

An Exploration of Korean Immigrant Women's Leisure in Spiritual Settings

by

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the role and significance that ethnic churches have in the lives of Korean immigrant women in Canada. Particular attention was paid to the ethnic church as a potential leisure site, and the benefits associated with church participation, such as social interaction, social capital development, adaptation to living in Canada, and resistance to constraining ideologies. At the same time, possible negative outcomes of church association were also addressed, as appropriate, such as lack of integration into the broader Canadian society and reproduction of traditional gender ideologies.

Purposeful intensity sampling method was used to find Korean immigrant women who could provide information-rich stories for this exploratory in-depth study. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted one-to-one with a semi-structured format. Seven women were interviewed. These women were all first-generation married Korean immigrants who had lived in Canada for over one year. Initially the first participants were recruited through advertisements handed out to various churches in an urban/suburban region of south-west Ontario. Snowball sampling also took place as an alternative method for finding more information-rich cases.

The analysis of this study resulted in the following themes: The first theme was the benefits gained from ethnic church attendance. These included exchange of information, emotional support and reinforcement of ethnic identity. Second, conflicts, divisions and challenges deriving from church attendance were explored. Negative aspects such as challenges between traditional and new values, lack of interaction with mainstream Canadian society, and reinforcement of gender inequality were evident. Finally, despite the difficulties that derived from being a member of the Korean ethnic church, the community provided help in adjusting in the new life for the women. The Korean ethnic community acted as an extension of family while helping newcomers through a variety of services in adjusting to life in Canada.

The findings of this study do show that the Korean ethnic church is an important site for leisure for women. Although church attendance does not seem to specifically facilitate integration or resistance to the Canadian society, it did help them to re-create a smaller community that helped the women deal with their daily lives. As a result they often felt no need to step out into the larger society: thus creating 'little Koreas' within Canada.

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Lastly, I would like to thank Joe Berry for his constant encouragement, support and love. It was his support that helped me through tough times and encouraged me to finish this thesis and obtain my Master's degree when I had not the strength to continue.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my Mother. It is her experience as a Korean woman in a new country, and her strength that she has shown me my whole life that inspired me to do this study. Her encouragement and emotional support have led me to where I am right now. Thank you and I love you!

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Canada is a multicultural society. Because there have been efforts to improve cross-cultural understanding and racial tolerance issues, there has been an increase in recent studies on race and ethnicity. However, even with an increase in leisure research that deals with issues of race and ethnicity, this research has been criticized for neglecting the dynamic elements of race and ethnicity (Tirone & Pedlar, 2000). Thus there continues to be a need to understand leisure experiences of various ethnic minority groups from their own perspectives and not just according to western notions of leisure (Tirone & Shaw, 1997).

Though the percentage of immigrants from Asia are by far the highest at 58.3% (Statistics Canada, 2006) of the Canadian immigrant population, little research has been conducted on Asian ethnic minorities in the leisure literature. Most leisure research involving race and ethnicity in North America has focused on Blacks and Hispanics. Also among the small body of leisure literature of Asian ethnic minorities, there are surprisingly few studies that have looked at the differences among Asian countries. Because of the specific cultural differences between Asian countries, theories and ideas in one study may not necessarily apply to other ethnic cultures.

Research focused on Korean ethnic minority groups, in particular, is lacking in the leisure literature. Even with the increase in the study of Korean immigrants in the field of ethnicity and cultural research (Im & Meleis, 2001; Moon, 2003; Noh, Speechley, Kaspar & Wu, 1992), there is a lack of research in the area of leisure studies. Within the cultural studies literature on Korean immigrants, though, some interesting ideas have emerged that relate to leisure and leisure studies. In particular, much of this literature has emphasized the tight-knit social support that exists within

Korean communities and is often associated with Korean churches. Through networks such as churches, business organizations, alumni organizations, and senior schools, many Korean Americans maintain and strengthen social interactions with other Koreans (Kim, Kleiber & Kropf, 2001). More generally, ethnic social support networks have been found to be central to the coping strategies for members of the Korean ethnic minority group (Yeh & Inose, 2002; Yeh, 2003; Kim & Honig, 1998; Kim & Hurh, 1993; Noh, Speechley, Kaspar & Wu, 1992; Noh & Avison, 1996; Min, 1991).

Coping strategies seem to be particularly important for Korean women immigrants since they encounter various constraints and conflicts in the process of acculturation. Korean women endure psychological conflict due to social pressure to succeed in their new country (often seen as self-imposed pressure). Many first-generation Korean women immigrants are well educated with college degrees. Because of language barriers, lack of personal skills, and lack of knowledge in using social resources, they are usually forced to either stay at home or take low-paying menial jobs unrelated to their former education and experience (Shin & Shin, 1999). A few studies have shown that one of the biggest constraints on Korean women immigrants' healthy acculturation process has been the lack of social support from family and friends (Im & Lipson, 1997; Im & Meleis, 2001; Kim & Honig, 1998, Shin & Shin, 1999). Thus, social networks, such as those associated with Korean churches, might be particularly important for women immigrants. Moreover, Korean church participation may be a form of leisure for women immigrants, and may provide other experiences and benefits often associated with leisure such as, social interaction, relaxation and enjoyment.

This study explored the role and significance that ethnic churches have in the lives of Korean immigrant women in Canada. Particular attention was paid to the ethnic church as a potential leisure site, and the benefits associated with church participation, such as social interaction, social capital development, adaptation to living in Canada, and resistance to constraining ideologies. At the

same time, possible negative outcomes of church association were addressed, as appropriate, such as lack of integration into the broader Canadian society. As a Korean woman who has resided in North America for over 12 years, my own experiences assisted me in the understanding and interpretation of the data gathered on this topic.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Background

It is a popular conception that Canada is a multicultural society and its population is constituted of immigrants from all over the world. In fact, it could be said that 98% of the Canadian population is made up of immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2001) if you consider the fact that most Canadians' ancestors have come from abroad. However, since an immigrant is defined as, "one that migrates, or a person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence" (pp. 221, Merriam-Webster, 2003), it is more accurate to understand Canadian immigrants as persons born in a foreign country who come to Canada and become Canadian residents. Using this definition, Crompton (2006) reported that 19.8% of the Canadian population is comprised of foreign-born immigrants and among them 63% are members of visible minority groups (Statistics Canada, 2006). It is also noteworthy that since 1991, there has been a 43% increase in new immigrants and this trend is not slowing down (Statistics Canada, 2006). Indeed, these demographic trends show that this could lead to the day when the term "visible minority group" may soon lose much of its social significance as a social label (Shaul & Gramann, 1998). Therefore, increased understanding of the different cultures, experiences of immigrants and the social implications of such rapid increase in immigration is continuously needed with the growth of diversity in multicultural Canada.

2.1.1 Ethnicity and Race in Leisure Studies: Why it is needed

During the past few decades, interest in leisure research on race and ethnicity issues (Stodolska & Yi, 2003) has been rising. However, it has also been argued that there have been serious

problems within this literature. The neglect of classic studies of community life (Hutchinson, 1998) and an inappropriate conceptualization of the meaning of race and ethnicity (Allison, 1988, Hutchinson, 1998, Tirone & Pedlar, 2000) are some examples. Henderson (1997) also emphasizes the importance of not forcing people to fit into theory or theoretical conceptualizations that may not be appropriate for them. There is a need to understand leisure experiences of various ethnic minority groups from their own perspective and not just according to western notions of leisure. Thus, these issues need to be addressed by future researchers.

Moreover, because of the changing role of racial and ethnic groups in North American societies, there is a need for leisure services to be adjusted to the needs of minorities. However more importantly, studying minority groups could provide a rare opportunity to expand theory applicable to human leisure experience in general (Stodolska, 2000). For example, by focusing on problems faced by recent immigrants, researchers can not only broaden their understanding of leisure participation patterns and experiences of immigrant groups themselves, but they can also gain important insights into various problems faced by the mainstream population. Research with minority groups could enhance understanding about the validity of mainstream theories, and also provide the opportunity to find different relationships that have been overlooked.

Stodolska (1998) has reported that immigrant populations possess certain characteristics in their leisure behaviour and face particular constraints that cannot be found in the general population nor in other special groups. For example, language difficulties, being unfamiliar with the customs of the new country and even experiences with discrimination can have significant effects on the leisure experiences of new immigrants. Variations in norms and values between ethnic and racial groups can also result in very different leisure styles, sometimes based on different concepts and values of leisure. As leisure can be used as both a means of cultural expression and as a mechanism for cultural

assimilation (Shaull & Gramann, 1998), it is undeniable that leisure activities and experiences will both shape and be shaped by the increase in cultural diversity in Canada. This further emphasizes the importance of understanding the diversity of leisure practices and experiences among different immigrant groups.

2.1.2 Acculturation, Assimilation and Leisure

According to Gordon (1964), acculturation is defined as a change of cultural patterns to those of the host society, while structural assimilation is a process of “large scale entrance into cliques, clubs, and institutions of host society, on a primary group level (p.71)”. Specifically, acculturation refers to the manner in which individuals negotiate two or more cultures and the process is determined by how the individuals maintain or let go of their national culture when dealing with conflicting cultural values (Yeh, 2003). An acculturation model has been theorized by Berry, Kim, Minde, and Mok (1987) where they tried to explain the process with four adaptation strategies: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization. These authors defined assimilation as the strategy associated with rejecting one’s cultural values in favour of entering into the dominant culture’s practices. Integration represents maintenance of cultural identity while participating in the dominant culture’s values. Separation is the strategy which is associated with valuing one’s cultural norms and not participating in the cultural norms of the dominant culture. Last, marginalization is defined as the adaptation strategy in which people do not participate in either their own culture, nor the dominant groups’ culture. The authors also acknowledge that there are differences in acculturation strategies among different ethnic groups and immigrants and that these strategies may have different outcomes for individuals. For example, research has shown that moving to a new culture can have negative effects on immigrant’s mental health (Lynch, 1992; Morrow, 1994; Sadowsky & Lai, 1997;

Yeh, 2003) which would lead to negative effects on their well-being. Yeh (2003) found in her study of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean immigrant junior high and high school students, that Asian immigrants who experience acculturative distress (e.g., cultural conflicts, feeling caught between two cultural groups) also encounter general mental health problems. In addition, a few studies have been conducted on understanding the relationship between cultural acculturation and leisure practices for immigrants (Stodolska, 1998; Stodolska, 2000; Rublee & Shaw, 1991; Shaull & Gramann, 1998) and how that has an effect on immigrants' mental health.

All immigrants bring with them a part of their own culture when they arrive at a new country. This includes distinct leisure-participation patterns (Stodolska, 2000). In her interviews with recent immigrants from Poland residing in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, Stodolska (2000) found that all newcomers, regardless of their national origins and cultural characteristics, can go through post-arrival depression during the initial adjustment period caused by lack of language skills, fear of the new environment, and lack of social networks. These factors strongly affected their leisure participation and enjoyment, causing them to abandon many of their old leisure practices, and at the same time preventing them from acquiring new ones. When traditional activities were not abandoned, these activities were shown to provide a sense of psychological comfort associated with stability, familiarity and a connection with the former ways of life. In addition, Stodolska's interviews also revealed that new leisure opportunities did constitute an important reason to motivate people to change their leisure activities and that participation in new leisure activities constituted opportunities for a quick and relatively pleasant way of assimilation into the new culture. Stodolska also notes that immigrant populations were subjected to certain constraints not found in the general population, and that the perceived importance of leisure constraints was typically associated negatively with assimilation level.

Similarly, in their study on Latin American refugee women in Atlantic Canada, Rublee and Shaw (1991) found that the women faced immigrant-specific constraints such as inadequate language skills, severe post-arrival social isolation, cultural differences, lack of social interactions, lack of knowledge in Canadian everyday life, and difficulties in accessing social support systems. These constraints not only severely affected the leisure participation of the refugee women, but also hindered their assimilation into Canadian society. In regard to community participation, their findings suggest that language difficulties, new societal norms, and less opportunity to socialize in church and neighbourhood settings made the leisure practice of refugee women more passive and home-oriented leading to the lack of community involvement.

Thus research to date has shown leisure to have an effect on the cultural assimilation of new immigrants. Certain activities may lead to an easier assimilation process, whereas various social constraints from participation in certain leisure activities have shown to have a negative effect on immigrants in settling into the new culture. This suggests the significance that perceived leisure access and leisure participation have for immigrants during the acculturation process and for their well-being in general. Therefore, a deeper exploration of immigrants' leisure pursuits in regard to social interaction and the role of community should to be further pursued.

2.1.3 Ethnic Communities and Leisure

Although most studies do include one or two sentences on the role that ethnic communities have on immigrants, Stodolska & Jackson's (1998) study seems to be one of the few that focuses specifically on the relationship between ethnic communities and leisure. These authors found that immigrants who are largely confined to the ethnic community with respect to both their personal contacts as well as economic and social interactions, may be more likely to perceive mainstream

groups as alien or threatening. Likewise, individuals who had a significant problem with discrimination were less likely to seek social contacts outside the circle of their close friends. However, regardless of how much individuals had contacts within the ethnic community, the authors claim that individuals who fear discrimination will be more reluctant to seek new social contacts. This would consequently contribute to their uneasiness in leisure engagements outside of their ethnic community, giving them a more limited choice of partners as well as potentially restricting awareness of existing opportunities.

Although these findings are helpful in understanding ethnicity and leisure, Stodolska and Jackson's (1998) study was restricted to the feelings of discrimination among a white ethnic minority group. The experiences of members of other ethnic communities, and particularly of members of visible minority groups, may differ from the Polish immigrants in Stodolska and Jackson's study.

2.1.4 Characteristics of Immigration, Race, Ethnicity and Leisure

Although there has been an increase in the literature on the leisure of ethnic and racial minorities, studies related to the leisure behaviour of recent immigrants are scarce. Moreover, the majority of studies that deal with participation in leisure activities after immigrating have dealt with the subject from the perspective of assimilation and have emphasized how constraints prevent participation in certain leisure activities (Stodolska, 2000). These studies have shown that, first of all, immigrants experience constraints that are not commonly found among the general population. These include, for example, language difficulties, lack of social interactions due to social isolation, different cultural values and customs, lack of social support and lack of knowledge in obtaining social services are common among immigrants. This suggests that the leisure behaviour and participation of immigrants is also severely constrained immediately after their arrival, in ways that are not applicable

to the general population such as insufficient language skills or not feeling at ease among the mainstream (Stodolska, 1998). Some of these constraints may decline as the immigrants adapt to the new environment. In addition, a great number of studies also suggest that discrimination or fear of discrimination affects both the minorities' leisure participation patterns and the benefits from and enjoyment of leisure activities (Blahna & Balck, 1992; Feagin, 1991; Phillip, 1995; Stodolska & Jackson, 1998; West, 1989). For example, it was found that minorities who experienced any sort of discrimination in parks, restaurants, pools and campgrounds were less likely to use public recreation areas frequently used by members of the mainstream to protect themselves from potential racially motivated attacks. This suggests that immigrants, who have few contacts outside the ethnic community, also have leisure lives confined within its boundaries. These immigrants might be less aware of opportunities for certain recreation activities, have more difficulty finding leisure partners, and be more restricted in choosing service providers (Stodolska & Jackson, 1998).

It is not only the different physical and social environment of the new county that can cause changes in immigrants leisure behaviour, but also other immigration related factors might affect their choices in leisure participation. For example, lack of family and friends, a shift in socio-economical position, and lack of time and money could all contribute to changes in leisure activity participation. Social leisure may also become severely constrained as leisure becomes more home-oriented, passive and focused on childcare-related activities (Ruble & Shaw, 1991). On the other hand, Tirone and Shaw (1997) found that South Asian women were able to enjoy more freedom from community control than they had prior to immigrating, such as more freedom in clothing choice and in personal relationships. These contradictory findings may suggest that the leisure behaviour of immigrants is influenced greatly by the values and customs of their national home country. In addition, within the

immigrant population, immigrants with different ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds may respond differently to their new adopted cultural environment.

While some traditional activities clearly give immigrants a sense of connection with their past, this traditional leisure may also help immigrants distance themselves from problems associated with being in a new and unfamiliar environment. This escape approach (Stodolska, 2000) from everyday problems and stress, may also be an important factor in the motivation for immigrants in their leisure choices. That is, immigrants may feel comfort and stability when participating in familiar activities, but the leisure experiences may also give them an opportunity to escape and rest from the problems they face after immigrating to a new country.

On the other hand, in terms of new opportunities, immigrants might try new exercise oriented and outdoor activities just to do what is “trendy” or what others do in the new country. By looking at the role that constraints can have in determining leisure participation patterns, Stodolaska’s research (2000) showed that in certain circumstances age related constraints actually motivated people to participate in new age specific activities reinforcing the “forbidden fruit” effect. The immigrants expressed desire to try new activities that may not have been accepted for people at that age in their home country, whereas coming to Canada has given them the opportunity to pursue these previously restricted activities. Immigrants may also be affected by the so-called “demonstration effect”, in which they start participating in activities associated with higher social status (Stodolska, 2000), such as golf, which is associated with a high social class in many countries. It is therefore important to recognize how constraints have a role in leisure choices for immigrants.

In sum, it is apparent that the choices that immigrants make that determine their leisure participation pattern after coming to a new country are affected by a number of factors that are specifically related to various issues that arise when arriving and adjusting to the culture of a different

country. The acculturation process itself can be burdensome for immigrants and positive leisure experiences seem to facilitate their assimilation to the new culture. However, various constraints such as language barriers, lack of social connections, and discrimination, act negatively on their assimilation process, limiting their activities within their home or within their ethnic community. Such patterns reflect the various hardships and constraints that immigrants go through in a new country providing implications of the need for further understanding and adjustment of leisure and community services for these newcomers. It is also important to understand that there is considerable intra-group diversity which needs to be taken into consideration when dealing with the experiences of different ethnic minority groups. Clearly there is a need to further explore the experiences of specific ethnic minority groups to further contribute to leisure theory and research.

2.2 Korean Immigrants

2.2.1 Background

During the past decade, there has been quite an increase in the volume of literature involving the lives of Korean immigrants (Kim & Grant, 1997; Kim & Honig, 1998; Lee & Landreth, 2003; Lim, 1997; Lin, Lau, Yamamoto, Zheng, Kim, Cho & Nakasaki (1992); Min, 2001; Noh & Avison, 1996; Shin & Shin, 1999; Um & Dancy, 1999; Yeh & Inose, 2002). Similar to other families who experience culture shock, adjustment stress, and socio-cultural disruption, caused mainly by distinctively different cultural and language, limited English proficiency, and unique physical characteristics (Hurh 1998; Lee & Landreth, 2003), Korean immigrant families are faced with the challenges of struggling between their traditional values and the values of the new, mainstream culture (Hurh, 1998).

These life changes, cultural adjustments and problems with acculturating in the new society itself become chronic sources of stress for immigrants (Kuo & Tsai, 1986) after they arrive at a new country. Moreover, it has been found that due to limited English language skills and socialization disadvantages, most Korean immigrants also face the stress of not being able to maintain the same levels of occupation that they had prior to their immigrating to the new country (Min, 2001). Kim and Grant (1997) have suggested that the longer Korean immigrants have had residence in the new country, the more employment opportunities which are consistent with their previous education and/or experience, become available. Interestingly, it has been noted that Korean immigrants tend to take lower prestige jobs compared to other Asian-Americans (Kim & Grant, 1997) even when their education level is comparable or even higher. In addition, Kim and Grant's study also shows how the immigrants' English fluency was related to lower levels of post-arrival depression. This might seem to imply that Korean immigrants have more difficulty in learning the new language. However, other factors need to be taken into consideration as well, including factors associated with the Korean culture.

Korean immigrants are a very homogeneous group in terms of culture and historical experiences, more homogeneous than any other Asian group, including the Japanese (Min, 1991). In the Korean culture, relationships are the essence of people's lives (Shin & Shin, 1999). In fact, although Korean immigrants live physically in North America, most of the time they speak the Korean language, practice Korean customs and socialize mostly with other Korean immigrants. Studies have shown that Korean immigrants seem to be socially segregated from the larger society more so than other immigrant groups, thereby affecting their assimilation to the new culture. These structural factors, including Korean immigrants' cultural homogeneity and economic segregation seem to keep the Korean immigrants socially segregated from the main stream society.

2.2.2 Korean Immigrants' Community and Church Participation

Intriguingly, much of the literature related to Korean immigrants mentions the importance of Korean ethnic churches in the lives of Korean immigrants (Kim & Grant, 1997; Kim & Honig, 1998; Lee & Landreth, 2003; Lim, 1997; Lin, Lau, Yamamoto, Zheng, Kim, Cho & Nakasaki 1992; Min, 2000; Min, 2001; Noh & Avison, 1996; Shin & Shin, 1999; Um & Dancy, 1999; Yeh & Inose, 2002). This strongly suggests that Korean immigrants' post-arrival experiences and life in the new country is closely connected with Korean ethnic church participation. Kuo & Tsai (1986) explained that immigrants can, and do institute their own social networks and social institutions. In doing so, they establish ethnic support networks which replace the social support network that they had prior to immigrating. These ethnic networks allow them to live relatively separated from mainstream society. A study on Koreans in Canada and their stress also shows that social support from members of their own culture make substantially greater contributions to Korean immigrants' well-being than support from individuals from the broader community (Noh & Avison, 1996).

Swenson (1979) conceptualized the functions of a social network as mutual aid. Mutual aid includes various types of support from providing goods or services, to giving financial assistance and giving emotional, psychological support. When such a social network is not provided, immigrants become more vulnerable to external stress (Hepworth and Larsen, 1986). Kuo and Tsai (1986) also stated that success in re-establishing such social networks in the new country reduces the accumulation of psychological distress experienced by new immigrants. In the case of Korean immigrants' social networks, these seem to be composed primarily of church members, friends and relatives. Many Korean immigrants who did not attend church prior to immigration do seem to attend Korean churches for fellowship and other practical purposes in their new country. In their efforts to maintain Korean cultural traditions through their ethnic churches, Korean immigrants have

“Koreanized” Christian religions even further. In fact, even though Christians compose only 36.8% (Korean Statistical Information System, 2003) of the population in South Korea, studies have shown that more than 75% of Korean immigrants at that time were affiliated with Korean Christian churches (Hurh & Kim, 1990; Min, 2000). This could also explain for the low involvement in traditional white North American churches.

Interestingly, other organizations seem to be less effective than the ethnic churches in maintaining social interactions and friendship networks among Koreans (Min, 2000). Not only do Korean churches seem to be the primary organization that assists immigrants in building new social networks, but they also provide their church members with various formal and informal services. Kim & Grant (1997) found that the Korean ethnic church is the main social institution that immigrants turn to for useful information and services. The Korean churches assist their members on both an individual and group basis while providing information and counselling on employment, business, health care, children’s education, personal problems and so on. Also, the churches’ social networks are maintained not only inside the church, but also outside of the church environment by providing Koreans with intimate friendship networks.

In a study comparing the difficulties and coping strategies of Chinese, Japanese and Korean immigrant junior and high school students, Yeh & Inose (2002) found that while the most common problem was communication difficulties, the most frequently reported coping strategy was the use of social support networks. Even among this age group, Korean students were shown to utilize religious practices as a coping strategy more so than the Chinese or Japanese students. The authors suggest that for many young Korean immigrants, the church and community within the church played a role similar to that of an extended family. This helps to explain why many young Koreans felt comfortable sharing their problems within their ethnic religious community, which they considered part of their family. Thus, this study and the other studies mentioned above, all imply the importance of Korean ethnic churches in the lives of Korean immigrants, leading to the suggestion that Korean ethnic churches are the center for community activities of Korean immigrants in North America (Min, 1998).

