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STATUS INCONSISTENCY AND STRIVING FOR POWER IN A CHURCH: IS CHURCH A REFUGE OR A STEPPING-STONE?*

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This cross-cultural study seeks to determine if churches serve as political forums where status inconsistent persons seek power in order to compensate for their unsuccessful lives in the larger society. The relationships of three variables—relative deprivation resulting from status inconsistency, adaptive skills, and psychological marginality—with political behavior in churches were examined. Status inconsistency theory, in conjunction with relative deprivation theory, was used as a theoretical framework. The data were collected through mail surveys of 366 members of 2 Anglo-American and 2 Korean ethnic churches in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, supplemented by interviews with the ministers of the 4 churches. Relative deprivation affects the political behavior of immigrants in a church, but not the political behavior of non-immigrants. For immigrants, a lower sense of relative deprivation toward occupation or income induces relative passivity and aloofness in a church, a behavioral pattern not found in non-immigrants. Inconsistency resulting from disparity between incompatible statuses in different societies (migratory inconsistency) does not affect immigrant political behaviors in a church. Although the inconsistency hypothesis synthesizing psychological and structural factors was partly supported, the "status-balancing" rationale behind the inconsistency theory was not found to be true.

STATUS INCONSISTENCY

Status consistent persons (highly crystallized persons) are those holding comparably ranked positions across all hierarchies, while status inconsistent persons (lowly crystallized persons) are those holding widely varied positions (Knoke 1972-73). Several conditions cause status inconsistency: (1) discrepancy between a person's past and present statuses; (2) conflict between a person's aspiration (internalized view of self) and his/her real self (external role/status) (Stryker and Macke 1978); (3) simultaneous occupancy of conflicting structural positions (Stryker and Macke 1978); and (4) different definitions of status between interacting individuals, or between groups to which a person belongs or with which s/he identifies.

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The authors argue that status inconsistents have somewhat different behavioral patterns than those of status consistents. Status inconsistents experience psychological discomfort or stress. Pressure operates on them to alter the condition of discomfort. Status inconsistent people have some choices to alleviate the discomfort. They may try to alter the condition which makes their status inconsistent. According to Goffman (1957), status inconsistents seek to change the power structure to bring their status into greater congruency. If their attempt to change the condition is not possible, they may withdraw from the interaction or the condition.

Another important point is that status inconsistency must be understood as a subjective experience. Status inconsistency theorists assume that inconsistency results from the individual's simultaneous occupancy of statuses with different degrees of prestige. In fact, however, there is no unitary consensus among societal members regarding the hierarchy of statuses. When people evaluate their status, they usually compare their status with the investment they made to achieve the status. A status inconsistency occurs when investment and reward do not match (Geschwender 1967).

In this sense, deducing psychological discomfort from the imbalance between two (or more) different statuses is somewhat misleading. For a better conceptualization of status inconsistency, we must borrow a concept of "equity" or "justice" from distributive justice theory. According to distributive justice theory, when people perceive inequitable inequalities, they frequently experience cognitive tensions (Alwin 1987). In distributive justice theory, psychological discomfort comes from the imbalance between investment and reward values, rather than from the disparity between two or more inconsistent statuses.

Recently, there have been several attempts to objectively conceptualize distributive justice in social exchange, using income distribution among people (Alwin 1987; Jasso and Rossi 1977; Jasso 1978; Shepelak and Alwin 1986), and such organizational fairness scales as pay rules, pay level, and so on (Lim et al. 1988). However, critical problems in distributive justice theory remain, including the major drawback of a lack of objective criteria for judging the fairness of exchange. The efforts of these authors are more technical refinements of the rough justice/equity formulae of Homans and Adams than solutions to the basic problem.

First, in quest of a general standard for distributive justice, some authors assume that people share some degree of consensus concerning fairness (Jasso and Rossi 1977, p. 649; Shepelak and Alwin 1987, p. 34). Even if a consensus could be achieved, it would not be an objective standard from

which one can assess people's judgment of fair exchange because: (1) if, as Marxists argue, the existing economic system or organizational culture is biased by the dominant values justifying income / status inequality, the consensus is useless in determining the objectivity of people's perception of fairness, whether the consensus is based on existential or utopian criteria; (2) the authors implicitly assume that consensus is stable and static, which, in fact, is not the case; and (3) even when people make the same investment and receive identical rewards, the value of the input and outcome may be perceived differently by each investor / recipient because of differences in the marginal utility of the reward, the perception of input value (in the case of existential consensus), and individual needs and aspirations (in the case of utopian consensus).

Furthermore, these authors used variables such as income, education, sex, and family size, the value of which are relatively easy to quantify. The findings cannot be generalized into a context involving the exchange of psychological or emotional elements which are hard to quantify, such as social approval, recognition, respect, liking / disliking, and so on.

Thus, equity or justice in social exchange cannot be measured objectively. As Walster et al. (1976, p. 4) put it, equity or distributive justice ultimately depends upon each individual's subjective perception.

Cultural/Ethnic Marginality

Ethnic marginality often causes status inconsistency. A person's status is meaningful only when society acknowledges the status-ranking system of the person or the group / community to which the person belongs (Knoke 1972-73). But because the ethnic community and the larger society often set different definitions of status hierarchies, ethnic minorities often experience status marginality. When faced with status marginality, many minorities withdraw from mainstream society and return to their own communities.

Further, the inability to cope with adaptive problems keeps minorities within their ethnic communities. As ethnic group members come into contact with the larger society, they may lack social skills or appropriately ascribed attributes to become integrated into the larger society (Knoke 1972-73, p. 29). As a result, marginal cultural or ethnic groups often develop relatively secure sanctuaries which can buffer their adaptive problems to the wider society (Knoke 1972-73).

Given this set of circumstances, it is not surprising that there often is vigorous competition for status and reputation within ethnic communities. This may happen because of the need to bolster their low status and low

self-esteem in the larger society. Lopata (1976, p. 75) states that many Polish-Americans, recognizing their low status in America and their powerlessness to change it, participate in community life and in its lively and engrossing status competition. Thus, it is assumed that low status, little power, inability to cope with adaptive problems, and inhospitable attitudes from the main society contribute to the vigorous participation in the community politics of minorities.

