counsel ABBC on transformative principles of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence that apply to a local church in an overwhelmingly non-Christian and homogeneous nation. In order to do this, the author first created a theoretical framework for the following research. Secondly, the author examined contemporary literature on the topic. Thirdly, the author considered the Biblical basis for a church’s attempt to multiculturally integrate. The author then made detailed preparations. Finally, the church put the intervention strategy plan into action in the church life of ABBC. The non-dominant attendees of ABBC counseled the dominant members of ABBC on transformative principles of multicultural integration. This final chapter will address four questions. First, how did the research project results compare to information gleaned in the literature review? Second, what did the researcher learn implementing the project? Third, how might the results apply in other settings? Finally, what questions need additional investigation?

How did the research project results compare to information gleaned in the literature review? This thesis primarily focused on organizational influence. This focus is because no matter what definition a researcher uses for authentic multicultural integration, organizational influence will be heavily involved in that definition. For example, Edwards, Christerson, and Emerson emphasized the need for over 20% of the church community to be ethnoculturally non-dominant. Why is this? Part of the reason is that if 20% of the church is non-dominant, then there is a high probability that those non-dominant attendees have a degree of authentic organizational
Naidoo says the actual amount of organizational influence is more important than the actual percentage of non-dominant attendees. Even Patten, who emphasized non-dominant representations of food and music in the church community as a key to evaluating multicultural integration in a church, said that this is because the food and music are evidence that the non-dominants have organizational influence.

In other words, the past research and present literature strongly point to the need for multicultural integration regarding organizational influence if the church is to be considered truly multiculturally integrated. Initially, this author assumed that meant non-dominant attendees who made up 26% of the church in 2019 need to become members to increase the 4% of the official organizational influence held by non-Japanese people in ABBC. This author wanted to seek ideas on how to decrease the gap between 26% and 4%. However, it did not take long to recognize that organizational influence is not just a membership matter. Like Patten mentioned above, the mere presence of the non-dominant’s food and music points to organizational influence by the non-dominants. If the non-dominants were not allowed to have influence, their food and music would not be present in the church. Therefore, they have organizational influence whether they are members or not.

This reality suggests that a church is multiculturally integrated in a way that is hard to define concretely. The temptation is to define multicultural integration in concrete ways, as this author did at the beginning. However, the risk of tokenism is always present. In the case of ABBC, at the moment, there is no practical way to ensure that a non-Japanese person who cannot

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141 Edwards, Christerson and Emerson, “Race, Religious Organizations, and Integration,” 213.


143 Patten, Leading a Multi-Cultural Church, Loc. 221.
speak Japanese can fully exercise his or her authority within the church even if he or she became a member. The non-dominant member would look good on paper. However, the reality would be that person is more of a token than not. While formal organizational influence by the non-dominants is a good thing, the focus should be on a more subjective form of organizational influence. This practical reality was evident in the literature review as well. Thus, the secret to creating a multiculturally integrated church regarding organizational influence is not about coercing non-dominants to become members. Instead, the secret to creating a multiculturally integrated church regarding organizational influence is more about listening and loving the non-dominants in the church’s midst.

It does not matter how many non-dominants attend. It does not ultimately matter how many non-dominants are official members. What matters is how much the church listens to and cares for the non-dominants. In other words, what matters is how much the church loves the non-dominants in its midst. How does the church know if they are doing a good job of that or not? The best way is to ask the non-dominants. They are in the best position to tell the church how it is doing. In the case of ABBC, according to the non-dominants, the church was doing a better job of loving the non-dominants than the dominants in the church thought it was. On the other hand, if the church is not doing a good job, the non-dominants can help the church discover how they can do better. Creating situations where the non-dominants can talk freely and the church listening when that happens will be vital in any situation. In the case of this research project, the English service accomplished that goal. In a different situation, a different intervention strategy may be necessary.

This conclusion is closely related to the theological foundation as well. In the theological foundation, the author considered how God showed great care and love for the
“sojourners” in Israel. Today, the non-dominants in a church are similar to the “sojourners” in Israel. The church reveals the heart of God by loving and caring for the non-dominants in their midst. This love and care will naturally result in multicultural integration regarding organizational influence, even if that is not the goal of the loving care. In fact, loving care does not have an ulterior goal. The church that loves the non-dominants loves just because they are loved by God as well. Multicultural integration regarding organizational influence will be a natural result of such love.