2.2.3 Korean Immigrant Women's Experiences

Despite the homogeneous culture of Koreans, the experiences of men and women within that culture have shown to differ substantially, largely because of the traditional family system. It is almost impossible to understand this influence without also understanding the influence of Chinese Confucianism (Min, 1988). Although in Korea, Confucianism is rarely practiced as a religion, the history of Confucianism in Korea has left a legacy of values, traditions and beliefs that are deeply embedded in the Korean culture. Traditionally, the Korean society is based on the patriarchal system in which sons were considered more valuable and given more power, care and privileges than daughters. The husband is the breadwinner, the major decision maker, the head of the family and the enforcer of rules. The wife's role is to provide nurturance to her family, and she assumes full responsibility of the

tasks in the household, while the husband is expected to be responsible for duties outside of the household (Um & Dancy, 1999).

Perhaps associated with this traditional family system, Korean immigrant women seem to experience more problems than Korean immigrant men. The women encounter more constraints and conflicts in the process of acculturation. In the past, many first-generation Korean women immigrants were well educated with college degrees. Historically, education and knowledge represented nobility and upper class privilege in Korea, thus educated women were preferred as ideal wives and daughter-in-laws by upper class families in order to maintain the worthiness of the household. Even with their high level of education, after marriage many Korean women took the role of the 'housekeeper', 'wise mother and good wife', and the domestic supporter of her husband, children and sometimes her husband's extended family. So the traditional gender roles are thus perpetuated.

While Korean women have typically been immersed within the values of a patriarchal society, after immigrating to a new country they are often faced with having to work outside the home to help support the family financially. However because of language barriers, lack of personal skills, and lack of knowledge in using social resources after immigrating to a new country, they are often forced to take low-paying menial jobs unrelated to their former education and experience (Shin & Shin, 1999). Many Korean women are forced to work more frequently than they had in Korea and under undesirable employment conditions in which they were under-represented for top occupational categories despite their high level of education (Kim & Grant, 1997). These Korean immigrant women showed problems related to gender because of the conflict between their role as financial supporter of the household and their domestic role. This has led to some marital and family problems. For many Korean women, employment is not a means for achieving independence from their husbands, but rather an obligation for family survival and sacrifice. However, when these Korean women start to work

outside the home, the traditional roles are challenged. In Um & Dancy (1999)'s study on the relationship between coping strategies and depression among employed Korean immigrant wives, it was found that some women challenged their roles by negotiating with their husbands for assistance in household work. Those that did not or could not negotiate their roles with their husbands found that they had to work harder than before. Surprisingly, most Korean immigrant women fell into the category of working harder and performing all the household tasks without negotiating the chores with their husbands. In the case where the women worked harder and took the burden of both inside and outside work, their depression increased, whereas when they negotiated with their husbands, the women were less likely to be depressed. Thus, marital conflicts and tensions within the household increased as the women's economic role increased if their husbands' traditional patriarchal ideology had not changed.

On the other hand, recent cultural changes in Korea have led to the expectation that women should get a good education and have a job before marriage. With the increase in living costs in South Korea, many young Korean women are expected to work even after they get married for financial reasons. However, even with this change in Korean women's role, and with some challenges to traditional patriarchal ideologies, there has not been much change in the negotiation of household chores with their husbands. Young Korean women who have been part of a changing cultural system in South Korea also experience change and problems after immigrating to a new country. Just like the older generation of Korean immigrant women, these women struggle with language problems and lack of social skills leading them to either find work in undesirable low paying employment conditions unrelated to their former education and experience (Shin & Shin, 1999), or take the role of a full-time housewife and be forced to take on domestic duties despite often wishing to go back and resume their role outside of the home.

Along with the various issues mentioned above, a few studies have shown that one of the biggest constraints on Korean women immigrants' healthy acculturation process has been the lack of social support from family and friends (Im & Lipson, 1997; Im & Meleis, 2001; Kim & Honig, 1998, Shin & Shin, 1999). Separated from relatives and friends, the women experience extreme loneliness. Due to transportation issues, some women talk about their lives as being akin to a prison without bars. Homesickness is a common problem that many Korean immigrant women have in common as they long for their homeland and cling to the slight hope that one day they might go back (Shin & Shin, 1999).

Without the immediate support from their family and friends, immigrant Korean women tend to look for other support groups within the community. Most of the women in the studies mentioned above received both strong religious and social support from the Korean community. Kim and Grant (1997) found that while relatives have a negative effect on Korean immigrant women's mental health, friends and church members have a positive affect. Often the husband's family also immigrates to the new country and thus plays a role in maintaining the traditional patriarchal extended family system. The wife usually takes the responsibility of taking care of the husband's family which sometimes causes conflicts and increased stress level for the women when dealing with their in-laws. On the other hand, new friends and church members have been shown to give more help and moral support to these women.

These studies have also shown, though, that these social institutions do not always lead to positive results in terms of Korean immigrant women's acculturation to the western society. First, high affiliation with Korean ethnic churches has been shown to create social segregation from the main stream society for many Korean immigrants (Min, 2000). Because of the close-knit atmosphere, familiar culture and the many social services that the Korean church offers, many

Koreans do not feel the need to look for more resources provided by the main stream society. As a result, even several years after they first set foot in the new country, many Korean immigrant women may still have great difficulty dealing with the new language and culture, and have trouble in interacting with people of the mainstream society. Not only does this prevent the Korean immigrant women from achieving faster acculturation to the new culture, but it also perpetuates the patriarchal ideology Korean immigrants bring with them from Korea.

Interestingly, while the South Korean society itself has had vast changes related to gender role attitudes during the past decade, Korean immigrants' communities are more reluctant to change their patriarchal views. For example, the churches usually do not allow women to serve as head pastors or to hold important positions although women compose the majority of church members (Min, 2000). Most of the decision making is lead by the male members of the church, while female members are encouraged to deal with the organization of meals, childcare, etc. all of which reinforce traditional patriarchal values. Thus, it can be argued that high affiliation with the Korean church and segregation from the main stream society may prevent Korean immigrants from learning, negotiating and practicing the more egalitarian gender role attitudes of the Western society (Min, 2000).

In sum, past studies have shown that Korean immigrants are a very homogenous group that seem to be more socially isolated from the dominant society compared to other immigrant groups. These immigrants face various challenges associated with immigrating to a new country as well as struggling between their traditional values and the values of the new, mainstream culture. Because of Korea's traditional patriarchal values, Korean immigrant women seem to experience more problems than Korean immigrant men. Whether it is because the women are forced into low paying, undesirable workplace for financial reasons, or because women cannot continue to pursue their careers after immigration, most women do seem to struggle with gender role conflict and to

experience certain constraints because they are immigrant women. Throughout the literature of Korean immigrants, every study has implied the importance of Korean ethnic churches of Korean immigrants. Church participation and church members have been mentioned by Korean immigrant women as one of their main sources of social support and social connections. Korean ethnic churches are at the centre, not just for community activities, but also social interaction and social activities of Korean immigrant women. However, even with the social benefits that church participation may have brought upon these Korean immigrant women, it has been suggested that such high connections with the Korean church tend to prevent the women from obtaining social connections with the dominant society. Hence, traditional patriarchal values may be preserved within the invisible walls of the Korean church and community, hindering Korean immigrants from learning, practicing and negotiating the more egalitarian gender role attitudes of the modern North American society. This literature, in general, suggests the importance of Korean ethnic churches in the lives of Korean immigrant women, and the highly significant role the Korean church may have in their lives, affecting their acculturation into the new dominant culture. Why the Korean ethnic church in North America play such a significant role, though, remains an important question which may be better understood through the use of a different perspective.

2.3 The Korean Ethnic Church as a Potential Leisure Site

2.3.1 Leisure and religion

Exploration of the ethnic church as a potential leisure site relates to the experiences and motivations for participation. Although church is thought to be primarily a site for spiritual growth, it is known that church adherents engagement in activities that could be unrelated to spiritual growth (Bermann & Mussig, 1969). Many of these activities do not represent a particular kind of Christian

behaviour, but may be associated with various practices in our society. So although the various activities pursued by church supporters may not be related to spiritual growth, it has been shown that church members often participate in these activities together. This suggests that not all activities provided at a church are related to religion. Rather, other factors such as leisure, enjoyment, socialization, social integration and social support may in fact motivate church supporters to participate in these activities. Thus, church is not only a site for religious practices and spiritual awakenings, but it is also a community. While this community of people has a common grounding of religion, the community may play other important roles too, including leisure provision. This may be particularly important, given the research (cited earlier) that has shown the impact of constraints on the leisure of immigrant women. The church may provide an opportunity for the kind of experiences often associated with leisure (such as relaxation, enjoyment and self expression) even though Korean women may not use the term “leisure” to describe these activities.

Few studies have examined the relationship between religion and leisure. However, it has been acknowledged by Emard (1990) that religion and leisure have had a long standing relationship throughout the ages. Emard’s study showed that there had been a resurgence of churches becoming actively involved in providing recreational activities for their church members and sometimes, even for the whole community. However, Emard’s study did not address the question of ‘why’, or the motivation for participation in such activities. Nor did it look at the leisure related benefits and outcomes of church participation, such as enjoyment, socialization, social capital and resistance to traditional gender ideologies, although these benefits may also be important. At the same time, church-related activities may also have negative outcomes, which also need to be considered, such as the tendency to reinforce ethnic cultural isolation.

2.3.2 Leisure space and community within the ethnic church

Leisure space is viewed as the availability of public and private recreation facilities and services, personal space for relaxation, as well as opportunities to socialize with others and interact with one's environment (Allen & Beattie, 1984). For example, if people find enjoyment in bicycling and seek various opportunities to do so in their free time, this would represent a leisure activity and a leisure space would be the place or location where bicycling could be pursued. If a person enjoys reading novels and seeks this activity during his/her free time, this also would be considered leisure activity and any quiet or not quiet area in which this person pursues novel reading could be called this person's leisure space. Similarly, community life could also be seen as space for leisure activity for persons who find socialization with other people a means of increasing enjoyment and relaxation.

Community leisure spaces can be seen to provide physical and social sites for various activities and interactions. A study on community gardens in urban areas by Shinew, Glover and Parry (2004) has shown that this specific type of leisure environment, community gardens, served as a setting for many leisure-related activities. The authors explored whether community gardens were perceived as spaces in which people of different races integrated successfully and in which leisure could play the potential role in bridging diverse groups. The authors found that many leisure settings do offer opportunities for equal-status and cooperative interracial contact for creating positive interracial relationships. Thus, this study shows the potential role leisure has in increasing positive interracial interaction and creating a greater sense of community. Their findings also suggest the importance of leisure in building strong social ties, which led to their argument that leisure can be seen to facilitate social capital development (Glover, Parry, & Shinew, 2005).

2.3.3 Leisure as a site for social capital development

Recently, the concept of social capital development through leisure activity has been used increasingly in leisure research. Social capital is a concept that helps to explain the dynamics of human involvement and participation in groups. Portes (1998) defines social capital as the resources or the abilities that people have that help them to secure membership in social networks and to gain the benefits associated with this membership. He points out three basic functions of social capital – “(a) as a source of social control; (b) as a source of family support; (c) as a source of benefits through extra-familial networks” (Portes, 1998, p.9). For example, within a family the parents may take advantage of social capital in terms of rule enforcement in order to maintain discipline over their children. But at the same time, families also provide various other types of support as well, such as emotional, educational, economical, and intellectual supports. Portes (1998) explains the inter-connection between these functions by arguing that if there is a reduction of social capital in the form of community social bonds and control, this is somewhat compensated by an increase in social capital in the form of family support. Likewise, it could be argued that immigrants who leave their community compensate for their lack of familial social capital by strengthening support within the immigrant family. In other words, the elements of social capital can be seen as the social connections between people within a group, and the expectations and obligations that follow from these relationships (Putnam, 1996).

As leisure experiences can provide opportunities for social interaction and increase social connection between people, leisure has been seen to have potential in facilitating the development of social capital (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). Yeun, Pedlar and Mannell (2005) conducted a study in investigating social capital development among young international campers. The findings suggested that children who had different cultural backgrounds found a common ground through leisure

experiences and were able to develop and maintain relationships which thereby contributed to the development of social capital. Leisure experiences that were social in nature, were found to facilitate connections and promoted networks of obligations and expectations.

However, social capital has been seen to have negative consequences as well. Glover and Hemingway (2005) point out that social capital may strengthen unwanted social networks, preventing people from getting out of unpleasant situations. Portes (1998) also discusses several negative aspects of social capital. He explains how such strong ties that bring a group together restrict access to the benefits of the group from outsiders of the group. In some cases, ties within the group are strengthened by common experiences of misfortune and opposition to the outer groups, i.e., the mainstream society. Being a member of a group can increase the level of social control within the group restricting personal freedoms, thus enabling the group to keep a tighter control over its members. As explained above, leisure experiences may lead to the positive effects associated the development of social capital. However, it is critical to also take into consideration the negative aspects of social capital in further understanding the dynamics of group participation within the leisure context.

2.3.4 Leisure as a site for reproduction and resistance to traditional gender ideologies

Not only can leisure experiences provide grounds for social capital development, but it has been argued by leisure researchers that leisure provides a context for both reproducing and resisting traditional ideologies of gender (Shaw, 2001; Yeun & Shaw, 2003). Compared to work or household duties, leisure is associated with self-determination and free choice (Shaw, 1999; Shaw, 2001) which can then potentially provide a site to reinforce, challenge or resist traditional patriarchal ideologies. For example, Green's (1998) research on women's talk and friendship as leisure showed that talking

with friends may 'mirror' traditional gender ideologies and their experiences also included acts of resistance when they used humour to subvert sexist imagery. Likewise, Tye and Powers (1998) study on bachelorette parties also showed that women used humour to both distract and subvert the patriarchal view of women and to resist culturally constructed gender values.

This form of resistance through leisure activities, experiences and behaviours can challenge structured power relations and dominant values associated with class, race, ethnicity, or gender and thus make leisure a form of political practice (Shaw, 2001). At the same time, leisure practice can constrain choice and reinforce traditional roles for women (Green, 1998), so it is important to look at both the potential for reproduction as well as the potential for resistance (Shaw, 2001). By looking closely at the behaviour of people during their leisure and talking to them about their feelings and experiences, conscious or unconscious acts of reinforcement or resistance to traditional gender ideologies may be uncovered. Exploring these possibilities within the context of ethnic church activities may reveal another aspect of the significance and role of this form of participation.

2.4 Summary

Immigrating to a new country brings about many changes in the lives of the immigrants. The acculturation process is slow and difficult, because immigrants face various challenges while settling into the new culture. Positive leisure experiences have shown to facilitate immigrants' assimilation to the new dominant culture, however, the various constraints act as a negative barrier in getting access to different types of leisure activities and experiences. Some of the experiences that are associated with leisure activities are related to pleasure and relaxation associated with socially interacting with others. It can be argued that such social interactions occur within various types of communities. For

immigrants, therefore, ethnic communities may be seen as physical or social sites for various activities and interactions related to leisure experiences.

Throughout the literature on Korean immigrants, the Korean ethnic church in North America has been mentioned repeatedly, emphasizing the role that the Korean ethnic church has in the lives of Korean immigrants. The comparison of the statistics of Korean church participation in South Korea and in North America, clearly suggests that the Korean church plays a major role in the lives of Korean immigrants. Unless the majority of Koreans who immigrate to North America are Christians, or the majority of Koreans who immigrate to North America suddenly decide to convert their religious beliefs to Christianity, it could be suggested that the Korean church offers more than just spiritual comfort and spiritual development. On the one hand, there is the possibility that there may not be any other factors that influence Korean immigrants in attending a Korean church other than for spiritual reasons. On the other hand, enjoyment and socialization may be the motivation for the Korean immigrants, and the Korean ethnic church may constitute an important site for leisure experiences for Korean immigrants. In particular, the role that the Korean ethnic church and community has in the lives of Korean women may be particularly significant as past studies have shown that Korean immigrant women deal with more social problems than Korean immigrant men related to their gender roles, and that they are more likely to be influenced by social interaction and social support.

Few studies have examined the relationship between religion and leisure, but the Korean church could be seen as a potential space for leisure experiences for ethnic communities in North America. For immigrant populations, the ethnic community is a great resource for information, social interaction, social connections and different types of support for newcomers. Given the previous literature in leisure participation and motivations for immigrants, exploration of immigrant leisure

could potentially be applicable to the ethnic church.

Particular consideration needs to be given to the experiences of Korean immigrant women because immigration affects women differently from men. The Korean ethnic church may play an important role in gender and gender related attitudes and behaviours. For example the church may perpetuate traditional ideologies and beliefs, and/or it may be a site for possible resistance. That is the church may emphasize traditional roles and restrain women from seeking more egalitarian gender values, or it may be a place where women can turn for support in their resistance to traditional and constraining gender roles.

Consideration also needs to be given to the dynamics of an ethnic community and how it plays a role in the lives of Korean immigrant women. How does being a member of a visual minority ethnic community, i.e., church, effect on their assimilation to the dominant culture? The services and support that the church provides newcomers may help them settle into the new environment. But the extent to which the church helps immigrants to successfully get jobs, learn the new language, and adjust to the new culture is not known. Thus the potential negatives as well as positives outcomes of attending an ethnic church in Canada need to be further explored.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Purpose of the Study

This study examined the role that ethnic churches have in relation to Korean immigrant women's leisure and well-being within the Korean ethnic community in multicultural Canada. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to explore the experience of Korean ethnic church attendance as a leisure pursuit for Korean immigrant women. The aim was to examine whether ethnic churches were perceived as spaces in which immigrant women can turn to for leisure benefits and social support, and whether there were any negative aspects of church participation in regard to acculturation processes into the new culture. This study focused on members of Korean ethnic churches located in a suburban community in Canada.

3.2 Research Questions

The research question that guided this study was: What is the role and significance of involvement in an ethnic church in the lives of Korean immigrant women?

With the central research question as an overarching guide, sub-questions included:

1. How do Korean immigrant women describe their experience at a Korean church?
 - a. How do Korean immigrant women describe their typical day at church?
 - b. What activities do they participate in their free time? (Both church activities and other types of activities)
 - c. How different are their experiences compared to attending church in Korea?
 - d. What are the positive and negative aspects of their church experiences and activities?

2. What role does attending a Korean church play in Korean immigrant women's lives?
 - a. Why did they seek to attend the church when they arrived in Korea?
 - b. How important is attending church to them in the matter of their quality of life and life satisfaction?
 - c. What benefits do they derive from their participation in church activities, with particular attention to non-spiritual outcomes? Any negative outcomes?
 - d. How does church attendance help them or not help them in adapting as a new immigrant in Canada?
 - e. Why have they chosen to attend a Korean church and not a Canadian church?
3. To what extent does the Korean church represent a site for leisure and leisure related benefits for immigrant women?
 - a. How do they feel about the church and church-related activities? (Do they have experiences that could be seen as leisure or report motivations typically associated with leisure?)
 - b. What are the benefits and/or negative outcomes of their participation? (Do church-related activities provide benefits such as social interaction, community integration, social capital development and/or opportunities for resistance? Are there negative outcomes associated with reproduction of patriarchy or cultural isolation etc.?)
 - c. What role does their church involvement play in terms of fulfilling a need for leisure in their lives?

3.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical perspective that guided this study was based on social constructivism. The

social constructivist viewpoint was based on the assumption that individuals understand the world through their developed subjective meanings of their own experiences Creswell (2002). The assumption was that meanings are different for every individual and for every situation. Individuals' views are constructed through interaction with different people and cultures. People are socialized to believe in certain values and behave in certain ways. The culture and the history of the environment that people are raised in often interact with the individuals' creation of meaning and how they understand the world around them. Therefore, it is important to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants as well as their experiences.

By exploring the experiences of Korean immigrant women on their participation in an ethnic church, I examined a combination of issues related to immigration, gender, and ethnic communities. The focus was on understanding church participation from a leisure perspective. The development of an ethnic community through church attendance by immigrants was examined, with further exploration of the social and personal outcomes derived from being a member of this community. In this sense, social constructivism helped to understand the meaning of ethnic church participation and the extent to which such participation can be conceptualized or understood as leisure experience.

Special consideration was taken on gender ideological issues with specific questions regarding changes in gender roles, gender related constraints and resistance from traditional gender ideological practices. Also, specific experiences related to being a visual minority immigrant were further examined. Most importantly, this study strived to understand how gender and race intertwined to create a different type of social world that had not been explored previously by other researchers.

I myself am a Korean woman who has lived in North America for over 12 years. Although I was not born in Canada, I was raised since I was a young child until I was a teenager in Canada and the United States. After moving back to South Korea and receiving junior high school, high school,

and university level education, I was fortunate to be able to come back to Canada to further my studies. With the experience of being a newcomer to Canada as an adult woman, and with the memories of being a daughter of a woman who has lived as a first-generation immigrant in Canada, my own experiences added further meaning, sensitivity and understanding to the exploration of this topic.

3.4 Grounded Theory Research Design

Often based on grounded theory, qualitative research methods “take the researcher into and close to the real world so that the results and findings are grounded in the empirical world” (Patton, 2002, p.125). As the nature of the research question in this study was exploratory and based on the lived experiences of Korean immigrant women, this inductive qualitative approach was and grounded theory was adopted. The data for this inductive study were gathered from in-depth interviews focusing on participants’ experiences. The grounded theory approach allowed me to develop new concepts, meanings and understandings that were grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

3.5 Sample and Site

Seven women were interviewed in this study. The anticipated sample size had been eight to ten women, but the analysis started to show some commonality of opinion earlier than anticipated. The participants for this study were Korean immigrant women residing in an urban/suburban region of south-west Ontario who attended a Korean church. Purposeful intensity sampling method was used to find Korean immigrant women who could provide information-rich stories for this exploratory in-depth study. Patton (1990) explains purposeful sampling as information-rich cases in which it is

possible to learn a great deal about the issues most important to the purpose of the research. Intensity sampling methods are used when “excellent or rich examples of the phenomenon of interest, but not unusual cases” (Patton, 1990, p.171) are pursued as participants for the study.

To increase the homogeneity of the sample group, the women were married or divorced first-generation Korean immigrants who had lived in Canada for over 1 year. Initially the first participants were contacted through two churches located in an urban/suburban region of south-west Ontario. By obtaining information about women’s groups or women’s clubs within the Churches, I obtained permission to visit the group meetings and during my visit I introduced my study verbally. At the same time I gave out copies of a handout (Appendix A) that contained more information about the study and my contact information. The handout included the purpose of my study, what the participants’ role in the research process would be and further contact information if they wanted to participate or if they had any questions about the study. I also received contact information from some participants who were interested in participating at this time. For those who had contacted me and were interested in participating, I set a date, time and place for the interview. I informed the participants of their right to decline participation in the study at any time. I also used the snowball sampling approach to find more information-rich cases, by asking my previous participants whether they knew anybody who would be willing to participate in my study. I gave my participants a week for an opportunity to give notice to the potential participant that they referred to, and then did a follow-up phone call (Appendix B) after the initial interview with the previous participant.