Churches

Churches are still important social institutions in the United States today. They are an important part of life, especially for immigrant groups. Since this nation began, churches have been valuable intermediate structures which have helped both Western and non-Western immigrants adjust to American life (Palinkas 1984). They have been a way for immigrants to assimilate into the larger society. Alternatively, they have been the anchor of many ethnic communities and the symbol of a cultural identity, sometimes even a refuge from the larger society.

Korean ethnic churches continue to perform important functions for the resident Korean population. According to a recent study by Hurh and Kim (1990), about 70% of Los Angeles Koreans and 77% of Chicago Koreans are affiliated with Korean ethnic churches. They argue that compared to other voluntary associations, such as social and alumni clubs, churches are more accessible and provide frequent and regular opportunities for interactions. Therefore, churches are at the core of many Korean-American communities.

Churches are a unique and complicated political forum. They serve as agents for religious practices and rituals, and provide social associations which satisfy people's social, cultural and psychological needs. Research shows that churches play non-religious roles such as creating and maintaining peoples identity (Hammond 1988), satisfying peoples' needs for security, esteem and psychological comfort (Pargament et al. 1978), and providing opportunities for interactions with others (Hurh and Kim 1990; Palinkas 1984). Due to the various functions churches provide for their members, churches are perceived differently by their members. Accordingly, people have different motives for attending church. Many authors describe churches as being full of conflict, and have documented the rivalry among members over social status, prestige, power, or recognition (Hurh and Kim 1990; Palinkas 1984; Carroll 1988; Shin and Park 1988). Conflict among members within ethnic churches is especially well documented (Hurh and Kim 1990, Palinkas 1984, Shin and Park 1988).

In addition to the general roles, churches must be understood in relation to the peculiar and marginal status of ethnic immigrants in the U.S., particularly the difficulties immigrants experience in the process of adjustment. Ethnic churches help immigrants adjust to a new society by providing the opportunity to learn a new language, develop social skills and obtain knowledge of the culture (Palinkas 1984), and by giving emotional support to those immigrants who experience stress or personal crisis in their new environment (Hurh and Kim 1990; Palinkas 1984).

Meanwhile, ethnic churches serve as cultural communities where people who speak the same language and share the same values gather and interact with each other. This, in turn, solidifies the ethnic identity (Hurh and Kim 1990; Palinkas 1984), and deters its dissolution. As a cultural island isolated from the main society, ethnic churches provide a sanctuary for those individuals who retreat from mainstream society (Knoke 1972-73).

We believe that status-based or structural theories of motivation may work only when studying the behavior of immigrants, but not of native-born individuals. We believe that these theories need to be reconceptualized within the framework of the ethnic experience and ethnic institutions. If this is done they may be very useful predictors of why some strive for power in churches while others do not.

HYPOTHESES

Most authors assume that the discrepancy between reward status (e.g., occupation, income) and input status (e.g., education, race, sex) causes status inconsistency. Although many authors use objective measures of status, it is difficult to measure individuals' subjective feelings toward their own status.

In a general sense, it is assumed that those who feel their present status is lower than they deserve given their level of education will try to upgrade their status or seek to achieve status in another social arena. However, it is the sense of relative deprivation created by being in conflicting status positions which results in an individual's efforts to obtain power within churches. This is an important point, and extends the status inconsistency hypothesis in a significant way.

> Hypothesis 1: A person who thinks s/he deserves a higher status occupation or a higher income is more likely to strive for power in a church.

A member of an ethnic minority can be in a marginal position. Partly

because of the different definitions of status hierarchies by the main society and the ethnic community, and partly because of the inability to adjust to the main society, many minorities often choose to remain in their ethnic community. Also, their sense of marginality often motivates them to compete for power and reputation within their community to buffer their sense of powerlessness.

Hypothesis 2: Among immigrants, those who lack the language and social skills of the dominant society are more likely to strive for power in a church.

Hypothesis 3: Among immigrants, those who feel isolated from the main society are more likely to strive for power in a church.

Ethnic minorities often experience marginality, a symptom similar to that experienced by status inconsistents. Because there are large overlaps between the factors causing ethnic marginality and status inconsistency, the interaction between the factors is expected.

Hypothesis 4: Among immigrants, those who think their occupational status in their home country was higher than that in the U.S. are more likely to strive for power in a church.

DATA AND METHODS

Data Description

The data were collected from two Korean and two Anglo-American churches located in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan area. The two Korean churches(a Methodist and a Presbyterian(were selected because of their larger size in membership and longer history relative to the other Korean churches. The Anglo-American churches were added for comparative purposes. The American churches match the Korean churches in terms of age, location, denomination, and number of members in regular attendance.

The Churches

The Anglo-American Methodist church (AMC) is located in a newly developing southern suburb. Its membership has grown very quickly since it was founded in 1980. The regular attendance is about 190 each Sunday. The AMC is relatively egalitarian. There are no deacons or elders, and no formally structured hierarchies exist in the church. In terms of demographic characteristics, most of the members are relatively young, and belong to the

middle to lower middle class.

The Anglo-American Presbyterian church (APC) was founded in a southern suburb in 1967. About 100 people attend the church every Sunday. The APC is relatively hierarchical, with nine ordained elders and some unordained deacons. The elders are permanently appointed; the deacons are not. The most powerful committee, the Session, which is responsible for making most of the important decisions, consists of the minister and the nine elders. The socioeconomic status of the members varies.

The Korean Methodist church (KMC) was founded in a northern suburb in 1977. The KMC is the largest among all Korean churches in the area. Approximately 200 adults regularly attend the KMC. The church has a relatively hierarchical structure with a minister at the head and four levels of lay positions below the minister. The socioeconomic status of the members varies, ranging from professionals to lower class new immigrants.

The Korean Presbyterian church (KPC) is located in a northern suburb of the Twin Cities. The KPC, founded in 1967, is the oldest of all Korean churches in the region, and has a regular attendance of approximately 110. Like the KMC, the KPC is relatively hierarchical. In terms of occupation and education, the members are very homogeneous. Most of the members have high educational backgrounds. About half of the congregation are professionals, University of Minnesota faculty, or graduate students.

Data Collection

We limited our study to people 19 years of age or older who had been attending their respective church longer than one year at the time of the study. This study is concerned with the activities and traits of the members during 1988-1989. Those who were younger than 19 in 1990 were excluded because most of them were high school students in the previous year, and were likely to have attended Sunday School rather than participate in church politics during 1988-89. In total, the 4 pastors provided the names of 654 parishioners.