What did the researcher learn implementing the project? The researcher's most significant takeaway from this project is a transformed understanding of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. Before this project, this author was too concerned with whether the church looks integrated or not on paper. This author thought the gap between the 4% and 26% was evidence of a failure to multiculturally integrate regarding organizational influence. In fact, that was the initially stated problem. Throughout this project, that gap did not close at all. At the time of this writing, there is no available evidence that the gap will close anytime soon. However, the author has come to understand that the 4% vs. 26% gap is not a big deal. There are far more important things than the gap on church paperwork. As the pastor of ABBC, the author should focus more on just loving and serving the non-dominants whom God puts in the path of the church. That will naturally result in a more subjective form of multicultural integration. However, multicultural integration should not be the goal. Trying to look good on paper will lead to things like tokenism and pride. Only a fake form of multicultural integration will be obtained if multicultural integration is the goal. The takeaway is simple. Practically, ABBC should listen to, love, and serve the non-dominants God sends their way. That is all.
How might the results apply in other settings? In non-formal discussions regarding this project, a participant mentioned that ABBC is different from most other Japanese churches. Many of the Japanese people in the church can speak English. Many of the Japanese people have lived overseas before. The pastor is an American. Yes, it is undeniable that ABBC is not a typical Japanese church. However, the conclusions of this project can easily be applied in any church in any situation. With God’s help, anyone can love the non-dominants in their midst. No language skills are necessary to show empathy toward a non-dominant. No language skills are necessary to seek to serve the non-dominants. This love will result in the non-dominant having a subjective degree of organizational influence in the church. This love will result in the church becoming multiculturally integrated, even though that is not the goal.

In the case of ABBC, an English service was a promising intervention strategy to increase empathy and, as a result, love for the non-dominants. The strategy seemed to be successful. However, it is easy to overstate the success of the strategy. For example, two non-dominant participants in the focus group stated that English is not their mother tongue. They know less English than Japanese. An English service does very little to help them. So the strategy did not benefit all of the non-dominants. If a church in a different setting wants to enact a similar strategy to eliminate hindrances to multicultural integration, the church must be aware of seeking the perfect strategy. Any practical strategy will have limitations; the problem is too complex to solve with one strategy. Considering this, a church in a different setting should first talk to the non-dominants in their midst to get ideas on a practical strategy that could be applied to their own situation. The non-dominants will usually be the church’s best resource concerning identifying intervention strategies that apply to that church’s specific situation.
What questions need additional investigation? The thesis statement of this thesis was, “If the congregation of ABBC receives counseling on transformative principles of multicultural integration, then the anticipated result is that the church will become more multiculturally integrated regarding organizational influence.” Through the interviews and the focus group discussion, ABBC received counseling on transformative principles of multicultural integration from the non-dominant stakeholders at ABBC. This counseling resulted in a measurable transformation in the Japanese participant’s understanding of the situation. They were much more prone to listen to the non-dominant church population after the counseling. The non-dominants said that transformation would increase multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. Unfortunately, this project cannot investigate the long-term effects of that ideological transformation. Will the church return to how it was before this project as if nothing happened? Or will there be practical and measurable changes in the church life resulting from the transformed thinking? Once again, as one member of the focus group commented, time will tell. Additional investigation is needed to determine how much this transformation in thinking will impact church life. Are the non-dominants right in asserting that listening to them will result in multicultural integration? Additional investigation is needed to say for sure.

Additional investigation is also necessary to provide a stronger foundation for the many assertions of all members of the research triangle. For example, the research facilitator expressed his theories about the reasoning behind some of the interviewee's answers. Are such assertions correct? Further investigation is needed. In the case of the non-dominants, some said that the English evening service hindered integration because no Japanese people joined. Additional investigation is needed to confirm that assertion as well. For example, the researcher could see if anything changes after including Japanese participants in the English evening service. Finally,
the dominant`s claims need further investigation as well. One member of the focus group commented that he thought the non-Japanese hold back a lot. This statement means that he thinks they want to do or say something, but they avoid taking the first step due to language and cultural concerns. Is this statement true? If there were no barriers, would the non-dominants be more actively involved? Or do they just not want to get involved very deeply in the church? This, too, would need additional investigation to determine the answers to such questions in a specific situation.

In any situation regarding multicultural integration, a comprehensive theological framework will be of the utmost importance. This is because a church`s primary responsibility is to listen to its head, Jesus Christ. As this thesis also observed, Jesus Christ is concerned about the topic of multicultural integration. As seen from the Old Testament, God has been concerned about the “non-dominants.” The church must also reveal the same concern toward the non-dominants that God has if they are to be a visible representation of God on earth. This concern practically reveals itself by first listening to the non-dominants. Listening does not have to be done using formal interviews like in this project. However, empathetic listening of some kind must occur for the church to serve the non-dominants. As a result of that listening, praise songs that the dominants do not know or understand may appear in the service. Food that some dominants think smells bad may make the church facilities smell for days. Many other uncomfortable situations will probably abound. However, all of this should be a reason for rejoicing. It reveals that the church is loving and caring for the non-dominants in their midst. They deny themselves to serve others. They will naturally become multiculturally integrated. More importantly, they will represent Christ and His desire for all nations and people groups to come together as one to worship Him alone. God will be glorified through them.
Bibliography


Appendix A

Interview Questions

(The Interview will be limited to one hour.)