3.6 Data Collection

3.6.1 The Researcher's Role

As an interpretive researcher involved in in-depth interviews with the participants, it was essential for me to establish a sense of trust and rapport with the Korean immigrant women. My understanding of the experiences of immigrant women was influenced by my own experience as an international student in North America, as well as my mother's experience as a temporary resident of over 9 years in Canada and the United States. Although I sensed that this may be a positive factor in increasing empathetic understanding and rapport with the participants, I also remained aware throughout the research process of my own views and opinions, and practiced ongoing reflection.

As there may have been some discomfort on part of the participants in sharing their experiences in a spiritual setting because I was not a member of the Christian church, I remembered to be sensitive to their religious values. Furthermore, because my age was considerably younger than the women who were interviewed, the participants may have felt some discomfort in sharing personal information with someone from a different generation than themselves. However, because of my personal background and familiarity with the language and culture, my personal experiences helped me to give meaning to words that seemed previously not to have meaning, and related and empathized while I listened to the women.

3.6.2 Data Collection

In-depth, face-to-face interviews. I conducted in-depth, one-to-one interviews with each of the participants. All of the participants were given the choice of location for the interview. Six participants preferred the interview to be held at their homes and one participant met with me for the interview at a local coffee shop. I started each interview by reminding the participants of their right to

decline participation at any time during the interview. I asked the participants for permission to audio-tape the conversation. Next I gave the participants the interview consent form to fill out (Appendix C). At this time I also reviewed the purpose of the study with the women. I thanked the women for their participation and reminded them that all their personal information will be kept confidential.

I used a semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix H) which included key research questions, probes, and transition messages for my own use (Creswell, 2003). This was used to ensure that the same topics were explored at each interview (Patton, 2002). The first section of the interview guide asked questions related to what a typical day at church looks like in terms of responsibilities, activities and use of free time. These questions provided insight into the various experiences of attending church, and the different responsibilities that occurred while attending the church. In addition, these questions were easy to respond to and the participants were able to develop a sense of comfort with the interview before we continued into questions that that focused more on emotions and meanings.

The next section of the interview focused on the participants' meanings of and feelings about their experiences while attending church. These questions were geared towards understanding motivations for participating and enjoyment of the activities.

The third section of the interview focused on the role that Korean church attendance had for the women. The questions are centred on the significance of the church in their overall lives and their decision to attend a Korean church in Canada. The aim of these questions was to understand whether their experiences could be related to leisure activities.

The final section of the interview explored the importance of the women's participation in the church activities. The answers provided more insight into the role that Korean church attendance had in helping immigrants adapt to the new culture or perhaps be of a disservice to Korean

immigrants in this regard. In addition, the role the church plays in terms of community and social capital was explored, as did the possibility that church participation sometimes acts as resistance to and/or reproduction of traditional gender ideologies.

All of the interviews were done in Korean according to the participants' preference. I did not record notes during the interview in order to keep the natural flow of the conversation uninterrupted but I did audio-tape, with the participants' permission. At the end of the interview, I asked permission to contact the participants by phone for follow-up discussions in order to clarify or add any additional information they may think of.

Research Journal. As I did not keep notes during the interview, I took notes immediately after the interviews in my research journal. The notes were written in both Korean and English. This included information about the time, place and date of the interviews and any observations about the interview process. I also recorded my overall feelings about the interview, the participant, and the atmosphere of the place where the interview was conducted. I also noted any emerging issues or themes that came up during the interview that I felt were important during the interview. I then used the journal as a resource in modifying the interview guide for subsequent interviews to emphasize important themes, and to check the emerging themes with my initial feelings throughout the data analysis.

3.7 Data Analysis

All the interviews were audio tape recorded and later transcribed in their original language as “the translation of terms can create confusion as can an understanding of meanings due to gender, geographic, environmental, class and socio-cultural factors (Juniu & Henderson, 2001, p.3)”. Initial systematic coding procedures (Kirby & McKenna, 1989) were conducted on all transcripts and the

reflective journal. By using the housekeeping coding (Lofland & Lofland, 1995) technique in which I used memo cards to organize the different codes, I attempted to identify codes that reflected the participants' descriptions of their activities and experiences.

I then used cross-referencing procedures (Kirby & McKenna, 1989) in an attempt to develop themes and look for patterns, which 'go together' to make categories. In this way, I began the process of linking the categories and building concepts. I used memos and diagrams for the organization and analysis of data. For the visual presentation of the relationship of the concepts, hurricane thinking diagram procedure and flow charts (Lofland & Lofland, 1995) were used to further discover the relations between the main topic and the categories. Throughout these processes, I was living with the data (Kirby & McKenna, 1989). This helped me step back, reflect on the analysis, live with it and rework the analysis. My own experiences increased my theoretical sensitivity during the analyses and led to "further insight, ability to understand and give meaning to the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990)".

While the transcripts were not translated during the analysis process due to the inaccuracy of translation that might occur during my interpretation, the coding itself was in English. The findings were reported through descriptive, narrative form with selected translated quotes while stating some concepts in Korean to reflect cultural sensitivity (Creswell, 2003). Although throughout the analysis the various themes that emerged and my personal interpretation was recorded in English, the Korean quotes were not translated until the last stage of reporting my findings. Because of the desire to accurately translate the meanings and the feelings of the participants in their quotations, this was a challenging process for me as a bilingual person. Some of my interpretations of their meanings were included in the translation to better explain the intentions of the participants than if I simply translated the quotes word for word.

3.8 Establishing Trustworthiness

In order to ensure that the study appropriately represented the information given by participants, a few strategies were used (Creswell, 2002). First, member checks were done by doing follow-up phone calls for more information as needed and by sending the final analysis to the participants and asking for feedback on the specific issues that derived from my analysis. Second, a triangulation (Patton, 2002) strategy was used by checking out the consistency of findings and by using my research journal for further insight. Third, my emerging topics were reviewed and evaluated by my thesis advisor. Throughout the data collection procedure I recorded my thoughts openly and honestly, while reflecting on my own experiences and my role as a researcher. Finally, I increased my study's trustworthiness by using rich, thick description of my findings, with the hope of transporting my readers into the setting so that the readers would be able to generate their own comparison of emerging themes (Creswell, 2003).

Chapter 4

Findings

4.1 Interview Profiles

The following profiles were developed based on notes taken before and after the interviews on the atmosphere of the interviewee's homes, their comments about their lives and how the interviewees described themselves throughout the interview. For example, some of the homes were filled with spiritual paintings and sculptures, and the women talked about their families, future dreams and their day-to-day concerns. These profiles provide background information about each participant which allows greater insight so that their experiences can be more clearly interpreted. The women's names have been coded in order to protect their identity.

Participant A

Participant A was in her thirties at the time of the interview. She had come to Canada 6 years before to support her husband who had come to Canada to further his education in Canada. She was unemployed and raising her two daughters (one was a toddler and the other attended public school), and keeping the house. A few years previously her husband had obtained a government job and only recently had the family received Canadian citizenship. Participant A was also planning to start college to earn a degree in accounting. Before moving to Canada, she had received a degree in French Literature at a renowned women's University in Korea and had been employed at a trade-related company doing accounting related work. She was very faithful to the Christian religion and her faith started when she was in University as the University was a Christian based private University. After moving to Canada, she tried attending a Canadian Church but she felt that the culture was too different and so she was lonely. She then switched to a Korean Church after she was introduced to a Korean member through a member of the Canadian church. She was very involved in church activities and she volunteered as a bible school teacher on Sundays. For her leisure, she enjoyed going for walks around the neighbourhood. She enjoyed shopping, but complained that it was difficult to enjoy shopping in this urban/suburban region of south-west Ontario as there were not

many shopping centres. She also enjoyed meeting Korean church members during the week for lunch or coffee.

Participant B

Participant B immigrated to Canada because of health issues 13 years ago. She came from a wealthy background and visited Korea at least once a year since she had immigrated to Canada. She was in her fifties at the time of the interview, and her health had improved immensely. She was unemployed, but helped her husband run a grocery store a couple of hours twice a week. She had never been formally employed and had been a full-time housewife during her marriage. She had one son who was in his late twenties and employed at a company in the same region. She was very faithful to the Christian religion and she had attended church before she came to Canada and attended a Korean church as soon as she immigrated to Canada. However, she was not very involved in church activities. For her leisure, she did arts and crafts, exercised at home while listening to gospel music, and enjoyed watching Korean programs on cable television.

Participant C

Participant C was an owner of a floral shop and lived a very busy life. She was divorced with two grown children, one of whom still lived at home. She was in her fifties at the time of the interview and she had immigrated to Canada 32 years ago. She had only visited Korea once after she immigrated to Canada. She had led a very difficult life as a single mother in Canada as her husband had left her during her first year in Canada. With the help of her mother, she raised the children while often holding two to three low income jobs at the same time. Her experiences ranged from cleaning houses to manual labour at factories. She had been successful enough to open two floral shops in the urban/suburban region of south-west Ontario, but had sold one of the shops and now owns one. Although she was quite faithful to the Christian religion, she admitted that before immigrating to Canada she was Buddhist. Participant C enjoyed doing acupuncture as volunteer work for sick people and meeting with close friends in her leisure. She enjoyed meeting with Canadian friends she met in Business Women's School a couple times a month, and she enjoyed meeting close Korean friends from church once or twice a week for prayer sessions and visiting. Her leisure activities were usually social in nature.

Participant D

Participant D immigrated to a small town in Ontario, Canada in 1975. In Korea she had majored in English Literature at a University and she came to Canada with her husband after her marriage to support her husband in his studies. Throughout her husband's studies, she had worked at a factory to financially support her husband and her two daughters. After he had successfully received his degree and started working as a pharmacist, she opened her own clothing store and sold clothes for about 7 to 8 years. She stopped working outside of the home in the mid 1990's when her family moved to the urban/suburban region of south-west Ontario because of her older daughter's University. At the time of the interview she was in her fifties and unemployed. Sometimes she would go to her husband's pharmacy and help out with cleaning the store or working as the cashier. Her eldest daughter lived in Toronto and her younger daughter was attending a University in Waterloo while living at home. Participant D had always been extremely faithful as a Christian as her mother and her grandmother had been an extremely devout Christian before her. She had attended church in Korea when she was young, and she had attended a Canadian church when she lived in the smaller town for 20 years before moving to the urban/suburban region of south-west Ontario. Here she had been attending the Korean church for over 10 years. She was very active in participating in church events and enjoyed playing a major role in the Korean church community. Because of her fluency in English, most of her days were filled with volunteering to help newcomers adjust to life in Canada. For her leisure, she enjoyed reading the bible and meeting and helping church members when they ask for help.

Participant E

Participant E was employed part-time as a social assistant for disabled people. She had been a stay at home mom for four years and then re-entered the workforce last year after her older daughter started University and the younger daughter adapted well to the new educational system. She was in her forties and had immigrated to Canada five years ago because she felt that the educational system would be better for her children. Her husband was not able to find a job using his past experience and degree from Korea, and was working at a factory. Participant E had a bachelor's degree in Music and taught piano lessons in Korea before immigrating to Canada. Her interest in the Christian religion started in Korea a few years before she immigrated because of the kindness she had seen in some of

her Christian friends. She was attending a Korean church at the time of the interview, but claimed that she questioned her faith in the Christian religion and claimed that to have faith was difficult at times because of her disappointment in some Christians. Participant E enjoyed meeting with close church members, exercising at fitness centres with some of her church members and drinking coffee while chatting. She enjoyed social activities for her leisure.

Participant F

Participant F also immigrated to Canada for educational reasons in her case for her two children who were both in high school. She was in her forties and employed part-time as a cashier at a convenience store. Her husband still lived in Korea because he could not leave his job to come to Canada. She visited Korea once a year to see her husband. She had a degree in French Literature and had been employed for ten years at a tutorial institution for grade school students back in Korea. By the time she had quit her job to move to Canada, she had been working as the manager of a branch of the company. Her faith in Christianity had just started when she immigrated to Canada less than two years ago. She started going to Korean church for both ethnic community support and religion. Participant F preferred to spend her free time helping her children with their schoolwork and reading the bible. She also enjoyed inviting Korean friends for dinner and chatting.

Participant G

Participant G was in her fifties at the time of the interview and immigrated to Canada 23 years ago because of marriage arrangements. Her husband worked at a camera store and she helped out during the day before picking up her teenage children from school. She was very faithful to the Christian religion and enjoyed being an active member of the church. She had a bachelor degree of arts from a renowned University in Korea but never was formally employed. She enjoyed volunteering as a Sunday school teacher while actively participating in most decision making of the church and doing volunteer work for the church.

4.2 Themes

When analyzing the transcribed interviews, three main themes emerged from the study on the role of church attendance in the lives of the Korean immigrant women: (1) the benefits of ethnic church attendance (2) the difficulties deriving from ethnic church attendance, and (3) adjustment to

new life through the Korean ethnic community. The first theme regarding benefits of the church is addressed in the following section.

4.2.1 Benefits of Ethnic Church Attendance

The women talked about four different types of benefits from their participation in the Korean ethnic church. First, many of them reported spiritual fulfillment, and felt that this was linked to their quality of life. Second, the women talked of the opportunities that the church provided for them to obtain different kinds of information that helped them in various aspects of their lives. Third, all of the women mentioned the emotional support they received from the church community. And finally, the opportunity to reinforce their own and their children's ethnic identity was discussed as a benefit of being a member of the Korean ethnic church.

Spiritual Comfort and Quality of Life

The women's experiences with the Christian religion revealed different levels of faith. For example, for Participant A, Christianity was a family heritage and her faith was her priority before family obligations. Participant B and Participant F on the other hand, were still in search of faith. However, when asked to describe how attending church affected their quality of life, many of the women first discussed the spiritual comfort and fulfillment they experienced. Participant A described how it affected her life as:

I think that it's extremely important to have faith in a religion. I thought so in Korea, and here I'm more lonely and um what should I say, well I feel comforted and guided, it helps me a lot mentally.

종교를 갖는거라 나는 굉장히 중요하다고 생각해요. 더군다나 한국에서도 그랬고 여기와서도 더군다나 더 외롭고 뭐 뭐랄까 뭐 마음의 위로도 되고 지침도 되고, 정신적인 부분에 있어 많이 도움이 되죠.

For Participant A, spiritual comfort and fulfillment was an important factor in having a happier life in Canada. Faith was something that she could turn to heal loneliness and receive

guidance. This feeling was common among most of the women. Participant C also expressed how her faith grew after she immigrated to Canada:

The church itself didn't effect it (quality of life), so what should I say, more so than the church effecting it, I had a lot of faith. I really got to turn to faith. And so also my faith grew stronger.

교회가 영향을 준게 아니고요, 그러니까 어떻게 되나, 교회가 영향을 줬다니 보다는 제가 많이 믿었죠. 의지하게 되었죠 많이. 그럼으로 해서 또 믿음이 생기고.

For Participant C, Christianity was not her first religion. Before immigrating to Canada she had believed in Buddhism. However, for various reasons she was introduced to a Korean church after immigrating and slowly she had converted to Christianity. Thus, Participant C claimed that it was the spiritual comfort and guidance that improved her quality of life. For such spiritual fulfillment, she turned to the Christian religion which in turn helped her faith grow stronger.

The women also differed with regard to how they felt attending church affected their lives. Participant G described how it affected her life as:

There's much affect on quality of life... What increases the quality of life is really more than just religion, what we mean by quality of life in a true sense of life is not how much money we earn but how beautifully we live our life, and how we live not just for myself but by helping others... So I think to help with my quality of life, and to live (better) I attend church so I believe that there's nothing better than believing in the Lord to improve my quality of life.

삶의 질 영향 많이 받죠... 그 삶의 질을 높이는 거라는 것은 진짜 종교 이상으로 우리가 삶의 질이라는거는 진정한 삶에서는 돈을 많이 버는게 아니고 어떻게 아름답게 사냐, 나 자신을 위해서 사는게 아니고 다른 사람을 도우면서 살잖아... 그렇게 삶의 질을 돕게 하게, 살기 위해서 교회를 다니기 때문에 삶의 질에는 하나님을 믿는 것 처럼 좋은게 없다고 생각해요.

In this quote, Participant G said that she believed that by attending church it gave her a more fulfilling life by giving her an opportunity to help others. Likewise, Participant D was a very active

member of the church. She enjoyed volunteering to help other church members and help out in church activities. Most of her weekdays were filled with appointments with various church members who asked for her help. When asked how it made her feel in terms of her quality of life outside of the church she stated:

Of course. It is very worthwhile for me... It makes me feel good when I get involved and become a part of their lives...

그럼요. 굉장한 보람을 느껴요... 내가 involve¹ 가 되어 내가 part of their lives 가 된거 보람을 느끼고...

For Participant G and Participant D, attending church gave them the opportunity to express their faith by giving them access to various volunteer opportunities, further increasing their sense of worthiness and enjoyment. For them church, was a space in which they were given an active role and they were able to develop their identities as people who other people could turn to for help and trust. This role for them was very important in defining what made them happy in life.

The hardships of adjusting to a new environment, such as language difficulties, feelings of loneliness and inadequacy and adjusting to a new culture led the women to seek comfort in religion. Whether they first sought to attend church because of their beliefs, or whether they were introduced to Christianity for other reasons, the women were able to find spiritual comfort through attending a Korean ethnic church. Not only did church attendance improve their faith, but by participating in church related activities and socializing with other church members, the women found that they were given opportunities to help others which in turn gave them feelings of worthiness and fulfillment in their quality of life.

Exchange of Information

One of the first things that most of the participants mentioned when explaining why and/or how they decided to attend a Korean ethnic church after they first arrived in Canada was to obtain information about living in Canada and about Canadian culture. Some participants were reluctant to admit that they attended Korean church to exchange information, but did say that it was common for newcomers to seek information within the church community. For example, Participant B was a very

faithful Christian even before immigrating to Canada. During her interview when asked of any benefits of attending a Korean church for new immigrants, she stated:

So umm... well we can give advice on how to live here (in Canada)... I guess some people could've come to get information. For example, they can meet Korean people here and see how they live, how to do things, what to do things, where to live, well people come for stuff like this.

그러니까 음... 뭐 여기서 어떻게 사나 조언도 할 수 있고...
information 얻을려고 그런 사람들이 왔겠죠. 그니깐은 여기서 한국
사람들 만나서 어떻게 살아가며 어떻게 해야되는지 뭘 해야되는지
어디에 살아야되는지 뭐 이런 것들 때문에 오는 사람들도 있죠.

Throughout her interview she emphasized her faith in the Christian religion and was reluctant to tie any other reason for attending a Korean church for herself, but willingly admitted that many newcomers do seek the Korean church community for information rather than religious membership. In the case of Participant D though, she also had been a faithful Christian before immigrating to Canada, and although seeking information was not her main reason for attending church, she was happy to explain that she received a lot of information through the church community when she first arrived:

When I came (to Canada) ... people at church would tell me what shampoo to use, well you don't really know what shampoo to use at first even though you know in Korea, because hair gets dry here I should use something more oily, single young women taught me stuff like that, yeah and ah, lets see, and there were youth group (for church) meetings and I would go to someone's house and listen to stories, and hear a little about Canadian culture.

제가 왔을...인자 거기 교회 다니는 사람이 뭐 샴푸는 이거써라,
처음에는 샴푸가 뭔지 모르잖아요 한국꺼는 알지만, 그렇게 머리가
드라이 하니까 이렇게 오일리한거 그런거 사야한다 결혼 안한
아가씨들이 가르쳐줬어요 저를, 예 그리고 아, 어디 보다, 그러고 와서
또 청년회 회의를 하는데 그 집에 가서 이야기를 듣고, 여기 캐나다
문화에 대해서 조금 들었어요.

Both Participant B and Participant D had been faithful Christians all their lives and their statements suggest that exchange of information for them was not the main benefit of attending church, but it was a common practice for newcomers to receive information from church members after immigrating to Canada. On the other hand, Participant E's statement clearly did emphasize how this exchange of information was important for new and old immigrants alike:

There's lots [of things you get out of attending church]. You get lots of information especially for new people in this area, well for example there is a great variety of apples here, right? We Korean people haven't tried this or that, some are kind of too weird and there's too many different types so you can get that kind of information... There's the issue of children's schools, and what to teach them, you can get a lot of help in stuff like that. You can find out where to go for stuff, where you can get cheaper stuff, and well it's what we each have. Like my husband knows a little about cars, he can teach basic stuff about taking care of cars and people help each other a lot this way at church. Yes, we can share a lot of information this way.

많죠. 정보도 많이 얻고 특히 새로운 사람들은 이 지역에서 뭐 예를 들어서 여기 사과가 종류가 많잖아요, 그죠? 우리 한국 사람들은 뭐 이것저것 못 줘, 어떤건 너무 이상하고 많으니까 그런 정보도 얻을 수 있고... 애들 학교 문제도 그렇고 애들 뭐 가르키는 문제도 그렇고 뭐 그렇것들이 많이 도움이 되죠. 어딜 가면 무엇이 있다는 것도 알 수 있고 어디서 싸게 살 수 있다는 것도 알 수 있고, 뭐 또 서로 자기가 가지고 있는 것. 애네 아빠 같은 경우에는 자동차를 좀 알면, 자동차에 대해서 기본 상식을 가르쳐줄 수도 있고 서로들 그런거가 많이 도움이 되죠. 교회에서. 예 그런 서로 정보를 많이 나눌 수 있죠.

In the case of Participant E, although she had been Christian before immigrating to Canada, she claimed that she was still struggling to become a more faithful Christian. She was more willing than some of the other woman to admit that there were a more benefits other than spiritual fulfillment in attending a Korean ethnic church in Canada.

Even though most of the women were reluctant to say that they themselves benefited from church attendance in ways that did not involve spiritual fulfillment, exchanging information about

living in Canada was definitely common practice within the church community. Most of the information that Korean immigrants seem to share were related to Canadian culture and simple everyday knowledge that most Canadian residents take for granted. No matter how obvious and simple it may seem to Canadian residents, to newcomers every experience is new and difficult and knowledge from where to shop for groceries to information on the local health system is salient for their quick adaptation to the new environment.

Emotional Support

Another important benefit that all of the women in this study mentioned was the amount of emotional support they received from the church community and how it had helped them when they first came to Canada. Often new immigrants are faced with a variety of difficulties: language barriers; lack of knowledge in dealing with simple things such as shopping, buying a car, buying a house, sending children to school and finding a family doctor; and financial difficulties. In addition, most immigrants face great changes in their lives which include change of job and loss of family and close friends. All of these could lead to an increase in anxiety, loneliness and depression at a time when they might also be experiencing emotional upheaval from moving and cultural shock.

All of the women in this study did state that they received or gave emotional support to other members of the Korean immigrant community through the church. It was clearly indicated by the women throughout their interviews how much this meant to them to have someone to talk to and be consoled throughout their hardships during their first years in a new country. Participant A who was a housewife after immigrating and did not know many people, mentioned this a few times during her interview when asked how being a member of the church community helped her when she first came to Canada. She said:

It helps a lot emotionally. We come here (to Canada) and we're lonely, and it's like comforting and guides us.

여기에서도 더군다나 더 외롭고 뭐 뭐랄까 뭐 마음의 위로도 되고
지침도 되고, 정신적인 부분에 있어 많이 도움이 되죠.