The questionnaire was written in two languages, English and Korean. The English questionnaire was used for the members of the two Anglo-American churches, and the Korean questionnaire for those of the two Korean ethnic churches. An English questionnaire was also used for the Americans who attended the Korean churches, and those young Koreans who were not fluent in written Korean.

The initial questionnaire was mailed to the 654 eligible respondents in March 1990 with self-addressed, stamped envelops enclosed. After two

intensive mail follow-ups and two telephone follow-ups, 366 people participated in the study. Of the total respondents, members of the American churches make up 54%, and members of the Korean churches make up 46%. Reductions to the 654 names originally provided by the ministers included 71 people who were found not eligible or unable to respond (e.g., too sick, moved back to Korea), and 25 people who could not be contacted due to inaccurate addresses and telephone numbers. With the exclusion of these ineligible subjects, the response rate rises to 65.6%.

After the data collection was completed, the 4 ministers were interviewed again to obtain information on the non-respondents. A comparison reveals that, on average, the respondents are two years older than the non-respondents. A gender comparison reveals no significant difference in response rates between the two groups. People with higher education levels and those who have been attending their church for a longer period participated in the survey at a higher frequency rate. Similar over-representation by better educated, more active members has been reported elsewhere (e.g., Hoge 1976; Hoge and Carroll 1978).

Measurements

1. Relative Deprivation and Status Inconsistency

Relative deprivation is a sense of injustice that a person feels toward his/her reward status (e.g., occupation or income) after comparing his/her reward status to that of others with similar input status (e.g., educational attainment). Two questions were asked of both native-born and immigrant respondents. The first question measures the subjective feelings of the respondents toward their occupation: "Compared to others who have similar educational backgrounds, how do you feel about your present occupation?" For this question, six answer choices were provided: (1) I should have a much more prestigious job given my level of education; (2) I should have a better job given my level of education, but my present one is tolerable; (3) My present job is about equivalent to my educational background; (4) I should have a less prestigious job given my level of education; (5) I should have a much less prestigious job given my level of education; and (6) I don't know.

The second question measures the subjective feelings of the respondents toward their income: "Compared to others who have similar educational backgrounds, how do you feel about your income?" Six similar answer choices were provided: (1) I should be earning much more given my level of education; (2) I should be earning more given my level of education; (3) My

present income is about right given my level of education; (4) I should be earning less given my level of education; (5) I should be earning much less given my level of education; and (6) I don't know.

We are also interested in examining how migratory inconsistency—a change in status caused by geographic migration from one society to another—affects the political behaviors of immigrants in a church. For immigrants only, this question was asked: "How would you compare your present occupation with your previous one in your former country?" The six answer choices for this question were: (1) My previous job was much more prestigious than my present one; (2) My previous job was more prestigious than my present one; (3) Both jobs are almost equal in terms of prestige; (4) My present job is more prestigious than my previous one; (5) My present job is much more prestigious than my previous one; and (6) I don't know.

These ordinal variables were coded according to the degree of subjective injustice. As a result, a lower score indicates a higher negative feeling or higher relative deprivation about one's present occupational or economic status.

2. Language Skill

English proficiency was assessed by asking immigrants to evaluate their ability to speak and understand English on a five-point scale, ranging from "unable to communicate in English at all" to "speak English excellently with no accent."

3. Social Skills

The social skills of an individual are the degree of understanding of American society and the ability he needs in order to function as an ordinary member of the society (including proper norms and etiquettes, knowledge of U.S. political, economic, social, and tax systems, and so on). Three questions were asked: (1) "Are you embarrassed at parties with Americans because you feel that you lack appropriate manners?"; (2) "How often do you feel reluctant to discuss the political, economic, cultural or social issues of the U.S. because you feel that you are not familiar with the issues?"; and (3) "Are you reluctant to go to a party, movie, concert, or any other public place alone because you feel that you don't know how to behave there?"

For the first two questions, five answer choices were provided: (1) Very often; (2) Often; (3) Sometimes; (4) Rarely; and (5) Never. For the last question, two simple dichotomous answer choices were provided: (1) Yes,

and (2) No.

4. Sense of Isolation / Distance

The sense of isolation was assessed using two methods. The first measures the psychological distance an immigrant feels from this country—perceived "homeness" (homelessness). To the question, "Do you consider the U.S. home or a foreign country?," three answer choices were provided: (1) Nothing but a foreign country; (2) A foreign country, but a comfortable place where I can settle in; and (3) Home.

The second method measures the degree to which an immigrant feels s / he is discriminated against in this country. We asked the question: "How often do you feel you are discriminated against because of your race / ethnicity, religion, ideology or other reason?" For this question, five answer choices were provided: (1) Very often; (2) Often; (3) Sometimes; (4) Rarely, and (5) Never. The five answers were ordinally scaled.

5. Effort to Gain Power

The effort to gain power—"striving for power"—refers to a set of political efforts a church member exerts to influence church policies or to occupy a position which enables him / her to have some control over church policies. This variable was measured by asking six questions: (1) During the last two years, have you (individually or with other members) made any church-related suggestion to a pastor or to a relevant committee?; (2) During the last two years, have you tried to persuade any of your church members to think the way you do on church-related matters (e.g., policies, beliefs, disciplines, etc.)?; (3) During the last two years, have you asked any of your church members to support your church-related suggestion?; (4) During the last two years, have you asked any of your church members to recommend you for a certain board or committee that you were qualified for?; (5) During the last two years, have you asked any of your church members to help you be assigned to a certain position or role?; and (6) During the last two years, have you worked together with anyone to influence church decisions or policies? For each question, two alternative responses were given: "Yes" and "No". One point was assigned to the answer "Yes", 0 to "No". The answer values to the six questions were totaled, with the score indicating the level of an individual's political efforts to gain power in a church.

In testing Hypothesis 1, the respondents were divided into two groups, based on the relative deprivation perceived by individuals toward their occupation: 1) a dissatisfied group, i.e., those who think they deserve a more

prestigious job given their educational backgrounds; and 2) a satisfied group, i.e., those who believe their job is about equivalent to their education or who think they deserve a less prestigious job.