(Some participants do not speak English, so the author has interpreted the forms into Japanese to minimize language-based misunderstandings. The author has a Japanese Language Proficiency of Level 1 (the highest level) and is qualified to interpret.)

1. Can you tell me a little about your church background before you came to Akita?
秋田に来る前はどのような教会に行っていたのか教えていただけますか？

2. Could you refer to the church you used to be a part of as being multiculturally integrated in regard to organizational influence?
その教会は組織的影響力に関して、多文化統合していたと言えると思いますか？

3. If the reason for the answer to the previous question is not voluntarily provided, then:
   What would you say is the reason for that?? or Why do you think that is the case?
どうしてそうだと思いますか？

4. What about ABBC? Do you think ABBC is multiculturally integrated in regard to organizational influence, and why would you say that?
秋田聖書バプテスト教会は組織的影響力に関して多文化統合できていると思いますか？どうしてそう思いますか？

(The answer to #4 may affect the direction of the interview. However, in general, the following questions will be used as necessary)
5. Do you feel you have some degree of organizational influence in ABBC? If you do, could you tell me what makes you feel like you have a degree of organizational influence? If not, could you tell me why you think that is?

自分は教会内で組織的影響力を持っていると感じていますか？どうして組織的影響力があると考えていますか？どうして組織的影響力はないと思いますか？

6. What are some things in the church that may discourage multicultural integration in regard to organizational influence at ABBC?

教会内に組織的影響力の多文化統合を妨げるものはあると思いますか？

7. Can you please give me an idea of what you think could encourage a greater degree of organizational influence within the non-Japanese attendees in the church?

さらなる組織的影響力に関する多文化統合を促すためにはどうすればいいと思いますか？
January 27, 2021

William Petite  
1-18-5 Yokomori, Akita City, Akita Prefecture Japan 010-0044

Dear William Petite:

After careful review of your research proposal entitled “The Challenge of Ecclesiastical Multicultural Integration in Homogeneous Japan,” we have decided to permit you to conduct your study at Akita Bible Baptist Church. We will cover your transportation costs for interviews.

ウィリアム・ペティートさんへ、

「単一民族国家の中にある教会の多文化統合のチャレンジ」と題した、あなたの研究プロジェクトの提案を注意深く調べたところ、秋田聖書バプテスト教会でその研究を行うことを許可します。インタビューに行くために教会の車が必要であれば、自由に使っていいです。

Sincerely,

Deacon/執事: Kazuo Ishikawa
Date: ______________________

Deacon/執事: Eigo Oomi
Date: ______________________

Deacon/執事: Yoko Takahashi
Date: ______________________

Deacon/執事: Seiko Abe
Date: ______________________

Non-Japanese Representative Member／他国籍会員代表：

Kim Hyunjun
Date: ______________________

Japanese Representative Member／日本人会員代表：

Ryuichi Takahashi
Date: ______________________
Appendix C

Action Research Plan Preliminary Explanation to ABBC

アクションリサーチ開始前の教会に対する説明文

When we studied the Book of Acts together in 2019, we studied how the Book of Acts presents the church at Antioch positively. It could be considered as being an ideal church within Acts. In the church at Antioch, we saw the multicultural diversity within the members and among those with organizational influence (Acts 13:1-3, 15:1-2). Contemporary literature also points to the importance of multicultural integration among those with organizational influence to have a healthy multicultural church that best represents God’s ultimate goal as having all people groups worship Him together as one in heaven (Acts 1:8, Revelation 7:9). ABBC has a significant level of multicultural diversity. What is lacking is the non-dominant attendees’ representation among those with organizational influence. Presently, only those who are members of the church have any official organizational influence within the church. While over 20% of the adult attendees are non-dominant, only 4% of the church members (excluding the pastor) are members with official organizational influence. The purpose of this DMIN action research thesis is to counsel ABBC on transformative principles of multicultural integration that apply to a local church in an overwhelmingly non-Christian and homogeneous nation. I need your help to do that. Throughout 2021, I will contact many of you who are non-dominant in the church for your help. I will ask you for an hour of your time to be interviewed by me. Once the interviews are finished and the received data is analyzed, a plan of action will be created based on the provided data. The plan will be put into action to increase multicultural integration in regard to organizational research at ABBC. The results of the process will be reported on in my thesis. My greatest desire is for this project to benefit every person at ABBC for the glory of God. I would be very grateful for your cooperation and prayers throughout this project.

144 Contemporary literature defines “significant” as being over 20% of attendees being multicultural or non-dominant. Akita’s average for fiscal year 2019 was 26%.