Emotional support is very important for immigrants when they first moved to a new country. Unlike in their home country where they were surrounded by family and friends, here in Canada most immigrants find themselves alone and the whole process of adjustment can be frightening and stressful. Likewise, Participant D also explained how she believed she helped newcomers when they first came to the Korean church. She said:

And well there's some people come here (to Canada) and they don't adjust well and they're having a hard time. If there's someone like that, then again, I say it's ok living here. Like this I consoled them, and I encouraged them, stuff like that...

또 인제 뭐 사람들 와가지고 어떤 사람들은 여기 와서 적응이 안돼가지고 힘들어하는 사람이 있죠. 그런 사람이 있으면 인제 또 여기 사는거 괜찮다. 요런거 또 위로도 해주고 격려도 해주고, 그런거...

Immigrants are able to relate with each other the hardships such as loneliness, feeling frightened and incompetent because of language difficulties, and the stress that follows moving to a new environment. It is easier for people to emphasize and give encouragement for situations that they themselves have gone through. Also for people who need the support also find it more encouraging to hear success stories from people who come from the same background. Participant A explains this:

Well, we similar people get together and talk about our homesickness, and um, what can I say, like relieve stress, we talk about a lot of stuff like that.

향수를 달래는 그런면도 있고 그러니까 같은 사람들끼리. 그냥 뭐 말하자면 뭐라 그럴까 스트레스 해소 한다고 할까, 그런 많은 얘기들을 해요.

Even if other immigrants are not able to provide physical support or accurate advice at all times, for many of the women, socializing was therapeutic in helping them cope through hard times. Having someone there to talk to and identify with provided an enormous sense of security for the women when they felt that they were alone in a foreign place. All of the women in this study talked about the emotional strength and support they received from church members and the lasting

friendships that they developed within the community. Some of the participants also claimed that they only knew people from church whereas other participants said that their church friends were their closest friends. For example, Participant C reported:

I was 100% affected. As soon as I came here (to Canada) I went to church and through the church I got a lot of strength. And the people that I met through church around me were all that kind of people. They all encouraged me and I really trusted them and depended on them, I mean depend on them humanely and they are all people that I met through church. Right now the close friends that I really trust and depend on all used to have faith together as church members.

영향은 100% 죠. 제가 여기 오자마자 교회를 나가면서 교회를 통해서 제가 많이 힘을 얻었어요. 그리고 그 교회를 통해서 만난 사람들이 제 주위에 다 그런 사람들이었거든요. 그 분들이 다 저를 격려해주고 제가 많이 믿고 의지하는, 그러니까 인간적으로 의지하고 그 분들이 다 교회를 통해서 만난 분들이예요. 지금 제가 정말 믿고 의지하는 친한 친구들이 다 옛날 부터 같이 믿은 교인들이예요.

Also, when Participant E was asked about her friends in Canada, she replied:

Yes, they are [people I met from church]. Ultimately the [Korean] church is the [Korean] immigrant community.

지금 만나시는 친구분들은 다 교회에서 만나신 분들인가요? 네.
일단은 결국은 교회가 이 이민 사회더라고요.

Thus, it appears that the emotional support that the new immigrants received through the church was very important in their lives. It is clear that the members of the church community were able to provide encouragement and emotional strength when times were challenging and stressful for the new immigrants. More importantly, this support led to trust and friendship while the church community acted as a large extended family for those who felt lost and separated from their own family and friends back in their home country.

Reinforcement of Ethnic Identity

There is a common saying among Korean people that once one leaves the country, one suddenly becomes a patriot. After growing up immersed within one culture and then moving to a new culture, new immigrants feel sharply the cultural difference and at the same time start to acknowledge their own ethnic identity. All of the women in this study had a strong sense and pride in being Korean and expressed this throughout the interviews. This included talking about their Korean upbringing, Korean morals and values and their sense of Korean ethnic identity.

All of the women I interviewed for this study had lived in Canada for one year or more and were capable of communicating in English. Most of the women had high educational backgrounds and had studied English for most of their lives. However, all of the women had chosen to attend a Korean church at the current time of the study. When asked why she had chosen to attend a Korean church versus a Canadian church, Participant B replied:

I think I just like hanging out with Korean people. Well, umm being the same Korean gives a feeling of closeness and just because it's a church I think it's a little bit different. Even if you're fluent at English, well anyways because of a lot of different characteristics, like the culture is different and well the service and stuff like that are a bit different so for all these different reasons I'd probably just go to a Korean church. (Because of cultural differences?) Yes, and I think I just like meeting with Korean people.

그냥 한국 사람들하고 어울리는게 좋은거 같아요. 글썄, 그거 뭐 같은 뭐 한국 사람이라는 그 친근감도 있고 또 교회의 특성상 좀 다를 것 같아요. 그게 아무리 영어를 잘 해오 뭐 하여튼 여러가지 특성상 다른 문화도 다르고 좀 설교나 이런것도 좀 다를 수도 있고 그래서 여러가지로 그냥 한글 교회를 나갈 것 같아요. (문화적인 차이가 커서?) 예, 그냥 한국 사람들 만나는게 좋은 것 같아요.

Participant G also attended the Korean church because she wanted to experience the Korean culture. She described what she enjoyed about attending Korean church as follows:

When we meet with people at the church we do something like a fellowship. Then you know we don't just drink coffee, but we eat rice cakes, too? And? We also eat meals, too you know? As you

know in the Korean church we make lots of food. All the time we divide in to different parts and make food, and because we can't eat a lot of Korean food (outside of the church) when we come to church we eat a lot.

결국은 친교를 할때 fellowship 은 같이 해요. 그럼 거기서 커피만 먹는게 아니라 떡도 먹고 그러거든요? 그리고? 밥도 먹고 그러거든요? 한국 교회는 아시다시피 음식을 참 많이 자주 해요. 허구헌날 파트를 나눠서 먹고 하고 그러는데 한국 음식을 자주 못 먹으니까 우리 교회 오면 정말 많이 먹어요.

Most of the women chose to attend the Korean church for their own comfort and enjoyment. However, there were a few women who also felt it as their duty as Korean women, Korean mothers, to preserve and pass on their ethnic culture to the next generation. For example, Participant F stated:

Well it's because kids here have this.. what's it called.. I realized while raising my children that they were forgetting about Korea. The kids. About Korea itself. Now watching [Korean programs on] TV is one thing, but isn't it in the Korean church where you really get to greet and show respect to adults, and where you can get to know the Korean culture better? ... Wouldn't it increase chances for young people to meet with older people?

왜냐면은 애들이 그래도 여기에 그거는 있어요. 그렇게 뭐야. 애들을 키우니까 한국을 좀 잊어가는거지. 애들이. 한국 자체를. 인자 텔레비 보는것도 보는 거지만은 그래도 어른들을 보면 인사할수 있고 한국의 문화를 그래도 좀 접할 수 있는 곳이 한인 교회이지 않나?... 젊은 사람들이 어른과 접하는 시간이 더 많아진게 아닐까요?

Participant G also felt that attending a Korean church benefited her children in terms of teaching Korean traditions and values, which to her it were very important and would help her children to develop and maintain their ethnic identity; for example, she reported:

So then why do I come [to church], it's for my children. For the next generation. If we go to a Korean church, the reason why we must go to a Korea church in Canada is because we're not only going there to meet with Korean people, but we get to know the Korean [cultural] background. In the end, Korean is used in Sunday school, although bible school is taught in 100% English, there's still some Korean [cultural] background somewhere. And we get to eat Korean food, and the children get to learn Korean people's atmosphere and environment. We teach them how to bow to adults, we teach them how to speak politely, so it's for the children to know about Korean [cultural] background. Like the kids call themselves mixed, they say that they're skin is yellow but they're white inside. They think Canadian style. They're kind of individualistic and they have the western thought in their styles. And if you think about it, Korean style is to be modest and yield oneself, and I think it's like the bible in the end? Jesus said to hold others in reverence and to lower oneself. I attend Korean church to teach my children that kind of Korean state of mind or culture.

그러면은 왜 오냐, 내 자식들을 위해서. 2 세대를 위해서. 우리가 Korean church 를 가면은 Korean church in Canada 에 가는 이유는 거기에 가서 한국 사람을 보는 것에 끝나는데 아니라 Korean background 를 알게 된다고요. 결국은 한국말을 Sunday school, bible school 이 전부 English 로 100% 진행되기도 하지만 거기에 어딘가에 Korean background 가 깔려 있거든요. 또 한국 음식도 먹고 음식도 먹고 한국 분위기도 있고 그런 걸 아이들이 배우게 된다고요. 어른들한테 인사하는 것도 가르치고 존댓말도 배우고 그러니까 Korean background 라는걸 애들을 위해서 이런 아이들이 혼혈이라고 하잖아요. 본인은. 겉질은 노랑지만 안은 하얗다는 소리에요. 생각하는게 Canadian style 이라는 거예요. 약간 이기적이고 여기 style 외국 의식이 들어가 있단 말이에요. 그러면 한국 스타일은 겸손하고 나를 양보하는 거 내가 그게 결국은 성경이잖아요? 남을 높이고 나를 낮게 여기는 예수가 말했잖아요. 그런 한국적인 정신 상태나 문화나 그런거를 애들한테 가르치기 위해서 한국 교회를 다니는거예요.

Participant A explained it very plainly when she was asked why she thought attending a Korean church would be beneficial for her children. She said:

There's a sense of responsibility that we need to somehow something that's also like keeping my roots [heritage or ethnic identity] and handing them down to the next generation.

내 뿌리에 대한 어떤걸 간직해야된다 그런것도 우리 다음 세대에게
어떡하든 그게 이어줘야된다 그런 책임감도 있고요.

In sum, it appears that the immigrant women experienced a higher sense of ethnic identity after immigrating to Canada and felt the desire and need to be a part of a community that reconstructed the traditions, culture and values of the country which they came from. Not only did they enjoy meeting with people who shared their same interests, struggles, history and culture; but they also were able to feel more comfortable in an environment where they did not have to struggle with communication problems, and they could eat Korean traditional foods which they did not have as much access to at home. Furthermore, most of the women also felt it was their duty to preserve and pass on what they thought was valuable in their culture to their children, and teach their children to be proud of their ethnic identity.

Although many of the women focused on spiritual comfort when asked directly about the benefits of attending a Korean church, other benefits were also evident. Information exchange was mentioned, as well as a range of emotional support such as encouragement and friendship all helped the women learn to fit into the foreign community and Canadian life. At the same time, the desire to be around people they felt more comfortable with, because of language barriers and cultural differences, reinforced their ethnic identity and the Korean culture. All of this made a positive sense of community for the women, a safe haven in which they could hold on to their original culture and at the same time help them adjust to new life in Canada.

4.2.2 Conflicts, Divisions and Challenges Deriving from Church Attendance

Throughout the interview negative aspects of Korean church attendance were evident as well. These included lack of interaction with mainstream Canadian society, reinforcement of gender inequality, and challenges between traditional values and new values.

Challenges between traditional values and new values

As mentioned above, the difference between traditional values and newer values was a major factor that caused mental conflict for the women when dealing with their role as a woman in the ethnic church community. Despite the rapid cultural and social change in South Korea over the recent decades, the women claimed that the immigrant church community here in the urban/suburban region in South-west Ontario had not changed. In South Korea, Confucian values are still the basis for cultural beliefs and norms, but the western egalitarian ideology started to be incorporated into Korean culture some time ago. Many Koreans now accept ideals of equality, democracy, development and efficiency. However, because the Confucianist beliefs were so deeply embedded in the Korean culture, traditional values such as respect for elders and hierarchy, collectivism and obedience have also persisted as essential elements of Korean culture. Thus, conflict between egalitarian ideals and authoritarian ideals are common in the modern Korean society. This was also reflected in this study.

Tension Between Different Generations

When asked about challenges deriving from being a part of the church community, most of the women started talking about tensions between people with traditional values and those with newer values. For example, Participant C, who was one of the older women in this study, reported:

So I feel a lot of it (tension) from the newer immigrants nowadays.
From those people...

그러니까 요즘 새로 온 사람들이 그런걸 많이 느껴요. 그런 사람들
한테서.

Similarly, in a discussion about problems within the church community, Participant B, also an older woman, noted tension with the newer immigrants which she described it as cultural difference. She said:

There is some [cultural difference between us and the newer people].
I feel it a little bit but not a lot.

(지금 새로 오신 분들하고 문화적 차이) 그런건 있어요. 조금 느끼는
건 있는데, 크게는 모르겠고요.

Most of the women described this type of tension as existing between groups based on age and time of immigration. Many of the participants called the immigrants who had been here the longest as the ‘older people’ and the recent immigrants as the ‘newer people’, Participant G was more specific and talked about three different groups. She said:

So the first group is the people who’ve been here for a long time. And then the second is the people who came in the middle. And the third group of people is the people who came here very recently, within 5 years. The group of people who came here since about 5 years ago just hang out together.

원래 부터 오래된 그룹? 두번째는, 중간쯤 온 그룹? 세번째는 아주 최근에 온 그룹, 한 5 년 이내에 온 그룹? 5 년 이내에 온 그룹은 자기네 끼리 뭉치더라고.

In her statement, it was clear that she defined the differences between the groups by time of immigration, and not the age of the immigrant. Moreover, she was also asked whether she thought that there had been cultural changes within the immigrant community during the past few decades that reflected changing values and ideologies in South Korea. She replied:

I don’t think there has been much change.

그렇게 엄청 많다고 보지는 않아요.

The fact that ideologies and values within the immigrant community had not kept up with the rapid change going on in South Korea, meant that the newer immigrants faced challenges in adjusting to the more conservative and traditional culture of the existing immigrant society. This was difficult for the newer immigrants to accept, and the expectations imposed upon them caused a rift between the older immigrants and the newer immigrants. Participant A explained her experience after she first immigrated six years ago:

So what I mean by difference here is, I really could not mix very well even when I went to church and for about a year I was like a wanderer. It’s just that we spoke the same language and we looked the same, but our thoughts were so different. And it’s still like that

right now. There's a wall between us and people who have been here for a very long time.

그러니까 그 이질감이라는 건 그, 굉장히 교회 가셔도 굉장히 어울리지도 못하고 한 일년은 거의 방황을 했어요. 같은 말을 하고 같은 외모를 가졌다 뿐이지 생각 같은 건 정말 달랐거든요. 지금도 그런 부분이 있죠. 아주 오래되신 분하고는 벽이 있죠. 어쩔 수 없는 거죠 그러니까.

The difference that she felt in ideologies and beliefs were significant enough for her to feel like an alien within her own ethnic community. These differences between the two groups of immigrant women are explained in more detail below.

Views Of The Older Generation

The women who belonged to the older immigrant group felt that the newer and mostly younger immigrants were different, in that they did not cooperate with and were not supportive of the immigrant community. For example, Participant G complained:

And we people who've been here for a long time, what more do we need? We all live pretty well, and have houses. We [the older people] don't need help because our life here [in Canada] is generally set up and good. Then the people [who came] in the middle live (adjusted) quite a bit well too, and then the last group of people they don't think of working [in the church] but just hang out by themselves. So the group of people who've only been here around 5 years get together and do gossiping. So if they get together at the church they gossip.

우리 오래된 사람들은 여기서 부족할게 뭐가 있어? 다들 집 갖고 다들 뭐 웬만큼 산단 말이에요. 도움도 필요없고 자기네 끼리 잘살다 보니까 중간에 이민 온 그룹은 조금 더 낮고 맨 끝에 있는 그룹은 자기네가 같이 일을 할 생각을 안 하고 자기네끼리 똘똘 뭉치는거야. 그러니까 자기네 끼리 5년 안에 온 그룹은 사람들이 한국 사람들이 모이면 gossiping 하게 돼. 그래 갖고 그렇게 모이면은 막 교회에 gossiping 을 하는거예요.

She points out that the older generation of immigrants have already settled down and are at a comfortable state with their immigrant lives in Canada. They do not need help in terms of settling in, and they do not need information from other immigrants anymore. Instead, they are the ones that are providing services to help new-coming immigrants and they seem to expect only friendship, respect and community spirit in return. However, it is clear that Participant G felt frustrated that the new immigrants did not seem as cooperative as expected, but rather that they “got together and gossiped”. Likewise, Participant C also felt that the newer immigrants did not participate as a part of the church community as often as she would have liked. She claimed:

Well, things like volunteering or stuff like that, the younger people don't really want to participate. They really try not to be a part of the things at church or the education at church. So um, if you look at bible study groups, it's all older people. Our younger folks don't have much interest. So mostly the 30s and 40s are rarely there.

뭐 봉사회 뭐 그런거 그런거 같은데 젊은 사람들이 많이 참석을 안 할려고 그래요. 그런 교회에서 하는 교육 같은 것 젊은 사람들이 안 할려고 애를 써요. 그게 많이 배울려고 하지않아요. 그래서 음, 성경 공부 같은데를 들어가 보면은 중년 이상이 많아요. 우리 젊은 세대 별로 관심이 없어요. 그래서 거의 30대에서 40대 사이. 거의 드물어요.

Furthermore, Participant G saw this as a form of disrespect towards the immigrants who built this community from scratch. She said:

But the new people they just all have no sense of respect. I mean they [the newer women] don't even know the effort and pains we went through to come here, and, they complain about older people's authority. They criticize. Like really what do they know? They haven't even been here for long. And they don't even work and they criticize the people who do. I think that's really negative. I think it's really bad. I mean they should get up and work, too. While they receive help, they don't work. They complain that it's not enough. So they shouldn't act like that, because church is where you negotiate so they should join and pray together.

근데 지금 금방 오는 사람은 다들 인사불성이란 말이야. 그러니까 우리가 얼마나 그렇게 힘들게 해온 것을 그것도 모르면서 뭐 장로들이 파워를 할려고 그렇게 핍박한다. 비판을 한단 말이에요. 자기네들이 솔직히 뭘 안다고. 온지 얼마나 됐다고. 그러면서 일은 안 하면서 일 하는 사람들 비판한다고. 그건 정말 negative 한거라고 생각해요. 나쁜 거라고 생각해요. 자기도 끼어 들어서 일을 하란 말이야. 일 안하고 자기들은 도움만 받으면서. 그거 조금이라고 막 비판만 하면서. 그렇게 하지 말고 교회는 협력하는 선을 이루는 곳이니깐 같이 join 하고 기도하고 그렇게 해야되는데.

In her view, the newcomers were not only uncooperative, but also very critical about the way the church community was being run by the older immigrants. For the older immigrants, it was a very different age and society when they immigrated to Canada. Just four decades ago, South Korea was still struggling to recover from the Korean war and the people had suffered tremendously from losses they experienced as a result of war and poverty. So the immigrants of that era were probably people who had little money and possessions and who came to the new country dreaming of a better future. On the other hand, during the past couple of decades, South Korea has rapidly developed economically and an increasing number of South Koreans started moving to Canada to study abroad or immigrate because of personal choices. Participant C who immigrated to Canada more than three decades ago explained this difference. She said:

Of course there are differences [between older immigrants and newer immigrants]. Back then we were all equal. We were all people who came with nothing in our pockets. Back then people who immigrated thirty years ago were people who came without any money... back then when we came even though we had nothing we would get together every week for birthday parties and such, and we would all get together and feed each other like crazy. Like really even though we lived in small houses or town houses or apartments we did that, but now there's nothing like that.

차이가 있죠. 그때는 우리가 다 동등하거든요. 다 빈털털이로 온 사람들이거든요. 그때 30년 전에 온 사람들은 다 돈 하나도 안 갖고 온 사람들이에요... 우리 그때 왔을 때는 없어도 매주 모이면은 생일잔치다 무슨 잔치다 하면서 막 퍼 먹이고 그랬는데 서로 모여

가지고 막 서로 퍼 먹이고 그랬어요. 정말 쪼그만 집에 살면서 타운 하우스에 살면서도 아파트에 살면서도 그랬는데.

Despite being poor, she recalls that the immigrants back then were more generous to each other and had formed a tight and supportive community. Even though the newer immigrants did not need much financial support, she points out that they are less generous and seem more selfish. She claimed:

So people who come now are um, well I guess I don't know what their life really is like, but I personally think that they live life really easily. They have a lot of money but they're very narrow-minded. Even though they live much more easily, they're very selfish with their money. They have lots of money, but they're selfish. They're not generous...[Would you see that as individualism?] I think so. Well, I think it's becoming very selfish. I think that it's quite selfish individualism.

그러니까 지금 오는 사람들은 좀 um, 자기들 나름대로의 생활은 모르겠지만은 제가 생각하기에는 굉장히 쉽게 사는 것 같아요. 굉장히 쉽게 생각하는거 같아요. 사는거 같아요. 쉽게 살면서도 굉장히 이 자본에서 옹졸한거 같아요. 돈은 많은데 굉장히 이 마음이 옹졸해요. 후하지가 못해요... 요즘은 그런게 굉장히 없어요. (개인주의적이라고 해야하나요 그러면?) 그런 것 같아요. 글썄요 그게 굉장히 이기주의가 되는거 같아요. 내 생각에는 좀 이기주의. 개인주의인거 같아요.

Higher education was also mentioned by Participant G as a factor that divided her from the newer immigrants. She said:

But ah, recently it's not just our church, but most churches, the newer people all have high educational backgrounds. So because they come from good schools, they talk like 'I'm from Seoul National University, like I'm from somewhere', even though they don't know anything. This church has been around for more than 30 years, and we've worked so hard managing it throughout these years, before we got this church. We were the first members, so then they should at least recognize all the people who have worked so hard until now. Recently it's been more like that. It's because they think

they're so much smarter, they say that they've gotten their master's degree at Seoul National University, and other degrees there. And then others went to Korea University. Like that. Then do they do that well here? No, it's not like that. They don't even know English and all they do is come to a Korean church. If they don't like it here, then go to a Canadian church. If they're so bright and good at English, then I say go to a Canadian church.

아 최근 대부분의 교회가 우리 교회만 특정하게 말하는게 아니라 최근에 온 사람들이 또 학벌들이 굉장하잖아 또. 학벌도 굉장하니까 나 서울대 나왔다. 나 어디 나왔다. 이런 식으로 짓볼도 알지 못하면서 이 교회가 얼마나 30 몇년이 된 교회인데 우리가 그 동안 이걸 운영 아느라고 건축비를 얼마나 뼈 빠지게, 그 교회 나오기 전에는, 우리가 주축 멤버고, 그럴거면은 이제까지 해온 사람들의 수고도 인정해줘야하는 아니냐 이거야. 최근 그런일들이 더 많아요. 머리통에 들은게 많거든, 자기는 서울대 석사 받았고 서울대에서 뭘 받았다고 거야. 애들도 고대에서 받았고. 그런 식으로, 그럼 여어를 그렇게 잘해 여기서? 아니잖아요. 영어도 짓볼도 못하면서 한국 교회만 막 쫓아다니면서 그렇게 싫으면 캐나다 교회로, 영어 잘하면은 캐나다인 교회로 가라 그거야.

Undoubtedly, she was very angry with the disrespect and lack of appreciation she felt from the newcomers. Even though she herself had a university degree from a well known university in South Korea, she found the newer immigrants to be boastful of their education level and arrogant. Additionally, Participant C explained the expectations the older immigrants had about the newer immigrants. She said:

They [the younger and newer immigrants] need to work harder so that it's more comfortable for us when we get into our 40s or 50s. We can entrust it [the duties] all to them, but they need to get trained a lot. They need to listen and learn a lot so that they can do well. But attitudes like that need a lot of improvement.

그 분들이 열심히 해야지 40 대 50 대가 되면은 훨씬 편하죠 위임을 가질 수 있는데 훈련도 많이 받고, 많이 듣고 많이 배우고 그래야 훨씬 잘하거든요. 그런데 그런거 같은 경우가 조금 부족해요.