The respondents were also divided into two categories, based on the relative deprivation perceived by individuals toward their income: (1) a dissatisfied group, i.e., those who think they deserve a higher income given their educational backgrounds; and (2) a satisfied group, i.e., those who believe their income is about equivalent to their education or who think they deserve a lower income. Non-immigrants (American-born individuals) and immigrants were analyzed separately.

To test Hypothesis 2, the language skill was measured by asking for respondents' subjective level of English proficiency. Five answers are clustered into three levels. The lowest proficiency (poor) level is for those who cannot communicate at all in English or those who can put simple words together, but can hardly make complete sentences to deliver their ideas. The medium (fair) level is for those who can speak English well enough to carry out daily conversations. And the highest (good) level is for those who can either speak English very well and feel comfortable in most situations or speak English excellently with little accent.

The sense of isolation considered in Hypothesis 3 was assessed by measuring 1) the psychological distance an immigrant feels in this country, and 2) the degree to which an immigrant feels that he is discriminated against in this country because of his race/ethnicity, religion, ideology, or other reason.

Two groups were also created to test Hypothesis 4: 1) those who think that their previous job was much better or simply better than the present job in the U.S.; and 2) those who think that both jobs are almost equal in terms of prestige, or those who think their present job is better or much better than the previous one.

FINDINGS

Hypothesis 1

Perceived Relative Deprivation toward Occupation: Table 1 examines the relationship between feelings of relative deprivation of church members toward their occupation and efforts to gain power in a church. These data indicate there is no difference between the two groups of American-born individuals (non-immigrants) in their efforts to gain power, and that the difference between the two groups of non-immigrants with different

TABLE 1. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER BY RELATIVE DEPRIVATION TOWARD OCCUPATION

	Dissatisfied Group	Satisfied Group	Test Statistics Tests	P-Value	
1) Non-Immigrants					
Size	34	106	Levene F for variability		
Mean	2.6176	2.4151		0.06	0.8058
STD DEV	1.7410	1.7667			
Maximum	6	6	Pooled T	0.58	0.5604
Minimum	0	0	Separate T	0.59	0.5588
			Mann-Whit	1953.50	0.4535
2) Immigrants					
Size	33	53	Levene F for variability		
Mean	2.5455	1.6981		2.11	0.1500
STD DEV	1.6026	1.7496			
Maximum	5	5	Pooled T	2.25	0.0268
Minimum	0	0	Separate T	2.30	0.0243
			Mann-Whit	1120.50	0.0247

degrees of relative deprivation is negligible. Thus, relative deprivation felt by American-born individuals toward their occupation does not make them differ in efforts to gain power in a church.

However, the immigrants who regard themselves as over-qualified for their job have a much stronger tendency to exert efforts to gain power in a church than the immigrants who do not think that way. This difference between the two types of immigrants is statistically significant at the level of 0.05.

The results in Table 1 seem to support the thesis that a church has different meanings for non-immigrants and immigrants. For non-immigrants, a church is not a forum where individuals seek power to compensate for their relative deprivation, but perceived injustice or relative deprivation makes immigrants politically active in a church.

A cross-cultural comparison between immigrants and non-immigrants in Table 1, however, challenges this interpretation. The satisfied immigrants are much more passive and aloof (mean = 1.6981) than the dissatisfied non-immigrants (mean = 2.6176), the satisfied non-immigrants (mean =2.4151), and the dissatisfied immigrants (mean = 2.5455). Compared to the satisfied immigrant group, the other three groups exert much more political effort. Therefore, the difference between the two immigrant groups results from the fact that immigrants who are satisfied with their occupation tend to be indifferent to church affairs rather than from the fact that immigrants who are dissatisfied with their occupation are especially active politically in a

church.

2. Perceived Relative Deprivation toward Income

Table 2 examines how the feelings of relative deprivation toward income affect members political behaviors in a church. A comparison between the two groups of non-immigrants shows that the non-immigrants who feel they deserve more income based on their level of education do not exert any more political efforts than those who do not think they deserve more income.

However, immigrants show a different pattern. The immigrants who think that they deserve more income tend to be more active than their income-satisfied counterparts in exerting efforts to gain power in a church. This difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Relative deprivation toward income makes non-immigrants and immigrants differ politically in a church.

A cross-cultural comparison between non-immigrants and immigrants in table 2 again reveals that the satisfied immigrants are more passive (mean = 1.6522) than the dissatisfied non-immigrants (mean = 2.6034), the satisfied non-immigrants (mean = 2.3605), and the dissatisfied immigrants (mean = 2.4872). The latter three groups are very active politically, compared to the relative inactivity of the satisfied immigrants. Once again, the behavioral differences between the two groups of immigrants and between non-immigrants and immigrants are caused by the fact that immigrants who are

TABLE 2. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER BY RELATIVE DEPRIVATION TOWARD INCOME

	Dissatisfied Group	Satisfied Group	Test Statistics Tests	P-Value	
1) Non-Immigrants					
Size	58	86	Levene F for variability		
Mean	2.6034	2.3605		0.39	0.5343
STD DEV	1.6852	1.8338			
Maximum	6	6	Pooled T	0.81	0.4219
Minimum	0	0	Separate T	0.82	0.4144
			Mann-Whit	2729.50	0.3289
2) Immigrants					
Size	39	46	Levene F for variability		
Mean	2.4872	1.6522		1.32	0.2541
STD DEV	1.6201	1.7284			
Maximum	5	5	Pooled T	2.28	0.0249
Minimum	0	0	Separate T	2.30	0.0242
			Mann-Whit	1144.50	0.0248

satisfied with their income tend to be indifferent to church politics, rather than by the fact that immigrants who are dissatisfied with their income are especially politically active in a church.

Hypothesis 2

1. Language Skill and Efforts to Gain Power

The results of the first part of Hypothesis 2 are presented in table 3 as the relationship between language skill and striving for power. Contrary to the hypothesis, the immigrants with the highest English proficiency are more prone to exert political efforts in a church than those with fair or poor English proficiency. The differences in political effort between the highest and lowest proficiency groups, and between the medium and lowest groups, are significant at the level of 0.01 and 0.1, respectively.

2. Social Skills and Efforts to Gain Power

Tables 4 through 6 test the second part of Hypothesis 2 - the relationship between social skills and political efforts in a church. The data do not reveal significant differences between immigrants with varied degrees of social skills.

It was found that the more appropriate manners an immigrant has, and thus the less embarrassment s/he experiences at parties with Americans, the stronger tendency s/he has to exert political efforts in a church (Table 4).