145 使徒の働き 1 : 8、黙示録 7 : 9

146 地域教会のおかれた社会では「非支配的な人」＝「non-dominant members」がこの分野での専門用語です。
会は確かに多文化統合されていると言えるのかもしれない。しかしが、秋田教会で足りないのは、他国籍の人々の組織的影響力です。参加人数の20％以上が他国籍なのに、組織的影響力を持っている他国籍会員数は会員数の4％。

（牧師を除く）参加人数が20％他国籍だから組織的影響力を持っている人も20％他国籍でなければいけないわけではないではありません。しかし、20％と4％の差は大きいです。秋田聖書バプテスト教会のこの差を少しでも縮めるためのヒントをもらうためにこのアクションリサーチを行います。その差を少しでも縮めることによって秋田教会と関わっているすべての信者が祝され、秋田教会がますます神様の国へのふさわしい窓となることができるように祈っています。このアクションリサーチを実行するためには皆さんのご協力とご理解が必要になります。まずは他国籍の方々と連絡を取り、教会に関する一時間以内のインタビューをお願いしたいと思っています。声をかけられた方々は是非ご協力ください。そのインタビューから得られたデーターは分析され、そのデーターに基づいて組織的影響力における多文化統合を促すための計画を立てます。その計画は教会に承認されれば、数週間その計画を実行します。終わり次第、教会内の組織的影響力における多文化統合に変化があったのかを図ります。その結果を卒論で報告します。皆さんのご協力と祈りをお願いいたします。このプロジェクトが教会の益のために用いられることにお祈りください。

147 礼拝の参加人数に関しては、多文化統合されている教会の参加人数は20％他国籍の人でなければならない。秋田教会は普段からその条件を満たしている。

148 組織的影響力を会員数で図るのが本当に一番正しい方法なのかどうかをこのプロジェクトの検討課題の一つです。
Appendix D

Informed Consent Form

Title of the Project: The Challenge of Ecclesiastical Multicultural Integration in Homogeneous Japan
Principal Investigator: William Petite, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study
You are invited to participate in a project. In order to participate, you must be over 18 years old and attend Akita Bible Baptist Church (ABBC). Taking part in this project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to participate in this research project.

What is the study about, and why is it being done?
The study aims to address the challenges of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence at Akita Bible Baptist Church. Data that will be collected through interviews, surveys, and focus groups will be analyzed and used to create a practical intervention strategy for ABBC that directly addresses the challenges of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence. That strategy will be enacted and then evaluated and reported on in William’s thesis.

What will happen if you take part in this study?
If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in an up to one-hour interview concerning multicultural integration regarding organizational influence that will be audio recorded.
2. Answer potential follow-up questions over the course of the project.
3. If possible, participate in a focus group to be held on the topic in June.

How could you or others benefit from this study?
The direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study are a greater sense of belonging and purpose as a vital part of the local body of Christ called ABBC.

Desired benefits to the church include a greater degree of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?
The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?
1. The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for
use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

2. Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.

3. Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

4. Interviews/focus groups will be recorded and possibly transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

5. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus group settings. While discouraged, other focus group members may share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.

What are the costs to you to be part of the study?

To participate in the project, you may need to pay for transportation costs to focus groups or interviews if necessary.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is William Petite. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at [email protected] or [phone number]. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty sponsor, Dr. Albert Sarno, at [email protected].

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.
Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the above information.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

Informed Consent Form (Japanese Version)

同意説明文

プロジェクトのタイトル: 単一民族国家の中にある教会の多文化統合のチャレンジ

研究者: ウィリアム・ペティート リバティー大学

同意協力への誘い

あなたは今回の研究に参加するように招待されています。参加条件は: あなたは18歳以上。あなたは秋田聖書バプテスト教会に集っている。この研究に協力するかどうかはあなたの自由です。

同意する前にこの資料を注意深く読み、質問があれば、聞いてください。

どのような研究ですか？何のために研究ですか？

秋田聖書バプテスト教会での組織的影響力に関する多文化統合のチャレンジに立ち向かうために研究がなされています。アンケート、インタビュー、フォーカスグループを通してデーターが集められます。そのデーターに基づいて多文化統合のチャレンジに立ち向かうための作戦ができる予定です。その作戦は教会内で実行され、その結果がウィリアムさんの卒論の中で報告されます。
参加に同意するとどうなる？

参加に同意するなら、次のことが求められます:

1. 組織的影響力の多文化統合に関する一時間のインタビューを受ける。このインタビューが録音されます。
2. 研究の間追加の質問があれば、その質問に答える。
3. 可能であれば、6月頃に行われるフォーカスグループに参加する。

この研究に協力する人はどのようなものがあるか？

この研究に協力することによって、あなた秋田聖書バプテスト教会の重要な期間としての自分の居場所の目的を発見することができるであろう。
教会にとっては組織的影響力の多文化統合が見られることを願っている。