In accordance with Confucius traditional customs and values, their belief was that the younger generation should be more obedient, learn the system, and learn the rules from the older generation who made them. Participant C used the term ‘generation gap’ to describe the division within the church community among the older immigrants and the newer immigrants. She said:

[The atmosphere at church] has really changed. Changed a lot. Generation gap. There’s a huge gap. Like this (spreads hands wide apart).

그때랑은 벌써 바뀌어졌죠 벌써. 많이 바뀌어졌죠. 세대 차이. 많이 있죠. gap 이 많아요. 이렇게 좀 떨어졌어.

Views of the Younger Generation

The women in this study who were newer to Canada had different complaints regarding the generation gap. When asked whether there was anything negative about being a part of the Korean church community, the newer immigrants also mentioned the differences with the older immigrants and the difficulties that derived from their different values and expectations. Participant A felt tension because she felt the older immigrants demanded respect from the younger and newer immigrants. She said:

...Actually, the people who have been here for a long time don’t really get along very well with Canadians. So they need to be respected [by other Koreans]. So when you think about it in Korea, let’s say you succeed at work and receive respect from the society, well they try to get that from the church community, y’know? We always have to respect them, and if they make mistakes or something they should do something about it, but now we have to take care of it. So anyways there’s a bit of tension and wariness from stuff like that.

...그 오래 되신 분들은 사실 Canadian 하고 잘 어울리지 못하시는 분들이세요. 그러다 보니까 그 뭔가 대접을 받아야되고 그 어떤 한국에서 말하면 사회에 나가서 뭐 출세하고 뭐 대접 받고 이래야 될것들이 교회내에서 할려는 받으려는 심정 그 심지가 참

많으시거든요? 우리가 무조건 존경해 드려야하고 그 분이 실수를 하던 뭐 이런걸 해야 되는데 인제 우리가 해야 되죠. 근데 아무튼 그러면서 오는 서로 견제와 약간의 그런 것이 있어요.

Likewise, this was also mentioned in a conversation with Participant E. She claimed:

So even if the Pastor or people like that [who have higher status within the church] don't want things like that [special treatment or special respect], the elders below them raise them higher and treat them that way so before they know it, then they're in that position. Or they [the pastor or other people] could want it to be like that. So it always follows Korean communities like that. Things like abuse of power and stuff. And the newer people really hate it. They didn't even like it in Korea, and then they come here and see it as well, of course they hate it.

목사님이라던가 좀 그런 분들이 그걸 원하지 않아도 밑에 집사님들이 더 받들어서 본인도 모르게 그렇게 될수도 있고 또 본인이 원해서 그렇게 될수도 있고 그러니까 항상 따라다니더라고 한국 사회에는. 그런 병폐적인 것들이 있더라고요. 근데 새로운 사람들은 그걸 딱 싫어하죠. 한국에서도 그런걸 싫어했던 사람들인데, 여기 와서 그런걸 보면 싫어하죠.

As seen in these quotes, the younger women felt as though they were being forced to show respect and that the older immigrants were demanding power and respect through respect for their age and age-based status. Furthermore, the younger women also expressed concern over the lack of privacy and lack of boundaries among the older immigrants in the community. Interestingly, some of the younger women also referred to gossiping as a problem among the older women. Participant E expressed her displeasure about the gossiping that frequently occurred within the church community. She said:

I guess you can sense their [older immigrants] disapproval?
<Laughter> But there are some people who are more liberal, and they really shouldn't [hint that they disapprove], but some sort of hint their disapproval [of how you act and dress]. Yes, there's a lot of talk and gossiping.

그런거를 좀 눈치들을 주죠? (웃음) 근데 그거를 또 자유롭게 하는
사람들도 있고 눈치주면 안돼는데 눈치를 좀 주더라고요. (행동가짐이
어떻게 되는지) 예, 말이 많죠.

Not only did she feel as though people were talking about her, but she also complained about the lack of freedom and the “rules” within the established church community. For example, she did not feel comfortable wearing certain types of clothes or talking about certain topics because she was afraid that the older immigrants would disapprove and spread rumors. Participant A also mentioned negative aspects of being a part of an ethnic community and she also felt uneasy about how rumours were spread easily throughout the members of the immigrant community. She said:

It’s really sad. We’re from the same country but well if something bad happens (laughs) of course we help each other. It’s not like we don’t help each other when someone is in a difficult situation, but still inside, again they might say “Oh right, those people are like this and that.”, they spread bad rumours and stuff like that.

그게 말 참 슬픈 일이지만 같은 동족인데 그게 좀 안 좋은 일이 있고
그러면 (웃음) 물론 도와주죠. 도와주고 서로 어려운 일에 안
도와준다는 건 아니지만 그래도 내면 한 쪽으로는 또 그렇게 말하자면
‘아자 저 사람들은 그렇데’ 서로 그렇게 다 나쁜 쪽에 루머들을
퍼뜨리고 뭐 이런 것들도 있죠.

Interestingly, while the older immigrants tended to think that the newer immigrants were different in that they were ruder, more selfish and arrogant, the newer immigrants put the blame on the older immigrants’ lack of change for the differences and tension that existed between the two groups. For example, Participant B explained;

People who came here 30 years ago think like people from 30 years ago, and people who came here 20 years ago have ideals from 20 years ago, and they have biases and think that they don’t get along well or communicate well with the new people. Even though things have changed a lot, I felt kind of like that when I first came here. It was like that at first, now a few years later I don’t feel it much anymore. The longer they’ve been here, the immigrants from decades ago seem to be a little more conservative. Still they’ve worked hard. The immigrants who’ve been here longer have been

through harsher times, and so they sort of feel unworthy and now I think there's something like that. They're conservative and like they've been hurt by many things, and at that time the immigrants couldn't mix very well with the main society, decades ago. So I guess they'd have scars from that and, and they'd have scars from Korean people, too. So... But as they grow older I think it gets better.

삼십년전에 온 사람은 삼십년전 생각을 가지고 있고, 이십년 전에 온 사람은 이십년전 생각을 가지고 있어가지고 새로운 사람들하고 안 맞는다 커뮤니케이션이 안된다 그때 고정관념을 가지고 있고. 많이 변했는데도 불구하고 그런건 처음에 조금 느꼈어요. 처음에 왔을 때는 그랬는데 몇 년 지나니까 모르겠더라고요. 오래될수록 조금 몇십년 된 사람들은 조금 보수적인 것 같고, 그때 생각 그래도 있는 좀 잘 고생을 좀 더 많이, 오래된 분들이 고생을 더 많이 하셨잖아요 여기 일찍 온 사람들은 그러니까 그런 것에 대한 어떤 자격 지심도 있고 이제 그런 그런거가 있는 것 같아요. 생각이 보수적인 데에다가 여러가지로 조금 상처 받았던게 많았던 것 처럼 또 그때는 주류 사회와 어울리지 못하는 세대가 많았잖아요 몇 십년 전에 그러니까 그런 데에서 받는 상처도 있겠고 또, 또 한국 사람들끼리 받은 상처도 있겠죠. 아무래도 그래서... 근데 이제 점점 살면서 그런것들이 줄어드는것 같아요.

Similarly, Participant A also reasoned that the differences came from the change of culture that South Korea went through but that the immigrant community in Canada did not follow. She said:

Right now mostly there's a lot of younger people who immigrated after us. But when we came here in year 2000, it was mostly the people who came here almost 30 or 20 years ago and then there were us new people. It was like the first time the generations got together, so um I felt that there was a lot of differences. Those people just think of the olden days. They grew up in a time when they couldn't eat very well, and they did not get a very good education whereas we have been educated and have come for more education.

No matter how much we explain [the change and development in South Korea] they don't believe us, because they left Korea 30 years ago and have never gone back. It's better for some of them who have visited Korea frequently. Umm, so sometimes we insisted on it and some of them went and came back. Anyways, things like that are so funny. They talk about how hot water and cold water didn't come out

properly [in Korea] even though that was ages ago. So... There are people who keep those kind of [old fashioned] thoughts.

거의 가 지금은 우리 이후로 이민 온 젊은 사람들이 많거든요. 근데 우리가 2000 년도에 왔을 때에는 거의 30 년 20 년 전에 이민 온 사람들하고 그 다음에 우리 새로 온 사람들이 처음에 그렇게 맞닥들이는 그런 시기였기 때문에 어 굉장히 이질감 많이 느꼈죠. 그분들은 옛날 생각만 하고 잘 못 먹고 잘 못 배우고 그런 시기에 살다 오신 분들이고 우리는 다 배우고 인제 더 배울려고 오는 사람들이잖아요. 그렇지만 뭐 어울리는 사람들이나 어떤 얘기하는 소재나 이런거는 같을 수가 없거든요. 지금도 분리되어 있는 편이 되어 있죠 조금. 암만 설명을 해도 믿지를 못하는거야 믿지를, 30 년 전에 오고 한번도 안 가신 분이기에 때문에 중간에 좀 갔다 오신 분이면 좀 나는데 어 그래가지고 그거 우겨서 갔다오긴 했어요. 아무튼, 그런 점 너무 우습잖아요. 그게 언제 때 얘기인데 더운물 찬물 안 나온다는데 그게... 그러니까 그런 사고를 계속 갖고 사시는 분들이세요.

Participant E also shared her opinion about the differences. She said:

Well, if you look at it from our point of view, the people who come nowadays have different thoughts, but the older people, if you look at it this way, some say things like they've never worked before and when they left the Korean society, our country was at a difficult time and was poor, and they bring their way of thinking from back then. If they immigrated in the 1960s, then they keep their way of thinking from back then in the 60s. They weren't able to develop beyond that, even though they live in Canada, or the US. But for us, people who came here in the 2000s, you know that Korea has changed a lot. So for the newer people there's a huge gap.

그건 우리 입장에서 보는거예요, 요즘에는 오는 사람들은 생각이 조금 다른데 옛날 분들은 어떻게 보면 이렇게 얘기하는 사람들도 있어요 사회 생활을 많이 안 해보셨고 그리고 떠났을 때 한국 사회 참 우리나라가 어렵고 못 살때 그 가지고 왔던 그 사고가 본인이 60 년대에 오면 60 년대 사고가 그대로 남아 있네요. 거기서 발전이

안되는거예요. 캐나다에 살지만, 미국에 살지만. 근데 저희 같은 경우에는 2000 년대에 온 사람들이라 한국이 많이 변화가 됐잖아요, 그래서 온 사람들과의 Gap 이 많은 거예요.

When asked about why she thought there was such a difference in the rate of change and development between South Korea and immigrant communities, Participant A explained that this was probably because the older immigrants probably did not have the money to travel back to South Korea often, or did not have the time. Thus, after immigrating to a new country, it seems that the older immigrants treasured their cultural heritage out of homesickness and tried to preserve the Korean culture the way that they remembered it.

Work Culture Differences

Another issue brought up by the participants was the different work habits and work culture the two groups had. Participant A explained that there was a difference in the type of jobs the older immigrants had compared with the newer immigrants. She said:

The older people all have convenience stores or laundromats around here. It's almost just these two [businesses]. Or people who work in factories. So the people who work at factories are also the same. Now they can't travel [to South Korea] because of financial reasons... The people who come nowadays usually get [white collar] jobs. Rather than shops... The folks who work at shops don't have much freedom because of time constraints.

그죠. 옛날 사람들은 다 여기 근처는 convenience 아니면 세탁소. 거의 딱 두개예요. 아니면 공장에서 일하시는 분들. 그니까 공장에서 일하시는 분들도 마찬가지예요. 인제 그 여유가 없으셔서 못 가시고, 그러신 분이고... 요즘에 우리 새로 오신 분들 중에서도 좀 그나마 직장 생활을 하는 편이죠 인제. 가게 보다는... 가게 하시는 분들이 가장 부자유스럽죠 시간 때문에.

Because the nature of their jobs, the older immigrants who were more likely to own a shop or have a blue collar job had less time and money and less experience with working with other people in white collar environments. However, many of the newer immigrants came to Canada with previous employment experiences and higher education levels from education in both Korea and/or North

America. Thus, part of the difficulty within the church community, where decisions were made by elders who were usually older immigrants, seemed to reflect differences in work experiences and work cultures. For example, Participant E explained:

So even if there is some kind of work to do [in church], if you look at it, the driving force of the newer people is to want everything planned out. Because they are people who are used to working for big companies, you know there's something like that. They want something that's more efficient, but even though they [the older immigrants] live in Canada, they're very traditional Korean people. Even though they do have initiative and drive, it's a little different. You have to see it as our different thinking processes... So, and in other words, can you call this like putting on a show? You know how they say Korean people really like to show off things, it's like that kind of thing was carefully preserved.

그래서 거기서 어떤 일을 할려고 해도 그 추진력이라던가 주목해보면 일단 여기 온 사람들은 모든지 계획하에 회사를 다니다 온 사람들이니까 그런게 다 있잖아요. 그런거를 원하는데 일단 그게 합리적이라고 생각을 하는데 캐나다에서 살지만 지극적인 한국적인 사람이에요. 추진력이 있지만, 좀 다르죠. 우리랑은 생각이 다르다고 봐야죠...그리고 또 어떻게 보면, 소하는거라고 해야되요? 한국 사람들이 그거를 참 파렴치레 이런걸 좋아하잖아요, 그게 고스란히 남아 있는 것 같더라고요.

In her perspective, the way things were planned out and done within the ethnic church community looked inefficient and “fake”, almost like they were putting on a show. She expressed her frustration at the lack of change toward development and the older immigrants’ reluctance to let go of traditional methods. She said:

On the other hand really in [modern] Korea people are more sophisticated, you know? If we try to improve things, develop things, or make some sort of policy, they wouldn't accept it. Because for the older people, they think that the newer people should see what the older people do and follow their older ways. A lot of them think this way. I found that it's hard to change that. If we don't [accept] them we clash and fight. [The immigrant community in Canada] is very different from [modern] Korea.

오히려 한국이 세련됐거든요? 좀 발전 좀 시킬려고 뭔가 제도를 만들려고하면 그게 먹히지 않더라고요. 왜냐면 옛날 분들 같으면 지금 온 사람들과의 옛날 분들은 그렇게 하는거 옛날 방식이 이렇게 이렇게 해야된다고 생각을 하고 있어요. 많이들 갖고 있어요. 그거를 떼기가 어렵더라고요. 안 그러면 부딪히고 싸우게 되요. 많이 달라요 한국이랑.

Generation Gap

Because of the virtue of being obedient and respectful to elders within the Korean culture, it was difficult for most of the younger women to express their frustration and advocate for change. Therefore, instead of the different generations getting together and solving things out democratically, a gap had formed dividing the groups according to their beliefs. As time passed, the gap between the groups seems to have grown wider and the silent tension has heightened. And all of the women showed some form of acceptance of the situation and resignation about advocating for change. For example, Participant E's quote expresses her resignation and acceptance. She reported:

So I think that there are things like this that underlie the reason why people like to hang out with people who immigrated at the same time. Because they can sympathize with each other. I mean it might work if we all just let go of ourselves [beliefs] and we need to work hard to get closer with the older people, but the saying that there is a gap, there is a gap, I thought at first like how hard can it be, couldn't we all just try to understand, but as I live longer here, I started to understand why they say that. Yes... so that's why there's a saying like "birds of a feather flock together", and I feel more and more that old sayings are never wrong.

그러니깐은 이민 온 시기가 비슷한 사람들 끼리 서로 잘 맞는다는 이야기가 그런것도 있는 것 같아요. 왜냐면 서로 공감대를 느낄 수 있는 것도. 아직 서로 자기끼를 확 다 버리고 그러면은 모를까 옛날 분들하고 서로 노력해야만이 서로 가까워지는데 옛날에 왔을때 gap 이 있다 gap 이 있다 했을때 뭐가 그렇게 있을까 서로 좀 노력하면 되지 않을까 이렇게 생각했는데 그거는 점점 살아갈 수록 그 말을 이해하게 되더라고요. 예... 그런게 그래서 유유상종도 있고 우리나라라 옛말이 틀린게 하나도 없다는게 점점 느껴요.

The women in this study were asked to describe any challenges that they felt from being a part of the Korean church community, and most of the women passionately described the tensions that existed between people with traditional values and newer values. The tensions existed between the older immigrants who had immigrated to Canada decades ago and started the church, and the newer immigrants who had immigrated here within the last ten years. For the newer immigrants, the difference that they felt in their ideologies and beliefs were so significant that they claimed to feel like outsiders within their own ethnic community. To the older immigrants, the newer immigrants were different, not cooperative or supportive, disrespectful, arrogant and rude. On the other hand, the newer immigrants thought that the older immigrants lacked boundaries, were stuck with their old-fashioned ways and did not appreciate efficiency and development. However, because of the Confucius culture that forms the basis for Korean culture, the newer Koreans were reluctant to approach the older Koreans and express their desire for change and the older immigrants expected the new immigrants to obediently respect their elders. Thus, the women in this study felt that the concept of generation gap and the negativeness it brought to their community was a very salient challenge for them.

Lack of interaction with mainstream Canadian society

One theme that re-occurred among all of the women when asked to describe anything negative about attending a Korean church in Canada, was that they did not know many non-Koreans and did not have a lot of opportunities to get to know more about the Canadian culture. For example, Participant C reported:

If you hang around with only Korean people and just bind together you can't get away [from the group]. There's no opportunity. But it seems that almost all of us Korean people are like that. Korean people really roll up and bind together.

완전히 한국 사람들하고 어울려 이렇게 똥똥 뭉치면은 빠져 나가질 못해요. 기회가 없어요. 근데 거의 다 우리 한국 사람들이 그런 것 같아요. 똥똥똥똥 뭉쳐요 한국 사람들 끼리.

Likewise, even though Participant A had lived in Canada for over 6 years, she also explained how she was close to only Korean people she met in church. She said:

In my case, except for people I meet when I go to school, the only people I meet are Korean people. (From church?) Yes, it's people who come to church.

저 같은 케이스는 학교 다닐 때 외에는 만나는 사람은 한국 사람 밖에 없는 것 같아요. (그럼 한국 사람들 속에서도 거의 교회 사람들?) 예, 교회 오는 사람들이지.

Most of the interaction the women had with non-Korean Canadians took place while they did everyday tasks, such as shopping, going to school, seeing doctors etc. A lot of these interactions were not for socializing or pleasure, but forced upon them because they had no choice but to interact with non-Koreans because they lived in Canada. When asked whether she had a lot of interaction with the Canadian society outside of the church, Participant B said:

Is there a lot of interaction with the Canadian society?
Not really. (Laughter) Really there's not much. When you go shopping well, for example whatever type of shopping you do uh where there's not any Korean people uh I don't really know (of any interaction).

캐나다 주류 사회와 오가는게 많나요?
없어요 거의. (웃음). 없어요 별로. 쇼핑하고 그럴때는 그러때는 뭐 예를 들어서 뭐 어떠한 쇼핑이던간에 뭐 한국 사람들 없는데에 가서 뭐 그런건 잘 모르겠어요.

One of the reasons why most of the women did not seek friendship or relationships with non-Koreans was because of their lack of comfort in conversing in English. Even the everyday tasks such as shopping had been stressful for the women when they first immigrated because of the difficulty in communicating and the humiliation and fear they felt when they could not understand what the other person was saying. For example Participant B explained how it took her a while to get used to shopping in Canada:

It's like that when I buy clothes, and when I go grocery shopping, I don't think that it all requires a lot of talking. (Laughter). Because I can't understand um at first I was really thrown off and confused, but once I got the knack of it there wasn't anything too difficult or uncomfortable.

옷을 사도 그렇고 grocery shopping 갈때도 그렇고 다 뭐 크게 말이 필요 없는 것 같아요. (웃음) 못 들으니까 뭐 처음에는 좀 당황하고 그랬지만 요령이 생기니까 별로 크게 불편한건 모르겠어요.

When asked to explain why she thought there was not much interaction with the outside society, Participant G also mentioned how language difficulty seemed to be one of the key reasons. She said:

The way I see it, it's the people who can't speak English who come to Korean churches and just focus on Korean stuff so people like that don't get much interaction [with the Canadian society]... They get isolated. They don't understand or know the Canadian society and keep trying to live in the Korean society.

우리가 보면은 일단은 언어가 안돼는 사람들이 한국 교회에 오고 한국 끼어만 집중을 하다보니까 그 사람들과 교류를 잘 못하는 거지... 고립되어 사는거지. Canadian 사회를 모르고 한국 사회로 자꾸 살려고 하는거지.

Another reason for this lack of interaction mentioned by Participant G was that Korean people seemed to “try to live in the Korean society”. Living in a foreign country among strangers who all speak a different language, it is natural for immigrants to seek comfort among people from the same country, who are experiencing the same challenges that they are. Participant E explains:

You can say that it [Korean community] interferes [with interaction with mainstream Canadian society] if you call it interference, but actually it's more like Korean people feel that it's more comfortable on this side and don't think of going to the other side. If it interferes, than you can call it interference... It all depends on personality, but the church probably doesn't directly interfere. It doesn't interfere, but people try to live comfortably in the Korean community. That's what it is.

방해되는 거라면 방해고요, 방해가 방해는 아닌데 이쪽으로 한국 사람들이 더 편해져서 그쪽으로 갈 생각을 안 하는거죠. 방해라면 방해죠... 다 성격인데 교회가 방해 주지는 않을 거예요. 방해주지는 않지만 그게 자기가 그게 편해서 거기에 안주해 할려고 그러죠. 그거예요.

All of the women in this study mentioned the lack of connection with the mainstream Canadian society. Mostly they explained that this was because of language difficulties and cultural differences. The Korean church seemed to provide a space for the immigrants to meet with other immigrants and feel safe and accepted. However, such comfort seemed to have also hindered many immigrants' from mingling and mixing with non-Koreans and the Canadian culture. This theme recurred when women explained the negative aspects about being a part of the Korean church, thus emphasizing the fact that the women actually do desire to have more interaction with people outside of the church. So the comfort of being a part of a familiar community, and the relationships that they had developed with other Koreans not only helped the women adjust to new life, but also confined them within this safe and familiar zone, making it more difficult for them to embrace opportunities where they could get to know non-Korean people and different cultures.

Reinforcement of Gender Inequality

Even with the comfort of being in an environment surrounded by people of the same ethnicity, the women faced difficulties dealing with conflicting values within their own ethnic community. One of the conflicts between the women of different generations related to gender issues and expectations about the roles and behaviours of women. Both women who had immigrated decades ago and newly immigrated women were caught between the ideals of gender equality and fairness, and the traditional gender role that is part of their traditional culture and preserved within the Korean ethnic community. All of the women in this study reported involvement in traditional female activities, such as cooking, cleaning, teaching etc. Some of the women saw this as natural, whereas others were less accepting of this traditional division of labour. When asked about what they typically did when they worked for the church Participant F, a younger immigrant, said:

Well now I help in the kitchen when they make snacks for the kids and umm meals for the adults or when we eat donuts...

나는 인자 주방에 주방에서 애들 뭐야 찬거리 간식거리 만들때도 도와주고 어른들 뭐 밥 먹는다던가 그런 도너츠 먹는다던가 그럴때 준비하고...