TABLE 3. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER BY ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Significance
ENGLISH	24.9793	2	12.4896	4.42	0.0138
Error	381.4265	135	2.8254		
Welsh				6.44	0.0031
Levene's test for Variances				6.15	0.0028

** Tukey Studentized Range Method **

Group	Mean	N	Group Poor	Fair	Good
Poor	0.80	20		–	**
Fair	1.72	83	–		
Good	2.20	35	**		

** P < 0.01
– P < 0.1

TABLE 4. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER BY EMBARRASSMENT AT PARTIES

Source	Sum of Squares	DF Square	Mean	F	Significance
PARTY	5.5043	2	2.7521	0.93	0.3981
Error	383.7288	130	2.9671		
Welsh				0.84	0.4435
Levene's test for Variances				0.75	0.4748

Group	Mean	N
Often Embarrassed	1.20	10
Sometimes Embarrassed	1.71	69
Rarely Embarrassed	1.96	54

The relationship between the degree of appropriate manners and political behavior is linear, but the differences among the three groups are not significant at the level of 0.05.

Table 5 examines the relationship between the willingness or reluctance of immigrants to discuss political, economic, or social issues of the U.S. with others, which stems from their knowledge of those issues, and striving for power in a church. An analysis of variance in table 5 shows that the more familiar an immigrant is with the political, economic, cultural or social issues of the U.S., and therefore the less reluctant s/he is to discuss those issues with others, the more s/he is prone to exert political efforts in a church. The differences among the three groups, however, are not statistically significant.

T-test in table 6 examines the differences between two groups of immigrants with different degrees of social skill. The first group consists of

TABLE 5. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER BY RELUCTANCE TO DISCUSS ISSUES

Source	Sum of Squares	DF Square	Mean	F	Significance
DISCUS	5.0731	2	2.5365	0.89	0.4135
Error	367.9875	129	2.8526		
Welsh				1.05	0.3591
Levene's test for Variances				1.68	0.1898

Group	Mean	N
Often Reluctant	1.22	18
Sometimes Reluctant	1.76	55
Rarely Reluctant	1.81	59

TABLE 6. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER BY RELUCTANCE TO GO TO PUBLIC PLACES

	Reluctant Group	Groups with No Fear	Test Statistics Tests		P-Value
Size	17	112	Levene F for variability		
Mean	1.6471	1.7946		2.15	0.1454
STD DEV	2.0598	1.6665			
Maximum	5	6	Pooled T	–0.33	0.7424
Minimum	0	0	Separate T	–0.28	0.7811
			Mann-Whit	893.0	0.6705

those who are reluctant to go to public places alone because they feel that they do not know how to behave in a socially appropriate manner. The second group is comprised of those who are not reluctant to venture out into public settings. Table 6 shows that the immigrants who are not reluctant to go to public places alone have a slightly stronger tendency to exert political efforts in a church than do their reluctant counterparts. This difference, however, is very small and statistically insignificant.

To sum up the findings in tables 4 through 6, those immigrants with more appropriate social skills are more prone to exert political efforts in a church than those with less appropriate social skills, but the differences are not statistically significant. The findings lead us to believe that, among the immigrants, the ability to use appropriate manners, and knowledge of political, economic, cultural or social issues—the necessary skills needed by the immigrants to function as ordinary members in the U.S. society—do not make the political behavior of immigrants differ in a church.

Hypothesis 3

1. Sense of Homeness

Table 7 examines how the psychological distance of an immigrant toward this country affects his/her political behavior in a church. An ANOVA in table 7 reveals that the more an immigrant feels at home in U.S. society, the more s/he is likely to exert efforts to gain power in a church. The data indicate that as one's sense of "homeness" in the U.S. increases, his/her political efforts in a church increase as well, but that the differences among the three groups are not statistically significant.

2. Sense of Discrimination

The relationship between the sense of discrimination and the political behaviors of immigrants is presented in table 8. The sense of discrimination

TABLE 7. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER BY THE SENSE OF HOMENESS

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Significance
USHOME	15.7274	2	7.8637	2.73	0.0691
Error	392.3302	136	2.8848		
Welsh				3.31	0.0481
Levene's test for Variances				2.27	0.1071

** Tukey Studentized Range Method**

Group	Mean	N	Group Foreign	Comfortable	Home
Foreign	1.07	29		–	
Comfortable	1.87	94	–		
Home	2.00	16			

– P< 0.1

TABLE 8. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER BY THE SENSE OF DISCRIMINATION

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Significance
DISCRM	3.3023	2	1.6512	0.55	0.5755
Error	398.7561	134	2.9758		
Welsh				0.53	0.5952
Brown-Forsythe				0.54	0.5837
Levene's test for Variances				0.10	0.9055

Group	Mean	N
Often Discriminated	1.31	13
Sometimes	1.74	76
Rarely	1.87	48

felt by immigrants and their political efforts in a church are negatively related, i.e., the more frequently one experiences discrimination, the less politically active s/he becomes in a church. However, the differences in political behavior among the three groups of immigrants with different degrees of felt discrimination are not statistically significant.

In general, sense of isolation and political efforts are not related (tables 7 and 8). Although the immigrants who feel less isolated from the main society exert more efforts to gain power in a church, we have no strong statistical evidence to conclude that behavioral differences exist between immigrants with different senses of isolation.

Hypothesis 4

The T-test comparison between the two groups created for this hypothesis is presented in table 9. Comparing the two groups of immigrants, those who think their job in their previous country was much better do not reveal any different political behavior from those who do not think their job in their previous country was much better. The two groups show almost the same degree of political efforts aimed at gaining power in a church. Thus, a person's frustration stemming from the disparity between his/her previous and present jobs does not affect his/her political behavior in a church.

Path Analyses

We found that feelings of relative deprivation toward occupation or income affects the political behaviors of immigrants in a church, but not those of non-immigrants (tables 1 and 2). We also examined the relationships between various cultural factors and the political behaviors of immigrants in a church. Of these cultural variables, only language skill (ENGLISH) was found to be related positively with the political efforts of immigrants in a church (table 3). On the basis of the earlier findings, three sets of causal models are constructed: (1) both immigrants and non-immigrants combined together; (2) non-immigrants; and (3) immigrants.