研究に協力することによって直面するリスクとは？

この研究に協力することによって直面するリスクは非常に低い。それは普段の生活に直面するようなリスク以上のものではないということを意味します。

個人情報は守られますか？

1. この研究で集められたデーターは守られます。出版された卒論の中には個人の情報を確定することができは一切載せない。データーは安全に保管され、ウィリアムさんが見てアクセスすることができる。個人が確定できないような形でのデーターは将来他の研究、または他の研究者に用いられることがあるかもしれませんが、ウィリアムさんがデーターを他人とシェアする場合、シェアする前に、個人を確定することができるようなデーターはすべて削除される。
2. 参加者の個人情報は筆名を使うことによって守られる。インタビューは第三者に簡単に聞かれないような場所で行う。
3. データーはパスワードで守られているパソコンで保管される。三年以内にその情報は全部削除される。
4. インタビューでフォーカスグループの内容は録音される。書き写される可能性もある。録音されたものはパスワードで守られているパソコンに保管される。三年以内にそのデーターは削除される。その録音されたものをアクセスすることができるのはウィリアムさんだけです。
5. フォーカスグループ内の発言から出た個人情報が守られることを約束できません。フォーカスグループの他の参加者が第三者にそのことを話す可能性があるからです。

協力するとどのような費用が発生するか？
協力するとインタビューやフォーカスグループに参加するための交通費が発生するかもしれません。それ以外の費用はありません。

協力するかどうかは私の判断に任せてていますか？
はい。協力するかどうかは個人の自由です。参加の有無はあなたの今後の秋田聖書バプテスト教会やリバティー大学との関係を影響するようなことはありません。協力する場合でも、すべての質問に答えなくてもいいし、途中で抜けても大丈夫です。途中で抜けても教会や大学との関係は影響されません。

途中で抜けたい場合はどうすればいいか？
途中で抜けたい場合、直接ウィリアムさんにメール／電話等でご連絡ください。抜けた場合、フォーカスグループであなたから集められたデーター以外のデーターはすべて削除されます。あなたから集められたデーターはこの研究に用いられることはありません。フォーカスグループの内容は削除されませんが、その時のあなたのデーターは用いられることはありません。

途中で気になることがあれば誰に連絡すべきか？
この研究をしている人はウィリアム・ペティートさんです。この同意書に名前を書く前に是非なんでも聞いてください。同意してからの質問に関しては、いつでもお電話やメールをください。（電話番号：  ☎️ Ｍｅａｌアドレス： ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ）ウィリアムさんのメンターに連絡することもできます。名前：アルバート・サルノ先生。メールアドレス： ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

研究協力者としての自分の権利に関する質問がある場合は？
この研究に関する気になる点や質問がついて、ウィリアムさん以外の人に話したい場合はInstitutional Review Boardにご連絡ください。1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 メール：irb@liberty.edu

あなたの同意
この資料に署名することによってあなたはこの研究に協力してくださるという意志を示しています。研究の内容が良く理解できてから署名してください。署名してから、この同意書のコピーをお渡しします。ウィリアムさんも記録のためにオリジナルを安全な場所に保管します。この同意説明分に署名をしてからでも、質問がある場合はご連絡ください。

私は上記の内容を読んで、理解しました。質問をして、答えを聞きました。この研究に協力することに同意します。

ウィリアムさんは私の声を録音してもいいです。
（同意をしてくださるなら☑をしてください）
お名前

署名と日付
Appendix E

Spousal Consent Form

配偶者の同意書

I understand and consent to my wife/husband’s involvement in William Petite’s action research thesis project as explained in the informed consent form that he/she agreed to. (Appendix D).

ウィリアム・ペティートのアクションリサーチに関する私の妻／夫の協力を理解し、それに同意する。

Name ・名前__________________________________________ Date/日付: ______________________

Name ・名前__________________________________________ Date/日付: ______________________
Appendix F

Focus Group Questions

フォーカスグループの質問

1. What did you think of the intervention strategy to increase multicultural integration regarding organizational influence at ABBC?

組織的影響力に関する多文化統合を増やすための今回の実験はどう思いましたか？

2. Do you think the strategy did anything to encourage an increase of organizational influence among non-dominant attendees?

今回の実験は他国籍の人の組織的影響力の変化を少しでも促したと思いますか？

3. What do you think was beneficial about the intervention strategy?

今回の実験で良かったこと、教会の益となったことは？

4. What did you think was not beneficial about the intervention strategy?

今回の実験で良くなかった、教会にとって良くなかったことは？

5. Is there anything you think we should continue even after this project is done?

プロジェクトが終わってからも続けるべきことはあると思いますか？
Appendix G

Intervention Design Timeline

March 2021

- Get church permission and begin to contact interviewees.

March-April 2021

- Contact and Perform interviews with ten non-dominant attendees

April 2021

- Analyze data obtained from interviews to sharpen the measurement system of organizational influence and to create an intervention strategy to increase multicultural intervention regarding organizational influence

April 2021

- If needed, perform further data gathering.