Likewise, Participant D explained women's and men's role in the church. To her, this difference in women's and men's work was a natural extension of the traditional mother and father roles in the family. She reported:

Minimally for someone [woman] who works very hard, on a Sunday the service lasts about one hour and a half, and she puts in a minimum of an hour of (kitchen) work at church. If something sad happens amongst us church members, we go and give comfort, if someone has a baby we buy presents, if there's a wedding we prepare food, if there's a funeral we prepare food, it's like the women's group acts as the role of the mother in a household, in a family. So if it's your turn to do the kitchen work that month, than there's a lot of work to do [at church], if not there's not much to do. The men <pause> If we women prepare stuff like the food, the men normally do something like the church cleaning, like painting the church, and then if something happens at church, ah so um, they carry heavy stuff, or bring out the food trays, like when we have meals the men put out the food trays, or clean the floors the tough work. It's just like in a family. The stuff that a father does, it's just like that. And let's see, what else do they do... Like right now if someone passes away, then mostly outside work, um stuff like that, if there's a wedding at the church they'll work outside at the parking lot mostly organizing the parking, stuff like that...

적어도 열심히 하는 사람 같으면 주일날 같으면 한시간 한 예배를 들이고 교회 일 적어도 한 minimum 한시간 정도 하는 것 같아요. 우리들끼리 교우들 끼리 또 무슨 슬픈 일이 있으면 가서 위로해주고, 애기 낳으면 선물 사다 갖다 주고, 결혼식하면 우리가 음식물을 준비해가지고 가고 장례식 생기면 장례식 음식 해주고, 결혼식하면 우리가 음식물을 준비해가지고 가고 장례식 생기면 장례식 음식 해주고, 집에서 말하면, 가정에서 말하면 어머니의 역할을 여성교회에서 하죠. 그러니까 그게 자기 순위 그 달에 부엌일을 하는

달이면 일이 많고, 그렇지 않으면 일이 적어요. 그 분들은<잠시 멈춤>
우리가 주로 음식 같은걸 한다면 그 분들은 주로 교회 청소 같은거,
교회 페인트 같은거, 그 답에 또 교회 무슨 일이 있으면, 아 그러니까
뭐, 무거운 거 같은걸 든다던지, 판 같은거 놔주던지, 밥은 먹을때
개들은 판 같은거 놔둔다던지 바닥을 닦는다던지 힘든거, 가정과
똑같아요. 아버지가 하시는 일, 그거와 같은 거예요. 그리고 또 보자,
무슨 일을 하나... 지금 처럼 누가 상이 났다, 이러면 주로 바깥일, 뭐
그런 일, 그런 일을 하고 교회에서 이렇게 결혼식이 있다 그러면
바깥에서 차를 정리하고 parking lot 에서 주로 차 정리하고 그런거...

However, this acceptance was not the case for all of the women. In fact, while all of the women seemed to comply with the system, most of the women did complain about their kitchen roles. Participant G's description of her role in the church and her feelings clearly show her frustration:

When we make the food we divide into groups, you know? We must've made so much food... Really there are things that aren't even funny. Even though I'm a woman, think how hard it is for women. We have to work at least once a month when we're ordered to. We have to work in the kitchen, and because here it's divided into parts, we also have to make food and bring it to the church...

우리는 한번도 음식을 할때도 파트를 나눠서 하거든요? 엄청 많이 했을 거예요... 진짜 웃지 못할 그런 것도 있고 같은 여자지만 하는데 여자들도 얼마나 힘들어. 한달에 한번씩 그때는 일하라고 할때 일을 해야한다고. 부엌에 가서 일해야되고 여기는 대부분 파트로 하기 때문에 음식을 또 해야가하고...

Clearly many of the women were not happy with the division of labour and some put the blame on the male members of the church. Although as Participant D mentioned above, men were expected to do some of the cleaning and moving heavy items, this was not a systematic division of groups for the men, nor was there a pre-determined schedule for the work they were assigned each week, as was evident for the women's work. Moreover, as Participant G pointed out in her interview, many of the women even had to cook at home and bring food to the church for meals. Participant E also expressed her resentment at the 'natural' role that the women were assigned to at church, she reported:

I wonder why should only women work in the kitchen, I think that men should help with the dishes, too. But people think it's normal. Already younger people do it too, so now women ask the men to do things that require more strength. Women can do things that require strength, but it's divided naturally. Men's work, women's work. I think there's some division like that. Men can make sandwiches and place them out in the common room, but it's always the women who do that. It's really irritating to me.

왜 여자들만 부엌에서 일해야되고 남자들도 와서 설겅이도 하고 같이 해야되지 않나 싶어요. 근데 의례것들 그런줄 알아요. 벌써 젊은 사람들이 또 그래서 여자들이 또 힘 쓰는 것을 다 남자들 시키고 그것도 다 그거 해라 그럴 수 있기는 한데, 여자들도 물론 힘 쓰는 일을 할수도 있죠, 그게 자연스럽게 딱 나뉘지더라고요. 딱 남자 일, 여자 일. 그런게 있는 것 같아요. 남자들이 샌드위치 만들어서 친교실에서 대접 할수도 있는 건데 항상 여자들이 하는 걸로 되어 있어요. 늘 그게 좀 답답해요 저는.

Likewise, Participant E also expressed her frustration on the limited role of women in the church. She reported:

... and inside the church, it could've been the Korean women who do all the work better within the church and their role could have gotten bigger. But here where our role is the biggest [within the kitchen], you know how we used to have the patriarchal system long ago? It's preserved exactly like that inside the church. Always the people working inside the kitchen are deaconesses, but you know that's not right, isn't everyone supposed to do this? Right? And well, am I allowed to say this, I think that the pastor can wipe the counters or take out the trash. But he just doesn't. But you can't really say anything. And shouldn't the elders also do [work]? Normally within a church, there isn't a difference between men and women? Right? There shouldn't be a hierarchy? Anybody should do it, right? Well it isn't, and if it's because they're all busy with their own roles or something I don't know, but anyways it's more Korean here. That's what I really don't like.

... 그리고 교회 안에서가요 오히려 한국이 여성분들이 교회 안에서 모든일을 더 잘하고 더 역할이 커졌을수도 있어요. 근데 여기서는 역할이 크게 우리 옛날 가부장적인 제도 있죠? 그게

교회 안에 그대로 있는 것 같아요. 무조건 부엌에서 일하는 사람들은 여자 집사님들이 일하는 거고요 그게 아니잖아요 다 해야되는거 아니에요? 그죠? 그리고 이런 얘기해도 되나, 나는 내 생각에 목사님도 쓰레기도 버틸수도 있고 식탁도 닦을 수 있다고 봐요. 그냥 안 하셔요. 그런데 뭐라고 할 수는 없죠. 장로님들도 해야되죠? 교회를 곳은 특히 남녀 그런게 없잖아요? 그죠? 위 아래가 없는 거잖아요? 누구라도 할 수 있는 거죠? 그게 아니면 본인들의 역할이 있어서 바빠서 그런지는 모르겠지만 하여튼 그게 오히려 더 한국적이에요. 그게 오히려 더 나는 그게 마음에 안 들더라고요.

While the women in the church were assigned to tasks related to cooking and cleaning, men were given roles that involved leadership and decision making. Participant A explains:

Well the men are, first of all the pastor and all of the elders are men. Um, the thing is the church here is worse and I heard that churches in Korea aren't so bad. Really, here all that women can do is well, making food. And even when there are church events, it's well, I guess [the women] got used to it, but it's also a problem that the women don't protest. Well first of all the problem is that it seems like it's all lead by the men, and now women get used to it without protesting.

남자들이 아무래도 일단 목사님, 장로님들이 다 남자고요, 어, 여기 교회가 더하는게 한국에 있는 교회는 그나마 덜한데요. 정말 여기는 여자들이 할 수 있는 건 뭐, 밥 해주는 것 밖에 없고, 교회 무슨 활동을 해도, 그니깐은, 근데 또 그게, 또 익숙해진건지 다들 여자들도 거기에 항의를 하니 않는 것도 문제긴 하죠. 근데 일단 주동을 그렇게 해 가는건 주로 남자들인 것 같고 거기에 인제 아무런 반항을 하지 않고 익숙해져 가는 그런 여자들도 문제가 있는 거겠죠.

As stated here, generally the men were assigned leadership roles and made most of the decisions. Moreover, concerning the lower status of women in the Korean church, Participant D stated:

First if you look at Western churches, you'll see that there's lots of female elders. Usually Presbyterian churches determine the number of elders by the number of members of the church. If there's 100

member's then they are told to pick 15 elders, elders are people who work for the church and uh most of the important decisions are made by them. Usually half of the elders are men, and when there is stuff to discuss the women's voices get reflected in the decisions. Isn't the value of women that they see things differently than men?... But you know this Korean church, especially this Presbyterian church doesn't pick any female elders. There are rarely any female elders. Rarely.

뭐가 있냐면 첫째 이 서양 교회에서 보면은 여자들도 장로가 굉장히 많아요. 여자들도. 만약에 장로가 한 교회에 보면은 교인 숫자에 따라서 장로 숫자가 정해져요. 교인이 100 명이다 그러면 15 명에 한명은 장로를 뽑아라, 장로라는 사람들이 하는 일이 교회 전반적인 그것에 대한 그, 어, 의견이 가장 중요한 일이 거기서 나오거든요. 남자 장로는 한 반 정도 있어 이렇게 같이 의논할때 여성의 voice 가 많이 반영이 되죠. 여성의 가치는 전반적인 일을 보는 눈이 남자들하고 조금 다른 일들이잖아요?... 그런데 이 한국 교회 특히나 장로 교회를 보면은, 여장로를 거의 안 뽑거든요? 여장로가 거의 없어요. 거의.

Some women were in fact, assigned leadership positions within the church, such as the position of a deaconess, which is one level below elders. For example, Participant D explained that although deaconesses are picked to lead the various groups of women, they are not included in important meetings and thus not a part of the initial decision-making group. She said:

... We do pick deaconesses, but the work the male elders and deaconesses do are totally different. Deaconesses usually take overall care of kitchen stuff, the Deacons don't really take care of that kind of stuff but they do sort of like, a little bit of, uh what do you call it. <pause> I guess you can say that they [the Deacons] lead, so when they lead, if there was a female elder or if they let a deaconess come to the meetings, it could be different in that we could get ideas from women on what we would like done in the church for next year ... If they [women's opinions and suggestions] are included from the beginning, it could make things so much more easier. Yes, it's sort of, it would be nice if it could be done from the beginning, that's when I sometimes feel that it's a little unfair. Even now younger people who teach [at the bible school], even the one's who are in their twenties or early thirties, even though they have something to say, they don't say anything. The way I see it, I

feel that if the other Deaconess had something to say to me, it could be something I did wrong. But they never say anything. You have to be obedient to church leaders. That is following the bible. We learn stuff like this a lot, you know?

그러다 보니까 여자 권사는 뽑기는 뽑는데, 여자 권사가 하는 일하고 남자 장로가 하는 일하고 완전히 달라요. 여자 권사가 하는 일을 주로 보면은 부엌일 전체에 대한 것을 그 집사들이 하는 일을 관리 한다는 것 보다 조금 이렇게, 고 이렇게, 조금 뭐랍니까, 이렇게 인도한다고 그럴까, 리드하는데 있어서 할때 그게 만약에 여자 장로회가 있다던지 여자 권사를 거기에다가 넣어준다던지 이러면 여성들이 교회 내에서 우리 교회에서 내년에 무슨 일을 어떻게 했으면 조핵싸다 하는 그런 아이디어가 여성들한테서 나오는게 조금 다를 수도 잇잖아요. 그게 이제 처음부터 아직 그게 반영이 됐다면 일이 더 쉬울수도 잇잖아요. 예, 그게 좀, 처음부터 계획을 짤 때 그렇게 나오면 좋을텐데, 그게 조금 제 생각에는 조금 unfair 하다 이런 감정을 종종 느껴요. 지금도 젊은 사람 그렇게 교사를 하다보면 또 지금 20 대, 30 대 초 사람들도 보면은 하고 싶은 말이 분명히 있는데도 안해요. 제가 봤을 때는 제가 하는 행동에서도 저 집사님이 저한테 하고 싶은 말이 분명히 있을텐데, 제가 잘못된 것이 있을수도 잇잖아요. 근데 말 안해요. 교회 리더에 대해서 무조건 순종해라. 그게 성경적이다. 이런걸 많이 배우거든요?

Compared to other conflicts that existed among the women, the conflict over gender issues was less polarized. This was because the women in this study all had some feelings of discontent about the unfairness and recognized the inequality of men and women within the church. Participant A's statement shows how she recognizes the unfairness of the current situation within the church but can not seem to openly oppose to the norm within the community. She said:

The church is more conservative. I started to become religious when I started to attend a Christian Womens' University, and the most difficult thing [at the Korean ethnic church] was the conservative view of women. We didn't learn this at University. Even then we created a stir with feminism and stuff, so it was more equal. We learned about ways to get the [respect] that we couldn't receive, and

to crush the discrimination we suffered from men. But within the church here, it just didn't work. The women are consorts that help men and uh, even now it's like that in the church. So if I have an important issue to report, I can't say anything at will. Even if I have a really better idea, or an innovative solution, I can't say anything.

교회는 더 보수적이죠. 저는 신앙을 대학교, 학교 입학하면서 부터 그때부터 다니기 시작했는데, 가장 힘들었던게 보수적인 여성관. 우리 학교에서는 그렇게 안 배우잖아요. 그때만 해도 여성학이니 뭐니 sensation 을 일으키고 그래서 동등하고 어떡하면 그 동안 못 받았던, 남자들에 의해서 어떤 피해를 입었었던, 그런 것들을 어떻게 하면 꼭 시키고, 이런 것들을 그렇게 교육을 꼭 받아왔는데, 교회 내에서는 그게 안 통하는 거죠. 여자는 남자를 돕는 베필이고, 아, 그건 교회에서 지금도 그래요. 그러니까 내가 무슨 중요한 issue 를 얘기할 때 내 입장을 함부로 말할 못해요. 내가 훨씬 좋은 생각을 갖고 있고, 뭐 진보적인 해결책을 알고 있다 하더라도 함부로 말할 못해요.

It was mentioned by Participant A that when she was in Korea, she was taught to respect women's rights and fought for equality. Interestingly, she points out that the Korean church in Canada, which might be expected to have been influenced by the western culture, is actually more conservative than churches in South Korea. She explained why she thought women had more power in churches in Korea. She recalled:

[Churches in Korea] are a little different. It's because well first of all, there are lots of women. There are lots of women here too, but like there's women power in Korea. In Korean churches the women do a lot of work. The men come late from work, especially in Korea. Most of them barely make it to church on Sunday. Here there's lots of couples [that come to church], but in Korea there's lots of women who go alone, you know? Um, stuff like volunteer work and even group meetings are usually done mostly by women. Here everybody does it together, so in churches in Korea, a lot more women participate more actively, and even the culture, the women even the deaconesses have a lot of power, as much as the elders, so... I don't know about other churches, but maybe because the church I went to [in Korea] had an innovative pastor, it was like that. So you know it wasn't ever like women always sitting primly next to the men, right? So it was more women focused, and the men just sort of followed

along. It could've been because of amount of time available or other different reasons, but it was like that. But here it's totally different.

좀 달라요. 왜냐하면 일단 교회에 여자가 많잖아요. 여기도 여자가 많기는 하지만 그 한국에 아줌마 파워가 있는 것 처럼 한국 교회 내에서도 여자들이 많은 일들을 해요. 오히려 남자들이 직장 생활을 하고 늦게 오잖아요. 한국은 특히. 교회도 주말날에 겨우 나오는 사람들이 더 많고, 여기는 같이 다니는게 많지만 한국은 여자들이 혼자 다니는 경우가 많잖아요. 뭐, 사회 봉사하는 일이나 이런 것들이 하다 못해 구역 모임 같은 것들이 여자들이 거의 하잖아요. 여기는 다 같이 하지만. 그렇다 보니까 거기 한국에 있는 교회들은 훨씬 뭐 여자들이 적극적으로 참여를 하고, 또 그런 문화를, 여자들은 뭐 권사님들도 파워가 있고, 장로님도 못지 않게, 그래서... 다른 교회는 모르겠지만 제가 있었던 교회는 진보적인 목사님이 계셔서 그랬을지 모르지만 그랬어요. 그래서 여자들이 항상 남자들 옆에 다소곳이 앉아서 있는 그런 분위기는 절대 아니었거든요? 그러니깐은 여자가 오히려 위주였고 남자들이 진짜 따라오는 듯한, 시간적으로나 여러가지 이유가 있겠지만 그랬던 것 같아요. 근데 여긴 아니 전혀 달라요.

When questioned about why the church here in Canada was unfair to women, the women had different explanations and theories for the current situation. Some of the women felt that the system was a result of the Korean men's reluctance to let go of the traditional patriarchal culture and their refusal to accept the newer egalitarian gender ideology. Participant C claimed:

Well, Korean men, except for the men who have quite a bit of faith, I feel that men who don't have faith are narrow-minded. I really wish that Korean men would be more liberal. I wish that men here in Canada, not even all the men in Korea but the men who attend my church, would open their minds up a bit. There's a bit [of sexual discrimination]. I think that the habit from Korea, that old-fashioned habit of men, like their mighty authority thing, is still there. [Do you think it's reinforced by the church community?] Yes, I feel stuff like that. Well, it's not like they try hard to show it that directly, but I feel it a lot. I think men need to be a bit more liberal.

좀 한국 남자들이 좀 믿음이 있는 사람들을 빼고, 없는 사람들은
옹졸하다고 느껴요. 참 한국 남자들이 좀 개방했으면 좋겠어요. 우리
캐나다에 한국에 있는 사람들을 빼 놓고 우리 교회에 있는
남자들만이라도 캐나다에 왔으면 mind 를 좀 open 했으면 좋겠어요.
성차별 그런것도 있죠. 있고, 한국에서 그 버릇, 그런게, 한국의 그
고지식한 버릇들, 남자들 위세 같은거, 남자들 아직도 있는 것 같아요.
[교회 내에서 reinforce 하게 되는건가요?] 네, 느끼게 되는 거죠. 뭐,
직접적으로 뭐, 이렇게 뭐, 자리네들이 보일려고 애를 쓰는게 아니라,
이렇게 제가 많이 느껴요. 좀 남자들이 좀 개방 좀 해야겠다.

Participant G even suggested that the system reflected the influence that the pastor had on the community and the pastor's views on women. She said:

...Still for Korean people women are lower [in status], the Korean church itself is like that. And even the pastors individually are like that. If the pastor has the idea that men are superior to women, then that becomes the attitude of the whole church. There was one pastor who was really devoted to his wife. But some people criticized that the pastor favoured women - and they didn't like that.

한국 사람은 아직도 여자가 낮아지고, 한국 교회 자체가. 그것도 목사님들이 목사님 각 개인 마다, 어떤 목사님이 남존여비를 갖고 있다, 그럼 그게 교회 전체적인 태도에요... 어떤 목사님은 와이프를 막 위해주시고, 그런데 또 일부에서 목사님은 꼭 여자한테 잘한다고, 그것도 남들이 싫어해요.

However, as Participant G mentions at the end of her statement, it was more than just the pastor who had influence on reinforcing traditional gender ideological views. She added:

So you can't say that it's equal yet. The whole church itself. It's because the older people are involved. Already for younger people like us the generation is different... But since we have the older seniors in the community, they're like our parents you know? Stuff like that Korean people must respect, and we must listen to our seniors, and uh, the church itself isn't people of the same age group, you know? So because we have to live with seniors we have to listen to them and respect them. So it's not totally equal.

그러니까 아직까지 동등하다고 할 순 없죠. 한국 교회 자체가. 외냐면 어른들이 관여를 하니까. 우리 같이 젊은 사람들의 세대만 해도 벌써 이게 generation 이 다르단 말이에요. 근데 윗세대 노인들이 같이 또 다니니까 어쨌든 우리에게는 장인이잖아? 그런것도 있고 어른들을 한국 사람들은 존중을 해줘야하고 어른들의 말을 들어야하고, 어, 인제 또 교회라는 자체가 같은 나이 그룹이 아니거든요? 그러니까 어른들하고 같이 생활을 해야하니까 어른들의 말을 들어야되고 장인들을 지키고 그러니까 완전히 평등하다고 할 수 없어요.

It was evident, therefore, that not only did some of the women think that Korean men were reluctant to change, but also that they [the women] did not feel entitled to go against the traditional views and values of elders from older generations. Participant E's statement also shows how eventually, with time, she had come to accept the unfairness of this situation. She said:

Well according to their personalities, some [newcomers] will say something because they don't like the situation, or maybe it could be natural for them since they came from Korea. [When I first came to Canada] we tried to do something new and innovative when a group of Koreans left the older Korean church and made a newer Korean church, but it didn't [work the way I thought it would]... I wished for the new church to be younger and lively like the new churches in Korea, the progressive churches in Korea. But it didn't work as well as I thought it would. Slowly I started to accept things as I aged. Especially in this [urban/suburban South-west Ontario] region, I am starting to understand why the older people are like that. It's a problem. I shouldn't [accept things the way they are]. But it seems like I'm not strong enough and there's a limit to what I can do. Even in Toronto I heard that there are many churches that aren't like this. I guess it's because there's lots of people that when they want to do something they can do it. But it's really onerous.

(새로 오신 분들은) 그 성격에 따라서 그게 싫어서 말하는 사람들도 있을꺼고 본인 자신이 원래 한국에서부터 그게 자연스러울 수도 있는 거고, 그래요. 저희는 좀 이렇게 새롭게 좀 진보적인 거라고 그렇게 할려고 했었는데 또 그게 잘 안돼더라고 주님의 교회로 나오면서... 한국의 새로운 좀 교회는 항상 발전되는 좀 교회들 처럼 좀 젊고 생동감이 있는 교회였으면 하는데, 생각보다 그게 안되는 것 같아요.

그게 점점 인정하는게 나이 들면서 이 지역에 특성상 그니까 옛날 사람들이 그 그러한 거를 조금씩 이해도 돼요. 문제가 있죠. 그러면 안되는데. 힘 딸리는것 같기도 하고 또 한계가 있는 것 같아요. 토론토만 해도 안 그런 교회가 또 많다고 하더라고요. 일단 사람 수가 많으니까 뭘 일을 해볼라 그래도 확실하게 할수가 있나봐요. 그런데 힘든 것 같아요.

All of the women in this study were eager to express their thoughts and feelings when asked if there were any gender issues which affected their lives and the role that the church played in this regard. Although the intensity of their feelings differed, all of the women did agree that gender discrimination existed within the church community, and that it reinforced traditional gender ideology. The work that the women were assigned to usually consisted of chores that are seen as traditional women's work. Their role within the church reflected an extension of the traditional mother and father roles in the family, limiting them to secondary roles compared to the leadership roles assigned to the men. Even though the women did not seem to disobey the tasks assigned to them or the roles that were placed upon them, they did express their frustration and displeasure. All of the women felt some degree of dissatisfaction with this culture within the community and how it affected their role and identity as a woman in Canada. It is interesting to note that there were some differences between women of the younger generation and women of the older generation. Some of the younger women were more aware of the discrimination because the immigrant community was more discriminatory towards women than the church communities in South Korea. Also, while both younger and older women held the Korean men primarily accountable for the discrimination, because of the men's tendency to hold on to the traditional patriarchal culture, the younger women also felt that some of the blame could be directed towards the older women as well. The older women were seen to embrace traditional gender values too, and the younger women did not feel that they were able to openly dispute the traditions and values of people from older generations.