In our first path models (figure 1), education shows no direct effect on political efforts (EFFORT). Education is positively related to feelings of relative deprivation both occupation and toward income. Additionally, the relative deprivation variables (JOBDEP and ECODEP) are positively related to political efforts. Education appears to be positively related to political efforts, simply because education is positively related to variables which have significant positive effects on political efforts.

TABLE 9. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER BY THE COMPARISON BETWEEN PREVIOUS AND PRESENT JOBS

	Old Job is Better	Others	Test Statistics Tests		P-Value
Size	42	33	Levene F for variability		
Mean	2.1905	2.1818		0.22	0.6414
STD DEV	1.8378	1.7039			
Maximum	6	5	Pooled T	0.02	0.9834
Minimum	0	0	Separate T	0.02	0.9832
			Mann-Whit	696.50	0.9696

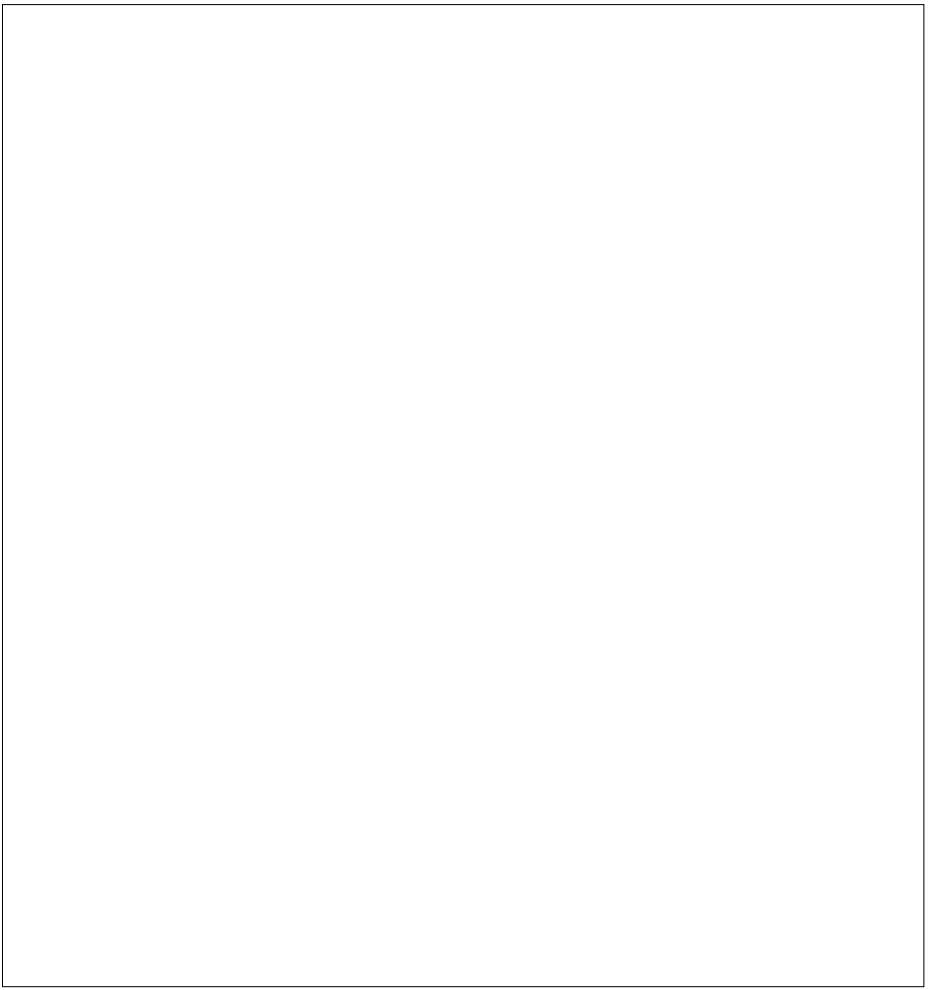

FIGURE 1. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER: NON-IMMIGRANTS AND IMMIGRANTS COMBINED

JOB: occupational status
EDU: educational attainment
INC: income
JOBDEP: relative deprivation toward occupation
ECODEP: relative deprivation toward income
EFFORT: efforts to gain power

Figure 2 presents path models for non-immigrants. It shows that occupational status, income, and education have significant effects on feelings of relative deprivation (JOBDEP and ECODEP) of non-immigrants.