- Use the annual church board meeting to update the church on the project's direction and obtain further official approval and cooperation if necessary.

April-May 2021

- The details of the intervention strategy will be organized and prepared to be practically enacted in May. The church will be updated repeatedly.

- A measurement of non-dominant organizational influence will be made at the beginning and end of the intervention strategy. (Appendix I)
May 2021

- The intervention strategy will be enacted in church life.

May 2021

- A measurement of non-dominant organizational influence will be made at the end of May.
- A focus group made up of both dominant and non-dominant stakeholders will be held to discuss the results of the intervention strategy.
- The results of the intervention strategy will be analyzed and reported on in this thesis.
Appendix H

Average Percentage of Non-Japanese Adult Attendees for the Fiscal Year 2019: 26%

PERCENTAGE OF NON-JAPANESE ADULT ATTENDEES FISCAL YEAR 2019

- Mar 22
- Feb 23
- Feb 9
- Jan 26
- Jan 12
- Dec 29
- Dec 15
- Dec 1
- Nov 17
- Nov 3
- Oct 20
- Oct 6
- Sep 22
- Sep 8
- Aug 25
- Aug 11
- July 28
- July 14
- June 30
- June 16
- June 2
- May 19
- May 5
- Apr 21
- Apr 7

[Graph showing the percentage of non-Japanese adult attendees from April 7 to March 22, 2019, with specific dates and percentages indicated.]
Appendix I

**Objective Scoring System**

Official Non-Dominant Church Member = 3 Points
Taking Practical Steps Toward Becoming a Member = 2 Points
Voicing a Desire to Get More Involved in the Church = 1 Point

**Subjective Scoring System**

To supplement the objective scoring system above, the author will use the following subjective scoring system at the beginning and the end of the intervention strategy. If numbers 1-3 are circled, the score is 1 point. If numbers 4-7 are circled, the score is 2 points. If numbers 8-10 are circled, the score is 3 points. Only the non-dominant participant’s scores will be added to the above objective scoring system to measure ABBC’s multicultural integration regarding organizational influence.

For Dominant and Non-Dominant:

Please circle the number that best represents your views on the importance of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence in the local church that you are a part of.

自分の思いを一番表している数字に〇を付けてください。

地域教会での組織的影響力の

多文化統合は大事ではないと思う

Not Important

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very Important

多文化統合はとても大事だと思う

Comment/コメント：

The Subjective Section will be anonymous for non-interviewed participants. Participants will place the filled-out form in William’s bulletin box at the church.
Appendix J

Permission Request Letter

January 27, 2021

Akita Bible Baptist Church
010-0044 3-16-18 Yokomori, Akita City, Akita Prefecture, Japan

Dear Akita Bible Baptist Church:

As a graduate student in the Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the Doctor of Ministry degree requirements. The title of my research project is “The Challenge of Ecclesiastical Multicultural Integration in Homogeneous Japan,” and the purpose of my research is to counsel ABBC on transformative principles of multicultural integration that apply to a local church in an overwhelmingly non-Christian and homogeneous nation.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at Akita Bible Baptist Church.

Participants will be asked to participate in an interview and one focus group over the course of this project (March 2021 to June 2021). The collected data will be used to create an intervention strategy plan to address the challenge of multicultural integration regarding organizational influence to be enacted from July through October 2021. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating (Appendix D). Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on official letterhead indicating your approval (Appendix B). A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

William Petite
Pastor of Akita Bible Baptist Church
Appendix J (Japanese Version)

秋田聖書バプテスト教会へ、

リバティー大学の学生として、「奉仕の博士号」取得のための一環として研究をしています。卒論のタイトルは「単一民族国家の中にある教会の多文化統合のチャレンジ」です。この卒論の目的は単一民族国家でキリスト教国ではない国にある地域教会に適用できるような組織的影響力に関する多文化統合を促す手段を見つけるために秋田聖書バプテスト教会を用いて研究したいと考えています。

その研究をするための許可を求めるために私はこの手紙を書いています。

10人の他国籍の参加者は一つのインタビューと一つのフォーカスグループに協力するようにこれからお願いします。（2021年3月〜6月の間）秋田聖書バプテスト教会に集まっているみんなも簡単なアンケート（Appendix I）を提出するようにお願いします。集められたデーターは組織的影響力に関する多文化統合を促すための作戦を見つけるために用いられます。その作戦は実行され、結果が卒論で報告されます。インタビューを受ける参加者は事前に同意説明分（Appendix D）に署名をします。一人一人が協力するかどうかは完全に個人の自由です。参加者は途中でやめることもできます。

ご検討ください。許可をしてくださるのであれば、Appendix B にある書類に名前と日付をお書きください。

秋田聖書バプテスト教会　牧師
ウィリアム・ペティート
Appendix K (English Version)

Recruitment E-mail

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Ministry degree. The title of my project is “The Challenge of Ecclesiastical Multicultural Integration in Homogeneous Japan,” and the purpose of my research is to counsel ABBC on transformative principles of multicultural integration that apply to a local church in an overwhelmingly non-Christian and homogeneous nation. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older and be a part of Akita Bible Baptist Church. Participants, if willing, will be asked to take part in a less than one-hour interview and one focus group that will take less than two hours at most in 2021. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

In order to participate, please contact me at lml_mtob@hotmail.com or 080-6502-3415 for more information and to schedule an interview.