4.2.3 Adjustment to New Life through the Korean Church Community

Despite all the difficulties discussed above, being a part of the ethnic church gave all of the participants a feeling of belonging to a community. Encompassing both the positive and negative aspects of attending church, two themes were evident in explaining the nature of the ethnic church as

a community that all of the participants felt some resentment towards, yet recognized the help it provided in terms of adjusting to a new life in a new country by redeveloping the Korean community within Canada. These themes included the community as an extension of family, and adjustment to a new life.

Extension of Family: The Korean Ethnic Community

One of the most difficult things for immigrants when they come to a new country is the feeling of being different and alone. All of the participants in this study shared this feeling of loneliness and the theme of being different and feeling different from Canadians recurred several times. For example, Participant A said:

I did go to a Canadian church, but because there was such a feeling of difference, well even though they did treat us warmly, still they couldn't speak Korean and I couldn't speak English in a friendly style like they could, so I was lonely and I decided to go to a Korean church.

Canadian 교회를 나가긴 나갔었는데 이질감이 너무 나니까
개네들이야 뭐 따뜻하게 해주긴 하지만 뭐 한국말도 못하는데에다가
영어도 개네들처럼 friendly 하게 되는 스타일도 아니고 그러니까 그런
입장도 아니었고 외로워 하니까 그때 결심을 하고 한국 교회를 나가기
시작한거예요.

Not only did Participant A have difficulty with the language barrier, but she claimed that she felt different from Canadians and lonely. Participant E also talks about loneliness that she thought a lot of Korean immigrants felt when they first came to Canada. She said:

There are also people who come [to church] because they are homesick. When I first came, that's what I heard. Even though they don't have faith, they come to church for their children to meet other Korean children at church. In my case I went [to church] because I had faith, but most of them, well I don't know very well, some of them don't have faith and so they're very lonely. There are people who are really lonely.

그리워서 나오는 사람들도 있어요. 내가 왔을 때 그러더라고요.
자기는 믿음은 없지만 우리 애들이 더군다나 한국 애들을 그나마 교회
가서 만나기 위해서 믿음이 없지만 오는 사람들도 있어요... 나 같은
경우는 다녔기 때문에 그렇게 찾아간거고 대부분 그래서 잘 모르는데
어떤 분들은 그걸 못해서 외로운 사람들도 있어요. 많이 외로워하는
사람들도 있어요.

Participant G explained this loneliness as a feeling of being an outsider. She said:

And still there's this thing about being a minority or a majority. So we are outsiders, right? So new immigrants come to the Korean church not to be an outsider, right?... No matter how they try to trick people, Korean people are Korean. They're Korean people who eat kimchi, right? So that's probably why they come and attend (Korean church).

아직까지도 이 minority 라던지, majority 라고 하더라고요, 주변인 역할을 하잖아요. Outsider 라고? 그러니까 outsider 가 되지 않기 위해서 한국 교회를 온단 말이에요?... 한국 사람들이니까 우리가 아무리 속여도 한국 사람이거든? 김치 먹고 한국 사람이거든? 그러니까 그런거를 생각했기 때문에 오는거라고 할 수 있어요.

Here although both Participant E and G were not talking about their own experiences with loneliness, they both hinted that it was very common for Korean immigrants to seek the Korean ethnic church because they were lonely. By going to a Korean church, the immigrants were given the opportunity to meet with like-minded people. This is also mentioned by Participant F. She said:

Well it was nice when I went [to church]. So then I thought that I should start attending [regularly]. And now I get to know more people...

가서 가니깐은 좋더라고. 그때 인자 다니긴 다녀야겠다 생각이 들더라고. 아무래도 인자 아는 사람들이 많아지고...

Likewise, it was also a benefit for Participant B because she was able to meet people and socialize. She said:

I like it because we meet with people there, and I also like the service, I like eating food while meeting with the people. I like it all. I think we gain both [spiritual and social] things.

둘 다 느껴요. 거기서 친교도 하니까 좋고, 예배 봐서도 좋고, 친교 하면서 밥도 같이 먹고 그것도 좋고, 다 좋다고, 두가지 얻는다고 생각해요. 그니까 교제 쪽을 더 많이 하는 것 같고, 여기, 그렇게 많은거 같아요. 친교가 더 많고 주로 다니는 사람들 얘기로는 그런거 같아요.

As it is with anybody moving to a new area, it is a challenge to become familiar with the environment and people. The Korean church was a physical area available for newcomers to go and meet with people in the community. Participant A explained how it helped her. She said:

Here in the Korean community, if you don't go [to church] and meet with the Korean people and really when you come here [to Canada], you can't meet Korean people. And you really don't know anybody. So we go to church and I know some [people], but I don't know that much compared to the people who work at convenience stores, they know a lot about each other... You get to know about what's going on and all that. So I guess this can be a benefit. And socializing is a reason [to attend], too...

그답에 이제 뭐 그런거죠. 한인 사회 이 안에 있는 한인 사람들하고 좀 만나서 뭐 정말 거기라도 안 나가면은 진짜 이렇게 나와서 살다보면 한국 사람 만나지도 못하고 진짜 잘 몰라요. 근데 또 교회 나가서 저도 그나마 저희는 잘 모르고 convenience 하는 사람들은 참 잘 알아요 서로에 대해서. 돌아가는 소식이랄까 그런것들이. 그런것도 좀 있겠조 얻는 것. 사교적인 이유도 있고...

Not only did the participants have to face the loneliness of moving to a new area when they first immigrated to Canada, but language difficulties isolated the immigrants even more from getting to know the people in the neighborhood and community. This is reflected in Participant F's statement.

Like I said before it's kind of uncomfortable because I can't communicate well... Like finding someone [Korean] to fix things for

you. You can say that this is the charm of living together [as a community] than alone? Right?... First we introduce the new person to everyone, and when we get introduced we usually ask whether there's anything uncomfortable or anything needed...

아까 내가 말한것 처럼 이렇게 여기는 말이 안돼다 보니까 좀 불편하잖아요... 만물상이 좀 고치는 그런 것... 혼자 사는 것 보다는 더불어 사는게 그런 묘미겠죠? 아무래도? 일단은 처음 오시는 분한테는 다 인사를 시키니까, 인사를 시키면은 그러면서 인자 서로 사람을 먼저 묻지...

By meeting with other people who either are or were in the same situation, new immigrants were able to get introduced to one another. They gave and received help from fellow immigrants and they were able to relieve their loneliness through socializing. To the Korea immigrants, the Korean ethnic church was a safe haven to go to for a variety of reasons. Thus, a community was formed consisting of not just Christian Koreans, but non-Christians as well who needed the support and emotional protection of other Korean immigrants. Participant F explained:

Anyways, because they make a community for us, the Pastor does that, and the women's group, or the elders try to make lots of meetings. So we get together and talk and people we don't know participate, and so in the end it becomes one community. So I think it's nice that in this lonely life in a new country, they give us an opportunity to get together and protect each other more.

아무래도 공동체를 만들어주니까 그러니까 목사님도 그렇고 여성교든, 장로회든 그런 무슨 모임을 만들어줄려고 노력하고 그래요. 그러면 서로 부딪기면서 이야기 하고 또 모르는 사람들은 참석하고 그러다 보면은 하나의 공동체가 되는거니까 외로운 이국 생활에서 조금 더 보호해서 부딪길수 있는 기회를 만들어주니까 그게 좋지 않나, 그래서...

Not only did the church community provide a network of Koreans for emotional and informational support, it provided an environment familiar to the immigrants. Participant E mentioned the importance of cultural familiarity. She said:

But because we are an immigrant church, wherever we go, for us Korean people it is good to go to church for emotional or cultural reasons, or everything including getting help in their eating lifestyles, or getting comforted. And for real it's good if people come here to get information, they're really welcome.

그렇지만 우리가 특히나 이민 교회이기 때문에 우리가 어디를 가더라도 우리 민족이 우리가 정신적으로 아니면 문화적으로 식생활에 도움이나 모든 어떤 면에서라도 우리가 정서적으로 위로를 받거나 받길 위해서라도 교회를 오는게 좋고요, 실제로 필요한 information 을 받기 위해서 오시는 분들을 그건 참 환영하고 너무 좋은거예요.

Likewise, Participant F also said:

Isn't it in a Korean church where you can still get some contact with the Korean culture?

한국의 문화를 그래도 좀 접할 수 있는 곳이 한인 교회이지 않나?

Overall, the Korean church provided the basis for forming the Korean immigrant community in Canada. For example, Participant E said:

It's the whole Korean community because inside you can get information, or you can meet people, everything is taken care of within the community... It's true that the Korean church's role is very big in the Korean immigrant community. You can say that the Korean church is the Korean community...

그 안에서 정보라던가 사람을 사귀다던가 모든것이 그 안에서 해결이 되니까 그게 한인 사회더라고요... 한인 교회의 역할이 굉장히 큰거라는 것은 사실이에요. 이민 사회에. 교회가 곧 이민사회라고 보면 되는건데...

The comfort of being within a familiar culture and meeting with people who shared the same culture and experiences gave the immigrants a feeling of intimacy with one another.

Participant B said:

Well, I guess um, being the same um, Korean brings a feeling of intimacy and being a church I think it's kind of different. Like no matter how well I know English, there's a lot of features [about church] that are different, different culture and the service is slightly different. So for many reasons I think I'll still go to a Korean church.. I just like meeting Korean people.

글쎄, 그거 뭐 같은 뭐 한국 사람이라는 그 친근감도 있고 또 교회의 특성상 좀 다를 것 같아요. 그게 아무리 영어를 잘 해도 뭐 하여튼 여러가지 특성상 다른 문화도 다르고 좀 설교나 이런것도 좀 다를 수도 있고 그래서 여러가지로 그냥 한글 교회를 나갈 것 같아요...그냥 한국 사람들 만나게 좋은 것 같아요.

Such feelings of intimacy within the community developed into friendships of trust not unlike that of siblings within a family. Participant C said:

I gained [from attending church] that as expected, I found out that neighbours or fellow church members are better than brothers and sisters. Really when we came to Canada, it's different nowadays because there's so many people who come now, but back then our [Korean community] neighbours were like our siblings.

역시 이웃 사촌이 친 형제보다 낫다는 것을 알았죠. 정말 캐나다 오면은 역시 지금은 좀 다르죠 지금은 많이 오니까 그때만 해도 이웃 사촌이 내 형제라고.

Thus, the Korean ethnic church in Canada acted as the center of the Korean immigrant community. This was the place that Koreans were able to turn to for information, comfort and company. The community not only acted as a formal group for the benefit of the immigrants, but the immigrants developed intimate, caring relationships within the community. The role in each other's lives did not end at friendship, but acted as an extended family. Taking care of each other in need and for good or for bad, the immigrants within the community were there for each other. For many immigrants this community had provided a substitute for family and friends that they left behind when they immigrated to Canada.

Helping To Adjust To The New Life

As it is with close family and friends, the people within the church community were not only available for exchange of information and emotional support, many of the participants were given or gave help in adjusting to their new life in Canada. Even though there was help available through local YMCA's and multicultural centres, the participants found it difficult to seek help or advice from these sources because of language barriers. For example, Participant G talked about how newcomers come to church because of language difficulties. She said:

So first of all, they come [to church] because it's beneficial to them and because they need to. They get help. And the church is nice to them, you know?... And then some people seek Korean churches because of their [lack of] English [communication skills].

그러니까 첫째는 자기가 필요해서 자기가 유리해서 오는거야. 거기서 도움 받거든. 교회는 친절하게 잘해주고? ... 그 다음에 또 다른 사람들을 보면은 영어 때문에 한국 교회를 찾죠.

However, not only did the newcomers seek Korean churches because they had difficulty in English, but they also found that church members were more willing to put in time and effort to help the newcomers adjust to their new life. For example, Participant F said:

Because we can't communicate [in English] well, if it's urgent we ask Koreans first, even if you're fluent in English the language itself is so different it would be difficult [for Canadians for help], and you'll get to know more about immigration once you live here for a while, but they [Canadians] won't answer your questions if they're [the questions] are not in their area.

아무래도 언어 자체가 틀리니까 영어가 뭐 웅통하게 잘한다 하더라도 그건 힘들지 않을까, 그리고 이게 immigration 같은 데가 살면 아시겠지만 이게 딱 지꺼 아니면 답을 안해줘.

In this statement, Participant F not only mentioned problems because of language difficulties, but also that help outside of the Korean ethnic community was not as useful because the service provided was too superficial. Fellow Korean immigrants on the other hand, tended to go out of their

way to help one another just like they would for family members and friends. This level of support was not available through public services.

Adjusting to a new culture and a new environment involves many difficulties that are taken for granted by Canadians. Complicated issues dealing with registration and paperwork are not the only areas where help is needed, but simple everyday tasks also require guidance. For example, Participant D described the various kinds of help that she had given to other newcomers to help them adjust to their new life more easily. About shopping she said:

Sometimes when they come, I take someone shopping all day, like I mean grocery shopping and I tell them what is good here, and this place has good meat, and this place has good vegetables and so I give them a tour the whole day.

어떤때는 오면은 인자 사람 하루 데리고 쇼핑을 그러니까은
grocery shopping 데리고 다니면 여기는 이게 좋고 여기는 고기가
이 집이 좋고 이 집은 채소가 좋고 인자 하루를 다 투어를 해줘요.

For many new immigrants, not only is finding a decent grocery store a challenge, but also the whole experience of choosing the right types of meat and vegetables, reading the labels and going through the check-out line is a challenge. Taking the time and effort to guide newcomers through simple everyday essential tasks such as grocery shopping may seem trivial, but is extremely helpful for new immigrants in adjusting to the new environment. However, such services are not easy to obtain through public services. Participant D also described specific help that she or other members of the church usually gave to newcomers. She reported:

When a new immigrant comes, whether that person is Christian or not, or a student, they have something that they need. First, they need a place to stay, people with children need to find a school, then they have to buy a car, and so on. Then someone like me will um, help them apply for a social insurance number, then help them find a doctor, or go with them to a doctor's appointment, yes, go with them to school interviews, let them know which school in good... And about shopping, if it's a student then they won't need new furniture, right? Then we find used furniture within the church, see if anyone has something they don't use and gather up the items and give them to students, provide anything that they need, and if they need help when they move we help them, and then if they are sick we visit to see if they're getting better...

새로 이민자가 딱 들어오면은, 믿었던 자든 안 믿었던 자든
학생이든지 이 일단 필요성이 있잖아요. 첫째, 살아야될 장소가
필요하고, 아이들을 가지고 있는 사람들은 학교에 보내야하고, 그답에
차도 사야되고, 이렇잖아요. 그러면 저 같은 사람은 인자 뭐 social
insurance 신청한다던지, 그 다음에 의사 찾아준다던지, 안 그러면
doctor's appointment 그럴때 따라가준다던지, 예, 학교 인터뷰에
따라가준다던지, 어느 학교가 좋다던지... 쇼핑에 대해서, 학생 같으면
그렇게 새로운 furniture 가 필요 없잖아요, 교회 내에서 헌거, 안
쓰는거 남은 사람 누가 될 있다는거 찾아내가지고 찾아서 준다던지
그래요, 헌것 같은거 안 쓰는거 있으면 그걸 모아가지고 유학생들이
필요한거 있으면 provide 해준다던지, 뭐, 유학생들이 이사갈때 짐을
실어다준다던지, 그 다음에 또 어떻게 또 아프다 그러면 또 찾아가
준다던지...

Generally, members of the church acted as guides, translators and emotional supporters throughout the whole process that immigrants go through in settling into the new environment and society. Church members not only provided information about settling into Canada, but they also took the time to walk the newcomers through the simple processes of doctor's visits, applying for social insurance numbers and enrolling themselves or their children in school. These tasks would have been very challenging for the immigrants to do all this on their own and also very time consuming. Whether newcomers appreciated the amount of help and effort the church members put into assisting the adjustment process, the participants of this study were quick to acknowledge that this type of service was available and was being given at all times willingly.

4.3 Summary

The core theme derived from this exploratory study was that although there may be challenges related to conflicts between generations, gender discrimination and confinement within the community, the overall benefits of attending a Korean church in Canada outweigh the negative challenges. Three main themes were developed through the analysis, as well as an understanding of how these three themes related to one another and to the core theme.

The first main theme explored the type of benefits the women gained from attending a Korean ethnic church as an immigrant in Canada. All of the participants of this study discussed feeling comforted both emotionally and spiritually by attending church. For example, Participant A found that through her faith she was able to feel comforted and guided during her loneliness. Other participants contributed the feeling of comfort and worthiness to opportunities given through church activities to help others. Participant D felt that attending church made her feel good because of what she could contribute to other members. Non-spiritual benefits included exchange of information and reinforcement of the participant's ethnic identity and culture. Through socializing within the church, the women were able to exchange information about life in Canada. Topics like the different types of apples, shampoos, schools and car repair were mentioned by some of the women as information that they found useful and shared with one another. Living in a new society, with a new language and different people, the women felt comforted and safer being surrounded by other Korean immigrants who were experiencing a similar situation. This encouraged the women to embrace their heritage and culture, further reinforcing the importance of their ethnic identity. Some of the participants also felt that the ethnic church was an ideal place for their children to learn more about their Korean identity and culture.

The second main theme was about the conflicts and difficulties that the women felt while attending a Korean ethnic church. First of all, there were tensions that existed between people with traditional values and people with newer values.. The participants of the older generation group, or the immigrants who have lived in Canada the longest, were unhappy about the attitude of the younger generation immigrants. They felt that the younger immigrants were ungrateful for the older members' support, that they were selfish, and that they lacked respect for the older members. On the other hand, the participants of the younger generation group, immigrants who have lived in Canada for five years or less, thought that the older members used their status and power to demand respect and obedience. To the younger participants, the older members were old fashioned in their beliefs and their work ethic was lacking. Thus, a generation gap existed between the older and younger generations causing a lot of stress and discomfort for both parties. Second, because of the comfort of being surrounded by immigrants who spoke the same language and were familiar with the same culture, many of the participants reported that church membership hindered them from interacting more with people outside the Korean ethnic community. For example, Participant C claimed that being a part of the

group bound them together, limiting their opportunities to engage in social activities with non-Koreans. Finally, the issue of gender inequality was discussed, and every participant in this study felt that gender discrimination did exist within the church community. Although the degree of frustration was different between the women, they all agreed that traditional gender roles and values were being reinforced by the men, the elders and fellow women within the church.

The last theme was developed while exploring the role of the church community for the immigrant women. To the Korean immigrant population, the Korean ethnic church was the center of the immigrant community. This was the place to go to meet people, to ask for help and to socialize. In many ways, the people in the community replaced the role that family and friends had provided prior to immigration. Thus, the Korean church acted as an extended family for the immigrants. For example, Participant C mentioned how she felt that the church members were better than brothers and sisters. Also the members of the church provided help in various forms for newcomers to adjust faster and more easily to the new society. Participant D described how members of the church would guide newcomers through the various processes of applying for a social security number, finding a good school for children, finding a family doctor and shopping. Church members acted as translators when needed for interviews, appointments and meetings. They were also available to give emotional support through tough times when new immigrants needed family or friends, such as when sickness occurred.

Looking at the relationships among these three themes led to the conclusion that, even with the difficulties related to disputes between generations, dealing with gender discrimination, and gossiping and lack of personal space, the church served as an extended family that the participants needed and appreciated, and that served to reinforce their ethnic identity. Because the Korean women were able to get information, support and help when they needed it, and because they were able to make good friends within the church community (even if it was only among the people of the same generation), they continued their participation and involvement with the Korean church, despite the difficulties that they sometimes faced.

Chapter 5

Discussion

5.1 Discussion of Findings

A qualitative design and constructivist grounded theory approach guided this study through the process of participant recruitment, in-depth interviews and the analytical process of coding and developing theory. A grounded theory methodology guides a researcher through a way of thinking and conceptualizing data during the study of a phenomena (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Thus grounded theory led to the development of the various themes that emerged during the collection and analysis of data and helped to explain the interrelationships between these themes. Through recognition of the complexity of lives of the participants, the strategy of grounded theory helped provide a method that revealed the meaningfulness (Wells, 1995) of this study. For example, through the constant comparative method (Patton, 2002), various themes were identified during the first couple of interviews which in turn guided the next interviews, allowing for further explanation and verification the various themes that had appeared previously. The themes that emerged were explored more thoroughly in future interviews, through the interplay of initial and subsequent data collected throughout the research (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Since the study was guided by constructivist grounded theory, priority was given to the meanings that played out in the participants' lives (Patton, 2002). For example, the concept of the existence of a generation gap was a recurring concept that was meaningful for the participants. Therefore, more focus was given during the interviews and during the analysis to this topic.

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the role and significance of the ethnic church in the lives of Korean immigrant women. The church was conceptualized not only as a spiritual setting, but also as a site for leisure. For example, church activities were seen as leisure because they provide social and recreational activities as well as spiritual activities. Furthermore, church attendance can be seen as leisure in the sense that it is an activity that is entered into voluntarily during free time. Exploring the leisure aspects such as the social context of the church and the social relationships and social support provided by the church, the study focused on the ways in

which these aspects of church involvement were related to the quality of life for the immigrant women, as well as their adjustment to immigration.

The participants for this study were recruited from two different Korean ethnic churches in an urban/suburban region of south-west Ontario. All of the participants in this study were first-generation Korean immigrant women, who had lived in Canada for over one year. One woman was in her thirties, two were in their forties and four of the women were in their fifties. Only one of the women was divorced and the rest were married. They all had raised or were presently raising children in Canada. Seven in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted for this study and the interviews were carried out in Korean according to the preference of the participants. All of the interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed in their original language. English translation of the text was performed during the initial systematic coding procedure while identifying the various themes that emerged through cross-referencing procedures. Various themes arose out of analyzing the church as a leisure site. First, benefits of being part of the church community were found such as spiritual comfort, emotional support, reinforcement of ethnic identity and opportunities to exchange information. The next main theme that emerged was the various conflicts and challenges experienced by the women because of Korean church attendance. Challenges between traditional and new values lead to a division between different generations. Being a part of the ethnic community also limited opportunities to interact with the mainstream Canadian society, and traditional gender ideologies were reinforced within the church community. Overall, the church provided an extension of family and assisted in adjustment for new immigrants, while at the same time it also involved conflict and may have hindered integration.

The study showed that the Korean ethnic church played a major role in the women's lives. All of the women claimed that the people they had met through the church were very important to them, and much of the women's lives were shaped around the activities of the church. This finding supports previous research that Korean ethnic churches are important in the lives of Korean immigrants, and that the experiences for Korean immigrants after their arrival in a new country are very closely connected to Korean ethnic church participation. Min (2000), for example, found that ethnic churches maintain stronger social interactions and friendship networks among Koreans compared to other organizations, thus suggesting that the Korean ethnic churches were at the centre of the community activities of Korean immigrants. Kim and Grant (1997) also determined that the

main social institute that the Korean immigrants turn to for services and information was the Korean ethnic church.

All of the participants in this study talked about the various activities within the church community which did not entail spiritual growth. This also supports previous research on church activities and the link between religion and leisure (Bermann & Mussig, 1969; Emard 1990). For example, although the church is usually associated with religious activities such as bible study and prayer meetings, that facilitate spiritual fulfillment and growth, research has shown that activities that are unrelated to religion are also affiliated with the church (Bermann & Mussig, 1969) such as socialization and recreational activities. Also Emard (1990) demonstrated that churches were becoming more actively involved with recreational activities, not just for the church members, but for the community as a whole. This research study reported that socializing was the most common non-religious aspect of church participation talked about among the participants. All of the participants said that they went to church to meet with people, and most of the participants claimed that their closest friends were people they had met within the church community.