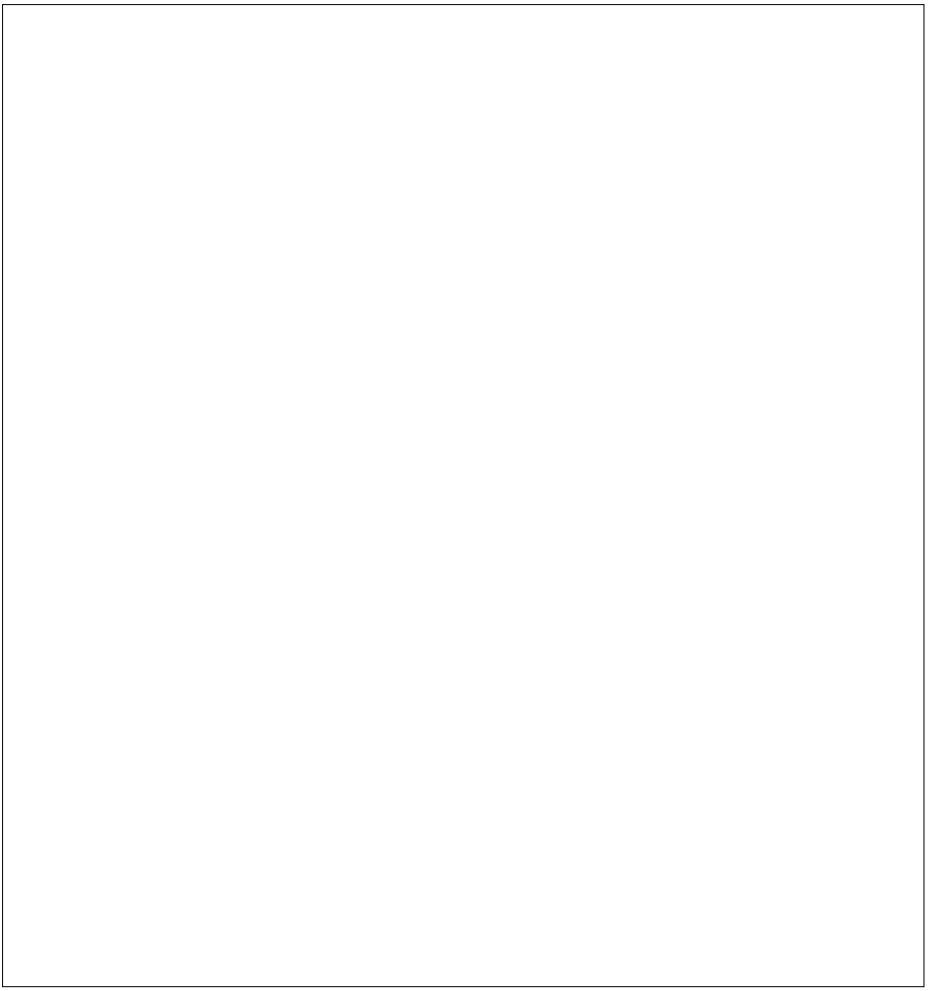

FIGURE 2. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER: NON-IMMIGRANTS

JOB: occupational status
EDU: educational attainment
INC: income
JOBDEP: relative deprivation toward occupation
ECODEP: relative deprivation toward income
EFFORT: efforts to gain power

Non-immigrants with a higher occupational status or more income have a lower sense of relative deprivation toward their occupation ($P < 0.01$). Non-immigrants with more income have a lower sense of relative deprivation

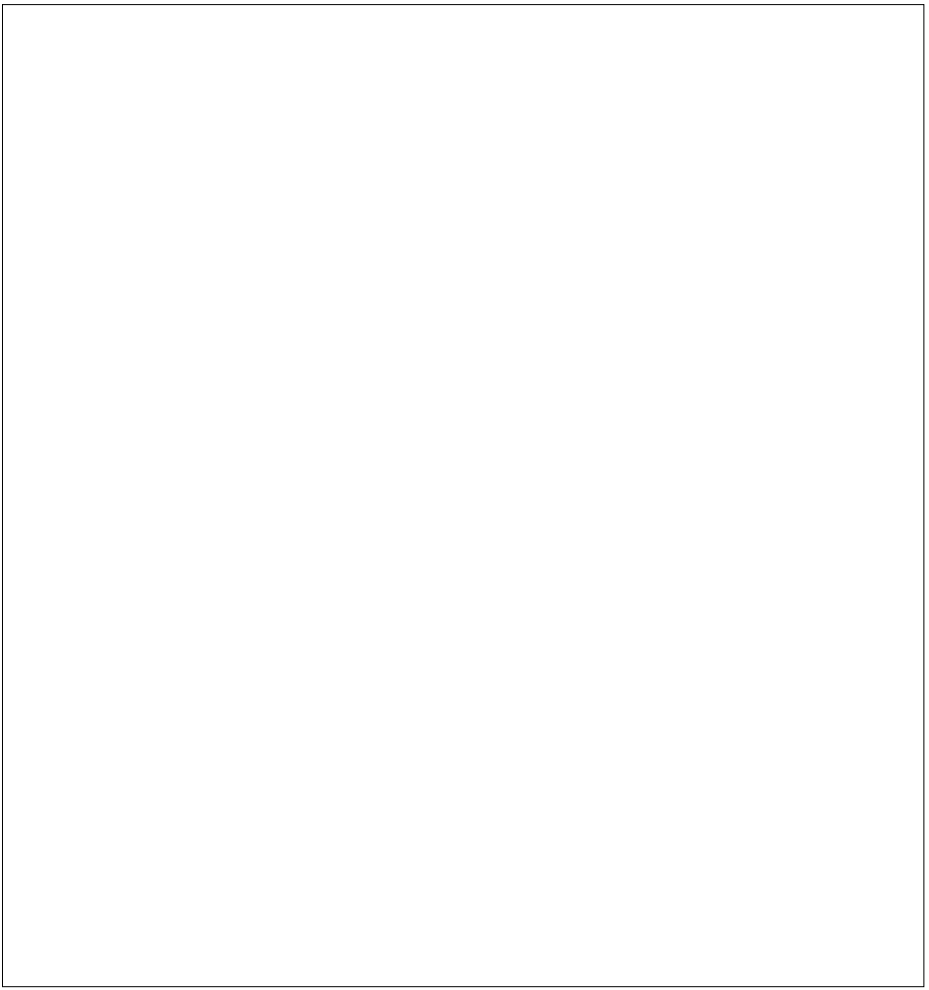

FIGURE 3. EFFORTS TO GAIN POWER: IMMIGRANTS

JOB: occupational status
EDU: educational attainment
INC: income
JOBDEP: relative deprivation toward occupation
ECODEP: relative deprivation toward income
EFFORT: efforts to gain power

toward their income ($P < 0.001$). But better educated non-immigrants have a higher sense of deprivation toward their occupation ($P < 0.01$) and income ($P < 0.05$). These are basically the same findings as for immigrants.

The three demographic variables, however, have no direct causal effects on non-immigrants' political efforts. None of the relative deprivation variables has a causal effect on the political efforts of non-immigrants. This leaves us in the awkward position of not knowing what leads non-immigrants to strive for power.

Figure 3 presents 2 path models for immigrants. Immigrants with a higher occupational status have a lower sense of deprivation toward their occupation ($P < 0.001$), and immigrants with more income have a lower sense of deprivation toward their income ($P < 0.001$). Education is positively related to both relative deprivation variables for immigrants: better-educated immigrants have a higher sense of deprivation toward both their occupation ($P < 0.001$) and their income ($P < 0.01$).

The three demographic variables—occupational status, education, and income—have causal effects on the relative deprivation toward occupation and income, and the relative deprivation variables have independent causal effects on immigrants' political efforts. Interestingly, language skill (ENGLISH) does not increase or decrease immigrants' political efforts (figure 3). This result contradicts our earlier finding in the bivariate analysis (table 3). When language skill is entered in the multivariate path model with education, the effect of language skill on immigrants' political efforts disappears. This is because education, which is a stronger variable through its closer relationship to other variables, offsets language skill which is highly correlated with education.