A consent document will be given to you one week before the interview. The consent document contains additional information about my research. Please sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the interview.

Participants will be entered into a raffle to receive a 1000yen Starbucks gift card.

Sincerely,

William Petite
Pastor of Akita Bible Baptist Church

[Contact Information]
リバティー大学の学生として、「奉仕の博士号」取得のための一環として研究をしています。卒論のタイトルは「単一民族国家の中にある教会の多文化統合のチャレンジ」です。この卒論の目的は単一民族国家でキリスト教国ではない国にある地域教会に適用できるような組織的影響力に関する多文化統合を促す手段を見つけるために秋田聖書バプテスト教会を用いて研究したいと考えています。この手紙はその研究に協力してくださる方の参加を求めるために書いています。

参加条件は18歳以上また秋田聖書バプテスト教会に集っている方です。協力してくださるのであれば、2021年に一時間以内のインタビューと2時間以内のフォーカスグループの参加が求められます。個人情報が求められるかもしれませんが、個人情報は安全な場所に保管され、守られます。卒論では筆名を使うなどして、個人が特定できないようにします。

参加するためにはまず私にご連絡ください。090-6502-3415 lml_mtob@hotmail.com

インタビューの一週間前までに同意説明文をお渡しします。研究に関する追加の情報が同意説明文にあります。同意してくださるのであれば、同意説明文に署名をして、インタビューの時に持ってきてください。

参加された方々の中から一人、抽選でスタバの1000円のギフトカードが当たります。

秋田聖書バプテスト教会 牧師
ウィリアム・ペティートより
Appendix L
IRB Approval

February 26, 2021

William Petite
Albert Sarno

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY20-21-611 The Challenge of Ecclesiastical Multicultural Integration in Homogeneous Japan

Dear William Petite and Albert Sarno,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study does not classify as human subjects research. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your IRB application.

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

Explanation: Your study is not considered human subjects research for the following reason:

(2) Your project will consist of quality improvement activities, which are not "designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge" according to 45 CFR 46. 102(l).

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office
# Appendix M

**June 20, 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emcee: Ego Domi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pianist: Motoi Petitto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship Leader: Clay Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message: Billy Petitto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Welcome and Announcements**

Prelude
Scripture Reading: Psalm 119:67-68
Praise and Worship: Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
Prayer
Lord's Prayer
Communal Scripture Reading: 2 Cor.12:7-10
Praise and Worship: On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand
Scripture Reading: Phil. 1:27-30
Message: "Worthy of the Gospel"
Praise and Worship: Give me Jesus
Lord's Supper: Behold the Lamb
Jesus Paid it All Offering
Doxology: Praise God, from Whom all Blessings Flow
Benediction: Heb. 13:20-21

**Announcements**
1. Please continue to wear a mask, sanitize your hands frequently, and maintain some physical distance while at church. Masks are available if you forget yours. Thank you.
2. Today is the first ever Sunday Morning English Worship. It is part of an action research project for Billy’s Doctor of Ministry thesis. Please join the focus group after the service for a time of open discussion on the topic of ecclesiastical multicultural integration at ABBBC.

**Today's Plans**
1. There will be a focus group immediately after the service until 1pm. Please join if possible.

**This Week's Plans**
1. Wednesday Evening Prayer Meeting from 7:30pm

**Next Sunday's Plans**
1. There will be a business meeting after the service.

**June Plans**
- June 27: Business Meeting

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**This Week's Verse**
- "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Philippians 1:27)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>[Next Week's CS Teachers]</th>
<th>June 27</th>
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<tr>
<td>Emcee: Ishikawa</td>
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<td>Pianist: Hatsumi</td>
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<td>Message: Billy</td>
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<td>Scripture Reading: Yoko</td>
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<td>Offering Prayer: Junko</td>
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<td>Church Cleaning: Ishikawa</td>
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<th>[Last Week's Attendance]</th>
<th>June 13</th>
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<td>Adult: 26, Children: 7</td>
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<td>Wednesday: 8</td>
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<td>Sunday Morning: 33</td>
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**Lord's Prayer**
- Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name; your kingdom come; your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen

**Attitude of Worship**
- Our primary purpose for gathering here today is to worship God together. Please refrain from talking during the service, as we seek to keep our hearts focused on God alone.
- Giving Offerings is a way we thank God for His grace and express our trust, commitment, and obedience to Him. It is not something that is required, so if this is your first time, if you don't understand the reason for it, or if you just don't have anything to give, that's fine. Just pass the offering basket to the next person please. Thank you.
Appendix N
Focus Group Answer Summary

Japanese #1: I liked the English service. But it made me realize I need to study English more. It is much easier to understand when it is in Japanese.