Communities in which people socialize and in which many leisure-related activities take place, can be seen to contribute to the development of social capital (Shinew, Glover and Parry, 2004). In this present study, the various benefits and difficulties that came from church attendance that the women reported in this study also relate to the concept of social capital. According to Portes (1998), one of the functions of social capital is the provision of extra-familial networks and family support. In this study, it was evident that the church community acted as an extension of family. Most of the participants felt that the help and emotional support the church members provided replaced the support that they used to receive from friends and family before immigrating to Canada. Even if some of the participants were reluctant to admit that they received help and support, they were all quick to admit that they gave support freely and expected other church members to do so as well. All of the participants reported that exchange of information was a crucial benefit of being a part of the church community. Members of the church network actively helped newcomers adjust to the new environment by acting as guides, teachers and translators for them. Parents of children took advantage of this benefit of social capital in terms of educating their children about their ethnic culture and ethnic identity. The children learned to conform to cultural traditions such as showing respect to elders and using proper language.

This idea of the church community acting as an extended family relates to previous research on the concept of “family making” (Bella, 2002) within immigrant communities. Based on the idea that the family can be created through the process of caring “for” and caring “about” each other, Bella (2002) suggests that immigrants behave like a large extended family through their interactions with one another. Furthermore, in a study that examined the relationship between volunteer firefighters, Yarnal, Dowler and Hutchinson (2002) found that the men’s actions that sustained their friendship, such as working together, playing together and caring for each other, corresponded to the process of family making. These findings, which suggest that caring for one another can make people feel like a family even without legal ties, was consistent to the findings in this study on the Korean immigrants and their feelings towards the Korean immigrant church community.

However, in the present study a number of negative consequences of being involved in an ethnic church community were also reported, and these can be seen as negative aspects of this form of social capital. Division between immigrants of the older generation and the younger generation, lack of interaction with Canadians outside the Korean community and restriction on personal freedom were some of the issues brought up by the participants that reflected negative social capital. This is similar to Min’s (2000) research which showed that high affiliation with Korean churches has been related to social segregation from the main stream society. Glover and Hemingway (2005) explained that by strengthening social networks, social capital can function to prevent people from getting out of unpleasant situations. Portes (1998) also wrote how strong social capital within a social group can restrict members’ access to benefits from outside of the group, and can increase the level of social control over its members. In this study, the participants complained about people gossiping about one another and how that hindered them from acting or dressing the way they wanted to. The immigrant women and especially the younger immigrant women, were thus constrained by the traditional norms of the group.

One theme that reoccurred repeatedly during the interviews was the conflict the women felt between the newer and the traditional values within the Korean community. The women of the older generation felt that the younger (or newer) immigrants were disrespectful, uncooperative and elitist, whereas the newer immigrants felt as though the older immigrants were stubborn, inefficient and power hungry. As quoted by Participant E, a ‘generation gap’ existed within the community and this was a huge conflict among the women. This particular gap among women who are all first-generation

immigrants has received little attention by previous research. However, there have been numerous studies on immigrants that have shown this phenomena between first-generation and second-generation immigrants (Kim & Grant, 1997). For example, research by Tirone and Pedlar (2000) has shown that conflict and tensions sometimes exist within immigrant families between the older generation and the newer generation on issues related to traditions and values. Likewise, a generation gap had been identified as one of the main reasons for conflict between parents and their children within immigrant families in Canada (Wakil, Siddique & Wakil, 1981).

Another issue discussed by most of the participants of this study was the lack of gender equality and the reinforcement of traditional gender ideologies within the church community. All of the women in this study had much to say on the subject of gender inequality within the church. They spoke about the roles of the women within the church and how these roles were limited and subservient to the roles to the men. The women were not included in the decision making process of church affairs and most of the work they did included jobs traditionally thought of as women's work, such as making food, cleaning and teaching. This confirms research done by Min (2000) in which she found that women in her study were not allowed to serve as head pastors or hold important decision making positions, even though the women composed the majority of church members. She theorized that high affiliation with the Korean church segregated the Korean immigrants from the main stream society, preventing them from learning and practicing the more egalitarian gender role attitudes of the Western society. This fits with the extensive body of research that has looked at how leisure also reinforces traditional gender roles and practices (Deem, 1986; Green, 1998; Shaw, 1994).

However, the findings in this study provided only minimal support for the idea of leisure as a site for resistance to traditional gender ideologies. Although previous research has found that through leisure activities, including social leisure, women can resist to traditional gender values (Green, 1998; Shaw, 1994; Shaw, 2001; Tye & Powers 1998), this was not explicitly evident in this study. Perhaps this was due to the fact that traditional gender roles were not only enforced by men, but also by older women who felt that this was the natural division of labour. For example, with the exception of Participant G, the older women complained about the unfairness in decision making, but thought that the division of labour was natural and fair. Also, with the exception of Participant F, all of the younger women were unhappy with the inequity between men's and women's roles, rights, and power. However, they reported feeling helpless with regard to changing the overall atmosphere of the

community because of the opinions of the older women. On the other hand, the fact that the women were able to express frustration during their interviews could also be seen as indication of some resistance, or a resistant attitude, which perhaps was or could be expressed to others. While women's leisure and women's discourse can reinforce traditional feminine ideologies it can also facilitate acts of resistance (Shaw, 2001), as shown in Green's (1998) study on women's friendships. Thus, the willingness to talk about their frustration and feelings of discrimination among the women of this study may suggest the potential for a form of resistance through women's talk.

Although there has been an extensive amount of research on social capital development and reproduction and/or resistance to gender ideologies in past leisure literature, little attention has been given to the interplay of these theoretical conceptualizations. Based on the findings of this current study, a connection between the two social phenomena could be identified. Specifically, this study focused on a community which the level of social capital development was especially strong. At the same time, the interviews with the women in the study revealed that most experienced problems and conflicts related to the reproduction of traditional gender ideologies within the ethnic church. They seemed to find it particularly difficult to resist the pressures to conform to these dominant ideologies. For example, because of the fear of becoming sanctioned from other members of the community and further losing the benefits that derive from being a part of the ethnic church community, the immigrant women seemed to feel that they needed to endure the discrimination trapping them in unpleasant situations. This suggests that high social capital may conflict with opportunities for resistance. In addition, as Portes (1998) has previously indicated, higher social capital within a group may restrict access to benefits from outside of the group. In this case, the Korean ethnic church community restricted their access to benefits that could have come from adapting an egalitarian gender ideology. In this environment, the traditional ideologies and values of the older immigrants was reproduced and passed on, while it was difficult for newer immigrants to challenge these values of the community.

Through the analysis of this study, the link between immigration, church attendance and leisure are significant. Recognition of the connection contributes to our understanding of the experiences of immigration, which is an important issue given the steadily increasing number of immigrants to Canada every year (Statistics Canada, 2006). As all immigrants bring with them a part of their own culture to the new country, including leisure-participation patterns (Stodolska, 2000), it

is important to understand the process of community development that might facilitate adjustment for the new immigrants. Previous research had linked immigrants with post-arrival depression and passiveness in pursuing leisure activities (Ruble & Shaw, 1991; Yeh, 2003) due to language difficulties and discrimination. As leisure is used for cultural expression and also a mechanism for cultural assimilation (Shaul & Gramann, 1998), it is clear that studying immigrants' choices for leisure is necessary in terms of understanding their culture and the adjustment process. In addition, as any leisure can have both positive and negative impacts at the same time (Shaw, 1994), it is also important to understand the negative impacts that certain leisure can have on immigrants and the ways in which leisure can hinder their quality of life and their adjustment to the new culture.

The theoretical significance of this study is not only the link between the leisure experiences of church attendance for immigrants and the experiences of adjusting in a new country, but also the many and complex roles that this form of leisure plays in the lives of immigrant women. First, the analysis shows that having church-related social contacts clearly helped the adjustment process in a number of ways for the immigrant women. However, the dominance of these contacts also seemed to hinder integration into the broader mainstream society. This reflects the separation strategy that Berry, Kim, Minde and Mok (1987) include as part of their acculturation model. This particular strategy is one in which immigrants place value on their traditional cultural norms and thus withhold from participating in the cultural norms and practices of the mainstream culture. Another theoretical aspect of the study relates to the ways in which church activities provided social capital for women in the form of an extended family, social support and practical help. While this form of social capital was mostly beneficial, it also constricted and constrained the women who were segregated from the benefits of main stream society and felt restricted in sense of personal freedom. Third, the church as a leisure site was seen to reinforce traditional gender ideologies and this was experienced negatively by most of the church-going women. The potential for resistance existed, but there was little evidence of much overt resistant activity. Overall, these findings reinforce the notion of leisure as contradictory, involving a complex mix of positive and negative components. In this study the contradictory dimensions of the women's experiences linked to resistance through leisure, social capital through leisure, and church-related leisure practices in general.

Despite the difficulties, the women in this study found that the church community provided support that did indeed help them to adjust to the new life, and find friendship and emotional support.

The analysis suggests that social leisure was a major part for the women's individual decisions to continue their participation in Korean church activities, confirming suggestions in earlier literature about the social benefits of ethnic church involvement. Despite the negative role of leisure such as increased social control, relations with unwanted social networks and restriction of interaction with people outside of the community, the benefits of leisure and the positive experience of church attendance seemed to be predominant for these women, leading to their decision to continue to attend church.

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of women church members. Perhaps because of this explicit purpose, many of the women were at first reluctant to talk about their own personal experiences with the non-spiritual benefits of the church and any negative aspects that were associated with the church. Thus, some participants tried to either divert attention away from themselves when talking about non-spiritual activities, or they claimed that 'others' probably attended church for various non-spiritual reasons. In the case of Participant F and Participant B, both were reluctant to talk about any gender-related difficulties and brushed off conflicts within the church as not important and not related to themselves. In fact Participant B was a very faithful Christian and she did not want to associate herself with anything that suggested otherwise. But Participant F was a new believer in Christianity and admitted that she was still searching for faith. Perhaps her reluctance to talk about non-spiritual matters was due to the fact that she might have suspected that I would be judgmental because I was also a Korean woman, even though I was not a member of the church and I had reassured the participants of confidentiality. However, all of the women did at least implicitly, if not explicitly, recognize the role the church played as social leisure in helping them adjust in Canada.

This was an exploratory study and only a small number of women participated. Also all of the women were first generation immigrants who were either married or divorced and lived in Canada for over one year. Thus the findings may not be applicable to women with other backgrounds and experiences. For example, second generation North American immigrant women would not have the experience of growing up in a different culture and may not experience the various difficulties with adjusting to the new culture and values. In addition, women who have lived in Canada for less than one year would most likely be more concerned with their personal issues related to settling down and adjusting to the new culture than worrying about women's roles within the church or the conflicts that existed between the older and newer generations.

Finally, although all of the women did claim that by attending the Korean ethnic church they found it easier to adjust as an immigrant in Canada, it did not actually help them to know, understand and become an active citizen in the main stream society. Rather, it helped them to re-create a smaller community in which most of them seemed to feel little need to step out into the larger society. Within this smaller community, they met Korean people, they ate Korean food, they spoke the Korean language and they reinforced the Korean culture, thus creating 'little Koreas' within Canada.

The stories of the women who participated in this study helped open my eyes once again to the complexity of the process of adjusting to a new culture. Referring back to my research journal and reflecting upon the initial insights that the women gave me during the time of the interview, I felt that despite all the challenges they faced, these women were all very strong and enthusiastic about starting a new life in Canada. While their frustration and loneliness saddened me and reminded me of my Mother who also had lived as a first-generation immigrant in Canada, their positive attitude of hope and success strengthened my admiration of all the women who had the courage to leave everything familiar behind and start fresh in a new country.

5.2 Implications for Future Research

This research has implications for future studies related to the tensions and potential benefits leisure has for immigrant communities. For example, this study examined married or divorced women in their thirties to sixties. However, many women in their twenties also immigrate to Canada and it would be interesting for researchers to examine whether they experience immigration differently, what type of issues they face while they try to adjust to the new country, what role social leisure plays in their lives, and whether church attendance is important for them.

In addition, since all of the participants for this study were women, this study could be extended to men. Men's experiences with the difficulties of immigration, the importance of adjusting, and the need for social leisure and experiences with church attendance may differ greatly from those of women. For example, Korean men are expected to be the breadwinners of a family. As a result, they would have more access to socializing with people in the work place, thus reducing their need to find company within the church community. Also it would be interesting to see how the men relate to the issue of gender inequality and the different roles assigned to women and men at church. Thus, the

positive and negative aspects of social capital development within the community may be different for men compared to women.

The experiences of children and teenagers would also be different from the experiences of grown women. Researchers might examine the role that the ethnic church has in the lives of younger Koreans and determine whether church attendance has a social leisure aspect for them, or if they attend church as a duty to their parents. It would be interesting to explore how much the church community would have an affect on the adjustment of children and teenagers to their new culture, because the school environment provides them with extensive contact with mainstream Canadian culture.

Future research might also examine immigrant women from other cultures and different ethnic backgrounds. Researchers could explore whether there is any difference in the non-spiritual services provided by different religious institutions and catering to people of different ethnic backgrounds. For example, Yeh and Inose (2002) compared Chinese, Japanese and Korean teenagers. They found that Korean teenagers depended on religious practices as a coping strategy to a greater extent than did the other teenagers. An exploration on the central space for different ethnic communities and whether they are spiritual sites would be interesting in terms of understanding the different cultures.

Finally, a longitudinal study that explores how the ethnic church community affects immigrants is needed in order to further understand how the relationships between different age groups may change, and whether the perception of non-spiritual benefits differs according to how loyal the immigrant is to the church. Such a study would help to determine whether traditional values are exchanged for the newer values or whether within the ethnic community, the traditional values are continually reinforced and passed on to younger generations.

In conclusion, this study made a contribution to understanding the role of leisure in a spiritual setting amongst immigrant women and the ways in which this form of leisure affects immigrant women's lives. Hopefully further research will be pursued in the future to further understand immigrants' experiences.

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Footnotes

¹ These and other English words included within the Korean quotes were the exact words that were used by the participant during the interview.

Appendix A

**Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies
University of Waterloo**

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH IN ETHNIC CHURCHES AS POTENTIAL LEISURE SITES

We are looking for volunteers to take part in a study of exploring the experiences of Korean immigrant women in their involvement in Korean ethnic churches.

As a participant in this study, you would be asked to participate in an one-to-one interview with the researcher.

Your participation would involve a 1 hour session,

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study, please contact:

Jinhee Chung

Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies

at

Phone: 519-888-4567 Ext. 34424

Email: *j23chung@uwaterloo.ca; jhchappy@nate.com*

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics, University of Waterloo.

Appendix B

Information Letter for Interview Study

Date

This letter is an invitation to consider participation in a study I am conducting as part of my Master's degree in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Professor Susan M. Shaw. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

As a Korean who grew up in Canada, I have many memories of Korean immigrants coming together – going to church together, helping each other out, and enjoying recreational activities. Many research studies have been done on trying to understand immigrants' experiences in their work and school lives. However, not much has been done in trying to understand the interactions among immigrants. I want to gain a better understanding of the lives of Korean immigrant people, as I remember how difficult it can be as a newcomer to this country. The purpose of this project is to examine the role of the Korean church in the lives of Korean women. For example, I am interested in how important the church and church activities are in women's lives, and the benefits and other outcomes of their participation.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants must be female Korean immigrants and must attend a Korean church. It will involve an interview of approximately 1 hour in length at your home for your convenience. This interview may be conducted in English or Korean, whichever language you are more comfortable in and prefer. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you wish to do so. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by advising the researcher. With your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis. After the interview has

been completed, I will do a follow-up telephone call to discuss the summary of themes of our interview and to provide you will the opportunity add or clarify any points should you wish to do so. All information is considered completely confidential. To support the findings of this study, quotations from the interviews will be reported anonymously. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study. Data collected during this study will be retained in my locked office at the university for 6 months and then confidentially destroyed. Only my supervisor and I will have access. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics. If you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Susan Sykes, Director, Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo at (519) 888-4567 ext.36005.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at (519) 722-2171 or e-mail at j23chung@uwaterloo.ca. You may also contact my supervisor, Professor Susan M. Shaw at (519) 888-4567 ext.35019 or e-mail sshaw@healthy.uwaterloo.ca

The final decision about participation is yours. I hope that the results of my study will be of benefit to Korean immigrant families residing in North America, as well as to the broader research community. I very much look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Yours sincerely,

Jinhee Chung, MA Graduate Student
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies
University of Waterloo
j23chung@uwaterloo.ca; jhchappy@nate.com

Appendix C

Phone Call Guide

P = Potential Participant; I = Interviewer

I- May I please speak to [name of potential participant]?

P – Hello, [Name of potential participant] speaking. How may I help you?

I – Hello, I received your contact information from [XXXX]. As part of my Masters work with the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Waterloo, I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Susan M. Shaw, on ‘Ethnic Churches as Potential Leisure for Korean immigrant women’. This research also has important personal meaning to me as I also am a Korean international student, and my parents have lived in Canada and the USA as immigrants. As part of my research, I am conducting interviews to discover Korean immigrant women’s experiences with attending Korean ethnic churches in an urban/suburban region in south-west Ontario.

I would really like to meet with you and talk about some of your experiences and thoughts. Is this a convenient time to give you further information about the interviews?

P – No, could you call me back later (agree on a more convenient time to call person back.)

OR

P – Yes, could you provide me with some more information regarding the interviews you will be conducting?

I – Background information:

- ✓ I will be undertaking interviews starting in September.

- ✓ The interview would last approximately one hour, and would be arranged for a time convenient to your schedule.
- ✓ Involvement in this interview is entirely voluntary and there are no known or anticipated risks to participation in this study.
- ✓ The questions are quite general (for example: What do you do at church on a typical Sunday? What type of activities? Who is involved?)
- ✓ You may decline to answer any of the interview questions you do not wish to answer and may terminate the interview at anytime.
- ✓ With your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis.
- ✓ All information you provide will be considered confidential.
- ✓ The data collected will be kept in a secure location.
- ✓ This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo.
- ✓ After completion of the interview, I would contact you by telephone for a follow-up discussion, to verify my interpretations and to add or clarify any additional points you may have.

I would like to mail/e-mail you an information letter which has all of these details along with contact names and numbers on it to help assist you in making a decision about your participation in this study.

P – No, thank you.

OR

P – Sure (get contact information from potential participant i.e., mailing address/fax number/e-mail address).

I – Thank you very much for your time. May I call you in 5 to 7 days to see if you are interested in being interviewed? Once again, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at my cell number 519-722-2171.

P – Good-bye.

I – Good-bye.

Appendix D

Consent Form

I agree to participate in a study conducted by Jinhee Chung of the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, University of Waterloo under the supervision of Professor Susan M. Shaw, Ph.D. I have made the decision based on the information I have read in the Information Letter. In addition, I have had the opportunity to receive any further details I wanted about the study. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time, by telling the researcher.

I understand that the interview will be audio-taped to facilitate the collection of information with the understanding that all information which I provide will be held in confidence and I will not be identified in the thesis, summary report, or publication. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher.

I also understand that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance from the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo, and that I may contact the Director at (519) 888-4567 ext. 36005 if I have any concerns or comments resulting from my involvement in the study.

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

YES NO

I agree to have my interview tape recorded.

YES NO

I agree to the use of anonymous quotations in any thesis or publication that comes of this research.

YES NO

Participant Name (Please Print):

Participant Signature:

Witness Name (Please Print):

Witness Signature:

Date:

Appendix E

Appreciation Letter

Date

Dear (Name);

I am writing to thank you for our meeting last week. It was indeed a great pleasure meeting you.

My project, Ethnic Churches as Potential Sites for Leisure: An Exploratory Study in the Lives of Korean Immigrant Women on the Involvement in Korean Ethnic Churches, is proceeding according to design. I am now seeing a few more individuals such as yourself who can lend additional information and insights. Thank you for suggesting (name of contact) as a potential source.

I hope you will get in touch with me if further thoughts occur to you about the subject of our conversation, particularly if you decide in retrospect that you would like to designate some of it for non-attribution. Should you have any comments or concerns, you should also contact Dr. Susan Sykes of our Office of Research Ethics at (519) 888-4567 ext. 6005. This project was reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo.

I shall be sending you a copy of the chapter, for your criticism and comments if you request. I expect it to be ready for your review by November or December.

All the best to you,

Jinhee Chung, MA Graduate Student,
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies
University of Waterloo
(519) 722-2171, j23chung@uwaterloo.ca

Appendix F

Follow-up Letter for Participation in the Study

Date

Dear (Insert name of participant),

I would like to thank you for your participation in this study. As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of Korean immigrant women in a Korean ethnic church in Canada; specifically focusing on the meaning and significance of church attendance as an immigrant.

Please remember that any data pertaining to you as an individual participant will be kept confidential. Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this project, I plan on sharing this information with the research community through seminars, conferences, presentations, and journal articles. If you are interested in receiving more information regarding the results of this study, or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at either the phone number or e-mail address listed at the bottom of the page. If you would like a summary of the results, please let me know now by providing me with your mailing address. I am anticipating that the study will be completed by December 30th, 2006. At that time, I will send you a summary of the results if requested.

As with all University of Waterloo projects involving human participants, this project was reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. If you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Susan Sykes, Director, Office of Research Ethics, at (519) 888-4567, ext. 36005.

I would like to once again thank-you for assisting me with this research. It was a great pleasure to have met you, and shared some of your experiences.

All the best to you,

Jinhee Chung, MA Graduate Student,
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies
University of Waterloo,
(519) 722-2171, j23chung@uwaterloo.ca

Appendix G

Interview Guide

Ensure that a consent form has been signed and the purpose of this study has been explained to the participant. Gain permission from the participants to tape record the interview.

The following will provide a guideline of questions to be asked. I am free to build conversation within each subject area and to explore topics specific to the participants' experiences.

- 1) Can you tell me about a typical day at church?
 - a. How often do you go to church?
 - b. What do you do at church, and how long does it take you?
 - c. What do you like to do if you have free time at church? How often? With whom?
- 2) How do you feel about your involvement in the church?
 - a. Do you enjoy all of these activities? Are there some aspects that you are less happy about?
 - b. Why did you choose to become involved in church activities?
 - c. Did you do these activities before you came to Canada?
 - d. How did your involvement affect you in terms of quality of life?
- 3) What role does attending a Korean church play in your life?
 - a. Did you attend church in Korea? How did you get to seek church?
 - b. Why did you choose to attend a Korean church and not a Canadian church?
 - c. What kind of services did the church provide for you?
 - d. What role does church involvement play in terms of your leisure life?
- 4) How did being involved in the Korean church affect your lives?
 - a. What benefits do you feel you personally derive from your involvement in church? (particularly non-spiritual benefits?) Any negative outcomes?
 - b. What is the meaning and significance of your church attendance as a woman? (including positive and negative aspects such as liberation and discrimination)
- 4) Is there anything else you want to add?

End of Interview Notes

- 1) Thank them for their precious time and for sharing their stories.
- 2) Ask permission to be contacted by telephone for a follow-up discussion, to verify my interpretations and to add or clarify any additional points they may think of.
- 3) Ask if they could suggest any other Korean women I could contact and with whom I could arrange a potential interview.