A comparison between figures 2 and 3 reveals that occupational status, income, and education have similar effects on relative deprivation toward occupation and relative deprivation toward income for both non-immigrants and immigrants. These three demographic variables have no direct causal effects on the political efforts of immigrants and non-immigrants in a church. The only additional variable for immigrants, language skill, has no effect on the relative deprivation of immigrants toward their occupation or income.

One clear difference between immigrants and non-immigrants is that feelings of relative deprivation toward their occupation or their income affects the political efforts of immigrants, but not those of non-immigrants. For non-immigrants, a high sense of relative deprivation toward their occupation or income does not lead them to exert more political efforts in a church. But for immigrants, a high sense of relative deprivation toward their occupation or income affects their political behavior in a church.

However, the behavioral difference observed in immigrants must be interpreted with caution. It has been found earlier, in tables 1 and 2, that

immigrants who are satisfied with their occupation or income are passive and aloof. The positive effects of relative deprivation toward occupation (JOBDEP) and relative deprivation toward income (ECODEP) on political efforts (EFFORT) are due to the fact that immigrants who have a lower sense of deprivation tend to be indifferent to church affairs; it does not mean that immigrants with a higher sense of deprivation toward their occupation or income are especially interested in church affairs politically.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

Status Inconsistency and Striving for Power

Some psychological and cultural factors were predicted to motivate people to strive for power in a church. These factors are: relative deprivation resulting from the disparity between input/investment status (education) and reward status (occupation and income); discrepancy between the past and the present statuses; ability to adjust to the main society (e.g., language skill and social skills); and a sense of isolation. Of those variables, only relative deprivation stemming from the disparity between input status and reward status was found to have some effect on the political behaviors of people in a church.

According to status inconsistency theory, status inconsistent people attempt to change the condition which makes their status inconsistent. But if they are not successful in doing so, they retreat to a forum where their attempt seems more successful. It was found that immigrants who have a lower sense of relative deprivation toward their occupation or income are relatively indifferent to church politics. In contrast, immigrants who have a higher sense of relative deprivation toward their occupation or income are much more politically active in a church. The same behavioral difference was not found in the American-born subjects. American-born individuals with either a higher or a lower sense of deprivation are as politically active as the immigrants with a high sense of deprivation.

Jackson and Curtis (1972) once suggested that inconsistency effects occur only under certain conditions or for certain subgroups because rates of mobility and inconsistency are so high among the general population in the U.S. They are correct in the sense that there exist behavioral differences among immigrants, but not among non-immigrants.

However, quite contrary to the expectation of Jackson and Curtis, the behavioral differences among immigrants are not caused by the attempts of status inconsistent immigrants to make their overall status consistent.

Rather, the differences among immigrants exist because immigrants who have a low sense of deprivation are very passive and aloof in a church compared to the immigrants with a higher sense of deprivation. At this moment, we do not know what makes the immigrants with a lower sense of deprivation particularly indifferent to church politics. At the same time, the ethnic church is not an asylum where relatively deprived people exert efforts to gain power and reputation as a means to compensate for the subjective injustice they experience in the main society. Those who participated in church politics in the Korean churches did so at a rate comparable to those in the Anglo-American churches.

Status inconsistency resulting from the migration from one society to another does not appear to affect the political behaviors of immigrants in a church. The immigrants whose previous occupational status in their former country was higher than the present status did not reveal any behavioral differences from their counterpart. This finding suggests that status inconsistency resulting from the simultaneous occupancy of incompatible positions affects the motivation of immigrants to seek power in a church. But inconsistency resulting from the disparity between incompatible statuses in different societies does not affect the political behaviors of immigrants in a church.

Jackson and Curtis (1972) say that inconsistency effects are less likely to affect those who quickly learn various techniques to get around their (inconsistency) difficulties. Knowing that the status hierarchies in one society do not necessarily coincide with those in another society, people may have to change their conception of "justice" between input values (e.g., credentials or qualifications for a job) and reward values (e.g., occupational status) in the societal system. Thus, the migration from one country to another may obscure peoples clear conception of status hierarchies. This psychological preparation may prevent people from experiencing discomfort. As a result, the migratory inconsistency does not affect the political behaviors of people in a church.

Hypothesis 1 was a new attempt to graft a psychological concept (relative deprivation) onto status inconsistency theory. The relative deprivation hypothesis was partly supported by the data. Relative deprivation causes behavioral differences among immigrants, but not among non-immigrants (American-born individuals).

In general, the migratory inconsistency hypotheses were not supported. The two hypotheses using objective statuses were weakly confirmed. Although the inconsistency hypothesis synthesizing psychological and structural factors was partly supported, the "status-balancing" rationale

behind the inconsistency theory was not found to be true.

Cultural Factors

None of the cultural factors was found to strongly affect the political behaviors of immigrants in a church. Adaptability (e.g., language skill, social skills, and knowledge of various issues in the U.S.) and sense of isolation do not make immigrants behave differently in a church. We found in an earlier univariate analysis that language skill has a positive effect on immigrants' political efforts in a church. But when language skill was entered in a multivariate path model with education (which is highly correlated with language skill), the effect of language skill disappeared because education offsets language skill.

Throughout this study, adaptive skills or cultural factors were not found to have statistically significant effect on the political behaviors of immigrants in a church. Instead, some demographic variables (e.g., education, income, and occupation) were found to be the most important variables causing behavioral differences among individuals in a church.

Our interpretation is that the Korean churches are truly vehicles which push the immigrants into the larger society rather than being refuges for people who wish to retreat from society. Two observations in this study support this thesis. First, people who have "Americanized" themselves and feel comfortable in this country are more likely to be active participants in church politics, although the differences are small and statistically insignificant in some cases. And second, people who feel "pinched" by the difference between their own education and status and the education and status of those who feel deprived are actively involved in church politics.

We may first jump to the conclusion that those who feel low deprivation are people who have high education and high status. Yet, in tables 1 and 2, the happiest are those with low education and high status. In other words, the happiest people are the lucky ones. They may be the ones who did not aspire for much, have poor language skill, or have their own little store; they would be the ones who were least interested in integrating into the larger society. In contrast, those who are most active in churches are the members who have jobs or income below their educational level, but have prominent language skills and feel comfortable in the U.S.—the upwardly mobile types. Thus, church is a "stepping-stone" where Korean immigrants who are equipped with appropriate skills and knowledge move forward to the larger society. It is also a place where those who want to move up and can make it in the American society act out their aspirations.

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