Japanese #2: I was only able to understand 20-30%.

Japanese #3: English songs were easier to understand for me. But I thought I would feel lonely and left out if this happened every week.

Japanese #4: The English service was exhausting for me. It took a lot of work. I felt left out.

Japanese #5: It made me grateful for the work of the translators. They were the only reason I could understand anything. The work of interpretation is important.

Japanese #6: I was not able to follow what was happening in communion at all. I realized what a blessing it is to be able to hear His Word in Japanese every Sunday. It was hard to focus today.

Japanese #7: It was a good experience. I would like to know the number of the songs in Japanese so that I can at least harmonize with the English speakers. I think I would not mind having this every week.

Japanese #8: I could not focus at all. I got mixed up in the two languages being used. It made me wonder if this is how the non-Japanese feel every week.

Japanese #9: I had a hard time understanding the message. I think the interpreters at this church probably need to do a better job than they are doing. (The speaker was one of the interpreters.) I could see how this could be a lonely experience for the English speakers.

Japanese #10: I was not able to digest today`s message at all. It was hard to concentrate. I realized what a blessing it is to listen to sermons in Japanese.

Japanese #11: It reminded me of the first time I went to church in America. Going to a church that uses a different language than your own is quite stressful. I think personal interaction across languages is important even if it is not easy. It stretches you.

Japanese #12: I felt the sermon was easier to understand because including Japanese interpretation forced Billy to slow down a lot.

Japanese #13: I used to go to a church that always did it the way we did it here today. But the message connects with the heart a lot easier when it is just in your mother tongue. That is for sure.

Japanese #14: I felt like the message was just an increase in information. It did not reach my heart probably because of the language issue. I did not understand what I was singing either. It was very stressful.

Non-Japanese #1: For me, both Japanese and English are not my mother-tongue. It was very difficult for me. I would need to learn English more if this were to continue. I am very much against doing this every week.
Non-Japanese #2: This is the first time I have ever understood what was going on. I would love it if we could do this once a month.

Non-Japanese #3: It was so nice to sing in English. On a typical Sunday, the interpreters have to skip sections of what is going on in the service. When that happens, you are just left trying to fill in the blanks on your own. It is very difficult.

Non-Japanese #4: Several of the Japanese people said that it was hard to concentrate. I just want to say, welcome to our world! It is hard to focus and easy to be distracted when everything is in Japanese.

Non-Japanese #5: I often get left behind on a typical Sunday. I am not good at English or Japanese. But I was able to follow much better today because it was in English. Thank you. It was much more comfortable for me. But I will keep putting in the effort needed to worship with you in Japanese.

Appendix O
Comments on the Questionnaire

Japanese Comments before the intervention strategy service followed by the level of influence the speaker indicated in parenthesis:

Japanese #1: I am not sure what organizational influence means. (7)

Japanese #2: I think the non-Japanese have influence regarding the faith, but I think they do not have much organizational influence. (4)

Japanese #3: I have not been coming here long, but my church image of ABBC is that both Japanese and non-Japanese are trying hard to communicate with each other. (8)

Japanese #4: Because of Corona, we cannot have many events right now, so the non-Japanese have limited influence. Nevertheless, once we can get back to normal, I think they will have an increase in influence. (3)

Japanese #5: I think the non-Japanese are holding back a lot for the sake of the church, but I want to do more things with them. I think we can become equal regarding influence and are intrinsically equal too. I hope the non-Japanese understand that. (4)

Non-Japanese comments before the service:

Non-Japanese #1: The influence is there but not very strong. (6)

Non-Japanese #2: The influence is largely language-ability dependant. (3)

Japanese comments after the focus group:

Japanese #1: I was happy that so many non-Japanese thought they had influence in the church, according to the interview results.

Japanese #2: I was happy that the non-Japanese feel like the church is trying to bring them into the family. I do not feel like we are doing very much for them. I think we can serve the non-Japanese community in this way because the pastor is bilingual. I hope that we can not be entirely dependant on the pastor but rather all come together to create a place where the non-Japanese can grow spiritually.

Japanese #2: Before the service, I only thought about organizational influence in the direct membership sense. I think it would be great if we could all understand the message together. This is very important for our growth as Christians.

Non-Japanese comments after the focus group:

Non-Japanese #1: No change. Time will tell.